



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Marine litter action plan



Regional Action Plan for Marine Litter in the Baltic Sea

Adopted in 2015

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Why an action plan?

Marine litter may seriously damage the environment as well as human health. The majority of litter are non-degradable items – mainly plastics – which are deliberately discarded or accidentally lost. Small organisms living in the sea often mistake the tiny, possibly toxic particles of plastic litter for food and eat them. These microplastic pieces may then transfer along the food chain to other marine animals.

The sources of litter in the Baltic Sea are many. Household waste – through sewage but also dumping – plays a prominent part, while shipping, fisheries and industries also have a considerable share in creation of the problem.

HELCOM Regional Action Plan for Marine Litter now sets the standard for each HELCOM member country – all nine coastal states – to put the agreed commitments into action.

Importantly, the action plan will make a difference only if many actors contribute to its implementation. While the major responsibility stays with the regional and upstream governments, all are invited – and needed – to cooperate with HELCOM for minimizing the effects of marine litter.

Within HELCOM, Pressure Working Group coordinates regional implementation of the marine litter action plan and follows up the progress.

For more information, please visit www.helcom.fi.

The structure

1. HELCOM Recommendation 36/1: Regional Action Plan for Marine Litter

2. Annex to the Action Plan: List of actions

- a. Types of actions
- b. Regional actions – HELCOM Collective Actions
 - i. Land-based sources of marine litter
 - ii. Sea-based sources of marine litter
 - iii. Education and outreach on marine litter
- c. Voluntary national actions
 - i. Land-based sources of marine litter
 - ii. Sea-based sources of marine litter
 - iii. Education and outreach on marine litter

Appendix I – Reporting format in implementation of actions

Appendix II – Reporting format on the effectiveness of the implemented actions

Appendix III – Definition of terms for the purpose of this Recommendation



HELCOM RECOMMENDATION 36/1

Adopted 4 March 2015, having regard to Article 20, Paragraph 1 b) of the Helsinki Convention

Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP ML)

THE COMMISSION,

BEING CONCERNED of the harmful effects of marine litter on the marine ecosystem such as entanglement of biota in marine litter, ingestion of marine litter by marine organisms, litter as potential source of accumulation of toxic substances within the marine food web or pathway for transport and introduction of alien species through transport of marine litter items up to damage and degradation of marine habitats due to the presence of marine litter;

BEING ALSO CONCERNED of the harmful effects of marine litter on the human beings, including safety risks caused by marine litter such as sharp items at beaches or entanglement of divers, the potential introduction of toxic and endocrine disruptors in fish and shellfish for human consumption and of risk to navigation safety at sea;

BEING AWARE of the severity of the marine litter problem in the oceans, while recognizing that more evidence is needed to adequately reflect about the scale of the problem in the Baltic Sea;

BEING ALSO AWARE that the main activities contributing to marine litter inputs in the Baltic Sea are associated with household related/municipal solid waste activities, coastal-based recreational and tourism activities, transport and waste collection/dumping, fishing activities as well as land-based activities involving the use and generation of micro-particles;

NOTING at the same time the socio-economic losses that marine litter is causing to many activities of the Baltic Sea, e.g. fishing, shipping, coastal tourism, cooling water systems;

RECALLING the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and its obligations for States to protect and preserve the marine environment (Art 192) including to take measures to prevent, reduce and control pollution (Art 194) and related United Nations General Assembly Resolutions on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, recently Resolution A/RES/68/71 (2013) and earlier submissions;

RECALLING ALSO the Rio +20 commitment to take action to achieve significant reductions in marine debris by 2025 and the achievement of the goals and strategy objectives of the Honolulu strategy, as outlined in Resolution A/RES/66/288 (2012);

RECALLING FURTHER the London Convention 1972 and the 1996 Protocol thereto aiming to promote the effective control of all sources of marine pollution and to take all practicable steps to prevent pollution of the sea by dumping at sea of wastes and other matter generated on land;

ACKNOWLEDGING marine litter to be one of the eight contaminant categories of UNEP's Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Sources (GPA) as well as one of the key issues of the Regional Seas Programme (RSP) of UNEP;

RECALLING FURTHERMORE the provisions on ship generated waste management under Annex V of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL 73/78);

RECALLING other relevant regional programmes and activities developed in the framework of structures stemming from international agreements such as the Regional Action Plan for Prevention and Management of Marine Litter in the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR Agreement 2014-1);

RECALLING ALSO the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan (2007) on encouragement of projects to remove litter from the coastal and marine environment, and related HELCOM Recommendations, among others Recommendation 28E/10 on application of the No-special-fee system to ship-generated wastes and marine litter caught in fishing nets in the Baltic Sea Area and agreement to raise public awareness on the negative environmental and socio-economic effects of marine litter in the marine environment;

NOTING related agreed HELCOM actions to reduce litter input in the Baltic Sea environment, especially *via* Recommendations 10/5 concerning guidelines for the establishment of adequate reception facilities in ports (1989); 10/7 concerning general requirements for reception of wastes (1989); 19/14 concerning a harmonized system of fines in case a ship violates anti-pollution regulations (1998); 19/9 (supplemented by 22/1) concerning the installation of garbage retention appliances and toilet retention systems and standard connections for sewage on board fishing vessels, working vessels and pleasure craft (1998) and 31E/4 concerning proper handling of waste/landfilling (2010);

RECALLING the HELCOM Moscow Ministerial Declaration (2010) with agreement to take further steps to carry out national and coordinated monitoring of marine litter and identify sources of litter;

RECALLING ALSO the 2013 HELCOM Copenhagen Ministerial Declaration for further coherent action in addressing the pollution of the marine environment by litter, prevention and reduction of marine litter from land- and sea-based sources, together with the decision to develop a Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter by 2015 in order to achieve a significant reduction of marine litter by 2025;

RECALLING that this complementary approach is without prejudice to the implementation of related regulations and policy initiatives applicable for HELCOM countries being EU members such as EU initiatives, Directives and Regulations, among others, the Waste Framework Directive, the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive, the Port Reception Facilities Directive, the Landfill Directive, the Water Framework Directive, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), the Bathing Water Directive, the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive, the Ecodesign Directive and the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation;

RECALLING that the provisions of this Recommendation shall be without prejudice to provisions concerning marine litter management contained in other national, regional or international instruments or programmes;

NOTING the aspirational target of the European Commission's Communication 'Towards a Circular economy' (COM(2014) 398, 2014) to reduce marine litter by 30 % by 2020 for the ten most common types of litter found on beaches, as well as for fishing gear found at sea, with the list adapted to each of the four marine regions in the EU;

RECALLING the related regulation of the Russian Federation, the Federal law on wastes of production and consumption; Water code of the Russian Federation; The law on internal waters, territorial sea and contiguous zone of the Russian Federation; The law on environmental protection of the Russian Federation and subordinated legal acts.

ACKNOWLEDGING related, including stricter, national and international legislation, provisions, criteria and guidance for marine litter prevention and sustainable management as complementary marine litter approaches;

RECOMMENDS to the Governments of the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention to jointly develop, assisted by the relevant HELCOM subsidiary bodies including *via* a lead country approach, appropriate regional

actions (collective HELCOM actions) as well as voluntary national actions based on the list of possible actions to be finalized and agreed by mid-2015 into concrete measures aiming at:

- a) The achievement of a significant quantitative reduction of marine litter by 2025, compared to 2015, and prevention of harm to the coastal and marine environment in the Baltic Sea area as stated in HELCOM Copenhagen Ministerial Declaration 2013;
- b) Prevention of further introduction from land-based and sea-based sources in the Baltic Sea and reduction of marine litter already present in the marine environment and of its potential impact on marine biota, habitats, public health and safety and of its socioeconomic costs;
- c) The enhanced coordination, cooperation and coherent implementation, utilising the list of possible regional and proposed voluntary national actions;
- d) A framework under which Contracting Parties can identify where a regional approach can add value to actions on marine litter of individual Contracting Parties, including measures under the MSFD for those HELCOM countries being EU members as well as under relevant regulations of the Russian Federation, and exchange platform for gaining and sharing information on technical, socio-economic and policy aspects of such actions ;

DECIDES to base further work on fundamental principles, as contained in Articles 3, 6, 8, 9 and 15 of the Helsinki Convention, as well as the following approaches:

- a) “Public participation and stakeholder involvement”: Procedures and methods to create awareness for the problems of marine litter and ensuring a sense of public ownership for broad-based support to preventive and removal measures;
- b) “Sustainable consumption and production”: The use of goods and services that respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life, while minimizing (1) the use of scarce natural resources; (2) the generation of toxic materials; (3) the emissions of pollutants and waste generation over the life cycle of the service of product;
- c) “Best available knowledge and socio-economic effectiveness”: Actions and operational aspirational targets to be based on available knowledge of the predominant amounts, materials, items and sources of marine litter found in the Baltic Sea as well as social and economic costs of degradation compared to the cost and benefits of proposed measures and, where available, costs for non-action;
- d) “Integration”: Marine litter management to be an integral part of the solid waste management to ensure any environmentally sound anthropogenic management including rational use of resources;
- e) “Application of waste hierarchy”: Solid waste management to follow the five-step waste hierarchy, as introduced by the EU legislation in 2008¹, starting from prevention to preparing for re-use, recycling, other recovery up to final disposal;
- f) “Ecosystem approach”: Management of human activities according to the 2003 Joint HELCOM and OSPAR Ministerial Statement on the Ecosystem Approach to the Management of Human Activities;

RECOMMENDS ALSO to

- a) finalize, by mid-2016, common indicators and associated definition of Good Environmental Status (GES) related to marine litter for regional application in the years to follow;
- b) identify, by 2016 the way forward to establish coordinated monitoring programmes for the common marine litter indicators including data collection for regular assessment of the state of marine litter in the Baltic Sea area;

¹ Waste Framework Directive 2008/98/EC (art. 4).

- c) report on the implementation of actions for the first time in by 2018 according to the simplified format in Appendix I and on the effectiveness of the implemented actions and achievement of corresponding targets where defined in 2020 using the format in Appendix II and thereafter in regular cycles;
- d) engage in a dialogue and enhanced cooperation with the business and industry, sea users, local communities and other relevant civil society groups as well as national stakeholders focusing on marine litter, at the appropriate level, to promote the removal of litter from the marine environment in a practical, feasible and environmentally sound manner, to develop best available techniques (BAT) and best environmental practice (BEP), including identification of circumstances of “escapes” of litter into the marine environment as well as new waste management and adaptation practices to achieve a good environmental status;

RECOMMENDS FURTHER that the Contracting Parties review and, if necessary, update this Recommendation and its action plan in 2021;

RECOMMENDS FURTHERMORE that the Governments of the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention foster cross-sectorial cooperation and seek close cooperation with other relevant regional and global organizations and initiatives to combat marine litter, including UNEP and other Regional Seas Conventions (i.a. OSPAR Commission, Barcelona Convention, Black Sea Commission), the International Maritime Organization, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Baltic Sea Advisory Council, and River Basin Commissions including via partnerships with the private sector and with non-governmental organizations.

Actions to reduce the input and presence of marine litter in the Baltic Sea

as part of the HELCOM Regional Action Plan on Marine litter (RAP ML)

1. Types of actions

In line with HELCOM Recommendation 36/1 “The Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP ML)” the Contracting Parties agreed to start implementation of actions on marine litter as included in this Annex to be further developed jointly, assisted by the relevant HELCOM subsidiary bodies including via a lead country/actor approach. In a follow up process to implement the RAP ML, the intention is to develop appropriate actions into concrete measures to prevent and reduce marine litter. In doing so, cost-effectiveness of measures and ongoing activities which can be used for the implementation should be considered.

The actions are divided into regional actions and voluntary national actions.

The regional actions are those, requiring a joint approach by Contracting Parties and of a large-scale, widespread and transboundary character. The joint approach could be, for instance, to address other organizations or institutions having the specific competence to act (e.g. exclusive competences of the European Union, the International Maritime Organization regarding new regulations for shipping).

The voluntary national actions are primarily of national concern and responsibility of the Contracting Parties. They are presented in the format of a pick list for the Contracting Parties to voluntarily select for their implementation according to national relevancy. The voluntary national actions are part of the list with the aim to exchange information and coordinate measures.

Both types of actions are divided into three themes: (i) actions to combat land-based and (ii) sea-based sources of marine litter which include also actions on removal and disposal of litter already present in the marine environment, and (iii) actions for education and outreach. Producing less litter by means of smart production is treated as an integral theme.

The list of actions has been developed through a bottom-up approach whereby a wide array of experts and stakeholders were consulted. Available information on main items and composition of marine litter found in the coastal and marine environments, and amounts and sources of marine litter in the Baltic Sea, has been taken into account. Thus, the list represents areas in which, to the best knowledge, the Contracting Parties need to act, jointly or individually. Further, each of the regional actions include further specification based on first considerations during the workshops for the development of the RAP ML. These specifications can be further worked out with regard to kind of envisaged products or processes for the single actions that are to be delivered or conducted, and are up to amendments according to needs and capacities of Contracting Parties through a lead country approach.

The Contracting Parties agreed to reach a good environmental status of the Baltic Sea by 2020/2021, and the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter will be reviewed and, if necessary, updated in 2021.

2. Regional actions – HELCOM Collective Actions

The following tables compile a number of actions for the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention for joint implementation on the regional scale. Coordination on these collective actions is a key for implementing the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter.

An implementation plan will be subsequently prepared following a lead country approach in order to assign the actions to those countries which are willing to develop them further into concrete measures. The action plan will be revised if necessary. The desired results, or output of the actions should also be specified in course of the planning. Actions linked to the corresponding activities within OSPAR are marked with the reference to the OSPAR Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter. Cooperation is ongoing between the Regional Seas in order to implement the Regional Actions Plans in a coordinated way e.g. to build on each other work and jointly plan implementation.

2.1 Regional actions addressing land-based sources of marine litter

CODE	REGIONAL ACTION	FURTHER SPECIFICATION
General improved waste prevention and management		
RL1	Prepare and agree on HELCOM guidelines on marine litter references to be included in national and local waste prevention and waste management plans, i.a. an element highlighting the impacts of marine litter.	Guidelines by 2017
RL2	Provide HELCOM guidelines on best practice routines with regard to cleaning and collection systems to prevent litter from land entering the aquatic environment.	Guidelines by 2017
RL3	Share best practice on waste management in order to identify and address loopholes that makes waste turn into marine litter, including the issue of landfills, regulations and enforcement:	Overview report on good waste management and loopholes, taking into consideration similar action within OSPAR by 2016.
RL4	Improvement of stormwater management in order to prevent litter, including microlitter, to enter the marine environment from heavy weather events.	By 2018 at the latest HELCOM has compiled information to give guidance on improvements of stormwater management on a local level to prevent and reduce stormwater related waste (including micro litter) entering the marine environment, taking into consideration similar action within OSPAR. If appropriate according to findings of the activity and other relevant information, amend HELCOM Recommendation 28E/5 on municipal wastewater treatment.
RL5	Establish a dialogue and negotiate on solutions with business and industry to (i) develop design improvements that reduce the negative impacts of products entering the marine environment, and (ii) reduce over-packaging and promote wise packaging	Initiatives taken by the private sector.

Measures to tackle top items		
	Micro particles	
RL6	Establish an overview of the importance of the different sources of primary and secondary microplastics. Evaluate products and processes that include both primary and secondary micro plastics, such as fibres from clothing, assess if they are covered or not by legislation, and act, if appropriate, to influence the legal framework, or identify other necessary measures. .	By 2017 an overview on what products and processes contribute to the input of micro plastics to the Baltic Sea, taking into account similar action within OSPAR. By 2018 existing legislation is assessed and necessary measures identified together with relevant stakeholders.
RL7	Investigate and promote best available techniques as well as research and develop additional techniques in waste water treatment plants to prevent micro particles entering the marine environment.	By 2018 HELCOM has compiled information, and prepared a report on micro particles removal in waste water treatment plants taking into account similar action within OSPAR. If appropriate according to findings of the search and other relevant information, amend HELCOM Recommendation 28E/5 on municipal wastewater treatment.
	Sewage related litter including sanitary waste	
RL8	Assess the importance of the contribution of upstream waste flows to the marine environment and, if needed, identify suitable actions.	By 2017 an assessment of the importance of sewage related waste coming from the upstream waste flow is produced. By 2018 share assessment with River and River Basin Commissions and identify measures including the implementation of related regulations; missing elements are identified and guidelines for improvement are presented.
	Expanded Polystyrene (Polystyrene Foam)	
RL9	Compile information on the prevalence and sources of expanded polystyrene (EPS) in the marine environment, and engage with industry to make proposals for alternative solutions (e.g. use of other materials, establishment of deposits, return and restoration systems, overpackaging reduction).	By 2017 an overview of the most significant sources of EPS ending up in the marine environment is produced, in cooperation with OSPAR. Make recommendations to the Contracting Parties on voluntary agreements with the industry on changes in product design and applying best practices when handling EPS by 2019.
	Plastic bags	
RL10	Define and implement appropriate instruments and incentives to reduce the use of plastic bags, including the illustration of the associated costs and environmental impacts (e.g. establishment of levies, deposit fees, taxes or bans on plastic bags). []. Support regional coordination in the Baltic Sea of the implementation of the future revised Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste to reduce the consumption of lightweight plastic carrier bags, for HELCOM Contracting Parties being EU members.	By 2018 HELCOM Contracting Parties start to coordinate and inform each other about consumption of plastic bags on an annual basis. By 2019 establish a reduction target of plastic bags, taking into account the measures which are implemented nationally.
	Bottles and containers	
RL11	Cooperate on the establishment and/or further development of deposit refund systems for bottles, containers and cans (e.g. glass, plastics and aluminum) in the HELCOM Contracting Parties in accordance with national law as appropriate. . Investigate and strive for bilateral and multilateral solutions between the countries for establishment of such systems in relation to passenger ships. .	CPs informing in 2017 on the status/plans regarding the deposit refund systems, including on possible solutions regarding passenger ships.

	Actions addressing third parties	
RL12	Encourage, based on existing labels such as the EU Ecolabel and the Nordic Ecolabel, exchange with international environmental certification schemes for information and inclusion of the management and prevention of marine litter in their lists of criteria.	By 2016 initiate an activity on what certification schemes could be addressed, which existing criteria could be promoted for potential inclusion in international certification systems together with ways and means how to help approving those.
RL13	HELCOM Contracting Parties to seek cooperation with the River and River Basin Commissions, as appropriate, in order to include impacts of litter on the marine environment from riverine inputs, taking into account activities in the context of the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the Bathing Water Directive, and beyond, when applicable. This cooperation should include the exchange of experience on best practice to prevent litter entering into water systems, in line with action RL8.	HELCOM Contracting Parties will continue cooperation with River and River basin Commissions, as appropriate, in order to integrate measures addressing the reduction of littering in river basins followed up by appropriate information exchange on the implementation of measures.
	Remediation and removal actions	
RL14	Address landfills or dumpsites including historic ones which may eventually pose a risk to the marine environment due to factors such as coastal erosion and vicinity to rivers.	By 2020 a regional-wide map on landfills and dumpsites including historic ones which may eventually pose a risk to the marine environment is produced.
RL15	Establish an exchange platform for spreading experiences on good cleaning practices in beaches, including cleaning beaches actions by local communities, riverbanks, pelagic and surface sea areas, ports, marinas and inland waterways, in cooperation with relevant fora. Develop best practice on environmental friendly technologies and methods for cleaning.	Coordinate with other RSCs in order to set up an exchange platform for spreading experiences on good cleaning practices in the different marine compartments and rivers.

2.2. Regional actions addressing sea-based sources of marine litter

CODE	REGIONAL ACTION	FURTHER SPECIFICATION
Actions addressing shipping related waste		
RS1	Development of best practice on the disposal of old pleasure boats (i.e. intentional disposal of the boats at the ending of their lifetime in the sea and on shore).	Best practice developed by 2018
RS2	Develop best practice in relation to inspections for MARPOL Annex V, including harmonized management of data. Support regional coordination of IMO regulations in accordance with EU requirements for those HELCOM countries which are EU members.	Best practice developed in cooperation with Paris MoU by 2017
RS3	Further work on implementation and harmonization of the no-special-fee system in ports of the Baltic Sea countries, addressing: – gaps in existing regulations, – enforcement and practices concerning shipping, – port reception facilities auditing to assess adequacy of garbage collection, – fair waste burden sharing between ports.	Evaluate the implementation of HELCOM Recommendation (28E-10), starting 2016
Actions addressing waste delivery in ports/marinas		
RS4	Implementation of the ISO standard (ISO 201070:2013) in relation to port reception facilities. Differentiate according to the size of the port. Promote the development of regional statistics on waste collected in ports based on existing information as far as possible.	Assess how many ports are operating according to ISO standards and to propose action as appropriate by 2017.

	Actions addressing waste related to fishing and aquaculture	
RS5	Promote and disseminate best practice in relation to all relevant aspects of waste management within the fishing sector (including e.g. waste management on board, waste management at harbors and operational losses/net cuttings).	By 2018, based on the OSPAR outcome, select best practices to be disseminated in the Baltic Sea.
RS6	Through a multinational project, such as the MARELITT Baltic project, together with the fishing industry and other stakeholders, develop and promote best practice in relation to ALDFG and derelict fishing gear and their removal.	Best Practice developed by 2017, the issues is promoted within HELCOM-EUSBSR cooperation
RS7	Compile information and elaborate guidelines on best practices to reduce the input of ALDFG from commercial and recreational fishing to the Baltic Sea taking into account geographical particularities; utilize UNEP RSC report and FAO on ALDFG as a starting point and focus on regional specifics	Guidelines developed by 2017 taking into account geographical particularities.
RS8	Identify the options to address key waste items from the fishing and aquaculture industry, which could contribute to marine litter, including deposit schemes and extended producer responsibility.	Late 2016 assess the use of OSPAR document and in consultation with the Baltic Sea Advisory Council consider and agree on the way forward to address key waste items from the fishing and aquaculture industries.
RS9	Investigate the use and prevalence of dolly ropes (bunches of polyethylene threads used to protect the cod end of demersal trawl nets from abrasions; synthetic fibre) in the areas of the Baltic Sea where they are used and consider the need to act.	Consider the outcome of the study on the impact of dolly ropes currently under development by the Netherlands. Baltic Sea Advisory Council is to be invited to be involved in this activity.
	Remediation and removal measures	
RS10	Mapping of snagging sites or historic dumping grounds and a risk assessment for identifying where accumulation of ghost nets pose a threat to the environment and should be removed.	As part of the assessment to be developed by HELCOM SUBMERGED by 2016. Mapping by 2017. Risk assessment by 2018.
RS11	Based on the risk assessment conducted in RS10 and identification of accumulation areas, initiate removal of ghost nets and their safe management on land.	The aim is to increase the removal and disposal of the nets, and that statistics are available to confirm the increasing trend.
RS12	Enter into the partnership with international and regional organizations (e.g. KIMO, NABU, OSPAR Commission) as well as port authorities, to encourage implementation of passive Fishing for Litter schemes, to collect litter caught in fishing nets during normal fishing activities.	Increasing trends in the number of vessels from the fishing sector involved in the schemes.

2.3. Regional actions addressing education and outreach on marine litter

CODE	REGIONAL ACTION	FURTHER SPECIFICATION
General improved waste prevention and management		
RE1	To prepare information sheets to assist Contracting Parties in developing material for education programs, especially for professional seafarers including fishermen, highlighting the marine litter problem and including codes of practice in cooperation with relevant organisations including IMO.	Information sheets to be prepared by 2016
RE2	HELCOM website to be updated periodically based on the input from Contracting Parties on marine litter management activities.	2015 initial information uploaded (simplified BSAP follow up system)
RE3	Develop a communication strategy for this Regional Action Plan linked in a coherent way with national initiatives/actions. This will include linking the HELCOM website to relevant projects and initiatives.	2016

3. Voluntary national actions

The following tables compile a number of proposed actions for the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention for voluntary implementation. These actions aim at information exchange and coordination but are primarily of national concern and in the responsibility of the Contracting Parties.

Therefore, the following lists of actions can be seen as a pick list for possible actions which can be chosen, according to national findings, e.g. for inclusion in the national programmes of measures (PoM) to fulfill the requirements of the MSFD for those Contracting Parties which are also EU Member States.

3.1. Voluntary national actions addressing land-based sources of marine litter

CODE	PROPOSED NATIONAL ACTIONS
General improved waste prevention and management	
NL1	National and local waste prevention and waste management plans: * to include a reference to marine litter * to include an element highlighting the impacts of marine litter * to consider the cleaning and cleansing provision/infrastructure in municipalities by the coast or rivers and to make the necessary improvements to prevent sources and pathways of litter from land entering the aquatic environment.
NL2	Promote Extended Producer Responsibility Strategies requiring producers, manufacturers, brand owners and first importers to be responsible for the entire life-cycle of the product with measures prioritizing the hierarchy of waste management in order to encourage companies to design products with long durability for reuse, recycling and materials reduction in weight and toxicity. Focus to be made on items frequently found in the marine environment.
NL3	Improvement of stormwater management in order to prevent litter, including microlitter, from heavy weather events and to enter the marine environment.
Measures to tackle top items	
	Micro particles
NL4	Encourage voluntary reporting of companies on their products formulas (i.e. that they do not contain micro particles) towards HELCOM Contracting Parties. Bring in certification schemes, such as Blue Angel, EU Ecolabel, Nordic Ecolabel, etc. Promote a no-littering policy in national parks and protected areas, i.e. visitors should carry out everything they carry in.
NL5	Establish an overview of the importance of the different sources of primary and secondary microplastics. Evaluate products and processes that include both primary and secondary micro plastics, assess if they are covered or not by legislation, and act, if appropriate, to reduce the potential impact on the marine environment and to influence the legal framework. This must include the engagement with all appropriate sectors such as manufacturers and retailers. With regard to the use of primary microplastics in personal care products formulations the possible impact on the marine environment should be reduced by applying substitutes. For other areas of applications appropriate solutions need to be defined.
	Sewage related litter including sanitary waste
NL6	Clarify and, if needed, carry out research on the importance of sewage related waste in the upstream waste flows (i.e. sewage treatments applied, efficiency of the treatments, existence of untreated sewage, storm water influence, psychology behind people's behavior related to flushing the toilet, identification of missing elements).
	Plastic bags
NL7	Support local pilot projects phasing out, replacing, and reducing single-use plastic bags. Strive for voluntary agreements with retailers and supermarkets to set an objective of reduction of plastic bags consumption.
	Bottles and containers
NL8	Establish deposit refund systems for bottles, containers and cans (glass, plastics and aluminum), including the establishment of such systems on passenger ships and related harbors. Encourage refill systems and recycling, e.g. bulk and refill/reusable container for dry food and cleaning products, when applicable.

	Cigarette butts
NL9	Establish ashtrays in public areas such as beaches and outside restaurants, bars, public buildings (inland and along the coasts, ferries).
Remediation and removal measures	
NL10	Map (and highlight) landfills or dumpsites, including including historic ones which may eventually pose a risk to the marine environment due to factors such as coastal erosion, vicinity to rivers, and take appropriate action.
NL11	Establish an exchange platform for spreading experiences on good cleaning practices in beaches, including cleaning beaches actions by local communities, riverbanks, pelagic and surface sea areas, ports, marinas and inland waterways, in cooperation with relevant fora. Develop best practice on environmental friendly technologies and methods for cleaning.

3.2. Voluntary national actions addressing sea-based sources of marine litter

CODE	PROPOSED NATIONAL ACTIONS
General improved waste prevention and management	
NS1	Ensure the full implementation of HELCOM Convention Article 8 (Annex IV), especially Regulation 6; in line with related international agreements such as MARPOL V and related EU legislation (59/2000/EG) with regard to discharge of wastes to port reception facilities, and Article 9 on adequate reception facilities for pleasure crafts.
Actions addressing shipping related waste including waste delivery in ports/marinas	
NS2	Improve and follow-up enforcement of MARPOL Annex V.
NS3	Ensure and gather information on the implementation in ports of HELCOM Recommendation 28E/10: Application of the no-special-fee system to ship-generated wastes and marine litter caught in fishing nets in the Baltic Sea area.
NS4	Promotion of garbage collection for pleasure crafts by marinas (i.a. Blue Flag Marinas requirements related to the availability of pump-out stations and sustainable waste management).
Actions addressing waste related to fishing and aquaculture	
NS5	Improve enforcement of EU Regulation 404/2011 on gear marking.
NS6	Improve enforcement of EU Regulation 1224/2009 on reporting lost gear.
NS7	Enhance resource efficiency by facilitating markets and applications for plastic waste from the fishing, aquaculture and shipping industry (e.g. by bringing together producers of waste and recycling companies) by looking at specific items and differences in materials, including giving value to waste streams by financial incentives.
Remediation and removal actions	
NS8	Based on the risk assessment and identification of accumulation areas initiate removal of ghost nets and their safe management on land.
NS9	Promote removal of lost fishing gear.
NS10	Encourage fishing vessels to be involved in passive Fishing for Litter schemes, where they are available.

3.3. Voluntary national actions addressing education and outreach on marine litter

CODE	PROPOSED NATIONAL ACTIONS
NE1	Promote and undertake education activities on marine litter in synergy with existing initiatives in the field of sustainable development and in partnership with civil society (including activities related to prevention and promotion of sustainable consumption and production).
NE2	Identify and promote curricula for marine related education, including both professional seafarers and the recreational sector (e.g. diving and sailing schools), which develop awareness, understanding, and respect for the marine environment and secure commitment to responsible behavior at personal, local, national and global level.
NE3	Encourage participation in International, EU and National Marine Litter Cleanup Campaigns.
NE4	Promote the “Adopt a beach” system.
NE5	Raising public awareness, including for children and youths and consumer campaigns, on the occurrence, and prevention of marine litter (e.g. to use ashtrays in public areas inland and along the coast), including micro particles, taking into account existing materials (e.g. Marlisco Project) and accompanied by image campaigns addressing threats/impact to marine life from various harmful litter items, such as cigarette filters.
NE6	Enhance cooperation and coordination with global marine initiatives such as: – The UNEP’s Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA-Marine); – Regional Seas Action Plans; – The Global Partnership on Waste Management (GPWM); and – The Honolulu Commitment and the Honolulu Strategy on marine debris.

Appendix I – Reporting format on implementation of actions

Country	
Date	
Contact person	
Affiliation	
E-mail	
Telephone	
Skype	
Type of action ¹	
Code of action ²	
Action	
Implementation period	From: To:
Status	
Description of the action	
Responsible organization	
Other organizations involved	
Geographical area covered	
URL to the initiative	
Type of marine litter targeted³	
Compartment targeted⁴	
Source targeted⁵	

1 - Please select accordingly: L –actions addressing land-based sources of marine litter; S – actions addressing sea-based sources of marine litter; E – actions addressing education and outreach on marine litter.

2 - If the action is listed in the Annex to the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, please provide its code. Otherwise, leave the space blank.

3 - Select from the following keywords, the best that adjust to the types of marine litter targeted by the action. If none is appropriate please indicate “other” and provide further details:

Keyword	Description
ALDFG	Abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear
Food related waste	Food and beverage related waste, i.a. plastic and glass bottles, “six-pack” rings, plastic caps/lids, disposable cutlery and cups, straws
Plastic bags	Single use plastic bags and shopping bags
Plastic waste	All type of plastic waste. Indicate as appropriate: macro-, meso- (5 mm and 2,5 cm in size), micro-plastics or plastic microbeads
Sanitary waste	Household sanitary waste, i.a. sanitary pads and/or tampons, diapers, razors, cotton bud sticks
Smoking related waste	Disposable lighters, cigar tips, cigarette butts

4 - Please select accordingly: beach, water column, water surface, sea bed, tidal flat, river bank, shipwreck, sediment, biota.

5 - Please indicate which land-based or sea-based source of marine litter is addressed by the action.

Appendix II – Reporting format on the effectiveness of the implemented actions

Country	
Date	
Contact person	
Affiliation	
E-mail	
Telephone	
Skype	
Type of action¹	
Code of action²	
Action	
Implementation period	From: To:
Status	
Description of the action	
Responsible organization	
Other organizations involved	
Geographical area covered	
URL to the initiative	
Type of marine litter targeted³	
Compartment targeted⁴	
Source targeted⁵	
Cost of the initiative	
Financing source	
Challenges⁶	
Results achieved	
Results expected	
Negative impacts	
Next steps	
Comments	

1 - Please select accordingly: L – actions addressing land-based sources of marine litter; S – actions addressing sea-based sources of marine litter; E – actions addressing education and outreach on marine litter.

2 - If the action is listed in the Recommendation, please provide its code. Otherwise, leave the space in blank.

3 - Select from the following keywords, the best that adjust to the types of marine litter targeted by the action. If none is appropriate please indicate “other” and provide further details:

Keyword	Description
ALDFG	Abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear
Food related waste	Food and beverage related waste, i.a. plastic and glass bottles, “six-pack” rings, plastic caps/lids, disposable cutlery and cups, straws
Plastic bags	Single use plastic bags and shopping bags
Plastic waste	All type of plastic waste. Indicate as appropriate: macro-, meso- (5 mm and 2,5 cm in size), micro-plastics or plastic microbeads
Sanitary waste	Household sanitary waste, i.a. sanitary pads and/or tampons, diapers, razors, cotton bud sticks
Smoking related waste	Disposable lighters, cigar tips, cigarette butts

4 - Please select accordingly: beach, water column, water surface, sea bed, tidal flat, river bank, shipwreck, sediment, biota. Please indicate whether it is a “protected area” or a “non-protected area”.

5 - Please indicate which land-based or sea-based source of marine litter is addressed by the action.

6 - Please provide a brief description of the challenges encountered: technical, logistical, political, financial, institutional and cultural if appropriate.

Appendix III – Definition of terms for the purpose of this Recommendation

- a) “Abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear or parts thereof” (ALFDG) or “Derelict fishing gear” (DFG) are the collective terms for commercial and recreational fishing gear that has been abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded into the marine environment and causes negative biological impacts through, e.g. unintentional catches of fish (a process which is often referred to as “ghost fishing”), coverage of sensitive habitats and/or fragmentation into micro-particles that could enter the food chain;
- b) “Fishing for litter” means the collection of marine litter and its subsequent landing in ports and proper disposal by fishermen, whether “passive” (litter is collected during their regular fishing activities) or “active” (litter is collected by fishermen on duty for that specific purpose);
- c) “Fishing gear” includes all items/elements onboard fishing vessels that are used for fishing purposes, including fish aggregating devices (FADs);
- d) “IUU fishing gear” means any fishing gear, marked or not marked, used for the purpose of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing;
- e) “Marine litter” means any persistent, manufactured or processed solid material discarded, disposed of or abandoned in the marine and coastal environment. Marine litter consists of items that have been made or used by people and deliberately discarded or unintentionally lost into the sea and on beaches including such material transported into the marine environment from land by rivers, draining or sewage systems or winds. For example, marine litter consists of plastics, wood, metals, glass, rubber, clothing, paper, etc. This definition does not include semi-solid remains of, for example, mineral and vegetable oils, and chemicals that sometimes litter sea and shores;
- f) “Macro litter” means the fraction of marine litter of more than 2,5 cm in size;
- g) “Micro litter” means the fraction of marine litter of less than 5 mm in size with a further division into “Large Micro Particles” (1-5mm) and “Small Micro Particles” (<1mm);
- h) “Personal care product” means an article intended to be rubbed, poured, sprinkled, or sprayed on, introduced to, or otherwise applied to, the human body or any part thereof for cleansing, beautifying, promoting attractiveness, or altering the appearance and an article intended for use as a component of such an article;
- i) “Primary microplastics” means plastics produced in microscopic size either for the direct use in products (such as microbeads used, e.g. in cosmetic peeling products or for cleaning purposes of ship hulks) or indirect use (such as pre-productions pellets or nurdles);
- j) “Secondary microplastics” means the fraction of microplastics in the marine environment which results from the breakdown of larger items in numerous tiny fragments due to mechanical forces and/or photochemical processes, as well as from other degradation sources such as fibres in wastewater from washing clothes and particles of rubber lost from tyres due to normal wear.



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