



## Conclusions

### Interreg Med Working Webinar on Marine Litter



The first Working Webinar organized by PANACeA on 17 July 2017 focused on Marine litter at the request of several Interreg Med projects, with the objective of fostering the development of partnerships, knowledge exchange and a better coordination of activities among these initiatives dealing with marine litter in the Mediterranean.

Facilitated by the European Topic Centre of the University of Malaga (ETC-UMA) as lead partner in the Interreg Med Horizontal Project PANACeA on Biodiversity Protection, the structure of this working webinar consisted of a series of presentations on the activities carried out by the participating projects as related to marine litter, followed by a brief poll to collect comments from the audience, which are summarised at the end of this document.

More than 60 people registered to listen to the presentations delivered by the following Interreg Med Projects:

<b>AMAre</b> François Galgani IFREMER	<a href="#">Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and marine litter dynamics: addressing marine litter in MPAs, focusing on the model of marine litter dynamics</a>
<b>ACT4Litter</b> Thomais Vlachogianni MIO/ECSDE	<a href="#">Action plans and measures to address marine litter in the framework of MPAs</a>
<b>MedSeaLitter</b> Antonella Arcangeli ISPRA	<a href="#">Towards a common monitoring procedure for the Mediterranean</a>
<b>Blue Islands</b> Michael Grelaud Autonomous University of Barcelona	<a href="#">The impact of tourism on marine litter in islands</a>
<b>POSBEMED</b> Simeone Simone IAMC-CNR and Fondazione IMC	<a href="#">Waste and no-waste: Posidonia banquettes and recommended measures for management</a>

The five Interreg Med projects addressed issues concerning data and research on the distribution of marine litter along the Mediterranean coast; campaigns to identify the best measures to counteract the impact on biodiversity particularly in protected areas; actions to identify an effective and common monitoring system for protected areas across countries; and the need to raise awareness on the benefits of *Posidonia oceanica* banquettes and beach management in the Mediterranean.

Among the conclusions reached during the webinar, participants highlighted several synergies to build an Interreg Med collaborative framework towards:

- Sharing data and information obtained from latest research results and under way to complement each other;
- Transferring and building capacities for the use of standardised and tested monitoring and management measures and protocols, including joint governance considerations;
- Disseminating and giving visibility to current efforts to halt waste generation and find feasible solutions to better protect biodiversity and ecosystems;

- Raising awareness on the difference between waste and Posidonia banquettes among beach users to protect their key role in the coastal and marine ecosystems;
- Spreading best practices to and involving additional protected areas beyond the Interreg Med pilot sites;
- Providing targeted support to practitioners for their management plans;
- Focusing on priority EU and Mediterranean policies, strategies and instruments to jointly influence biodiversity protection in the Mediterranean

## ANSWERS TO POLLS AND COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS

### 1. What are the sources of Marine litter?

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- 0. land-fills: 0%
- 1. rivers and floodwaters: 0%
- 2. industrial outfalls: 0%
- 3. discharge from storm water drains: 16.7%
- 4. untreated municipal sewerage: 16.7%
- 5. **littering of beaches, coastal areas (tourism): 33.3%**
- 6. fishing industry: 0%
- 7. shipping (e.g. transport, tourism, fishing): 25%
- 8. offshore mining and extraction
- 9. illegal dumping at sea: 8.3%
- 10. discarded fishing gear: 0%

### 2. What do you think would be the best measures to reduce litter?

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- 0. Public awareness campaigns: 9.1%
- 1. Better facilities to separate and recycle rubbish: 9.1%
- 2. Involvement of citizens in cleaning campaigns: 9.1%
- 3. **Economic sanctions and fines on the use of plastic and polluting materials: 18.2%**
- 4. More investment in biodegradable materials: 9.1%
- 5. Government measures to reduce pollution by the private sector: 9.1%
- 6. Better purification plants and waste water management: 9.1%
- 7. Stricter laws and policies at international, EU, national and local level: 9.1%

### 3. Is there any aspect of relevance to marine litter in the Mediterranean not addressed here that you would like to mention?

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- Waste generated by cruise ships - linked to tourism.

- A lot of projects are about monitoring and I think we need more projects about how to tackle marine litter in the sources
- The capacity of marine litter to act as a transport vehicle of invasive marine species across Med areas.
- Reducing primary litter production
- Very little done about sea litter IN the water (floating or on the bottom). It seems that is almost completely excluded. Litter that you are talking about is just a visible part on land, or found in organisms- a non-representative part of marine litter in the sea.

#### 4. Your opinion on actions to better tackle marine litter in Interreg Med projects

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- a. Organize more webinars and awareness raising events: 15.4%
  - b. Take the debate to the policy arena: 15.4%
  - c. Involve the private sector in committing to reduce plastic and polluting materials: 30.8%**
- a + b + c: 30.8%**
- a + c: 7.7%

#### 5. Can you suggest collaborative activities for these Interreg Med projects to be more effective?

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- Common strategies and MPAs specific guidelines
- Joint networking, debate and result-sharing events (virtual or physical).
- Exchange of joined projects data and conclusions.

#### 6. Help us improve our future webinars by leaving your comments and webinar evaluation here.

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- Improve the sound quality for some speakers
- Reduce presentations and increase time for interaction with the guests
- Great webinar. Content-wise and technically
- Just keep on going like this...

The full webinar is available from our [YouTube Channel](#).

More details on the projects and access to the presentations can be found by clicking on the name of the project and the title of the interventions in the programme provided at the beginning of this document.

## NEXT STEPS

Taking into consideration the common areas of work among these and other initiatives under way at EU and Mediterranean level, PANACeA will promote further efforts to implement the recommendations received concerning in particular protected areas, namely to:

- Pull together current information sources regarding the origin and flow of marine litter to provide a more comprehensive overview of knowledge available and gaps identified concerning time series and spatial data;
- Inform and invite parallel initiatives to connect to the Interreg Biodiversity Community and share their knowledge and experience as appropriate;
- Look for a specific marine litter strategy to be adapted, cost-effective and feasible for implementation in most MPAs based on research, capacity building for practitioners and communication to policy makers;
- Provide interaction opportunities to researchers, protected area managers and policy makers to exchange on priorities and further needs for tackling marine litter in the Mediterranean at local and regional level;
- Promote the use of a [common calendar](#) among the Interreg Med projects on biodiversity protection to finetune timeline actions.

To fulfil these recommendations, PANACeA will in the following weeks:

- launch a call for sources of information on marine litter among the different institutional partners in Interreg Med and prepare a Mediterranean perspective on available data;
- organize a research, practitioner and policy maker dialogue platform in Barcelona on 23 and 24 October 2017 for a wider community to disseminate current efforts and agree a common roadmap; and
- coordinate the organization of an Interreg Med Biodiversity Protection meeting on 25 October 2017 to review progress, build on achievement to date and help plan common actions among the Interreg Med community of projects.





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## Additional information sources

The following list of documents, articles and data sources has been compiled to provide and give visibility to current information available on marine litter and pollution and its impact on biodiversity, and will be complemented with additional documents as provided by the relevant projects:

- [Are baleen whales exposed to the threat of microplastics? A case study of the Mediterranean fin whale \(\*Balaenoptera physalus\*\)](#)
- [Conservation Evidence](#)
- [Diffuse Pollution, Degraded Waters, Emerging Policy Solutions](#)
- [Fin whales and microplastics: The Mediterranean Sea and the Sea of Cortez scenarios](#)
- [Harm caused by Marine Litter](#)
- [Lack of Staffing, Funds Prevent MPAs from Realizing Full Potential](#)
- [Large filter feeding marine organisms as indicators of microplastic in the pelagic environment](#)
- [Malta MEDFISH4EVER Ministerial Declaration](#)
- [MedPAN/RACSPA publication based on MAPAMED, MPA database](#)
- [Presence of plastic debris in loggerhead turtle stranded along the Tuscany coasts of the Pelagos Sanctuary for Mediterranean Marine Mammals](#)
- [Roadmap for a Comprehensive Coherent Network of Well-Managed Marine Protected Areas](#)
- [Science for Environmental policy: Extent of plastic in the Mediterranean Sea](#)
- [The Science of marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean](#)
- [What are the forthcoming legislative issues of interest to ecologists and conservationists in 2017?](#)
- [Med-IAMER data layers:](#)
  - [Report with main methods, results, and annexes](#)
  - [Map viewer](#) (go to the left menu ☒Med-IAMER)
  - [Factsheet on Protection](#)
  - [Factsheet on Legal frameworks](#)
  - [Factsheet on cumulative pressures \(comparing results of Micheli et al. 2013 to Med-IAMER\)](#)