

Global plastics associations take action on marine litter

According to PlasticsEurope, the European plastics industry has been instrumental in bringing together plastics industry organisations from around the world to sign up to a “Joint Declaration for Solutions on Marine Litter”. The declaration outlines a set of clear objectives for industry action, and advocates close cooperation with a broad range of stakeholders to achieve substantial progress in reducing damage to the marine environment.

In the six-point strategy outlined in the declaration the industry will:

- Work in public-private partnerships aimed at preventing marine debris
- Work with the scientific community to better understand the scope, origins and impact of marine litter and the range of solutions to the problem
- Promote comprehensive science-based policies and enforcement of existing laws to prevent marine litter
- Promote best practice in waste management, in particular in coastal regions
- Enhance opportunities to recover plastic products for recycling and energy recovery
- Steward the transport and distribution of plastic resin pellets and products to its customers and promote this practice along the supply chain

While acknowledging that the causes of marine litter are many and complex and the problem can not be solved by one stakeholder group alone, the European plastics industry is determined to drive multi-stakeholder action on the issue both in Europe and at international level, says PlasticsEurope.

It is estimated that over 80 % of marine litter originally comes from land as a result of poor waste management. The European plastics industry is already working with public authorities, NGOs, academics and other actors to identify and address gaps in the implementation of waste management procedures across Europe. PlasticsEurope supports the renewed focus on the marine environment at European Union (EU) level and looks forward to continuing to collaborate closely with the European institutions and national governments in the context of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive and related initiatives.

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