



**Joint Media Statement of
the Special ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Marine Debris
Bangkok, Thailand, 5 March 2019**

1. Ministers and representatives responsible for natural resources, environment and marine affairs from the ASEAN Member States, met in Bangkok, Thailand, on 5 March 2019 to attend the Special ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Marine Debris (SAMM-MD). The Meeting was chaired by H.E. General Surasak Karnjanarat, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, Thailand.
2. The Meeting was an initiative of Thailand, as the Chair of ASEAN in 2019, to provide ASEAN a platform to explore and pursue concrete actions on combating marine debris and strengthen collaboration between ASEAN and supportive partners to address marine debris issues in the region effectively.
3. The Ministers exchanged views on the status and initiatives of ASEAN Member States on marine debris pollution at the national, regional, and global levels, noting that most of it originates from land-based sources. They also underscored their great concerns on the high levels of marine plastic debris in the region, and its potential negative impacts on marine biodiversity, environment, health, society, and economy.
4. The Ministers highlighted the common aspiration of ASEAN Member States to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.
5. The Ministers reviewed regional cooperation and global initiatives in addressing marine debris issues and noted the tremendous efforts made by ASEAN Member States and the international community in preventing and reducing marine debris.
6. The Ministers recognised ASEAN Member States have taken efforts to develop policies to combat marine debris, and emphasised the need to enhance these efforts, including at the regional level through ASEAN-led mechanisms, including at East Asia Summit (EAS).
7. The Ministers acknowledged the transboundary nature of marine debris issues and the urgent need to work harmoniously to promote for regional collaboration among ASEAN Member States in addressing the issues.
8. In this connection, the Ministers extended their full support to advance partnerships for sustainability as well as to promote synergy within the framework of ASEAN partnership, in particular to combat marine debris in the ASEAN region.

9. The Ministers discussed the way forward and future directions as well as recommended actions for ASEAN to prevent and reduce marine debris. The Ministers agreed to forward the Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris in ASEAN Region for consideration and adoption by the ASEAN Leaders at the 34th ASEAN Summit in Bangkok, Thailand.
10. The Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris in the ASEAN Region reaffirms ASEAN's commitment to conserve the marine environment and strengthen regional cooperation in addressing marine debris issues.
11. The Ministers also welcomed the ASEAN Framework of Action on Marine Debris which comprises four (4) priority areas, namely, (i) Policy Support and Planning; (ii) Research, Innovation, and Capacity Building; (iii) Public Awareness, Education, and Outreach; and (iv) Private Sector Engagement.
12. The Ministers encouraged ASEAN Member States to jointly and vigorously implement the ASEAN Framework of Action on Marine Debris and looked forward to the development of relevant national and regional action plans to further prevent and reduce marine debris in the ASEAN region.
