



Conference Circular Economy against Marine Litter 2019

Berlin, 27.11.2019

On the 21st and 22nd of November 2019, around 150 speakers and participants met in Berlin at the 3rd International RETech Conference on "**Circular Economy against Marine Litter**". The conference was organised jointly by the [German RETech Partnership](#) and the [Federal Environment Ministry](#) under the patronage of Federal Environment Minister Svenja Schulze. It brought together politicians, administrators, industry and representatives of affected countries. Speakers from eight countries presented their experiences during the conference, especially of countries with the largest amounts of plastic loads in the rivers, seas and oceans. They reported about local projects and initiatives in which various measures are being taken to establish a conscious approach to waste. The conference strengthened the international exchange of experience and provided impetus for new projects. In addition, it brought together the current state of knowledge in the development of environmentally sound disposal and recycling structures.

Dr. Armin Vogel, CEO of RETech: "The reduction of marine litter can only succeed, if all players work together to focus on the framework conditions for a functioning city cleaning system and circular economy in the countries concerned. This requires not only the development of the technical infrastructure and the training of specialists, but also the establishment of a legal framework, the securing of financing, also by involving the producers, and last but not least, environmental education. Actors in the environmental service branch from Germany can also make an important contribution to solving these challenges with their knowledge, experience and proven techniques and processes.

The projects, which in the long term aim to reduce waste inputs into the world's most polluted rivers, are aimed at changing consumer habits, product and material design, expanding environmentally friendly supply chains and establishing sustainable waste management, creating a market for recycled secondary raw materials.

At the conference, the Federal Environment Ministry also presented its commitment to the "Marine Debris Framework - Regional hubs around the globe" (Marine:DeFRAG) and announced the launch of a new funding programme to develop waste management and recycling structures in Asia and Africa. It focuses on countries and river regions from which the largest quantities of waste are discharged into the oceans. These are located in Asia and Africa. In addition, projects are to be carried out in coastal regions and island states where the main input of waste takes place directly from land. At the beginning of 2020, the Federal Environment Ministry will launch a call for the funding programme to submit project proposals.

The conference was funded within the framework of the Environmental Technologies Export Initiative and organised in cooperation with the [WWF](#) and the [GIZ Development Cooperation Scout Programme](#).