

An underwater photograph showing a large whale swimming towards the left. To the right of the whale, a clear plastic bag is floating in the blue water. The title text is overlaid on this image.

Declarations of intent on joining the Plastic Busters Network

PREPARED BY

**THE INTERREG MED
PLASTIC BUSTERS MPAs PROJECT**

<https://plasticbustersmpas.interreg-med.eu>



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Document Information	
<p>This document (Deliverable 2.3.1) provides the declaration of intent that will be signed by some marine litter related stakeholders in order to join the Plastic Busters network for tackling marine plastic pollution in the Mediterranean, with special emphasis on Marine Protected Areas</p>	

Approvals	
Date	Partner
2021-01-26	ISPRA (Task Leader)
2021-03-05	ISPRA (Task Leader), UNISI
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Document History

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First draft	2021-03-05	Submitted to the communication responsible and coordinator partners	ISPRA, UNISI
Final document	2021-04-23	Text finalized and approved	ISPRA, UNISI, MIO-ECSDE, ARC-SCP/RAC

DECLARATION OF INTENT

on joining the Plastic Busters Network for tackling marine plastic pollution in the Mediterranean, with special emphasis on Marine Protected Areas

Aware that **marine litter pollution, and in particular marine plastic pollution, pose a significant and growing threat to the Mediterranean Sea and its biodiversity and ecosystems, even within Marine Protected Areas(MPAs);**

Mindful that **the marine litter issue** is linked to multiple economic sectors resulting in a societal problem that has **no 'one-size-fits-all' solution;** and recognizing that marine litter travels and expands beyond borders, therefore, **representing a transboundary challenge;**

Acknowledging that **the impacts of marine litter on flora and fauna within Marine Protected Areas remain poorly addressed** and that **immediate prevention and mitigation measures are needed;**

Recognizing that **networking and joint governance between and among pelagic and coastal Marine Protected Areas is necessary for the implementation of prevention and mitigation actions of marine litter impacts on biodiversity;**

Mindful that the **marine litter issue can only be effectively addressed through a transnational approach** requiring joint, harmonized and coordinated actions at cross-border level, with a wide geographical coverage and the involvement of a wide variety of stakeholders;

Driven by the policy framework of the European Union Marine Strategy Framework Directive (where Marine Litter is included as Descriptor 10 of Good Environmental Status), the European Union Single-Use Plastics Directive and the Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy; and the Barcelona Convention Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean and the Ecosystem Approach; as well as the UfM2030GreenerMed Agenda;



Acknowledging that **the enforcement of regional and sub-regional cooperation is required to achieve a good environmental status** through the prevention and reduction of marine litter, and the minimization of its impacts;

Aware that, despite the progress achieved in combating marine litter, there **is still a long way ahead to implement the policy commitments and reduce effectively the amount of marine litter and the risks posed to biodiversity**;

Aware that **management strategies to address the marine litter issue should include proper implementation of policies, technological advances, behavioral change, and the adoption of circular economy solutions**;

Reminding that **transnational cooperation strengthens coordination and collaboration, and encourages the exchange of information and the definition of a common framework of marine litter actions** for the Mediterranean region;

Motivated by the **successful cooperation accomplished within the partners engaged in the Plastic Busters MPAs** (“Plastic Busters: preserving biodiversity from plastics in Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas”) Interreg MED project, the first project at Mediterranean basin scale where EU and IPA countries join forces to tackle **Marine Litter in pelagic and coastal Marine Protected Areas**, via a coordinated approach along the entire management cycle of marine litter;

Valuing **the synergies the project has built with relevant projects and initiatives** that developed priority actions needed to tackle Marine Litter in the Mediterranean;

And

aware that **networking, capitalization and capacity building provide an effective way to address the marine litter issue, leading to a strengthened implementation of the legislative frameworks of Mediterranean countries**.

We, as representatives of our institutions and/or organizations,

Decide to **join the Plastic Busters Network**, a collaborative network of Mediterranean stakeholders that support the urgent need for transnational cooperation on the issue of marine litter in the Mediterranean, with special emphasis placed on Marine Protected Areas, by committing to:



- ✓ **Actively share updates, ideas, information and – to the extent possible – data within the network;**
- ✓ **Exchange knowledge, experiences, best practices and expertise(e.g., via training activities);**
- ✓ **Seek and/or create opportunities** for a collective and collaborative effort towards1) **increasing knowledge and understanding** of the sources, origin, and pathways of marine litter and 2) **reducing** Marine Litter pollution;
- ✓ **Invite other interested parties** that share the vision and commitment of the network to join the network.

Name of the institution/acronym, here represented by Mr/Ms

Signature/date

