



Part I – General information

Project: PLASTEKO - Supporting EU regions to curb plastics waste and littering

Partner organisation: Association Baltic Coasts

Other partner organisations involved (if relevant): N/A

Country: Latvia

NUTS2 region: Latvia

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Part II – Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
<input type="checkbox"/>	European Territorial Cooperation programme
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument addressed: Operational programme “Growth and Employment” (OPGE)

Part III – Details of the actions envisaged

ACTION 1 Mapping and assessing impacts of marine litter on coastal ecosystem services

1. The background (please describe the lessons learnt from the project that constitute the basis for the development of the present Action Plan)

Litter near aquatic areas can create significant harm to the aquatic ecosystems, including the sea. During PLASTEKO, the issue of littering was discussed on several occasions – under A1.3 (identification of measures to curb aquatic litter and facilitate clean-up efforts) and A3.3 (interregional workshop on how to raise awareness on plastics littering and promote the purchase of products from recycled plastics). During these activities, various preventive and corrective practices for reducing plastics littering were presented, which gave inspiration for the development of this action. For example, one of the measures identified within A1.3 was related to the Clean Sea LIFE project in Italy, where in addition to the awareness raising activities, the project is compiling a map highlighting the areas where the accumulation of waste poses a risk for biodiversity. A similar activity would be relevant for the coastal area of Latvia.

2. Action (please list and describe the actions to be implemented)

Mapping and assessing impacts of marine litter on coastal ecosystem services

One of the key tasks of the action is to develop a Coastal littering map to identify the distribution of marine litter according to all fractions, including microplastics, along the Latvian coast of the Baltic Sea and specify their origin from inland and sea sources including shipping, fishing, tourism, recreation, communal and septic waste waters, lack of coastal infrastructure, port activities, etc. Before pursuing the task, methods to map coastal litter and assess its impact on ecosystem services will be developed.

The action will result in a summary report that illustrates the threats to biodiversity and human health, drop in tourism from mismanaged waste (including approximate cost estimations to be borne from such issues); reduced income for local municipalities, higher costs for upkeep/maintenance of coastline, costs of biodiversity loss, etc. caused by marine litter.

As a result, the action will aid decision makers in understanding the key aspects to consider with regards to marine litter reduction and prevention when implementing the policy instrument. Therefore is expected that the action will contribute to a better governance of the policy instrument, ensuring that the decisions made will be based on recent and relevant findings about the impacts of marine litter on coastal ecosystem services.

Connection with policy instruments

Latvia uses a set of policy instruments for waste management issues. It includes policy planning, regulatory framework, economic and financial aspects, public initiatives, research and development etc.

Action Mapping And Assessing Impacts of Marine Litter on Coastal Ecosystem Services falls under planning of national waste management policy, is a part of Action Direction No 3 of the National waste management plan 2021-2028¹, which is approved by the Cabinet of Ministers on 22 January 2021 (Order No 45) – No 3 Promoting Public Awareness Of Waste Management Issues, Environmental Education And Participation (AD No 3) with sub-action 3.2 Support for Environmental Education Activities for the Prevention, Reduction and Public Monitoring of Marine Pollution, with realisation period 2021-2028.

Indicator of the sub-activity is Reduced Marine Pollution and responsible institutions - Latvian Environmental Protection Fund and municipalities. The main finance source of AD No 3 is Latvian Environmental Protection Fund which supports also activities of the Environmental Education Foundation My Sea.

Action Mapping and Assessing Impacts of Marine Litter on Coastal Ecosystem Services correlates with Part 2 of the Waste Prevention Program: Measures to Reduce Contamination of the Marine, Coastal, Inland Waters, Specially Protected Areas and Other Areas of the National Waste Management Plan 2021-2028. It significantly contributes to the implementation of several actions of Waste Prevention Program, at least to:

- 1) Action Direction no 2 Measures for The Most Important Types of Pollution
 - To promote non-littering measures in specially protected nature territories

¹ Available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/320476-par-atkritumu-apsaimniekosanas-valsts-planu-20212028-gadam>

- To establish a platform for good coastal clean-up practices, including the treatment of beaches and riverbanks by municipalities and residents, and the treatment of seawater, including in ports, marinas and inland waters, in cooperation with relevant sectors and institutions, including the development of best treatment technologies and methods from sea and coastal litter

2) Action Direction No 6 Measures Related to Public Involvement

- Promote educational activities on marine litter in synergy with other activities in the field of sustainable development and cooperation with the public (including in relation to waste prevention and the promotion of sustainable consumption and production)
- To continue and improve the Latvian Environmental Protection Fund Campaign My Sea for monitoring beach waste, assessing the situation and promoting public participation
- Raise public awareness, including through information campaigns for children, young people and consumers on the occurrence and prevention of marine litter (e.g. collection of food and drink packaging or plastic bags after use), taking into account information materials already available and using graphic materials, including beaches areas.

Results of the *Action Mapping and Assessing Impacts of Marine Litter on Coastal Ecosystem Services* have to be included into evaluation reports about realisation of the National Waste Management Plan 2021-2028.

Action Mapping and Assessing Impacts of Marine Litter on Coastal Ecosystem Services is related to a number of different national regulatory enactments in the fields of waste management and water protection:

- Law on Environmental protection;
- Law on waste management;
- Packaging law;
- Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 519 Terms of operation of the deposit system;
- Law on Reduction of Consumption of Products Containing Plastics;
- Water Management Law;
- Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 118 (dated March 12, 2002), Regulations on the Quality of Surface and Groundwater

No less important is the connection of the *Action Mapping and Assessing Impacts of Marine Litter on Coastal Ecosystem Services* to the Program of Measures to Achieve Good Marine Environment in 2016-2020 approved by the Cabinet of Ministers, where action to prevent the generation of marine polluting waste is envisaged in the action plan Prevention of Waste Generation, Improvement of the Information Base, Raising the Level of Public Awareness (accordingly to the Council Directive 2008/56 / EC of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of marine environmental policy) as regards qualitative characteristic No 10 (Marine polluting waste)) and includes 5 measures for the reduction and prevention of waste, including public information and educational activities carried out by the Environmental Education Foundation in the framework of the annual My Sea campaign, in addition to the public monitoring of waste on the beach. The obtained monitoring data are used to assess the state of the marine environment and are reported to the EC and HELCOM.

Economic aspects within the methodology of the *Action Mapping and Assessing Impacts of Marine Litter on Coastal Ecosystem Services* will include analyses related to the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 353 (June 20, 2017) Requirements for Green Public Procurement and Procedures for their Application².

Available data on marine coastal littering based on fact material can be included further in the national data base Module of regional development indicators (RAIM) which is a publicly available tool for various data³ regulated by the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 367 Procedures for Monitoring and Evaluation of Regional Development (adopted July 1, 2014)⁴.

² Available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291867-prasibas-zalajam-publikajam-iepirkumam-un-to-piemerosanas-kartiba>

³ Available at: <https://raim.gov.lv/riki>

⁴ Available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/267737-regionalas-attistibas-uzraudzibas-un-novertesanas-kartiba>

Action Mapping and Assessing Impacts of Marine Litter on Coastal Ecosystem Services also supports Action 1.1 Improvement of waste and material flow accounting at the level of merchants, local governments and the state, use of statistics in the development of informed policy within the Action Direction No 1 Transition from Waste Management to Resource Management of the Action Plan for the Transition to a Circular Economy 2020-2027⁵, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers on 4 September 2020. Action 1.1 will be funded by the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF). IT solutions fall under the Reform 2.1.2.r. Increasing the efficiency and interoperability of the use of national ICT resources within the RRF Plan for Latvia, 2021-2026⁶ (approved with the Decision of the Council of Europe on 6 July 2021) where improvement of data quality, transparency, trackability is envisaged also for waste management activities, implemented by State Environmental Service.

3. Players involved (please indicate the organisations in the region who are involved in the development and implementation of the action and explain their role)

Mapping and impact assessment will be coordinated with key actors already involved in litter quantification in Latvia (FEE Latvia campaign My Sea platform), MoEPRD (as line ministry responsible for coastal development planning), Nature Protection Agency, other ministries, especially Ministry of Agriculture on issues related to fishery-born waste in the sea.

4. Timeframe

The key steps of the action would be:

- 1) Selection of experts to implement the activity by December 2022.
- 2) Development of socio-economic monitoring guidelines for assessing the impact of marine litter on ecosystem services by May 2023.
- 3) Development of methodology for coastal littering mapping by May 2023.
- 4) Implementation of first coastal littering mapping by July 2023.
- 5) Development of a first summary report on the mapping to support decision makers by July 2023.

5. Costs (if relevant)

The costs of implementation of this action would be around eur 51,500. The daily rate of one person working on this action is calculated to be eur 118,19. It is estimated that at least 4 people would be working on this activity, for at least 10 months working half time. There would also be transportation costs for field visits amounting to approximately eur 1500, assuming the rate of fuel consumption to be eur 0,25 per km driven with a car.

6. Funding sources (if relevant):

Funding will be provided within the project LIFE Waste To Resources IP, national cofinancing, and partner financing (MoEPRD, Baltic Coasts, FEE Latvia cofinancing). This financing has already been secured.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Stamp of the organisation (if available): _____

⁵ Available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/317168-par-ricibas-planu-parejai-uz-aprites-ekonomiku-20202027-gadam>

⁶ Available at: <https://www.esfondi.lv/normativie-akti-1>



Vides aizsardzības un reģionālās attīstības ministrija

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Rīga, 20.07.2022 No. 1-14/5120
To _____ No. _____

Association “Baltic Coasts”

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*Regarding the support for the Action Plan developed by the project PLASTEKO
“Supporting EU regions to curb plastics waste and littering”*

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia (hereinafter — the Ministry) confirms that it got acquainted with the Action Plan developed by the project PLASTEKO “Supporting EU regions to curb plastics waste and littering” (hereinafter — Project). The Ministry holds the view that the proposed Action Plan activity:

Mapping and assessing impacts of marine litter on coastal ecosystem services would be valuable in developing relevant findings about the impacts of marine litter on coastal ecosystem services to be applied in policy implementation.

The Ministry also appreciates that it was given a possibility to discuss the Action Plan with the Project representatives before its finalization. The Project objective and actions are closely aligned to the Ministry’s interests to introduce measures to reduce contamination of the marine, coastal, inland waters, specially protected areas and other areas in Latvia, therefore the Ministry believes that the proposed Action Plan will complement other ongoing or planned activities and looks forward to further work on curbing plastics waste and littering.

Yours faithfully,
Acting Deputy State Secretary for the Environment,
Director of Environmental Protection Department

Rudīte Vesere