

【欧州】【海事】

Environment: European Parliament and the Council of the European Union reach provisional political agreement on new measures to tackle marine litter

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【概要 : Summary】

Since decades, plastic material and other litter pollute the oceans and seas at global level. Plastics account for about 85% of beach waste and eight million tons of plastic end up in the oceans every year.

Marine litter and plastic in marine environment causes a wide spectrum of negative environmental, economic, safety, health and cultural impacts. The quantity of plastics, and in particular micro-plastics is increasing constantly and measures to reduce the amount of litter in the oceans are urgently needed. The IMO's MARPOL regulation prohibits dumping plastics into the sea and mandates the governments to guarantee the availability of adequate port reception facilities to receive ship waste. The IMO MEPC's Action Plan to address marine plastic litter from ships should contribute to prevent marine plastic litter from entering the oceans through ship-based activities, including fishing vessels.

In the light of the ever-increasing problem of plastic litter and micro-plastic polluting the seas, the EU has individualised the single-use plastics as one of the most serious waste problems. The Circular Economy Action Plan and the comprehensive Plastics Strategy together with the Single-use plastics Directive is expected to change the common attitudes of using plastics and instead to produce and use

sustainable alternatives that avoid marine litter and oceans pollution. Equally important besides tackling the marine litter will be to develop a new circular business model in order to make the EU's economy generally more sustainable.



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【記事 : Article】

Marine litter consists of items that have been deliberately discarded or accidentally lost into the sea or rivers or on beaches. Due to its slow decomposition, macro-plastics and micro-plastics, mostly resulting from the fragmentation of larger plastic items, accumulate at mid-ocean gyres, as well as close to population centres, in coastal areas and on beaches. Plastic residues are also found in marine species and therefore also in the human food chain. Therefore, the economic impact of plastics as marine

litter encompasses not just the lost economic value in the material, but also the costs of cleaning up and losses for tourism, fisheries and shipping.

According to the UN report “Single-use plastics - A roadmap for Sustainability”, single-use plastics are the biggest contributor to ocean pollution and besides the environmental problem, floating garbage and plastics pose a costly as well as dangerous problem for shipping, as they pose a potential navigational hazard and can become entangled in propellers and rudders.

The dumping of wastes at sea is regulated by the “Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter 1972”, (“London Convention”). Currently, 87 States are Parties to the London Convention. In 1996, the “London Protocol” was agreed to further modernize the Convention and in 2016, the London Convention and Protocol’s Contracting Parties adopted a recommendation to combat marine litter in order to tackle the long-lasting marine litter threats.

The MARPOL Convention’s Annex V prohibits the discharge of all types of garbage, including all plastics, into the sea from ships with few exceptions. MARPOL Annex V applies to all vessels of any type operating in the marine environment and more than 150 countries have signed up to MARPOL Annex V. On 26 October 2018, the IMO’s Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC), 73rd session adopted an Action Plan to address marine plastic litter from ships. The Action Plan identifies a number of measures, including a proposed study on marine plastic litter from ships and also includes considerations on the availability and adequacy of port reception facilities. It also makes the marking of fishing gear mandatory. Member States and international organizations are also invited to undertake studies to better understand the problem of micro-plastics coming from ships. These measures need to be completed by 2025 and measures should be reviewed at the MEPC 74.

In the EU, the European Commission is proposing a comprehensive set of measures to address the problem

of plastic litter. The Directive on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment (Single Use Plastics Directive) of 28.5.2018 (COM (2018) 340 final) is an integral part of the Plastics Strategy and an important element of the Circular Economy Action Plan. The Single-use Plastics Directive should avoid the emission of 3.4 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent, avoid environmental damages, which would cost the equivalent of EUR 22 billion by 2030, and save consumers a projected EUR 6.5 billion. The Single-use plastics Directive is complemented by other measures such as the Directive on port reception facilities. The Council presidency reached a provisional agreement with the European Parliament on this proposal on the Draft directive on port reception facilities for the delivery of waste from ships (COM (2018) 033 final) as part of the ‘circular economy package’ on 12 December 2018. This Directive on port reception facilities sets measures to ensure that waste generated on ships or collected at sea is always returned to ports, recycled and processed. Under the new rules, ships will have to pay an indirect fee, which will give them the right to deliver their waste to a port, and which will have to be paid regardless of whether or not they deliver any waste. This fee will also apply to fishing vessels and recreational craft, which means that it will also help prevent end-of-life fishing nets and waste going into the sea. Landlocked EU Member States without ports or ships flying their flag will not be obliged to transpose the Directive or certain parts of it.

On 19 December 2018, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union reached a provisional political agreement on the Single Use Plastic Directive (COM (2018) 340 final) to tackle marine litter at its source, targeting the 10 plastic products most often found on the EU’s beaches as well as abandoned fishing gear. The new measures also impose an EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) on fishing gear. The European Parliament and the Council agreed on a ban of single-use plastic products where alternatives are readily available and affordable, including plastic cutlery, plates, straws, drink

stirrers and others. The EU Member States will have to implement measures to reduce the use of plastic food containers and drink cups. Producers will be made to help cover the costs of waste management and clean up. Member States will also have to collect 90% of single use plastic drink bottles and EU Member States will be required to raise the awareness of consumers about the negative impact of littering among others. The new rules are expected to contribute to a broader effort of turning the European economy into a more sustainable, circular economy.

The provisional agreement of 19 December 2018, reached between the European Parliament and the Council, contains also a delay of the 90% collection target for plastic bottles by four years from 2025 to 2029, but with the inclusion of a 77% midway benchmark for 2025. The provisional agreement must now be formally approved by the European Parliament plenary and the EU Member States. Following its approval and the publication in the EU's Official Journal, the Member States will have to transpose it after two years.

The European Commission welcomed the provisional agreement reached on the proposal to reduce single use plastics with the agreement on the Single-use plastics Directive (COM (2018) 340 final). According to the EU's Commissioner for Environment, Maritime affairs and Fisheries, Karmenu Vella, the EU has taken a big step towards reducing the amount of single-use plastics in the EU economy and the oceans and ultimately in the human bodies. After the provisional agreement in December 2018, the EU Member States' ambassadors (COREPER) endorsed it on 18 January 2019, and the Parliament's ENVI committee approved it on 22 January 2019. The European Parliament's plenary vote is planned for the March II 2019 session.

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