



Co-funded by the LIFE programme  
Environment and Resource Efficiency



# LEMA

Intelligent marine Litter removal and  
Management for local Authorities

## NEWSLETTER





## PUBLISHER

Dear All,

We are pleased to present our first Life LEMA newsletter. The Life LEMA project, which is co-funded by the European Commission through the Life Programme, commenced in September 2016 and will run for three years. We hope to keep you up to date with the progress of our project through this newsletter, involving you in everything that takes place in relation to Life LEMA from the very outset, until 2019. We will do this by publishing two annual newsletters, which, alongside our website [www.lifelema.eu](http://www.lifelema.eu), will allow us to share how each of our Life LEMA actions are progressing. We will be able to notify you of all the events that we are organising or participating in and you will be able to find out more about our work team. Our newsletter, which can also be downloaded from our website, will contain a brief interview, which will be used to find out more about the different people and organisations of interest related to Life LEMA.

Our team would like to invite you to follow our project closely, and we invite you to contact us at any time that you wish and become an active part of our project.

Welcome aboard,



## THE PROJECT

The European Environment Agency (EEA) estimates that 10 million tons of marine waste is dumped into the seas and oceans across the globe every year, and the Bay of Biscay is no exception. Waste originating from ships, the shores of our rivers or seas is building up on the seabed and on the surface of our sea, with very serious environmental, economic and maritime health and safety implications.

The purpose of the Life LEMA project is to create a viable system for the detection and collection of the fraction of this marine waste that has risen to the surface, with the involvement of local authorities and coastal communities. It also aims to raise awareness among the public about this important issue and to be able to reduce it as much as possible.

The consortium organising the Life LEMA project is composed of six organisations that have been all too aware of the problem for quite some time, each of which from a different perspective. All of us are combining our strengths to promote a coordinated action by the local community from the coast of the Gulf of Biscay. The Kosta Garbia joint syndicate has ample experience in the collection of floating marine waste along the coastal strip located between the estuaries of the river Adour and Bidasoa, which it has carried out using a fishing boat that is suitably equipped for the collection of waste.



The Biarritz City Hall and local company Rivage Pro Tech (Suez Group) are also doing this along the shores of the beach of this locality, using another type of specialised boats for this purpose. AZTI is a technology centre with expertise in applied marine research and more than 30 years' experience in the study of the sea off our coasts, with a great concern for the evolution of our marine species and the realities of the fisheries sector. Surfrider Foundation Europe, a non-profit organisation dedicated to the protection of the sea, the waves and beaches, with extensive knowledge of the problem, contributes to the existing data bank through its citizen science campaigns. Finally, the Department of the

Environment and Hydraulic Works of the Regional Government of Gipuzkoa, is providing its own expertise to the comprehensive waste management policy and the transition toward a circular economy, and the importance of moving toward sustainability as a tool in the fight against climate change. It does this through its experience in the cleaning of the beaches in Gipuzkoa, its knowledge of all things related to waste, as well as through its capacity for coordination of the local coastal and inland water entities that have to contribute towards the prevention and alleviation of this problem. All of us have to ensure the

implementation of this innovative project which has attracted the attention of the European Union, which is interested in obtaining criteria for the European Marine Strategy and in replicating these action patterns throughout the community.

To summarise, the project, in place since September of last year, consists of creating a system for the observation, forecast and detection of floating marine waste (BMF in Spanish), to prepare a small fleet of different types of boats that will go out to collect the floating marine waste, placing barriers at specific points along the coast in order to intercept it, collecting and analysing the waste contained in the same and exploring its potential for the recycling of materials, exposing this to raise awareness among the general public and managing where it ends up. Also expected to take place is an improvement in the energy efficiency of the boats taking part in the project, the creation of a database for the floating marine waste, the contribution of criteria to the current protocols for classification of the floating marine waste, the testing of different technologies (drones, radars, cameras, etc.) and the obtaining of an IT tool to support the location of build-up points.



The project aims to promote the involvement of the fisheries sector, which has expressed its interest in collaborating, thanks to the potential for diversification of their activity and an additional source of income for the months when there is no work in the sector. The maritime authorities are also collaborating in order to address the administrative management aspects involved in obtaining the required permits. All of this will result in an integrated and sustainable management model that will have to be validated by the local authorities with a view to its viability and continuity, and its possible replication in other coastal communities.

The Department of the Environment and Hydraulic Works of the Regional Government of Gipuzkoa is the coordinating body of the consortium and is leading the project in relation to the European Union. Its initial objectives involve promoting a comprehensive vision for the sustainable management of the beaches in Gipuzkoa and boosting the economy through new business models, involving waste becoming a resource and recycling as a source of green jobs, in this case for the financial sector most closely related to the sea. The longer term goal is to promote coordinated action (corrective and preventive) of the local coastal agents, including others located offshore, towards awareness of a problem that often takes place out of our sight.

Many entities and institutions near and far have expressed interest in the project, with the generation of a great degree of expectation. All of this has been driving us toward attaining a successful model. In short, a learning model for the care for our sea.

**“The purpose of the Life LEMA project is to create a viable system for the detection and collection of the fraction of this marine waste that has risen to the surface, with the involvement of local authorities and coastal communities. “**

# AGENDA

**13-14  
May**

## THE LIFE LEMA TEAM IS CELEBRATING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIFE PROGRAMME AT ZURRIOLA BEACH, WITHIN THE SCOPE OF LET'S CLEAN-UP EUROPE!

The Life LEMA team would like to invite all members of the public from San Sebastián/Donostia to get to know us better during our open-door events taking place over two days. We will hold a public information conference on 13 May about who the members of Life LEMA are, what we do and what it means to be part of the European Union's LIFE programme. The following day on 14 May, we will join up with Let's Clean up Europe! Involving a collection and characterisation of marine waste along the Zurriola Beach of San Sebastián. Why not come along! Contact us at the following email in order to take part in the event: [lifelema@gmail.com](mailto:lifelema@gmail.com)

- Event open to the public
- Donostia Gipuzkoa (Spain)
- <https://goo.gl/maps/5bmcPtW9U9R2>

**24-25  
May**

## 14TH SPANISH COASTAL AND PORT ENGINEERING CONFERENCE

The Life LEMA team is going to be taking part at the 14th Spanish Coastal and Port Engineering Conference on May 24 and 25 next, which will be held in Alicante. This year sees Marine Spatial Planning and the European Marine Strategy being discussed for the first time. The Life Lema team will be introducing the project and presenting the series of historical data of the marine waste drift along the coast of Gipuzkoa and Labourd, within this discussion. The 14th Spanish Coastal and Port Engineering Conference is a scientific-technical conference, bringing together experts from Spain and abroad to deal with certain topics of great interest, related to the management and protection of the coastline, among others. Further information available at: <http://costaspuertos2017.com/>

- Advance registration is required to attend the conference
- Alicante (Spain)
- <https://goo.gl/maps/cjExd2q6uMq>

**27-29  
September**

## 1ST MEETING OF THE LEMA GROUP OF EXPERTS

The third technical meeting of the Life LEMA project will take place on 27, 28 and 29 September in Biarritz. The first conference that will bring together the experts from Life LEMA will take place during this seminar, which will be attended by all the members. This group will involve the participation of experts from France and Spain organised into working groups aimed at proposing solutions related to European policy and working on optimising the management of marine waste within the territory.

- Invite only event
- Biarritz City Hall (France)
- <https://goo.gl/maps/5bmcPtW9U9R2>



# INTERVIEW



## JOSÉ IGNACIO ASENSIO BAZTERRA

Deputy of the Environment and Hydraulic Works

*Regional Government of Guipuzkoa*

### Why do you think that a project such as Life LEMA has managed to generate so much interest from a political, social, media and other perspectives?

Well, this would be due to how society is becoming increasingly aware of the influence that we as species can have on the planet. Climate change has highlighted how our activities clearly affect air quality, the consequences of which are becoming increasingly apparent. The ocean is one of the few spaces that we thought of as being free in its immensity, due to being slightly out of our

reach. What we know today demonstrates that this is very much not the case and we are increasingly aware of how it is on its way to becoming a sinkhole if we do not look after it.

### How can we take care of the sea?

Acting from the ground, to a large degree. While the Life LEMA project is going to focus on locating and finding out what waste is floating on the Gulf of Biscay, as well as going out to collect some of this waste to design a collection system that is viable for local coastal communities and their institutions, its

underlying aim involves raising awareness and implementing a prevention plan to prevent all of this waste from ending up in the sea, either on its surface or mixed with the substratum of the seabed, and in the plankton and animals, and stopping it from ending up in the food chain.

### Why is a local entity, the Department of the Environment and Hydraulic Works of the Regional Government of Gipuzkoa, taking part in this project?

While it is one thing to have skills, the responsibility that we all have in dealing with a collective problem that is developed on the basis of a common good, as is the case here, is quite another. While the Basque and Spanish Government have the remit to deal with maritime matters, the European Union is calling for the collaboration of the local governments in solving environmental problems, especially those that have now become of a global scale. It is essential for all institutions, companies, associations and the general public, as well as the media, to align our action, to come together in a coordinated manner, if we want to halt and begin to reverse our impacts as a species. The Regional Department of the Environment and Hydraulic Works is contributing its experience in terms of the cleaning and

general condition of the beaches in Gipuzkoa, which sees a significant amount of this waste arrive to its shores, as well as its knowledge of waste, its subsidiary responsibility related to municipal issues, its capacity for leadership and coordination, its technical expertise and its human and economic resources.

### What do you think this experience will teach us?

My personal hope, in addition to deepening knowledge of the problems of man-made waste generation and management and the development of an intelligent tool to manage this, is for this experience to teach us to establish a collaborative team that will still be in place for a long time after the project ends. Life LEMA is a project that has been developed in collaboration between institutions and entities from Iparralde and Hegoalde. To sum up, I hope that the communities bordering the Bay of Biscay learn to work together in the fight against the problems suffered by the sea and the coast that we all share.



# TEAM



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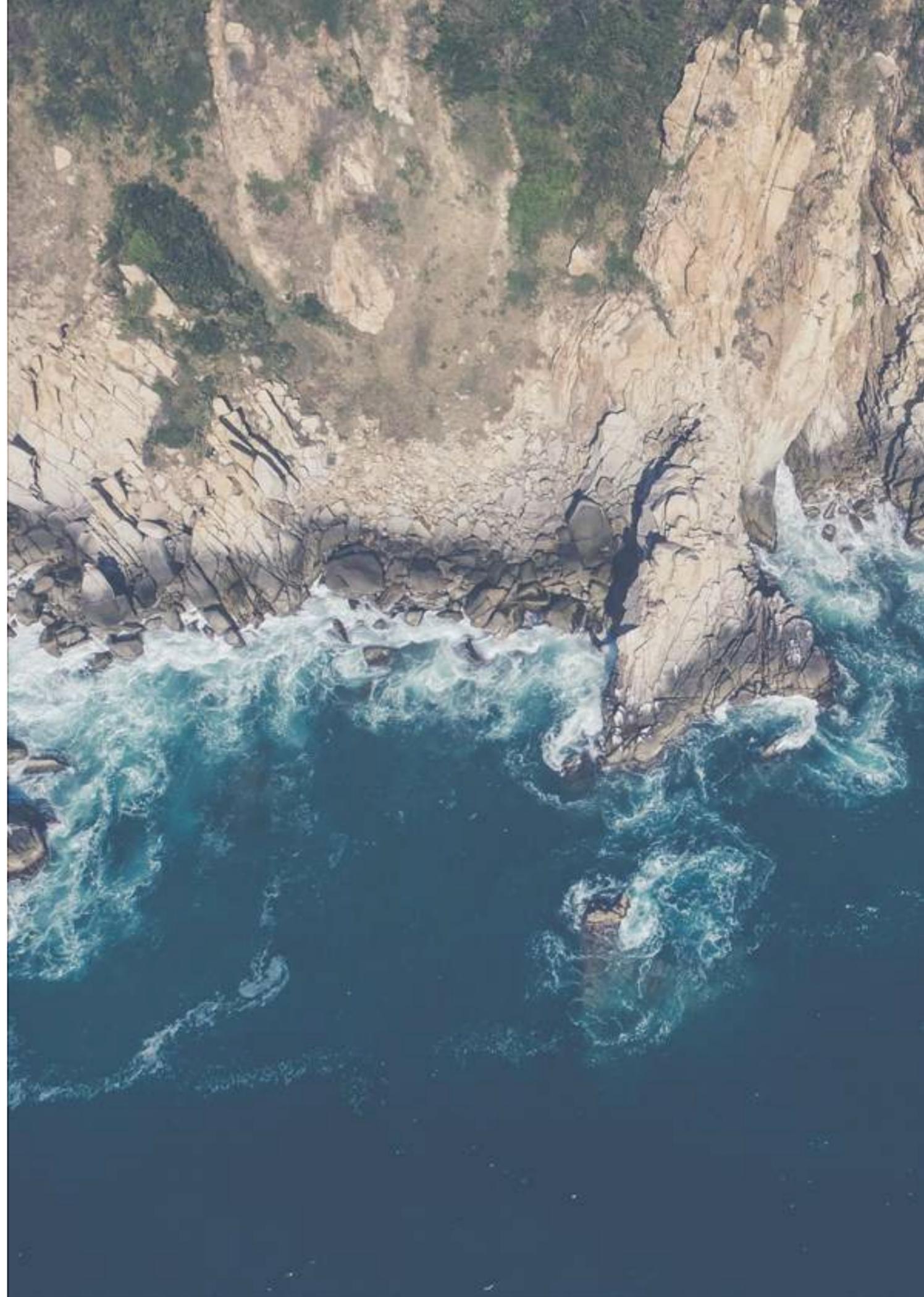
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