



G20 Action Plan on Marine Litter

Introduction

The G20 recognizes the urgent need for action to prevent and reduce marine litter in order to preserve human health and marine and coastal ecosystems, and mitigate marine litter's economic costs and impacts. We stress the direct relationship between the challenge of marine litter, environment, human health, economic development, social well-being, biodiversity and food security.

Realizing the global nature of the challenge of marine litter, the G20 will work together to promote and initiate measures and actions at local, national, and regional levels to prevent and reduce marine litter. We recognize that the lack of effective solid waste management, wastewater treatment and storm water systems, and unsustainable production and consumption patterns, are primary land-based sources and pathways of marine litter. Taking into account the need for comprehensive multi-stakeholder involvement, we as the G20 acknowledge the role of non-state actors and further encourage private sector engagement and the development of environmental protection solutions to reduce marine litter.

We recognize the challenge posed by knowledge gaps. We consider UNEP's report on "Marine plastic debris and microplastics - global lessons and research to inspire action and guide policy change" and the GESAMP reports in 2015 and 2016 on "Sources, fate and effects of microplastics in the marine environment: A global assessment", and The First Global Integrated Marine Assessment (World Ocean Assessment I, which is the outcome of the First Cycle of the Regular Process) as positive foundations on which to base further work on marine litter. In accordance with and acknowledging relevant UN resolutions and commitments and where applicable within different regional seas conventions, programs and initiatives, as well as action plans and measures in place (as referred to in the annex to this document), we will continue to share knowledge and experiences and support further research into marine litter and its prevention to fill evidence-based knowledge gaps. A lack of certainty in scientific evidence can no longer be accepted as an excuse for non-action. Recognizing that a large majority of G20 are members to a Regional Cooperation, Action Programs, Action Plans etc., we are determined to complement existing initiatives, experiences and expertise, and work to incorporate them into the G20 approach.

We, the G20, will take action to prevent and reduce marine litter of all kinds, including from single-use plastics and micro-plastics. We thus reiterate our commitment to preventing and substantially reducing marine litter and its impacts by 2025 in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals and targets related to



marine pollution, waste management, waste water treatment and sustainable consumption and production by putting into practice the following 'G20 Operational Framework' and the voluntary Global Network of the Committed (GNC).

G20 Operational Framework

Issues to be addressed

The G20 maintains that the tools to reduce marine litter have to be as diverse as the challenge of marine litter itself. There is no 'one size fits all' solution. We **reiterate the need to:**

- address pollution from land based sources,
- address pollution from sea based sources, including key waste items from the fishing and aquaculture industry as well as from the shipping sector,
- address financial resources for cost-effectiveness analyses as well as measures for marine litter prevention or reduction,
- put in place effective actions e.g. to facilitate the implementation of the polluter pays approach, e.g. 'extended producer responsibility' or deposit schemes - already in place in some G20 countries as appropriate and develop new sources of funding for effective waste management systems, as well as stimulate innovation;
- address education and outreach, and
- address additional research requirements.

Given that in many regions the largest amount of marine litter entering the oceans worldwide stems from land-based sources, waste reduction and waste management, as well as waste water management, including storm water, deserve priority actions.

The G20 emphasizes its need to work on land- and sea-based sources of marine litter and commits to focusing on the following priority areas in accordance with national circumstances.

Areas of prior concern and potential policy measures:

1. Promote the socio-economic benefits of establishing policies to prevent marine litter

- a) Acknowledge and promote the socio-economic benefits of preventing marine litter and reduction measures in terms of employment generation including the informal sector, tourism development, sustainable fisheries, waste and wastewater management, biodiversity and other areas
- b) Identify policy measures on the basis of risk and impact assessments (including economic, social and environmental costs and benefits)



- c) Facilitate communication and cooperation between impacting and impacted municipalities, countries and regions as well as with other stakeholders
- d) Promote partnerships with stakeholders from economic sectors such as tourism, fisheries, the shipping and cruise sectors, waste, waste water and harbour management, as well as the plastics and consumer goods industries.
- e) Develop highly qualified scientific and technical staff for monitoring and assessing marine litter and alleviating its impacts (e.g. treatment centres for injured animals such as turtles etc.)

2. Promote waste prevention and resource efficiency

- a) Utilize the waste hierarchy and the '3 Rs' (reduce, reuse, recycle) approach, according to which waste prevention should be the first option, followed by reuse and recycling
- b) Promote mechanisms to involve producers, importers and retailers in the establishment of resource-efficient product value chains from design to end-of-life treatment and in financing waste collection and treatment
- c) Significantly reduce the use of micro-beads and single-use plastic bags and where appropriate phase them out
- d) Implement source reducing measures, e.g. Sustainable Material Management (SMM), by paying attention to product innovation, product design and consumer behaviour (product use)
- e) Significantly reduce the loss of plastic pellets during production and transport

3. Promote sustainable waste management

- a) Support integrated sustainable waste management including infrastructure (for collection and treatment)
- b) Promote access to regular waste collection services and facilitate investments in waste management infrastructure in order to prevent waste leakage into the sea
- c) Where needed, integrate informal waste workers into modernized waste management systems in order to improve their working conditions and livelihoods
- d) Support international cooperation among the G20 and with other partners, for capacity development and infrastructure investments for improved waste management systems in coastal, urban and rural areas
- e) Establish adequate port reception facilities at ports and terminals in line with MARPOL requirements, in particular Annex V. Encourage port reception facilities to apply a reasonable cost or when applicable no-special-fee system for waste of sea-based sources



- f) Promote regulatory frameworks on environmentally sound management of waste in order to facilitate its implementation at local levels
- g) Secure cross-financing of waste management operational activities (e.g. through economic incentives, fees, charges, deposit funds or taxes)
- h) Surmount barriers to financing waste management, e.g. by de-risking private waste management infrastructure investment in G20 Countries (cf. APEC model)

4. Promote effective waste water treatment and storm water management

- a) Consider providing and extending wastewater treatment coverage
- b) Facilitate investment in wastewater treatment infrastructure in order to prevent waste leakage into the sea
- c) Promote available technologies to avoid large solid waste from entering into rivers and oceans

5. Raise awareness, promote education & research

- a) Promote public information campaigns for citizens and businesses to reduce waste generation, to re-use and to facilitate their participation in waste collection systems and to avoid littering
- b) Support research and coordination among countries and international organizations to identify and remediate through environmentally sound methods sources of marine waste, concentrated areas of marine litter (national, regional, local), taking into account, inter alia, litter loads and sensitivity of biodiversity and ecosystems and document defining characteristics (lack of infrastructure, geography, product use and impacts on marine biodiversity and human health)
- c) Support research to assess marine litter impacts on ecosystems and human health
- d) Promote knowledge sharing, e.g. by expert exchange, thus strengthening institutional and human capacities
- e) Include scientific and technical aspects in measure-related considerations, inter alia by promoting and, where under way, continuing and supporting efforts with regard to harmonization of global marine litter monitoring, as well as by standardization of methods, data and evaluation

6. Support removal and remediation action

- a) Support research and coordination to identify environmentally sound removal and remediation actions
- b) Develop guidance and toolkits and support their implementation
- c) Promote activities to clean up marine litter in a planned and regular manner



7. Strengthen the engagement of stakeholders

- a) Seek to continue communicating about marine litter (amongst G20 partners as well as with third parties)
- b) Contribute to implementing existing regional plans tackling marine litter and developing new such plans, where useful
- c) Accept appropriate responsibilities and act as a focal point in existing networks and co-operations involving G20 members
- d) Continue to involve stakeholders (in particular local authorities, civil society organization, Industry, Financial Institutions and Scientific Experts)
- e) Stimulate and support Public Private Partnership (PPP) as relevant
- f) Promote the engagement of the private sector in reducing marine litter and in developing integrated waste management and waste water treatment solutions
- g) Promote the issue of marine litter in high level economic forums (e.g. World Economic Forum and Green Financing Forum)
- h) Inform about G20-related activities in international forums, inter alia SDG 14 Conference (New York), Our Oceans Conference, (Malta), APEC, ASEAN, and possible G20-side events, 6th International Marine Debris Conference (San Diego)
- i) Promote knowledge sharing, e.g. by expert exchange, thus strengthening institutional and human capacities
- j) Harness existing business (B20) engagement to promote a dialogue on the contributions of industry to tackling marine litter
- k) Communicate results, effects, achievements of measures, activities and projects that address marine litter
- l) Promote cooperation between authorities responsible for freshwater and marine water



Global Network

Helping to support implementation of the activities within relevant work areas, the G20 launches a voluntary **Global Network of the Committed – GNC**, a platform addressing marine litter linked to the UNEP's Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML) to offer and secure exchange, dissemination and transfer of information, standards, experiences and knowledge.

The network will offer a platform to share knowledge and experiences on the implementation of the G20 Action Plan on Marine Litter and the GPML Steering Committee will support the development of terms of reference for the GNC.



Annex

Quotation and citation (non-exhaustive)

of conventions, programs and initiatives, action plans and measures, and relevant UN resolutions:

- Barcelona Convention (Legally Binding Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management, 2013)
- Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal
- Bucharest Convention
- CBD (2012): Report – “Impacts of Marine Debris on Biodiversity: Current Status and Potential Solutions” (CBD Technical Series No. 67)
- CBD DECISION XIII/10 (2016): Addressing impacts of marine debris and anthropogenic underwater noise on marine and coastal biodiversity
- EU Marine Strategic Framework Directive (Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy)
- G7-Presidencies (chronological order):
 - Germany (2015): G7 Action Plan to Combat Marine Litter
 - Japan (2016): G7 Ise-Shima Leaders' Declaration Communique; G7 Toyama Environment Ministers' Meeting; Tsukuba Communique G7 Science and Technology Minister's Meeting in Tsukuba, Ibaraki; Tokyo Message on the Standardization and Harmonization of Marine Litter Monitoring from the 2016 Expert Workshop
 - Italy (2017): G7 Workshop on Marine Litter “Mainstreaming the work of the Regional Sea Programmes towards the better implementation of the G7 Action Plan and the achievement of the global commitments on marine litter”
- G20 resource efficiency dialogue [*inclusion subject to endorsement by G20 members*]
- Habitat III (2016): New Urban Agenda
- Helsinki Convention (Regional Action Plan, 2015)
- Honolulu Strategy (2011): Globally framing an Action Plan to prevent, reduce and manage marine litter
- International coalition “Stop Plastic Waste” launched at COP22
- International Convention for the Prevention of Marine Pollution from Ships, 1973 (MARPOL 73/78) and its revised Annex V
- International Coral Reef Initiative
- Manila Declaration (2012): Global Programme of Action - Marine Litter becoming an additional major component



- OECD Guidelines on Extended Producer responsibility (update 2017)
- OSPAR Convention (Regional Action Plan, 2014)
- Rio + 20 Declaration (2013): “Significant reduction of marine litter until 2025.”
- UN SDG 14.1 (2015): „By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution“
- UNEA I (2014): Resolution on Marine plastic debris and microplastics
- UNEA II (2016): Resolution on Oceans and Seas and on Marine Litter and microplastics
- United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)