

Open Regional Fund for South East Europe – Modernisation of Municipal Services (ORF MMS)  
Project “Solid Waste Management in cross-border rural and coastal areas of South Eastern European region”

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## **Policy Recommendations on Solid Waste Management in Cross-Border Rural and Coastal Areas of South Eastern European Region**

*Considering* the seriousness of the issue of waste pollution in the regions of Adriatic Coast, Tara-Drina-Sava and Sharra Mountain causing trans-boundary environmental and economic impacts,

*Being aware* that floating debris threatens the health and productivity of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems,

*Expressing concern* for the rising costs of cleaning illegal dumpsites, beaches and riverbanks, lost tourism revenue, rural development, poor publicity, diminishing and depleted fish stock, damaged nets and miscellaneous fishing gear, damaged engines and lost revenue from power generation at hydropower plants,

*Bearing in mind* the relevant EU and international policies on waste management and floating debris – the Barcelona Convention, Marine Strategy Framework Directive, the Water Framework Directive, the Espoo Convention and Basel Convention,

### **Invite National and Regional Governments to:**

- Consider the development and adoption of a framework agreement on a regional scale for cooperation on floating debris' prevention;
- Support the establishment of a mechanism for regional cooperation and cross-sectoral cooperation that will allow the exchange of experiences and transfer of know-how on the prevention of floating debris, by utilising existing networks and resources to their full extent;
- Take advantage of synergies between ongoing programmes and projects that address floating debris and/or its sources;
- Enforce good governance principles to prevent the floating debris' generation;
- Implement reform of national and municipal waste management planning in order to enact the EU policy for floating debris, as well as to better reflect the trans-boundary character of the floating debris, in particular:
  - Include floating debris on the list of priority waste streams;

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- Develop and implement regionally coherent methodologies for monitoring of floating debris and illegal dumping;
  - Develop and implement national methodologies for determination of waste collection coverage as well as perform solid waste analysis – generation and composition;
  - Address adequately the impacts and pressures of rural population and tourists’ influx in the solid waste management planning process.
- Establish the necessary legal framework for tackling floating debris at regional and national levels, as well as guide the operationalisation of these legal frameworks at the local level:
    - Establish a functional permitting system for municipal waste operators providing waste collection or strengthen the one already in place;
    - Enable the provision of universal service to all waste generators;
    - Enact revisions of construction laws so as to include stipulations that require investors to plan for adequate space to accommodate a sufficient volume of waste generated within the premises by set standards
  - Introduce economic instruments that will facilitate the prevention of floating debris, such as:
    - Organising deposit-refund schemes for packaging waste with an emphasis on plastic packaging;
    - Utilizing volume/per lift or weight-based tariffs that will incentivize households to adopt environmentally sustainable behaviours in terms of littering, waste reduction and segregation;
    - Establishing an extended producers’ responsibility system.
  - Preventing illegal dumping by developing Standard Operating Procedures for use by inspection entities;
  - Supporting local authorities in their endeavours to plan and implement adequate measures for minimisation of floating debris by the provision of necessary resources and financial support;

**Encourage Local Elected Officials and Local Governments to:**

- Develop or revise and adopt the existing local regulations on municipal waste management so as to:
  - Provide universal waste collection service based on the pillars of *full coverage of the area of service provision; non-discrimination; sustainability of service; quality and efficiency; transparency and affordable pricing;*
  - Embed the principles of sustainable tourism and rural development as per the already existing regional programs and initiatives.
- Adjust the municipal waste management planning process to better facilitate the prevention and management of floating debris;
- Use Inter-municipal Cooperation as an alternative service provision in the area of municipal solid waste management by ensuring economy of scale and regionalization of services;

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- Recognise the improved local Solid Waste Management planning as a precondition for local economic and tourism development.

**Appeal to donors and international partners to:**

- Provide the necessary financial support to the initiatives for prevention of floating debris in the pilot regions;
- Promote the exchange of organizational and institutional know-how, technologies and instruments in support of the floating debris prevention.