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# CLEAN CITIES, BLUE OCEAN

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC



PHOTO: ION ANGIN/CLEAN CITIES BLUE OCEAN

The Dominican Republic is one of the fastest growing economies in Latin America, but solid waste management systems must be strengthened across the country to enable continued growth and address mounting environmental, economic, and human impacts that have resulted from the island's growing waste volumes and insufficient waste infrastructure. The tide, however, has begun to change. In 2020, the country's first national solid waste management law was passed, marking a critical shift to a more robust waste management system that can reduce ocean plastic leakage, reduce related climate change-fueling emissions, and preserve the country's environmental resources. And, in early 2021, a Presidential Decree ordered the closure of several of the heaviest polluting open dumpsites in the country. USAID's Clean Cities, Blue Ocean program is supporting the Dominican Republic in this transition, working at the national and local levels, in Samaná Province.



Solid waste from the Samaná Peninsula enters the Samaná Bay and Atlantic Ocean from multiple point sources within and outside the peninsula. Plastic from rice production along the Yuna River flows into Samaná Bay; household waste is often deposited directly into streams and rivers; heavy rains carry trash from the hilltops to low-lying areas; and trash left by beachgoers is captured by high tides. Samaná Bay hosts more than 1,500 humpback whales between December and March and the Province's burgeoning tourism sector is a significant economic driver.

*Details on program activities, implementing partners, and grantees can be found on the program website, listed below.*

### COUNTRY STATS

**240** informal and open dumpsites

**25%** of households without regular waste collection services

Approximately **11,000** metric tons of waste generated daily

### In Samaná Province, USAID is:

- Providing technical guidance to remediate and take steps toward closure of two open dumps in **Las Terrenas** and **Santa Bárbara de Samaná** and design, develop, and open a new regional sanitary landfill. This model is being applied in additional dumpsites across the country to reduce waste's environmental impact.
- Advancing social and behavior change for more sustainable waste practices among households, communities, and businesses. Research completed with grantee, the Center for the Conservation and Eco-Development of Samaná Bay and its Surroundings Consortium, to uncover community waste practices is being used to strengthen local waste programs and services.
- Providing technical guidance to landfill operators on safety protocols and equipment to improve the livelihood and safety of those working in the waste sector. USAID has also completed research on women's roles throughout the waste value chain to advance women's economic empowerment and gender equality.
- Piloting new programs to aggregate and return recyclable materials to the local circular economy, in partnership with local hotels, businesses, and emerging recycling businesses.

## OUR LOCAL SYSTEMS APPROACH

USAID's engagement in the Dominican Republic comes at a pivotal time, supporting action to avert irreversible damage to our oceans, reduce plastic and waste-linked contributions to the climate crisis, and advance other priority development objectives. Where possible, the program is learning from and expanding on the success of proven initiatives by local government and non-governmental organizations.

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



1. **Data-driven policies for circularity**



2. **Effective solid waste services and investment**



3. **Green jobs and local innovations**



4. **Sustained behavior change to reduce single-use plastics**



5. **An inclusive, just, and equitable system**

## IMPACTS AND RESULTS

In the Dominican Republic, program impacts (to date) include:



Prevented and secured over **380,000 metric tons** of waste (including over **50,000 metric tons** of plastic) from entering into drainage canals, rivers, streams—and ultimately the ocean—through its partnership with the Directorate General for Strategic and Special Projects of the Presidency (PROPEEP).



Mobilized over **\$3.95 million** in public investment for improved local solid waste management in Samaná Province, in collaboration with PROPEEP.



Improved solid waste management services and waste-related air and water pollution for over **85,000 people** in Samaná Province through the remediation of two open dumps.

## ABOUT CLEAN CITIES, BLUE OCEAN

Clean Cities, Blue Ocean is USAID's flagship program to combat ocean plastic pollution. The five-year (2019-2024), \$53 million 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 and advancing or building circular economies, city by city, USAID builds sustainable solutions that reduce ocean plastics while empowering vulnerable populations and mitigating pollution that affects human health and our climate. The program is implemented by Tetra Tech, in partnership with a consortium of organizations that include the International City/County Management Association 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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