

## The challenge of marine litter

The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party convening in Warsaw, Poland on 1 to 3 December 2016:

### Notes that:

- marine litter has become a major global challenge for the marine and coastal environment;
- at least eight million tonnes of plastic leak into the ocean every year;
- plastics amount to 80% of marine litter on shorelines and seabeds;
- it causes the deaths of 100,000 marine mammals and 1 million birds annually;
- estimations expect more plastic than fish in the sea by 2050;
- more than a quarter of all fish now contain plastic.

### Considering that:

- marine litter has a European and global dimension and cannot be solved on a national level;
- besides fishing gear, more than 80% of most marine litter is land-based;
- global plastic production has increased between 2004 and 2014 by 38%;
- across the EU coastal and beach cleaning cost up to €630 million per year;
- the long-term costs of marine debris in the ocean will exceed the costs of prevention dramatically;
- concerns about food security have risen due to recent studies on the accumulation and impact of microplastics and plastic on the ocean's food chain.

### Welcomes:

- the increase of public attention;
- the Marine Strategy Framework Directive setting the framework for Member States to achieve by 2020 Good Environmental Status for their marine waters, in particular focusing on marine litter;
- the proposed Directive to reduce the use of plastic bags, the Port reception Facility Directive, the proposed Directive on Waste and the proposed Directive on Packaging Waste;
- the international efforts for preventing and reducing marine litter and for mitigating its impacts such as the 2015 G-7 Action Plan to Combat Marine Litter and the Honolulu Strategy.

### Resolution:

The challenge of marine litter

### Year and Congress:

Warsaw, Poland 2016

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Energy and Environment

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## **Calls for:**

- a common European roadmap on the reduction of marine litter and its causes;
- more efforts to conclude global agreements on the reduction of marine litter;
- a public campaign to raise further awareness of the topic of marine litter and its causes;
- an initiative to phase out plastic microbeads in cosmetic products in the EU;
- further research on the impact of microplastics on marine organisms;
- increased research on the impact of the use of microplastics in clothes such as fleece.

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