

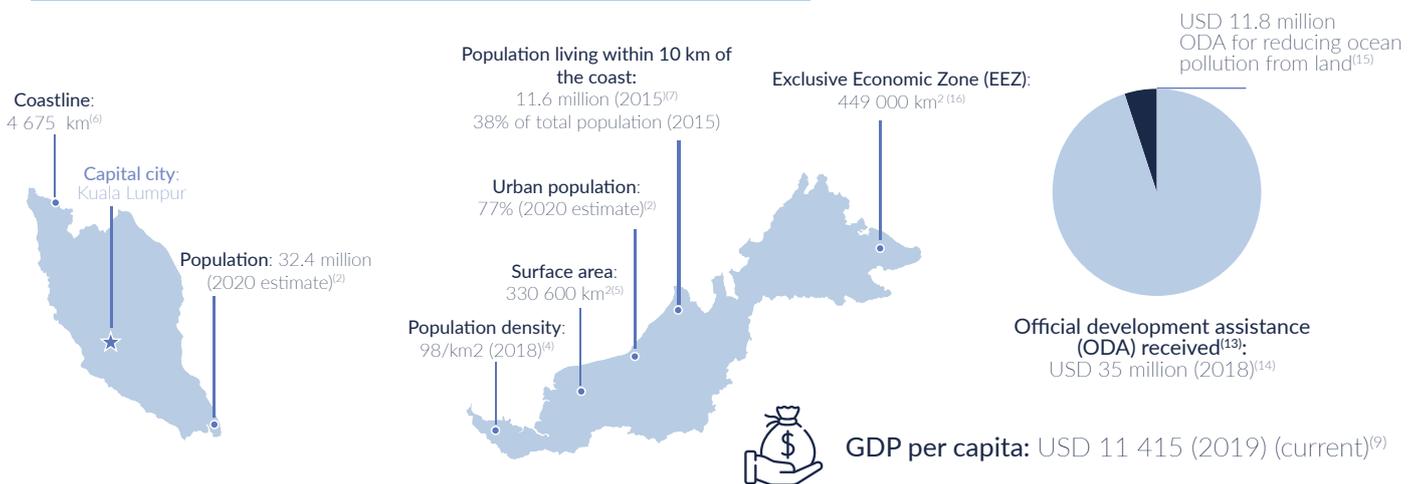
MALAYSIA

Malaysia aims to phase out the use of single-use plastic products by 2030⁽¹⁾.

Millions of tonnes of plastics enter the ocean every year, with tremendous environmental, economic and social costs that are difficult to quantify. However, the marine plastics pollution problem cannot be solved just by cleaning up the ocean. Most marine plastics are not discarded directly into the sea but derive from land-based sources. They end up in the sea due to a multitude of reasons, such as the inadequate filtering of wastewater, improper or illegal disposal, or unexpected natural disasters. Land-based initiatives are therefore essential to addressing marine plastics pollution.

The OECD stands ready to help develop policy advice and financing strategies to address marine plastics pollution in Southeast Asia, a region where this problem is particularly acute.

Figure 1. Malaysia: Key demographic, geographic, and economic indicators



In Malaysia, several government ministries and agencies are involved in addressing marine plastics pollution:

- **At the national level,** the Ministry of Housing and Local Government oversees solid waste management (SWM) services and public cleaning.⁽¹⁰⁾ The National Solid Waste Management Department, under

the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, co-ordinates between federal, state and local authorities and formulates policies, action plans and laws relating to SWM; establishes standards, grants licenses and approves new treatment facilities. The Solid Waste and Public Cleansing Management Corporation,⁽¹²⁾ also under the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, administers and enforces

1. Prime Minister's Office of Malaysia (2019), Malaysia's Roadmap Towards Zero Single-Use Plastics 2018-2030, <https://www.pmo.gov.my/ms/2019/07/pelan-hala-tujuan-malaysia-ke-arrah-sifar-penggunaan-plastik-sekali-guna-2018-2030/>

2. United Nations Population Division (2019), *World Population Prospects 2019*.

3. United Nations Population Division (2018), *World Urbanization Prospects: 2018 Revision*.

4. United Nations Statistics Division (2019), *Demographic Yearbook 2018*.

5. Ibid.

6. CIA (2020), *The World Factbook*.

7. OECD (2020), OECD Statistics (OECD calculations based on Florczyk et al, 2019), <http://dx.doi.org/10.2760/062975>

8. Ibid.

9. World Bank (2020), *World Development Indicators Database*.

10. Ministry of Housing and Local Government Malaysia (2021), <https://www.kpkt.gov.my/>

11. National Solid Waste Management Department (2021), <https://jpspn.kpkt.gov.my/>

12. Solid Waste and Public Cleansing Management Corporation (2021), <https://www.swcorp.gov.my/>

13. Net ODA for Malaysia was negative because loan repayments were greater than new, incoming ODA; this has been the case in Malaysia since 2015.

14. OECD (2020), "Detailed aid statistics: Official and private flows", OECD International Development Statistics (database), <https://doi.org/10.1787/data-00072-en>.

15. Sustainable Ocean for All Initiative based on OECD/DAC Creditor Reporting System database.

16. Source: Flanders Marine Institute, 2019

laws of solid waste management and public cleaning to develop systematic practices of recycling and segregation at source.

The Ministry of Environment and Water is responsible for reducing pollution and plastic waste and implementing the Roadmap Towards Zero Single-Use Plastics, as well as drafting a Circular Economy Roadmap.⁽¹⁷⁾ SIRIM Berhad, a state-owned enterprise under the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, develops ecolabels and technical standards for biodegradable and compostable plastic packaging materials.⁽¹⁸⁾

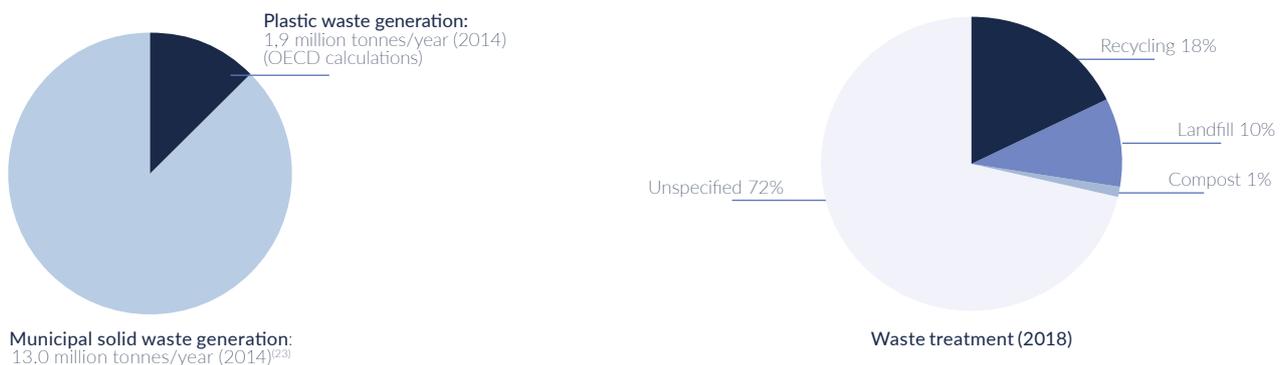
- **At the subnational level**, local authorities provide solid waste management (SWM) services in areas within their jurisdiction, including waste collection and transfer to disposal sites, and the operation of some recycling centres.

Government Policies

Malaysia has a Roadmap Towards Zero Single-Use Plastics 2018-2030 and a **National Plastics Recycling Policy** and **Circular Economy Roadmap**.⁽¹⁹⁾⁽²⁰⁾ These plans involve the Malaysia Plastic Pact, a group of public and private stakeholders in the plastics value chain.

Legislation enacting plastic trade bans is not yet in place, although there was a ban on plastic waste in 2018 through the cessation of permit issuances. There are plans for a complete ban on all plastic imports by 2021,⁽²¹⁾ with only clean material from US, EU and Japan to be allowed in the meantime. In recent years, Malaysia has sent back improperly labelled, unrecyclable or unclean waste to exporter countries. Financial levies exist for the import of clean plastics (MYR 15/metric tonne, USD 3.65/metric tonne) and a deposit to cover possible violations of import regulations and repatriation costs.⁽²²⁾

Figure 2. Malaysia: Waste and plastic waste statistics at the national level



Waste collection and disposal

Municipal solid waste generation is estimated at 13 million tonnes per year,⁽²⁴⁾ with plastic making up 20%.⁽²⁵⁾ Malaysia has a relatively high rate of waste

collection coverage, estimated at approximately 95% of waste.⁽²⁶⁾ Tax incentives are in place for waste management companies.⁽²⁷⁾

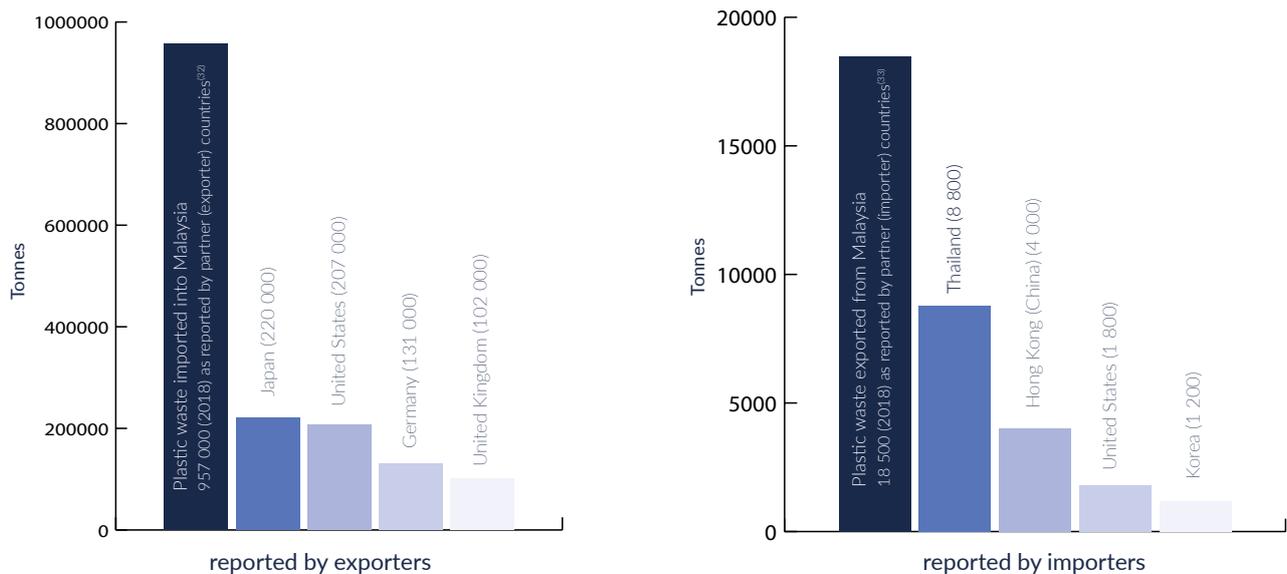
17. Ministry of Environment and Water (2021), <https://www.kasa.gov.my/>
 18. Ministry of International Trade and Industry (2021), <https://www.sirim.my/>
 19. Ministry of Energy, Science, Technology, Environment and Climate Change (MESTECC) Malaysia (2018), https://www.moe.gov.my/images/KPM/UKK/2019/06_Jun/Malaysia-Roadmap-Towards-Zero-Single-Use-Plastics-2018-2030.pdf
 20. WWF Malaysia (2020), *Study on EPR Scheme Assessment for Packaging Waste in Malaysia*, https://wwfmy.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/study_on_epr_scheme_for_packaging_waste_in_malaysia_wwfmy2020.pdf.
 21. Kaos, J. (2018), *Malaysia issues permanent ban on import of plastic waste*, <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2018/10/26/malaysia-issues-permanent-ban-on-import-of-plastic-waste/>.
 22. Ministry of Environment and Forestry (2019), *Ninth Regional 3R Forum in Asia and the Pacific*.
 23. World Bank (2018), *What a Waste Global Database*.
 24. Ibid.
 25. Chu, M. (2019), *Generating more waste than ever*, <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2019/07/30/generating-more-waste-than-ever>.
 26. World Bank (2018), *What a Waste Global Database*.
 27. Malaysian Investment Development Authority (2021), *Sustainable Waste Management in Malaysia: Opportunities and Challenges*, <https://www.mida.gov.my/sustainable-waste-management-in-malaysia-opportunities-and-challenges/>

While waste separation at source is mandatory in through the Separation at Source Initiative since 2015, there still appears to be limited traction amongst the public,⁽²⁸⁾ with one estimate suggesting that less than 50% of plastic waste had been

recycled.⁽²⁹⁾ The plastic waste recycling rate is estimated at 20%,⁽³⁰⁾ with a higher rate of recycling for high-value plastics (such as HDPE, PET, PP) and no systematic recycling of low-value plastics.⁽³¹⁾

Figure 3. Malaysia: Key plastics waste trade indicators

Major exporters and importers of plastic waste



Measures to address marine plastic waste

Prevention efforts, including recycling, waste reduction and circular economy efforts are underway. For example, the “No Straw by Default” initiative started in 2019 for fixed premises,⁽³⁴⁾ though only 64% of Malaysians report being aware of the effort.⁽³⁵⁾ This initiative will be extended to non-fixed premises starting in 2022. Malaysia began using compostable garbage bags for garden waste collection in 2019,⁽³⁶⁾ and will introduce bio straws in packet drinks starting in 2022.⁽³⁷⁾ The expansion beyond straws and bags to food packaging, plastic

film, cutlery, food containers, cotton buds, polybags, plant pots and slow-release fertilisers is expected to begin between 2022 and 2025; and to single-use medical devices (e.g., catheters), diapers, feminine hygiene products and other single-use plastics by 2030.⁽³⁸⁾

Malaysia has started to enact a **pollution charge** of at least MYR 0.20/bag imposed at the state level for fixed premises, and states are to decide when to begin implementation (between 2019 and 2021). The charge

28. Razali, F. et al. (2020), “Waste separation at source behaviour among Malaysian households: The Theory of Planned Behaviour with moral norm”, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, Vol. 271, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2020.122025>.

29. Jain, A. (2017), *Waste Management in ASEAN Countries: Summary Report*, <https://environment.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Summary-Report-Waste-Management-in-ASEAN-Countries-UNEP.pdf>.

30. WWF Malaysia (2020), *Study on EPR Scheme Assessment for Packaging Waste in Malaysia*, https://wwfmy.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/study_on_epr_scheme_for_packaging_waste_in_malaysia_wwfmy2020.pdf.

31. Ibid.

32. UN Comtrade (2020), *UN Comtrade Database International Trade Statistics*.

33. UN Comtrade (2020), *UN Comtrade Database International Trade Statistics*.

34. MESTECC (2019), *Roadmap Towards Zero Single-Use Plastics 2018-2030*, <https://www.mestecc.gov.my/web/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Malaysia-Roadmap-Towards-Zero-Single-Use-Plastics-2018-20302.pdf>.

35. Ipsos (2019), *The Last Straw: Discouraging Single-Use Plastic*, <https://www.ipsos.com/en-my/last-straw-discouraging-single-use-plastic>.

36. MESTECC (2019), *Roadmap Towards Zero Single-Use Plastics 2018-2030*, <https://www.mestecc.gov.my/web/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Malaysia-Roadmap-Towards-Zero-Single-Use-Plastics-2018-20302.pdf>.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.



will be extended to non-fixed premises by 2025.⁽³⁹⁾ A pollution levy on plastic bag manufacturers will begin in 2022.⁽⁴⁰⁾

Education and awareness-raising efforts are also underway, though there is a lack of federal budget for such programmes.⁽⁴¹⁾ A National Cleanliness Policy (2019) aims to drive public awareness of proper waste disposal/management. It includes waste-to-money initiatives (to develop a circular economy), encouragement of 3Rs, encouragement of separation

at source and reduction in plastic packaging.⁽⁴²⁾ 3R campaigns exist and thousands of awareness campaigns have already rolled out. However, their effects on public consciousness are small so far, possibly because of lack of enforcement.^{(43);(44);(45)} A “No Plastic Bag Day” campaign launched in 2011 and encouraged customers to bring their own bags or to buy alternative bags. Half of consumers were found to pay the MYR 0.20 (USD 0.06) fee.⁽⁴⁶⁾

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. Jain, A. (2017), *Waste Management in ASEAN Countries: Summary Report*, <https://environment.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Summary-Report-Waste-Management-in-ASEAN-Countries-UNEP.pdf>

42. WWF Malaysia (2020), *Study on EPR Scheme Assessment for Packaging Waste in Malaysia*, https://wwfmy.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/study_on_epr_scheme_for_packaging_waste_in_malaysia_wwfmy2020.pdf

43. KeTTHA (2017), *Green Technology Master Plan Malaysia 2017-2030*, <https://www.pmo.gov.my/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Green-Technology-Master-Plan-Malaysia-2017-2030.pdf>

44. Moh, Y. and L. Abd Manaf (2014), “Overview of household solid waste recycling policy status and challenges in Malaysia”, *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*, Vol. 82, pp. 50-61, <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2013.11.004>.

45. cyclos (2019), *Legal Framework Study of Extended Producer Responsibility*, https://d2ouvy59p0dg6k.cloudfront.net/downloads/framework_study_epr_cyclos___final.pdf.

46. Asmuni, S. et al. (2015), “Public Participation and Effectiveness of the No Plastic Bag Program in Malaysia”, *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Vol. 168, pp. 328-340, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.10.238>.

47. UNDP (2021), *Green Technology Application Low Carbon Technologies*, <https://open.undp.org/projects/00085914>