

European Marine Strategy Framework Directive  
Working Group on Good Environmental Status  
(WG-GES)

# Monitoring Guidance for Marine Litter in European Seas

**Draft Report**

**CHAPTER 1**

**SUMMARY**

**July 2013**



**This report can be cited as follows:**

Monitoring Guidance for Marine Litter in European Seas. MSFD GES Technical Subgroup on Marine Litter (TSG-ML). DRAFT REPORT, July 2013

**Authors:**

François Galgani (chair, IFREMER), Georg Hanke (co-chair, EC JRC), Stefanie Werner (co-chair, UBA), Lex Oosterbaan (Rijkswaterstaat and OSPAR), Per Nilsson (University of Gothenburg), David Fleet (Schleswig-Holstein Agency for Coastal Defence), Susan Kinsey (MCS, UK), Richard C. Thompson (Plymouth University), Jan van Franeker (IMARES), Thomais Vlachogianni (MIO-ECSDE), Michael Scoullou (University of Athens), Joana Mira Veiga (EUCC), Andreja Palatinus (Institute for Water, SI), Marco Matiddi (ISPRA), Thomas Maes (CEFAS), Samuli Korpinen (HELCOM), Ania Budziak (Project AWARE), Heather Leslie (IVM-VU), Jesus Gago (IEO, ES) and Gerd Liebezeit (Univ. Oldenburg).

**TSG-ML acknowledges valuable contributions and comments received from:**

Leo De Vrees (EC), Nils Guse (Forschungs- und Technologiezentrum Westküste FTZ), Alexander Bond (University of Saskatchewan), Bernard Cadiou (Seabird Monitoring Programme in Brittany), Ommo Hüppop (Institut für Vogelforschung "Vogelwarte Helgoland"), Ursula Siebert (Institute for Terrestrial and Aquatic Wildlife Research ITAW), Constança Belchior (EEA), and UNEP.

**Draft Guidance Report:**

TSG-ML was tasked to deliver guidance so that European Member States could initiate programmes for marine litter monitoring. As monitoring must be operational by 2014, first guidance was required by mid-2013. The draft Guidance report provides the basis for the marine litter programme however since new information continues to be compiled TSG-ML can review and update this guidance later in 2013.

The report cover page image has kindly been provided by Joana Mira Veiga, EUCC, The Netherlands.

TSG-ML was supported by Arcadis and Coastal & Marine Union (EUCC) under framework contract ENV.D.2/FRA/2012/0025.

Final edition was done by Georg Hanke (co-chair, EC JRC), Stefanie Werner (co-chair, UBA), François Galgani (chair, IFREMER), Joana Mira Veiga and Maria Ferreira (EUCC).

**Disclaimer:** This report has been prepared by a group of experts nominated by EU Member States and Stakeholders. It aims to provide guidance for the implementation of MSFD Descriptor 10 on Marine Litter. It does not constitute an official opinion of the European Commission, nor of the participating Institutions and EU Member States.

## 1. Summary

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) requires European Member States (MS) to develop strategies that should lead to programmes of measures that achieve or maintain Good Environmental Status (GES) in European Seas. As an essential step reaching good environmental status, MS should establish **monitoring programmes for assessment**, enabling the state of the marine waters concerned to be evaluated on a regular basis.

As a follow up to the Commission Decision on criteria and methodological standards on good environmental status (GES) of marine waters (Commission Decision 2010/477/EU), the Marine Directors requested the Directorate-General for the Environment (DG ENV) in 2010 to establish a Technical Subgroup (TSG) under the Working Group on Good Environmental Status (WG GES) for further development of Descriptor 10 Marine Litter (TSG-ML). TSG-ML in 2011 focused on providing advice through the EU Report 25009 “Marine Litter – Technical Recommendations for the implementation of MSFD requirements”. Within that report the options and available tools for the monitoring of marine litter in the different environmental compartments have been identified. Member States have then requested a follow-up through an additional mandate. One scope of this work is to provide harmonized protocols for the monitoring of marine litter for the European Seas.

The present document is the **Monitoring Guidance for Marine Litter in European Seas (Draft Report)** and provides MS with the recommendations and information needed to commence the monitoring required this aspect of MSFD. This draft report divided in 8 sections/chapters presents a general overview of approaches and strategies dealing with marine litter monitoring and provides protocols for the monitoring of specifically: beach litter, floating litter, seafloor litter, litter in biota, microlitter. It concludes by presenting an introduction to a Master List of all litter items for use in litter monitoring programmes in the European marine environment.

The present guidance document has been developed by the MSFD GES Technical Subgroup on Marine Litter. This group has been established within the MSFD common implementation strategy on request by the EU Member States. The group has been led by DG ENV and chaired by IREMER, the EC Joint Research Centre and the German Environment Agency. The group consists of Member State delegates, relevant organizations and invited experts. The guidance document should support EU Member States in implementing harmonized monitoring programs for marine litter. The document is a follow-up of the Report “Marine Litter : Technical Recommendations for the Implementation of MSFD Requirements . EUR 25009 EN”. Dealing with a topic under development through research efforts and by fast growing experience this guidance should be regarded as a living document and be updated regularly.