



## **PLANNING OF GESAMP ACTIVITIES**

### **Sea-based sources of marine litter**

#### **Report of the Chair of Working Group 43**

1 Working Group 43 (WG 43) was established, in principle, during GESAMP 45 in September 2018 with its terms of reference formally approved in April 2019. The overall objective of WG 43 is to build a broader understanding of sea-based sources of marine litter, with particular focus on the shipping and fishing sectors, including; a) assessing the relative contribution of different sources; b) analysis of plastic use and management within both industries; and c) evaluating the range and extent of impacts from sea-based sources of marine litter. The Working Group is developing a more comprehensive understanding of types of sea-based sources of marine litter in order to guide interventions on these sources based on identified priorities and expertise of its Sponsoring Organizations, FAO, IMO and UNEP.

2 WG 43 is co-led by FAO (Technical Secretary role transitioned from Mr. Jonathan Lansley to Ms. Amparo Perez Roda) and IMO (Technical Secretary Mr. Fredrik Haag) and co-sponsored by UNEP (contact: Ms. Joana Akrofi). Dr. Kirsten Gilardi (University of California, Davis/California Lost Fishing Gear Recovery Project, United States) serves as the Group's Chair.

3 Following its establishment in 2019, the working group conducted its work through virtual meetings and one in-person at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy, 28 to 30 October 2019, submitting its first interim report to GESAMP on January 29, 2020. The WG Chair collaborated with IMO's Technical Secretariat to prepare a progress report for the 75th session of IMO's Marine Environmental Protection Committee (MEPC), which was originally scheduled for April 2020 but postponed due to COVID-19. The WG continued virtual meetings, and submitted a draft second interim report to GESAMP on 4 June 2020. This report was subsequently presented as a session background document to the 34th session of the Committee of Fisheries (COFI34), rescheduled from July 2020 to 1 to 5 February 2021 due to pandemic restrictions. WG 43 members subsequently compiled a final technical report submitted for GESAMP peer-review on 4 December 2020, followed by external review 3 March 2021. After incorporating feedback, WG 43 delivered the final report to GESAMP and the Sponsoring Organizations on 15 May 2021. The publication process included editing and formatting before the report was officially published GESAMP as Reports & Studies No. 108 on the GESAMP website on 21 October 2021.

6 WG 43 disseminated its findings beginning with a webinar to the Sponsoring Organizations on 23 September 2021. In addition, the WG 43 Chair presented its findings at the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST), (15 December 2020) and virtually to the Abidjan Convention in a session on sea-based sources of marine debris (13 April 2021), and through pre-recorded presentations at the Lighthouse Lofoten Conference 22, (5 to 6 April 2022), and at the 2nd International Conference of the African Marine Waste Network, (23 to 27 May 2022).

8 The Sponsoring Organizations (IMO and FAO) proposed new Terms of Reference (TOR) in 2022 and conducted virtual consultations with the Chair on 26 April and 7 July 2022. The proposed TORs were reviewed during GESAMP 49 (5 to 9 September 2022), and subsequently approved by GESAMP (see annex 1). The WG Chair proposed a roster for WG 43 to the GESAMP

Chair and Sponsoring Organizations on 8 October 2022, with the final roster established on 9 December 2022 (see annex 2).

9 WG 43 commenced its second phase with dual virtual launch meetings on 28 February 2023 to accommodate global participation for member introductions and orientation to TORs. These were followed by an in-person working meeting hosted by UNEP at their offices in Geneva, Switzerland (May 15 to 17, 2023). Annex 3 contains a summary of meeting activities and outcomes. Subsequent in-person meetings were conducted by Workstream 1 in Seattle, Washington, United States (March 8 to 9 2024) and Workstream 2 at IMO headquarters (April 16 to 18, 2024).

10 Workstream 1 submitted its interim report on TOR 1 to 3 to GESAMP for review on 25 November 2024, with the revised report submitted to IMO on 20 December 2024. The Chair subsequently delivered a virtual presentation of the report for the LC/LP Scientific Groups meeting, in March 2025. Workstream 2 delivered its interim report on TOR 4 to 6 for internal review by GESAMP on 4 May 2025, with revisions currently underway (as of 30 June 2025).

11 Looking ahead, WG 43 plans to consolidate both workstream reports into a single technical report by 10 July 2025 for external peer review. Following the anticipated three-week review period, the final report will be submitted to the Sponsoring Organizations in time for GESAMP 52 in September 2025, after which it will undergo final editing and formatting for publication in the Reports & Studies series.

#### **Action requested of GESAMP**

12 GESAMP is invited to consider the information provided, in particular the terms of reference set out in annex 1, and to take action as appropriate.

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## ANNEX 1

### WG 43 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Working Group has two concurrent work-streams:

Work-stream 1 will support information requests of the Scientific Groups of the London Convention/Protocol (LC/LP) Parties that will help identify priorities for addressing LC/LP waste streams, ship coatings and abandoned vessels as sources of plastic in the ocean.

Work-stream 2 will support information requests of FAO to further understand abandoned, lost and otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG) as a source of ocean plastic, with a particular focus on methodologies for remediation, monitoring and reporting.

#### Work-stream 1 – LC/LP waste streams

TOR1. Review methodologies and technologies to measure and reduce the presence, type, origin and quantity of plastic litter and microplastics in LC/LP waste streams.

TOR 2. Further elucidate the amount and types of microplastics in anti-fouling paint and hull coatings, and the major geographic locations where these materials are applied and removed from ships.

TOR 3. Conduct a global review on the scrapping and abandonment of fibre-reinforced plastic/polymer vessels, including their types, numbers, and spatial and temporal distribution.

#### Work-stream 2 – ALDFG

TOR 4. Analyse trade-offs between ecological and economic costs of ALDFG recovery and benefits derived from such recovery efforts, including drifting Fish Aggregating Devices (dFADs).

TOR 5. Identify elements that should be included in a monitoring programme for ALDFG, including an update on availability of remote, or vessel based, sensing technologies/tools for monitoring ALDFG.

TOR 6. Identify and analyze potential causal links between Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and ALDFG.

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## ANNEX 2

### WG 43 MEMBERSHIP (DECEMBER 2022)

<b>Name (gender)</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Country/ Region</b>	<b>Expertise</b>
Valerie Allain (F)	Pacific Community (SPC)	New Caledonia	Pelagic fisheries; fish aggregating devices
Kyle Antonelis (M)	Natural Resource Consultants, Inc.	United States	Marine debris, ALDFG and ALDFG removal; gear design
Filipa Bessa (F)	University of Coimbra	Portugal	Effects of urbanization and (micro) plastic pollution on marine and coastal ecosystems; methods for quantification of microplastics
Paritosh Deshpande (M)	Norwegian University of Science and Technology	Norway	Waste management; circular economies; fisheries technologies
Kirsten Gilardi* (F)	University of California, Davis	United States	Marine pollution, marine debris, ALDFG and ALDFG removal, wildlife health
Alexander Girvan (M)**	Independent Consultant	Jamaica	Ecosystem assessment, environmental economics, environmental valuation
Pingguo He (M)	School for Marine Science and Technology, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth	United States	Fishing gear technology, ecosystem impact of fishing
Francois Galgani (M)	Institut Français de Recherche pour l'Exploitation de la Mer (IFREMER Tahiti)	France	Marine debris and ALDFG surveillance; shipping waste
Christopher Pham (M)	University of the Azores	Portugal	Deep sea; marine debris monitoring
Raffaella Piermarini (F)	Istituto Superiore per la Protezione e la Ricerca Ambientale (ISPRA)	Italy	Marine debris, ALDFG, LC/LP
Wonjoon Shim (M)***	Korea Institute of Ocean Science & Technology	Republic of Korea	Microplastics, ship/hull coatings; ship waste streams

Saly N Thomas (F)	Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (Ret.)	India	Fishing gear materials, ALDFG, ecosystem impact of fishing
<i>* Working group chair</i> <i>** Stepped down from GESAMP and WG 43 in 2024 due to employment with GEF.</i>			

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