

A revolution in plastics management

Third international open seminar of the Interreg project

The third On-Site Deep Dive (OSDD) meeting took place in Velenje, Slovenia, 5–6 March 2024. The hosts from the [Faculty of Environmental Protection](#) and the [Development Agency of Savinja-Šalek Region](#) have prepared an interesting and varied programme for PLASTIX partners and stakeholders.

On the first day, an **OPEN SEMINAR** was organised at which, in addition to the host institutions, the project partners and their guests presented themselves.

- Catalonia (E): [ACCIÓ – Catalan Agency for Business](#)
- Tampere (FIN): [Tampere University of Applied Sciences](#)
- Fryslân (NL): [NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences](#)
- Lombardy (I): [Elettrotecnica Rold Srl](#)
- Värmland (S)

The research group from the Faculty of Environmental Protection shared their significant research achievements of their one-year long activities within the PLASTIX project on monitoring the presence of microplastics in and macroplastics along small rivers. Their [presentation](#) highlighted the major environmental issues of plastic pollution in our waterways and offers effective approaches to its mitigation in the future.

The seminar was also attended by regional stakeholders, interested individuals from the business sector, various interest groups and the public of the SAŠA region, such as the:

- [Savinja-Šalek Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#),
- [Plastika Skaza](#),
- [BSH Home Appliances Group, Nazarje](#),
- [Coal Mine Velenje](#),
- [Faculty of Polymer Technology](#),
- [Gorenje Household Appliances, Hisense Europe](#),
- [Utility Company Velenje](#),
- [Chamber of Public Utilities of Slovenia](#).

Focusing on the challenges of the project, knowledge exchange, innovative approaches to promote sustainable practices, the development of circular economy models and the growth of environmentally friendly industries/technologies, the participants visited the companies [Veplas](#) and [Plastika Skaza](#).

In addition to several good practices in the field of plastics management, the guests also got to know a part of the rich tourist offer of the SAŠA region. They took the oldest working elevator in Slovenia down to the underground part of the [Slovenian Coal Mining Museum](#), where 160 metres below the surface, the symbiosis of a raw industrial environment and gastronomic delights awakened all the senses. They also enjoyed the unspoilt nature of our highest waterfall, [the Rinka](#), the first source of the Savinja River, which, surrounded by the mighty Kamnik-Savinja Alps, impresses in all seasons.

Get a glimpse of the OSDD Slovenia in a short [video](#) (*link to video*) summary and read about the **thoughts of the hosts after the OSDD** (*link to after thoughts*).

Plastic is an important material in our economy and plastic products make our everyday lives easier. But most plastics are still produced from fossil fuels, so there is an urgent need to tackle the problems that the production, use and consumption of plastics pose for the environment today. The millions of tonnes of plastic waste that end up in the oceans every year are one of the most obvious and worrying signs of these problems and are a cause of growing public concern.

That's way the monitoring microplastics in rivers and riverine litter along them are crucial to understanding the ecological and human health risks associated with plastic pollution. Approximately 80% of all plastic waste found in the oceans originates from land-based activities, with rivers being one of the key transport media for plastic particles. To address this challenge the FEP project team, supported by the technical expertise of the College of Industrial Engineering Celje, developed and built a field prototype based on the use of a filtration system with a portable water pump, with small upgrades to allow accurate monitoring of the physico-chemical sampling conditions.

For further details regarding the prototype and sampling methodology click on new PLASTIX BLOG.
(link to Anja's blog)