

Cleaner rivers – cleaner Baltic Sea

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BSAP-2023-158

Report prepared 22.9.2025

Executive summary of the project

Key highlights of the Project:

Acknowledgment and education of authorities on national and local level as well as the harbours, marinas, entities, associations and foundations about the needs and the available solutions to stop flowing wastes entering the Baltic Sea. We contacted, arranged and hold meetings, made the presentations, shared the information about the environmental advantages of using the PortBin solutions with:

- Ministry of Infrastructure including State Water Management Polish Waters (at the national level and Regional Water Management Boards)
- Ministry of Climate and Environment
- 16 voivodeships departments of Environmental Protection of and the voivodes
- 13 ports, shipyards and container terminals
- over 20 marinas and yacht clubs
- over 150 entities and private investors
- over 15 foundations and associations
- business organizations, media.

Thanks to the Project we raised awareness at the ministry level that the existing regulations governing liability for waste caught in rivers on a national scale, regarding the collection, reception, and disposal of waste need amendments. In Poland, the rivers are managed by the Ministry of Infrastructure and the collection of wastes is under the responsibility of The Ministry of Climate and Environment.

The Ministry of Infrastructure is aware that waste pollution, which poses an increasing threat to the aquatic and marine environment, is associated with a wide range of human activities at sea and on land, and the main stream of waste entering marine waters comes from land (including rivers, sewage systems, floods, and wind). Significant sources of waste polluting Polish rivers and the Baltic Sea include, among others, the production and use of microplastics, household and municipal waste, recreation and tourism, transport services, and fishing activities.

The Ministry of Infrastructure noted that the problem of solving the pollution of Polish rivers requires the involvement of a larger number of public administration units from both ministries. This results from the division of competences, responsibilities and sources of financing. The process of preparing amendments to the regulations has begun

- We found the locations and convinced to get 17 PortBin installations in the places, where floating litter gather. They can work 24/7 all year round and collect unwanted items in aquatic environments and by this contribute to a more natural ecological balance. Working capacity of PortBin - water flow - 147 m³/h causes high water circulation and collection of large amount of flowing waste.

We have managed to get the installations of PortBins in inland marinas, the inland sea marinas, sea marinas and harbours.

- We increased the awareness that the quality of the Baltic Sea waters is influenced by the purity of the rivers flowing into it. It was also important to convince to the installations of PortBins not only in the areas where rivers flow into the Baltic Sea, but also at the beginning of their course, far in the South of Poland. It has resulted in the installation of 2 PortBins in Solina Lake, located on San River, which is tributary of Vistula River (far away from the Baltic Sea).
- We raised awareness what is collected from the water - plastic waste, organic waste, municipal waste, dead animals and also that bottom sediments are shallowing harbour basins.
- In the installation places – the information boards about the principle of operation of PortBin have been mounted and the local authorities shared the information about the installation of PortBins with public medias, on their social medias, webpages.
- We encouraged the local authorities to provide the educational activities for children regarding floating litter and their impact on the environment, the Baltic Sea and the climate change. We shared the proposals for educational workshops.
- We encouraged the entities to include in their CSR policies the activities for the protection of the environment and the Baltic Sea (UN Sustainable Development Goals no 6,11,12,13,14,15)