

Pilot project: Removal of marine litter from Europe's four regional seas

Final Report

Contract 070333/2012/SER/D2/636849



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The views expressed herein are those of the consultants alone and do not necessarily represent the official views of the European Commission.

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MARELITT pilot project:
Removal of marine litter from Europe's four regional seas

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ABBREVIATIONS USED

BIM	Bord Iascaigh Mhara
CMR	Institute Ruder Boskovic - Center for Marine Research
DFG	Derelict fishing gear
EoI	Expression of interest
FLAG	Fisheries local action group
GES	Good environmental status
KIMO	Kommunenes Internasjonale Miljøorganisasjon (Local Authorities International Environmental Organisation)
ML	Marine litter
MLR	Marine litter retention
MSFD	Marine Strategy Framework Directive
NABU	Nature And Biodiversity Conservation Union
OLPA	Osservatorio Ligure Pesca E Ambiente (Ligurian Observatory of Fisheries and Environment)
UBBSLA	Union of Bulgarian Black Sea Local Authorities
WFO	Waste Free Oceans
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

INTRODUCTION

This is the Final Report for the project *Pilot project: Removal of marine litter from Europe's four regional seas* (Contract number 070333/2012/SER/D2/636849). The acronym for the project is MARELITT. This report is a key deliverable of the project, as defined in the technical specifications for the project.

The Final Report provides an overview of the work completed under the project and delivers a number of key deliverables in the Annexes. It builds upon the previous reports for the MARELITT project, listed below.

- Inception Report of March 2013, approved by DG Environment in March 2013, which described the early planning of the project.
- Interim Report of 18 July 2013, subsequently approved by DG Environment, which described progress with tasks from January to July 2013 and included the following deliverables:
 - 15 Project Description Sheets
 - Inventory of marine litter removal projects
 - Inventory of related marine litter projects
 - Assessment methodology
 - Two pilot Project Assessment Sheets
 - MARELITT project flyer
 - Dissemination strategy
- Progress Report, January 2014, approved by DG Environment in January 2014, which included the following deliverables:
 - 17 Project Assessment Sheets
 - Assessment Report
 - Code of Good Practices
 - Host organisation checklist
 - Intervention area checklist
 - Long-list of potential host organisations
 - Dissemination tracking table
- Overview Report, January 2014, presented to DG Environment and DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries at the meeting of 30 January 2014, which included the following deliverable:
 - Short-list of 18 potential host organisations.
- Report on Selection of Host Organisations, March 2014, approved by DG Environment in March 2014, which included the following deliverables:
 - 15 host organisation viability assessments
 - List of the six selected MARELITT host organisations.

This Final Report is structured into the following two parts:

- Section 1 provides an overview of the MARELITT project, including the objectives of the project, its scope and the tasks undertaken to meet the project objectives.
- Section 2 provides a report on the results and key achievements under the project.

The eight annexes provide the remaining deliverables for the project, listed below:

- Host organisation letters of engagement (Annex 1)
- Brussels workshop report (Annex 2)
- Terms of reference and guidelines for regional workshops (Annex 3)
- Regional workshop reports (Annex 4)
- MARELITT project business cases (Annex 5)

- Overview of dissemination targets for MARELITT Toolkits (Annex 6)
- MARELITT Toolkit for Marine Litter Retention Projects (Annex 7)
- MARELITT Toolkit for Derelict Fishing Gear Projects (Annex 8)

1 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF MARELITT

This section provides an overview of MARELITT. It sets out the objectives and scope of the project and a summary of the key tasks carried out to meet these objectives.

1.1 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the project is to assist EU Member States in reaching the objective set out in the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)¹ of ‘achieving good environmental status’ (GES) for EU marine waters by 2020. One of the qualitative descriptors for determining GES is that ‘properties and quantities of marine litter do not cause harm to the coastal and marine environment’ (Descriptor 10). As set out in the technical specifications for the project², ‘the ultimate aim of the project is to have the best “Fishing for Litter” practices started or in place in all four regional seas by identifying responsible organisations that will take this up and further develop these practices’. As described in the technical specifications, the term “Fishing for Litter” refers to different types of marine litter and derelict fishing gear removal projects. Further detail about these types of projects, and the scope of MARELITT, is provided in section 1.2 below.

As set out in the technical specifications for the project, the specific objectives of MARELITT were as follows:

a. Assessment of best practices

The project would evaluate the three existing forms of ‘Fishing for Litter’. Organisational, economic (cost effectiveness) aspects and environmental aspects are to be considered when assessing the best practices. The project would gather existing best practices and any possible legal implications for the different types of fishing for litter.

b. Setting up Fishing for Litter projects

The project would launch or maintain the best ‘Fishing for Litter’ practices in all four regional seas. Responsible local organisations would be identified in order to take this task up and develop these best practices further after the project period.

c. Dissemination of the results

The project would develop a toolkit for use by stakeholders. The EU fishing community along with EU plastics producers, converters and recyclers, local authorities, waste managers and NGOs would be engaged in several steps of the project.

1.2 PROJECT SCOPE

MARELITT covers the following three types of marine litter removal projects involving fishermen:

■ **Marine litter:**

- a) *Marine litter retention (MLR) projects*, during which marine litter that accumulates in the nets during regular fishing activity of (mostly) trawlers is collected. These are often referred to as ‘Fishing for Litter’ projects and are promoted by organisations such as KIMO and NABU.
- b) *Marine litter collection projects*, during which fishermen make special purpose trips to collect floating ML at sea. This type of project has primarily been promoted by Waste Free Oceans (WFO). This type of project was not a key focus of MARELITT and MARELITT did not seek to initiate marine litter collection projects. Further detail about the rationale for this is provided in Section 2.1 of the report.

¹ 2008/56/EC

² Specifications, Invitation to Tender, DNV.D.2/SER/2012/0039

- **Derelict Fishing Gear (DFG³):**

- c) *DFG retrieval projects*, during which fishermen make special purpose trips to retrieve DFG. To date, all DFG retrieval projects in the European Union are located in the Baltic Sea.

While there are a number of other types of marine litter removal activities, such as port area clean-ups or diving for litter, these activities are outside the direct scope of MARELITT.

1.3 PROJECT OVERVIEW

MARELITT is organised around three parts:

- **Part A** of the project described and assessed existing marine litter removal projects, with a view to identify good practices. This assessment informed the work carried out under Part B (initiation of new marine litter projects) and the MARELITT Toolkit developed under Part C.
- In **Part B**, we supported the initiation of MLR and DFG retrieval projects in all four European regional seas. This work involved identifying and selecting host organisations and providing these organisations with assistance and technical support in initiating marine litter projects.
- **Part C** related to the dissemination of the results of the project, including the development and dissemination of the web-based MARELITT Toolkits, which provide step-by-step guidance to organisations that wish to establish their own marine litter removal projects. This guidance has been based on the good practices identified in Part A and further developed throughout Part B the project.

To deliver each part of the project, the technical specifications set out a series of tasks, described in Table 1 below. These tasks have been carried out by Milieu Ltd and its partners ARCADIS, MEGAPESCA Lda, IMARES and LEI institutes from the Stitching DLO foundation, RSS Marine, Plymouth University, the Coastal & Marine Union (EUCC) and the Centro Mediterráneo de Estudios para el Uso y Conservación de las Costas (EUCC Mediterranean Centre), the Baltic Environmental Forum and Mare Nostrum.

³ In some literature, DFG is also referred to as ‘Abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG)’.

Table 1 Overview of MARELITT project objectives and tasks

Objective A Assessment of best practices		
Task description (From technical specifications)	Specific tasks and key deliverables	Status of task December 2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of the existing Fishing for Litter projects in the four regional seas. The identification is related to all the three types of Fishing for Litter projects. <i>See sub-task A.1 for more detail.</i> • Collection of the relevant information from the organisations who are involved in present forms of fishing for litter in the four regional seas of Europe. <i>See sub-task A.3.</i> • Development of indicators to be used to analyse the projects. The indicators should reflect the strength and weaknesses of the projects as well as be able to identify best practices. Regional and cultural specific conditions should be considered. <i>See sub-task A.2.</i> • Analysis of the organisational, economic and environmental aspects of the identified projects in the four regional seas, using the developed indicators. The information of these projects should be analysed in a standardized manner in order to be able to draw lessons learned from these analyses. The analysis should provide generic and specific aspects which could be applied in other and new projects with a similar aim. <i>See Sub-tasks A.4 and A.5.</i> 	<p>Task A.1 Identification of existing marine litter removal projects Deliverables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inventory of existing marine litter removal projects ▪ Inventory of related marine litter projects (Interim Report) 	<p>Delivered in full.</p> <p>All tasks under Objective A have been delivered.</p> <p>In addition to the deliverables required in the technical specifications, the project delivered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An inventory of related marine litter projects ▪ The joint MARELITT-WFO workshop of December 2013.
	<p>Task A.2 Development of assessment framework Deliverables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assessment methodology (Interim Report) 	
	<p>Task A.3 Description of existing marine litter removal projects Deliverables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 15 Project Description Sheets (Interim Report) 	
	<p>Task A.4 Pilot assessment of two marine litter removal projects Deliverables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Two Project Assessment Sheets (Interim Report) 	
	<p>Task A.5 Assessment of projects Deliverables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 17 Project Assessment Sheets (Progress Report) ▪ Assessment Report (Progress Report) ▪ Code of Good Practices 	

Task B Setting up Fishing for Litter projects	(Progress Report)	
Task description (From technical specifications)	Specific tasks and key deliverables	Status of task (December 2014)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of criteria for self-sustained projects. It is of utmost importance that newly established Fishing for Litter projects are capable of continuing after being initiated, for instance by securing long term funding commitments. The criteria should be able to reflect this potential, for instance the possible ownership among local or regional organisations, their representativeness, possibility for sponsorship, the importance of the fishing fleet. Regional and cultural specific conditions should be considered. See <i>Task B.1</i>. Identification of possible locations within each of the four regional seas for the two main types of Fishing for litter (fishing litter out of the marine environment and collecting ghost nets or fishing gear) could be implemented. See <i>Tasks B.1 and B.2</i>. Identification of and contact with the relevant stakeholders including local host organisations. In the selected areas, the relevant stakeholders should be approached. A selection of the best suited host organisation should be made, based on the identified criteria which reflect amongst others, best chances for success. See <i>Tasks B.1 and B.2</i>. Analysis of these potential (self-sustained) projects in the four regional seas based on the identified criteria. See <i>Task B.2</i>. Identification and selection of proposed areas where to develop the Fishing for Litter projects further. The potential of the Fishing for Litter projects in the four regional seas of Europe should be identified, using the information from the previous tasks. Based on the potential identified, a selection should be made of a number of sites which are most promising and feasible. Per regional sea, two sites should be selected. See <i>Tasks B.1 and B.2</i>. Development of business cases in each of the four regions for the two main types of Fishing for litter. In total eight business cases should be developed. See <i>Task B.3</i> Identification of the need for support of the local host organisations to make them capable of running such a project as identified in the business 	<p>Task B.1 Preparatory work for the selection of projects</p> <p>Deliverables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host organisation checklist (Progress Report) Intervention area checklist (Progress Report) Long-list of host organisations (Progress Report) <p>Task B.2 Selection of the projects</p> <p>Deliverables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-list of host organisations (Overview Report) 18 Host organisation viability assessments Final list of host organisations (Selection Report) Host organisation letters of engagement (Annex 1) <p>Task B.3 Initiation of the projects</p> <p>Deliverables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brussels Workshop Report (Annex 2) Terms of Reference and Guidelines for Regional Workshops (Annex 3) Five Regional Workshop Reports (Annex 4) Five Business Cases (Annex 5) 	<p>Delivered, with deviations from the technical specifications as agreed with DG Environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project delivered four business cases for national projects in the Mediterranean, the North and the Black Seas, and one business case for a regional project, covering three countries, instead of the eight business cases set out in the technical specifications for the project. Further detail on this is provided in Section 2.2.2 of this report. The project developed five regional workshops, including one Baltic workshop covering three countries, instead of the eight regional workshops set out in the technical specifications for the project. Further detail on this is provided in Section 2.2.2 of this report. <p>In addition to the deliverables required in the technical specifications, the project delivered a workshop in Brussels for host organisations, which was not required under the technical specifications.</p>

<p>cases. Seek Task B.3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of eight workshops (in 4 regions and 2 main types of Fishing for litter) which bring together the relevant stakeholders and the local host organisations. The aim of these workshops is to explain and discuss how to initiate and run such Fishing for Litter project to address their needs through training. See Task B.3 • Organisation of workshops. In the 4 regions workshops for the relevant stakeholders have to be organized to teach them to work with the developed toolkit and how to set up and continue with such Fishing for Litter project. See Task B.3 		
Task C		
<p>Task description (From technical specifications)</p>	<p>Specific tasks and key deliverables</p>	<p>Status of task (December 2014)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making available the results of these analyses in the most appropriate form to address relevant stakeholders such as local authorities, Regional Seas Conventions, fishermen organisations, NGOs, the Commission. For this, several formats and dissemination modes have to be considered and analysed. • Development of a toolkit on how to set up Fishing for Litter projects. The web-based toolkit should contain an overview of best practices, examples, the analysis as preformed in the previous tasks, guidance for a step-wise approach and other tools which might be needed. The project should deliver a full toolkit with the tools necessary to be able to start a Fishing for Litter project by other initiators after the pilot project has finished. • The whole project should be well documented for future use. 	<p>Task C.1 Dissemination strategy Deliverables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dissemination Strategy ▪ MARELITT flyer (Interim Report) ▪ Dissemination tracking table (Progress Report) <p>Task C.2 Development of MARELITT Toolkit Deliverables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MARELITT Toolkit for MLR Projects (Annex 6) ▪ MARELITT Toolkit for DFG Projects (Annex 7) <p>Task C.3 Documenting the project for future use Deliverables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MARELITT website, which will be online for five years after the completion of the project 	<p>Delivered in full.</p> <p>In addition to the requirements of the technical specifications, the project carried out a number of other dissemination actions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The delivery of two specific Toolkits – one for MLR projects and one for DFG projects – instead of the one toolkit general required ▪ Delivery of a workshop on marine litter at the European Maritime Day Conference in Malta in May 2013.

2 REPORT ON PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

This section provides a report on the implementation and results of the project. It includes a detailed description of the tasks carried out under all parts of the project.

2.1 PART A: ASSESSMENT OF GOOD PRACTICES

Part A involved the assessment of existing marine litter removal projects in the European Union and the identification of good practices. Under Part A of MARELITT, we:

- **Identified the existing marine litter removal projects** in Europe (Task A.1). In doing so, the project compiled an inventory of marine litter removal projects and documented these projects in detailed Project Description Sheets (Task A.3). An inventory of other projects related to marine litter (i.e. marine litter research projects, DFG retrieval research projects, seasonal and port clean-ups and diving for litter projects) was also prepared to help the project define the scope of the MARELITT assessment and gather insights from relevant research projects.
- Developed an **assessment methodology** for the assessment and identification of good practices (Task A.2). This methodology included project assessment tables for use by all project partners in the assessment and a set of assessment criteria.
- **Assessed existing MLR and DFG projects** with the goal of identifying good practices (Task A.4 and A.5). This involved the development of 17 Project Assessment Sheets (12 for existing MLR projects; Five for existing DFG Projects). Based on these assessments, the project conducted a comparative analysis of the individual projects, documented in an Assessment Report.

2.1.1 Task A.1 Identification of existing marine litter removal projects

The objective of this task was to identify existing marine litter removal projects that could subsequently be assessed and learned from under the following project tasks.

For this purpose, we prepared an inventory of all existing marine litter projects in the European Union, which are listed by type of marine litter projects and by regional sea. An overview of the inventory is provided in Table 2 (marine litter retention projects) and Table 3 (derelict fishing gear projects) below.

Table 2: Marine litter retention projects identified under Task A.1

Regional Sea	ML retention projects
North East Atlantic: 12 projects, involving nearly 65 ports and over vessels,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Belgium: Stichting voor Duurzame Visserijontwikkeling, Fishing for Litter Belgium (2007-) ■ The Netherlands: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ North Sea Directorate, Vuilvisproject Den Helder (2002-) ■ KIMO The Netherlands-Belgium, Fishing for Litter (2002 -) ■ UK: KIMO, Fishing for Litter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Scotland (2005 -) ■ South West England (2008 -) ■ Isle of Man (2007-) ■ Faroe Islands: KIMO Faroe Islands, Fishing for Litter (2013 -) ■ Germany: NABU, Meere ohne Plastik (2011 –) ■ France: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Brittany, ARMOR GLAZ (2008 -) ■ Aquitaine region, Institut des Milieux Aquatiques (irregular between 1995-2008) ■ Spain: Galicia, CETMAR:

Regional Sea	ML retention projects
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nada Pola Borda (2009-2010) ▪ PESCAL(2012 -)
Mediterranean: 3 projects, involving 3 ports and approximately 90 vessels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ France: Sète (Languedoc-Roussillon), SATHOAN (a fishermen's association) (2010 -) ■ Spain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Palma de Mallorca - MoU between fishermen's association & the municipal waste management company (irregular since 2003) ▪ Villajoyosa (Alicante) – a fishermen's association (2012 -)
Baltic: 2 projects, involving 5 ports & approximately 60 vessels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Germany: NABU Meere ohne Plastik (2011 –) ■ Sweden: KIMO Baltic, Fishing for Litter (2011-)

Table 3: DFG retrieval projects identified under Task A.1

Regional Sea	DFG retrieval projects
North East Atlantic: 1 project (outside the EU)	Norway: annual routine DFG retrieval programme, implemented by the Directorate for fisheries, focussing on gill nets in deep waters.
Baltic: 3 projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Poland & Lithuania: WWF Poland: Pilot project Collecting ghost nets in the Baltic Sea, 2011- June/July 2012 ■ Sweden: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ KIMO Baltic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Summer 2012: a specific effort. ▫ Regular retrieval by 1 fisherman from a specific location where gear loss is rate is high. ▪ Efforts from individual fishermen, with Swedish Government and EFF support (since 2005). In total, eight fishermen have retrieved DFG during 21 summer periods. Of those eight fishermen, one accounted for nearly half of the periods (i.e.10). Two other fishermen went each out during three periods. In the inventory, this Swedish effort was included as a single project. However, the efforts of these three most active fishermen were separately assessed by MARELITT.

The inventory also identified two marine litter collection projects, during which fishermen make special purpose trips to collect floating marine litter at sea, promoted by Waste Free Oceans (WFO). One of these projects was undertaken in 2011 in Belgium by the Stichting voor Duurzame Visserijontwikkeling (SVDO); the other is ongoing and is undertaken in France by the Comité National des Pêches Maritimes et des Elevages Marins (CNPMM).

In addition to the inventory of marine litter removal projects, we prepared separate inventories of related projects in the EU: marine litter research projects, DFG retrieval research projects, seasonal and port clean-ups and diving for litter projects. These inventories were not required under the technical specifications, but were compiled because, when reviewing projects to draw up the main inventory, it was not always immediately clear what the scope of each project was. Also, by making our inventory of projects as complete as possible, we were able to capture all useful information.

The inventories were prepared on the basis of:

- A desk review of material on marine litter projects that was readily available, including reports both in hard copy and in electronic form;
- Personal e-mail and telephone contacts with primary stakeholders directly involved in the projects, i.e. organisations that are either leading (KIMO, NABU, WFO etc.) or physically implementing (such as representative organisations of fishers) projects.

Deliverables

- Inventory of existing marine litter removal projects
- Inventories of related marine litter projects.

2.1.2 Task A.2 Development of the assessment methodology

Under this task, we developed a methodology for assessing the existing marine litter removal projects included in the inventory developed under Task A.1, summarised above in Tables 2 and 3.

The objectives of the assessment were to:

- Evaluate the extent to which marine litter removal projects have an overall impact in improving the marine environment and, in particular, contribute to the objectives of the MSFD by helping to ensure that ‘properties and quantities of marine litter do not cause harm to the coastal and marine environment’ (MSFD Descriptor 10); and
- Identify good practices for the removal of marine litter.

In addition, the assessment was used under Part 2 of MARELITT to support the development of business cases for each of the projects that were initiated under MARELITT. The results of the assessment also fed into the MARELITT Toolkits developed under Part C of the project.

A draft assessment methodology was developed prior to the collection of extensive information on existing marine litter removal projects (Task A.3). This draft methodology was thoroughly discussed during a project team meeting involving all experts. The methodology was then revised following the collection of project information (Task A.3) and the pilot project assessment (Task A.4), taking into account the experience gained with its application. A full description of the final assessment methodology was provided in the Interim Report.

The assessment methodology was based on the EU’s standard evaluation framework for interventions⁴. It included a template Project Assessment Sheet, with a set of assessment questions and indicators, which was used by the project team in assessing the projects. By completing the template Project Assessment Sheet for each project, the organisational/technical, environmental and economic aspects of the projects were assessed in a consistent way.

Deliverable

- An assessment methodology comprising assessment criteria, indicators and a template Project Assessment Sheet for use by the project team.

2.1.3 Task A.3 Description of existing marine litter removal projects

The objectives of this task were to:

- Collect all information needed to fully describe each of the marine litter removal projects in the inventory; and
- Fully describe each of the marine litter removal projects, to allow subsequent assessment, identification of good practices and development of the MARELITT Toolkit.

In order to achieve this objective, Project Descriptions Sheets (PDS) were completed for each of the existing marine litter removal projects identified.

In completing this task, the following activities were carried out:

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/evaluation/methodology/guidelines/gbb_det_en.htm#02_05

Development of a template Project Description Sheet

A template PDS was developed during the inception stage for the description of the projects, based on the template Project Assessment Sheet. The template was developed to ensure that all projects were described in a similar manner and that all information needed for the assessment was collected.

Information collection: Desk research

First, the PDS were completed to the extent possible on the basis of a review of the material collected during the preparation of the inventory of existing projects (Task A.1). This desk review of available information allowed us to:

- Identify which stakeholders must be interviewed to gather additional information and views; and
- Focus the interviews to get a complete picture of each of the marine litter removal projects and to fully describe them in the PDS.

Information collection: Interviews

Telephone or personal interviews were then carried out with organisations that are directly involved in the projects, i.e. organisations that are either leading (KIMO, NABU, etc.) or physically implementing (fishermen's associations) marine litter removal initiatives. In some cases, telephone interviews were complemented with interview visits (e.g. for KIMO Netherlands). The interviews were guided by the list of questions and issues that had been prepared during the desk research. The interview process benefited from the fact that several organisations had already been contacted earlier in the project for the development of the inventory of existing MLR projects (Task A.1).

In some cases, interviews were also carried out with stakeholders other than those organisations directly involved in the projects. These secondary stakeholders held relevant information and opinions on existing marine litter removal projects that was needed to improve our understanding and to ensure that we gathered all available information necessary for the assessment of the projects.

Completion of the Project Description Sheets

The information collection for each project was documented through the completion of the PDS. During the completion of the PDS, it was observed that many of the projects have no detailed information, such as on crew composition and on dimensions of participating vessels (engine power, fishing periods, etc.). In some cases, stakeholders were reluctant or unwilling to share detailed information about their projects.

Very small projects, such as the KIMO project on the Faroe Islands, which has only one vessel, and projects for which no information was available, were not described or assessed in detail. The two marine litter collection projects, promoted by Waste Free Oceans, during which fishermen make special purpose trips to collect floating marine litter at sea, were also not described or assessed in detail. It had been our intention to describe and assess these projects in detail; however, it appeared that none of their projects were sufficiently advanced or had achieved results that could be evaluated.

The project also described and subsequently assessed one project outside the European Union, the DFG retrieval project in Norway. This provided a broader view of DFG retrieval projects beyond the small number of projects carried out in the Baltic Sea.

Table 4 below lists the projects that were described under Task A.3 of MARELITT. These projects were taken from the inventory of marine litter removal projects developed under Task A.1.

Table 4 List of projects described under Task A.3

Projects described under the Task A.3

1. Vuilvisproject Den Helder (North Sea Directorate)
2. Fishing for Litter - The Netherlands (KIMO)
3. Fishing for Litter - Belgium (SVDO)
4. Fishing for Litter - Scotland (KIMO UK)
5. Fishing for Litter - South West (KIMO UK)
6. Meere ohne Plastik (NABU, Germany)
7. Contrats Bleus in Brittany (Ar Mor Glaz, France)
8. Programme Macro-déchets (Aquitaine region, France)
9. Nada Pola Borda (CETMAR, Spain)
10. Pescal (CETMAR, Spain)
11. Contrats Bleus in the Mediterranean sea (France)
12. MoU for Fishing for Litter - Palma de Mallorca (Spain)
13. Collecting ghost nets in the Baltic Sea (WWF Poland)
14. Derelict fishing gear retrieval in Norway (Directorate of fisheries, Norway)
15. Kosta Garbia (France)

Deliverables

- 15 Project Description Sheets

2.1.4 Task A.4 Pilot assessment of two projects

The objective of the pilot assessment was to apply the draft assessment methodology to a selection of projects, with a view to refine and improve the methodology before applying it to all the projects.

At the start of Task A.3 (collection of information), a sample of projects was selected. The projects were selected to reflect the different types of marine litter removal and DFG retrieval, as well as to cover different geographical areas. The two selected projects were:

- Meere ohne Plastik (NABU, Germany)
- Collecting ghost nets in the Baltic Sea (WWF Poland)

The projects ‘Meere ohne Plastik’ (NABU, Germany) and ‘Collecting ghost nets in the Baltic Sea’ (WWF Poland) were assessed by applying the assessment methodology developed under Task A.2. Project Assessment Sheets were completed accordingly. Based on the experience gained with the pilot assessment, the assessment methodology was further refined.

2.1.5 Task A.5. Assessment of all projects

The objectives of this task were to:

- Evaluate to what extent marine litter removal projects can meet their objectives, which mostly relate to raising awareness, marine litter removal and monitoring.
- Define good practices that will support the initiation of new marine litter removal projects and the development of the toolkit.

In completing this task, the following activities were carried out, which are described in further detail below:

- Assessment of the projects;
- Comparative analysis of the project types and of the individual projects; and
- Identification and description of good practices.

Assessment of the projects

Projects were assessed through the completion of a Project Assessment Sheet (PAS). All projects that were described under Task A.3 were assessed, with the exception of Fishing for Litter in Belgium and Kosta Garbia in France, which had been found to be outside the scope of MARELITT during the

description phase. This project was not included as it was found to be seasonal clean-ups of litter organised by local authorities not involving fishermen. As fishermen did not participate in the project, it was found to be out of scope.

In addition to the projects listed in Table 4 above, PAS were also completed for four further projects: KIMO Baltic, and the DFG retrieval activities of three individual Swedish fishermen supported by the Swedish Government and the EFF (which were assessed as individual projects). At the time of completing the PDS, full information on these projects was not available. As the project progressed, further information became available, allowing for the assessment of these projects. A full description of the projects was provided in each PAS.

In the case of the two waste collection projects promoted by WFO, these projects had not been described under Task A.3 due to the lack of available information. Instead of describing and assessing these projects in detail, we delivered a joint WFO-MARELITT workshop in Brussels in December 2013, as suggested by DG Environment. The objective of the workshop was to identify good practices and allow the MARELITT team to improve its understanding of this type of project. The workshop focused on the early experiences and lessons arising out of the WFO projects.

Comparative analysis of the project types and of the individual projects

The key findings and assessment conclusions from the individual project assessments were summarised in the Assessment Report. This report provides information on:

- Key features of projects;
- Effectiveness of the projects in relation to the main stated objectives of the projects (primarily raising awareness, marine litter removal and monitoring);
- Efficiency of the projects; and
- A review of other considerations relating to the assessment of marine litter removal projects, including sustainability and legal considerations.

The Assessment Report provides a consolidated overview of existing marine litter removal practices in Europe, and draws conclusions on good practices and lessons learned that were extended to the projects initiated and the Toolkits developed in the next phases of MARELITT. The Assessment Report also provides a comparative overview, but given the limited number of existing projects and the variation between the projects, the conclusions that can be drawn from the comparison of projects are limited in number.

A key conclusion is that marine litter retention projects and DFG retrieval projects are good practices that should be promoted and supported. It is these types of projects that were initiated under MARELITT.

The third type of marine litter removal project that is covered by MARELITT are marine litter collection projects, during which fishermen make special purpose trips to collect floating marine at sea. Based on the work of the project carried out under Part A, we concluded that the collection potential of these projects is too low to justify initiation of this type of projects under MARELITT. From an efficiency and effectiveness perspective, such special purpose trips are only justified to clean up hot spots of floating litter.

Deliverable

- Assessment Report

Identification and description of good practices

The objective of the identification and description of good practices was to support the initiation or maintenance of marine litter removal projects under Part B and the development of the web-based toolkit under Part C of MARELITT.

The identification and description of good practices was based on the description and the assessment of existing marine litter removal projects previously carried out under Tasks A.3 and A.5. Good practices were identified for various aspects of the different types of projects, including project management, marine litter retention and DFG retrieval actions, management of collected litter and DFG, monitoring and awareness-raising.

These good practices were documented in a Code of Good Practice that was used as the basis for the MARELITT Toolkits developed under Part C of the project.

Deliverable

- Code of Good Practice

2.2 PART B: SETTING UP OR MAINTAINING MARINE LITTER PROJECTS

According to the technical specifications, a total of eight projects were to be initiated or maintained under Part B of MARELITT: two projects in each European regional sea (North East Atlantic, Baltic, Black Sea and Mediterranean). The projects in each regional sea should cover the two main types of marine litter removal activities (i.e. marine litter removal and DFG).

However, it was agreed with DG Environment at the Inception Meeting that the ultimate objective of MARELITT is not necessarily to initiate or maintain eight projects, but rather to have a significant number of projects significantly initiated or maintained to demonstrate how the removal of marine litter could be implemented in practice. Therefore, it was agreed with DG Environment that MARELITT might initiate fewer than eight projects. This decision was made in light of the recognition that it might be difficult to identify suitable host organisations that are willing to commit to hosting a project without direct funding, particularly in areas such as the Black Sea, where there are only two EU Member States and there are currently no existing marine litter projects. The total number of projects initiated would ultimately depend on the number of suitable host organisations identified by the project and their willingness to commit to the project.

As to the types of projects that would be initiated under MARELITT, the type of project initiated in each regional sea would be dependent on local circumstances, such as the existing projects already in place and the nature and severity of marine litter and derelict fishing gear problems in each sea. In particular, it was noted that only in the Baltic Sea region there are currently existing DFG retrieval projects. As a consequence, as discussed in the meeting with DG Environment in December 2013 and outlined in the Progress Report of January 2014, each type of project (DFG and MLR) might not necessarily be initiated in each regional sea. This issue of which types of projects would be initiated in each sea became clear during the selection of the projects – projects focused primarily on DFG retrieval were only proposed by organisations located in the Baltic Sea region, reflecting the higher level of local concern with DFG and of previous experience with DFG retrieval in that region. While DFG retrieval was proposed as a potential part of marine litter projects by organisations in the other regional seas, it was not the primary focus of any proposed projects outside of the Baltic Sea.

Based on the work carried out under Part A of the MARELITT, it was also decided that, under Part B, MARELITT would not initiate the third type of marine litter removal projects, that is, marine litter collection projects under which fishermen conduct special purpose trips to collect floating marine litter at sea.

2.2.1 Task B.1 Preparatory work for the selection of the projects

Task B.1 was focused on preparatory work for identifying marine litter removal projects and potential host organisations. Under this task, we:

- Developed a **host organisation checklist**. Based on the results of the assessment of marine litter removal projects and the identification of good practices under Part A, this checklist sets out the criteria that should ideally be met by an organisation hosting a marine litter removal project. This checklist was used to evaluate the potential host organisations during the host organisation selection process (Task B.2) and to identify key areas where host organisations may require additional support (Task B.3).
- Developed an **intervention area checklist**. A checklist was developed for both MLR and DFG projects to document the key characteristics that should be place in an area where a marine litter removal project is implemented. This information was used during the host organisation selection process (Task B.2) to consider the potential of the intervention areas proposed by host organisations.

- Together, the host organisation checklist and the intervention area checklist formed the **criteria for MARELITT projects**. These checklists were the basis for the viability assessments of potential MARELITT projects, carried out under Task B.2.
- Developed a **long-list of potential host organisations**. In identifying a list of potential candidate organisations for hosting a project, we carried out a wide range of dissemination actions during 2013 to reach out to the maximum number of potential hosts. This work was a key focus of the project's dissemination activities (Part C). To support this work, we developed an Expression of Interest (EoI) form and disseminated it widely to a wide range of stakeholders. Interested organisations were asked to complete this EoI and return it to the MARELITT team. In completing these EoIs, host organisations were asked to set out a brief description of their proposed project. Based on the EoIs received in December 2013, a long-list was prepared and submitted to DG Environment in the Progress Report.

Initial interest from potential host organisations was limited. In particular, few EoIs were received from organisations in the Black Sea and Mediterranean and very few had the retrieval of DFG as the primary focus. As a result, we carried out further work to identify potential host organisations in January 2014, with a particular focus on the Black Sea and Mediterranean regions. These efforts included individual follow-up contacts with all potential host organisations and contacts with relevant Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs), local government associations and the secretariats of the regional sea conventions. These efforts resulted in a number of additional organisations submitting EoIs, including organisations that were ultimately selected as suitable MARELITT host organisations. These organisations were added to the long-list of potential host organisations.

During the development of the long-list of host organisations, we took note of any organisations interested in acting as a partner in a project. The details of these organisations were documented, and these organisations have been considered as potential project partners during the work carried out under Task B.2 in supporting the initiation of projects.

Deliverables

- Criteria for MARELITT projects, consisting of a Host Organisation Checklist and an Intervention Area Checklist
- Long-list of potential MARELITT host organisations

2.2.2 Task B.2 Selection of the projects

The aim of Task B.2 was to identify and select the organisations best suited to hosting a marine litter project.

The first step in this process was establishing a **short-list of potential host organisations**. In developing this short-list, we reviewed the long-list developed under Task B.2 to exclude certain host organisations. The decision of whether to include a potential host organisation in the short list was based on an initial assessment of:

- The overall suitability of the project
- The responsiveness and motivation of the organisation to initiate a project
- The capability of the organisation to carry out a project
- The suitability of the proposed location of the project
- The level of development of the project concept, as described in the Expressions of Interest.

Some projects were excluded as they focused on activities that were not supported by MARELITT (for example, beach clean-up campaigns). Other projects were excluded as the organisation was unable to provide sufficient detail on the proposed project or the organisation.

This initial assessment resulted in a short-list of 18 potential host organisations, which included:

- Four organisations in the Baltic Sea
- Two organisations in the Black Sea
- Five organisations in the Mediterranean Sea
- Seven organisations in the North East Atlantic.

This short-list was the basis of discussions at a meeting with the European Commission on 30 January 2014, where the project team sought input from the Commission on the overall potential portfolio of MARELITT projects. The discussions at this meeting focused on the geographical distribution of project options, the level of previous experience of the host organisations, the types of projects proposed and the location of existing marine litter projects. As a result of these discussions, two organisations were not assessed as they were not located in an EU Member State.

Based on this feedback from the Commission, the project team proceeded to conduct a **viability assessment** of the potential host organisations through phone interviews with all short-listed organisations in February 2014. One organisation was not assessed as they were not available for an interview and did not provide respond to requests for further information. This viability assessment included the use of a template assessment matrix to ensure that the proposed projects were consistently assessed according to the project criteria developed under Task B.1. The template was used to document all interviews, resulting in the completion of 15 viability assessments.

During the viability assessment process, it became clear that the number of organisations with the capacity to host marine litter projects without direct initial funding from MARELITT was limited. A large number of organisations were excluded as they were unable to commit to participating in MARELITT during 2014 (for example, they were unable to commit to sending staff to attend the Brussels workshop or unable to commit to participating in a regional workshop).

MARELITT selected all organisations that were located in EU Member States, had the organisational capabilities to host a project and were able to commit to participating in MARELITT in 2014. There was only one instance where a potentially suitable organisation that was prepared to commit to MARELITT was excluded. In this case, the project was excluded on the basis that it sought to establish a project in the same port as an existing marine litter project.

The viability assessment led to the selection of six host organisations (see Table 5 below). The technical specifications for MARELITT stated that the project would produce eight business cases and eight workshops – that is, a business case and regional workshop for each of the projects initiated. The selection of six, rather than eight, host organisations meant that the project would deliver fewer than eight business cases and workshops. Following the viability assessment, the two selected Baltic organisations were joined by a third Baltic organisation, Keep the Estonian Sea Tidy, during the Brussels workshop. These organisations decided at the Brussels workshop to initiate a joint Baltic project involving at least the three organisations and their countries (see section 2.2.3 below).

This has resulted in MARELITT delivering:

- Four business cases for a national project and one business case for a region-wide project, covering three countries; and
- Five regional workshops, including one Baltic-wide workshop covering three countries, along with an additional workshop in Brussels for all host organisations.

Following the selection of the host organisations, each organisation was asked to sign a letter of engagement, acknowledging their commitment to participating in MARELITT in 2014. These letters included a commitment from the host organisations to develop a business case for a marine litter removal project ‘with the goal that this project would be implemented’ by the host organisations.

Five letters of engagement were signed by the host organisations. The decision of the host organisations in the Baltic region (WWF Poland and KIMO Baltic Sea⁵) to work in partnership on a joint Baltic-wide project across at least three countries in partnership with a third organisation (Keep the Estonian Sea Tidy) resulted in these organisations signing a joint letter of engagement. A sixth letter of intent was signed immediately prior to the submission of this report from an organisation (WWF Germany) signaling their intention to join the Baltic consortium. The letters of engagement are attached at Annex 1.

An overview of the seven MARELITT host organisations – the six selected during the initial selection process and Keep the Estonian Sea Tidy – is provided in Table 5 below.

Table 5 MARELITT host organisations

Organisation	Regional sea	Member State	Type of organization	Project type
KIMO Baltic Sea	Baltic	Sweden	An environmental network based in Simrishamn, Sweden, with 13 local government members (eight in Sweden, the rest in Estonia, Lithuania and Russia) and a number of partners	DFG retrieval
WWF Poland, based in Warsaw	Baltic	Poland	Environmental NGO, based in Warsaw	DFG retrieval
Keep the Estonian Sea Tidy (KEST)	Baltic	Estonia	Environmental NGO, based in Tallinn	DFG retrieval
Union of the Bulgarian Black Sea Local Authorities (UBBSLA)	Black Sea	Bulgaria	Local government association representing 21 municipalities located on the Bulgarian coast of the Black Sea	ML retention
Ligurian Observatory of Fisheries and Environment (OLPA)	Mediterranean	Italy	A consortium of research institutes, which also represents fishing sector associations, based in Genoa	ML retention
Institute Ruder Boskovic - Center for Marine Research (CMR)	Mediterranean	Croatia	Research institute based in Rovinj	ML retention
Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM)	North East Atlantic	Ireland	Statutory authority responsible for developing the Irish seafood industry, based in Dublin with offices across Ireland.	ML retention

Further information on the decision-making process leading to the selection of these projects is provided in the Overview Report, submitted to DG Environment in January 2014, and the Selection Report, submitted to DG Environment in March 2014.

⁵ As the organisation that would be required to commit staff efforts to the project, the Municipality of Simrishamn, which manages the secretariat of KIMO Baltic, signed this letter on behalf of KIMO Baltic Sea. KIMO Baltic Sea has also signed a letter outlining its support for the project.

Deliverables

- Short-list of potential MARELITT host organisations
- 15 host organisation viability assessments
- Final list of host organisations
- Host organisation letters of engagement

2.2.3 Task B.3 Initiation of the projects

Task B.3 was focused on supporting the host organisations identified under Task B.2 in initiating marine litter removal projects. This support was delivered in three key activities: a workshop of host organisations in Brussels; regional workshops with the local host organisations; and the development of a business case for each project initiated under MARELITT.

2.2.3.1 Brussels workshop

The Brussels workshop took place from 13 to 15 May 2014. In total, 25 participants attended. Participating organisations included:

MARELITT host organisations:

- Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM)
- Ligurian Observatory of Fisheries and Environment (OLPA)
- Institute Ruder Boskovic - Center for Marine Research
- WWF Poland
- KIMO Baltic Sea
- Keep the Estonian Sea Tidy⁶.

Other organisations:

- KIMO Netherlands and Belgium
- DG Maritime Affairs.

Representatives from the Bulgarian host organisation, UBBSLA, were unable to attend due to unforeseen scheduling conflicts. To ensure UBBSLA were provided with adequate support in the initiation of their marine litter projects, a member of the MARELITT team held a two-day meeting with UBBSLA in Constanta, Romania, in July 2014 to introduce them to MARELITT and make early progress in planning their marine litter project.

The primary objective of the Brussels workshop was to provide training and support to host organisations to assist them in the initiation of their projects and, in particular, in the development of the business case for their projects. The workshop also provided an opportunity to facilitate the exchange of expertise and experience between the host organisations and to promote collaboration between the organisations. The workshop provided an opportunity to the MARELITT team to start working with host organisations on the preparations for the regional workshops and to gather the input of host organisations on the content of the MARELITT Toolkit (Task C.2).

In support of these objectives, the first day of the workshop focused on providing participants with an overview of the marine litter problem, previous and existing MLR and DFG projects, EU policy context for marine litter, and an overview of the lessons learned and good practices identified during the assessment of previous and existing marine litter projects carried out under Part A of the project. The second day of the workshop included an introduction to the MARELITT business case template, training on project budgeting and financial analysis, breakout sessions dedicated to each individual

⁶ While not formally identified as a MARELITT host organisation at the time of planning the Brussels workshop, Keep the Estonian Sea was invited to participate due to its strong interest in participating in MARELITT in the Baltic Sea.

projects, and discussion sessions on funding options for marine litter removal projects. On day three, we sought the feedback of participants on the MARELITT Toolkit, and used breakout sessions to discuss how the regional workshops could best support the host organisations in initiating their projects.

During the breakout sessions, each host organisation met with a member of the MARELITT team who was allocated to support that organisation throughout their participation in MARELITT. This dedicated MARELITT advisor then continued to work with the host organisation through the rest of 2014 to develop their project further, prepare a business case for the project and plan and deliver a regional workshop.

The opportunity to network with other host organisations proved to be highly valuable to the participants. The discussions between organisations often focused on opportunities to share knowledge and experience about technical issues, measures that could be implemented in other projects and funding opportunities. A key outcome of this collaboration was the decision between KIMO Baltic Sea, WWF Poland and Keep the Estonian Sea Tidy to form a consortium to implement a Baltic-wide DFG project, i.e. MARELITT Baltic.

Further detailed information about the Brussels workshop is provided in the workshop report attached at Annex 2.

Deliverable

- Brussels workshop report

2.2.3.2 Regional workshops

The MARELITT team worked with the host organisations on delivering regional workshops involving local stakeholders whose participation and support would be crucial to initiating the new marine litter removal projects.

The primary objective of the regional workshops was to support the initiation of the marine litter removal project by the host organisation. The regional workshops achieved this by:

- Bringing together local partners and stakeholders to discuss the practical implementation of the marine litter removal project and clarify the roles and responsibilities of the host organisation and project partners;
- Exploring any issues that will impact the set-up and implementation of the project at the local level; and
- Facilitating the completion of the business case for the project, according to any areas identified for further development at the Brussels workshop.

In planning the regional workshops, a break-out session at the Brussels workshop in May provided the host organisations to meet with their dedicated MARELITT advisor to discuss how a regional workshop could best be used to meet the needs of the host organisation in supporting them in initiating their project. A session on the final day of the Brussels workshop focused specifically on the regional workshops, and provided the host organisations with the opportunity to provide input on how the regional workshops should be planned to meet their needs. Based on this feedback from the host organisations, we developed Terms of Reference for the Regional Workshops and Regional Workshop Guidelines for Host Organisations (Annex 3), which provided host organisations with detailed guidance on how they could contribute to the planning and delivery of the regional workshops. These Terms of Reference and Guidelines are provided at Annex 3. The MARELITT advisor then supported the host organisation over the following months in planning the regional workshops.

In all cases, the business case provided the basis for the agenda. Facilitating the completion of the

business case for the project was a specific objective of the workshops, as set out in the Terms of Reference and Guidelines for the Regional Workshops. The draft agenda provided to each host organisation in the guidelines was based on the sections of the business case. Each host organisation, in consultation with the dedicated MARELITT advisor, then adapted this agenda according to their needs.

The regional workshops also provided an opportunity to disseminate the understanding developed under Part A of MARELITT on best practices in marine litter removal projects and to collect input on the MARELITT Toolkit. This was done through presentations and discussions on best practices and lessons that could be incorporated into the new project. The regional workshops also were an opportunity to raise the awareness of marine litter issues among relevant stakeholders in each of the regional seas.

Five workshops, covering host organisations in seven countries, were delivered from September to November 2014. Each of the workshops is briefly described below, with further detailed information on each regional workshop, including a detailed agenda, provided in the five regional workshop reports attached at Annex 3.

Deliverables

- Terms of Reference and Guidelines for Regional Workshops
- Five Regional Workshop Reports

Baltics

The Baltic regional workshop was held over three days from 5-7 November 2014 in Warsaw. Given the region-wide nature of the Baltic project, covering three organisations and three countries, the Baltic workshop was expanded to cover three days. The specific focus of the regional workshop in Warsaw was on developing a Baltic-wide DFG retrieval project, referred to as MARELITT Baltic.

Preparatory activities

In addition to the regional workshop, the host organisations were involved in a number of meetings prior to the workshop to assist in the planning of the workshop and the development of MARELITT Baltic. The host organisations held two preparatory meetings, with a view to further develop the business case and to prepare the regional workshop:

- Tallinn, 5-6 August 2014, with Estonian and Swedish fishermen
- Szczecin, 9-10 September 2014, with Polish and Swedish fishermen.

Keep the Estonian Sea Tidy (KEST) presented MARELITT Baltic at the Estonian Fisheries Network Summer Workshop, on 1 and 2 July 2014. This workshop enabled KEST to get a better understanding of the DFG problem in Estonian waters and of the potential level of participation of Estonian fishermen in MARELITT Baltic.

The municipality of Simrishamn, representing KIMO Baltic Sea, also organised a workshop in Sweden on 3 October 2014 on DFG, as a part of its ongoing project on DFG in Swedish waters. At this workshop, the scope of MARELITT Baltic and which organisations could or should support the project, was also discussed.

WWF Poland delivered a presentation on MARELITT Baltic at the Baltic Sea Advisory Council meeting on 30 October 2014. Following the regional workshop, the Council submitted a letter of support for MARELITT Baltic to the project consortium.

Regional workshop

The regional workshop provided the three host organisations – KIMO Baltic Sea, WWF Poland and

Keep the Estonian Sea Tidy – with the opportunity to discuss the problem of DFG in the Baltic Sea with stakeholders and work with other potential project participants to further develop MARELITT Baltic.

The first part of the workshop – on 5 and 6 November – focused on the planning of the MARELITT Baltic project. This part of the workshop was attended by organisations and individuals that are likely to participate in, or have a direct impact on, the MARELITT Baltic project. In total, 51 people participated during the first two days of the workshop. During this part of the workshop, sessions focused on the problem of DFG in the Baltic Sea, previous DFG activities in the region, and the detailed planning of the MARELITT Baltic project.

During the afternoon of 6 November, project participants were joined by a broader group of stakeholders, including representatives of the HELCOM Secretariat and national ministries of environment and fisheries. A Polish member of the European Parliament welcomed participants to this part of the workshop via a video message and pledged his support to MARELITT Baltic. The discussions then focused on how stakeholders could support MARELITT Baltic and opportunities for securing funding for the project.

On 7 November, the host organisations and the MARELITT advisor met to discuss the outcomes of the workshop, the next steps and the implications for the business case for MARELITT Baltic. Discussions on this third day of the workshop were focused on agreeing on the way forward for the project, and documenting the agreed decisions and actions in the business case for MARELITT Baltic.

Bulgaria

The Bulgarian regional workshop was held in Nesebar on 26 September 2014. The specific focus of this workshop was on developing an MLR project. The workshop was officially launched by the Mayor of Nesebar, and was attended by 26 participants, including national, regional and local authorities, local FLAGs, port authorities and fishermen.

The workshop focused on further developing the business case for the project. In particular, the discussions focused on engaging potential participants in the project. The implementing institutions were introduced and their potential contribution to the project was discussed. The workshop was a first introduction to marine litter retention projects for most fishermen – fishermen are new to this subject and still need to be convinced of the benefits of participating. The role of the port authority in Nesebar was also discussed in regard to marine litter reception, treatment and monitoring. The host organisation invited the relevant funding authority – the Bulgarian Executive Agency for Fishery and Aquaculture – to support discussion of the funding strategy for the project. These discussions were documented and used to further develop the business case following the workshop.

Discussions focused on the arrangements for managing waste in the port of Nesebar and the local marine litter situation. Practical issues, such as the appropriate size of marine litter containers for the local fishing fleet, were also discussed. There was also interest among participants to conduct further work on the issue of DFG in Bulgarian waters in the Black Sea to determine the extent of the problem and options for retrieving DFG.

Croatia

The Croatian regional workshop was held in Rovinj on 30-31 October 2014. The objectives of the workshop were to bring all potential project participants together to discuss the implementation of a local marine litter retention project, and to gain official support for the project from policy-makers, suppliers and potential sponsors. Twenty-five participants attended the workshop, including representatives of the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the regional government of Istria, the city of Rovinj, the port authority, the municipal waste management company,

the NGO Zelena Istra and the Chamber of Commerce of Istria.

During the first day the potential project participants and policy makers proposed their view on the business case for the Croatian MARELITT project. Important contributions were made by the representatives of fishermen (both professional and recreational). The discussions assisted the host organisation in gathering detailed information on the specific actions that will need to be carried out to establish a project in Rovinj. This information was incorporated into the business case following the workshop.

The second day was focused on awareness-raising with a presentation from the NGO Zelena Istra (Green Istria), which gave an overview of their past campaigns. OLPA presented the Italian MARELITT project and a representative of EU-funded project DeFishGear presented their marine litter removal activities in the Adriatic Sea. Further cooperation in the future between the host organisation (CMR), OLPA and DeFishGear was also discussed. The DeFishGear team offered to share the results and data from their project that will be developed over the next 1.5 years. OLPA will share their monitoring experience and provide advice on the management of marine litter projects. One of the main ideas resulting from these presentations was to pursue opportunities to collaborate between organisations and develop regional best practices and possibly to also include Spain, France and Montenegro in future MLR activities.

The workshop resulted in an action plan, documented in the workshop report and described in detail in section 5 of the business case, for the preparatory phase of the project, especially for further negotiations with project participants and developing the budget.

Ireland

The Irish regional workshop was held on 23-24 October 2014 in Clonakilty (day one) and Castletownbere (day two). The workshop also included an excursion to the fishing pier of Union Hall and the harbour of Castletownbere. The objective of the workshop was to support the host organisation, Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) – a statutory authority for the seafood industry – in initiating a partnership on marine litter between policy-makers and the fishing sector. The workshop was attended by 17 participants. The specific focus was on developing an MLR project for implementation in the local fishing industry. The workshop was attended by representatives of the national authorities responsible for the environment (the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government) and for the fishing industry (the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine), the local government authority, representatives of the local port authorities, and a member of the local commercial fishing industry who has been active in the development of environmental initiatives. A representative from KIMO UK also attended, to present KIMO's previous experiences in encouraging fishermen to retain marine litter on board.

Discussions on the first day focused on setting the scene and sharing experiences of marine litter in Ireland and Scotland. Past monitoring of marine litter and DFG, clean-up activities and the label Responsible Irish Fish (RIF) were presented. KIMO UK presented on the practical experiences and lessons learned on MLR projects. In the afternoon, participants discussed the challenges of implementing a marine litter retention project and potential solutions to address these challenges. Further detailing the business case for the project was a key focus of discussions on the first day of the workshop. Discussions focused on the area where the project would be based, the roles and responsibility of partners, specific actions, resources and sources of funding and an outline of actions for 2015.

On the second day, the visit to the harbour of Castletownbere was followed by a wrap-up of the workshop, where the project objectives and next steps were agreed. These discussions helped to inform the further development of the business case following the workshop.

Italy

The Italian regional workshop was held on 20-21 October 2014 in San Remo. The specific focus was on developing a MLR project for implementation in the local fishing industry.

The first day focused on the dissemination of results of past monitoring and marine litter removal projects. OLPA presented their past initiatives on marine litter and results of monitoring campaigns were presented by the Regional Environmental Protection Agencies of Liguria and Tuscany and the secretariat of the RAMOGE agreement. During the first day, the Croatian MARELITT project was also presented to the audience by a representative of the Center for Marine Research of the Ruder Boskovic Institute. A representative of DeFishGear also presented their marine litter removal activities in the Adriatic Sea.

The business case was a key focus of discussions during the Italian workshop. The implementing institutions were introduced to each other and their roles and responsibilities were discussed. Potential funding sources for the project were discussed and an initial project budget was developed, based on past experiences with marine litter removal, monitoring and its awareness raising. The discussions on the second morning of the workshop were specifically focused on the practical implementation of the business case. A round table on the development of the business case was held on the second day, with a group of 14 potential project participants. These discussions were reflected in the further development of the business case after the workshop.

The waste department of San Remo was unable to attend. As their involvement is crucial for the development of the project, OLPA plans to organise a second round table with the core project team members, including representatives from the waste department of San Remo. This meeting will take place when a clear funding opportunity has been identified.

2.2.3.3 Business cases

To assist in the initiation of the new marine litter removal projects, we supported the host organisations in developing a business case for their projects. The objectives of the business case were to:

- Serve as a tool to guide the development of the MLR project by the host organisation and its partners, with the assistance of the MARELITT project team.
- Set forth the project objectives, context, activities and required resources and provide a clear, convincing justification for the implementation of the project.
- Provide the basis for future funding proposals to be prepared by the host organisation.

A detailed business case template was developed and shared with the host organisations ahead of the Brussels workshop. The goal of the template was to ensure that each business case was consistent, while still allowing enough flexibility for organisations to tailor their business case to the specific circumstances of their project. The template encouraged host organisations to take a step-by-step process to planning their project, by defining their objectives first and ensuring all activities and resources contribute to the achievement of these objectives. This template was later refined, based on the experiences of the MARELITT team and the host organisations, and used as the basis for the project plan templates provided in the MARELITT Toolkits (Part C of the project).

At the Brussels workshop, host organisations were provided with training on using the business case template. During the break-out sessions, host organisations met with their MARELITT advisor to discuss how the business case would be completed for each project.

Following the Brussels workshop, in general, each project took the same key steps in developing the business case. First, the MARELITT advisors and the host organisations worked on drafting and

refining the business cases to develop a detailed draft ahead of the regional workshop. This draft set out a reasonably well-defined draft plan for each project, including an initial statement of project objectives and expected outcomes, an overview of the local project situation, the roles and responsibilities of project participants, the key steps that would need to be taken in setting up and implementing the project, and for some projects, also an initial estimate of costs. This draft formed the basis of the presentation of each project to local stakeholders at the regional workshops. Following the regional workshops, the business cases were refined and detailed further to reflect the feedback and technical information provided by local stakeholders at the regional workshops.

In each case, the MARELITT advisors took an active role in supporting the host organisations in preparing the business cases and provided assistance according to the needs and capacities of the host organisation. A crucial contribution of the MARELITT advisors in developing the business cases was support in identifying potential funding sources for the projects. The MARELITT team researched appropriate funding opportunities for marine litter removal projects, and provided support to the host organisations in identifying funding sources suitable to their projects. For example, the host organisations in the Mediterranean were provided with the details of the DG MARE 2014 call for proposals under Guardians of the Sea. Both the Italian and Croatian host organisations are currently investigating the possibility of submitting a proposal under this call. In addition, some business cases have been developed with specific funding opportunities in mind. For example, a key driver in the decision to develop a multi-country project in the Baltic Sea was the potential to secure funding under the INTERREG Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014-2020. Each business case specifically addresses the question of how the project intends to secure funding.

A key challenge in developing the business cases was the limited staff time that host organisations were able to dedicate to develop the business cases. The MARELITT advisers have sought to provide real and substantive support to the host organisations in the preparation of the business cases. However, the MARELITT advisers have also been mindful to ensure that the host organisations have led the decision-making behind the business cases. The advisors took efforts to promote a sense of ownership over the business cases among the host organisations, given that they will be responsible for implementing the projects set out in these documents. In all cases, the host organisations have been actively engaged through the drafting process and have approved the final version attached to this report. A final version of the five business cases is attached at Annex 5.

The attached business cases provide a detailed description of each project initiated under MARELITT, and proposed next steps in implementing the project. A summary of each MARELITT project, as set out in the business cases, is provided in the tables below.

Deliverable

- Five MARELITT Business Cases

Baltics

MARELITT Baltic	
Location	Four countries in the Baltic Sea: Estonia, Poland, Sweden and Germany
Host organisation(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Simrishamn Municipality (representing KIMO Baltic Sea) ■ Keep the Estonian Sea Tidy ■ WWF Poland ■ WWF Germany⁷
Potential other participants	Municipal governments in Åland

⁷ WWF Germany signed the letter of intent to join the project in mid-December 2014.

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Fishing ports involved	<p>Poland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Kolobrzeg■ Ustka■ Hel <p>Sweden</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Simrishamn■ Sölvesborg■ Ystad <p>Estonia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Toila■ Viinistu■ Leppneeme■ Nõva■ Orjaku■ Liu-Lindi■ Häädemeeste <p>Fishing ports in Germany will likely join the project with the decision in December of WWF Germany to join the project.</p>
Project description	<p>The proposed project is a derelict fishing gear retrieval project, where fishermen go on purposed trips to retrieve derelict fishing gears in identified and prioritised hotspots.</p> <p>The objectives of the project are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Retrieve DFG from selected areas and shipwrecks;■ Increase the understanding of the DFG problems and impacts;■ Promote environmentally sound management of the retrieved DFG;■ Raise awareness on DFG and disseminate prevention and mitigation measures. <p>The project will include the following components: prevention and mitigation actions, DFG retrieval, DFG treatment, monitoring and awareness-raising.</p> <p>The required budget for the project will be significant, given the need to fund vessels and divers. The INTERREG Baltic Regional Sea Programme has been identified as a potential funding source. WWF Poland participated in the INTERREG Baltic Sea Region Programme Conference 2014 on 26–27 November 2014 in Warsaw, to get a better understanding of the programme requirements. Various national authorities have already shown an interest in co-financing the project. WWF Poland, WWF Germany and KEST intend also to provide co-financing, mostly in the form of in-kind support. Further funding will be sought from external sources.</p>
Early progress and next steps	<p>The project has obtained letters of support from KIMO Baltic and the Baltic Advisory Council.</p> <p>A key next step will be the submission of a project idea form to the secretariat of the INTERREG Baltic Regional Sea Programme (BRSP) for initial feedback. This will be followed by the submission of a project concept note to the BRSP by 2 February 2015. The project is likely to be eligible for funding under the BSRP, particularly under its Clean Water objective. If, however, the project is not eligible, the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund may be another source. The project has also begun discussions in November with partners in Finland (regional government in Åland) on the potential for expanding the project to further countries.</p>

Bulgaria

MARELITT Bulgaria	
Location	Province of Burgas (South-East of Bulgaria)
Host organisation(s)	UBBSLA
Other participants	Municipality of Nesebar, FLAG (Fishery Local Action Group) Pomorie-Nesebar, Executive Agency Maritime Administration Burgas, municipal waste management company
Fishing ports involved	One fishing port: Nesebar
Project description	<p>The proposed project is a marine litter retention project – where marine litter that accumulated in the nets during regular fishing activity is collected and landed in the port by fishermen.</p> <p>The objectives of the project are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Raise awareness on marine litter and promote behavioural change among local stakeholders ■ Collect information on marine litter in the area. <p>The project will include the following activities: litter retention at sea, awareness-raising, potentially monitoring at a later stage.</p> <p>The project will involve around 30 vessels at the start of the project. This will be increased to 100 vessels later on. The project will involve gillnetters, possibly a few pelagic trawlers. At a later stage of the project, the involvement of other ports in the region might be considered.</p> <p>A budget has been estimated for the preparatory phase of the project, which will be carried out during the first half of 2015. This preparatory phase will involve securing resources for the project, finalising partnership agreements, and recruiting the fishermen. The estimated costs of the second phase of the project – the operational phase – will need to be further refined during the preparatory phase.</p> <p>The costs of the preparatory phase will be met through in-kind and direct support from UBBSLA. Funding for the second phase will be sought from an external source. The Bulgarian Operational Programme for Maritime and Fisheries 2014-2020 has been identified as a potential source of funding. UBBSLA expects the Operational Programme to be open in April, and is preparing to make a submission for funding then. The Norwegian Programme Support to Bulgaria and the Programme for Integrated Management of Sea and Inland Water have also been identified as potential sources of funding.</p>
Early progress and next steps	<p>Early progress has been made in implementing this project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support was gained at the workshop from main potential project participants and relevant policy-makers ■ Main project risks and challenges have been identified. Solutions will be sought to overcome potential obstacles. <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organization of meetings and discussions with fishermen ■ Elaboration of a draft proposal to the Bulgarian Operational Programme for Maritime and Fisheries 2014-2010.

Croatia

MARELITT Croatia	
Location	Istria (North-west of Croatia), Northern Adriatic Sea
Host organisation(s)	CMR
Other participants	Fishermen of Rovinj; Port authority of Rovinj; Komunalni servis d.o.o (municipal waste management company); NGO Zelena Istra (Green Istria); Chamber of Commerce of Istria; Municipality of Rovinj
Fishing ports involved	One fishing port: Rovinj
Project description	<p>The proposed project is a marine litter retention project – where marine litter that accumulated in the nets during regular fishing activity is collected and landed in the port by fishermen.</p> <p>The objectives of the project are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remove marine litter and contribute to the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive in Croatia and to achieving good environmental status; ■ Collect data on marine litter in the Northern Adriatic Sea; ■ Raise awareness on the problem of marine litter. <p>The project will include the following activities: litter retention at sea, monitoring and awareness-raising.</p> <p>The project will seek to work with other similar projects in the region during the implementation of the project. In particular, the project has engaged with the DeFishGear during the planning phase and will collaborate with the DeFishGear team further in the future to explore opportunities to share lessons and outputs, including pilot project results and monitoring guidelines. These knowledge exchanges are documented in the business case for the project.</p> <p>Both professional and recreational fishermen will be involved in the project. Most of the professional fishermen involved will be small-scale fishermen - gillnetters and small trawlers. The project will start in Rovinj as a pilot; later on other ports such as Pula, Fazana, Vrsar, Novigrad, Porec, and Umag might participate.</p> <p>The host organisation is currently seeking further guidance from project participants to develop a full estimate of the costs of the project. This estimation is expected to be finalised in March 2015. During the current preparatory phase of the project, CMR and the other project partners are directly meeting the costs of their participation. While project partners are likely to continue to meet some of the costs of the project during its operation, further external funding will be sought through an application for LIFE funding (planned for October 2015).</p>
Early progress and next steps	<p>Early progress has been made in implementing this project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support was gained at the workshop from main potential project participants and relevant policy-makers ■ Contacts have been made with DEFISHGEAR on possible cooperation ■ CMR intends to apply for LIFE funding in 2015. <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ By February 2015, have a detailed description of the partners' roles in the MLR project set-up completed ■ By June 2015, have a final project proposal with official commitment of participants and sponsors and a timeline for a three-year project ■ By October 2015, have the Life application ready.

Ireland

MARELITT Ireland	
Location	South-West Ireland
Host organisation(s)	Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM)
Other participants	Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government Responsible Irish Fish
Fishing ports involved	Three fishing ports: Castletownbere, Dingle and Unionhall
Project description	<p>The proposed project is a marine litter retention project – where marine litter that accumulated in the nets during regular fishing activity is collected and landed in the port by fishermen.</p> <p>The objectives of the project are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop a multi-sectoral partnership on marine litter removal, with a comparable and transferable approach on marine litter removal (from retention to treatment); ■ Enhance awareness raising, dissemination and capacity building on marine litter removal. <p>Pilots will setup and tested at three local ports: two major harbour centres in Ireland (Castletownbere and Dingle) and one smaller pier (Unionhall).</p> <p>A budget for the project period of 2015 has been prepared. Some of these costs will be met through in-kind support provided by BIM and other project partners. Further funding will be sought from external sources. Discussions regarding funding with the national Department of Environment are ongoing.</p>
Early progress and next steps	<p>Early progress has been made in implementing this project, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pilot litter retention activities conducted by BIM ahead of the regional workshop ■ BIM presented MARELITT and the new marine litter retention project at the Clean Coasts Symposium & Ocean Heroes Awards, hosted by The National Trust for Ireland on 19 November 2014 <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Funding proposal to Department of Environment

Italy

MARELITT Italy	
Location	Liguria (North-west of Italy), Ligurian Sea
Host organisation(s)	OLPA
Other participants	Liguria region; ARPA Liguria; Municipality of San Remo; fishery cooperatives (LegaPesca, Federcopesca, AGCI Pesca), port authority of San Remo; FLAG (Fisheries Local Action Group) 'Il mare delle alpi'; waste management companies (AIMERI SpA)
Fishing ports involved	One fishing port: San Remo
Project description	<p>The proposed project is a marine litter retention project – where marine litter that accumulated in the nets during regular fishing activity is collected and landed in the port by fishermen.</p> <p>The objective of the projects are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Improve the marine environment and in particular the environmental

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	<p>status of the sea bottom by reducing marine litter;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Promote behavioural change among stakeholders and raise awareness on marine litter issues;■ Provide evidence on marine litter hot-spots in Liguria. <p>The project will include four activities: waste retention at sea, monitoring, communication and awareness-raising, and data analysis.</p> <p>The project will involve the 11 trawlers registered in San Remo. Artisanal fishermen using fixed nets and purse seines will also be involved in the project. Later on, the involvement of other ports in the region might be considered.</p> <p>The budget for the project during 2015, when activities will primarily be focused on setting up the project, recruiting fishermen and pilot activities, is expected to be modest. From 2016, when it is anticipated that the project will become fully operational, the budget for the project over four years is expected to expand. Some of these costs are expected to be met through internal in-kind support provided by OLPA and project partners. External support will be sought from other sources. The Italian Operational Programme for Maritime and Fisheries 2014-2020 has been identified as a potential source of funding.</p>
Early progress and next steps	<p>Early progress has been made in implementing this project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Support was gained at the workshop from main potential project participants and relevant policy-makers <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Organise a second round table with project participants to further discuss the practical implementation of the project■ Further discussion on funding opportunities and potential submission to DG MARE Guardians of the Sea

2.3 PART C: DISSEMINATION

2.3.1 Task C.1: Definition of a dissemination strategy

Task C.1 required the definition of a strategy for dissemination of the results of MARELITT. This strategy was delivered in the Interim Report and was crucial during Task B.1, when we sought expressions of interest from potential host organisations. It is also essential to the dissemination of the MARELITT Toolkits (Task C.2), as it allows for the distribution of the Toolkit to all relevant interested parties.

As a part of this strategy, members of our project team participated in number of conferences and events. These activities included the delivery of a workshop on marine litter and the MARELITT project at the European Maritime Day Conference in Malta in May 2013.

To assist in the dissemination of the Toolkits, a table of dissemination targets has been prepared, listing organisations and individuals who would be interested in the MARELITT Toolkits. This document includes the existing networks of the regional partners in MARELITT and all organisations who contacted the project team during the expression of interest process. To launch the Toolkits, they are being made available online on the MARELITT website and disseminated to all organisations in the table of dissemination targets. The Toolkit will continue to be available on the MARELITT website for five years after the conclusion of the project (i.e. until the end of 2019). The Toolkit dissemination targets table is attached at Annex 6.

Deliverables

- Dissemination Strategy
- MARELITT flyer
- Dissemination tracking table

2.3.2 Task C.2: Development of a toolkit

The objective of this task was to develop a toolkit that will provide step-by-step guidance to organisations wishing to establish a marine litter removal project. The technical specifications required the development of a single toolkit for both types of projects, i.e. MLR and DFG retrieval projects. However, it became clear during the course of the project that, due to the specific nature of DFG retrieval, the guidance would be more usefully delivered to users in two separate Toolkit documents – one for implementing DFG projects and one for MLR projects. These MARELITT Toolkits provide detailed guidance to organisations on each step in setting up a project, as well as practical tools that could be used in starting a marine litter removal project.

The Toolkits have been primarily based on the outputs and experiences of MARELITT. In particular, the following were important sources of information for the Toolkit:

- The assessments of existing projects completed under Part A
- The Code of Good Practice completed under Part A
- The experiences of the project team and host organisations in initiating marine litter projects under Task B
- The feedback from host organisations and other stakeholders at the Brussels and regional workshops.

The host organisations have been important contributors to the Toolkits. The Toolkits have been shared with the host organisations and other interested stakeholders for comment. In some cases, the tools delivered in the Toolkit have been tested by the host organisations and refined based on their experiences. For example, the project plan template is very much based on the experiences of the host organisations with the business case template.

Although limited in number, existing guidance documents relevant to marine litter retention projects were also reviewed, including the OSPAR 2007 Guidelines⁸ and the 2012 Commission Staff Working Document on Marine Litter⁹. For the DFG Toolkit a greater number of reports has been reviewed, not so much from actual DFG retrieval projects, as these are still only very limited in number in the EU (or even outside the EU), but from DFG research projects, several of which were funded by the EU. The reports that were reviewed for the development of the DFG Toolkit are included in the Toolkit.

The Toolkit will be delivered in two formats, with identical text in each format:

- **PDF format:** The Toolkit will be presented as a PDF so it can be downloaded from the MARELITT website and printed.
- **Online format:** The text of the Toolkit will be integrated into the Toolkit section of the MARELITT website.

A final draft of the MLR Toolkit is attached at Annex 7. A final draft of the DFG Toolkit is attached at Annex 8.

Deliverables

- MARELITT Toolkit for MLR Projects
- MARELITT Toolkit for DFG Projects

2.3.3 Task C.3: Documentation of the project for future use

This work has been ongoing throughout the project. As described in the Progress Report, the MARELITT website (www.marelitt.eu) was established in 2013 to document the project for future use. Key achievements under the project, including the initiation of the marine litter projects, have been documented onto the website. The website will also be a key tool in disseminating the Toolkit. The website will remain online for five years after the completion of the project.

Deliverable

- MARELITT website

⁸ http://www.ospar.org/documents/dbase/decrecs/agreements/07-10e_guidance%20to%20develop%20ffl.doc

⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/marine/pdf/SWD_2012_365.pdf

3 CONCLUSIONS

3.1 KEY CHALLENGES IN THE PROJECT

During the implementation of MARELITT, a number of issues presented challenges for the implementation of the project:

- **Limited availability of data for the assessment of marine litter removal projects.** In reviewing existing marine litter projects, it was found that in most project results had not been monitored. Detailed, robust information, particularly quantitative data, about the marine litter removal projects was not available. In some cases, organisations were reluctant or unwilling to share detailed information about their projects. Thus, limited data was available, meaning that projects could not be assessed to the desired level of detail.
- **Identifying organisations suitable for initiating a marine litter project.** Given the limited experience with marine litter removal projects in Europe, and in the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions in particular, it proved challenging to identify suitable organisations with the capacity to initiate a marine litter project. The specific lack of prior experience with marine litter projects in the Black Sea and Mediterranean resulted in a limited number of organisations expressing an interest in participating in MARELITT. In addition, the absence of direct grant funding for new marine litter projects affected the participation of organisations in all regions. In some cases, organisations expressed an interest in participating but were not able to commit to MARELITT as they were not able to cover the costs of staff involvement. In other cases, organisations that did participate in MARELITT were required to limit their level of active participation as a result of the staff time available to commit to the project.

In spite of these difficulties, we were able to identify organisations in each regional sea who are initiating marine litter removal projects. We have also engaged with and raised awareness of marine litter and DFG issues among a broader number of organisations who expressed interest in the project but were not able to commit to MARELITT.

- **Initiating DFG retrieval projects outside of the Baltic Sea region.** Organisations outside of the Baltic Sea region were primarily interested in initiating MLR projects. While many organisations outside of the Baltic Sea expressed an interest in potentially conducting DFG retrieval operations in the future, their priority was initiating MLR projects.
- **Putting the good practices identified by MARELITT into practice.** MARELITT identified good practices and guidance for marine litter removal projects. A key challenge has been ensuring that these good practices are implemented in the projects initiated under MARELITT, given the varying experience and capacities of the host organisations and local circumstances. In all cases, the MARELITT team has sought to provide advice in line with the MARELITT Toolkits. However, in some cases, the projects have identified good practices that may need to be adapted according to local circumstances. A key example of this is the example of recycling of marine litter and derelict fishing gear – recycling may not be an option in all projects due to local waste management arrangements.

These insights into the practical implementation of good practices have allowed MARELITT to collect feedback from the host organisations on their experiences, which has been incorporated into the final versions of the Toolkits. This has assisted in ensuring that the guidance is flexible enough to be adapted to local circumstances.

3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FOLLOW-UP

Over the course of the project, MARELITT has contributed to an improved understanding and increased awareness of marine litter issues, particularly in relation to DFG, which until now had received relatively little attention from policy-makers. MARELITT has supported organisations who will continue to initiate marine litter removal project in each regional sea and set an example for other organisations in the European Union. The MARELITT Toolkits meet a key need of organisations who wish to start their own marine litter removal activities by setting out the most comprehensive guidance available on MLR and DFG activities. It is intended that these results will continue to promote and support marine litter removal activities beyond the life of MARELITT.

To fully leverage the results of MARELITT, it will be important to use all available dissemination channels. In addition to the project's dissemination efforts, a small number of recommendations on dissemination of the project results have been identified that the Commission could take to build on the work of the project. These recommendations focus on using the Commission's own dissemination channels to further disseminate the results of MARELITT, and particularly the MARELITT Toolkit:

- **Dissemination of the MARELITT Toolkits through Commission channels.** The best practices and guidance set out in the Toolkits can be further disseminated through the Commission's channels, including the MSFD process, Member States and at relevant conferences and meetings.
- **Dissemination of the results of the project to the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund national authorities.** This dissemination of the MARELITT Toolkits will help to raise awareness of marine litter projects and further disseminate best practices to the national authorities, who may in the future be approached by organisations intending to establish a project.