

**PROJECT SUMMARY  
AYITI BLUE OCEAN PLASTICS SOLUTION  
(HA-G1043 & HA-T1266)**

Ocean plastic pollution is a looming international crisis. Scientists estimate that an average of 8 million metric tons of plastic materials enter the world's oceans every year, increasing at the rate of 7 percent each year since 2015. If the current trend continues, the amount of plastic in the ocean will exceed that of fish by 2050. Every minute, a million plastic bottles are bought around the world. As the use of plastic soars, efforts to collect, recycle, and keep it from polluting the oceans have been unable to keep pace. The sheer volume of plastic being produced and the fact that it can take more than 450 years to biodegrade is creating an environmental crisis.

Haiti, an island nation of 11 million people, is considered one of the countries with the greatest risk of plastic entering the ocean. Haiti generates a high volume of plastic waste in urban areas due to high consumption of treated water, soft drinks, and take away meals sold in plastic containers. It is estimated that only 11 percent of the solid waste generated in Haiti is collected. Most post-consumer plastic is openly discarded due to lack of waste management infrastructure allowing it to wash directly into canals, sewers, and water bodies. The plastic accumulates and blocks drainage channels, making certain areas vulnerable to flooding in the rainy season. In addition, discarded plastics can collect water and become breeding grounds for mosquitoes and pests, increasing the transmission of vector-borne diseases like malaria, dengue, and Zika. Eventually this plastic enters the ocean through key points in Haiti's 1,770 km of coastline posing a risk to marine habitats and coastal communities. Ocean-bound plastics can trap coastal communities in poverty by stunting the economic growth of Haiti's blue economy sectors, namely fishing and tourism.

Environmental Cleaning Solutions S.A. (ECSSA) is a Haitian recycling company started after the 2010 earthquake. ECSSA collects post-consumer plastic materials which it transforms into high quality plastic flakes for export. ECSSA operates a social business model that facilitates the collection, transformation and sustainable export of recyclable plastic materials. ECSSA is on the front line of the plastic pollution problem in Haiti and is progressively transforming itself into supplier and innovator around ocean-bound plastics. The company is demonstrating that the problem of ocean plastic can be turned into an opportunity. While the amount of plastic consumed in Haiti remains unknown, ECSSA collects an average of one million plastic bottles a day across the country. Over the past 8 years, ECSSA has built a network of over 9,000 collectors (1,100 full-time) with 75 collection centers and recycled 55 million pounds of plastic.

The proposed IDB Lab contingent recovery grant will co-finance the expansion of ECSSA's capacity to recycle plastics and produce a wider variety of end products including synthetic lumber and similar products for sale to national and export markets. This component will be documented as a loan with the client. The project will provide benefits for Haitians and the general population of the other wider-Caribbean countries with shores on the Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea and whose livelihoods depend on the sustainable preservation of the marine environment. They will benefit by a reduction in ocean pollution (plastics) that is improperly disposed into the ocean, an improvement in the quality of the resources in the ocean ecosystem and will be better able to maintain their health and livelihoods as a result. Additionally, the expansion of ECSSA's operations and product lines will result in an increase in the number of jobs for plastics collectors and the prices they receive for the plastics they deliver to ECSSA.

The Technical Cooperation resources will be used to help build out Haiti's first commercial-scale ocean-bound plastics supply chain and to create blue economy plans for coastal communities participating in this new supply chain and will be executed by the Pan American Development Foundation.

This project was selected for funding from a highly competitive group of over 50 project proposals from the Blue Tech Challenge in the Caribbean conducted by IDB Lab in the first quarter of 2019. It is the only project selected from Haiti. Through this project, together with the recently approved IDB Lab project for the MARPOL Marine Waste Reception and Processing Facility in the Bahamas (BH-L1047 & BH-T1069), and three other Blue Economy Challenge projects in preparation in Barbados (traceable tuna), Belize (sustainable fishing) and St. Lucia (sargassum solution), IDB Lab is actively contributing to solving some of the Caribbean's most pressing challenges to improve and preserve the blue economy in the region. This project also complements another recently approved IDB Lab circular economy project in Costa Rica (CR-L1141 "Sustainable Oil Recycling"), allowing IDB Lab to gain relevant experience in addressing a variety of sources of land and marine pollution that affect C & D countries, and contributing to round out our Inclusive Cities and Natural Capital strategies in the region.