

Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean

Main requirements and recent developments

*Conference on sub-regional cooperation on marine litter
management in the Adriatic-Ionian Macro-Region*

*March 25th 2015
Split, Croatia*



United Nations Environment Programme /
Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP)
Barcelona Convention

Background

- Barcelona Convention (BC) and its Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS)
- Contracting Parties to BC adopted Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in December 2013
- The Plan came into force on 8 July 2014 for all parties to the LBS Protocol and it:
 - provides Mediterranean countries with a framework to elaborate national policies and action plans to address impacts of marine litter
 - creates momentum for addressing litter-related marine and coastal pollution in an integrated manner



United Nations Environment Programme /
Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP)
Barcelona Convention

Why the Regional Plan on ML?

- Legal basis: Article 15 of the LBS Protocol

- ML generation and impacts in the Mediterranean:
 - Around 80% of marine litter originates from land-based activities
 - tourism and recreation, household activities – the main sources
 - Plastics account for 83% of the land-based marine litter
 - the three top items: plastic bottles, plastic bags and caps/ lids
 - Occurrence of cigarette filters much higher than the global average
 - Waste generation – growing trend in the EU and other MED countries
 - Inadequate waste management systems in many countries
 - Significant negative environmental impacts



Commitments under the Regional Plan

- Prevent and reduce to the minimum marine litter pollution in the Mediterranean
- Remove to the extent possible already existent marine litter by using environmentally sound methods
- Enhance knowledge on marine litter
- Bring management of marine litter in the Mediterranean in line with accepted international standards and approaches



Content of the Plan (Art 9)

➤ Prevention – land-based activities

1. Solid waste management - reduction at source, waste hierarchy (2025)
2. Reducing/ reusing/ recycling measures for plastic packaging waste (2019)
3. Explore and implement to the extent possible the following (2017):
 - Extended Producer Responsibility
 - Sustainable Procurement Policies
 - Voluntary agreements and fiscal and economic instruments to reduce plastic bags consumption
 - Deposits, Return and Restoration System (for beverage containers and expandable polystyrene boxes in the fishing sector)
 - Cooperate with industry to establish procedures and manufacturing methodologies to reduce micro-plastic
4. Establish as appropriate adequate urban sewers, wastewater treatment plants and waste management systems to prevent run-off and riverine inputs of litter (2020)



Content of the Plan (Art 9)

➤ Prevention – sea-based activities

1. Explore and to the extent possible implement:
 - Charges for the use of port reception facilities or No-Special-Fee system (2017)
 - ‘Fishing for Litter’ practices (2017)
 - ‘Gear marking to indicate ownership’ and ‘reduced ghost catches’ concepts (2017)
2. Prevent marine littering from dredging activities (2020)
3. Close the existing illegal dump sites on land (2020)
4. Combat dumping including littering on the beach, illegal sewage disposal in the sea, the coastal zone and rivers



Content of the Plan (Art 10)

- Removal of accumulated litter (when environmentally sound and cost-effective; priority to SPA and SPAMIs; **2019**)
 1. Identification of accumulations/ hotspots of marine litter and implementation of national programmes on their regular removal and sound disposal
 2. National Marine Litter Cleanup Campaigns
 3. Participation in International Coastal Cleanup Campaigns and Programmes
 4. Adopt-a-Beach or similar practices, and others.



Other provisions

- ML National and regional assessments in the framework of ecosystem approach:
 - the first round of national assessments due in 2016, Mediterranean-wide assessments every 6 years

- ML National and regional monitoring programmes and development of the regional one
 - National monitoring programmes to be put in place by 2017
 - Expert Group on Marine Litter Monitoring Programme

- The Plan emphasizes the need for research and scientific cooperation as well as for education and public awareness activities
 - A list of priority research topics agreed upon



Implementation – challenging for the CPs and for the UNEP/MAP Secretariat (strategies and resource mobilisation)

Activities under the UNEP/ MAP system

- 2015 update of the LBS Protocol NAPs – integration of marine litter, programmes of measures to achieve GES: ongoing process, all contracting parties have started the work
- Development of a regional plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production with ML prevention objectives
- Assessment of options for the application of charges at reasonable costs and No-Special-Fee system – port reception facilities (REMPEC: addressed in the new Regional Strategy to combat pollution from ships)
- Mobilisation of additional resources, assisting CPs
 - *a GPA project with a Med component*
 - *Project Concept note for EU funding*
- Partnerships, stakeholder involvement : aiming at a MAP led initiative on marine litter among EU regional seas



Scope of the 2015 ASSESSMENT OF MARINE LITTER IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA (ongoing output)

- **SOURCE, NATURE, DISTRIBUTION (including Derelict fishing gears)**
- **IMPACTS (including Derelict fishing gears)**
- **MONITORING (STRATEGIES, CATEGORIES, BASELINES, etc.)**
- **MANAGEMENT (TARGETS) AND REDUCTION MEASURES**
- **RESEARCH NEEDS**



INTEGRATED MONITORING ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME to be adopted by COP 19, 2016 (marine litter)

- **Establishing a monitoring framework for marine litter in the Mediterranean**

- **Support the implementation of monitoring and providing background information on:**
 - *Scale, extent (Importance of pilot scale experiments)*
 - *Sampling strategies and protocols (sites, categories, etc.)*
 - *Data Analysis (trends, etc.)*
 - *Quality Assessment/Quality Control*



Collaboration with partners

- Publication of educational kit in Arabic (MARLISCO)
- Publication of Best Practices Guidance in Arabic (MARLISCO)
- Preparation of Fishing for Litter Guidance (feedback from DeFishGear project welcome)
- Support from UNEP GPA to build up a coordination mechanism on the implementation of MLRP in the Mediterranean (expected to be provided soon)



Ongoing discussions (Integrated CorMon and MED POL FP meetings)

SCALE	Common baselines for the various EI (16, 17, 18) must be considered at the level of the entire basin (Mediterranean) rather than at sub regional level
RESEARCH	Need to define an adapted protocol for <u>microplastics</u> in sediments
	Research to support the development of an indicator dedicated to entanglement
BASELINES/TARGETS	Consider specific baselines and targets for litter categories that are individually targeted by reduction plans or measures by the Contracting Parties (cigarette butts, plastic bags, cotton buds, <u>etc</u>)
CATEGORIES	Consider the reduction of the number of categories in MEDPOL monitoring protocol
	Adapt MEDPOL master list , MSFD derived, to harmonize with other RSC
MONITORING	Needs for adjustment of the monitoring guidance (more compatible definitions and wording, list of items/categories)
	Harmonization of the on line group report with the ECAP monitoring guidance for Marine Litter





Thank you

Contact

United Nations Environment Programme
Coordinating Unit for the Mediterranean Action Plan
Vassileos Konstantinou 48
Athens 11635
Greece

www.unepmap.org



United Nations Environment Programme /
Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP)
Barcelona Convention