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OSPAR launches 2nd Marine Litter Regional Action Plan at the United Nations Ocean conference in Lisbon (Portugal)

The OSPAR Commission launched its 2nd Regional Action Plan to tackle marine litter (RAP ML 2) in the North-East Atlantic at a side event at this year's United Nations Ocean Conference in Lisbon (Portugal) on 28 June 2022. The plan will target marine pollution problems affecting the North-East Atlantic such as:

- tackling litter from rivers
- phasing out additional single use plastic items
- reducing microplastic releases from shipping
- addressing litter from aquaculture and commercial and recreational fishing
- developing measures to control or phase out plastic substances contained in offshore chemicals.

OSPAR has been at the forefront of international efforts to tackle the marine litter problem since the adoption of its first Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter in 2014. The RAP ML 2, agreed at annual meeting of the OSPAR Commission in Copenhagen (Denmark) on 24 April, builds on its work and includes 25 initial actions, each with its own milestones and deliverables covering the period 2022-2030 to address key issues where OSPAR Contracting Parties can best contribute to tackling this ubiquitous challenge from both land and sea-based sources.

The result of 2 years' work by marine litter experts and policy makers in addition to NGO observer organisations, the RAP ML 2 has been developed with the aim of implementing OSPAR's strategic commitment to *"Prevent inputs of and significantly reduce marine litter, including microplastics, in the marine environment to reach levels that do not cause adverse effects to the marine and coastal environment with the ultimate aim of eliminating inputs of litter"*.

The implementation of the RAP ML 2 will contribute to the achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 14 and specifically target 14.1 *"By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution"*.

ENDS

Note for editors

1. The OSPAR Commission was set up by the 1992 OSPAR Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic, which unified and updated the 1972 Oslo and 1974 Paris Conventions. It brings together the governments of Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, together with the European Community.
2. OSPAR adopted its North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy 2030 at a Ministerial meeting in Cascais (Portugal). Full text <https://www.ospar.org/convention/strategy>

3. More than 30 international non-governmental organisations are involved in OSPAR as official Observers. They represent a broad range of interests and expertise related to the marine environment and the uses of marine resources. Many contribute information, insights and standpoints. This is much appreciated feedback from civil society and the economy. The OSPAR Commission greatly values these partnerships that help inform its decisions and other results. (See list on OSPAR website at <https://www.ospar.org/organisation/observers>)

4. Marine Litter covers a wide range of materials which have been deliberately discarded, or unintentionally lost on beaches and on shores or at sea, including materials transported into marine environment from land by rivers, draining or sewage systems or winds. It includes any persistent, manufactured or processed solid material. Marine litter originates from different marine and terrestrial sources and is rooted in the prevailing production and consumption pattern. OSPAR collects data on beach litter, plastic particles in fulmar stomachs, and seabed litter. Our latest assessments of these can be found on our assessment portal <https://oap.ospar.org/en/ospar-assessments/committee-assessments/eiha-thematic-assessments/marine-litter/>