

Marine Litter: Social Awareness and Co-responsibility

Joana M. Veiga¹, Thomas K. Doyle², Bonny Hartley³, Richard Thompson³, Peter Kershaw⁴, Thomie Vlachogianni⁵, Iro Alampei⁵, Demetra L. Orthodoxou⁶, Xenia I. Loizidou⁶, Matthias Mossbauer⁷ and Luigi Alcaro⁸

(1) Coastal & Marine Union (EUCC)

P.O. Box 11232, 2301 EE Leiden, The Netherlands

Tel.: +31 71 5122900, Fax: +31 71 5124069

E-mail: j.veiga@eucc.net

(2) University College Cork, Ireland

Coastal & Marine Research Institute, University College Cork

Naval Base, Cobh, Ireland

Tel.: +353 21 4703119, Fax: +353 214701932

E-mail: t.doyle@ucc.ie

(3) Plymouth University, United Kingdom

School of Marine Science and Engineering, University of Plymouth,

Drake Circus, Plymouth, PL4 8AA, United Kingdom

Tel.: +44 1752 584651, Fax: +44 1752 584605

E-mail: Bonny Hartley bonny.hartley@plymouth.ac.uk

E-mail: R.C.Thompson@plymouth.ac.uk

(4) Centre for Environment, Fisheries & Aquaculture (Cefas)

Pakefield Road, Lowestoft, United Kingdom

Tel: +44 1502 562244, Fax +44 1502 513865

E-mail: peter.kershaw@cefasc.co.uk

(5) Mediterranean Information Centre (MIO-ECSDE)

12, Kyrristou str., 105 56 Athens, Greece

Tel.: +30 210 3247490, Fax: +30 210 3317127

E-mail: vlachogianni@mio-ecsde.org

E-mail: alampei@mio-ecsde.org

(6) ISOTECH Ltd Environmental Research and Consultancy

1 Kalliopis Str. & Larnakos Ave., Apt. 401,2102 Aglantzia, Nicosia, Cyprus

Tel: +357 22452727, Fax: +357 22458486

E-mail: xenia@isotech.com.cy

E-mail: project@isotech.com.cy

(7) The Coastal Union – Germany

(c/o) Leibniz-Institut für Ostseeforschung Warnemünde,

Seestraße 15, 18119 Warnemünde, Germany

E-mail: matthias.mossbauer@io-warnemuende.de

(8) Province of Teramo, B7 Sector, Via Milli 2, 64100 Teramo, Italy

Tel: +39 861331407, Fax +39 861 331206

E-mail: l.alcaro@provincia.teramo.it

ABSTRACT

Marine Litter – any human-made item that accidentally or purposely reaches the coastal or marine environment – but in particular its plastic fraction, is now globally recognised as an emerging issue of concern, that leads to major economic costs to maritime and coastal sectors, ecologic impacts and possibly other not yet fully-understood risks. Marine litter originates from land and sea-based sources, at different levels of the life-cycle of the item. Given the cross-sectorial nature of this issue and the fact that the way we produce and manage waste reflects our social and economic paradigms, marine litter is a complex problem, where responsibilities are often unclear and the burden of costs unequally divided.

In the last few years, marine litter has received major attention from the European Commission: it represents one of the 11 descriptors within the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and several funding schemes have been made available to improve the understanding of associated processes and implications but also to promote and facilitate the coordination of efforts of its Member States towards effective solutions.

MARLISCO - *Marine Litter in Europe's Seas: Social Awareness and Co-responsibility* is a FP7 – *Science in Society* project (2012-2015) that seeks to raise societal awareness, trigger co-responsibility across the different sectors and facilitate dialogue between the different players on both the problems and the potential solutions regarding marine litter.

MARLISCO will provide a series of mechanisms to engage and empower key stakeholders and implement awareness activities which will be tailored appropriately to the targeting sector. This will be achieved by organising activities across 15 European countries, including national forums in 12 of them, involving industry sectors, scientists and the public; a European video contest for school students; educational activities and tools targeting the younger generation; and exhibitions to raise awareness among the wider public. MARLISCO will make use of innovative multimedia approaches to reach the widest possible audience, in the most effective manner. The project will develop and evaluate approaches that can be used to address the problems associated with marine litter and which can also be applied more widely to other societal challenges where there are substantial benefits to be achieved through better integration among researchers, stakeholders and society.