

Baikal Plastic Free Alliance

Section 1: General Information	
Summary	Baikal Plastic Free Alliance, founded in May 2022, is a platform that unites the private sector, NGOs, national parks, institutes and universities under a mission to reduce plastic pollution of the Lake Baikal waters and shorelines. The Alliance was formed as a response to signals from the scientific community that microplastics, among other pollutants, are readily found in the surface waters of Lake Baikal, the largest freshwater lake in the world, holding 20% of the world's freshwater reserve.
Proponent Name(s)	Baikal Plastic Free Alliance, En+ Group
Proponent Type	Private Sector Companies
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Region	Asia Pacific

Section 2: Commitment	
Linkages to SDG 6	Improve Water Quality, Wastewater Treatment and Safe Reuse, Support Local Engagement in Water and Sanitation Management
Target	<p>Baikal Plastic Free Alliance has been formed as a response to signals from the scientific community that microplastics, among other pollutants, are readily found in the surface waters of Lake Baikal, and hence improved water quality by reducing pollution and support for local engagement in the problematic is at the core of the Alliance's mission.</p> <p>Baikal Plastic Free's mission is to contribute to a Baikal without waste.</p> <p>Each of the 28 members of the Alliance leads by example. Each member of the Alliance has internal programmes that tackle waste production and improve water management (recycling and wastewater treatment). Together, members support scientific monitoring, initiate projects that focus on removing sources of microplastics from the Lake and tackle the root causes of the pollution.</p> <p>For removal of existing pollution, in the summer of 2023, Alliance members organised the extraction of two tonnes of abandoned fishing nets from the lakebed. Members of Baikal Plastic Free also regularly take part in volunteer shore clean ups, for example one</p>

	<p>such initiative “Project 360”, just in 2022 collected over 30,000kg of trash from the shores of the lakes and rivers of Siberia.</p> <p>Root causes of pollution must be addressed to resolve the problematic and fully eliminate microplastics from the waters of Lake Baikal. The Alliance advances environmentally responsible tourism through partnerships with tourism organisations, construction of tourist routes, provision of waste management infrastructure, and advocating for legislation restricting the sale of single use plastic items in the territories surrounding Lake Baikal.</p> <p>Alliance members also host discussions with the local waste management services to address the regional need to speed up waste infrastructure provision. Baikal Plastic Free Alliance helps shine a light on the need for accelerated action. The construction of the first waste sorting plant of the region will begin in 2024.</p> <p>Representatives have attended the INC negotiations in Paris and Nairobi, have shared best practices on how to engage the corporate sector and local businesses and communities in the agenda. At UNEA-6, Baikal Plastic Free was presented to UNEP as an example of local efforts in support of tackling the triple planetary crises.</p>
Linkages to other SDG	Quality Education, Sustainable Cities And Communities, Life Below Water, Life On Land, Partnerships For The Goals

Section 3: Actions and Outcomes to Achieve Targets	
Relevant Sub-Theme	Disaster Risk Reduction and Management, Governance, Cooperation and Hydro-diplomacy
Actions and Outcomes	<p>Together, stakeholders of the Alliance initiate programmes, mutual projects, support development of restrictive legislation in regards to single use plastic pollutants, and lead by example. Since the establishment of the Alliance, 9 major businesses and national parks have implemented stricter recycling and waste collection programmes, and a number of regional and national projects were mutually funded to spread awareness and tackle the problematic. Members of the Baikal Plastic Free Alliance took part in programme creation across 6 children’s summer camps, hosting 13 workshops and lectures across for over 800 students.</p> <p>In the summer of 2023, a diving expedition was financed by the Alliance to lift two tonnes of abandoned fishing nets, a major source of microplastics, from the lakebed of Lake Baikal. The weeklong expedition was timed to ensure it did not overlap with the fish spawning seasons.</p> <p>Members of the Alliance take part in annual volunteer projects, which collect waste from the shores of lakes and rivers in Siberia. Once such volunteer project is En+ Group’s “Project 360”, which just in 2022 collected more than 30,000kg of trash.</p> <p>The Alliance focuses on the roots of the problem, addressing the causes of pollution. Microplastics in the lake originate from single use plastic items, often bags and cutlery, a ramification of wild</p>

	<p>tourism. Thus, the Baikal Plastic Free Alliance has joined efforts with local tourism operators and companies to ensure the development and facilitation of regulated and eco-tourism. The first Eco-Tourism Forum was hosted by the alliance in the summer of 2023, which resulted in a major national hotel chain joining the Alliance and making a commitment to reduce their plastic use.</p> <p>The Baikal Plastic Free Alliance has advocated for stronger regulation regarding unnecessary single use plastics. National legislation forbidding the sale of single use plastic bags and cutlery in the territory surrounding Lake Baikal has passed its first hearing, and is expected to be approved and implemented by the end of 2024.</p> <p>Initiatives will be carried out on an annual basis, with additional projects added to the yearly plan as more members join. In 2024, the Alliance will also host an art exhibition from recycled materials, an international forum on lake conservation and a university conference on plastic pollution reduction technologies and alternatives.</p>	
Implementation Period	Start Period	6/22/2022
	End Period	1/1/2050
Financial Commitment	Financial commitment varies by year and is dependent on the projects realized and the contributions members of the Alliance are willing to make.	