



## **OSPAR Marine Litter Regional Action Plan Communication Plan**

### **1 Context**

OSPAR is the mechanism by which fifteen Governments of the western coasts and catchments of Europe, together with the European Union, cooperate to protect the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic. Since 1972 OSPAR has worked to identify threats to the marine environment, and has organised, across the region, programmes and measures to ensure effective national action to combat them. In doing so it has pioneered ways of ensuring monitoring and assessment of the quality status of the seas, of setting internationally agreed goals and of checking that the participating Governments are delivering what is needed.

At its annual meeting of 2014, OSPAR presented OSPAR Agreement 2014-01 Regional Action Plan for Prevention and Management of Marine Litter in the North-East Atlantic (Marine Litter RAP). The diverse sources of marine litter in conjunction with ocean dynamics make it a transboundary issue requiring collective action. The Marine Litter RAP implements the commitment in the North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy as well as coordinating activities to deliver Good Environmental Status across the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) descriptors. Moreover, the RAP is contributing to the UNEP and GPA Global Partnership on Marine Litter- a global framework for prevention and management of marine debris - and the Honolulu Strategy developed at the 5th International Marine Debris Conference. In this sense, the RAP for the prevention and management of marine litter can be seen as an exemplar for regional effort.

This plan sets out the communication context for OSPAR's work on marine litter and describes the various actions OSPAR will take to spread the word about its achievements. It is envisaged that this plan will be updated in the light of progress. This plan should be read in conjunction with the Marine Litter RAP.

### **2 Guiding the plan**

The Communication Plan for the Marine Litter RAP is guided by the OSPAR vision, North East Atlantic Environment Strategy and by the communication requirements of its stakeholders.

#### **2.1 Communication Goals**

The communication goals of OSPAR's Marine Litter RAP are to:

- Raise the profile of the Marine Litter Regional Action Plan;
- Facilitate two-way communication with internal and external stakeholders;
- Demonstrate effective coordination under the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive;
- Promote understanding of the issues surrounding marine litter in the North-East Atlantic;
- Raise awareness of the threats to the marine ecosystems of the North-East Atlantic as a result of marine litter;
- Explain the challenges in the management of marine litter in an international context
- Highlight where OSPAR is taking collective action;
- Reinforce the Commission's role in influencing global ocean governance.

## 2.2 Vision

- OSPAR's vision is of a clean, healthy and biologically diverse North-East Atlantic used sustainably.

## 2.3 Stakeholders

The OSPAR Marine Litter RAP will have a diverse range of stakeholders with differing information needs. OSPAR must engage in dialogue with its target groups to understand their needs and to give the right information at the right time so it has the most impact. The OSPAR Marine Litter stakeholders include;

- OSPAR Heads of Delegation and Secretariat
- ministers and marine directors from Contracting Parties
- local/state authorities
- those requiring information exchange for meetings, intercessional working and ad hoc working groups
- journalists of all media and various fields
- stakeholders with a vested interest in the North-East Atlantic including other IGOs
- Observer organisations
- NGOs
- Maritime industry
- Fishing industry
- Waste disposal industry
- Plastics industry
- Manufacturing industry
- Coast users
- Users of OSPAR products and information including universities, researchers, interested members of the public etc.

## 2.4 Key messages

OSPAR's Marine Litter RAP will;

- prevent and reduce marine litter pollution in the North-East Atlantic and its impact on marine organisms, habitats, public health and safety and reduce the socioeconomic costs it causes;
- result in collective action to prevent litter entering the marine environment;
- remove litter from the marine environment where practical and feasible;
- enhance knowledge and awareness on marine litter;
- support Contracting Parties in the development and implementation of national programmes for litter reduction, including those for the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.
- coordinate work to improve the evidence base on the impacts of litter on the marine environment;
- be guided by the application of the ecosystem approach, the precautionary principle, the polluter pays principle and Best Environmental Practice (BEP) and Best Available Techniques (BAT).

## 3 Communication

Section 3.1 below sets out the communication tools which will be used when required to inform and update stakeholders about the Marine Litter RAP. A combination of the tools will be used to promote the Marine Litter RAP and its various actions as a whole. Section 3.2 goes on to detail timings for specific communication products with section 3.3 providing a summarised timeline.

### 3.1 Communication tools

Internal Communications	
<b>Output</b>	Basecamp, e mail, Webex, Regular comms updates
<b>Target Stakeholders</b>	EIHA HoDs and task managers
<b>Project description</b>	<p>Basecamp, email and Webex will be used to share practical information on developing background docs and OSPAR measures etc.</p> <p>Each Contracting Party should identify a Marine Litter Communications Contact as soon as possible. This will allow the Secretariat Communications Lead to co-ordinate press releases, the press pack, fact/assessment sheets etc.</p>

Press pack	
<b>Output</b>	Clear communication products
<b>Target stakeholders</b>	All
<b>Project description</b>	<p>Clear, simple communication products to accompany the Marine Litter RAP will increase its accessibility.</p> <p>An infographic (similar to one by Project Aware <a href="http://www.projectaware.org/sites/default/files/TheUglyJourneyofTrashInfographic_PD_F.pdf">http://www.projectaware.org/sites/default/files/TheUglyJourneyofTrashInfographic_PD_F.pdf</a>) presenting the sources and effects of marine litter in the North East Atlantic along with a document presenting clear concise facts about the Marine Litter RAP will greatly facilitate anyone wishing to understand or discuss the issue. The press pack will also contain an attractive, user-friendly copy of the Marine Litter RAP in full.</p> <p>The press pack will be developed by the Communications Lead at the Secretariat with guidance from all Contracting Parties.</p>

Media relations	
<b>Output</b>	Press coverage
<b>Target stakeholders</b>	Journalists from all media who can reach all other stakeholder groups
<b>Project description</b>	<p>Marine litter has become something of a hot topic in the media with newspapers etc. regularly covering the issue. Now is the ideal time for OSPAR to capitalise on this. Any achievements of the Marine Litter RAP should be marked with a press release co-ordinated by the Communications Lead at the Secretariat and agreed by communications contacts from Contracting Parties.</p> <p>Most press releases will be written by the Secretariat Communications Lead but content, timings etc. will be coordinated throughout Contracting Parties. Each Contracting Party's Marine Litter Comms Contact should maintain regular contact with the Secretariat and be able to identify and contact appropriate targets and stakeholder groups for each press release.</p>

Networking	
<b>Output</b>	All target stakeholders informed and engaged
<b>Target stakeholders</b>	Ministers and marine directors from Contracting Parties, those requiring information exchange for meetings, intercessional working and ad hoc working groups, other IGOs, Observer organisations, NGOs, Shipping industry, Fishing industry, Waste disposal industry and Packaging manufacturers.
<b>Project description</b>	Cross-sectorial cooperation is very important in order to reduce marine litter in the OSPAR maritime area. The Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter should therefore be implemented in close cooperation with other relevant regional and global organisations and initiatives, including UNEP and other Regional Seas Conventions, the International

	<p>Maritime Organisation, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the European Union, Fisheries Regional Advisory Councils, North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission and River and River Basin Commissions. Partnerships with the private sector and with non-governmental organisations should be part of the working approach.</p> <p>To consolidate stakeholder relations, OSPAR will identify relevant stakeholders and make efforts to approach them with information about the Marine Litter RAP. An effort will be made to solicit stakeholder views, debate priorities and identify opportunities for engagement.</p> <p>Stakeholders who are contacted should be asked to mention the Marine Litter RAP on their websites and in any publications in an effort to raise the profile of the RAP and OSPAR to a level otherwise not possible.</p> <p>Appropriate arrangements should be developed to exchange relevant information and to address significant trans-boundary marine litter issues. Contracting Parties should cooperate directly to address trans-boundary marine litter issues, with the assistance of the OSPAR Secretariat or the competent international or regional organisation. Where countries are Contracting Parties of more than one relevant organisation they should endeavour to coordinate internally to raise the appropriate issues in those fora.</p>
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Social media	
<b>Output</b>	Regular relevant use of social media by The Secretariat
<b>Target Stakeholders</b>	Journalists, Observer organisations, NGOs, Coast users, Users of OSPAR products and information including universities, researchers, interested members of the public etc.
<b>Project description</b>	<p>Most NGOs involved in campaigning around the issue of marine litter use social media to communicate to key stakeholder groups including researchers, other NGOs and the interested public. News such as beach clean events, unusual marine litter finds and damage to marine life caused by marine debris are shared widely across countries in the OSPAR maritime area making social media a valuable tool to communicate milestones, goals and achievements of the Marine Litter RAP.</p> <p>Considered use of social media will also help OSPAR to identify key stakeholders and will enable OSPAR to develop key relationships with those who have the power to influence those who are not yet engaged. Public participation and stakeholder involvement will create awareness about the problem of marine litter and ensure a sense of public ownership in order to build support for relevant measures.</p> <p>In using social media the Secretariat will remain mindful of the sensitive nature of discussions and processes and will ensure that social media messages remain consistent with the bounds of agreed conclusions and activities and in line with OSPAR's social media policy.</p> <p>Contacting Parties should follow the OSPAR Commission's Twitter and LinkedIn profiles and pass on any relevant information to their followers.</p>

Marine Litter Champion	
<b>Output</b>	Champion to talk about progress/challenges of Marine Litter RAP at OSPAR 2017 event and to the media
<b>Target stakeholders</b>	All
<b>Project description</b>	The appointment of a marine litter champion will help capitalise on coverage for the Marine Litter RAP. A prominent figure in the field of marine litter will be approached and

	<p>appointed as OSPAR’s Marine Litter RAP champion.</p> <p>This champion will work to raise the profile of the Marine Litter RAP in the media and speak about progress made and challenges ahead at the 25 year OSPAR celebration.</p> <p>A suitable champion should be identified by Contracting Parties.</p>
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<b>Website</b>	
<b>Outputs</b>	A dedicated page on the OSPAR Commission website
<b>Target stakeholders</b>	All
<b>Project description</b>	<p>The OSPAR website will be the first stop for stakeholders wishing to find out information about the Marine Litter RAP. It is therefore essential that information is easily accessible and in one place. It is for this reason that a page on the OSPAR website should be dedicated to the Marine Litter RAP.</p> <p>The web page will detail progress on all actions and communication products. There will also be space for a dedicated blog.</p>

<b>Fact sheets and Assessment sheets</b>	
<b>Outputs</b>	Fact sheets and Assessment sheets
<b>Target stakeholders</b>	All
<b>Project description</b>	<p>Fact sheets and assessment sheets and fact sheets should be produced to give more publicity to the Marine Litter RAP. An OSPAR Assessment Sheet will act as a communication product to provide timely, easy to understand and synthesised assessment information in relation to delivery of the Marine Litter RAP.</p> <p>Assessment sheets and fact sheets should be written by a lead country and produced by the Comms Lead with input from all Contracting Parties.</p>

### 3.2 Specific communication products and timings

Section 3.2 highlights specific communication outputs based on the communication tools detailed in section 3.1 and on the OSPAR actions detailed in Annex 1 of the ML RAP. Section 3.2 does not feature all products from Annex 1 of the ML RAP but instead highlights a selection of products chosen to give the maximum exposure possible to the ML RAP given limited resources. This selection is not exhaustive and can be added to as further communication opportunities arise.

Communication		Lead	Date for action	
<b>Press pack</b>				
Infographic giving an overview of the issue of marine litter and of the Marine Litter Regional Action Plan		OSPAR Comms Lead	Draft: November 2014	
Quick guide to the Marine Litter Regional Action Plan		OSPAR Comms Lead	Draft: November 2014	
Designed copy of the Marine Litter Regional Action Plan		OSPAR Comms Lead	Draft: November 2014	
<b>Identify communication contacts</b>				
Contracting parties to identify communications lead (henceforth referred to as ML Comms contacts)		Contracting parties	30 September 2014	
Communications contacts initial introductions		Secretariat comms lead	1 October 2014	
<b>Dedicated ML RAP web page</b>				
Web page developed		Secretariat	November 2014	
All stakeholders contacted and informed about web page		ML Comms Contacts	January 2015	
<b>Theme A – Actions to combat sea-based sources</b>				
Develop best practice in relation to the fishing industry				
Rap § No.	Action	Communication	Lead	Date for action
36	Through a multinational project, together with the fishing industry and competent authorities, develop and promote best	Press release to announce joint working between OSPAR, fishing industry and competent authorities.	Secretariat Comms Lead	July 2015

	practice in relation to marine litter. All relevant aspects (incl. e.g. dolly rope, waste management on board, waste management at harbours and operational losses/net cuttings) should be included.	Guidelines	Sweden, UK, Netherlands, Norway	2016
		Regular blog contributions should be sought from project partners including fishermen, harbour masters, competent authorities and Contracting Parties.	ML Comms Contacts	2015 onwards
		Networking opportunities identified and maximised to disseminate guidelines and engage with relevant stakeholders to maximise publicity of guidelines	ML Comms Contacts	July 2016 onwards
<b>Theme B – Actions to combat land-based sources</b>				
Improved waste prevention and management				
<b>Rap § No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Date for action</b>
39	Highlight those waste management practices that impact significantly on marine litter. Engage with the industry and other authorities, at the appropriate level, in order for them to be able to develop best environmental practice, including identification of circumstances where litter “escapes” into the marine environment and investigating how to close loops focussing on non-toxic material cycles.	Not yet decided	Germany with participation of Netherlands	2016
		Regular blog contributions to be sought from industry relating to their experiences in preventing escapes etc.	ML Comms Contacts	2016
		NB Comms details will have to be decided once action output has been finalised		
41	Exchange experience on best practice to prevent litter entering the water systems and highlight these to River or River Basin Commissions.	Report 2015	Netherlands with the assistance of Germany	2015
		Regular blog contributions should be sought on experiences, stories and tips on preventing litter entering the water system.	ML Comms contacts	2015 onwards
		Contact River and River Basin Commissions to highlight report	ML Comms Contacts	2015
<b>Reduction of sewage and storm water related waste</b>				
<b>Rap § No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Date for action</b>

42	Investigate and promote with appropriate industries the use of BAT and BEP to develop sustainable and cost effective solutions to reducing and preventing sewage and storm water related waste entering the marine environment, including micro particles.	Recommendation and/or guidelines	Ireland, Norway and Sweden	Background document 2016
		Press release to announce results, targeted at the appropriate industry bodies and publications in each Contracting Party.	Secretariat Comms Lead	2016
Incentives for responsible behaviour/disincentives for littering				
<b>Rap § No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Date for action</b>
44	Reduce the consumption of single use plastic bags and their presence in the marine environment, supported by the development of quantifiable (sub) regional targets, where appropriate, and assist in the development of relevant EU initiatives.	Specific target for presence of plastic bags in the marine environment	ICG-ML	2015
		Social media campaign to take photos of plastic bags in the marine environment. Could be run through summer 2015 before and after target announced. Tweets to be sent by the Secretariat and re-Tweeted by ML Comms contacts.	Secretariat comms lead	May to September 2015
		Press release to highlight target and social media campaign	Secretariat comms lead.	To time with announcement of target.
		Assessment sheet on prevalence of plastic bags in the marine environment	ICG-ML with Comms Lead	2016
Elimination, change or adaptation of the products for environmental benefits				
<b>Rap § No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Date for action</b>
46	Evaluate all products and processes that include primary micro plastics and act, if appropriate, to reduce their impact on the marine environment.	Report	Belgium, Germany and Netherlands	2015
		Fact sheet on micro plastics and the marine environment of the NE Atlantic	ICG-ML with Comms Lead	Following report
		Infographic highlighting the findings of the report	Secretariat comms lead	Following report
		Disseminate infographic, report and fact sheets to all relevant stakeholders	ML Comms Contacts	Following report



		Contact communications contacts at relevant NGOs to identify areas for joint working	ML Comms contacts	Following report
47	Engage with all appropriate sectors to explore the possibility of a voluntary agreement to phase out the use of micro plastics as a component in personal care and cosmetic products. Should a voluntary agreement prove not to be sufficient, prepare a proposal for OSPAR to call on the EU to introduce appropriate measures to achieve a 100% phasing out of micro plastics in personal care and cosmetics products.	Ongoing voluntary agreements	Germany & Netherlands with Belgium, UK & SAR	
		Background document and review	Germany & Netherlands with Belgium, UK & SAR	2015 Review 2017
		Press releases to mark any voluntary agreement as well as the publication of the background document and the review. As voluntary agreements will be different in each CP, ML comms contacts should prepare press releases accordingly.	ML Comms contacts	2015-2017
		NB: Further communications will be necessary if voluntary agreement proves not to be sufficient.		2017
48	Evaluate the potential harm caused to the marine environment by items such as cigarette filters/butts, balloons, shotgun wads, cotton buds and bio-film support media used in sewage plants. Based on this evaluation, proposals can be made on the elimination, change or adaptation requirements for these other potentially problematic items.	Report from TG ML	Germany	2015
		Press release to announce findings and publication of report	Secretariat Comms Lead	2015
		NB: further communications will be required depending on the outcome of the report		
Development of sustainable packaging				
<b>Rap § No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Date for action</b>
50	Engage in dialogue with industry aimed at highlighting the top marine litter problem items based on OSPAR beach monitoring surveys and/or other evidence of impacts.	Report from TG ML	Germany	2015
		Produce an infographic on top marine litter items	Secretariat Comms Lead	Following report

		Press release to highlight findings of the report	Secretariat Comms Lead	Following report
Zero pellet loss				
<b>Rap § No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Date for action</b>
52	Promote initiatives and exchange of best practice aiming at zero pellet loss along the whole plastics manufacturing chain from production to transport.	Press releases to highlight any joint campaigns	France with participation from Germany, Netherlands and Seas at Risk	2016
<b>Theme C – Removal actions</b>				
Cleaning environmental compartments and keeping them clean				
<b>Rap § No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Date for action</b>
54	Establish an exchange platform on experiences on good cleaning practices in beaches, riverbanks, pelagic and surface sea areas, ports and inland waterways. Develop best practice on environmentally friendly technologies and methods for cleaning.	Guidelines	ICG-ML with assistance from Germany and Seas at Risk	2016
		Source regular blog contributions from those involved in beach cleaning etc. to share experiences, stories and tips. The blog will be featured on the dedicated ML RAP web page	ML Comms contacts	2016 onwards
55	Develop sub regional or regional maps of hotspots of floating litter, based on mapping of circulation of floating masses of marine litter, and identification of hotspots of accumulation on coastal areas and the role of prevailing currents and winds.	Map developed	Portugal	2018
		Press release to announce publication of maps	Secretariat Comms Lead	2018
Reduction of abandoned, lost and otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG)				
<b>Rap § No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Date for action</b>
56	Identify hot spot areas through mapping of snagging sites or historic dumping grounds working with other initiatives, research programmes and with fishing organisations	Joint press release between OSPAR CPs and partners to announce joint working and the initiative	Secretariat Comms Lead	
		Blog contributions to be sourced regularly from partner organisations	ML Comms contacts	

		Hot spots identified	France and Norway	
		Press release to highlight results of the project	Secretariat Comms Lead	
<b>Theme D – Education and outreach</b>				
Education				
<b>Rap § No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Date for action</b>
58	Develop marine litter assessment sheets to assist Contracting Parties in developing material for education programmes, including those for professional seafarers and fishermen.	Assessment sheets to be produced as required. Engage with education programmes to see how these can be tailored more to their needs	ICG-ML	2016 onwards
		Assessment sheets to be promoted and disseminated to relevant stakeholders	ML Comms contacts	2016 onwards
Outreach				
<b>Rap § No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Date for action</b>
59	Establish a database on good practice examples of marine litter measures and initiatives and share this database with other Regional Seas Conventions in order to make action more visible to the public.	Database to be produced	Germany ICG-ML Secretariat	2016
		The database should be made available on the dedicated OSPAR ML webpage	Secretariat	2016
		A press release should mark the finalisation of the database	Secretariat Comms Lead	2016
		Contact relevant organisations and ask them to link their websites to the marine litter database	ML Comms contacts	2016

### 3.3 Task list for 2014 and 2015

Date	Lead	Action
30 September 2014	Contacting parties	Identify communications lead and send details to lucy.ritchie@ospar.org
1 October 2014	OSPAR Comms Lead	E mail introductions for ML communication contacts
30 November 2014	OSPAR Comms Lead	Press pack: First draft of Infographic giving an overview of the issue of marine litter and of the Marine Litter Regional Action Plan sent to CPs
30 November 2014	OSPAR Comms Lead	Press pack: First draft of quick guide to the Marine Litter Regional Action Plan sent to CPs for comment

30 November 2014	OSPAR Comms Lead	Press pack: First draft of designed copy of the Marine Litter Regional Action Plan sent to CPs for comment
20 December 2014	CPs	Return comments on press pack items
January 2015	Secretariat	Web page development begins
January 2015	OSPAR Comms Lead	Press pack ready and sent to ML Comms contacts
March 2015	Secretariat	Web page ready for use
March 2015	ML Comms contacts	Contact stakeholders and inform about new webpage
March 2015	OSPAR Comms Lead	Social media campaign to take photos of plastic bags in the marine environment launched (action 44)
March 2015	ML Comms contacts	Contact stakeholders and followers to inform of social media campaign (action 44)
July 2015	OSPAR Comms Lead	Coordinate press release announcing partnership working on multinational project, together with the fishing industry and competent authorities to develop and promote best practice in the fishing industry in relation to marine litter (action 36)
July 2015	ML Comms contacts	Send out press release to relevant stakeholders on partnership working with fishing industry (action 36)
July 2015	ICG-ML	Publish specific targets for presence of plastic bags in the marine environment (action 44)
July 2015	ML Comms contacts	Source blog contributions from project partners including fishermen, harbour masters, competent authorities and Contracting Parties (action 36)
July 2015	ICG-ML	Discuss appointment of a marine litter champion
July 2015	OSPAR Comms Lead	Coordinate press release to announce plastic bag targets (action 44)
July 2015	ML Comms contacts	Send out press release to stakeholders on plastic bag targets (action 44)
August 2015	Netherlands/Germany	Report on best practice to prevent litter entering the water systems (action 41) published
August 2015	ML Comms contacts	Contact River and River Basin Commissions to highlight report (action 41)
August 2015	ML comms contacts	Source blog contributions on experiences, stories and tips on preventing litter entering the water system.
September 2015	Belgium, Germany and Netherlands	Publish report on all products and processes that include primary micro plastics and act, if appropriate, to reduce their impact on the marine environment (action 46).
September 2015	OSPAR comms lead	Produce infographic on findings of report into primary micro plastics (action 46)
September 2015	ML comms contacts	Share infographic on primary micro plastics with stakeholders (action 46)
September 2015	ML Comms contacts	Share report finding with NGOs and identify any opportunities for joint communications (action 46)
October 2015	Germany & Netherlands with Belgium, UK & SAR	Background document on use of voluntary agreements to phase out the use of micro plastics as a component in personal care and cosmetic products (action 47)
October 2015	ML Comms contacts	A press release should be sent out to mark any voluntary agreement made in each CP and a copy sent to OSPAR Comms Lead (action 46)
October 2015	Germany/TG ML	Publish report evaluating the potential harm caused to the marine environment by items such as cigarette filters/butts, balloons, shotgun wads, cotton buds and bio-film support media used in sewage plants (action 48)
October 2015	OSPAR comms lead	Press release to announce findings and publication of report (action 48)

November 2015	Germany/TG ML	Engage in dialogue with industry aimed at highlighting the top marine litter problem items based on OSPAR beach monitoring surveys and/or other evidence of impacts (action 50)
November 2015	OSPAR comms lead	Produce an infographic on top marine litter items (action 50)
November 2015	OSPAR Comms Lead	Press release to highlight top marine litter items (action 50)