

# CAPonLITTER

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## **Regional Stakeholders Workshop #2 (Germany) – English Summary and Results**

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**Title:** Regional Stakeholders Workshops (Germany) – English Summary and Results

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**Place:** Dessau, Germany

# 1. Planning and logistics

## 1.1. Introduction

The German 2<sup>nd</sup> Regional Stakeholders Workshop within the CAPonLITTER project, was organized by the German Environment Agency (UBA) jointly with the Knotenpunkt Plastikfreie Küste (BUND Meeresschutzbüro Bremen), the State Agency for Environment, Nature Conservation and Geology Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and the Ministry of Energy Transition, Agriculture, Environment, Nature and Digitalization of the State of Schleswig-Holstein. With the title "Municipal Options for Action to Prevent Marine Litter", the series consisted of three workshops, which took place on the 4th, 11th and 18<sup>th</sup> of November 2020, each from 9 – 12 am via WebEx. The workshops had the following thematic focus:

- 1st Workshop Awareness, Outreach and Partnerships.
- 2nd workshop Legal options for action
- 3rd workshop Reusable options, infrastructure and waste management

The objective of the workshop series was to exchange and further develop concrete measures at the local level to support municipalities in reducing waste from leisure and tourism activities.

## 1.2. Communication

The workshops were promoted on the online calendar of the German Environment Agency and invitations to the workshop series were, distributed directly through the National Marine Litter Roundtable. Members of the Round Table and organization team subsequently forwarded the invitation letter to municipalities and other stakeholders via their distribution lists by mail. In addition, an article about the workshop series was published in the VKS News magazine in October 2020. The newsletter 17 - 2020 of the Transfer Agency Education for Sustainable Development / Local Agenda 21 in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern dated 26 October 2020 also drew attention to the events.

## 1.3. Registration

Interested parties were able to register for the workshop series or individual workshops via an online form in the German Environment Agency's calendar. A total of 85 people registered, of which about 60 were interested in each individual workshop. Finally, about 45 people logged in for each of the workshops, of which about half of the participants also participated in the interactive part of the workshop.

When registering, there was also an additional opportunity to sign up for a short presentation of one's own best practice example with respect to the thematic focus of the day, in which a good number of participants was interested in.

## 2. Workshop Activities

### 2.1. Introductory presentations

Each workshop was opened with a presentation of the CAPonLITTER project by Catharina Rubel (Federal Environment Agency) and a classification of the focus in (inter-)national processes by Stefanie Werner (Federal Environment Agency).

The first workshop focused on marine litter in general, the European Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the national Marine Litter Roundtable. The second workshop introduced the participants to the global and European legal background including the European Strategy for Plastics in the Circular Economy and the EU Directive on Reducing the Impact of Certain Plastic Products on the Environment and the third workshop focused on regional and national work in marine protection to support community initiatives. In addition, Sonia Grimminger (Federal Environment Agency) gave an update on the current status of the implementation of Article 4 of the EU Single-Use Plastics Directive and the promotion and optimization of reusable packaging systems in Germany in the last workshop.

### 2.2. Surveys

In order to involve the participants at an early stage and to gain a better overview of the participants, several short surveys were switched via WebEx per workshop.

The first statement was "My work/engagement relates to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive or other legal requirements (e.g., Habitats Directive, Port Reception Facilities Directive, Single-Use Plastics Directive)." At the workshops, about 30% of participants indicated that their work directly related to the directives. For about 50%, this was only partially or indirectly the case and 13% answered in the negative. The rest did not give an answer.

A similarly diverse picture emerged when asked whether "the guidelines on community action options of the Round Table on Marine Litter [were] known [to the participants]: While 20% had contributed to them, 30% each stated that they had read or heard about them. 10% of participants had not heard of the guides and 13% did not answer the question.

By asking about the area from which the participants came, it appeared that 10% were from local government and 13% were in government from state and federal levels. Associations and NGOs were strongly represented with 24% of the answers and 7% of the participants came from the tourism sector. One person also worked in event management. Furthermore, representatives from science, civil society initiatives, political parties and regional development were represented and 7% of the participants took part from private interest.

Another survey on the region represented by the participants concluded that both the Baltic Sea coast with 20% of the participants and the North Sea coast with 15% were well represented communally. While 20% represented Hanseatic cities or inland coastal states, 22% came from other regions of Germany and 28% of the participants did not answer the question.

In the second and third workshops, a survey also revealed that about half of the participants had already taken part in the first workshop or in one of the first workshops.

### 2.3. Presentation of Specific Options for Action

Subsequently, concrete examples from the action guidelines were presented by Isabelle Maus and Dorothea Seeger (BUND Meeresschutzbüro Bremen). The presentation at the first workshop focused on the organization and implementation of actions against marine litter, information campaigns and the development of educational materials on the topic, including single-use plastic products and cigarette filters. The second workshop was used to present the current action guide on municipal regulatory options for reducing plastic waste, including the limits of municipal action in this area. Important components were regulatory measures, economic incentives and municipal procurement and contracting. At the third workshop, municipal reusable and deposit systems in the to-go as well as packaging sector, measures to encourage drinking water refill stations, and municipally developed solutions in waste collection at the beach were presented.

### 2.4. Participants' presentations

As previously mentioned, the participants were asked in advance if they would like to briefly present their own initiative during the meeting. At the first workshop on awareness, outreach, and partnerships, the following eight people took initiative:

1. Teresa Böttcher (Pacific Garbage Screening) on the environmental education kit for schools,
2. David Pfender (NABU), on the cleanup partnership "water rescuer",
3. Heike Werner (Bye Bye Plastik Sylt) on activities towards a plastic-free island of Sylt,
4. Jennifer Timrot (Coast against Plastic) on the Replace Plastic App,
5. Nardine Stybel (EUCC The Coastal Union Germany) on the Baltic Sea Ashtray campaign,
6. Axel Subklew (Kampagne Mülltrennung Wirkt) on public relations for correct waste separation,
7. Stefanie Lenz (Nationalparkverwaltung Niedersächsisches Wattenmeer) on the marine litter research box, and
8. Angela Ottmann (BUND Inselgruppe Föhr-Amrum/Plastikfrei wird Trend) represented by Isabelle Maus, on plastic-conscious accommodation.

During the presentations, many specific examples on the municipal level could be pointed out and links between actors could be identified. The direct feedback from the participants during the workshop showed that the presentations is inspiring them to start similar actions or to seek direct contact with individual presenters.

At the second workshop on legal action options, only one participant took the opportunity to present a municipal best practice example. This was the statute of the city of Niebüll on waste prevention at events. The initiative was very well received and there was room for fruitful discussions. The legal text and the accompanying publicity campaign were subsequently made available to the participants as templates for their own actions.

At the third workshop on reusable alternatives, infrastructure and waste management, the following three participants presented their initiatives:

1. Stephan Vollbehr (Eckernförder Touristik & Marketing GmbH) on Coastal Cleanup Day and measures taken by the city to reduce plastic waste,

2. Alex Subklew (Kampagne Mülltrennung Wirkt) on the challenges of waste separation in the tourism sector and in public spaces, and
3. Nils Möllmann (NABU) on a reusable practice example from the beach gastronomy on Fehmarn.

## **2.5. Interactive Group Work**

Following a short break, small groups were formed to work on concrete implementation steps for individual options for action based on the Interreg Europe Best Practice Worksheet. Participants were free to choose which approach they would like to explore further. In addition to the given topics, they also had the possibility to propose a new topic for a group, which did not happen though.

At the first workshop, three groups worked on the topics of raising awareness on the impact of cigarette filters, municipal partnerships, and action against fireworks' litter. The group on cigarette filters in the environment came up with the idea of a nationwide awareness campaign. The group on partnerships with hotels, accommodations and restaurants found an exchange platform for businesses helpful for them to reduce plastics, and the third small group was dedicated to the idea of a central fireworks event on New Year's Eve combined with an augmented reality alternative and a ban on private fireworks.

During the second workshop, three to eight people each dealt with the topics of municipal procurement, special use permits for streets and informal measures. With regard to municipal procurement, the participants benefited from the exchange of information on existing guidelines at the federal and state levels. In the group on special use permits under road law, the implementation steps of an example from Kassel in the 1990s were discussed and in the third group the focus was compiling examples on already implemented and collecting approaches.

In the third workshop, the participants showed high interest in the topic of reusable to-go systems. Furthermore, there was a group on drinking water refill stations, mobile flush stations and waste collection - especially in relation to cigarette filters. The first group delved deeper into the approach of urban refill stations. In the group on waste collection, the idea of attaching fill level sensors to waste containers came up, which enables individual emptying. The system is already being tested in some pilot cities.

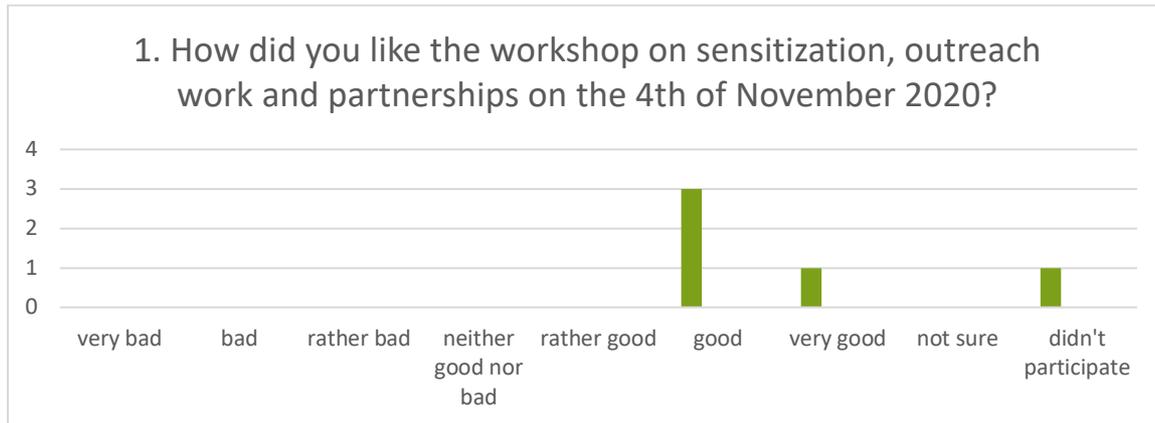
## **2.6. Presentation of Results**

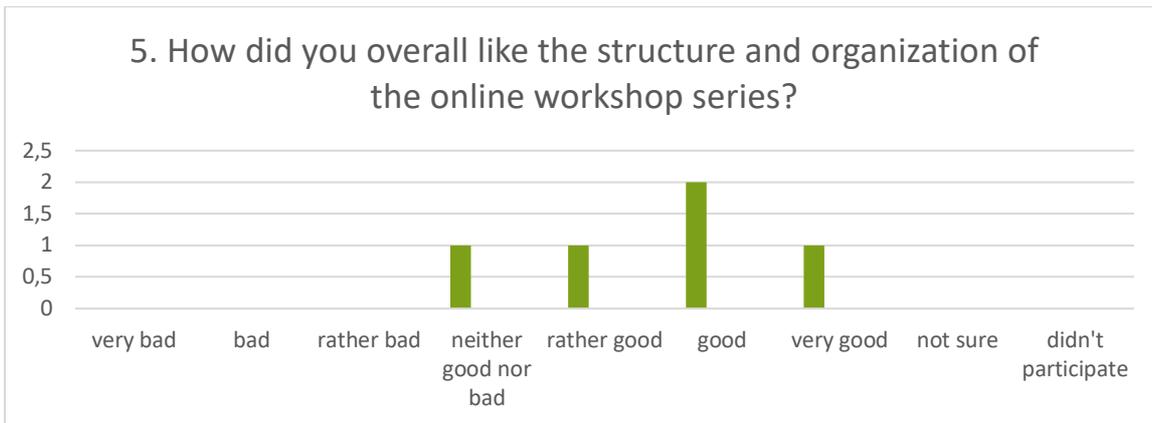
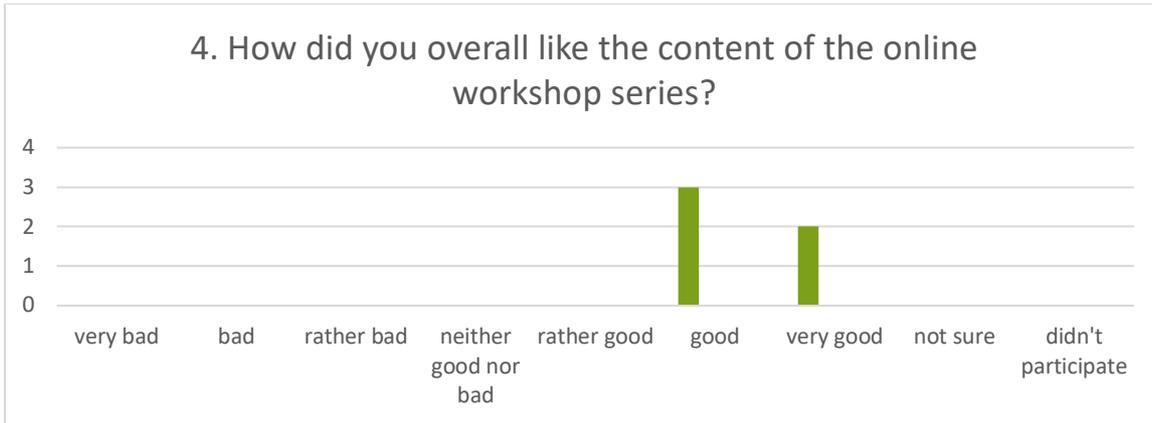
After the interactive session, the groups presented their ideas and they were discussed in the plenary. The Interreg Europe Best Practice worksheets as well as further notes from the group work were made available to all participants after the workshop series. In addition to innovative ideas and already known approaches, many helpful links to specific handouts and local examples were shared.

### 3. Evaluation

#### 3.1. Feedback of Participants

After the third workshop, all participants received a link to an online feedback form via email. The questionnaire was created using So-Sci-Survey and it took about three to five minutes to answer the questions. In total, five participants filled out the form. The results are presented in the following figures.





At last, participants were asked what they generally liked best and least about the workshops. The participants' presentations and the exchange in the groups were perceived as particularly positive, while there was some criticism about not having enough time for the group work and the presentation of ideas. The introductory presentations were felt to be too long. As an additional comment, one participant wished for more pragmatic and goal-oriented work in the sense of fewer but more concrete recommendations for action.

### 3.2. Outlook

It became clear in the discussions that the topic of reusable packaging options continues to play a very important role for municipal decision-makers and that they would like to see a more concrete elaboration of the recommendations for action in this regard. This also includes a detailed presentation of the relevance of so-called biodegradable plastics in relation to the marine environment.

It also became apparent that there is a need for harmonization of reusable deposit systems - both for "to-go" containers and for packaging - in order to avoid inputs from tourism and leisure activities. This implies that these containers can be returned at as many points of sale and in as many municipalities as possible. Through this, the acceptance of these offers increases and the packaging is prevented from ending up in the trash.

Furthermore, the legal guide and the hands-on example of the city of Niebüll on waste avoidance at events were very well received. The CAPonLITTER project can play an important role for municipalities in this regard by providing elaborated legal texts as templates for municipal statutes. It is important here that the compatibility with European and national legal frameworks is taken into account.