

Prospero

Beach and underwater cleanups in Thrace



Thessaloniki, 2025

Suggested Reference

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This interim report concerns actions implemented within the framework of the 23rd wave of Prosero.

At the same time, we thank the Makri - Alexandroupolis Primary School, the 1st & 2nd Primary School of Nea Peramos, the 1st Experimental Primary School of Alexandroupolis, the AXION Schools of Xanthi, the Red Cross - Evros Branch, the Evros Delta and Dadia National Parks Management Unit, ARSIS, the Maronia Environmental Education Center, the Thrace Biodiversity Protection Society, the Municipality of Xanthi, the Municipality of Komotini, the Municipality of Maronia-Sapon, the Municipality of Alexandroupolis, the Municipality of Pangaio, the Municipal Port Fund of Alexandroupolis, the Port Authority of Alexandroupolis, NECCA, the Land Service of Rodopi, the Land Service of Evros and the Land Service of Kavala.





Until now

320

beach & underwater
cleanups

96

tons of litter have been
removed



Beach cleanups

1st Action (D1): Fanari Beach, Porto Lagos

2nd Action (D2): Makri Beach, Alexandroupoli

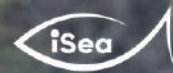
3rd Action (D3): Plaz Beach, Alexandroupoli

4th Action (D4): Agios Sotiras Beach, Evros Delta

5th Action (D5): Nea Peramos Beach, Kavala

Table 1: Beach cleanup data in the context of the project, November 2025.

Action	Action date	Number of volunteers	Kilos of litter
D1	14-11-2025	65	20.7
D2	20-11-2025	50	135
D3	21-11-2025	58	172.5
D4	22-11-2025	18	97.2
D5	24-11-2025	80	67.2
Total		271	492.6



Results of beach litter recording

As part of the actions to study the abundance of marine litter in the area, the marine litter on the beaches we visited was recorded and measured according to the protocol established by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

5 BEACHES

**492.6
KILOS**

**1.137
ITEMS**

88.7% PLASTICS

These results are in line with the findings of the international literature, according to which plastics are the dominant type of litter in marine and beach ecosystems. Their high proportion confirms the need for targeted actions to prevent and reduce plastic pollution in the areas under consideration.

Litter categories

The average percentage of plastic recorded across all beaches was 88.7%. Across all beach cleanups, plastic was the most abundant of all litter categories.

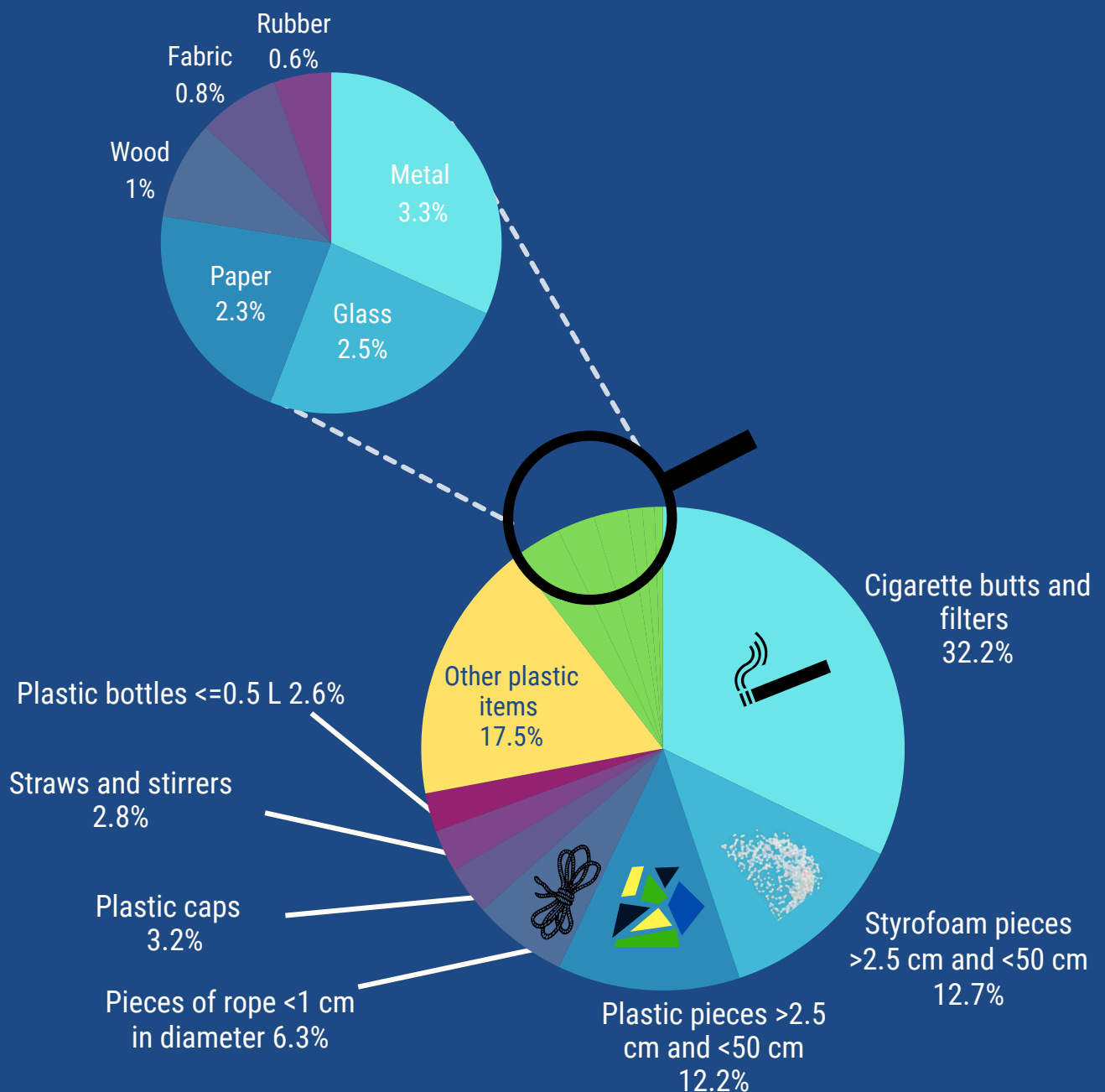


Figure 1: Litter categories in percentage (%), as derived from beach cleanups in Thrace.

Waste categories

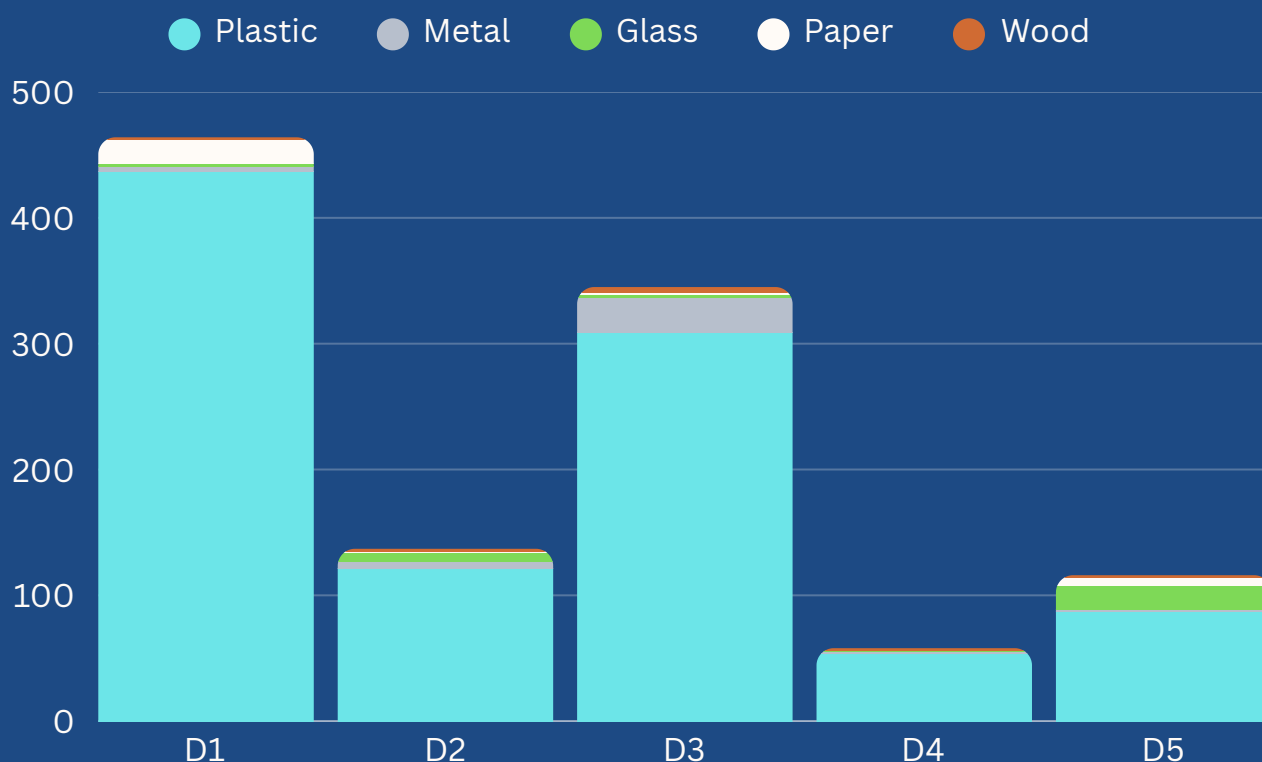


Figure 2: Total number of litter items per category for each beach.

In all the beaches we visited, plastic litter was the most frequently recorded category. Specifically, 437 plastic items were recorded per 100 meters at Fanari Beach, 121 at Makri Beach, 309 at Plaz Beach, 54 at Agios Sotiras Beach and 87 at Nea Peramos Beach. These records accurately reflect the real picture of the areas. For example, a particularly large number of cigarette butts and filters were found at Fanari Beach, while an excessively large volume of litter was collected at Alexandroupoli Beach. In addition, bulky objects were also found, such as vehicle tires, a supermarket trolley and a road cone, which highlights the need for more systematic cleaning, better waste management and continuous environmental monitoring in these areas.

Waste categories

Table 2: The most abundant beach litter in %.

ITEMS	PERCENTAGE (%)
Cigarette butts and cigarette filters	32.2%
Styrofoam pieces 2.5cm> and <50cm.	12.7%
Plastic pieces 2.5cm> and <50cm.	12.2%
Pieces of rope with a diameter of <1 cm.	6.3%
Plastic caps	3.2%

Thrace is a region of particular ecological importance, as it combines a variety of landscapes and ecosystems that contribute to the great biodiversity of northeastern Greece.

In this context, the Evros Delta stands out as one of the most important wetland systems in the Eastern Mediterranean, hosting critical populations of migratory birds, as well as rich flora and fauna. With its lagoons, salt marshes and extensive wetland areas, the Delta functions as a key pillar for regulating the hydrological regime, supporting local agriculture and maintaining environmental balance.

Its protection and sustainable management are necessary conditions for maintaining the ecological stability of the region.

Beach conditions

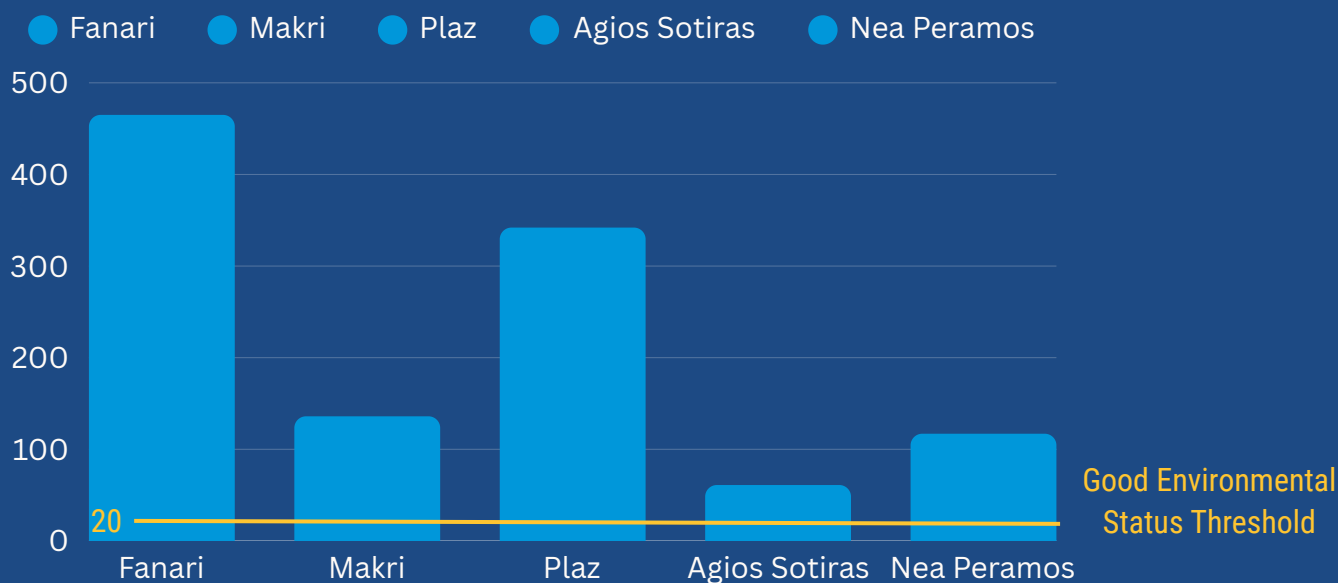


Figure 3: Total amount of litter per beach and comparison with the maximum litter limit per 100 meters to achieve Good Environmental Status.

The diagram shows the total amount of litter recorded on the five beaches cleaned. The horizontal red line shows the maximum litter limit for achieving Good Environmental Status set by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive at 20 items per 100 metres of coastline. As can be seen, all beaches far exceed the Limit Value set.

Fanari beach records the highest total number of litter (465 items). This dominance in the total number is mainly due to the presence of cigarette butts (288 pieces). If cigarette butts are excluded from the analysis, the beach with the highest number of litter is Plaz Alexandroupolis (342 items).

Litter of local interest and suggestions

During the clean-ups at Fanari beach, a large number of cigarette butts and filters were recorded, which are typical waste of local interest. Their increased presence is directly linked to the activities of bathers and the lack of appropriate infrastructure for the management of small litter. Cigarette butts, due to their small size, are difficult to collect and often go unnoticed, but their environmental impact is significant, as the filters contain plastic microfibers and chemicals that can burden the beach and aquatic ecosystems.

To address the problem, it is considered necessary to install ashtrays and appropriate collection containers in public recreational areas as well as in more remote areas, such as beaches (Charitou et al., Assessing marine litter in Greece, EVMAR Program, Greece 2024). At the same time, it is proposed to strengthen public information and awareness-raising actions, with the aim of promoting responsible behavior and reducing one of the most frequent and abundant types of litter on Greek coasts.

Underwater cleanup

6th Action (D6): Port of Maronia, Maronia

Table 3: Underwater cleanup data in the context of the project, November 2025.

Action	Action date	Number of volunteers	Kilos of litter
D6	15-11-2025	4	205

As part of the actions and to study the abundance of marine litter in the area, the marine litter of the port we visited was recorded and counted according to the protocol established by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. The average of plastics found in the port was 50.9%, followed by metal objects with a percentage of 36.9%.

A total of 205 kg of waste was removed from the port of Maronia. 401 items were recorded, of which 50.9% were plastic, a percentage that is in line with international data and relevant literature, according to which plastics consistently constitute the most abundant category of marine litter.

Benthic litter recording results

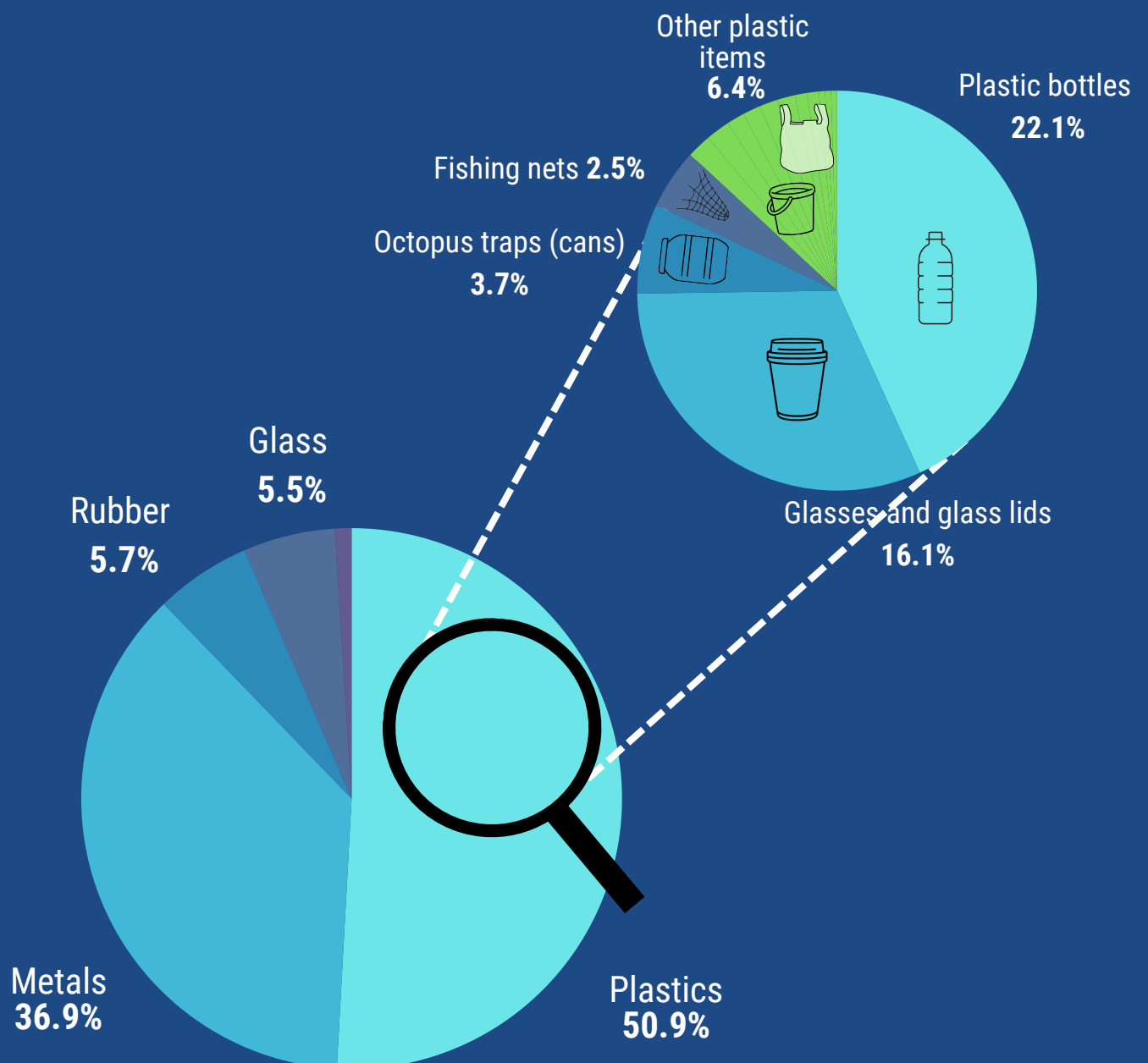


Figure 4: Litter categories collected in underwater cleanup, as percentages (%).

Litter categories

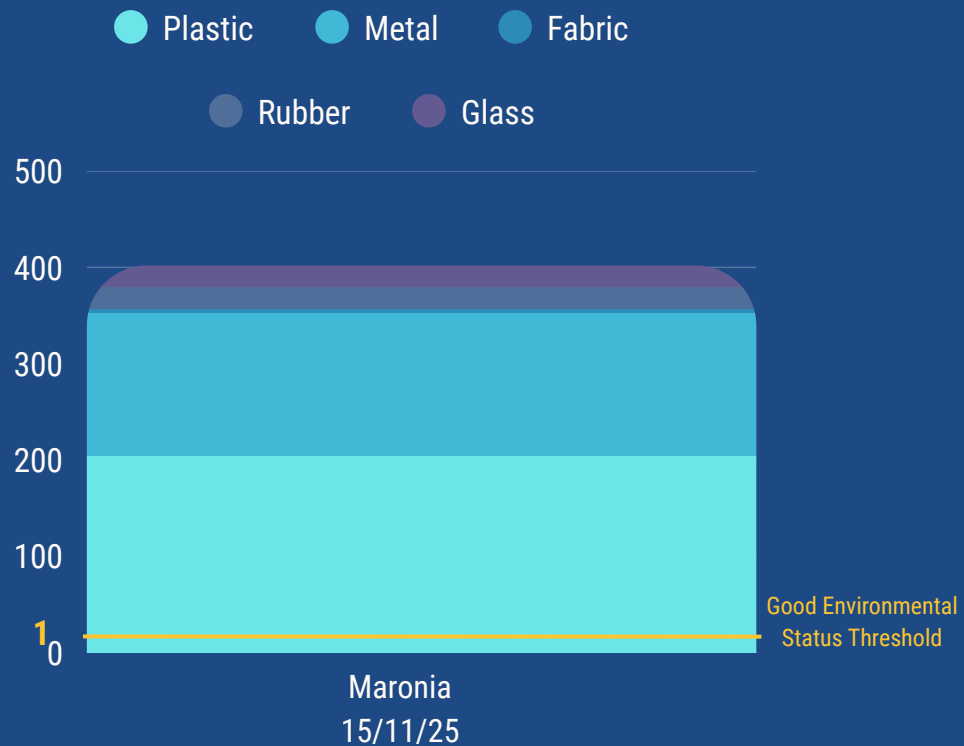


Figure 5: Total number of litter items per category collected during underwater cleanup and comparison with the maximum litter limit for achieving Good Environmental Status.

The most abundant waste items recorded belong to the category of plastics (205pcs) and metal objects (148pcs). The port of Maronia is a small-scale port facility, with particular archaeological importance. The use of the port mainly concerns small fishing vessels and pleasure boats, while the area is subject to seasonal tourist pressure. The waste recorded during the underwater cleaning directly reflects the connection of pollution with human activities in the port. Increased quantities of soft drink cans, plastic bottles and glasses were observed, as well as larger items such as fishing traps and vehicle tires, indicating inadequate waste management and possible long-term accumulation.

Waste categories

Table 4: The most abundant underwater cleanup items in %.

ITEMS	PERCENTAGE (%)
Soft drink cans	35.8%
Plastic bottles	22.3%
Plastic cups and lids	16.3%
Rubber bands and their pieces	4.3%
Octopus traps	3.8%

In total, 143 aluminum soft drink cans, 89 plastic bottles, 65 single-use plastic cups, 17 vehicle tires and 15 octopus traps were removed during the underwater cleanup, which constitute the most numerous categories of litter.

In addition to the qualitative and quantitative recording of the items, the density of litter on the seabed was also estimated, which was calculated at 210 litter items per 1.000 m². This value far exceeds the upper limit of 1 litter item per 1.000 m², established by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive as a criterion for achieving “Good Environmental Status” in marine waters.

Informative events

Within the framework of the “Prosfero” program, two information events were implemented. One in the city of Xanthi under the auspices of the Municipality of Xanthi and one in the city of Alexandroupoli under the auspices of the Municipality of Alexandroupoli.

32 people were informed, some of whom subsequently took part in the clean-up actions. iSea representatives informed all attendees about the goals and actions of the program and distributed information material with information on marine pollution and proposed measures for its prevention and treatment.

Adults and children who participated in the information event had the opportunity to learn about the most common types of litter found on Greek beaches and to see up close indicative objects that have been removed as part of underwater and beach cleanups.

The participation of children was particularly interesting, as they learned through the floor-based question game about ways in which they can adopt environmentally sound and responsible habits.

Participation

In total, 275 volunteers participated in the cleanup actions that took place in Thrace.

Members of the environmental organization iSea, as well as representatives of local organizations and educational structures, participated in the actions, contributing decisively to the success of the cleanups and raising awareness among the local community.



Makris Beach-Alexandroupoli

- Makris Primary School, Alexandroupoli



Nea Peramos Beach-Kavala

- 1st Primary School of Nea Peramos
- 2nd Primary School of Nea Peramos



Plaz Beach-Alexandroupoli

- Thrace Biodiversity Protection Society
- 1st Experimental Primary School of Alexandroupolis

Participation



Fanari Beach-Komotini

- AXION Private School of Xanthi
- NECCA



Agios Sotiras Beach-Evros Delta

- Thrace Biodiversity Protection Society
- Red Cross Evros Branch
- Evros Delta and Dadia National Parks Management Unit
- ARSIS
- NECCA



Port of Maronia

- Maronia Environmental Education Center
- Maronia Port Authority
- Municipality of Maronia



Communication plan

A total of 8 “stories” were created and shared on iSea’s Social Media during the actions, with the aim of informing the public about the progress of the actions, maintaining interest in the program and raising public awareness about the problem of marine litter and its impacts on the marine ecosystem. In addition, a Facebook event was created to inform the public about the upcoming actions. Within the framework of the program, there was cooperation with the Radio Station Status 94.2 and the TV channel Delta to promote the actions in the local community of Thrace.

INSTAGRAM

HISTORY

REACH

iSea 1	302
iSea 2	440
iSea 3	1.723
iSea 4	584
iSea 5	483
iSea 6	1.046
iSea 7	586
iSea 8	343
Total	5.507



Communication plan

FACEBOOK

HISTORY

REACH

iSea 1	365
iSea 2	3.489
iSea 3	456
iSea 4	373
iSea 5	301
iSea 6	466
Total	5.450

PUBLICATION

REACH

iSea 1	9.813
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PRESS RELEASE

VISITS

We offer cleaner seas and
beaches in Thrace

45

Communication plan

A Press Release was created and shared with local media and posted on the iSea website, inviting the local community to participate in the program and providing information about the planned actions. Also, 2 interviews were given on Status radio and Delta TV channel.

Table 5: Press articles regarding the program's actions in Thrace.

MEDIA	LINK
Xanthinea.gr	Link 1
Evros24	Link 2
Thrakitoday	Link 3
Kralnews	Link 4
Radioevros	Link 5

Table 6: Interviews in local media regarding the program's actions in Thrace.

MEDIA	LINK
Status radio	Link 1
Status radio	Link 2
Delta TV	Link 3

Learn more about the
Prospero program



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