



From the Plastics Strategy to microplastics

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A EUROPEAN STRATEGY FOR PLASTICS IN THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

- Smart
- Innovative
- Sustainable



- Opportunities
- Social innovation
- Environment

Four main axis





- Regulatory action on single use plastic and fishing gear → **COM proposal**
- Regulatory framework for biodegradable plastics
- Report on Oxo-degradable plastics → **REACH**
- Revision of Directive on Port reception facilities → **Council**
- Curb microplastics pollution:
 - intentional release → **REACH**
 - unintentional release (tyres, textiles, pellets) → **various actions**



Actions of the Plastics Strategy on microplastics

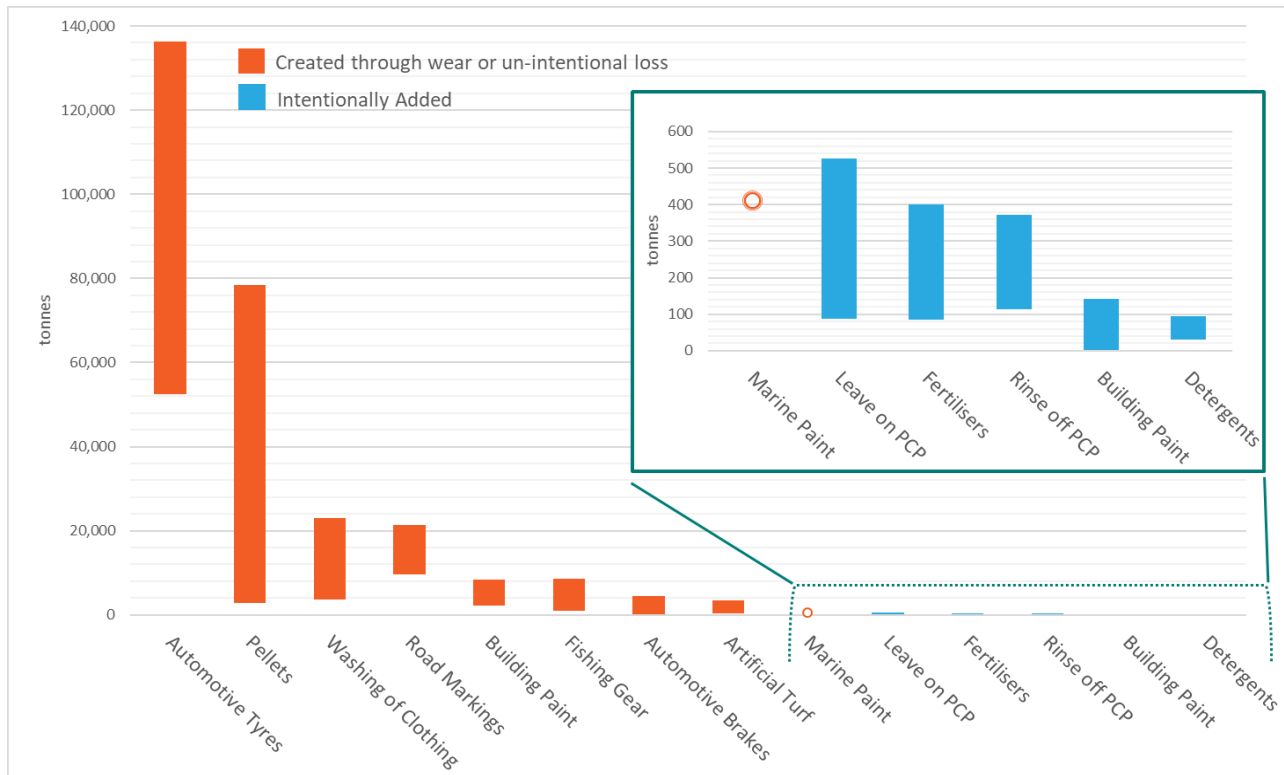
Closing the knowledge gaps:

- ✓ pathways and behaviour in the environment,
- ✓ impacts on the environment and health,
- ✓ standard tests

Policy options for reducing the

- ✓ Intentional uses of microplastics: REACH
- ✓ Unintentional release of microplastics (all sources):
 - Information and labelling, restrictive measures if appropriate
 - Microplastics capture and removal (Waste Water Treatment plants)
 - Monitoring via the Drinking Water Directive (under revision)
 - Measures for eco-design of plastic products in the Waste legislation (published)

Annual Emissions of Microplastics to Surface Waters (EUNOMIA, 2018)



Some of these data to be updated thanks to your contributions!



Why us? Why REACH?

- ✓ Restrictive actions taken at MS level and worldwide
- ✓ Voluntary actions taken by the industry (cosmetics, detergents, textiles)

Different scope and different definition of microplastics → REACH can harmonise

- REACH restriction process: unacceptable risk from the presence of microplastics in the environment → this will give a very strong push to all other actions
- Not only your sectors are under regulatory pressure: single use plastic, oxo-plastic, sea-based sources, sources of unintentional microplastics

Unintentionally generated microplastics

✓ Tyres

- ✓ Development of a standard to measure tyre abrasion
- ✓ Inclusion of tyre abrasion in EU Tyre Label Regulation
- ✓ Restriction on worst performing tyres (using Type Approval Regulation)

✓ Plastic pellets

- ✓ BREF: include prevention of pellet loss as a BAT
- ✓ Regulation on transport of pellets/plastic converters/supply chain to apply best practices

✓ Synthetic clothing

- ✓ Development of a test standard to measure the rate of fibre release during washing + label for fibre release
- ✓ Regulation setting a maximum threshold for fibre release

✓ Wastewater treatment

- ✓ Development of a test standard to quantify the microplastics in influent, effluent and sludge
- ✓ Extended Producer Responsibility scheme: sources of microplastics in wastewater will pay for the improvements of WWTPs

Conclusions

- ✓ Plastics and microplastics are a policy priority for Commission and nationally and this is likely to continue
 - ✓ We do not want a plastic-free economy, BUT
 - ✓ Plastic needs to be used in a more sustainable and circular way
- ✓ ECHA has recognised the importance of COM requests and is dedicating many resources to these dossiers
- ✓ All industries involved should recognise the problem and contribute to address it
 - ✓ All contributing sources will be addressed,
 - ✓ The Plastics Strategy is going to be successful only if we combine many targeted actions across the sectors, using all regulatory and non-regulatory initiatives available,
 - ✓ REACH is only one of them but will help also for the other actions

Thank you



This presentation does not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the Commission.