

**THE SOUTHEAST ASIA REGIONAL PROGRAMME ON COMBATING
MARINE PLASTICS (SEA-MAP) REGIONAL PROJECT**

Terms of Reference

Regional Platform for Innovation and Investments

1. Introduction

The Southeast Asia Regional Program on Combating Marine Plastics (SEA-MaP Regional Project) is a five-year program financed by the World Bank. Its objective is to aid the Member States (AMS) of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in combating marine plastic pollution and mitigating its negative impacts. This aligns with implementing the [ASEAN Regional Action Plan \(RAP\) for Combating Marine Debris](#). The project is implemented by ASEAN through the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC), with the structure comprising a Project Steering Committee (PSC), a Project Management Unit (PMU), and a Regional Implementation Support Unit (RISU) located within the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). More information on the project can be found in the [Project Appraisal Document \(PAD\)](#).

2. The SEA-MaP Regional Project

The SEA-MaP Regional Project adopts a long-term, programmatic approach and is divided into two main components:

(i) Strengthening Policies and Institutions for Plastics Circularity.

Through the development of regional guidelines, enhancement of plastics metrics and monitoring, and support for policy harmonization, the project aids in implementing the ASEAN RAP. The project's goals are designed to surpass its lifespan, aiming to strengthen regional actions and integrate them within the existing ASEAN structure, alongside fostering capacity building for decision-makers, private-sector champions, and other relevant stakeholders.

(ii) Establishing Regional Platforms for Innovation, Knowledge Sharing, and Partnerships.

The SEA-MaP Regional Project is committed to creating and institutionalizing two Platforms for 1) innovation and investment and 2) knowledge sharing and partnerships across ASEAN to address plastic pollution. These Platforms, aiming to bolster sustainability, will foster collaboration with regional private-sector champions and support existing data and research networks. They are designed to promote circular economy solutions and encourage plastic reduction partnerships. Further, they seek to catalyze private sector investment and support. The Platforms will provide technical assistance to plastics innovators, especially focusing on women-owned innovations, social enterprises, and NGOs, to help turn innovative ideas into proofs of concept, pilots, and bankable business solutions.

Table 1 below outlines the deliverables under each component.

Components	Deliverables
Component 1: Strengthen Regional Policies and Institutions for Plastics Circularity	

1.1: Supporting Regional Policy Development, Harmonization, and Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Best Practice Manual on Standards for Plastic Packaging ● Regional Guidebook on Standards for Responsible Plastic Waste Trade, Sorted Plastics, and Recycled Plastics ● Regional Guidebook on Financial Mechanisms for Investments in Plastic Waste Management ● Regional Guidebook on Phasing Out Single-Use Plastics ● EPR Handbook and Customized Toolkit
1.2: Supporting Regional Collaboration and Strengthening Monitoring Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regional Baseline Report (including on policies) ● Guidebook for Common Methodologies for Assessment and Monitoring of Plastic Pollution ● Regional Training Program on Plastic Waste Management
Component 2: Establish Regional Platforms to promote Innovations, Knowledge, and Partnerships for Plastics Circularity	
2.1: Regional Platform for Innovation and Investments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regional Platform for Innovation and Investments ● Web Platform/‘Marketplace’ for Investments/Innovation ● Annual technology/innovation expos ● Sustainability strategy
2.2: Establishing a Regional Platform for Knowledge and Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resource Mobilization Strategy ● Knowledge Sharing and Training ● High-Level Policy Dialogue and Discussion ● Communications

Table 1: Overview of SEA-MaP Regional Project Components and Deliverables

3. Background

A stocktaking, gap analysis, and assessment of plastic innovation and investments relevant to ASEAN have informed the Regional Platform for Innovation and Investments’ high-level design and implementation roadmap. The study was conducted between August 2023 and March 2024 and involved understanding the ecosystem and identifying its needs. It focused on the issues and opportunities at the intersection of capital needs, how they can be accelerated, and the technical assistance needed to facilitate ventures and capital. The study reviewed over forty existing multi-stakeholder platforms and conducted key informant interviews, journey mapping, and solution prototyping. In brief, the study identified the existing landscape of plastic innovation and investment actors in ASEAN: key stakeholders and users of the platform were identified as critical informants – innovators (start-ups/companies/ research institutions developing innovative technologies, etc.); investors (private donors and philanthropy; commercial and development banks; institutional donors/government funders looking to fund local innovation; private equity/investors; corporate funders); and customers (companies adopting and promoting innovative technologies; governments establishing and enforcing relevant regulations, the latter as enablers too).

The need for collaboration was a recurring theme throughout the research. The other key finding from the research phase was creating a more enabling environment across policy, innovation, and finance domains. This recognition foregrounds the need for the Regional Platform to Innovation and Investments to address more than just accelerating innovations and connecting investors; it also needs to address barriers by supporting the development of policy that facilitates innovation and creates instruments that can de-risk investments. The logic of the Platform

suggests that building awareness and capacity among key stakeholders will lead to more collaboration across the plastics value chain.

The Annex provides more details of the study. The selected firm will receive the complete results.

4. Objectives

Aligned with ASEAN RAP Action 14, this study aims to establish a regional platform to support innovation and investments in plastic and plastic waste management in ASEAN.

While many multi-stakeholder partnerships operate at the national level, there appears to be a regional coordination gap, especially serving innovators and investors. Hence, there is the opportunity to create a regional platform to bring together academics, the private sector, investors, civil society, and policymakers to support innovation in waste management and marine debris-related projects.

The Platform will include, at a minimum:

- Development/strengthening of a regional (online) platform to share innovation (connect with investors);
- Connection to existing innovation incubators at a regional level;
- Hosting or collaborating on a regional innovation incubator to attract, foster, and commercialize innovations in marine plastic solutions, including at the city level.

As part of this initiative, annual technology/innovation expos for plastics solutions at the regional level, inviting ASEAN and global innovators and investors, are proposed to be organized.

5. Scope of Work

The Platform proposes core features to attract, foster, incubate, and potentially commercialize innovations in marine plastic solutions. These features include a digital financing marketplace, an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered technical assistance bot, and a long-term highly tailored accelerator program. The Platform also proposes to host an annual innovation expo.

Based on the findings and recommendations of the research phase, the Platform is proposed to enable information sharing and connect actors at a regional level through communities of practice, sharing, and cross-promotion, as well as through filling gaps not currently addressed by existing programs. To achieve the goal, the Platform will have three core activities which the selected firm will lead:

- SEA-MaP financing marketplace: support innovators in finding partners for collaboration and matchmaking with investors (link supply and demand of innovative plastics solutions, including financing opportunities).
- Technical assistance program for innovators involved in plastic circularity in the ASEAN region: provide technical assistance to innovators to further develop innovative ideas into proofs of concept, prototypes, pilots, and bankable business solutions.
- Communications, outreach, and events: run communications and outreach activities to support the technical assistance program and financing marketplace. These activities aim to promote partnerships and collaborations, raise awareness about innovative circular economy solutions, and bring together innovators and investors in the platform's various processes, including organizing technology and innovation exhibitions and expos.

To establish the Regional Platform for Innovation and Investments, the selected organization/consulting firm/s will conceptualize, design, and implement a range of specific tasks to implement the core features that the Regional Platform for Innovation and Investments is expected to have, in close collaboration with UNOPS/RISU, the PMU/ASEC, and the World Bank.

Bidding firms will have a chance to influence the overall design and are expected to take an active role in improving the platform activities during the roll-out and implementation.

Given the broad range of tasks involved, consultancy firms are expected to engage experts on the interface of plastics waste, finance and investments, IT (mainframe and AI bot design), capacity development, knowledge management, communications, and advocacy to create this online interactive platform. Bidders can form a team of multidisciplinary experts through a joint venture/consortium or engage and manage sub-contractors.

Task 1: SEA-MaP financing marketplace

The financing marketplace is a digital platform that serves as a centralized hub where individuals, businesses, and organizations can discover solutions to address marine litter. It will primarily target three user groups: innovators, investors, and customers.

The financing marketplace will offer tailored and curated matchmaking services and opportunities and promote partnerships, cooperation, and innovative solutions. It will match the supply and demand of innovative plastic solutions with private and public sector financing. It will support the stakeholders in networking with counterparts and finding partners for technology and business collaborations.

The marketplace will accelerate partnerships rather than focus only on accelerating ventures. The bringing together of stakeholders is critical. This will combine algorithmic matching and - predominantly - manual matching through the support of the Platform staff.

Minimum threshold requirements will be established (defined in the design based on objectives and technical possibilities) to provide a baseline for entry into the marketplace.

The site will be managed to focus on innovative solutions for upstream and midstream interventions in the plastics value chain, reducing plastic waste, increasing plastic recycling, reducing leakage, building new business models, and providing opportunities to scale up promising initiatives.

The marketplace will also provide information about regional financing opportunities to innovators and a list of investors interested in deploying capital, thereby creating a dual-sided market with an inherent self-reinforcing feedback loop built in.

Sub-task 1.1.: Validation of the marketplace design and final version

Preparatory study:

- A short study with a light touch approach will enhance the current stocktake and gap document analyses. This study aims to:
 - Conduct a marketplace analysis to identify the market for plastic innovations and ascertain the gap between available financing and innovative plastic solutions seeking funding. The research will emphasize understanding the gaps in the ecosystem and their alignment with stakeholders' objectives and pinpointing the disparity between available funding and innovative plastic solutions seeking financing.
 - Validate the findings concerning plastic innovation initiatives, partnerships, and investments in the ASEAN region alongside existing practices aiding plastic waste reduction.

- Update existing classifications to specify geographical locations and sub-sectors of relevant innovations within ASEAN, such as materials, redesign, and digital mapping. This update will enable the visualization of investment landscapes geographically and by sector, ensuring inclusivity and identifying areas requiring further support. Moreover, it will highlight potential sources of finance, including green/sustainable finance, and list investors interested in financing innovative plastic solutions.
- Integrate gender-disaggregated data to identify female innovators in the region for participation in technical assistance and capacity-building activities.

Designing the functional and IT specifications of the digital marketplace:

- Create a design document for the financing marketplace based on the World Bank design report recommendations. This document will include at least details for:
 - The functional and IT technical specifications of the platform. Legal considerations must be included.
 - An implementation and maintenance roadmap.
 - A user access policy (user access and details about the technical architecture).
 - Accessibility standards and expectations (e.g., complying with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines -WCAG- or another chosen accessibility standard).
 - User Interface (UI): Ensure the design is intuitive, responsive, and visually appealing with professional graphics. A simplified layout of critical parts of the financing market platform UI and a User Experience (UX) sitemap and style guide.
 - Data Privacy: Implement data encryption, role-based access controls, a comprehensive privacy policy, and regular security audits. Robust data privacy measures to protect sensitive user information will be required.
 - Regular Updates: Enable real-time updates, automated alerts, a robust system for easy content management, and include a feedback mechanism. Regular updates will be made to reflect current funding opportunities and innovations.
 - Resource Allocation: Develop a comprehensive resource database with advanced search and filter options, regularly curate and update resources, and use AI for personalized recommendations. Ensure up-to-date and accurate data is in the resource allocation database.
 - Matchmaking: Develop algorithms for matching innovators with investors, include interactive features for connections, and showcase success stories.
 - Analytics and Reporting: implement tools to track user behavior and performance metrics, provide regular reports to stakeholders, and use feedback for continuous improvement. Make effective use of analytics and feedback mechanisms to drive continuous improvement.
 - User Support: Offer a comprehensive help center, live chat support, regular training sessions, and foster a user community for support.
 - For bidders' reference and consideration, possible capacities of the web platform could include:
 - Registrations will populate a dynamic database. Profiles of technology suppliers, adopters, investors, technology scouts/technology displayers, and other relevant stakeholders will be stored.
 - Facilitate the sharing of technology offers and requests, enabling the identification of suitable business partners and allowing predominantly manual and curated matchmaking based on pre-defined criteria (e.g., business, technology, supply and demand, specific sector, country of origin, etc.).
 - A system to join the marketplace, using or combining online and manual approaches for recruitment and registration, along with the ability to track user engagement.
 - Offer well-organized and easily accessible information, with user-friendly visualization, on updated grant or funding opportunities, materials, programs, and events. Information about financing opportunities in the ASEAN region suitable for plastics innovations (including green/sustainable finance), access modalities, and requirements/eligibility could be systematized, kept updated, and made available to align innovators with the financing available to support plastic circularity in the

private sector. Additionally, the platform will highlight best practices and replicability by linking with successful stories.

- The potential integration of an AI technical assistance bot to assist users looking for specific, timely, and tailored technical assistance to help them grow their innovation (see Task 2).
- Operationalization and recommendations on how the financing marketplace will link to and support other parts of this initiative: the provision of technical support, the entrance into the capacity accelerator (see Task 2), and the creation of communities of practice (see Task 3).
- The tracking methods will gather feedback and usage information about the site's features to ensure continuous improvement. This could include technical analyses (e.g., site usage heatmaps) and interpersonal feedback (e.g., a feedback survey on user experience). It will be able to track:
 - The number of innovations for reducing marine plastic pollution advanced towards bankable solutions.
 - The number of innovative plastics solutions supported through technical assistance or matchmaking with business or financing partners.
 - Women-led plastics innovations are financially and technically supported.
 - The private and public finance mobilized to address the plastics challenge.
- Be able to host online pitch events and other online initiatives (expos, exhibitions, etc.). Additionally, the platform will track statistics on the number of individuals reached through these events and measure the satisfaction level of participants with the online engagement process.
- Support the communication and outreach program (see Task 3).
- Include any other features to be considered critical for development.

Sub-task 1.2.: Implementation of the marketplace.

The implementation of the marketplace will entail online and offline activities. The online activities will require a blend of IT-related inputs and maintenance, including updating the web portal, organizing virtual events, providing dedicated online support to users, etc. Offline activities will involve conceptualization, design, event management, coaching, scouting, and matchmaking services (they are presented in section 2 on technical assistance).

Following the design document's approval, website development should occur alongside developing a user guide and content management training materials (e.g., How to design and deliver a compelling pitch, video, and deck templates for innovators, etc.).

Materials will be developed to provide capacity support to stakeholders into what they receive from the site (refer to Task 2).

Following the approval of a pilot site and the development of a hosting plan, the platform should be launched and advertised through communication channels as described in Task 3.

The first group of innovators will be recruited through a comprehensive marketing and promotion strategy to recruit new innovators to join the platform actively (refer to Task 3). Modalities in the selection of innovators will ensure equal opportunity and representation among AMS.

As part of monitoring the site function, reports should be undertaken covering the current state of the online marketplace platform to identify areas for further improvement and enhancement by utilizing insights from analytics reports. As part of these, user feedback sessions will be conducted to gather insights and identify pain points for further improvement in the online marketplace.

Task 2: Technical assistance program for innovators involved in plastic circularity in the ASEAN region

The technical assistance activities will facilitate connections between potential solution providers/project developers and potential investors/donors to collaborate on innovative plastic solutions and form partnerships. The activities will prioritize innovations led by women entrepreneurs.

The stocktaking and gap analysis has advised that the scope of technical assistance provided by the Platform to innovators should adjust based on the level of sophistication of the proposed ideas. Users of the financing marketplace will have the opportunity to benefit from it based on their needs, ranging from a more straightforward use of available online resources upon registration, online matchmaking capacities, interaction with the AI bot, more advanced and curated manual matchmaking functions, and even a curated program of technical assistance tailored to promote partnerships undertaken by Platform's experts.

Sub-task 2.1.: AI assistance bot

The AI bot will offer specific, timely, and tailored technical assistance to help users grow their innovation. It is recommended that the AI bot be rolled out in four phases: (1) feasibility, (2) design, (3) development and training, (4) launch and review.

The AI bot will be data-centric and data-driven, and its performance and accuracy will depend on the quality, quantity, and relevance of the data used for training and validation. Continuous data collection, management, and cleaning processes will be prioritized. Training will involve using large datasets to enable the model to recognize patterns and make decisions. Fine-tuning will be an ongoing process based on new data and feedback. The fitting algorithms must be chosen and optimized for the specific use case. An adaptive and evolving system will allow its improvement over time. Communicating what the AI can and cannot do at each stage will be critical.

Feasibility Phase: A complete feasibility study will need to be carried out following a more detailed elaboration on objectives and scope. This is an experimental technology; the initial feasibility study must determine whether it should proceed wholly. The feasibility study will need to:

- Conduct a detailed requirements analysis, evaluate technology stacks, assess data requirements, link functions to the target audiences/stakeholders, identify potential risks, and estimate costs.
- Analyze options for technology stacks that will be used to build the AI bot.
- Identify the data requirements for training the AI assistance bot and assess the availability of this data.
- Analyze the risks, challenges, and implications of using the AI assistance bot, including usability, legal, ethical, security, and data privacy. Develop mitigation strategies where appropriate. Additionally, the potential impacts of the AI assistance bot on inclusivity factors, such as gender and usability, will need to be considered.
- Evaluate the costs associated with developing and training the AI assistance bot.
- Type of AI: Decide between custom-built AI for unique requirements and API-based AI for rapid deployment.
- Specific AI Features and Technologies: Implement NLP engines, machine learning models, knowledge base integration, and focus on conversational UI/UX design.

Design Phase: Following the feasibility study, a roadmap for building and training the AI bot, including key milestones and tasks relating to development, testing, and deployment, will need to be prepared. This should include a series of clearly established go/no-go decision gates marking expected AI capabilities that would allow progress to the next stage of development. User access policies will be designed, and UI/UX design will be outlined. An implementation plan will define the project scope, select the technology stack, build and test the AI bot, perform full-scale deployment, and implement regular updates. These will need to be met and approved by the PMU at each stage.

Development and Training Phase: The AI bot will be fully developed and trained internally with selected resources and with pilot and test audiences before fully launching it through the Platform. If possible, it should include an automatic matchmaking facility for platform users that can complement manual matchmaking undertaken by staff. Pilot testing and user feedback integration will be ensured, and necessary adjustments implemented.

Launch and Review Phase: Roll out the AI bot. Ongoing monitoring of the AI bot's function should include conducting audits to ensure the continued accuracy of its responses. User surveys should be conducted alongside these audits to gather feedback on users' experiences with the AI chatbot. AI bot's knowledge base will be continuously updated.

Sub-task 2.2.: Technical assistance/accelerator program

A tailored technical assistance/accelerator program will prioritize long-term collaboration to facilitate high-quality partnerships. It will support partnerships between customers, investors, and innovators, focusing on projects that have moved beyond initial scoping towards developing formal commercial relationships. The aim is to drive more investment into innovative solutions to marine plastic pollution.

Equal opportunity and representation among AMS will be ensured.

Unlike existing incubator and accelerator programs, recruitment into the technical assistance/accelerator program will be limited to partnerships that require an innovator to apply alongside either an investor who has expressed an interest in investing in the company or a business that has expressed an interest in developing a commercial relationship with the company.

Conceptualization phase/operations manual: the stocktake and gap analysis conceptualize the technical assistance/accelerator program, which includes a high-level design, strategy, and program plan (ref. to the Annex).

Using the validation and marketing research carried out in Task 1 to help validate this, the detailed design will entail the preparation of an operations manual for the technical assistance/accelerator program. It will include at least:

- A mobilization strategy with details of the partnerships' recruitment, call for proposals, application, and selection processes for the identified focus areas. This will include pre-defined criteria to assess applications¹, a selection-related due diligence process, and an outreach communications strategy (see Task 3).
- A list of technical assistance activities to be delivered² to relevant focus areas and potential organizations that could provide or co-provide such technical assistance.
- Definition of the eligibility criteria for the identified technical assistance activities. The requirements should focus more on topic area suitability rather than experience, allowing for a balance of inclusivity rather than strictly project/organization maturity (for instance, suitability for the ASEAN region, affordability, inclusivity, scalability/replicability, innovativeness/creativity, impact, etc.).
- A tailored approach to provide onboarding facilitation, needs assessment, technical assistance, and capacity-building activities specifically designed to support women innovators and innovators from other minority groups within the ASEAN region. This approach will overcome gender-related barriers and facilitate their participation in the financial marketplace.
- Bidders must elaborate and include in their proposals how legal and intellectual property considerations will be addressed in the program's design.

Implementation phase: the implementation of the technical assistance/accelerator program could entail:

¹ Selection into the program can involve an application and a review process. Applications could be assessed on criteria that can include: proposed team; market potential; effectiveness of the solution provided; maturity and scalability of the product or service; technology and innovation proposed; customer acquisition; revenue growth; user adoption; sustainability and scalability of the business model; legal and regulatory compliance; existing partnerships and collaborations; etc

² This could include but is not limited to, providing investment consulting services, support with lab testing a product, or matching with a mentor. Examples of the types of technical assistance that could be offered include: general business coaching including personalized guidance and support in critical areas such as strategic planning, market positioning, and organizational development; material science and engineering support; manufacturing and production processes; waste management technologies; supply chain optimization; product design and innovation; chemical analysis and testing; regulatory compliance; life cycle assessment to evaluate the environmental impact of products from raw material extraction to end-of-life disposal; data analytics and monitoring; collaboration with research institutions; collaboration with universities and research centers for joint projects and knowledge sharing; negotiating commercial agreements with customers; etc.

- Building upon the solution scouting, seek out innovators and investors who fit within the focus area and meet the developed eligibility criteria to ensure buy-in from key stakeholders. Begin recruitment to bring them into the platform and the technical assistance/accelerator program (developed as part of Task 3). At least five partnerships should be involved in this first round.
- Efforts will be made to recruit women-led businesses onto the platform, with a goal of having 30% of women-led or co-led businesses participate on the platform. Identify women innovators within the ASEAN region who will be prioritized to receive technical assistance and capacity-building activities for solution scouting.
- Following applications from interested partners, the selection process will be completed with the required stakeholders.
- Once selected, innovators and their partners will be paired with a ‘case manager’ (part of the awarded company/s team) who will support them through the program. Innovators will undergo an onboarding process, and a detailed needs assessment of the partnerships will be conducted.
- Customized technical assistance plans will be designed, and tailored technical assistance programs will begin for each successful applicant (for instance, investment consulting services, support with lab testing a product, matching with a mentor, etc.). The Platform experts of the awarded company and - as applicable - the identified organizations that could provide the technical assistance will deliver the technical support. The bidders must elaborate on the specificities and modalities of the technical support to be provided.
- The awarded company will conduct periodic reviews to ensure progress and adapt the technical assistance program providers where needed. Ideas include events, coaching, scouting, matchmaking, and tailored programs. Post-training surveys will help assess the trainees' satisfaction and improve subsequent sessions.

Task 3: Communications, outreach, events

The Regional Platform for Innovation and Investments will support communications and outreach activities to disseminate knowledge on innovative solutions, build the capacity of innovators, raise public awareness of innovations for plastics circularity, and foster collaboration for scaling up and replicating investments.

Regional events will be organized to help connect innovative solutions to appropriate funding sources, connecting to existing innovation incubators, including potentially hosting or collaborating on a regional innovation incubator to attract, foster, incubate, and commercialize innovations. Workshops and seminars will be organized to support knowledge sharing, foster dialogue and discussion, and support technology transfer related to innovations and financing.

A detailed communications strategy for the Regional Platform for Innovation and Investments will be prepared (see Sub-task 3.1). It will include considerations and strategies for the financing marketplace, technical assistance initiatives, communities of practice, and on- and offline networking opportunities such as seminars, workshops, matchmaking sessions connecting innovators and investors, and innovation expos. It will propose online tools/social media, and offline initiatives and leverage connections with other platforms/movements/events/exhibitions to drive third-party amplification.

The anticipated target audience is:

- Innovators, including startups working towards plastics circularity in ASEAN.
- Investors and donors are critical actors in injecting accessible capital.
- Customers of innovations are users of innovations.
- Policymakers play a vital role in enabling new market conditions for plastic innovations and creating incentives to develop alternatives to plastic pollution.
- Universities and local research institutions. These may be the starting point for many early-stage innovations with the potential for commercialization. They are also a source of expertise and new knowledge to inform policymakers and other key actors in ecosystem building about breakthroughs in the innovation process. (This

category of target audience likely intersects with the Knowledge Platform's target audience, so it may be possible to coordinate on reaching out to them)

- Amplifiers: Organizations with a strong presence in plastics circularity, including international organizations, impact-driven organizations, etc.; ambassadors for SEA-MaP; platform users and partners identified as advocates; media; etc.

The SEA-MaP Regional Project has a communications strategy encompassing all project deliverables. Similarly, the Regional Platform for Knowledge and Partnerships (refer to section 7) will have a communication approach and strategy. The selected firm must coordinate with the PMU to ensure alignment.

Sub-task 3.1.: Initial and regular communications

Communications activities will occur during the Platform's pre-launch, launch, and roll-out phases.

Pre-launch:

- An essential brand identity for the platform and its parts will be crafted. This should guide both online and offline documents, including the website design.
- A scouting communication strategy will be developed for the initial stage of the acceleration outreach as part of its broader mobilization strategy. This will be built around the conclusions of the needs and market research carried out prior (Task 1).
- A broader outreach strategy will be developed to promote the platform, including the SEA-MaP financing marketplace. This should begin with a stakeholder mapping exercise, which can be used to generate an engagement plan that includes critical messages targeting each anticipated target audience. Introductory guides should be created to assist stakeholders in applying to the platform. Internal procedures should also be developed to provide platform users with ongoing support and technical assistance, especially when the AI bot cannot meet the users' needs.

Launch and roll-out:

- Communication activities should regularly highlight the Platform's main features, partnerships facilitated by the programs, and achievements. This outreach can also help promote the pairing of innovators and investors, for example, by targeting innovators for an area in which existing investors have signaled an interest.
- Each event's focus areas should highlight key features and achievements of the financing marketplace, the communities of practice, the technical assistance/accelerator program, and other activities.
- An essential marketing strategy should be outlined, including the expected outputs. One key output will be an overall event report, which can be shared with attendees and those seeking information about the financing marketplace. Post-event surveys should be used to evaluate their impact and feed into future events and the annual expos.
- Specific event planning: an essential program will be designed for regional events, which can occur online and offline to support knowledge, foster dialogue and discussion, and facilitate technology transfer to help connect innovative solutions to appropriate funding sources. Under this assignment, a minimum of 2-3 events (not including the annual expo) per year in 2025 and 2026 is expected to be organized to provide more regular engagement to stakeholders and maintain the momentum of started initiatives.
- The program should provide guidance for selecting suitable dates for the events, taking into account expected activities for 2025 and 2026 that were developed further during the planning of 2024. Depending on the activities identified, these events can be a mixture of virtual and hybrid. These events are expected to be smaller than the annual expos and should focus on providing updates to those already involved in the process to maintain engagement. Coordinate with relevant stakeholders to ensure alignment of schedules.

Sub-task 3.2.: Annual technology/innovation expos

Annual technology/innovation expos will be conceived, designed, planned, and executed to showcase plastic innovations at the regional level. These events promote the Platform as a strategic information hub, serving as a

collaborative space for learning, knowledge sharing, and expertise development to support innovation and investment in plastics circularity.

The expos will showcase innovation, disseminate knowledge, raise awareness at the regional level on plastic solutions for circularity, and foster avenues for collaboration. The expos will attract the identified target audience of plastics circularity in the ASEAN region to engage in programs to boost innovations. They will be functional in strengthening collaboration and connections amongst the identified target audience to expand supply and demand for innovations in plastics circularity.

As part of planning appropriate co-hosting events³ and potential partners for the expos should be identified, along with opportunities for collaboration in organizing these expos. Detailed concept documents outlining each expo's theme, objectives, and format should be prepared for approval by the key stakeholders. These should include comprehensive event plans detailing timelines, budgets, and logistics. Location planning must consist of design plans for the physical layout, branding, and signage.

A list of target key stakeholders to attend should be produced. These should include a mixture of those already on the platform and those targeted for future participation, and gender and geographical balance should be considered. Where needed and feasible, technical assistance should be provided to speakers to help develop their material.

The first such expos must take place in late 2024. It should serve as an introductory/launch expo, showcasing the potential of the newly launched financial marketplace and encouraging participation by relevant stakeholders. It should also highlight the potential of actions to be launched in 2025, such as the technical assistance/accelerator program and the communities of practice.

The contracting party is expected to execute all aspects of the expos, including program scheduling, speaker coordination, and attendee registration.

The program should include special sessions tailored to donors and philanthropists to raise additional funding for the platform. Implementing outreach initiatives, preparing materials, and coordinating with the media will be required. Following the expo, documentation of lessons learned and recommendations for future expo planning and execution will be needed. Expo outcomes, including attendee feedback, stakeholder engagement, and objective achievement, should be continuously monitored and evaluated.

More comprehensive expos are expected in 2025 and 2026. Documenting innovative ideas and strategies should ensure these expos effectively showcase innovations and promote the Platform as a strategic information hub.

Sub-task 3.3: Communities of practice

The objective of the communities of practice feature is to encourage learning and exchange between key stakeholders and, in doing so, develop a more conducive environment and more co-investments.

This feature will support groups of users in collaboratively learning, sharing knowledge, and developing expertise in supporting innovation and investment in plastics circularity. The communities of practice will be facilitated for an ongoing, interactive dialogue that encourages exchanging experiences, best practices, problem-solving, and insights.

A feasibility analysis/design document will be created that identifies and maps user groups, key organizations, and thought leaders (including leading policymakers, investors, innovators, etc.) who could be invited to such communities. This should help define the role of the communities within the broader ecosystem by providing an

³ The awarded firm will be expected to propose specific co-hosting opportunities. Examples could include: World Ocean Summit and Expo; Our Ocean Conference; UN World Ocean Day; GreenBiz Circularity; SEA of Solutions, etc.

understanding of the critical role that policymaking can play in creating an enabling environment and, thus, the use of communities of practice involving innovators, investors, customers, and policymakers. This analysis will benefit from the findings of other analytical work mentioned in this document and be functional in implementing different features of the Platform. The design document will also identify potential topics/groups, broad engagement/engagement strategy rules, recruitment and onboarding modalities and processes, roles, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and responsibilities to encourage active participation and contribution.

Community charters can define the objectives for each community, outlining what members should be involved in and what they hope to achieve collectively. They could also include the community's guidelines, expectations, and code of conduct and define the role of facilitators. Technical, usability, and gender considerations will be addressed to facilitate participation.

Suitable communication tools and platforms will be identified. Resource pools will be created where feasible, and each community will have access.

Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms will track community activities, assess the achievement of set goals, and develop KPIs to measure the community's impact on individual members and the organization. These will provide feedback to both SEA-MaP and the communities themselves, which can be used further to improve each community's onboarding and support processes.

An onboarding process will be created and implemented to recruit new members and familiarize them with the community's purpose, resources, and communication channels.

Each community will facilitate regular meetings and events. It should also encourage identified thought leaders to create a list of potential collaborative content. These outputs should be distributed through the project's communication mechanisms and shared at the annual expos and other events.

Task 4: Institutional sustainability strategy

At the outset of the task, and to be carried out concurrently with its execution, a dedicated institutional sustainability strategy and scaling plan will be launched. The study will build on the inputs provided by the stocktaking and gap analysis and housing and institutional and technical arrangements for hosting and managing its operations, as appropriate.

- The strategy should include considerations for the sustainability of the Platform activities beyond the implementation period of the SEA-MaP Regional Project, which is scheduled to close in Q1 2027.
- When developing the sustainability strategy, bidders are expected to identify the necessary stakeholders and outline the modalities to engage them to ensure the initiative's ownership and leadership.
- Bidders must elaborate on how the regional scope of the Platform can be harmonized with the necessity for national-level ownership in the implementation of solutions.
- Suitable options for integrating and/or collaborating with similar initiatives on relevant product streams should be recommended. This strategy and plan will address housing, institutional and technical arrangements for hosting, and management of its operations, and it will propose a roadmap accordingly.
- Preparing the institutional sustainability strategy will require extensive consultations with the identified critical stakeholders which will require to be planned.
- For efficiency and effectiveness purposes, the requirements for a temporary hosting solution of the financing marketplace will be identified for fast deployment, along with the requirements for a long-term sustainable option. The PSC of SEA-MaP will determine where the platform will ultimately be housed.
- Close coordination will be required with the team involved in establishing the SEA-MaP Regional Platform for Knowledge and Partnerships (refer to section 7) to create a potential integrated web solution enabling seamless collaboration and information exchange between the two platforms and determine the integration points where they can interact and share data.

- The institutional strategy will include capacity-strengthening initiatives targeting ASEC to prepare them to take over the management and operation of the Platform.

6. Events and stakeholder consultations

Implementing the Regional Platform for Innovation and Investments will require the organization of events and stakeholder consultations (online/hybrid/in-person), as detailed above. This will include a first innovation expo in 2024, annual expos in 2025 and 2026, and tentatively 2-3 events in 2025 and 2026 (a total of 4-6). Bidders are encouraged to suggest additional events or consultation needs.

Events and consultations will be designed in cooperation with the PMU and the RISU. For these and the consultations, the general advice follows that bidders will need to plan and budget for activities, which include:

- Necessary appointments and arrangements to plan each activity's location, date, time, and duration.
- Liaise with participants and organizers, including the SEA-MAP regional project team and other involved entities, before, during, and after events. Manage invitations as appropriate.
- Ensure a gender-balanced representation among participants and resource persons.
- Prepare necessary materials for knowledge exchange, disseminate the materials to the participants, and manage any copyright clearances essential from the owners of the materials.
- As appropriate, handle logistical and travel arrangements for the participants and resource persons, including per diem, accommodations, venue rental, equipment, translation services, transportation services, and other necessary arrangements.
- Post-event satisfaction surveys will be circulated and collected to record participants' feedback.
- Event reports will include a summary of the programs, satisfaction survey results, and recommendations. The reports should also analyze the gender dynamics of the programs (e.g., participation rates, issues related to gender equality, and suggestions for improving gender integration in future programs).

If there are specific events and consultations bidders believe would benefit the project, they should include proposals for these events in their bid alongside details for the events specified above. These should be led by a summary table describing the tentative list of the events, which must contain at least the following information:

Sl#	Name of the Event	Purpose	Possible Venue	# of Participants	Modalities (online/offline/hybrid)	Remarks/Other Information
1.						
2.						
...						

Table 2: Tentative list of events

7. Other points for consideration

1. The proposals will help ASEAN achieve RAP Action 14: *To establish a regional platform to support innovation and investments in plastic and plastic waste management. While many multi-stakeholder partnerships are operating at the national level, there appears to be a gap in coordination efforts at the regional level. Hence, there is the opportunity to create a regional platform in ASEAN that would bring together academics, the private sector, investors, civil society, and policymakers to support innovation in waste management and*

marine debris-related projects. The establishment of the platform is expected to include, at a minimum: 1) development/strengthening of a regional (online) platform to share innovation (connect with investors); 2) connection to existing innovation incubators at a regional level; and 3) hosting or collaborating on a regional innovation incubator to attract, foster, incubate and commercialize innovations on marine plastic solutions, including at the city-level. As part of this Action, annual technology/innovation expos for plastics solutions at the regional level, inviting ASEAN and global innovators and investors, are proposed to be organized.

2. The proposals should consider the ongoing developments of the International Negotiations Committee (INC) for a Global Plastics Treaty and explore opportunities for synergies and support for the targets and actions under discussion for the Global Plastics Treaty.
3. The Platform will refrain from investing in specific deals or transactions. It will not formulate and execute specific investments/transactions and will not provide technical assistance related to subsequent discussions and negotiations. Instead, it will facilitate investment activities and partnerships between entrepreneurs and potential investors through the marketplace.
4. The marketplace design will be informed by a World Bank study identifying the market for plastics innovations and the gap between existing financing available and innovative plastic solutions looking for financing⁴, as well as by the stocktake and gap analysis study and the design and roadmap report mentioned above.
5. The proposals should include activities that enable the achievement of the following result indicators of SEA-MaP:
 - PDO Indicator 2. The number of innovations for reducing marine plastic pollution that have advanced towards bankable solutions (target number: 6 numbers).
 - Intermediate Results Indicator (IR) 2.1. Innovative plastics solutions are supported through technical assistance or matchmaking with business or financing partners (Target: 20 numbers).
 - IR 2.2. Women-led plastics innovations are financially and technically supported (Target: 25 percent).
 - IR 2.3. Percentage of beneficiaries satisfied with the engagement process in the consultations, training, seminars, and workshops (Target: 70 percent).
 - IR 2.4. Private and public finance mobilized to address the plastics challenge (Target: USD 10,000,000).
 - IR 2.5. Innovation marketplace events to foster collaboration for scaling up and replicating plastics-related investments (Target: 4 numbers).
 - IR 2.6. Individuals are reached through online events, consultations, seminars, and workshops to support plastics-related knowledge sharing and technology transfer (Target: 600 numbers).

In addition, the platform should enable the capture of data indicative of stakeholder engagement, such as the number of website visits and clicks on specific pages, the number of users registered, the number of forms downloaded, the number of applications submitted, etc.

6. This activity will be conducted concurrently with a similar design and implementation effort for SEA-MaP's Regional Platform for Knowledge and Partnerships. The Regional Platform for Knowledge and Partnerships aims to support the implementation of ASEAN RAP Action 8 ('Strengthen ASEAN Regional Knowledge Network on Marine Plastics'), Action 10 ('Coordinate Regional Training Programs on Plastics and Waste Management'), and Action 13 ('Establish a Regional Platform for EPR Knowledge and Implementation Support'). It is envisaged as a comprehensive digital and in-person engagement portal for information, training, knowledge exchange, peer-to-peer learning, and partnerships in the marine debris space. The parallel development of the Regional Platform for Knowledge and Partnerships and the Regional Platform for Innovation and Investments is essential, as both Platforms are interdependent and must communicate and complement each other effectively. Both Platforms will seek collaboration for regional capacity building and best practice exchanges, potentially through activities such as annual technology/innovation expos. Consultant teams developing the regional Platforms must communicate regularly to align objectives and ensure mutual reinforcement,

⁴ Yet to be published and will be shared with the selected firm.

facilitating an effective regional network for policy dialogue and sustainable waste management. Should different teams handle the work, the RISU will facilitate coordination.

7. Hosting and participation in events: The consulting team will be responsible for the following tasks:
- Host online/offline consultation workshops with key development partners and stakeholders at various stages of the planning and implementation phase (setting up the virtual meeting, preparing all relevant documents, note-taking, report writing on the discussions, feedback, inputs, and recording attendee information, etc.).
 - Attend meetings as appropriate, including those of the Project Steering Committee.
 - Prepare relevant materials for consultations with the World Bank, ASEC/PMU, and UNOPS/RISU.
 - Helping facilitate the discussions, producing meeting summaries, and compiling comments and feedback from each consultation/meeting,
 - Consult and seek the inputs of the World Bank/ASEC/PMU and the RISU as necessary.
 - All deliverables must be submitted to UNOPS for review and will be commented on in multiple iterations by all the stakeholders involved in the process. The consultant team should be prepared to make amendments based on the feedback received.
 - The consultant team’s feedback will be welcomed to improve the deliverables further.

8. Deliverables and Timeline

The assignment is expected to start in Q3 2024 and end in Q3 2026. The main deliverables should be produced according to the following timeline.

Bidders are expected to introduce intermediate milestones for each task to monitor progress and make necessary adjustments, such as quarterly reviews of marketplace performance and user engagement. Progress against milestones should be clearly tracked to ensure timely task completion and regular review and adjustment based on performance data and user feedback.

Deliverable	Final Deliverable Due Date
Inception report, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Outline of early deliverables. ● Detailed expected objectives/outcomes. ● Tentative methodology. ● Outline of communication and engagement plan. ● Detailed implementation work plan/roadmap. ● Team structure and composition, with details of the required technical expertise and its availability in-house and otherwise. ● Statement regarding environmental and social measures relevant to the activities. ● Monitoring and reporting mechanisms. ● Risk log covering constraints, assumptions, risks, issues, and mitigation measures. ● Quarterly cash flow. ● Agreed milestones for each quarter. 	3 weeks after contract effectiveness (first draft) 5 weeks after contract effectiveness (final draft)
Task 1: SEA-MaP financing marketplace	
Light touch validation study (incl. Plastic innovation market study).	3 weeks after contract effectiveness (first draft) 5 after contract effectiveness (final draft)

Design documents/Product requirements for the financing marketplace.	4 weeks after contract effectiveness (first draft) 6 weeks after contract effectiveness (final draft)
Create a click-through prototype of the financing marketplace and develop a user guide and content management training materials.	6 weeks after contract effectiveness (first draft) 8 weeks after contract effectiveness (final draft)
Recruit the first group of innovators (minimum of fifteen initial stakeholders on the platform).	7-8 weeks after contract Effectiveness
Following approval of prototype and hosting, carry out formal launch of financing marketplace (at the first annual expo 2024).	12 weeks after contract Effectiveness
Roll out of the activities; recruitment of additional innovators; marketplace operations; platform management; operational support for the online and offline activities; alignment with ASEAN objectives.	From 12 weeks after contract effectiveness and until the end of the project. It includes activities outlined under Task 3
Marketplace handover.	Following up on the sustainability strategy and to start at least 24 weeks before the end of the project
Task 2: Technical assistance program for innovators involved in plastic circularity in the ASEAN region	
Prepare the operations manual with a detailed design, strategy, and program plan for the technical assistance/accelerator program (for presentation at the first annual expo in 2024).	8 weeks after contract effectiveness (first draft) 10 weeks after contract effectiveness (final draft)
Submit a full feasibility study for the AI assistance bot, including defining the objectives and scope, developing a roadmap for building and training, and laying out clear go/no-go decision gates.	8 weeks after contract effectiveness (first draft) 10 weeks after contract effectiveness (final draft)
Presentation of the technical assistance/accelerator program (at the first annual expo in 2024)	12 weeks after contract effectiveness
Launch of the technical assistance/accelerator program (identify innovators, evaluation, selection etc.)	20 weeks after contract effectiveness

Following calls/applications, provide a report detailing at least five partnerships of innovators and investors brought into the platform and technical assistance/accelerator program.	22 weeks after contract effectiveness (first draft) 24 weeks after contract effectiveness (final draft)
Design customized technical assistance plans for the technical assistance/accelerator program participants.	24 weeks after contract effectiveness
Develop an MVP AI assistance bot which will be tested with groups of users.	24 weeks after contract Effectiveness
Produce training materials for how to use the AI assistance bot and its matchmaking facilities.	26 weeks after contract Effectiveness
Integrate the bot into the web platform, with a working UI system.	30 weeks after contract Effectiveness
Roll out of the activities; additional calls/recruitment of additional partnerships; provision of technical assistance to partnerships; alignment with ASEAN objectives.	Until the end of the project. It includes activities outlined under Task 3
Programme handover.	Following up on the sustainability strategy and to start at least 24 weeks before the end of the project
Task 3: Communications, outreach, events	
Brand identity document.	5 weeks after contract effectiveness (first draft) 7 weeks after contract effectiveness (final draft)
Develop a generic event program and specialized annual technology/innovation expo program and logistics plan, identifying key stakeholders for these events.	7 weeks after contract Effectiveness
Develop a scouting communications strategy.	8 weeks after contract Effectiveness
Create feasibility analysis/design document for communities of practice.	8 weeks after contract effectiveness (first draft) 10 weeks after contract effectiveness (final draft)
Developing general outreach strategy for platform and financing marketplace.	8 weeks after contract effectiveness (first draft) 10 weeks after contract effectiveness (final draft)

Organize the 2024 expo and provide a complete event report.	12 weeks after contract effectiveness 13 weeks after contract effectiveness (first draft of the event report) 15 weeks after contract effectiveness (final draft of the event report)
Develop pilot community charters and resource pools for communities of practice (following feasibility study).	18 weeks after contract Effectiveness
First fully launched community of practice.	20 weeks after contract Effectiveness
Launching additional communities of practice.	32 weeks after contract Effectiveness
Organize 2-3 events in 2025 and prepare reports (dates to be indicated in the inception report).	By ~ 50 weeks after contract effectiveness
Organize the 2025 Expo and provide a complete event report.	~52 weeks after contract Effectiveness
Roll out of communications activities.	Until the end of the project.
Organize 2-3 events in 2026 and prepare reports (dates to be indicated in the inception report).	By ~100 weeks after contract Effectiveness
Organize the 2026 expo and provide a complete event report.	~100 weeks after contract Effectiveness
Task 4: Institutional sustainability analysis	
Institutional sustainability strategy outlining handover plans	Commencing at the onset of activities and to be finalized within a maximum timeframe of 24 weeks before the conclusion of the assignment

<p>Quarterly Reports (5 days before the end of each calendar quarter)</p>	<p>Quarterly Reports will highlight the project's progress in the quarter and any significant cumulative results.</p> <p>The selected consultancy firm will report against the work plan and schedule as approved with the inception report and the results framework.</p> <p>The quarterly reports will synthesize the main activities implemented in the quarter consistent with the Project's ESMF, the preliminary findings, and the planned activities for implementation in the next quarter; they will also include the consultant's considerations and reflections. The quarterly reports must include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The current state of the online marketplace platform. 2) Audits on the performance of the AI chatbot. 3) The current state of play of the technical assistance/accelerator program. 4) The current state of play of the communications and outreach activities - including on communities of practice.
<p>Completion report (5 days before the end of the last quarter)</p>	<p>A short description of the results achieved, including problems encountered and recommendations. An annex of the results' framework matrix with final values.</p>

Table 3: Deliverables and indicative timeline

9. Environmental and Social Risk Management

The World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) came into effect in 2018; it requires all World Bank-funded Projects to comply with relevant Environmental and Social Standards (ESS). For the SEA-MaP Regional Project, an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) has been prepared to ensure that the SEA-MaP Regional Project addresses environmental and social risks and impacts - associated with technical assistance supported under the Program - in accordance with the ASEAN legal requirements and the World Bank's ESF.

As the outputs of this assignment will help inform deliverables under the SEA-MaP Regional Project, the outputs should be consistent with the Project's ESMF, which may require coordination with the Environmental and Social Specialists of the Project and the World Bank. For example, where technical assistance is provided through the platform, the potential downstream environmental and social risks of the assistance provided need to be considered and mitigated. The ESMF ensures that Program investments do not create or result in downstream impacts on the environment and society through its technical assistance outputs.

In addition, the selected consultancy firm must comply with the labor-management conditions laid out in the ESMF.

10. Gender Equality

The selected consulting firm should ensure that gender concerns and women's empowerment strategies are mainstreamed throughout the project activities to address gender inequalities and foster women's increased participation in decision-making, including creating economic opportunities for women, inclusivity, and emphasizing gender equality.

The consultant should ensure that gender equality considerations are mainstreamed in all the above-listed activities. To this end, the Platform should ensure the participation of women-led organizations and entities and provide content and technical assistance that is geared to empower women and foster gender equality. Technical assistance should prioritize women-led plastics innovations to address gender gaps and put in place customized assistance/support to enhance the potential of women entrepreneurs. Women entrepreneurs often face financial

constraints, compounded by a lack of collateral, entrepreneurial and technical skills, business advisory services, and discriminatory norms.

The communications and outreach proposal should include considerations for engaging with women innovators and suggest specific methods of engagement that ensure that information is accessible to women interested in the Project or affected by it.

11. Results Framework

The assignment aligns with Component 2 of the project, Establishing Regional Platforms to Promote Innovations for Plastics Circularity, and is aimed at Supporting Public and Private Sector Innovation and Actions for Plastics Circularity.

The assignment's success will be assessed by the timely completion of fit-for-purpose deliverables developed through adequate stakeholder consultations and the management of the interfaces with related aspects of the project.

The assignment, specifically its tasks and deliverables, will contribute to:

PDO indicator 2 - *PDO2 Number of innovations for reducing marine plastic pollution advanced towards bankable solutions (Number)*

The expected outputs will directly contribute to the Intermediate Result - *Supporting Public and Private Sector Innovation and Actions for Plastics Circularity*, specifically to:

- IR2.1 Innovative plastics solutions supported through technical assistance or matchmaking with business or financing partners (Number)
- IR2.2 Women-led plastics innovations financially and technically supported (Percentage)
- IR2.3 Percentage of beneficiaries satisfied with the engagement process in the consultations, training, seminars, and workshops (Percentage)
- IR2.4 Private and public finance mobilized to address the plastics challenge (Amount USD)
- IR2.5 Innovation marketplace events to foster collaboration for scaling up and replicating plastics-related investments (Number)
- IR2.6 Individuals reached through online events, consultations, seminars, and workshops to support plastics-related knowledge sharing and technology transfer (Number)

The assignment's results are monitored through the framework below. Success will be measured by the results indicators mentioned in section 7 of this document. In addition, the bidders will provide input indicators, as appropriate, to meet the project's output expectations and monitor results through quarterly reports. Specific indicators will be developed for each task using both qualitative and quantitative methods to assess progress, such as the number of innovations funded, amount of investment mobilized, and user satisfaction rates, with timelines.

SEA-MaP Outcome	Project Outputs	Sub-Indicators	Target	Data Source and Means of Verification
PDO - To strengthen plastics policies and regulatory frameworks and promote innovative solutions to help reduce plastic pollution in Southeast Asia.				
Indicator - PDO2 - Number of innovations for reducing marine plastic pollution advanced towards bankable solutions (Number)				
Intermediate Result - Supporting Public and Private Sector Innovation and Actions for Plastics Circularity				

Indicator	Activity	Sub indicator	Target	Means of Verification
IR2.1 Innovative plastics solutions supported through technical assistance or matchmaking with business or financing partners (Number)	Concept design and proposal for the TA program	2.1.1 Review comments on the proposed design of the TA program	Proposed design proposal for the TA program is approved for implementation	PSC Meeting Minutes Quarterly Reports
IR2.2 Women-led plastics innovations financially and technically supported (Percentage)	Concept design and proposal for the TA program	2.2.1 Review comments on the proposed design of the TA program, and if it is designed to target and support women innovators	Proposed design proposal for the TA program approved for implementation	PSC Meeting Minutes Quarterly Reports
Indicator - IR2.3 Percentage of beneficiaries satisfied with the engagement process in the consultations, training, seminars, and workshops (Percentage)	Stakeholder consultations held to facilitate deliberations on the platform design	2.3.1 Percentage of feedback received from participants attending the training and consultations 2.3.2 Percentage of participants satisfied with the training and consultations	90% 85%	Event summary with photos Feedback Forms filled out by the participants at the end of the consultation meetings Quarterly Reports
IR2.4 Private and public finance mobilized to address the plastics challenge (Amount(USD))	Proposed Design for financing marketplace and prototype web interface	2.4.1 Review comments on the proposed design and prototype web interface	Proposed design and prototype web interface is approved for implementation	PSC Meeting Minutes Quarterly Reports
IR2.5 Innovation marketplace events to foster collaboration for scaling up and replicating plastics-related investments (Number)	Technology/ Innovation Expo	2.5.1 No. of Technology/ Innovation Expo organized	3 (one every year - 2024/ 25/ 26)	Event summary with photos Quarterly Reports

<p>Indicator - IR2.6 Individuals reached through online events, consultations, seminars, and workshops to support plastics-related knowledge sharing and technology transfer.</p>	<p>Stakeholder consultations held to facilitate deliberations on the platform design</p> <p>Technology/ Innovation Expo</p>	<p>2.6.1 No. of stakeholder consultations held.</p> <p>2.6.2 No. of participants engaged in the Technology/ Innovation Expo</p> <p>2.6.3 No. of participants engaged in the consultation (disaggregated by Region/ AMS, and Gender)</p>	<p>2</p> <p>TBC for the Expo</p> <p>20 - 25 (TBC) for each of the two consultations</p>	<p>Participant Registration and Attendance records</p> <p>Event summary with photos</p> <p>Quarterly Reports</p>
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Table 4: Results Framework

12. Qualifications/Expertise Required

Bidders should demonstrate key expertise relating to the project's different components and the needs of the multi-year management process. This can be demonstrated in any relevant manner, such as by forming a team of multidisciplinary experts through a joint venture/consortium or by providing key management and technical expertise while engaging sub-consultants.

Cumulatively, at least the following competencies and technical expertise are expected to be required to implement the Regional Platform for Innovation and Investments:

Minimum Selection Criteria

- Relevant experience in addressing marine plastic debris and related innovative solutions, policies, and practices in the ASEAN region, as demonstrated by relevant project experience and depth and breadth of staff expertise.
- Strong understanding of the ecosystem dynamics across ASEAN and existing relationships with the key stakeholders working on plastic waste prevention / circular economy (including innovators, universities, and local entrepreneurial support organizations), preferably in at least five countries in the region.
- Access to a pool of service providers who bring a wealth of experience and expertise and specialize in areas critical to developing and scaling innovations across various relevant industries and domains in ASEAN markets.
- Experience in designing and delivering relevant tailored technical assistance programs.
- Capacity to host and facilitate regular meetings in both online and offline settings.
- Demonstrated experience in designing and implementing digital platforms.
- Demonstrated experience with Large Language Models or other forms of adaptive digital processes.
- Ability to manage project communications in-house as well as with external partners.
- Experience in running communications projects in cross-cultural settings.
- Strong event management skills.
- Solid skills and experience in convening multi-stakeholder groups.

Desirable attributes

- Demonstrated technical expertise in designing and delivering regional incubation and acceleration projects focused on plastic waste prevention/circular economy, primarily working on upstream and midstream projects.
- Relevant technical experts with a presence in the ASEAN countries.
- Experience in designing innovative financial instruments.

Indicative Team Qualifications

Below is an indicative list of critical consultant positions. The bidders may use their expertise by proposing alternative estimates of the required expertise to complete the assignment. The implementing entity is anticipated to require multiple full-time staff throughout the project period to manage the program as it is currently designed. The following team composition can be considered a possible reference.

- A single Project Manager (Platform Coordination/Innovation Expert) should be responsible for the overall project and ongoing coordination with the PMU.
They should have a postgraduate degree and/or equivalent technical qualification supplemented by at least 10 years of work on plastic pollution, business, and/or computer engineering, of which five years should be within the ASEAN region. A bachelor degree with additional 2 years experience is considered equivalent.
- A Contract Manager should coordinate the non-technical part of the contract implementation, including coordinating with key counterparts and liaising with UNOPS on invoice submission and payment-related documents. They should have a postgraduate degree or equivalent technical qualification in a relevant field (e.g., business administration, contract law, finance) and at least 10 years of professional experience, of which at least five are within the ASEAN region. A bachelor degree with additional 2 years experience is considered equivalent.

For the project's different needs, it is also recommended that there be a single point of contact under the overall manager for 3 key spheres (other skills and roles may be cross-cutting, depending on the setup of the bidding organization).

For the team dedicated to the development of the financing marketplace and IT-related features, including AI bot:

- One financing marketplace and IT lead (senior staff with at least 10 years of relevant experience in IT Platform development).
 - Post graduation with PMP, PPM, or CSM or equivalent technical project management certification. Bachelor degree with an additional 2 years of experience is considered equivalent to the masters degree
 - Experience as a Project Manager for the financial marketplace platform.
 - Successfully managed complex IT projects and massive IT platforms with facilities for user interaction.
 - Experience managing large, complex, multi-stakeholder programs with strong background in project management methodologies and tools.
 - Demonstrated experience working in cross-cultural settings, especially in ASEAN.
- Mid-level staff (bidders will propose how many, 3-5 years of relevant experience)
 - Experience managing large programs with multiple stakeholders.
 - Extensive experience in software development, particularly in building digital marketplaces and implementing AI technologies.
 - Experience in optimizing database performance and ensuring data security.
 - Expertise in artificial intelligence, machine learning, and natural language processing. Ideally, previous experience in developing AI-driven features such as chatbots and recommendation systems.
 - Experience designing, monitoring, and iterating selection algorithms.
- Junior staff (bidders will propose how many, with at least 3 years of relevant experience):

- Experience conducting user testing and gathering feedback for iterative improvements. Project management and event organization skills.
- Proficiency in database management systems and data modeling.
- Proven track record in designing intuitive and user-friendly interfaces for digital platforms. Familiarity with best practices in user experience (UX) and user interface (UI) design.
- Proficiency in programming languages and frameworks relevant to marketplace development, database optimization and performance, data storage, and retrieval mechanisms.
- Experience with quality assurance.

For the team dedicated to the technical assistance/accelerator program:

- One Capacity Development lead (senior staff with at least 10 years of relevant experience in capacity building)
 - A technical leader in sustainability, focusing on circularity and plastic waste prevention.
 - Postgraduate degree or equivalent technical qualification in a relevant field (e.g., Education, Organizational Development, Public Administration). A bachelor degree with an additional 2 years of experience is considered as acceptable
 - Demonstrated experience working in cross-cultural settings, especially in ASEAN.
 - Experience working within the development and private sector.
 - Experience managing large, complex, multi-stakeholder programs.
 - Experience in program design and continual improvement methodologies will be an added advantage.
- Mid-level staff (bidders will propose how many, 3 - 9 years of relevant experience)
 - Deep experience working on entrepreneurial support and managing large programs with multiple stakeholders.
 - Strong technical knowledge of circularity, especially as it relates to plastic.
 - Deep experience managing complex projects.
 - Strong stakeholder management skills.
- Junior staff (bidders will propose how many, with at least 3 years of relevant experience):
 - Project management and event organization skills.
 - Knowledge of innovation programming and familiarity with community management and application review.
 - Familiarity with circular economy principles or other fields of sustainability
 - Communications, strong writing skills, and experience in preparing newsletters, social media, and managing vendors.

For the team dedicated to the communications area, including organizing annual expos and events.

- One Communications Lead (senior staff with at least 10 years of relevant experience).
 - Postgraduate degree or equivalent technical qualification in a relevant field (e.g., Communications, Event Management, Public Relations, or environment-related subjects). A bachelor degree with an additional 2 years of experience is considered as acceptable
 - Extensive experience in strategic communications, media relations, event management, and public relations.
 - Experience managing large, complex, multi-stakeholder programs.
 - Demonstrated experience in project development in cross-cultural settings; ASEAN experience will be preferred.
 - Proven track record in organizing large-scale events and expos.
- Mid-level staff (bidders will propose how many, 3-5 years of relevant experience)
 - Experience managing large programs with multiple stakeholders.

- Strong background in event planning and coordination, with experience in managing logistics and operations for large events, including venue selection, vendor management, and scheduling.
 - Experience in public relations, media relations, and communications is preferred.
 - Detail-oriented with excellent organizational and multitasking skills.
 - Proficiency in marketing strategies, branding, and promotional campaigns.
 - Experience developing communications strategies, marketing collateral, and event promotional materials.
 - Experience tracking and analyzing marketing metrics to measure the effectiveness of promotional efforts.
 - Experience building relationships with media outlets and securing press coverage for events.
 - Experience in recruiting, training, and managing temporary staff for events.
- Junior staff (bidders will propose how many, with at least 3 years of relevant experience):
 - Experience coordinating event logistics, such as catering, audiovisual equipment, and transportation.
 - Onsite experience to ensure the smooth management of events and address any issues.
 - Experience designing and distributing promotional materials, such as flyers, posters, and digital advertisements.
 - Experience in handling media inquiries and managing press releases and media kits; pitching stories to media outlets and coordinating interviews with event speakers and organizers..

13. Workplace and travel requirements

The project is expected to be conducted mainly as desk work and through online meetings but will require travel for in-person events. If a bidding company sees a need for additional traveling as part of the assignment, this should be indicated in their proposal, including explaining why these travels are necessary for producing the required deliverables and outcomes.

14. Application procedure and submission deadline

All submissions should be made through the UNOPS e-sourcing platform. UNOPS does not accept submissions of proposals through email / other means.

15. Financial offer and payment schedule

Bidders are expected to submit the financial offer based on their assessment of the scope of work and level of effort needed to complete the assignment. The cost should include all management and administrative overheads and any applicable fees, taxes, and insurance that may apply. All rates should be provided in USD.

Along with the satisfactory completion of each milestone mentioned in the table below, an invoice will be presented to UNOPS. The following table summarizes the payment schedule for this assignment:

No.	Milestone*	% Payment and timeline
1	Signing of the contract	5% of the contract amount
2	Submission of the inception report.	10% of the contract amount (5 weeks after contract effectiveness)
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Light touch validation study (incl. Plastic innovation market study). ● Design document for the financial marketplace. 	10% of the contract amount (12 weeks after contract effectiveness)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Marketplace prototype and user guide and content management training material. ● Selection of the first group of innovators. ● Financing marketplace launched. ● Operations manual with detailed design and plan for the technical assistance/accelerator program. ● Feasibility study for the AI assistance bot. ● Presentation of the technical assistance/accelerator program (2024 expo) ● Brand identity document. ● Generic event program and specialized annual technology/innovation expo program and logistics plan. ● Develop a scouting communications strategy. ● Developing a general outreach strategy for the platform and financing marketplace. ● Feasibility analysis/design document for communities of practice. ● Organize the 2024 expo and provide a complete event report. ● Start of the institutional sustainability strategy. ● Quarterly Report. 	
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roll out of the activities (marketplace). ● Development of MVP AI assistance bot and test. ● Launch of the technical assistance/accelerator program ● A report detailing at least five partnerships of innovators and investors brought into the technical assistance/accelerator program. ● Customized technical assistance plans for the technical assistance/accelerator program participants. ● Roll out of the activities (technical assistance/accelerator program) and follow-up applications (until the end of the project). ● Community charters and resource pools for communities of practice. ● First launched community of practice ● Institutional sustainability strategy (roll-out) ● Quarterly Report. 	<p>10% of the contract amount</p> <p>(24 weeks after signing the contract)</p>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roll out of the activities (marketplace). Until the end of the project. ● Produce training materials for the AI assistance bot. ● AI bot integrated into the web platform. 	<p>10% of the contract amount</p> <p>(36 weeks after signing the contract)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roll out of the activities (technical assistance/accelerator program). Until the end of the project. ● Additional communities of practice launched. ● Institutional sustainability strategy (roll-out) ● Quarterly Report 	
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roll out of the activities (marketplace). ● Roll out of the activities (technical assistance/accelerator program). ● Events' organization and reports (as agreed in the Inception Report). ● Institutional sustainability strategy (roll-out) ● Quarterly Report. 	<p>10% of the contract amount (48 weeks after signing the contract)</p>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roll out of the activities (marketplace). ● Roll out of the activities (technical assistance/accelerator program). ● Events' organization and reports (as agreed in the Inception Report). ● 2025 expo organized and report approved. ● Institutional sustainability strategy (roll-out) ● Quarterly Report. 	<p>10% of the contract amount (60 weeks after signing the contract)</p>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roll out of the activities (marketplace). ● Roll out of the activities (technical assistance/accelerator program). ● Events' organization and reports (as agreed in the Inception Report). ● Institutional sustainability strategy (roll-out) ● Quarterly Report. 	<p>10% of the contract amount (72 weeks after signing the contract)</p>
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roll out of the activities (marketplace). ● Marketplace handover (start of the process). ● Roll out of the activities (technical assistance/accelerator program). ● Technical assistance/accelerator program handover (start of the process). ● Events' organization and reports (as agreed in the Inception Report). 	<p>10% of the contract amount (84 weeks after signing the contract)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutional sustainability strategy document (completed) ● Quarterly Report. 	
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roll out of the activities (marketplace). ● Marketplace handover (completion) & documents. ● Roll out of the activities (technical assistance/accelerator program). ● Technical assistance/accelerator program handover (completion) & documents. ● Events' organization and reports (as agreed in the Inception Report). ● 2026 Expo organized and report approved. ● Final project documentation. ● Completion Report. 	15% of the contract amount (104 weeks after signing the contract)

Table 5: Payment schedule

* Any additional supporting documentation or deliverables for each milestone will be decided in the approved Inception Report.

16. Quality management

The bidder shall include a detailed discussion of the standard quality management methodology used by the firm to ensure that services provided to UNOPS will maintain consistently high levels of technical accuracy and be appropriate for the context.

17. Sustainability and gender

Bidders are requested to complete the DRiVE (Delivering Responsibility in Vendor Engagement) Supplier Sustainability Questionnaire. The DRiVE questionnaire is part of UNOPS' commitment to sustainability and risk management in procurement to ensure that UNOPS vendors operate responsibly and by high standards of integrity. This supplier self-assessment questionnaire is designed to give us a better understanding of how your company manages its environmental and social risks and impacts, awareness, and mitigation in these areas. The DRiVE submission is mandatory but will not be scored as part of the evaluation process. However, please note that UNOPS reserves the right to verify the completeness and accuracy of information provided as part of our mandatory due diligence process and in the spirit of fostering an open and honest dialogue and continuous improvement.

The DRiVE questionnaire covers key sustainability topics related to the bidder's operations, including:

- Environmental: energy reduction, promoting energy—and water-efficient technologies, and waste management (solid waste and wastewater).
- Social - such as gender equality and inclusivity, and equal representation/ leadership at senior level in the organization. Women-owned firms are strongly encouraged to apply.

To reduce the impact of excessive travel on the climate, services offered under this contract will limit unnecessary travel by prioritizing teleworking where possible. Where travel cannot be avoided, every effort will be made to minimize the creation of emissions. In addition, all flights will be economy class.

18. Eligibility and selection criteria

18.1 Eligibility and Formal Criteria

The criteria in the table below will be evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis and checked during the Preliminary Examination of the proposals.

Criteria	Documents to establish compliance with the criteria
1. Bidder is eligible as defined in Instructions to Bidders, Article 4. In the case of JV, all JV members should fulfill this requirement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form A: JV Partner Information Form, all documents as required in the Form, if a JV submits the Proposal Form B: Proposal Submission Form
2. Completeness of the Proposal. All documents and technical documentation requested in Instructions to Bidders Article 10 have been provided and are complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All documentation as requested under Instructions to Bidders Article 10, Documents Comprising the Proposals
3. Bidder accepts UNOPS General Conditions of Contract as specified in Section IV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form B: Proposal Submission Form

Table 6: Eligibility and selection criteria

18.2 Qualification Criteria

The criteria in the table below will be evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis and checked during the Qualification Evaluation of the proposals.

Criteria	Documents to establish compliance with the criteria
1. Bidders should be in the business of providing similar services in the past 3 years. In the case of JV, at least one of the JV members should fulfill this requirement. For sub-contracting, the primary bidders must satisfy the requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certification of incorporation of the Bidder Form F: Performance Statement
2. Bidder must provide at least two (2) customer details from which similar services have been successfully provided within the last 3 years. For sub contracting this reference must be from the primary bidder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form F: Performance Statement
3. Financial Capacity/Financial Stability: Bidder should have a minimum annual turnover of five million USD in the past three years. In the case of a JV, the annual turnover is calculated based on the total annual turnover of the JV members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audited Financial Statement/ financial statement verified by chartered accountant/ Tax declaration statement to the local government, or any similar documents accepted to the local authorities

For sub-contracting, the primary bidders must fulfill the requirements.	
<p>4. The liquidity / quick ratio should be a minimum of 1 in the past two years.</p> <p>In the case of a JV, at least one of the JV members should have had one liquidity/quick ratio in the past two years.</p> <p>For sub-contracting, the primary bidders must fulfill the requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audited Financial Statement/ financial statement verified by chartered accountant/ Tax declaration statement to the local government, or any similar documents accepted to the local authorities

Table 7: Qualification criteria

18.3 Technical Criteria

Technical evaluation will be carried out on bids that pass the eligibility, formal, and qualification criteria, with requirements as follows:

- The maximum number of points a bidder may obtain for the technical proposal is 80. To be technically compliant, Bidders must receive a minimum of 56 points
- Minimum pass score: 70% of maximum 80 points = 56 points

Section number/description		Points Obtainable
1	Bidder's qualification, capacity, and expertise	20
2	Key Personnel	25
3	Quality Assurance and Sustainability Requirements	10
4	Understanding of the Scope of Work and Implementation Strategy	25
Total Technical Proposal Points		80

Table 8: Technical criteria

Section 1: Bidder's qualification, capacity, and expertise		Points	Sub-points
1.1	Brief description of the organization, including the year and country of incorporation, and types of activities undertaken, including the relevance of specialized knowledge and experience on similar engagements done in the past.	17	
	Experience in the specific technical specialty (platform design and management/innovation on plastic/managing financial marketplace/regional innovation incubator)		12

	Experience in working in ASEAN region		5
1.2	A general organizational capability will likely affect implementation: management structure and project management controls. (Max 4 pages written text)	3	
	1. Management structure, management controls		3
Total points for section		20	

Table 9: Organizational background and capacity

Section 2: Key personnel proposed		Points	Sub-points
2.1	Qualifications of Key Personnel Proposed	25	
	1. Qualification of the Project Leader		6 (2 points for Education and 4 points for experience)
	2. Qualification of the Contract Manager		5 (2 points for Education and 3 points for experience)
	3. Qualification of the financing marketplace and IT Lead		3 (1 point for Education and 2 points for experience)
	4. Qualification of the Capacity Development lead		3 (1 point for Education and 2 points for experience)
	5. Qualification of the Communications lead		3 (1 point for Education and 2 points for experience)
	6. Qualification of the mid and junior-level team members		(2 points for Education and 3 points for experience)
Total points of the section		25	

Table 10: Key personnel proposed

Section 3: Quality Assurance and Sustainability Requirements		Points	Sub-points
3.1	Methodology of confirming accuracy and quality of submitted deliverables: discussion on quality management risks as well as mitigation plan for each of the services that the bidder proposes to offer	5	

3.2	Bidder's plan to ensure gender is mainstreamed in the implementation of the project is reflected by the following: Gender balance in the composition of the team (2) Bidder's plan to incorporate gender equality measures during the implementation of the project (3)	5	
Total points of the section		10	

Table 11: Quality Assurance and Sustainability Requirements

Section 4: Understanding the Scope of Work and Implementation Strategy		Points	Sub-points
4.1	Understanding of the scope of work for the assignment - SEA-MaP financing marketplace - Technical assistance program for innovators involved in plastic circularity in the ASEAN region - Communications, outreach, events and Institutional sustainability analysis	15	5 5 5
4.2	Implementation plan for deploying the relevant experts for the scope of work	5	
4.3	Planned strategy for liaising with relevant stakeholders for the completion of the work	5	
Total points of the section		25	

Table 12: Understanding the Scope of Work and Implementation Strategy

18.4 Financial Criteria (20 maximum points)

The financial part of those proposals found to be technically compliant will be evaluated as follows.

- Financial proposals will be evaluated following the completion of the technical evaluation. The maximum number of points a bidder may obtain for the Financial Proposal is 20. The maximum points will be allocated to the lowest evaluated bid. All other prices will receive points in reverse proportion according to the following formula:
- Points for the Financial Proposal of a bid being evaluated:

$$\frac{[\text{Maximum number of points for the Financial Proposal}] \times [\text{Lowest price}]}{[\text{Price of the proposal being evaluated}]}$$
- Example:

Points = (A/B) Financial Points
Bidder A's price is the lowest at \$20.00. Bidder A receives 20 points
Bidder B's price is \$40.00. Bidder B receives $(\$20.00/\$40.00) \times 20$ points = 10 points

Table 13: Formula for computing points

- The total score obtained in technical and financial proposals will be the final score, with 80% allocated to the technical proposal and 20% to the financial proposal. The proposal obtaining the highest score will be considered the winning proposal. This proposal will be the most responsive to the needs of UNOPS regarding value for money.
- The selection of the preferred bidder will be based on a cumulative analysis, analyzing all relevant costs, risks, and benefits of each proposal throughout the whole life cycle of the services and in the context of the project as a whole. The lowest-priced proposal will not necessarily be accepted.

19. Confidentiality Statement

All data and information received by the consulting firm from the World Bank to support this assignment are to be treated confidentially and are only to be used in connection with the execution of this ToR. All intellectual property rights arising from executing this ToR are assigned to ASEAN. The contents of written materials obtained and used in this assignment may not be disclosed to any third parties without the expressed advance written authorization.

Annex - Regional Platform for Innovation and Investments: Stocktake, Gap Analysis and Design.

The stocktake and gap analysis.

The study provided information on a high-level platform design and the implementation roadmap. It was conducted between August 2023 and March 2024 and involved understanding the ecosystem and identifying its needs. It focused on the issues and opportunities at the intersection of capital needs, how they can be accelerated, and the technical assistance needed to facilitate ventures and capital. Private sector inputs to the Platform design were collected using the data collected with the stocktake to provide inputs to the design.

Key Stakeholders and critical users of the Platform were Identified as key informants: innovators, investors, and customers. The work was done on recognizing the importance of the broader ecosystem and the understanding of the critical role that policymaking can play in creating an enabling environment.

Stakeholder consultation workshops were held. On 2 November 2023, the first stakeholder consultation allowed the presentation of a high-level structure and design of the Platform and sought feedback on activities to be included. The second consultation workshop, held on 10 January 2024, sought inputs based on the recommendations and possible design proposal in terms of features of the Platform. A series of user interviews were conducted involving four main stakeholder groups: ventures, policymakers, investors, and customers. These semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain insights into the desired functionalities and features. During these interviews, the participants were asked to react to specific design features relevant to their user group.

From the analyses conducted, it emerged that there is an unaddressed need for:

- Targeting innovators working on upstream and midstream innovations, with the current ecosystem being underserved by these innovators and the upstream and midstream areas being under-invested.
- Tailored and curated matchmaking services and opportunities, such as through a marketplace promoting partnerships between innovative solutions and innovators, investors, and customers.
- Technical advice tailored to the level of sophistication of the innovative ideas to help innovators reach their investment goals.
- Creating a central digital solution marketplace that promotes innovative solutions to investors and provides well-organized access to updated information on grant or funding opportunities - materials, programs, and events.
- Opportunities for critical stakeholders to learn together.
- Online and offline networking opportunities.

The Platform design.

The proposed Platform design focuses on creating more collaboration between critical actors within the plastics value chain. The logic underpinning it suggests that creating new market opportunities - primarily through supporting more enabling policy conditions and driving partnerships between customers and innovators - will increase demand for innovative solutions to address marine debris. By introducing this demand side push, the Platform will overcome the shortcomings of previously attempted matchmaking platforms that didn't fully succeed in addressing market dynamics.

The Platform design is built around a five-step logic model. The logic of the Platform suggests that building awareness and capacity among key stakeholders will lead to more collaboration across the plastics value chain. The need for cooperation was a recurring theme throughout the research and is therefore elevated in the logic model as a core and central theme. The other key finding from the research phase was creating a more enabling environment across policy, innovation, and finance domains. This recognition foregrounds the need for the Platform to address more than just accelerating innovations and connecting investors; it also needs to address barriers by supporting the development of policy that facilitates innovation and creates new innovative finance instruments that can de-risk investments. Driving demand for innovations will create 'pull demand,' encouraging innovative solutions to meet the needs of the latest market opportunities. As businesses expand to fill these new market opportunities, they will need capital, which is also likely to facilitate new investments.

Therefore, more demand for innovative solutions will increase the number and size of investible innovative businesses and, in turn, the amount of capital flowing into these businesses.



Figure 1: Logic model for the Regional Platform for Innovation and Investments

The design includes a list of possible Platform’s features, which include:

- Creating a central **digital financing marketplace** that promotes innovative solutions to investors and customers. The financing marketplace is a digital platform that serves as a centralized hub where individuals, businesses, and organizations can discover a curated group of solutions to address marine litter. The marketplace will provide a platform for solution providers with investors, donors, and customers, creating an ecosystem that fosters collaboration and innovation. It will offer a platform for innovators to showcase their offerings, detailing features, benefits, and use cases. The marketplace will focus on innovative solutions for upstream and midstream interventions in the plastics value chain to reduce plastic waste, increase plastics recycling, reduce leakage, build new business models, and provide opportunities to scale up promising initiatives. It will also provide information about regional financing opportunities to innovators and a list of investors interested in deploying capital, thereby creating a dual-sided marketplace with an inherent self-reinforcing feedback loop built in - the more innovators the Platform can attract, the more investors and customers will sign up.
- Building an **AI technical assistance bot** to provide tailored assistance. The AI bot is a powerful way to provide tailored technical support to many innovators. In doing so, it offers a valuable entry point to the financing marketplace and, in turn, a possible graduation pathway to the technical assistance/accelerator program. The AI bot is designed to be a feature widely available to key stakeholders and used to generate attention for the Platform. The feature is intended to reach a large number of users economically. Running a long-term, highly tailored **technical assistance/accelerator program** that supports advanced partnerships between customers, investors, and innovators. The Program is the central pillar of the Platform and targets partnerships between innovators, investors, and customers. The technical assistance/accelerator program is designed to meet ecosystem needs, go beyond supporting early-stage innovations, and address the ‘demand’ side of the pull for innovation. As a high-touch - high-impact feature, the accelerator will focus on working with a smaller number of high-quality partnerships over the long term, accelerating them toward investment. It aims to support multi-sectoral partnerships with technical support to co-create investible solutions. It will start with a design phase that employs market research, solution scouting, and engagement with investors and customers to focus on areas of the plastics value chain that meet the pre-determined criteria. Once the focus areas have been identified, the Program will begin a multi-pronged recruitment process. This will include an outreach communications strategy, active scouting for solutions, and engaging with universities and local research agencies looking for technology that could be commercialized. However, unlike existing incubator and

accelerator programs, recruitment into the Program will be limited to partnerships that require an innovator to apply alongside either an investor who has expressed an interest in investing in the company or a business that has expressed an interest in developing a commercial relationship with the company. Another distinction with other offerings currently in the market is that the Program will offer an ‘always open’ recruitment process (limited, of course, by funding). In other words, the Program will not need to recruit innovators in one go, significantly limiting the pressure on finding enough applicants. Selection into the program will involve an extensive due diligence process, especially on environmental and social due diligence of the innovations, innovators/incubators and investors’ entities. Once selected for the Program, innovators and their partners will be provided the technical support needed to unlock the investment or purchase from the customer.

- Develop **communities of practice** among critical stakeholders. It emerged through data collection that policymakers and investors don't currently have opportunities to learn together. This feature will support groups of stakeholders, including policymakers and investors, to collaboratively learn, share knowledge, and build expertise in supporting innovation and investment in plastics circularity. The communities of practice will be guided by a contracted project implementer who will facilitate an ongoing, interactive dialogue that encourages exchanging experiences, best practices, and insights. This social structure promotes the continuous development of skills and knowledge within the community, often transcending organizational or geographical boundaries. It will also have the added effect of encouraging investors and policymakers to engage more with the other elements of the Platform.
- Hosting an **annual innovation expo**. The SEA-MaP Regional Platform for Innovation and Investments will host an innovation expo event each year. The innovation expo will showcase innovation, disseminate knowledge, raise awareness at the regional level on plastic solutions for circularity, and foster avenues for collaboration. After the Platform has gained more traction, the Expo will also be used to celebrate the Platform's achievements. It will be designed to attract media attention with key expert talks, innovation showcases, investment announcements, and celebrations of partnerships developed with key customers. The innovation expo will target stakeholders across the plastics value chain (specific partners are outlined below), including innovators, investors, customers, policymakers, and donors.

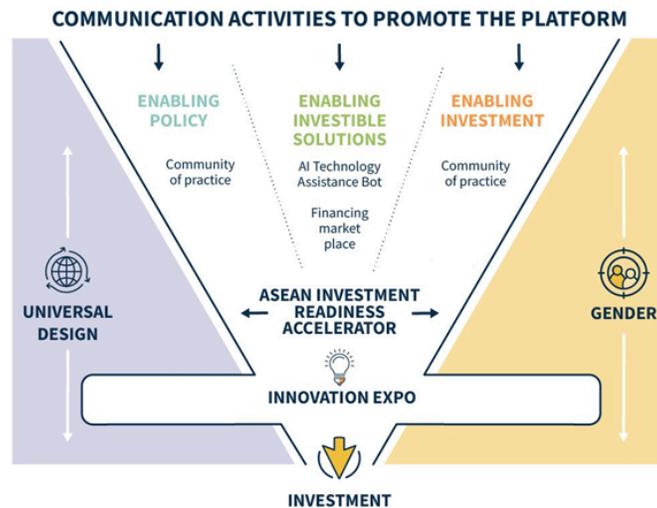


Figure 2: Key features of the Platform