

29 January 2016

European Union and its Member States contribution

The costs caused by marine litter pollution can be quite substantial¹: the potential cost across EU for coastal and beach cleaning was estimated at up to €630 million per year, while the cost to the fishing industry could amount to almost €60 million, which would represent approximately 1% of total revenues of the EU fishing fleet (in 2010). In addition, marine and coastal ecosystem services and biodiversity are resources greatly impaired by marine litter although the quantification of costs of non-action is difficult to estimate.

Land-based activities seem to generate most of the marine litter in the Mediterranean, Baltic and Black Sea. In the North-East Atlantic Ocean, sea-based activities are as important as the land-

The problem of plastic marine litter is global and collective and coordinated efforts to address it are required. In many regions of our planet waste management practices have not kept pace with industrial development and increased consumption; pollution from waste, including in the marine environment, has aggravated.

Several EU policies and pieces of legislation are directly or indirectly related to marine litter. The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) is the dedicated instrument for assessing, monitoring, setting targets and reaching good environmental status by 2020, including marine litter; extensive waste management legislation, including prevention measures and recycling targets for plastics, contributes substantially to the reduction of marine litter; EU-wide measures for the reduction of consumption of plastic bags are also in place. The Port Reception Facility (PRF) Directive has contributed to the delivery of higher volumes of ship-generated waste and cargo residues to port reception facilities in EU ports, as well as the management of the waste from ships in these facilities. In the Circular Economy Package it put forward in December 2015 the EU Commission, announced that it will take action to fulfil the objective of significantly reducing marine litter, thus also implementing relevant targets under the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals; the upcoming revision of the PRF Directive will further address the sea-based sources of marine litter.

A variety of activities for reduction/prevention/removal of marine litter activities are supported under regional, enlargement and neighbourhood funding initiatives. In order to protect and restore marine biodiversity and ecosystems in the framework of sustainable fishing activities, the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) supports the collection of waste by fishermen from the sea such as lost fishing gear. Measures adopted by Regional Management Fisheries Bodies with regard to abandoned, lost or discarded gear are also implemented. Marine LitterWatch is a citizen science based tool that can help fill data gaps relevant for policy, while raising awareness about the problem of litter. A number of research and innovation projects to better understand the issues and to prevent and reduce marine litter, including via outreach activities, are being funded by the EU.

Among suggestions for further action, the EU and its Member States would highlight creating a reference basis/baseline for supporting assessment and monitoring progress, facilitating fulfilment of the Rio+20 commitment for a significant reduction of marine litter and of SDG 14, assessing the effectiveness of removal measures and methodology for prioritisation of hot-spots for coordinated removal actions; promotion of action at regional level, coordination of monitoring and assessment methodologies; development of guidelines by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations with regard to discarded, lost or abandoned gear; advance in assessment of cost

Belgian participation to the Fishing For Litter programme since 2009. The programme has two aims: to remove marine litter from the marine environment and to raise awareness of marine litter issues within the fishing industry.

Aiming at awareness raising, the Federal Public Service of Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment created bookmarks with tips to protect our marine environment, among which how to prevent marine litter, that can be distributed during a variety of events.

<http://www.health.belgium.be/eportal/Environment/MarineEnvironment/index.htm#.Vpy-L3FVikp>

Executive Summary:

FRANCE

Challenges posed by marine litter: actions and activities undertaken by France, and suggestions to prevent and significantly reduce marine debris, plastics and microplastics

French contribution

The presence of debris, plastics and microplastics in marine environment is an important issue of concern, causing many environmental impacts, especially on marine fauna (marine mammals, sea turtles, seabirds, but also plankton) that can ingest or become entangled in such litter. Moreover, it is the entire food chain that could be affected.

This growing matter makes it urgent to have a common and vigorous action against it. However, once litter is present in marine environment, it is often too late to act.

This desire to reduce pollution at source was reflected for example by the adoption of the “**Energy Transition Law for a Green growth**” on 22 July 2015, which provides for:

- a ban on all "oxo-fragmentable" plastic packaging (18/08/2015),
- the end of single-use plastic bags available at cash-desks (01/01/2016),
- the end of the possibility for consumers to get other types of single-use plastic bags (for example those dedicated to fruits and vegetables) in shops, excepting biobased bags compostable in home composting (01/01/2017),
- a ban on non-biodegradable, non-compostable (in home composting) plastic packaging for press mailings and advertising (01/01/2017),
- and the end of disposable plastic plates and glasses availability, excepting biobased compostable in home composting (01/01/2020).

Am064 698.6J()-36045-5(the)10-1414maseje) ctivm

1. From this point of view, France is planning to work more specifically on the following topics :
 - general public information, awareness-raising and education
 - collection, treatment and recycling of end-of-life fishing gear
 - industrial plastic pellets (zero pellet loss)
 - microbeads in personal care or cosmetic products
 - identification of accumulation zones and priority issues
2. Moreover, **France wants to develop international cooperation initiatives**, concerning marine litter. Indeed, the Framework Act on Development and International Solidarity Policy (LOP-DSI) adopted by France in 2014, offers the possibility to local authorities in charge of household waste collection and treatment (those that receive the tax on the removal of household refuse), to conduct development cooperation

GERMANY

Marine Litter and Microplastics

German contribution

Marine litter (plastic) is a global problem that poses a threat to the coastal environment, wildlife and society. Currently, overall marine litter stems from land-based sources, with regional variations. Remaining portions are made up of sea-based remnants from fisheries (net fragments) and shipping (ropes).

SWEDEN

Marine Litter and Microplastics

Swedish contribution

(i) Challenges posed by marine debris, plastics and microplastics

As a result of circulation currents in the North Sea, the Swedish West Coast is heavily affected by marine debris floating a shore. The problem with marine debris is therefore of concern for Sweden nationally, regionally and globally.

(ii) New national and regional measures for marine litter

Sweden has developed a strategy for its marine waters in accordance with the EU marine strategy framework directive (2008/56/EC) with the purpose to achieve good environmental status (GES) by 2020. The strategy includes a programme of measures (PoM), which involves five new measures for marine debris¹¹: 1) promote efficient and sustainable collection and reception of lost fishing gears and prevent the losses of new ones, 2) develop a national information/awareness campaign for the public.

towards harmonising methods for monitoring, extracting and analysing microplastic particles with focus on the ecotoxicological effects of the particles on marine life¹⁴.

(iii) Suggestions for further action to prevent and significantly reduce marine debris, plastics and microplastics

On a global level, Sweden considers improvements of waste management infrastructure being crucial to solve the problem with plastic entering the oceans covering the whole chain from consumption, waste collection, waste disposal and treatment of effluents from urban areas. This also includes improving reception capacity in harbours of ship waste as well as incentives for the use

sustainable and cost-effective solutions to reduce and prevent sewage and storm water related waste entering the marine environment, including micro particles.

Sweden is as a lead partner for two EU-projects that starts in 2016. 1) MARELITT BALTIC takes a regional approach to address derelict fishing gears in the Baltic Sea and preventive measures to reduce losses in the future. 2) BLASTIC relates to Plastic waste pathways into the Baltic Sea and in order to identify and prioritize measures on how to reduce litter streams from land to sea. Sweden also participate in the EU coordination platform JPI Oceans which includes four projects focusing on harmonising methods for monitoring, extracting and analysing microplastic particles with focus on the ecotoxicological effects of the particles on marine life¹⁷.

¹⁷ <http://www.jpi-oceans.eu/news-events/news/results-%E2%82%AC75-million-call-microplastics-published>