



Photo: Unsplash/Dustan Woodhouse

CLEAN CITIES, BLUE OCEAN

USAID's Global Flagship Program to Combat Ocean Plastic Pollution

Clean Cities, Blue Ocean is the U.S. Agency for International Development's global flagship program to combat ocean plastic pollution under the Save our Seas Initiative. The program works at the global level and in specific, rapidly urbanizing focal countries to target ocean plastics directly at their source. By strengthening waste management systems and building circular economies, city by city, the program builds sustainable solutions that reduce ocean plastics while empowering vulnerable populations and mitigating pollution that affects human health and our marine ecosystems.

More than 11 million metric tons of plastic leak into the ocean each year, the majority from land-based sources—primarily communities and cities that aren't able to adequately collect and manage local waste. To address this critical issue, the program works in collaboration with global, regional, and local stakeholders to test, scale, and share inclusive and sustainable solutions to promote the 3Rs (reduce, reuse, recycle), strengthen solid waste management systems, and build or advance local circular economies. The program's work supports its partner countries to implement national plans and strategies and aligns with U.S. Government priorities and plans, particularly those outlined in Save our Seas 2.0 Act, such as increased engagement and cooperation with foreign governments, local stakeholders, and the private sector for the development of sustainable solutions.

At a Glance

\$67 million global program to tackle ocean plastic pollution at the source

Working in over **25 cities** across **10 countries** in **Asia, the Pacific Islands, Latin America and the Caribbean**

Advancing local circular economies for cleaner cities; healthier oceans; and more effective, equitable, and just waste management systems

Geographic Focus Areas

Clean Cities, Blue Ocean is global in scope, with a focus on key countries in Asia, the Pacific Islands, Latin America and the Caribbean (**Indonesia**, the **Maldives**, the **Philippines**, **Sri Lanka**, **Vietnam**, the **Dominican Republic**, **Peru**, **Fiji**, **Papua New Guinea**, and the **Federated States of Micronesia**).

DURATION: August 2019 – August 2025 **LOCATION:** Global **BUDGET:** \$67 million
IMPLEMENTER: Tetra Tech (in collaboration with ICMA and the Manoff Group)

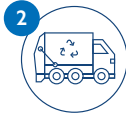
Our Approach

Clean Cities, Blue Ocean provides local, national, and international technical expertise, paired with a global grants program, to test, scale, and share locally-led, innovative, and proven solutions with governments, communities, and businesses. Where possible, the program learns from and expands upon the success of proven initiatives by local governments, non-governmental organizations, and the USAID Municipal Waste Recycling Program (2016-2021).

The program's work supports **USAID's Five Building Blocks for Reduced Ocean Plastic Pollution:**



Data-driven policies for circularity



Effective solid waste services and investment



Green jobs and local innovations



Sustained behavior change to reduce single-use plastics



An inclusive, just, and equitable system

Impacts and Results

As of March 2024, the program has:



Safely managed more than 7.4 million metric tons of waste and recyclables. Of this, **more than 1.2 million metric tons of plastic**—the equivalent of **over 127 billion plastic bottles**—were prevented from leaking into the environment.



Recovered and diverted approximately 30,000 metric tons of plastic and other waste from landfills, while supporting local livelihoods and building circular economies.



Trained over 17,000 individuals from local government, the informal waste sector, and local organizations to build local capacity for solid waste management planning and programs.



Impacted over 12 million individuals who have experienced better air and water quality as a result of landfill remediation activities or have improved access to waste services as a result of new local businesses, organizations, and government partnerships.



Awarded over \$11 million in grants and in-kind support to locally led organizations and local partner governments to implement effective, locally-led solutions.



Mobilized nearly \$12.7 million in public and private investment to advance local solid waste management systems through **more than 230 partnerships** around the world.

Management and Partners

Clean Cities, Blue Ocean is managed out of the USAID/Washington Bureau for Resilience, Environment, and Food Security's Center for Energy, Infrastructure, and Cities and is implemented by Tetra Tech, with a consortium of expert partner organizations: the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and the Manoff Group. Other partners include national and local government, members of the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and local women's and youth organizations.

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