

# EUROqCHARM Operational Network Synergies with other EU projects



## Work Package 4 CAPACITY BUILDING

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**Partners:** *NIVA, CNR, STICHTING VU, CSIC, NILU, AWI, AU, AFNOR*



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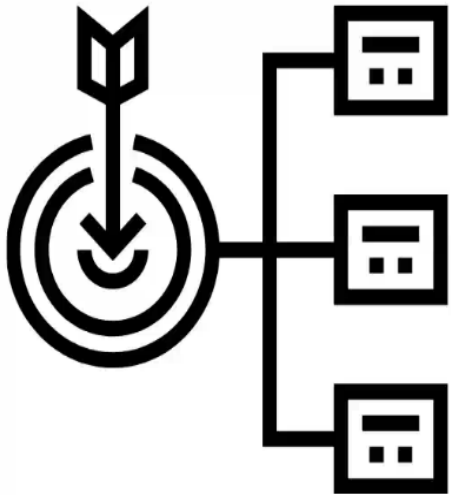
# CAPACITY BUILDING (WP4): Objectives

- Increase capacities for plastics pollution monitoring in Europe
- Facilitate the acceleration and adoption of developed standards and guidelines in the European countries by bringing together a critical mass of actors **to draw synergies** between environmental monitoring



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# CAPACITY BUILDING (WP4): Tasks



Establish an **Operational Network (ON)** for plastic monitoring

Provide **workshop facilitations** to promote new and innovative approaches and to improve the professional skills and competences

Stimulate **Transnational Joint Actions (JTAs)** to encourage country cooperation (bilateral or sub-regional level) and to optimize existing monitoring activities and the use of existing resources



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# CAPACITY BUILDING (WP4): Key outcomes

**Operational Network (ON) of Plastic Monitoring:**  
a network of key existing international & national stakeholders involved in different phases of monitoring of plastic pollution, to support and increase knowledge exchange, fostering scientific cooperation on a large European & global scale



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# The method of operation (“*modus operandi*”) of ON for plastic monitoring was built on three key pillars

Three pillars of the Operational Network	
1. Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancing capacities for plastics pollution monitoring in Europe.</li> <li>• Advising or supporting members and partners in the development of projects or special initiatives such as training programs and learning tools to address the needs of its membership.</li> <li>• Stimulating Transnational Joint Actions built on existing and future European and international initiatives.</li> <li>• Developing the Knowledge and Best Practices Plan containing a set of protocols to ensure that all relevant knowledge coming out of the project is carefully managed.</li> <li>• Enhancing collaboration opportunities in the future.</li> </ul>
2. Standard-settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributing to the achievement of formulating harmonised sampling, analysis and data reporting methods and to standardise approaches to plastic pollution.</li> <li>• Facilitate and accelerate adoption of developed standards and guidelines by EU policy and legislation.</li> </ul>
3. Knowledge & Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge exchange between scientists, industry, standardisation bodies (CEN, ISO etc.) and governance.</li> <li>• Best practice dissemination, in particular, in European countries that currently lack skills and resources.</li> <li>• Facilitates access to information in the fields of terrestrial, freshwater and marine plastic, and act as a repository for and portal to third party sources.</li> </ul>



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# FUNDAMENTAL STEPS in building the EUROqCHARM Operational Network (ON) of Plastic Monitoring

## 1. Identifying stakeholders

- Identification of potential stakeholders (*individuals, groups, projects or organizations that could impact or be impacted by the EUROqCHARM project's activities and outcomes*) started at the beginning of the project and was an ongoing process (continuously improved and updated throughout the project duration).
- A template spreadsheet in Excel (MS Office.xls file) was developed including pre-defined categories and criteria for identification of stakeholder and the initial EUROqCHARM Stakeholder Database was set up.
- The WP5EUROqCHARM Stakeholder List (**77 stakeholders**) was used to shape the ON for plastic monitoring. However all project partners were requested to add new entries when a new candidate was identified. Particular emphasis was given to the Black Sea region because of the low engagement in plastics monitoring at the time the project started (**160 stakeholders** identified) .
- Data in the EUROqCHARM Stakeholder Database was not publicly available (i.e. data was not shared with third parties and was not attribute to any commercial use)



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## 2. Engaging with stakeholders

All 237 identified and listed stakeholders associated with plastic monitoring **were contacted** and **invited** to join the EUROqCHARM ON for plastic monitoring.

WP4 partners used the common tools based on an invitation letter for stakeholders of the ON for plastic monitoring.

Each invited stakeholder was requested to provide *“A pdf file containing a short description of your organisation profile and fields of expertise to **be included in the Handbook** of relevant European plastic monitoring entities, projects and initiatives developed by EUROqCHARM project”*

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To: *email of stakeholder*

Cc: [euroqcharm.on@gmail.com](mailto:euroqcharm.on@gmail.com), [euroqcharm@niva.no](mailto:euroqcharm@niva.no)

Subject: **Join the stakeholders' Operational network (ON) for plastic monitoring!** – EUROqCHARM ON

INVITATION to

**“Join the stakeholders' Operational network (ON) for plastic monitoring!** – EUROqCHARM ON”

Plastic pollution has become a global environmental and societal concern in recent years. Environmental monitoring is currently facing a global challenge to generate reliable and comparable data on plastic pollution.

To establish harmonized methodologies for the monitoring and assessment of macro-, micro- and nanoplastics in the environment, as well as blueprints for standards and recommendations for policy and legislation, is the ambitious goal of European H2020 EUROqCHARM project (<https://www.euroqcharm.eu/en/>).

Creating an international operational network (ON) responsible for connecting key experts and stakeholders involved in different phases of environmental plastic monitoring, stimulating Transnational Joint Actions built on existing and future European and international initiatives is one of deliverables of the EUROqCHARM project.

The network is composed by international key players including universities and research centres and institutes, private companies, funders, public agencies and ministerial institutions, clusters, SMEs, NGOs, and international organisations, acting in the field of plastic monitoring in the environment.

**How to apply?**

Contact the EUROqCHARM staff at [euroqcharm.on@gmail.com](mailto:euroqcharm.on@gmail.com) and [euroqcharm@niva.no](mailto:euroqcharm@niva.no) to submit following provide professional information:

- Organization name
- Organization activity/interest
- Web address / home page
- Contact name
- Email address
- Annex documentation such as your signed Participant Consent Form to voluntarily participate in the EUROqCHARM's ON and to use the professional data of your organisation for the mentioned above purposes
- A pdf file containing a short description of your organisation profile and fields of expertise to be included in the *Handbook of relevant European plastic monitoring entities, projects and initiatives* developed by EUROqCHARM project



The Network is open to the interested stakeholders. We warmly invite you to get in touch with us to join our growing Operational Network for plastic monitoring!



## 2. Engaging with stakeholders

Rules and regulations for personal data protection (GDPR) were considered for collecting the information from the stakeholders.

For this purpose each invited stakeholder was asked to provide in written and signed their consent (GDPR) to be included in the ON and handbook

**Informed consent form**  
EUROqCHARM's Operational Network for Plastic Monitoring

**EUROpean quality Controlled Harmonization Assuring Reproducible Monitoring and assessment of plastic pollution (EUROqCHARM)**

I consent to participate in the *EUROqCHARM's Operational Network for Plastic Monitoring* developed by the European Union - funded<sup>1</sup> EUROqCHARM project led by Bert van Bavel at the Norwegian Institute for Water Research (NIVA).

I am aware that the purpose of the Operational Network for Plastic Monitoring (hereafter ON) is to bring together actors involved in different phases of plastic monitoring and to develop and implement a *Knowledge Transfer and Best Practices Plan*, which will enable the dialogue amongst the national and international key players: universities, research centres and institutes, private companies, funders, public agencies and ministerial institutions, clusters, SMEs, NGOs, and international organisations.

Once the ON is established, I will participate in the ON events as I see fit for my organisation. I understand that I am participating in this ON voluntarily and that I am free to cancel my participation at any time. I am also aware that I am free to refuse to answer any questions that I feel are commercially or institutionally sensitive or relate to topics that I do not wish to discuss. I understand that I have the right to ask questions and receive understandable answers before making any decision.

I understand that I will only be asked to provide professional, not personal, information. I have been informed about the steps of ON establishment and foreseen activities, and that my organisation profile and fields of expertise will be included in the *Handbook of relevant European plastic monitoring entities, projects and initiatives* developed by WP4 leader in EUROqCHARM project, and main responsible of the above-mentioned handbook. I understand that I am also allowed to make any changes to the input provided if I feel my contribution could be improved or clarified.

I understand that this initiative conforms to European Commission guidelines and that it has been approved by the Ethics Committee in the Cooperation theme of the Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme. Finally, I have been given the contact details of the research team and I have been informed that I am free to contact ON responsible about any queries relating to my data or the ON itself.

<sup>1</sup> Grant agreement no.101003805. Funded under SOCIETAL CHALLENGES - Climate action, Environment, Resource Efficiency and Raw Materials

### EUROqCHARM's ON - Participant Consent Form

**Participant Identification:** Please tick initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet explaining the above ON and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about this initiative.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline and can contact the ON Responsible at [euroqcharm.on@gmail.com](mailto:euroqcharm.on@gmail.com) and [euroqcharm@niva.no](mailto:euroqcharm@niva.no)
3. I agree to take part in the above described ON.

Name of Participant <i>(or legal representative)</i>	Date	Signature
Name of person taking consent <i>(if different from lead researcher)</i>	Date	Signature
Lead Researcher	Date	Signature

Copies:  
*Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form, the letter/pre-written script/information sheet and any other written information provided to the participants. A copy of the signed and dated consent form should be placed in the project's main record (e.g. a site file), which must be kept in a secure location.*



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## 2. Engaging with stakeholders

Out of **77 invited stakeholders** from the European countries (not including the Black Sea region), we got few messages of interest (**only 6 stakeholders**) in joining the EUROqCHARM Operational Network (D4.1) for plastic monitoring and Handbook (D4.2).

From total of **160 invited stakeholders** from the Black Sea region, **only 10 stakeholders** showed their interest in joining the EUROqCHARM Operational Network (D4.1) for plastic monitoring and Handbook (D4.2).



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# CAPACITY BUILDING (WP4): Key outcomes

The EUROqCHARM Operational Network (ON) for plastic monitoring is the base for all WP4 deliverables.

**D4.2 : Handbook of relevant European plastic monitoring entities, projects and initiatives** This deliverable presents a *manual containing the comprehensive description of the most representative entities, projects and initiatives* dealing with plastic pollution and monitoring in Europe, designed in a way that allows more effective interactions during the project duration: academia, private sector and policy-oriented entities; infrastructures including data management and observing systems; recently finished, ongoing projects and forthcoming calls focused on plastic in the European region.



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# CAPACITY BUILDING (WP4): Key outcomes

To achieve the fully operational network and the deliverables based on it within the project timeframe, we selected from the stakeholder mapping results (over 250 entries including the Black Sea region), the most relevant entities and on-going activities to plastic monitoring harmonization

The new selected stakeholders were invited to join the ON and thus making their activity more visible on international level by means of D4.2.

Three partners (VU, SALT and NIVA) used this time alternative tools (e.g. Google form, questionnaire)

**Over 60 stakeholders** already show their interest, but the number could be higher before the reporting D4.2



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Short description:  
The Center for Ocean Plastic Studies (COPS) is a pioneering research institution from Kyushu University, Japan, dedicated to addressing the pressing issue of plastic pollution in our oceans. COPS undertakes a multifaceted research approach encompassing various regions and disciplines, with the overarching goal of combating the global plastic crisis. COPS conducts extensive monitoring of small microplastics (SMPs) in the Japan Sea and Southeast Asia, examining these pervasive pollutants impact marine organisms, including corals and fish. COPS employs advanced numerical models to map the complex effects of MPs across global oceans, including model studies that delve into the effect on the vertical transportation of MPs. This modelling effort extends to microplastic abundance worldwide, helping us anticipate and mitigate potential risks. Collaborating closely with the Ministry of Environment Japan (MOEJ), COPS is building a global MPs dataset and a user-friendly website. This platform ensures that policymakers, scientists, and the general public, fostering informed decision-making.

EUROqCHARM  
EUROqCHARM Quality Controlled Harmonization Assuring Reproducible Monitoring and assessment of plastic pollution

**EURO  
CHARM**

D4.2 Handbook of relevant European plastic monitoring entities, projects and initiatives

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# CAPACITY BUILDING (WP4): Key outcomes

## Transnational Joint Actions (TJAs)

to stimulate country cooperation (bilateral or sub-regional level) and to optimize existing monitoring activities and the use of existing resources

TJAs included three actions along three general themes:

- (1) Education** – with the scope to develop and share best practices and innovative approaches in the fields of terrestrial, freshwater and marine plastic education and training;
- (2) Ecosystem** – with the scope to focus on ecosystem-based management, in a broader scale
- (3) Innovation** – aiming to promote novel approaches regarding optimisation of existing monitoring activities.

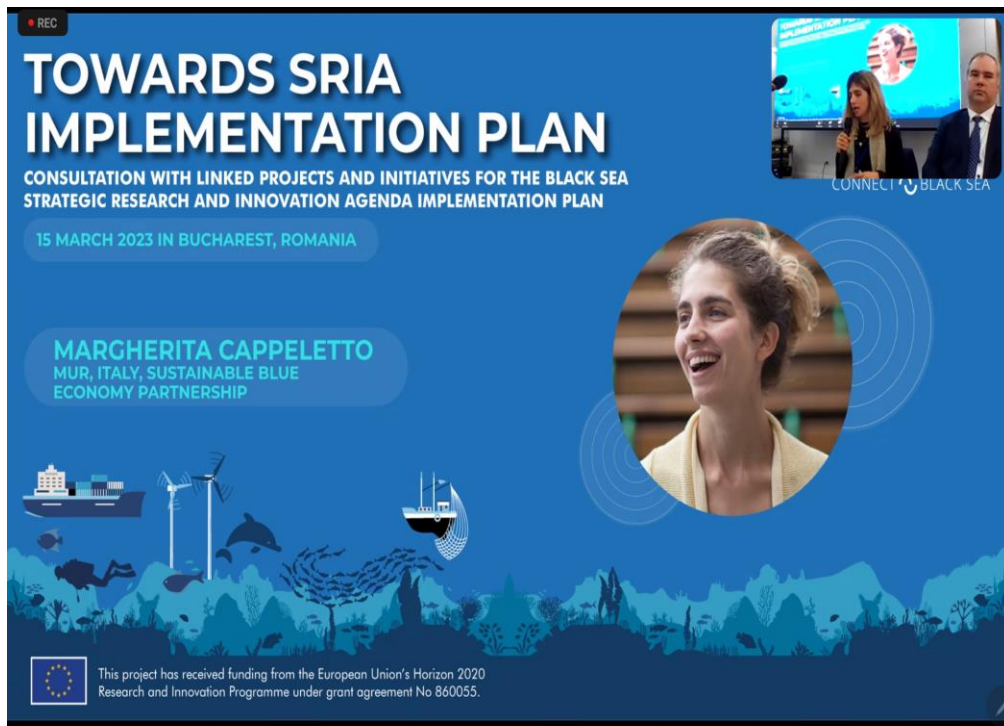


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# CAPACITY BUILDING (WP4): Key outcomes

## Transnational Joint Actions (TJAs): Contribute to Mission & Partnership

Synergies between H2020 – CONNECT Black Sea and H2020 – EUROqCHARM for the implementation of the Black Sea SRIA Implementation Plan



### EUROqCHARM partners attended Black Sea SRIA Meetings Consultation with Linked Projects and Initiatives on the Implementation Plan

On **15th March 2023**, a Consultation with Linked Projects and Initiatives on the Implementation Plan took place in **Bucharest**, organized by the Black Sea CONNECT partner, **GeoEcoMar**. The event was aimed to gather valuable input from stakeholders to shape and refine the Black Sea Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) Implementation Plan.

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# CAPACITY BUILDING (WP4): Key outcomes

## Transnational Joint Actions (TJAs)

Synergies between H2020 – CONNECT Black Sea and H2020 – EUROqCHARM for the implementation of the Black Sea SRIA Implementation Plan

EUROqCHARM attended Black Sea SRIA Meetings for launching of the Black Sea SRIA Implementation Plan



**Launch of the Black Sea SRIA Implementation Plan**  
the Black Sea Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) Implementation Plan launched in the European Parliament on the 4th of May, 2023.

under grant agreement No. 101000805 (EUROqCHARM).  
may be made of the information contained therein.

CO-ORGANISED BY:



# CAPACITY BUILDING (WP4): Key outcomes

## Transnational Joint Actions (TJAs):

**Innovation** - promote novel approaches regarding optimisation of existing monitoring activities.

Synergies between H2020 – DOORS Black Sea and H2020 – EUROqCHARM for harmonization of the methods for plastics monitoring



Open Sea Survey in the Black Sea (DOORS-1)/DOORS-1 Black Sea Survey 2023, Name of research ship: R/V Mare Nigrum, Cruise dates: up to 20 days in the period from 01 May till 20 May 2023

under grant agreement No. 101000805 (EUROqCHARM).  
that may be made of the information contained therein.

# CAPACITY BUILDING (WP4): Key outcomes

## Transnational Joint Actions (TJAs):

**Innovation** - promote novel approaches regarding optimisation of existing monitoring activities.

Synergies between H2020 – DOORS Black Sea and H2020 – EUROqCHARM for harmonization of the monitoring methods for plastics sampling and analyzing



**Marine litter:** Micro-mezo-macro plastic observation and sampling in sediments, surface layer water and water column

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# CAPACITY BUILDING (WP4): Key outcomes

## Transnational Joint Actions (TJAs)

### Education : marine plastic education and training

Synergies between H2020 – BRIDGE Black Sea and H2020 – EUROqCHARM



Black Sea Young Ambassadors attended *the EUROqCHARM Field workshop on macro- and microplastics sampling and analysis through harmonized methodologies, 9-14 July 2023, Constanta Romania*



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