

GENERAL PROJECT INFO	
Dataset ID	BSNN 11 - NGO Involvement in Policy Making and Citizen Science
Project title	Reduction of Litter in the Marine and Coastal Environment and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources
Project acronym	Marine Litter Watch
Project centre	Black Sea NGO Network, Varna, Bulgaria
Associated programme	NGO Programme in Bulgaria under the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area www.ngogrants.bg
Begin date	30/10/2014
End date	30/04/2016
Ongoing	Yes
LOCATION	
Geographical coverage	Bulgarian Black Sea coast and territorial waters
Area Type	Coastal, marine
Sea-area	Black Sea
Coastal zone	Bulgaria
DESCRIPTIONS	
Case Study Summary	<p><i>The case.</i> The accumulation of litter in the marine environment and on the coast adversely affects the ecological health of the sea and the shore. Litter, a product of unsustainable practices and consumer behavior creates great risks for society and its way of life. The risks are associated with the degradation of the marine and coastal environment resulting from over-exploitation of their resources and the accumulation of waste. It is harmful to human health and marine biodiversity, and has negative impact on the recreational and economic potential of the coastal resources. The most harmful marine litter to all forms of life is plastics which also form the largest percentage in the overall amounts. The problem has been recognized globally in the Declaration \$163 Rio + 20 and two EU directives - the Waste Framework Directive and the Marine Strategy (MSFD). Marine litter however is not incorporated in national legislation and waste management programme. The sources and distribution of marine litter are not sufficiently clarified, very little reliable data is available, and no monitoring is conducted to identify and formulate appropriate measures. This is one of the obligations under the MSFD both on national and regional level. Therefore NGOs need to engage decision makers on expert level and involve other stakeholders like environmental and marine agencies, businesses, municipalities and coastal communities to have marine litter included in the legislative framework and especially the Marine Strategy. The substantial problem of insufficient data needs also to be addressed.</p> <p><i>The change process.</i> The project includes three groups of activities associated with engaging decision makers, coastal stakeholders, youth and the wider coastal communities. The problem of marine litter has been formulated on expert level by NGO experts and has been presented to decision makers at the ministry of environment, the National Assembly, the Black Sea Basin Directorate, the regional environmental inspectorates in Varna and Bourgas. Round tables with local stakeholders have also formulated some problems and suggestions in the line of future measures to reduce marine litter. Another important group of activities envisages the involvement of youth in Citizen Science, training them to use the mobile application Marie LitterWatch of the EEA to collect data about beach litter. The involvement of youth is supported by various artistic and visibility activities. The third group of activities targeting the coastal</p>

population have general awareness and publicity effect and they target the coastal communities and concerned citizens in the whole country who visit the coast and love the sea.

The outcome. The project is still in progress though the major decision makers on the marine litter issue have been addressed and the coastal stakeholders have been involved in assessing the issue and providing suggestion on the possible solutions. The desired outcome is the inclusion of marine litter in the national regulatory framework and the design of good programme of measures for its reduction. Youth and concerned citizens are to be involved in Citizen Science network and awareness and information activities on the need to reduce litter in the sea and on the coast.

Emerging best practices. The involvement of NGOs and their experts who address national decision makers from the environment ministry, other ministries and the National Assembly with concrete proposals for improvement in policy issues can be described as best practice. BSNN has prepared and submitted a policy paper with suggestions for definition for marine litter and other ideas for specific amendments and the inclusion of the topic in the national legal framework. The project team maintains communication with ten institutions and agencies involved in the political process.

The project team has started the Citizen Science network for collection of data on marine litter on the Bulgarian coast. The start was a campaign with training on the use of Marine LitterWatch for environmental NGOs and stakeholders. The network can be extended on the coast of some littoral Black Sea countries.

Keywords	Marine Litter, Citizen Science, marine environment, Pollution, Nitrates, Agriculture
Data theme	MARINE LITTER/CITIZEN SCIENCE/ENVIRONMENTAL NGOS
CENTRE-INFORMATION	
Project centre	Black Sea NGO Network, Regional Office, Varna, Bulgaria
Role of research centre	Lead Partner
Other partners and countries	Bourgas Association of Ecological and Rural Tourism (BAEST)
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