## Plastics.



## UPDATE ON PROGRESS

In 2021, the following activities have been conducted by the workstream:

- Final edits and publication of the Guidelines and a technical summary for policymakers
- Webinar to launch the Guidelines
- Promotion of Guidelines in meetings and conferences
- Inclusion of remote sensing experts in the workstream team
- Participation in "Eyes on Plastic" workshop
- Consultation with marine litter specialists
- Application for seed funding to conduct pilot studies in geographically and socio-politically different places
- Connection to other WWQA workstreams, e.g., Africa use cases
- Preparation for surveys, workshops and pilot field studies for implementing the guidelines


## ACHIEVEMENTS

Until the end of 2021 the workstream achieved:

- Publication of MONITORING PLASTICS IN RIVERS AND LAKES: Guidelines for the Harmonization of Methodologies
- Seed funding proposal approved
- Stakeholder analysis and first surveys conducted (Table 1)
- Virtual mini-workshop for Rhine basin (Figure 1)
- On-site workshop in Accra, Ghana (Figure 2) including monitoring campaign (Figures 3 and 4) successfully conducted


Figure 1. Rhine mini-workshop agenda. Around 20 people from academia,


Figure 3. Plastic litter in Accra.

participants (around 50 in total).


Figure 4. Sampling sites in Accra.

|  | Lower Rhine | Ghana | Vietnam |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Funding |  | x | x |
| Lack of technical equipment |  | x |  |
| Theft of equipment | x |  | x |
| Lack of skilled personnel |  | x | x |
| Quantity to be monitored |  | x | x |
| Accessibility |  | x |  |
| Compatibility of the guidelines | x |  |  |
| Absence of government directives |  |  | x |

Table 1. Hinderances to monitor plastics in freshwaters.

## FUTURE OUTLOOK

The plastics workstream hopes to achieve the following in the next 6 months:

- Make the Guidelines more popular
- Evaluate on-site workshops in the Rhine basin and in Accra, Ghana
- Evaluate monitoring data obtained in Accra
- Prepare on-site workshop and pilot monitoring at the Mekong River, Cambodia
- Conduct pre-workshop stakeholder survey in Cambodia
- Evaluate monitoring data obtained at Mekong River
- Prepare for online workshop in Uganda
- Update stakeholder analysis (Chart 1)


Chart 1. Stakeholder composition across all pilot sites, December 2021

## WORKSHOP LEARNING ACTIVITIES

On-site workshops comprise the following elements:

- Welcome and icebreaker
- Presentation of the Guidelines
- Sessions on latest freshwater plastics science
- Interactive sessions on local plastic pollution
- Training on different plastic monitoring methods
- Hands-on training in the field (Figure 5)
- Design assessment


Figure 5. Sampling and observation of litter from bridge.

## GENERAL STRATEGY

- Aim for variety in (1) river/lake characteristics, (2) social context, (3) limitations
- Measurements of (1) floating plastic, (2) plastic on banks/shores, and (3) plastic on land
- Synthesize general strategy to develop freshwater plastics monitoring plan
- Long-term goals beyond 2022: consideration of extreme events; biota sampling

