



Marine Litter Impact on Oceanic Ecosystems - Problems and solutions" ***EU policies and actions***

Mrs Marianne WENNING

Director

Directorate C - Quality of Life, Water & Air

Directorate General Environment

Brussels

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A *serious* problem

Impacts

- **Ghost fishing:** Wasted fish and impacts on marine life : 100 % of turtles, 66 % of mammals and 50 % of seabirds affected
- **Microplastics & POPs:** Potential health impacts
- **Economic cost** (degradation of marine and coastal ecosystem services, beaches clean-up, damaged fishing gear)



Marine Strategy Framework Directive

- "Good Environmental Status" by 2020
- 11 "descriptors"
- Descriptor 10: "Properties and quantities of marine litter do not cause harm to the coastal and marine environment."
- Indicators:
 - Trends in amount/composition/spatial distribution and, if possible, source of litter on beaches/water column/seafloor
 - Trends in amount/distribution and, where possible, composition of microparticles, in particular microplastics
 - Trends in amount and composition of litter ingested by marine animals

Marine Strategy Framework Directive



- COM report: [Assessment of first round of implementation](#)
- Charts the way for programmes of monitoring (2014) and measures (2015)
- JRC: [Guidance on Monitoring of Marine Litter in European Seas](#)

Plastic bags Directive

- c.100bn single-use plastic bags p.a. (c.200 per person)
- 8 billion bags as litter
- Reductions of up to 80% possible
- EU implements measures to reduce their use



Planned next steps

- *Establishment of a baseline for marine litter quantities in the EU marine regions to monitor progress towards reduction target*
- *Consideration of marine litter and microplastics in the forthcoming Circular Economy Package*
- *Filling knowledge gaps with a view to tackling sources or forms of marine litter of concern, such as microplastics in products*
- *Implementing regional plans against marine litter*

A *shared* problem, a *joint* response

Regional cooperation

- **Barcelona Convention (Mediterranean):** First RSC to adopt an action plan on marine litter
- **OSPAR (North East Atlantic):** Action Plan adopted in June 2014
- **HELCOM (Baltic):** Action plan adopted in June 2015
- **Bucharest Convention (Black Sea):** marine litter as part of overarching strategic action plan

A *shared* problem, a *joint* response

- *Rio+20 : Collectively commit to **take action**; achieve significant **reductions by 2025**; prevent **harm** to the coastal and marine environment; recognises **plastic problem***
- *Study focused on plastic litter to be presented to UN Environment Assembly in 2016*
- *G7 adopts in June 2015 an Action Plan for marine litter*
- *Post-2015 agenda: Towards an SDG for oceans?*





Marine litter stands for wasted material, threat to biodiversity and to human health : its organic link with the resource efficiency agenda needs to be better understood and communicated

**Commission Marine litter webpage:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/marine/good-environmental-status/descriptor-10/index_en.htm**

Thank you for your attention!