

## MARINE LITTER POLICY ADVANCES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

The updated Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean was adopted in December 2021 during COP22 (Antalya, Turkey, 7-10 December 2021). The Regional Plan includes new elements, including new definitions, updated scope of measures expanded under four key areas (economic instruments, circular economy principles, land-based and sea-based sources of marine litter) and amended targets for plastic waste and microplastics. Moreover, additional principles are included, such as phasing out single-use plastic items and promote reuse options; setting targets for plastic recycling and other waste items; introducing economic instruments such as environmental taxes, banning and design requirements; EPR (land and sea-based sources); promoting new technologies and measures for the removal of marine litter; supporting the application of prevention measures to achieve a circular economy for plastics; reducing packaging; promoting voluntary agreements with industry; taking measures to integrate the informal sector into regulated waste collection and recycling schemes; strengthening measures related to SCP programmes; phasing-out chemical additives used in plastic products; introducing concrete measures on microplastics reduction; implementing measures to prevent and reduce marine litter in MPAs; minimizing the amount of marine litter associated with fishing and aquaculture; establishing marine litter monitoring programmes as part of IMAP EO10; enhancing public awareness and education; and including measures in the SPAMIs to combat marine litter. The added value of the updated Regional Plan is pertinent to reflecting and addressing recent directions by UNEA resolutions including of UNEA 5.2, global conventions and regional initiatives, encompassing substantive elements and lessons learnt over the 2013 version of Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean, as well as mobilizing significant resources to enable its effective implementation including from the Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF) and the European Union.