

Marine Litter in Lebanon

In Lebanon, it is estimated that 2,040,000 tons of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) are produced every year. While organic waste exceeds 50% of the total waste production, paper, cardboard, plastic, iron and glass constitute a significant proportion. Plastic material makes up to 11% of the waste.

An estimated 48% of plastic waste is land-filled, 29% openly dumped, and 8% recycled. Therefore, at best, we can estimate that 20 thousand tons of plastics in Lebanon are recycled yearly, while 120 thousand tons are land-filled and 73 thousand tons are openly dumped. Lebanese rivers convey large amounts of solid waste and plastic debris into the Mediterranean, but the country suffers from large and disproportionate open dumps of solid waste and landfills on its coast.

The Legal framework for the Management of the Solid waste sector is in place. Relevant legislations, strategies and roadmaps were either adopted by the government or being finalized for adoption and implementation. Special focus is given to the gradual ban of single use plastics, and the adoption of the 5R principle.

Many initiatives on marine Litter have been launched in Lebanon in the last 2 years, of which are:

- EU grant to support Lebanese civil society (the Lebanese Environment Forum and the Lebanon Eco Movement):
 - Tackling the sources of marine pollution and its impact on the marine ecosystems and the livelihoods of those population living from the sea
 - Raising the awareness of the Lebanese citizens on marine litter
 - Contributing to change national policies and legislations

- Monitoring Survey for Marine Litter & Microplastics in Byblos Area, in collaboration with MIO-ECSDE , with 21 Countries around the Mediterranean following the big National Campaign of Clean Seas.
- Small Scale Fund Agreement between UNEP/MEDPOL and a Lebanese NGO through the initiative supported by the EU Funded Marine Litter MED Project aiming at Implementing Pilot Projects to promote marine litter management best practices in Lebanon with a particular focus on the implementation of “adopt a beach pilots”
- SSFA between UNEP/MEDPOL and a Lebanese research center to support Lebanon in updating National marine environment monitoring programme with regards to the requirements of IMAP pollution and marine litter cluster in-line with the integrated monitoring and assessment programme (IMAP).
- Operation Big Blue Association (OBBA) initiatives including marine litter clean-up campaigns (on a yearly basis)
- Water and Environment Support initiative funded by the EU with different regional and national activities. For Lebanon, the national activities will tackle Marine litter management with special focus on single use plastics.