

# OSPAR ON TRACK TO ADOPT NEW REGIONAL ACTION PLAN ON MARINE LITTER BY 2022

## Why is this important?

Marine litter has become one of the defining environmental issues facing modern society. It is not only an aesthetic problem but incurs socioeconomic costs, threatens human health and safety, and impacts on marine organisms.

OSPAR's Regional Action Plan (RAP) on marine litter was adopted by the OSPAR Commission in 2014 and ran until 2021. It comprised 32 collective actions and 23 national actions aimed at addressing both land-based and sea-based sources and pathways of marine litter, as well as education, outreach, and removal activities.

Actions taken under the RAP include the Recommendation on the reduction of plastic pellet loss into the marine environment submitted to OSPAR 2021.

## What is OSPAR doing?

The North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy (NEAES) 2030 commits OSPAR to developing and agreeing an updated RAP by 2022, to address new and emerging issues and to reduce the impacts of those items causing most harm to the marine environment.

To provide a solid foundation for that work, OSPAR carried out an extensive evaluation of the impacts and effectiveness of the present RAP. The evaluation considered evidence from many sources, including the OSPAR indicator assessments, Contracting Party reporting, and stakeholder and public attitude surveys.

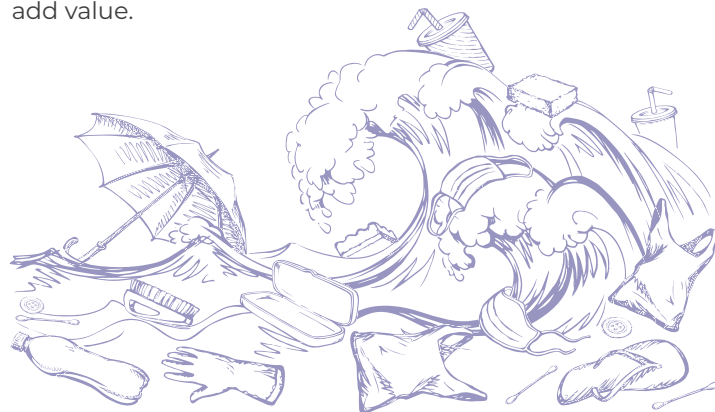
The evaluation report presents conclusions on the impact of the RAP and recommendations for the next phase. Many of these recommendations have already been taken up in the initial drafting of the new RAP.

As of June 2021, OSPAR Contracting Parties had completed 25 out of the 32 collective actions from the current RAP; 3 were still in progress; and 4 had been set aside. Recent OSPAR indicator assessments show some signs of reductions in marine litter levels but there is still a long way to go.

## How will this benefit the North-East Atlantic?

OSPAR's strategic objective is to prevent inputs of and significantly reduce marine litter, including microplastics, to reach levels that do not cause adverse effects to the marine and coastal environment with the ultimate aim of eliminating inputs of litter.

The evaluation of the current RAP will help to ensure that the next phase of work under the NEAES 2030 will be targeted on those issues where OSPAR can most add value.



For more information on OSPAR's Marine Litter Regional Action Plan please visit the [OSPAR website](http://www.ospar.org)