

# Workshop: Marine Litter Prevention in Beaches

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## Report 2 – Zero Beach

**Date**

30th of June of 2019



*This workshop was organized with the support of the Waste Agency of Catalonia and of the programme Beyond Plastic Med (Bemed).*

**Developed by:**

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*The opinions and documentation provided in this publication are the sole responsibility of the eco-union entity, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the entities that financially support the project.*

## Index

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Index.....	2
<b>1 Introduction &amp; Participants.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2 The Workshop .....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 Objectives and Methodology.....	5
<b>3 Key Outcomes .....</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1 Reusable cups in beach bars and other measures to prevent single-use-plastics. ....	6
3.2 Smoke ban in beaches.....	7
<b>4 Key Insights for Zero Beach .....</b>	<b>11</b>
4.1 Prevenció de plàstic d'un sol ús.....	¡Error! Marcador no definido.
4.2 Smoke ban in beaches.....	12

## 1 Introduction & Participants

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Zero Beach is Project lead by the Fundació Rezero and eco-union to promote the integration of zero waste approach in the beach waste management at coastal municipalities of Catalonia. The project is funded by the Waste Agency of Catalonia (WAC) and by the programme Beyond Plastic Med (Bemed). At medium term, this project pretends to be a benchmark initiative towards zero waste in beaches.

On May 29<sup>th</sup> of 2019, this working session took place in the headquarters of the WAC attended by experts in waste prevention and marine litter, as well as representatives of public institutions in Catalonia.

The aim of this meeting was to gather expert opinions for a better implementation of waste prevention and marine litter measures developed by Zero Beach project before testing them in three pilot areas of Catalonia. Beforehand, the organizers shared the outcomes of the baseline report and key outcomes for other similar projects (Blue Islands and Art4Litter). The results of the session are intended to generate knowledge to expand and improve the design of two measures: smoking ban in beaches, and reusable cups system and other single-use-plastics in hospitality facilities in beaches.

During the second stage of the project, the pilot test, two measures will be tested: the return-deposit system of plastic bottles with economic incentive and the smoking ban in certain areas of 3 pilot areas in the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona.

The assistants come from key institutions and organizations dealing with waste prevention and marine litter:

- Waste Agency of Catalonia
- Act4litter (Interreg-med)
- Blue Islands (Interreg-med)
- Barcelona City Council (waste prevention department).
- Sitges City Council (Beach management department).
- ENT Foundation



## 2 The Workshop

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The workshop was a technical meeting with waste prevention experts and public institutions from Catalonia. The objective of this meeting was **to share the waste prevention protocols defined by the project and to challenge participants to define key drivers for a good implementation within the European context**. The outcomes of the workshop are intended to inform the design process of TWO protocols: smoke ban in beaches, and deposit-return of glasses and other single-use-plastics at hospitality facilities of beaches. During the first stage of the project, only two measures will be tested (deposit-return of plastic bottles and smoke ban).



**Agenda: 29th of May of 2019****Headquarters of Waste Agency of Catalonia****10h00 - 10h15 Introduction + Presentation of participants**

eco-union + Rezero

**10h15 - 11h00 Zero Beach**

Waste in beaches (Rezero) 15min

Benchmark: Waste prevention measures in European beaches (eco-union) 15 min

Conference: tbc. 15 min

**11h00 - 11h30 Coffee break****11h30 - 13h30 Working groups**

Smoke Ban at beaches

Deposit-return plastic bottles and other measures for single-use plastic prevention

**13h30 - 14h00 Conclusions****2.1 Objectives and Methodology**

The objective of the working group was to evaluate the feasibility waste prevention protocols to prevent marine litter in beaches. Key experts were challenged to:

- Determine what resources are needed and what stakeholders should be better engaged to implement marine litter prevention strategies on beaches.
- Determine what barriers the administrations encounter when implementing the approved measures, as well as the solutions to these obstacles.
- Determine key regulation criteria for the implementation of marine litter prevention in beaches.

### 3 Key Outcomes

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#### 3.1 Reusable cups in beach bars and other measures to prevent single-use-plastics in hospitality facilities.

##### Key stakeholders

**Municipal Council departments: waste management, beaches, tourism and communication**

**Regional government: Waste Agency of Catalonia**

**Ports and marinas**

**Beach bars**

**Beach leisure users**

**Neighbourhood associations and environmental NGOs.**

**Beach bars suppliers**

**Reusable cups suppliers**

**Hotel sector**

##### Key Activities and Resources

**Working group with direct involved stakeholders.**

**Change the bylaw for beach bars to make mandatory reusable cups.**

**Communication campaign: information panels and leaflets for beach users.**

**Incentives: define an environmental distinctive to communicate the waste prevention policy of beach bars. This distinctive could be used for institutional and tourism communication.**

**Develop an integral model for waste prevention in beach bars.**

**Engage neighbourhood associations and environmental NGOs during the process of Planning and monitoring.**

**Training materials for beach bars workers.**

### However, there are key issues to deal with during the implementation phase:

- The beach bars business must deal properly with space constraints.
- The programme of reusable cups should be voluntary or mandatory.
- A penalty System need to be implemented, otherwise the effectiveness of the measure will not be guarantee.
- How to deal with the extra cost of reusable cups system.

Implementation	
Obstacles	Solutions
Beach bars are reluctant to participate	Communication incentives for best waste prevention practices. Publish a waste prevention guideline. Working group between city council and beach bars owners/workers.
Water and space are limited to deal with reusable cups.	Publish a waste prevention guideline.
The municipal council are not involved with beach bars to look for solutions	Working group between city council and beach bars owners/workers.
The coordination between waste, environment and beach departments is not working as it should	Plan a common strategy and coordination meetings.
Lack of inspection and sanction	The bylaw regarding beach bars activity must include well defined inspection and sanction system.

### Other ideas mentioned by participants

- Develop an expert committee to monitor the strategy.
- Street selling in beaches (beverages and food) is a problem, both because of unfair competition and because of the generation of single-use plastic waste on the beaches.

## 3.2 Smoke ban in beaches

Key stakeholders
Tobacco's industry representants
Public Health institutions (regional and/or national level)
Beach leisure users
Municipal councils: departments of beach, waste, public Health, environment and tourism
Research centres in public Health (exe. ISGLOBAL)
Beach bars and other beach businesses (ports and marinas)

## Key Resources and Activities

**Increase corps of civic agents**

**Communication Strategy: deliver educative and hit messages based on public health and environmental quality of beaches. The communication must display very clearly the smoke ban regulation and how beach users must adapt to it.**

**Beach facilities: build smoke-permitted areas away from the water, in any case. Display information panels at the entrance of the beach explaining the smoke ban regulation.**

**Provide incentives to organisations and individuals to collect cigarettes butts.**

**The regulation must be permanently implemented.**

## Implementation

### Obstacles

**It is difficult to implement a smoke-permitted area in very small beaches.**

**Smokers rejected the measure**

**Tobacco industry will be opposed to this regulation**

**Mandatory smoke ban in beaches is difficult to implemented as they public spaces without limit of access.**

**Normalization of the launching of cigarette butts in places where they do not correspond**

### Solutions

Vertical zoning

Build comfortable smoke-permitted areas (with benches at the shade).

Communication campaigns to smokers and non-smokers showing the benefits of smoke-free beaches.

Assess public perceptions about it (before and after).

The regional regulation of waste prevention could integrate the extended producer responsibility to implicate them with the costs of cleaning and maintaining the beaches.

Increase corps of civic agents  
High sanctions

Increase communication campaigns to concern people about it.  
Increase ashtrays facilities in public spaces.



## Regulation of Smoke ban in beaches

The regulations present several complications, as shown by the background of other strategies such as those created to reduce plastics on beaches. For this reason participants were challenged to provide key insights for the smoke ban regulation in beaches.

### Main purposes

- environmental related with the good environmental status of beaches and seas.
- Public health related with smoke prevention.

Justifying the smoke ban for legal purposes is difficult, participants proposed two ways to make it effective:

- Environmental impact because justifying a public health problem in an open space is complicated.
- Alleging a public health issue as they are shared spaces where people can be smoking near vulnerable people.

### Scope

- Difficulty controlling people who are smoking.
- Zoning of areas by smokers.

### The sanctioning regime

- It would always have to be linked to an inspection and control.
- Define who must oversee applying these sanctions. Which corps and from which body.

### Smoke ban Monitoring

- Users.
- Civic agents: preventive action.
- Inspector with sanctioning capacity.

### Other activities

- Producers pay for the information on tobacco packages, the collection of cigarette butts and the treatment of environmental spaces.
- Prioritise urban beaches.
- To make specific characterizations of waste looking for cigarette butts.
- Create an expandable smoke-free zone. This progressive measure may be more acceptable at the outset than a total ban in each area, but in return priority is being given to smokers.

### Other ideas

- Develop an expert group to monitor the definition of the regulation and its implementation.
- Use the better environmental status of beaches for tourism promotion, raising awareness on more responsible tourism, contrary to the model of party tourism.
- Create initiatives such as those in the United States by companies such as *Terracycle*<sup>1</sup>, which facilitates the collection of waste, provides economic incentives for the materials collected and sends the waste of its products to the producing brands.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.terracycle.com/ca-ES/>



## 4 Key Insights for Zero Beach

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### 4.1 Reusable cups and other single-use-plastics in hospitality facilities in beaches.

The benchmark report found few initiatives implementing measures in line with the Plastics Directive, concretely two cases in Italy, where some single-use-plastics have been banned in beach bars and recreational facilities. These initiatives found were developed through the adaptation of bylaws, which imply an obligation to carry them out. Also, these bylaws imply a sanctioning and inspection regimen. In one of them, an adaptation period was proposed (first year without sanctions; exclude water bottles during the first year).

Based on the opinions gathered in the workshop, the implementation of the measures should consider:

- Strong interdepartmental coordination is needed between areas related to beach management, waste, environment and communication. It is also necessary to involve beach bars, environmental groups, scientists and public authorities through working groups and monitoring activities.
- Regulations with sanctioning systems that imply an obligatory nature. However, transition strategies should be defined to facilitate their acceptance by commercial and leisure users.
- Encouraging the good practices of commercial users (beach bars) could improve their acceptability and collaboration with public institutions. It could also be used to define more comprehensive environmental management models for beach bars and other hospitality and catering spaces in ports, involving the training of employers and workers.
- Raising awareness among leisure users is a key element because the measures must be understood in relation to environmental benefits.
- Communication is a key element because the measures can be implemented effectively.
- The reuse of cups implies an additional cost of water, or an extra cost of subcontracting the cup cleaning service, and a design of the cleaning-distribution process. This may involve outsourcing services that do this work or adapting the spaces so that it can be done on-site.

## 4.2 Smoke ban in beaches

Initiatives to ban smoking on beaches are more varied than those to prevent other single-use-plastic. There are examples based on smoking ban campaigns without the need to develop a specific regulation (municipal or regional) or adapt regulatory frameworks, as is the case of Galicia's network of smoke-free beaches. Other experiences at the municipal level were made through a municipal bylaw which prohibits smoking with a sanctioning regimen. The bylaws pursue two objectives: public health and environmental quality (prevention of cigarette butts).

Based on the opinions gathered in the workshop, the implementation of the measures should consider:

- Strong interdepartmental collaboration between the areas of environment, beach management, waste and public health.
- Without a sanctioning regimen, the effectiveness of the strategy cannot be guaranteed since it is a large public space. The regulation must be accompanied by a control and inspection system. The inspectors must have the capacity to sanction in situ.
- The beaches could be zoned with spaces for smokers, well delimited and away from the water.
- Communication is a fundamental tool to facilitate their acceptability.
- In other instances, the responsibility of tobacco producers should be extended with the prevention of waste with a tax system that allows for the financing of strategies for the prevention of cigarette butts to the beaches and to the sea.
- These measures should be prioritized in the beaches with more affluence (urban and with beach services).
- Monitoring is a key element to evaluate the effectiveness of the measure in the prevention of cigarette butts.
- Incentives could be considered for waste collection companies, such as dreaming cigarette butts and informing about the brands found. In this way information on extended producer responsibility could be improved.