EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
Joint Research Centre
Directorate Sustainable Resources
Water and Marine Resources Unit

05.10.2021

Summary Minutes

On-line meeting of the

MSFD Technical Group Marine Litter

22. June 2021 (9:00 – 17:30 CET) + 23. June 2021 (9:00 – 13:00 CET)

Meeting venue: Webex on-line meeting, meeting restricted to TG ML members, no registration required

Tuesday, June 22nd

9:00 **WELCOME**
TG ML chairs

TG ML chairs, (FG) and (GH), welcomed all attendants to the meeting. Physical meeting was not yet possible due to Covid-19 situation in 2020 – 2021.
Circa 53 participants attended the on-line TG ML meeting.

9:10 **FAST ROUND TABLE PRESENTATION**
All (Just name and affiliation please)

Brief introduction of the participants attending the meeting.

9:25 **MSFD D10 POLICY UPDATE (1)**
MSFD reporting status, MSFD review, Green Deal, Zero Pollution Action Plan,
Michail Papadoyannakis DG ENV

(MP) provided an overview on recent policy developments related to the MSFD:
- (MP) informed on the relevance of the quantitative targets under the Zero Pollution Action Plan for marine litter.
- (MP) reminded the recent publication of guidance documents under the SUP Directive.
- Development restriction proposal and study of impact assessment for policy options for intentional and unintentional macro plastics.
- PRF Directive: preparing documents and guidance
- (MP) briefly reported on the process and steps of reviewing the MSFD directive.

(MP) reminded the TG ML about the mandate to continue and complete the on-going MSFD deliverables (e.g. monitoring guidelines, baselines and threshold values).
(MP) reminded the MS on the commitment to support the implementation of the jointly produced MSFD deliverables (e.g. beach litter threshold).

9:45   **TG ML Work Items Overview (2)**
Georg Hanke JRC

(GH) provided a brief overview of the main topics to be discussed during the meeting.

10:00   **International collaboration on Marine Litter (G7, G20, UN, Arctic) (3)**
Michail Papadoyannakis ENV, Francois Galgani IFREMER, Georg Hanke JRC

(MP) briefly informed TG ML that the EU and its MS are supporting a global agreement to tackle the complete cycle of plastic, in close collaboration with the UN.
(FG) presented an overview of the international activities ongoing under the UN, UNEA, UN WOA2, IMO/FAO, IOC/GESAMP – IOC/GOOS, G7, G20, EU initiatives and the OCEAN Mission
(GH) provided additional information on the collaboration of the EU in the Arctic Council - Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter.

10:20   **Regional Action Plans update, focus on:**
  - Strategic developments and updates (Monitoring and Measures)
  - Process timing

Presentations 15 min each (sharp) (4)

  - *HELCOM Marta Ruiz*

    (MR) provided an overview of the review and update process of the HELCOM Regional Action Plan on ML, including actions on land-based and sea-based sources. The adoption of the revised Action Plan is envisaged for October 2021.
    HELCOM is also collaborating and interacting with other RSCs.

  - *UNEP MAP/MEDPOL Jelena Knezevic*

    (JK) provided an overview of work done 1996-2021 on marine litter including updates on the IMAP implementation, guidance and monitoring protocols, beach litter items and proposal for TV and Candidate Indicator 24.
    The key principles of the upcoming upgrade of the Marine Litter Regional Plan were presented to the TG ML.

  - *BSC   Irina Makarenko*

    (IM) informed TG ML on the implementation process for the Black Sea Regional Action Plan adopted in 2018. BSC continues to collaborate and interact with the Barcelona Convention Secretariat, UNEP/MAP, GFCM and ACCOBAMS.

  - *OSPAR   Jennifer Godwin & Marieke Erfeling*

    (ME) introduced the framework and the operational objectives related to marine litter of the North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy (NEAES) 2021. An update of the marine litter assessment work was also provided.
    (JGO) briefly informed about the RAP-Marine Litter and the timeline for development during 2020-2022.

After the presentations, a discussion on the number and potential overlap of different working groups was held. Despite the different regional characteristics and needs, it was suggested to achieve the close collaboration and effective harmonisation, profiting from synergetic effects and streamlining discussions in joint efforts, wherever possible..

11:20   **Towards intermediate targets for Coastline Litter (5)**
Beach Litter Data and Trends
Georg Hanke JRC + Alessandra Giorgetti EMODnet

(GH) briefly informed on the process and next steps for developing the Intermediate Targets based on the collection of EU coastline litter dataset.

MS are invited to provide and prepare for the collection of further data.

(AG) complemented the presentation with a brief introduction on the Beach Litter Workflow and ingestion process of the data through EMODnet platform.

MS are expected to provide the missing 2020 beach litter datasets soon, either directly or through an intermediate data hub.

The intermediate targets will not be directly related with the Zero Pollution Action Plan targets. Next steps are expected to continue after the summer, when the process can be based on the analysis of the beach litter datasets up to 2020.

Modelling of Beach Litter trends
Willem van Loon, RWS

(WL) introduced a new tool for modelling and forecasting of beach litter counts based on a Negative Binomial General Linear Model (NB-GLM) from the recent publication (Walvoort et al., 2021).

Reference: Walvoort, D., van Loon, W., Schulz, M., & André, S. (2021). *Modelling and forecasting of beach litter assessment values.* (Report / Wageningen Environmental Research; No. 3090). Wageningen Environmental Research. https://doi.org/10.18174/546866.

MODELLING OF MARINE LITTER PATHWAYS (6)
State of work
Diego Macias Moy

(DM) provided an update of JRC activities on modelling of marine litter pathways in relation to transboundary litter pollution on Mediterranean coasts.

| 11:40 | **MSFD GUIDANCE FOR MARINE LITTER MONITORING** |

| 11:50 | **BEACH LITTER – GUIDANCE REVIEW (7)** |

State of work, open issues
Francesca Ronchi ISPRA

Lead authors shared a new draft version with the TG ML. After presentation and discussions, authors will ask the group to contribute to a list of potential identifiable mesolitter items, which are borderline between meso and macro litter. The guidance should enable harmonised monitoring set-up also with RSCs and facilitate through agreed compatible protocols.

It is estimated to finalise the chapter at the end of July 2021.

12:30   LUNCH BREAK (13:00)

| 14:00 | **FLOATING MACRO LITTER – GUIDANCE REVIEW (8)** |

State of work, work planning
Georg Hanke JRC + Luis Ruiz JRC

A new draft version of the background report was shared with the TG ML. The background report will be finalised and published, in parallel the guidance chapter will be prepared and then discussed in TG ML. The role of ingested litter monitoring as a proxy for floating macro litter was discussed and it was stated that scope and size range coverage of employed methodologies are different. JRC confirmed the development of a new version of the App

for floating litter monitoring through observers.

14:30 **SEAFLOOR MACRO LITTER – GUIDANCE REVIEW (9)**
State of work
Francois Galgani + All

(FG) and (AG) provided an overview of the open questions to be solved and the seafloor litter workflow, ingestion of data and current status of the EMODnet database. EMODnet has prepared a proposal and started to collect information on seafloor litter trawling data. Mediterranean MS should upload seafloor litter trawling data to avoid Reference to the "Quest for seafloor macro litter, Canals et al" publication, published earlier in 2021, as a scene setting publication was made. It was confirmed that the further preparations for using image-based methods for seafloor litter monitoring should proceed; JRC would be planning a dedicated workshop (2022?).

15:00 **MICROLITTER – TG MARINE LITTER POSITION PAPER/GUIDANCE REVIEW (10)**
State of work, work planning, roadmap
Georg Hanke + All

(GH) provided an overview of the current state, open questions and next steps of the microlitter guidance and position paper.
JRC will organize a dedicated workshop to address different aspects and open questions related to microlitter (e.g. guidance, baselines + threshold) by November 2021 (meanwhile scheduled for end of October 2021, final decisions due to COVID are pending).

The position paper and the update of guidance chapter are expected to be finalised by the end of the year 2021.

15:30 **ENTANGLEMENT + INGESTION - GUIDANCE REVIEW (11)**
State of work, work planning, roadmap
Marco Matiddi ISPRA, INDICIT

(MM) and (GD) informed on the work done through the INDICIT projects on ingestion and entanglement. Two harmonized monitoring ingestion protocols in marine fish and turtles have been published and posted on the TG ML wiki. The entanglement protocol is based on two approaches (opportunistic data + standard protocol) and is expected to be finalised by the end of July 2021.

ISPRA will lead the guidance review on ingestion and entanglement: the first draft is expected to be finished by October 2021.

16:00 **MANUAL FOR THE JOINT LITTER CATEGORY LIST (12)**
Implementation, conversion table, photo guide
David Fleet LKN, Thomais Vlachogianni, MIO-ECSDE, Francesca Ronchi ISPRA

(TV) informed about the publication and aims of the Joint List of Litter Categories of Marine Litter and the on-line photo guide. JRC will inform of the procedure to upload and ingest additional images to the photo guide. Incorporate the number of version, official number or year on the current Joint List could be useful for future updates. Some open questions were discussed about the conversion table/codes. Manual and List will be translated into French and German; TG ML members were invited to translate it to other languages.
It has been confirmed that the list should be used in all compartments (acknowledging technical hindrances for seafloor trawling litter), enabling thus inter-compartment evaluations.

17:30 *END*

9:00   **RESEARCH ON MARINE LITTER (13)**

RESEARCH PROJECTS ON MARINE LITTER – AN UPDATE
Luis Ruiz JRC, Georg Hanke JRC, Thomie Vlachogianni MIO-ECSDE

(LR) provided a brief update on the research projects on marine litter list. The list was uploaded to the wiki and TG ML is asked to add further projects to the current version of the list.

OCEAN MISSION
Francois Galgani IFREMER

(FG) informed about the Ocean mission, Zero Pollution Action Plan (Knowledge + Governance).

ANDROMEDA
Francois Galgani IFREMER

(FG) provided an overview of the JPI Andromeda project. The main aim is to optimize and develop instruments to analyse micro- and nanoplastics, and the characterisation of microplastics degradation.

EUROqCHARM
Bert van Bavel NIVA

(BB) provided an overview of the EUROqCHARM project on the plastic pollution assessment. The main aim of the project is to evaluate existing method and support their harmonization at EU level. A close collaboration with TG ML is envisaged.

9:30   **TG MARINE LITTER BASELINE DEVELOPMENTS (14)**
Presentations and discussions on baselines and threshold values were organised by environmental compartment.

- Seafloor trawling baseline
  Francois Galgani Ifremer + Alessandra Giorgetti EMODnet

  Seafloor has already a good dataset on trawling data at this moment. Mediterranean countries should upload missing data before the end of September 2021. Ingestion of data through EMODnet is expected to start by the end of September or October 2021. Seafloor will follow the same approach used for Beach.
  Call for participants to the core group of seafloor macrolitter (baselines + threshold). Chairs should be informed before the end of September 2021.

- Microlitter baselines
  Georg Hanke JRC + Alessandra Giorgetti EMODnet

  Within TG ML, a survey on available microlitter data in EU had been made, resulting in spreadsheets with the available numbers of datasets in different environmental compartments. It had then been agreed to collect microlitter data through their National Oceanographic Data centres. MS should provide data on floating microlitter by the end of September 2021 through NODC or EMODnet. Nodes should take care to send data to EMODnet. A webinar (recorded and available on the TG ML wiki) was held in order to facilitate the process. In collaboration with the AWI Litterbase a compilation of microlitter data from research publications had been made. The outcome confirmed the high diversity in applied methodologies and provides available concentration data.

- Litter Ingestion + Entanglement
  Marco Matiddi ISPRA, INDICIT

  (MM) reported on potential proposals for baselines and threshold based on the work developed in the INDICIT project.

- Floating Litter
  Georg Hanke JRC

  (GH) provided a brief overview on FMML data availability. Data sets are available from some projects Medsealitter, ACCOBAMS, EMBLAS (Black Sea) in the Arctic and from publications, but datasets are often not comparable due to different target size ranges. While satellites appear not applicable, due to the low resolution, drones may provide upcoming options also for long-range surveys. Overall, there is still need for method development and harmonisation, thus, while some concentration data are available, ingestion to EMODnet will start later.

10:00   **TG MARINE LITTER THRESHOLD PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENTS (15)**

- Floating Litter
  GEORG HANKE JRC

  On hold while a monitoring system and the baseline are being developed.

- Seafloor
  FRANCOIS GALGANI IFREMER

  Threshold values development will be starting after the baseline proposal.

- Microlitter
  GEORG HANKE JRC

  JRC will organize a dedicated Marine Microlitter workshop in October 2021 to address different aspects related to microlitter (e.g. guidance, baselines + thresholds).

- Litter Ingestion + Entanglement
  Marco Matiddi ISPRA, INDICIT

10:15   **REVIEW OF MS REPORTS ON ASSESSMENT, GES AND TARGETS (16)**
MSFD reports review by JRC
Luis Ruiz JRC

(LR) provided an overview of the recent published review of the MS reports on MSFD Articles 8 (Assessment), 9 (GES) and 10 (Targets).

10:45   **MSFD ART.8 GUIDANCE (17)**
Compilation of MSFD Guidance on Assessment across MSFD Descriptors
Francois Galgani IFREMER

(GH) informed and clarified about the process and aim of drafting the MSFD Art.8 Guidance. Leading authors provided a draft open to comments on wiki by 30.06.2021. The resulting document will then be provided to DG ENV and the Drafting group GES in order to be compiled with other Descriptors.

11:45   **NEXT STEPS IN LINKING MONITORING AND MEASURES (18)**
Linking assessments with sources
Chair group + All

First discussion as a starting point for the link between monitoring and measures. It is recommended to compile all the work done to date in order to establish the start of discussions. JRC will open a dedicated space on the wiki to start sharing pilot material.

Some members of the TG ML indicate the current development of projects at regional level which are involved in these aspects.

12:15   **TG Marine Litter Organisational issues (19)**
Chair-group

(GH) reminded group members to update their contacts/delegates: notify it to TG ML chair-group and DG ENV.
It was agreed that it would be practical to invert the order of the posts in TG ML wiki discussion threads, showing the latest comments on the top of each thread.

(FG) reminded TG ML that a chair position is open and Member States are welcome to propose their candidature.

12:30   **Wrap-up and next steps (20)**
Chair group

It was agreed that JRC would provide a compilation of next steps and deadlines shortly after the meeting, then meeting minutes, both for commenting before finalisation. All presentation given during the meeting have been provided on the TG ML wiki.

Practicalities for the next meeting will be discussed and decided once the COVID situation is clearer. Meanwhile technical online meetings can be held and organised if needed. David Fleet retires and leaves the TG ML group. The two co-chairs and the whole TG ML thanked David very much for the good collaboration, the dedication and leading important work items!

The TG ML chairs provided closing remarks and thanked all participants for their presence and contributions. The meeting was closed at 13.10.

END of TG ML meeting

Meeting Participants *(initials)*:

Ahmet Kideys (AK)	*Georg Hanke (GH)*	*Pero Tutman (PT)*
Alessandra Giorgetti (AG)	*Irina Makarenko (IMA)*	*Pilar Zorzo (PZ)*
Amy Lusher (AL)	*Isabel Moura (IMO)*	*Salud Deudero (SDE)*
Antoine Bruge (AB)	*Jakob Strand (JS)*	*Samy Djavidnia (SDJ)*
Bert van Bavel (BB)	*Jelena Knezevic (JK)*	*Tamara Zalewska (TZ)*
Cecilia Silvestri (CS)	*Jennifer Godwin (JGO)*	*Thomais Vlachogianni (TV)*
Christina Zeri (CZ)	*Jesús Gago (JGA)*	*Sandra Moutinho (SM)*
Daniel González-Fernández(DG)	*Johanna Eriksson (JE)*	*Sanna Suikkanen (SS)*
David Fleet (DF)	*Karen Staunton (KS)*	*Senne Aertbeliën (SA)*
Dennis Walvoort (DW)	*Karien de Cauwer (KC)*	*Sorcha Ní Longphuirt (SN)*
Diego Macías (DM)	*Konstantinos Antoniadis (KA)*	*Tomaso Fortibuoni (TF)*
Elena Stoica (ES)	*Luis F. Ruiz-Orejón (LR)*	*Uros Robic (UR)*
Elisabeth Nyberg (EN)	*Lone Soederberg (LS)*	*Willem van Loon (WL)*
Elke Fischer (EF)	*Louise Feld (LF)*	
Eugenia Molina (EM)	*Marco Matiddi (MM)*	
Eva Blidberg (EB)	*Marieke Erfeling (ME)*	
Francesca Ronchi (FR)	*Marta Ruiz (MR)*	
Francois Galgani (FG)	*Matteo Vinci (MV)*	
Frédérique Mongodin (FM)	*Michail Papadoyannakis (MP)*	
Gaëlle Darmon (GD)	*Natalja Buhhalko (NB)*	