

EN

E-001297/2026

Answer given by Ms Roswall
on behalf of the European Commission
(6.7.2026)

The Commission recognises marine pollution, including litter, as major environmental concerns, particularly in the Mediterranean Sea. To address these challenges, it is implementing a comprehensive framework of EU legislation and initiatives focused on prevention, reduction and monitoring. These include the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)¹, the Directives on Single-Use Plastics and Fishing Gears², on Port Reception Facilities³ and the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive⁴, the Regulations on intentional use of microplastics in products⁵ and on the prevention of plastic pellets' releases⁶; as well as the Zero Pollution Action Plan⁷.

Through the common implementation strategy of the MSFD, the Commission supports Member States in improving implementation and progressing towards achieving good environmental status. This includes the development of harmonised threshold values for beach and seafloor litter, ongoing work on floating marine litter and microplastics, and technical guidance on monitoring. In parallel, the Commission is reviewing the Directive to strengthen its effectiveness while simplifying the legislative framework.

At regional level, the EU cooperates with Mediterranean partners under the Barcelona Convention to reduce and prevent marine litter and enhance monitoring and assessment initiatives. This includes the funding of the Marine Litter Med Plus project⁸, which supports the implementation of the Mediterranean Plan on marine litter management. More broadly, the EU also plays a leading international role in negotiations for a Global Treaty against plastic pollution and pushes developments to prevent plastic pellet losses from shipping in relevant fora.

¹ Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy, OJ L 164, 25.6.2008, p. 19–40.

² Directive (EU) 2019/904 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 June 2019 on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment, OJ L 155, 12.6.2019, pp. 1–19.

³ Directive (EU) 2019/883 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on port reception facilities for the delivery of waste from ships (PRF Directive), OJ L 151, 7.6.2019, pp. 116–142.

⁴ Directive (EU) 2024/3019 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2024 concerning urban wastewater treatment, OJ L, 2024/3019, 12.12.2024, pp. 8–54.

⁵ Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/2055 of 25 September 2023 amending Annex XVII to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) as regards synthetic polymer microparticles, OJ L 238, 27.9.2023.

⁶ Regulation (EU) 2025/2365 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 November 2025 on preventing plastic pellet losses to reduce microplastic pollution, OJ L, 2025/2365, 26.11.2025.

⁷ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the regions, 'Pathway to a Healthy Planet for All EU Action Plan: 'Towards Zero Pollution for Air, Water and Soil'', COM/2021/400 final.

⁸ <https://www.unep.org/unepmap/what-we-do/projects/MarineLitterMED-Plus>.