





UNEP's Initiative on Sustainable Management of Marine Litter

Dr. Ellik Adler, Regional Seas Coordinator
UNEP, Nairobi

Marine Litter / Debris

Definition - 'any persistent, manufactured or processed solid material discarded, disposed of or abandoned in the marine and coastal environment' (UNEP GPA)

US Academy of Sciences - estimates the total input of ML into oceans worldwide is 6.4 Million tonnes per year (a convoy of 200,000 semi-trailers trucks loaded with 32 tons lining up bumper-to-bumper for 3,200 Kms); resulting in 13,000 plastic objects per square km of oceans surface – most of it does not degrade!



SOURCES of Marine Litter

Sea-based sources

- Merchant shipping, ferries and cruise liners
- Fishing vessels and fish farming
- Naval vessels, research ships and pleasure crafts
- Offshore oil and gas platforms

Land-based sources

- Waste from municipal landfills located on the coast
- River transport
- Discharge of untreated municipal sewerage and storm water
- Industrial facilities
- Tourism and beach-going leftovers

Characteristics:

- Consistency: non-degradable variety of plastics (90-95%), metals and glass
- Mobility: travels huge distances around the world with ocean currents and winds
- Persistency: long-lived and active for decades

- 
- **Effects:** a threat to marine life and human health, directly and indirectly
 - **Impact:** entails economic losses to fishermen, coastal communities, boat owners, tourism, power stations, navy, etc.
 - **Damage to fishing vessels and gear** (loss of 12,000-60,000 USD per year per vessel in the Shetlands)

Threats to marine life

- Entanglement
- Ingestion
- Destruction or smothering of the seabed
- Transportation of invasive species



Problems and bottlenecks (1)

- Despite international, regional and national efforts, there are indications that **ML is increasing**
- **The lack of international legal instruments (except for IMO/MARPOL Annex V) or Global Programmes – makes it difficult to tackle**



Problems and bottlenecks (2)

- **Deficiencies in the implementation and enforcement of existing** international, regional and national regulations/standards are increasing
- **Lack of awareness** among main stakeholders and the general public, is a major reason why ML appears to increase worldwide



ML is partially addressed by these Conventions and agreements

- **IMO- MARPOL 73/78 Annex V (garbage from ships)**
- **London Convention on Dumping**
- **Basel Convention**
- **Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation**
- **CBD, with the Jakarta Mandate**
- **CMS - Convention on Migratory Species**
- **GPA -Global Programme of Action on Land-based Activities**
- **FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (abandoned/lost fishing gear)**



Analysis and Proposal of UNEP's **Feasibility Study** – (Consultancy held during 2004/5)

- As the establishment of a Global Programme on ML would **currently NOT be the best approach** – the Feasibility Study recommends to develop **regional** programmes first in parallel to mobilize **resources** for a global initiative.



Possible Global Marine Litter Activities

1. Initiation of the Regional Activities
2. Building ownerships and partnerships
3. Information and outreach
4. Sectorial activities
5. Fundraising



Activities developed by UNEP

- The Feasibility Study
- Publications
- Participation in UNICPOLOS (GA decisions on Marine Litter!!)
- Development of Regional Activities
- Development of a GEF MS Project
- Establish of a network of NGOs
- Ties with the Civil Society

Partners

- **UNEP (Regional Seas, GPA, DTIE)**
- **IMO**
- **UNESCO/IOC**
- **FAO (and RFBs)**
- **Regional organisations (EU)**
- **Countries / Governments**
- **Civil Society – Industry and the Private sector, NGOs)**

Regional Activities developed and sponsored under Regional Seas

- NOWPAP (North West Pacific)
- East Africa (Nairobi Convention)
- SACEP (South Asian Seas)
- Black Sea
- Caribbean
- PERSGA (Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden)
- Mediterranean
- CPPS
- Baltic (partner programme)
- In 2006 – COBSEA, ROPME, SPREP



The Regional Activities – Main components of the “Flexible Template” approach

- **The “template” is flexible and region-adaptable**
- **Equity between countries – opportunity to present approaches and priorities**
- **Based on the role of Regional Consultant, National Consultants and the Secretariat (RCU)**
- **Based on Nat’l/regional assessments, draft policy document, regional meeting of experts and nat’l authorities; final regional strategy.**
- **Role of secretariat: Integrate the strategy into PoW; the Action Plan; the GEF project; the legal system; achieve programmatic and financial sustainability.**



The main components of the GEF MSP (for selected pilot regions)

- **Review of relevant legal instruments and programmes**
- **Collection and review of existing information and data**
- **Development of Regional Action Plans on Marine Litter**
- **Building ownerships and partnerships with private sector and other stakeholders**
- **Information and outreach**
- **Fundraising (identification and approach to potential funding sources)**



Draft Decisions of the 60th United Nations General Assembly

(Agenda item 76(a) -Draft 25 Oct. 2005; Draft Resolution - Oceans and the Law of the Sea)

The General Assembly,

48. Notes the **lack of information** and data on marine debris and **encourages** relevant nation, regional and international organizations **to undertake further studies on the extent and nature of the problem**, also encourages States **to develop partnerships with industry and civil society to raise awareness of the extent of the impact of marine debris on the health and productivity of the marine environment and consequent economic loss**;

The General Assembly –

49. *Urges* States to integrate the issue of marine debris within national strategies dealing with recycling, reuse and reduction (of waste) and promote the development of appropriate economic incentives to address this issue, and *encourages* States to cooperate regionally and subregionally to develop and implement joint prevention and recovery programmes for marine debris;



The General Assembly -

50. Invites the **IMO** in consultation with the **FAO**, **UNEP** and **DOALOS**, to review **Annex V** to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto, and to assess its effectiveness in addressing sea-based sources of marine debris;

50bis. Welcomes the continued work of IMO relating to **port waste reception facilities**, and notes the work done to identify problem areas and develop a comprehensive action plan;



The General Assembly -

*52. Welcomes the convening of the **Second Intergovernmental Review Meeting of the Global Programme of Action in Beijing** from 16 to 20 October 2006 as an opportunity to discuss marine debris in relation to the source categories of the GPA and urges broad **high-level participation;**" ...*

HOWEVER !

- Marine Litter is probably the most 'exposed' problem to the wide public, which affects, interests and irritates hundreds of millions of beach-goers, and many millions who are economically affected.
- No other marine pollution component mobilizes such public participation and readiness to act.
- And – it is a transboundary problem





We have to remember...

- ML is not an environmental problem that can be solved solely by means of legislation, law enforcement, beach cleaning campaigns and technical solutions.
- ML is also a cultural problem. Efforts to change attitudes, behaviours, management approaches, education and involvement of all sectors and interests, need to be undertaken.



Thank you