



Event Report

EPPA

Regional Workshop on Managing Marine Litter in EPPA Countries

– Challenges, Approaches, Developments

11-12 September, 2019

Split, Croatia



This Project is funded
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NIRAS umweltbundesamt[®]

The project implemented by the Consortium of NIRAS (lead)
and Umweltbundesamt GmbH

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ANNEXES

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1 Introduction

The regional workshop

The regional workshop on *Managing Marine Litter in EPPA Countries – Challenges, Approaches, Developments* took place in Split, Croatia, on September 11-12. The workshop was organized in cooperation with TAIEX and under the EPPA project work programme, namely activity 3.2, “Capacity building and technical assistance for managing marine litter and support to the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive”. The venue was chosen to capitalize on the cooperation experience between Croatia, Montenegro and Albania managing marine litter, formalized in the trilateral commission.

The participants of the workshop came from the relevant authorities of the EPPA beneficiary countries, including ministerial water departments, marine and coastal management departments, waste departments, EU integration and strategic planning departments, and representatives of environmental civil society organizations from the beneficiary region. More details are available in the list of participants (Annex 2).

Seeking to both pass knowledge and exchange experiences, the programme had a mix of EU speakers and speakers from the beneficiaries. The former presented their experience and some case studies with the marine litter policy framework in the EU. The latter presented their challenges with the transposition and implementation of the pertinent *acquis* in a pre-accession and accession context.

Marine litter

Marine ecosystems face increasing pressure from human activities both on land and at sea, through marine litter which is widely recognized as a significant threat to the marine environment, causing environmental, economic, health and aesthetic problems. It is estimated that more than 150 million tons of plastics have accumulated in the world's oceans, with a rapid dissemination.

There is a large number of initiatives at the EU level. The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) requires EU Member States to ensure that, by 2020, “properties and quantities of marine litter (Descriptor 10) do not cause harm to the coastal and marine environment”. A Guidance on Monitoring of Marine Litter in the European Seas (2013), and more recently, thematic reports on sources of litter, on riverine litter monitoring and on harm from marine litter have been produced to support the Member States in reaching Good Environmental Status (GES) for marine litter. Most of the proposed actions of the Strategy for Plastics, adopted by the Commission on 16th January 2018, as part of Europe's **transition towards a circular economy**, are related to marine litter, including its international dimension, which is relevant for EPPA countries. Further, actions on plastics were identified as priority in the Circular Economy Action Plan, which offers the most appropriate approach to the marine litter problem considering preventing/reducing of waste, recycling and reuse of materials.

Other directions of approaching the marine litter problems are offered through the policy and regulatory framework of Barcelona Convention which aims to protect the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment while boosting the implementation of regional and national plans to achieve sustainable development.

2 Objectives of the training and expected results

The aim of the workshop was to strengthen national capacities of EPPA countries for effectively addressing the large number of implementation challenges of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and Barcelona Convention regarding marine litter issues, in the context of achieving circular economy, and in synergy with the process of reaching the Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives.

Specific Objectives:

- To present the sources of marine litter both sea and land based and discuss legal instruments for assessing, monitoring, setting targets and reaching good environmental status regarding marine litter



- To discuss marine litter within the European Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), defining targets and approaches to reach the Good Environmental Status (GES)
- To present the policy areas, such as waste and wastewater management, shipping or fisheries, and their interlinkages and social and economic dimensions
- To examine measures to address the land-based source of pollution to reach the target for reducing by 30% beach litter through the Action Plan of Circular Economy
- To discuss results from the assessments regarding marine litter within the frame of different EU initiatives, projects and activities, such as Aqua Lit project, GiZ projects on Marine litter, Black Sea Commission initiatives
- To present the environmental and socio-economic benefits of establishing policies to prevent marine litter
- To examine the role, approaches and coordination needs for addressing marine litter issues
- To explore any national obstacles (involvement and commitment, data and methodologies, coordination and cooperation, capacity building needs) towards addressing marine litter
- To facilitate dialogue among the countries on marine litters approaches, results, funding and international cooperation with the frame of international agreements, conventions and action plans
- To benefit of TAIEX assistance for a more profound understanding of key marine litter topics based on countries needs and priorities.

3 Highlights from the workshop

3.1 Introduction to the workshop

The first day of the regional workshop was chaired by Ms. Mihaela Popovici. It was noted that 1) the Albanian delegation would miss the first day because of a missed flight connection and 2) the project team leader, Mr. Mihail Dimovski, would also miss the first day because of family reasons. Ms. Mihaela Popovici facilitated a *tour de table* where the participants introduced themselves, highlighting their work portfolio, followed by a short introduction to the EPPA project water activities, a walk-through the agenda, and the current policy climate around marine litter in the EU.

3.2 TAIEX - Mission and activities

The session gave participants information about TAIEX, the Technical Assistance and Information Exchange Instrument of the European Commission. TAIEX has a peer-to-peer approach to technical assistance and policy-support of EU Member States to neighbouring countries. TAIEX targets public administrations via workshops, expert missions, and study visits. The presentation also covered TAIEX assistance to the EPPA beneficiaries in previous years, by country and sector, including examples of recently implemented assistance. Immediately forthcoming activities in the beneficiaries were also mentioned.

The presentation concluded with a clarification of the TAIEX cycle, from request submission to implementation and evaluation, and how public administrations can apply for support.

TAIEX financed the costs of this workshop.

3.3 Status and emerging trends of the legislative frameworks in dealing with marine litters in the EPPA countries

The representatives of the EPPA countries presented the current status of implementation of the MSFD, the existing legal arrangements, and the technical and implementation problems encountered regarding marine litters.

Albania

Albania focused on the status and emerging trends of the legislative framework in dealing with marine litter. Reference was made to the EU water legislative acts, like the WFD, which are either partially or only at an initial level of transposition. However, the country does have a Strategic Plan for Marine and



Coastal Protected Areas since 2013, the National Waste Management Strategy is being revised and updated (to be approved by the end of 2019) and Albania banned single use plastic bags in September 2018. Finally, the presentation listed several projects in which Albania participates, including the Plastic Buster MPAs project.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Water management in Bosnia and Herzegovina is framed by legislation adopted in the Federation of BiH and Republika Srpska. Both entities are transposing the main principles of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) is not transposed yet. Bosnia and Herzegovina is party to the Barcelona Convention. Since 2017 there is a National Action Plan (NAP) for the Mediterranean region containing 12 priorities, mainly related with infrastructure. The presentation also included information on projects in which Bosnia and Herzegovina participated in (for instance, DeFishGear), as well as statistics on marine litter for the country and the Adriatic.

Kosovo

Kosovo is currently preparing River Basin Management Plans for its four river Basins, as part of its efforts to implement the Water Framework Directive. The first plan is expected by 2020 for the White Drini Basin. Kosovo has no specific legislation for marine litter, but waste is recognized as a significant water management issue for its RBMPs and there are links established from the waste management strategy 2013-2022 to water management.

Montenegro

Montenegro suggested that the speakers scheduled for day two will provide necessary information related to this agenda item.

North Macedonia

North Macedonia presented its legal framework on water management and the country's four transboundary river basins. The law on water is the main legislation prescribing three main water management, planning and development documents: the National Water Strategy, the Water Master Plan and the River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs).

Serbia

Ninety-two percent of Serbia's territory falls under the Danube River Basin. As such, the country recognizes that any uncontrolled waste contributes to marine litter in the Black Sea. At the moment, the two major sources of pollution in the Danube basin, from Serbia, are nutrients and untreated urban waste waters. Serbia is at the final stages of transposing the WFD. It is expected that all bylaws related to the WFD implementation are adopted in 2020. Serbia is also planning to transpose Articles 6 and 7 of the MSFD, regarding requirements for landlocked countries.

Turkey

Turkey has twenty-five river basins and three seas, 9000 km of coastline, dense coastal population and heavy marine traffic. These factors make the implementation of the existing legal framework challenging. However, RBMPs are being implemented and, as of June 2019, there are marine litter provincial action plans that are expected to tackle marine litter from a regional perspective. In parallel, the country is currently developing a network of 350 monitoring stations. Marine litter will be one of the MSFD descriptors tracked by the monitoring network.

3.4 European Environment Agency Marine Litter Watch

The presentation introduced and explained the EEA's Marine Litter Watch, a crowdsourced data harvesting initiative to monitor marine litter across Europe. The EEA aims to provide valuable data and information for EU marine litter policies and to provide marine litter assessments with an ecosystem-based approach. The MLW Initiative currently has a database of 1.000.000 litter items quality checked



and shared with EMODnet. The data is being collected by 35 communities, where NGOs play a vital role. The database is accessible online with a map of beach litter data collection events organised by MLW communities. It also provides overview graphs and tables of both the data collected and community engagement. Based on that data, the presenter gave aggregate statistics for Marine Litter in Europe. Some of the key ideas emerging from the data are that the Black Sea is the most polluted sea followed by the Mediterranean Sea, north-east Atlantic Ocean and the Baltic Sea (with 2.4 fold difference between highest and lowest average values), however, more in-depth statistical analyses are needed to disclose any significant difference among regional seas. The main sources of pan-European litter are plastics (80%), followed by glass/ceramics, metal and paper/cardboard. The data shows a decrease in quantities of monitored litter, whether because of the monitoring process or actual reduction of litter is unknown. The presenter suggested the need to ensure that the data base will be further improved with monitored data for the remaining European countries, regardless their political status.

3.5 Marine litter – EU actions

The presentation introduced and defined what is considered marine litter, its likely sources and most important damages to the marine environment and the economies it supports. The presentation explained the most important actions being taken by the EU under the MSFD and the European strategy for plastics in a circular economy, including aspects related to the single use plastics ban, new recycling targets, urban wastewater, aquaculture and shipping.

3.6 Marine litter - ongoing initiatives, projects, events, forums, and mitigation strategies in the Mediterranean

The presentation included an inventory of initiatives, past and present, contributing to address marine litter. Those initiatives were presented in several categories:

- EU Thematic Activities, Projects, Initiatives Regional Response on Marine Litter: the Mediterranean Case
- Areas of Common Interest to Extend Cooperation with BRS Conventions
- UN Environment/MAP
- Around EU
- EU Participation on a Global Level
- Other international Cooperation
- Marine litter and the EUSAIR
- Global Partnership on Marine Litter

3.7 Best practice measures to curb marine litter in Med MPAs

The presentation gave an example of practices and tools applied to facilitate and enhance stakeholder participation in regional and sub-regional governance in the Med MPAs, using the Interreg MED Plastic Busters project (2018-2022) as a case study. The project provides a comprehensive framework to address the problem of marine litter. Its interventions will:

- Define and test harmonized methodologies for monitoring marine litter
- Assess the marine litter impacts on biota dwelling in MPAs
- Identifying marine litter hotspots in MPAs through a forecasting model
- Showcase marine litter prevention and mitigation measures
- Build capacities and transfer knowledge on marine litter issues
- Set up a joint governance plan for managing marine litter in pelagic and coastal MPAs

3.8 Assessment of marine litter - current developments, best practices in the Danube and the Black Sea Region

The presentation used the case of the Black Sea and the Danube River Basin as a case study to the problem of marine litter in Europe, raising also the issue of transboundary water management. The



Danube Basin is the most international river basin in the world. It includes twenty-two countries. The Danube is the Black Sea's biggest tributary. The Danube itself collects the waters of 18 countries, with different waste management systems, with an estimated contribution of 4 tones/day of litter.

Any intervention must take these facts into account and recognize that only a coordinated, international approach can succeed in tackling marine litter in the Black Sea. Current tools to work on a cross border approach include:

- The Convention for the Protection of the Danube River - one objective is to protect the Black Sea
- The Danube River Basin Management Plan, with the potential inclusion of plastic pollution in the third cycle of the Danube River Basin Management Plan
- Increase the monitoring capacity for plastic, microplastic and nanoplastic
- Development of the specific projects dealing with marine litter

In addition, each contributing country should, in parallel, increase education and public awareness, implement Waste Management Plans and circular economy measures related to single use plastic and zero waste disposal.

3.9 Impact of the litter to the marine biodiversity

The presentation focused on understanding the adverse effects of marine litter to the ecosystems. It identified the most common marine litter associated with impact to biodiversity, it gave an overview of the state of marine biodiversity in EU, and, as a case study, it presented information on the state of marine biodiversity in Romania. One of the most salient points is that the systemic impact to species and habitats is still largely unknown across Europe.

3.10 Introduction to workshop day two

The second day of the workshop was chaired by Mr. Gheorghe Constantin, Water and Marine Director, Romania. The project team leader took the opportunity to introduce himself and express regret he was unable to attend the first day.

Albania also presented its current status of implementation of the MSFD, the existing legal arrangements, and the technical and implementation problems encountered regarding marine litters. For the purposes of this report that intervention was included in section 3.3, together with those of the remaining beneficiaries.

A brief summary of the previous day was given before starting the second day's presentations.

3.11 Marine litter within the European Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) - defining targets and approaches to reach the Good Environmental Status (GES)

The presentation gave an in-depth look at the MSFD, especially the provisions related to marine litter. Special attention was given to the role of Good Environmental Status in the directive, as well as national marine strategies. The key messages related to the implementation of the MSFD were:

- The MSFD will help to understand better and define more accurately the boundaries of sustainability through long term ecological objectives
- It is important to understand, identify and assess the ecosystem services provided by the marine environment
- The ecosystem approach should be implemented through a gradual action plan in stages and in each regional sea, based on international coordination
- Integration of environmental concerns into the different policies which have an impact on the marine environment
- Regional cooperation and collaboration is fundamental for defining coherent and adequate GES and targets, and setting up effective and efficient national monitoring strategies and measures, by setting up integrated monitoring programmes with regional neighbours.

The presentation also reflected on the specific obligations under the MSFD for landlocked countries, and on the directive's linkages with other pieces of EU legislation, namely the Birds and Habitats



directives, the Urban Waste water Treatment Directive (UWWTD) and the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

3.12 Raising Awareness and Involvement of Citizens in Combating Marine Litter in Montenegro

Montenegro presented its experience with citizen engagement in preventing marine litter. Raising awareness of the public is only one tool to address the problem, but it is an important one. It can help to significantly decrease the amount of waste that ends up becoming marine litter. Montenegro's engagement with the citizens regarding marine litter takes place under the Clean Seas Campaign, which originated a GEF funded project called "Clean the Beach". Several campaigns to collect waste in Montenegrin beaches was carried out and educational activities were undertaken to teach students and the public the problems connected with marine litter. The presentation however noted that raising awareness is not enough. Additionally, systemic measures are also needed, including reduction of plastic production and usage where possible, capable waste management infrastructure, implementation of circular economy measures like recycling polymers for the secondary market, among others.

3.13 Achievements and deficiencies of environmental enforcement of MSFD legislation in Croatia

Croatia presented its experience about the transposition of the provisions of MSFD into Croatian national legislation, its achievements and identified deficiencies in enforcement. The presentation also included concrete examples of detected illegal waste disposal that resulted in marine litter.

Although the MSFD is fully transposed (Croatia has a Marine Strategy and Integrated Coastal Zone Management 2014), Croatia is currently experiencing difficulties with the monitoring and reporting of marine litter, having not complied with the EC's information requests. This is also partially related to the monitoring cost, which was estimated to be 12.028,362,00 kunas (no VAT).

Enforcement of the directive is further complicated by the number of institutions with legal competence over marine waters, depending on the sector (spatial planning, fisheries, emergency response to maritime pollution, general environmental oversight, etc). Implementation of MSFD is a collective process that requires cooperation, participation and an active role of all stakeholders - relevant ministries, scientific institutions, county and local institutions, civil society.

Croatia presented the positive case of the County Sibenik – Knin, which is the only county in the Adriatic area that adopted a Plan for Integrated Coastal Zone Management. The plan was awarded the overall winner prize during the European Conference on Climate Change Adaptation (ECCA, 2019) - Mediterranean Climate Change Adaptation Awards. It is important to note that the plan is not legally binding.

3.14 Key barriers of achieving Good Environmental Status (GES)

The presentation illustrated the results of MSFD implementation in Romania regarding the preparation of the Initial Assessment, establishing the GES, upgrading the Black Sea Monitoring System, and the development of the Program of Measures. Also, exemplification was made regarding the Program of Measures reported by Romania - 38 new measures of which 16 were developed within the project 'Technical and administrative support for the joint implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) in Bulgaria and Romania – phase II' funded by DG Environment, and are jointly coordinated with Bulgaria. The speaker introduced the key barriers to achieve good environmental status (GES) in the Danube and Black Sea region as a case study and made a series of recommendations for EPPA countries.

3.15 Preliminary results of marine litter monitoring on Montenegrin beaches

Montenegro presented its project to perform marine litter monitoring on beaches 2018/2019. The main objective was to promote awareness raising, education of school age children, and encourage



public participation. The project selected a number of representative beaches along the coast, namely: Blatna plaža, Herceg Novi, Bečićka plaža, Budva, Velika plaža, Ulcinj. Two transects of 100 meters per beach were used for applying the monitoring methodology developed by the EU DeFishGear project. Results were then presented on the major types of litter found per season. Predominantly, as expected, they were plastics, cigarette butts and packages.

In parallel, Montenegro also runs an “adopt a beach” programme, that also aims to clean up beaches with public support. The waste collected is compiled using the methodology of sampling and categorization of the MEDPOL protocol.

3.16 Montenegro and alignment with Single Use Plastic Directive

Montenegro further contributed to the workshop with its experience on single plastics use and the development of a waste management system in the country to stop the tide of plastics flowing to marine waters. The speaker recommended that the focus, both in Montenegro and in all EU, should be put on prevention, through circular economy measures, and on waste management infrastructure that can recycle or treat the waste in a sustainable way. The attempt to outsource the problem, by exporting waste to 3rd countries, should be avoided because it is not a solution that correctly addresses this global concern of marine litter.

3.17 Environmental enforcement of legislation in Croatia

The last presentation sought to bring to light real enforcement experience of marine litter related cases in a recent Member State, Croatia. The legal and institutional frameworks were presented in detail, followed by the introduction of the predominant sources of pollution in Croatia, and of examples of enforcement cases where some institutional overlap affected the enforcement.

Croatia catalogues the main sources of pollution in its waters as follows:

- from the land (industrial emission, dumping of household waste or construction waste, sewage water..)
- from the air (emission of exhaust gases)
- as a consequence of damage to maritime and coastal pipelines, underwater activities (exploration and exploitation of marine resources),
- from the ships (sinking of harmful substances, waste water, balast water, household waste)

The presentation included a case study of illegal dumping of construction waste into the sea and a case of illegal embankment. Improper waste landfills and illegal waste disposal construction are particular sources of concern in Croatia due to the pressures to urbanize and develop tourist infrastructure in the coastal areas. These types of cases raise questions regarding legal competences. As a maritime domain, it is the responsibility of the Port Authority Inspectors, but local government units also take care of coastal protection and building inspection, and maintain the part of the maritime domain in general use located in its territory. In addition, the environmental protection Act define an environmental impact assessment procedure for the operation of embankment of the seashore in the length of 50 metres and more. It is defined that owner of the procedure may submit an application for assessment to the Ministry of Environment and Energy as a competent authority. In such cases, overlapping of responsibilities is practically unavoidable and a clear decision regarding competency or cooperation in inspection control procedure is needed.

Another case study of marine litter was presented. In 2010, litter was dragged by currents to the shores of Croatia. The litter originated from multiple countries in the Adriatic Sea. In this case, Croatia took the burden to clean up but faced difficulties for lack of proper equipment, and other resources. In addition, there were problems with overlapping competences and coordination. Finally, there was no cross-border and regional cooperation to assist Croatia in the clean-up effort.



3.18 The Way Forward – discussion of a joint statement, including a set of recommendations regarding regional cooperation in tackling marine litter

Following the presentations and the discussions, and acknowledging the need for a joint marine litter vision for the EPPA countries, the participants discussed a joint statement with recommendations for regional cooperation. The draft text will be consulted in writing with each beneficiary. The Secretariat will facilitate this process. When approved by the beneficiaries, it is expected the statement will be presented at the second EPPA marine litter workshop.

4 Conclusions

The workshop presentations and discussions identified a few common threads when it comes to marine litter. Firstly, marine litter is currently an important political and policy issue. The potential negative impacts, and the somewhat uncontrolled status of marine litter, have brought the matter to the public eye. Secondly, tackling marine litter can only be done effectively at the source. Therefore, it is vital to integrate marine litter concepts and measures in the wider circular economy approach to waste reduction, reuse, recycling and recovering. Thirdly, marine litter is effectively a cross-boundary issue and needs to be tackled as such. International cooperation is essential to achieve visible results. Fourthly, marine litter is an issue for both maritime countries and landlocked countries. One major source of litter is land based, for which landlock countries also contribute, their waste being carried down to maritime waters via rivers.

From the perspective of experts and civil society, it is important to keep updated on new developments. Marine litter is a relatively new policy area, and developments are quick. This also reflects in the science that supports existing and potential marine litter policy. Methodologies and protocols for measurement, mitigation measures, etc, should all be harmonized or coordinated to give policy, remediation and enforcement initiatives a solid basis.

Based on the above, the participants discussed a joint statement including measures the region can take cooperatively to tackle marine litter. Those cooperation measures are:

- Take steps by setting requirements to adopt measures as proposed by the Commission to cut the consumption of plastic and to monitor and reduce marine litter, taking into account the full environmental impacts of alternatives and supporting global, national and regional actions.
- Strengthen the domestic capacity to prevent plastics leakage into the marine environment from all sources, and enable their collection, reuse, recycling, energy recovery, and / or environmentally-sound disposal.
- Promote access to tap water for citizens and tourists, thus reducing packaging needs for bottled water.
- Participate actively in the international processes for addressing marine litter and plastics pollution, such as the implementation of the principles set out in the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal.
- Promote investment, research, and the development of innovative technological and social solutions across the lifecycle of plastics to prevent marine plastic waste.
- Support collaboration with partners across the supply chain, and advance efforts to address marine plastic litter and support information and best practices sharing.
- Encourage raising public awareness and education to reduce use of single-use plastics and plastic waste generation.
- Encourage partnerships to combat marine litter from plastic waste.
- Promote synergy within the framework of relevant multilateral fora to encourage awareness and action to reduce marine litter and plastics waste, such as the Tri lateral Commission between Croatia, Montenegro and Albania.

Workshop outputs

The workshop's main outputs were:



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- A joint statement showing the beneficiaries commitment to the problem of marine litter and proposing concrete regional cooperation steps to address it
- Enhanced understanding of the topic, policy and legislation, challenges and current practices related to marine litter
- Exchange of experiences within the beneficiary region and between the beneficiary region and EU Member states improved
- Cooperation between the beneficiaries strengthened for marine litter issues and
- Better capacity to deal with the requirements of the current EU acquis dealing with marine litter, especially the MSFD.

5 Evaluation

The participants were asked to evaluate the workshop *post-factum*. They received a paper format questionnaire at the end, consisting of six questions along two pages, in order to assess the impact of the work conducted during the workshop, in light of the EPPA project objectives. Later, the participants also filled in a second questionnaire circulated electronically by TAIEX, asking them to provide feedback on the technical and logistical quality of the workshop. This report presents the results of both evaluations.

5.1 The EPPA impact evaluation

Twenty-five participants filled in the paper-based questionnaire aiming to assess the impact of the workshop. The sample offers enough coverage of all project beneficiaries, as it can be seen from the following table. The questionnaire is composed of six questions, the first five looking at the specific impacts of the workshop, and one asking the respondents to offer their opinion on their country's priorities and suggestions for future EPPA events.

The first five questions are "agree/disagree" questions, in a scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". They also include a space allowing the respondents to explain or offer more information about their level of agreement. The final question is of open ended type.

Country	Nr of answers
Albania	2
Bosnia and Herzegovina	4
Kosovo	4
Montenegro	4
North Macedonia	4
Serbia	3
Turkey	4
Total	25

Table 1 - Answers to EPPA evaluation questionnaire per country

The results of each question are presented here, one by one.

Question 1 - The event agenda, and corresponding outcomes, were relevant to my country's priorities and needs in the given subject

The majority of participants agreed with the question (68%), while a significant number (32%) strongly agreed. There were no negative answers. It can be concluded that the programme offered in the workshop was well received by the participants and the outcomes achieved, as described above, were to the satisfaction of the entire group. Some participants noted that marine litter is a crucial topic for the region, even for landlocked countries, who share the burden of marine litter prevention.



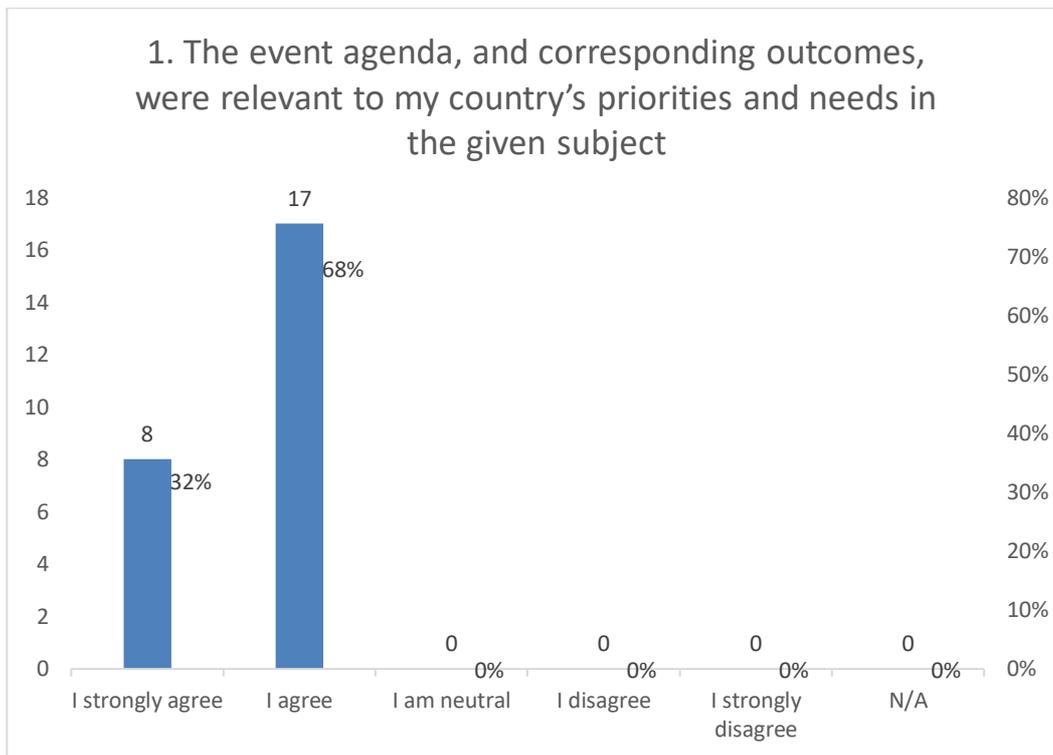


Figure 1 - Agenda and outcomes relevance

Question 2 - My work performance will benefit from the event in terms of knowledge/expertise gained, contacts established, best practices, others.

As in question 1, the responses were overwhelmingly positive, with 64% agreeing and 32% strongly agreeing. Only one response was "I am neutral". It is fair to conclude that the outcomes of the workshop, for which the participants were satisfied with, will indeed contribute to improve the substantive outputs of the administrations present regarding marine litter and related issues. Some participants highlighted the usefulness of learning from the experiences of EU countries, like Croatia. Others noted that the case studies presented (Croatia and Romania) should have been more specific and detail oriented.

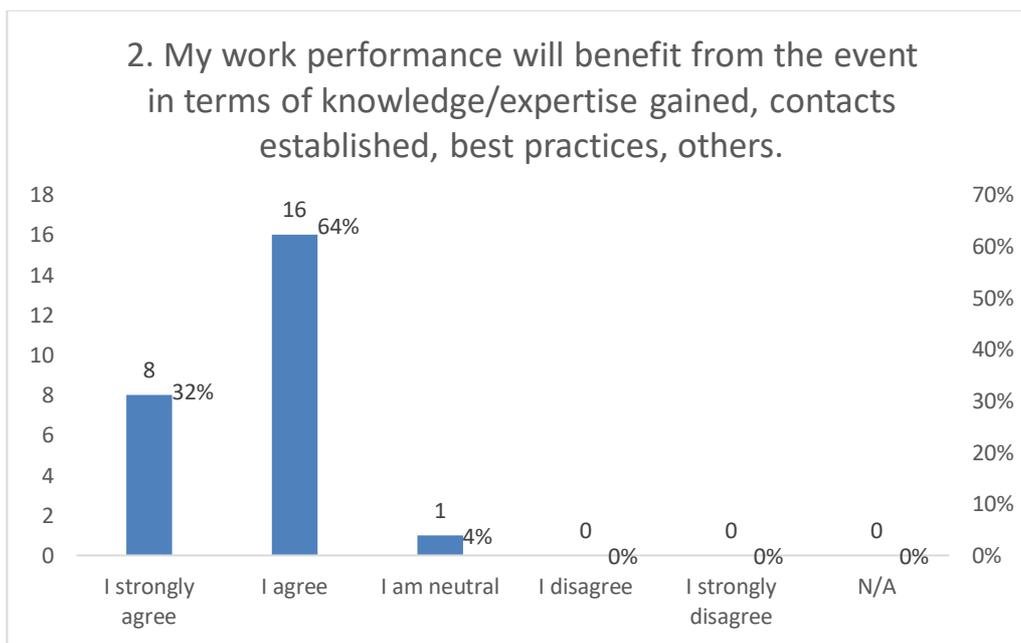


Figure 2 - Better work performance



Question 3 - This event contributed to enhanced regional cooperation in the EU candidate countries and potential candidates in the implementation of the EU environmental acquis

Regarding the contribution of the workshop towards better regional cooperation, the majority of respondents were satisfied (40% strongly agreed, 48% agreed), but it is worth noting that 12% (three participants) were neutral about it. It can be concluded that the workshop indeed contributed to regional cooperation and mutual understanding. Expectations of such cooperation probably varied along a scale where the institution the participant works at is a main factor. For instance, one might expect higher agreement regarding regional cooperation from a ministerial staff member, than from an official who works in a limited scope agency, focused only on internal management of a specific issue.

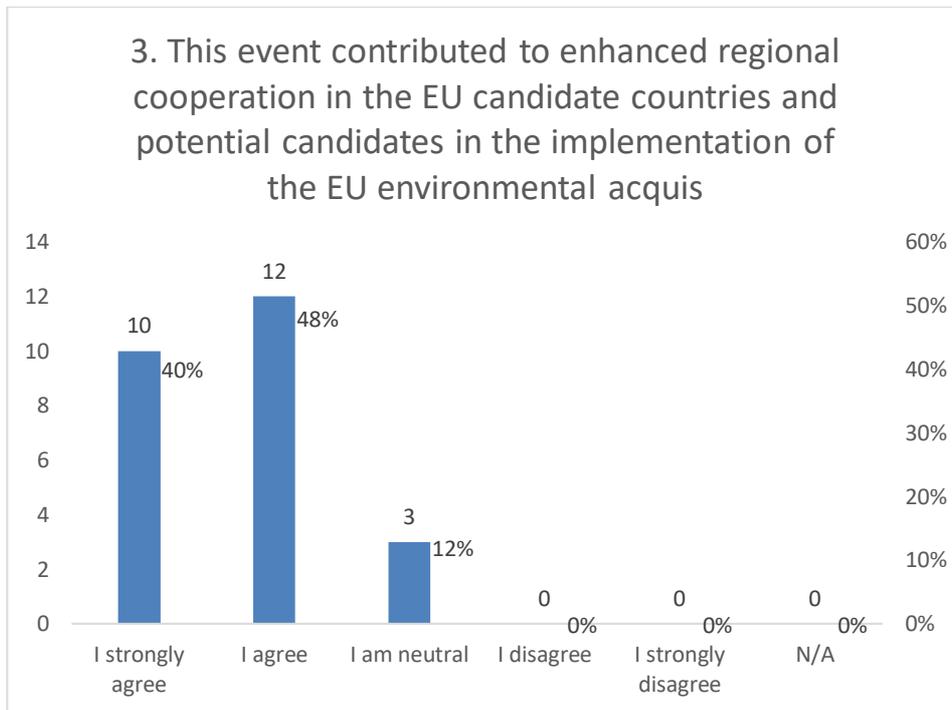


Figure 3 - Regional cooperation

Question 4 - This event contributed to increased alignment of my country’s legislation with the EU environmental acquis, and its enforcement.

The results show that the workshop achieved a high, perceived contribution to the beneficiaries’ alignment efforts with the EU acquis. The conclusion is reinforced by participants’ comments that their understanding of the issue of marine litter increased substantially. Ninety-two percent of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the question.



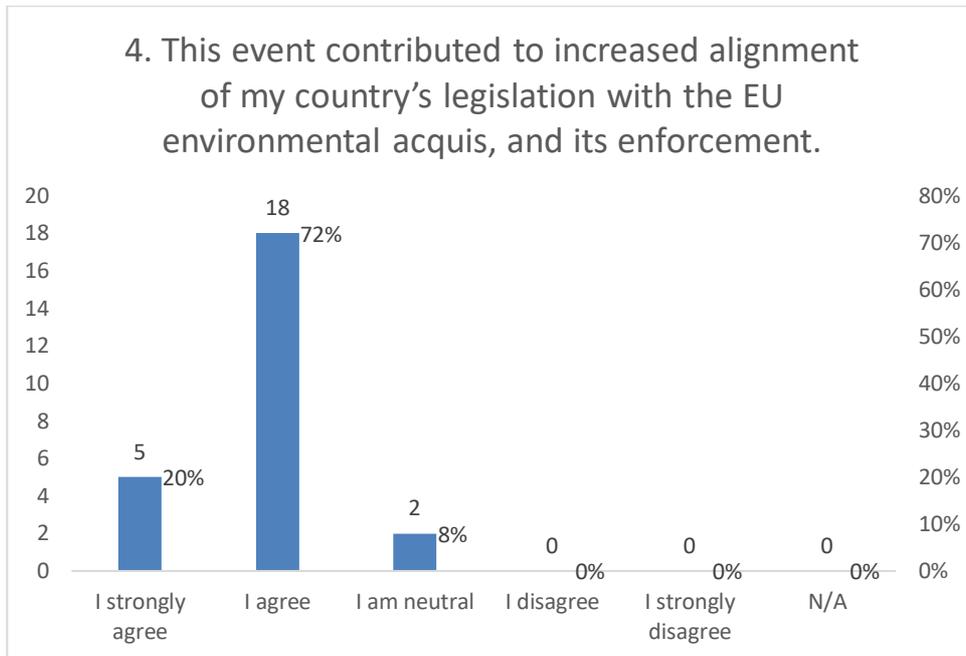


Figure 4 - Alignment with the EU acquis

Question 5 - This event contributed to increased capacity and technical knowledge of my organization to deal with transboundary environmental issues, in line with EU acquis

The majority of participants (96%) also strongly agreed or agreed that the workshop increased their home institution capacity to deal with marine litter as a transboundary problem. Taken together with question three on regional cooperation, one can conclude the workshop did go a long way in terms of creating awareness of the interlinkages of the marine litter problem with other sectors, and across borders. One of the respondents suggested that the project should organize further similar workshops targeting junior level experts from the beneficiaries.

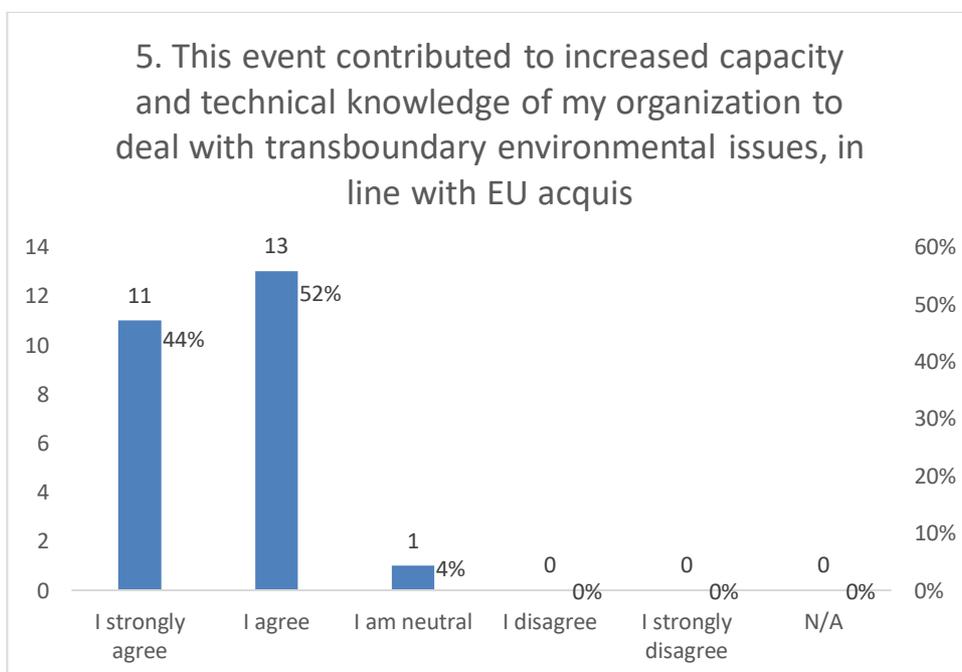


Figure 5 – Capacity for transboundary issues



Question 6 - Do you have general recommendations, for the future, regarding the topic and how best to address your country's needs?

The participants' replies to the open question were dispersed over multiple aspects. This is a summary of the key ideas offered.

In general, respondents supported further workshops in marine litter, which they see as important to build capacity and cooperation to tackle the problem. Some sub-topics suggested were single use plastics, and particularly plastic bags and examples of either banning or taxing them, the role of landlocked countries in preventing marine litter, enforcement of waste legislation and waste management systems

Another main thread was the suggestion to further connect the topic of marine litter with a wider circular economy approach, recognizing the problem of marine litter has to be prevented with measures that affect our societies produce, consume and manage waste. Merely remedial or technical solutions will not be enough.

In addition, it was also suggested to explore in future workshops how an ecosystem approach to marine environments management interacts with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

Multiple respondents suggested that field trips, during future workshops, might be an advantage to fully dissect and explore case studies. One particular example given was a visit to a best practice waste management system.

Respondents also flagged the need to use the workshops to raise awareness of stakeholders. In a similar line, another respondent suggested that examples of public awareness campaigns on pollution should be included in a future workshop.

One participant offered that the next agendas should be structured in a different way: begin with general information, continue with specific studies and end up with best practices.

Finally, one participant voiced dissatisfaction with the logistical arrangements regarding the payment of DSAs via Western Union and with the room arrangement (theatre layout).

5.2 The TAIEX technical and logistical evaluation

To be completed once TAIEX evaluation data is made available.



6 Annexes

6.1 Annex 3: CSO involvement in combating Marine Litter

CSO involvement in combating Marine Litter

Introduction

The regional workshop on *Managing Marine Litter in EPPA Countries – Challenges, Approaches, Developments* (TAIEX-EPPA project ETT 69367) tackled also the issue of involvement of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and wider public – citizens, in various actions related to management of marine litter.

CSO/public involvement – now and way forward

Several presentations on the workshop (e.g. I. Vojnovic (MNE), A.Ivanovic, Dr Vlachogianni, G. Constantin) referred to Measures to reduce marine litter. Number of measures count on the involvement of wider public and CSOs, e.g. from cleaning actions to actual implementation of waste management principles which would tackle the majority of marine litter at source (land-based pollution).

Aside of industrial/commercial pollution and governmental/legal actions in prevention, control and management of waste, it is clear that the wider involvement of public will be one of the key forces in lowering the production, and later the impact of the marine litter to the marine environment (seas and oceans).

Current actions and/or recommendation for future **involvement**:

1. Increase **education and public awareness on marine litter** issues and general waste management issues.

Prevention of land-based waste to become marine litter. This could be achieved through synergy with proper implementation of the Waste Management Plans (national and local level). See practical example presented by MNE on Clean Seas Campaign project – awareness rising through beach cleaning campaigns.

2. Encourage **raising public awareness and education to reduce use of single-use plastics** and plastic waste generation.

3. **CSO/public involvement in monitoring¹ activities²**

In line with Guidance on Monitoring of Marine Litter³ in European Seas.

See the presented case study example of stakeholder participation in regional and sub-regional governance in the Med MPAs, using the Interreg MED Plastic Busters project (2018-2022).

4. **Clean up activities** (on beaches) with public support

- Possible measure/action: Adopt-a-beach schemes – added value if linked with No.3

- Although seeming like one-time action, this will be valuable tool for monitoring marine litter if implemented/waste collected data is compiled using the methodology of sampling and categorization (of the MEDPOL protocol and EU DeFishGear project).

All actions should be further developed in line with overall approach to combating marine litter, as discussed during the workshop.

¹ eg. European Environment Agency Marine Litter Watch (MLW). The data is shared with EMODnet database (on beach litter data). The data is being collected by 35 communities, where CSOs/NGOs play a vital role (35 MLW communities).

² see presentation of T. Vlachogianni, MIO-ECSDE (CSO platform) actions regarding ML

³ the output of the work of the TSG-ML between 2012 and 2013



6.2 Annex 4: Joint Statement

EPPA JOINT STATEMENT ON STRENGTHENING COLLABORATION ON REDUCING MARINE LITTER AND PLASTIC WASTES

24 September 2019

On the occasion of the Regional Workshop on “**Managing Marine Litter in EPPA Countries – Challenges, Approaches, Developments**”, organized by EC TAIEX in cooperation with EU Environment Partnership Programme for Accession (EPPA) on 11-12 September, 2019, in Split (Croatia), the participants acknowledged that the pollution from marine litter and plastics resulting from current practices have negative impacts on ocean and seas health, biodiversity, economic sustainability, and potentially on human health.

The representatives of EPPA countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo⁴, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey) at the workshop recognized the importance of taking a sustainable lifecycle approach to the management of plastics to reduce the threat to the environment and, particularly, to reduce marine litter in oceans.

Recalling the 21st May 2019 new rules of the EU Council on single-use plastics to reduce marine plastic litter through ambitious measures proposed by the Commission to tackle marine litter coming from the 10 single-use plastic products most often found on European beaches, as well as abandoned fishing gear and oxo-degradable plastics, the participants committed to move towards more resource-efficient management of plastics across their entire life-cycle (circular economy) which will decrease environmental impacts.

Acknowledging the transboundary nature of marine litter issues for sea based and landlocked countries, and the urgent need to work harmoniously to promote for regional collaboration among them in addressing the issues, the representatives of EPPA countries highlighted the common aspiration to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.

The representatives of EPPA countries endeavor to:

- Adopt measures as proposed by the Commission to cut the consumption of plastic and to monitor and reduce marine litter.
- Strengthen the domestic capacity to prevent plastics leakage into the marine environment from all sources, and enable their collection, reuse, recycling, energy recovery, and / or environmentally-sound disposal.
- Promote access to tap water for citizens, thus reducing packaging needs for bottled water.
- Participate actively in the international processes for addressing marine litter and plastics pollution., such as the implementation of Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal.
- Promote investment, research, and the development of innovative technological and social solutions across the lifecycle of plastics to prevent marine plastic waste.
- Encourage raising public awareness and education to reduce use of single-use plastics and plastic waste generation.
- Promote synergy within the framework of relevant multilateral fora to encourage awareness and action to reduce marine litter and plastics waste, such as the Trilateral Commission between Croatia, Montenegro and Albania.

⁴ This designation is without prejudice to position on status, and is in line with the UNSCR 1244/99 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence



The EPPA beneficiaries have agreed to conclude the “Joint statement on strengthening collaboration on reducing marine litter and plastic wastes”, for further consideration in their cooperation in international fora, and in sectoral initiatives and projects to address marine litter and plastic wastes.

The participants conveyed gratitude to the European Commission for much appreciated support offered through EU EPPA project and TAIEX instrument.





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