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## Promoting laws to protect our oceans by Fundacion OneSea

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Costa Rica discards 550 tons of plastic every day and as much as 80 percent enters our coastal areas, impacting marine ecosystems and local livelihoods. Building on existing laws, this project is supporting Costa Rica in putting in place a container deposit scheme for plastics, glass and metal; introducing tax incentives to reduce loss of fishing nets and strengthening the regulation of cigarette butts disposal.

The project started in March 2021 and planned to conclude its activities by end of February 2023. The project achieved the following to date:

1. Finalized the draft of the following bills:

- Law combatting pollution from cigarette butts, to declare cigarette butts as a waste that needs special handling, and to include an environmental message on cigarette packs and establish communication strategies on the safe disposal of cigarette butts
- Law on the proper management of ghost fishing gear aiming to create a national registry for the collection and exchange of fishing gear data, outlining the obligation of fishermen to report on lost fishing gear, and pushing for the establishment of gear recovery centres in ports and fishermen's associations
- Law to combat microplastic contamination from cosmetic, personal care, and cleaning products. The proposed law prohibits the importation, production, commercialization, distribution, export, and delivery of cosmetic, personal care, and cleaning products containing microplastics
- Law applying Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) system on the disposal of plastic, aluminium, tetra pack, and glass containers. This proposed law imposes the obligation to follow the principles of eco-design in the production of packaging



2. Started a national campaign to promote the declaration on Peace with the Ocean. This declaration was promoted globally by the Costa Rican delegation at the 2022 UN General Assembly in September.
3. Conducted meetings with Costa Rican parliamentarians to promote the four bills and garner parliament support to these bills
4. Collaborated with municipalities in Costa Rica to ban smoking in public beaches to reduce cigarette butts from entering the sea

OneSea's innovation is already generating impacts to reduce ocean pollution — the ban on smoking has already been approved in three coastal municipalities in the country, representing approximately 27 of the country's beaches, which reduces the likelihood of cigarette butts from polluting the seas. It is expected that this project will have an impact not only on the approval of the four proposed bills and the reduction of pollution, but also promote new processes and, through the Declaration of Peace for the



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Oceans, will promote commitments in different areas and by different actors. Currently, OneSea serves as a think tank for environmental policies in Costa Rica, and is aspiring to replicate best practices at the regional and global level.

This project guarantees its sustainability since it has a committed team that will follow up until the proposed bills have been approved. OneSea has become a connector between various institutions and is working to promote changes with key partners. At the same time, new proposals are being developed to replicate this process, specifically the participatory methodology, both at the national level, as well as scaling it up in other countries such as Sao Tome and other Latin American countries. OneSea is also working with the Costa Rican Ministry of Foreign Affairs in promoting the Declaration of Peace for the Oceans at a global level to realize the replication of this innovation in other countries.