



Tackling marine litter in the Mediterranean

4 December 2013, 13.15-14.00

Istanbul Congress Center/ Room Emirgan A

The Mediterranean Action Plan Partners, the Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE) and the Hellenic Marine Environment Protection Association (HELMPEPA), in collaboration with the Catalan Waste Agency, ACR+ and UNEP/MAP MEDPOL will hold an event on “Tackling marine litter in the Mediterranean”.

The main objective of the event is to inform participants about major initiatives in the Mediterranean aiming to tackle marine litter and to highlight how these initiatives are contributing and/or supporting the implementation of the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean. Furthermore, the potential to capitalize on the cutting edge outputs, best practices and lessons learned of these initiatives will be explored with respect to the Action Plan, as well as and how these can be expanded and replicated in order serve the needs of other Mediterranean countries.

Speakers/Agenda

13.15-13.20	Opening remarks Mr. Enrique de Villamore, Director of CP/RAC
13.20-13.30	Mr. Konstantinos Triantafyllou, HELMEPA Assistant Executive Coordinator
13.30-13.40	Mr. Josep Maria Tost Borràs, Director of Catalan Waste Agency, Barcelona Spain, President of ACR+
13.40-13.50	Ms. Thomais Vlachogianni, MIO-ECSDE Programme Officer
13.50-14.00	Questions/Discussion

The initiatives to be presented at the event include the following:

MARine Litter in Europe’s Seas: Social Awareness and CO-Responsibility (MARLISCO): MARLISCO is an FP7 – Science in Society project – that raises public awareness, triggers co-responsibility across the different sectors and facilitates dialogue between the different stakeholders on both problems and potential solutions regarding marine litter. The MARLISCO activities are implemented in 15 countries of the 4 European Regional Seas, among which are Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Slovenia and Turkey. MIO-ECSDE is leading the Awareness Raising & Education related component of the project and is also the Regional Node Leader for the Mediterranean. *[project in full swing, Lead Partner: Provincia di Teramo, Italy].*

Derelict Fishing Gear Management System in the Adriatic Region (DeFishGear): DeFishGear is an IPA Adriatic funded project aiming to facilitate efforts for integrated planning to reduce the environmental impacts of litter-generating economic activities carried out in the marine and coastal environment of the Adriatic Sea and ensure their sustainable management and use. The DeFishGear activities will be implemented in the following countries: Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia. MIO-ECSDE is leading the Marine litter Assessment related component of the project. *[project launched in November 2013, Lead Partner: National Institute of Chemistry, Ljubljana, Slovenia].*



Global Observatory on Marine Litter (GOML): This initiative of HELMEPA is supported by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and has been included in the Organization's recently-announced Sustainable Maritime Transportation System (SMTS). The GOML initiative aims to effectively implement the recently revised Annex V of MARPOL by helping seafarers to become more environmentally aware about and sensitive towards the issue of marine litter; and to provide a useful tool for the examination by the international maritime community of possible further action to be taken to address the issue of marine litter. The GOML's activities include the coordination, collection and processing of voluntary observations from ocean-going vessels in open seas or near-shore areas. Under the Environmental Stewardship activities of IMO's SMTS, this data will be submitted to IMO and made available to UNEP and other relevant stakeholders on a quarterly basis for further evaluation and/or action. The GOML will include a dedicated section on the Mediterranean Sea, which when operational may constitute an important source of information and a valuable point of reference with regards to the accumulation of floating litter items. Thus, the successful outcome of this initiative at the Mediterranean level largely depends on the support it will acquire from competent State authorities, maritime stakeholders and relevant international and intergovernmental bodies active in the region.

Cities and Regions address the drivers of marine litter through waste prevention (ACR+): ACR+ is an international network of cities and regions who share the aim of promoting smart resource consumption and sustainable management of municipal waste through prevention at source, reuse and recycling. The network is active not only within EU28 but also in a number of Mediterranean countries, in particular in Northern Africa and the Balkans. ACR+ has been involved in a number of different projects and research assignments concerning waste management. The relevance of these activities is best reflected when one considers that 80% of marine litter is in fact land-based. Moreover, ACR+ has recently paid a lot of heed to the marine litter issue specifically, by focusing one of the Thematic Working Groups on plastic bags. The Working Group produced a thorough report on plastic bags, published by ACR+ in 2013.

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