



Document title	Joint contribution by the Regional Sea Conventions on the global process regarding marine litter
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Agenda Item	6 - Matters arising from the HELCOM Groups
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Submitted by	Executive Secretary
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Background

The 6th Informal Meeting of the European Regional Seas Conventions (RSCs) on the Implementation of the Regional Action Plans on Marine Litter was held online on 1 June 2021. In the meeting, Spain proposed to increase the visibility of the collaboration between European RSCs via a high-level event in conjunction with the 2022 MARLICE international forum, which will take place on 16-20 May 2022 in Seville, Spain. The forum will be convened by the Spanish Association of Marine Litter and the Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge. [The previous MARLICE event took place in 2019](#) and addressed issues of governance, conservation, circular economy as well as education and awareness. The modalities for such an event are still open for discussion and could take the form of a high-level meeting of the Executive Secretaries, perhaps with the development of a joint declaration on a common vision and priority areas, or a technical meeting - or perhaps both.

Following the discussions at the informal meeting, Spain formally contacted the Executive Secretaries of the EU RSCs via e-mail, with the proposal for the OSPAR Convention, UNEP/MAP, HELCOM and the Black Sea Commission to join for a special event on 18 May 2022 in the forum to show their joint commitment to the global process. This could entail, for example, the presentation of their individual approaches in a roundtable, a discussion on their role in the global response and, if appropriate, the signing of a non-binding statement as a joint declaration of intent. Considering that by that time UNEA will most likely have already taken a decision on a new global agreement on plastics and the formal process towards it will have started, it seems to be a very good moment to show the joint commitment of the EU RSCs to contribute and be a part of the architecture of the global solution. It is envisaged that the next informal meeting of the EU RSCs to be held on 29 November 2021 will discuss this proposal.

PRESSURE 15-2021 discussed the modality/output of the joint event, was of the view that it is premature at this stage to decide on a specific input to the UNEA process and agreed that a roundtable on approaches towards global cooperation would be a suitable form of demonstrating the joint commitment of the RSCs in the MARLICE international forum.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

- approve HELCOM's participation in the EU Regional Sea Conventions joint event to be organised in conjunction with the 2022 MARLICE international forum, on 20 May 2022 in Seville, Spain;
- approve the modality of the HELCOM contribution to the joint event based on the proposal by PRESSURE 15-2021.