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## Micro, the first European microplastic risk assessment

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The European Marine Strategy Framework Directive states that marine litter need to be at levels that do not adversely affect the ecosystems. Marine Litter, inclusive Microplastics (MP), is one of the descriptors towards achieving GES – Good Environmental Status. However so far, good practices for adequate monitoring or impact determination are relatively sparse. In order to address these issues, the Micro EU Interreg project has monitored MP within the Channel Region in a range of different matrices (water, sediment and biota) and provided a risk assessment based on these field observations in combination with lab experiments and mathematical models. MICRO is a cross border cooperation to prevent environmental, technological and human risks attributed to MP. Furthermore, the project contributed to establish common strategies for environmental risk assessment by modelling the potential impacts on the environment, and by proposing follow-up tools and mitigation measures. The three main pillars of the project are:

- Scientific: A risk assessment of the current situation by combining distribution data, modelling and biological effect measurements with socio economic endpoints.
- Educational/knowledge exchange: Establishing good practices for adequate monitoring or impact determination across Europe.
- **Public/scientific awareness:** Increase awareness of human behaviour in relation to waste production and management by creating co-responsibility among the different actors.

The presentation will give an overview of the outcomes of the MICRO project and focus on the spatial and temporal distribution data and ecotoxicological results of MPs in the Channel area between France, Belgium, Netherlands and UK.

## Biography

T Maes holds a Master of Science in Advanced Studies in Marine and Lacustrine Sciences and a Master of Science in Biology. He is Co-author of several articles, reports and international guidelines. He coordinates and develops Cefas' international monitoring programmes and provides advice to the UK Government on marine issues. He chairs the OSPAR monitoring and assessment group (MIME) and act as the UK expert on Marine Litter in the European task groups. He manages large, multi-disciplinary research projects and monitoring programmes including leadership of several EU-funded programmes.

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