Template for Country Updating (information-sharing)
for the Implementation Framework for Actions on Marine Plastic Litter

1.Name of country and organization(s):
Northland Regional Council (NRC), New Zealand

2.Policy framework: (please list relevant policies and plans, including legislations or targets related to marine plastic litter and outline them briefly)

3.Measures: (please list measures taken/to be taken and outline them briefly. ※ Please describe in detail a few selected best practices in section 5)

Rethinking plastics in Northland, New Zealand

Northland Regional Council (NRC), New Zealand, has a proactive approach to litter data collection, particularly plastic data in our region. The following projects and partners collectively fill plastics data gaps e.g. type, volume, and geographic spread. The data collected will provide insight into recommendations to plastic producers, importers, and consumers. The guiding recommendations for NRC’s projects and partners are outlined here:

Office of the Prime Minister’s Chief Science Advisor

Rethinking Plastics – Recommendations
2) Improving Plastics Data Collection (abridged)
a) Commission projects to audit and quantify known data gaps for plastics, including use, collection, reuse, recycling, disposal and leakage in NZ
b) Support standardisation and national roll-out for citizen science litter monitoring projects, including kaupapa Māori projects, ensuring:
i) Alignment with international best-practice methodologies
ii) An open data policy, in line with the government-wide approach to increase openness and transparency

**Current Northland Regional Council Projects and Partners**

**NRC main contacts:**

Richard Griffiths (Resource Scientist - Coastal) richardg@nrc.govt.nz

Nick Bamford (Environmental Monitoring Officer - Coastal and Water Quality) nickb@nrc.govt.nz

**Litter Intelligence**

_Sustainable Coastlines (2019 onwards)._ Live data, insights, and actions to reduce environmental leakage of litter into the environment from Sustainable Coastlines’ citizen science beach litter project. Because the data collection methods align to the United Nations Environment Program / Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission methodology, data are of tier-1 standard, which means they can be used for national, regional, and international reporting (e.g. Ministry for the Environment & Stats NZ (2019). New Zealand’s Environmental Reporting Series: Our marine environment 2019. Available from [www.mfe.govt.nz](http://www.mfe.govt.nz) and [www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz)).

Website: [www.litterintelligence.org](http://www.litterintelligence.org)

**The Te Tai Tokerau Debris Monitoring Project (TTTDMP)**

_NorthTec and the NRC (2019 onwards)._ A citizen-science based project where the public can record details of litter through use of the Marine Debris Tracker App. Results are displayed on the webpage via interactive display. The TTTDMP is part of a multi-layered approach that provides litter data for prevention, advocacy, and policy against litter in our environment.

NRC and NorthTec partnered to create an easy and reliable way to collect litter data in our region. The audience for this App is communities, iwi, and schools. This enables groups to see instant results. Both Litter Intelligence and TTTDMP ensures that recommendations a) b), i) and ii) are satisfied and fills spatial data voids in our region.

Webpage: [https://tttdmp-northtec.hub.arcgis.com/](https://tttdmp-northtec.hub.arcgis.com/)

**ESR - Crown Research Institute**

_ESR’s Project AIM² (Aotearoa Impacts and Mitigation of Microplastics)._ First comprehensive research investigating the impact of microplastics on New Zealand’s environment.
NRC has selected 11 Coastal and one Lake site for microplastic sediment surveys in 2020. ESR have also requested consultation with iwi to determine microplastic pollution from water and biota of freshwater and coastal marine ecosystems.

**Scion - Crown Research Institute**
Develop marine microplastic sediment methodology and analyses samples collected by NRC. NorthTec is also supporting this project. Scion has also trained a NorthTec Student for sediment microplastic analyses to be conducted within our region.

**National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA) - Crown Research Institute**
“**Our hypothesis is that it’s in the rivers that the plastics are being broken up into tiny pieces creating microplastics that are the really dangerous particles harming marine life**”. NRC are working with NIWA to better understand plastics in freshwater systems and ultimately the marine environment. Comparisons of macro and microplastics at sites will be considered. Where available, these results will be compared with microplastic freshwater and marine surface water trawls.

**SeaCleaners – Charitable Trust**
Part-funded by NRC, SeaCleaners raise awareness, up-skill students and teachers with the knowledge to organise their own coastal clean-up events in our region.
SeaCleaners have removed ~ 8.8 million litres of litter from New Zealand’s coastline. 
Website: [https://seacleaners.com/](https://seacleaners.com/)

**4. Achievements:** (please describe achievements of measures mentioned above, where applicable and available, with relevant indicators, data or other numerical information)
Note: Relevant indicators, data or other numerical information can be included at the discretion of each country, for example: (1) the amount of waste generated, reused, collected, recycled, and properly disposed of; (2) the amount of marine litter cleaned up; (3) the scale of use of innovative technologies and materials including R&D investment; (4) the scale and/or effect of assistance for countries that need technical capacity development including the increased amount of waste properly disposed of. (encouraged to indicate the proportion/elements of plastics and/or microplastics, if available)

5. **Best practices:**  (Please describe a few selected best practices to be shared, among measures described in section 3, in detail)

6. **Further information:**  (Please indicate further detailed information, if any, e.g. name and address of related website, name of published reports and materials)

7. **Contact details:**  (Please specify name and email address)
   
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