## A Novel Best Practices Approach: The Marlisco Case

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MARLISCO 'Marine Litter in Europe Seas: Social Awareness and Co-Responsibility', is an FP-7 funded project that aims to develop and evaluate an approach that can be used to address the problems associated with marine litter and that can be applied more widely to other societal challenges. Considering that marine litter is a key threat to marine habitats, MARLISCO aims to achieve substantial benefits through better integration among researchers, stakeholders and society. One of the project aims is to identify best practices that can effectively minimise the amount of marine litter in European Seas. In MARLISCO, best practices were approached in a novel and smart way, trying to get the most impacts and added value for the innovative character of MARLISCO. Best practices served as a tool to identify the most implementable practices to be promoted, but also served as tool for enhancing key actors active participation and capacity building through the implementation of an innovative decision support method. The process for the evaluation of best practices and key actors involvement, took place in Cyprus from February 2013 to May 2013. A detailed mapping of marine litter stakeholders took place, and the dedicated decision support tool DeCyDe-4-Marlisco was developed and implemented. The key actors and stakeholder panel was set up, the evaluation criteria have been define, DeCyDe-4-Marlisco matrices have been prepared and the evaluation process took place with the participation of the key actors, which demanded the achievement of consensus for each decision. The method uses a numerical approach that quantifies the results, rather than simply providing qualitative indications, so that at the end of the assessment, each best practice is assigned an overall score. This means that the user can easily check what would happen if the scoring of a best practice is changed for one or more of the criteria. The evaluation of Marlisco best practices implementing the DeCyDe-4-Marlisco tool, identified five interesting attributes as "preferences" for a successful marine litter management practice: 1. Preference in preventative measures rather than mitigating actions 2. Preference in practices with high degree of social responsibility 3. Preference in initiatives that involve the public and promote active citizenship 4. The support of the local administration has been considered as indication for sustainability 5. Monitoring of the implementation of each practice is crucial. It is important to have Data/information in order to record and document the impact of a best practice, which otherwise is hard to assess. Also the paper presents a snapshot of the key

attributes of the recorded best practices as a means of helping the reader, and particularly decision makers, recognise the characteristics that will make their marine litter management efforts more successful.