

## RESULTS OF *FISHING FOR LITTER* IN 2025

### INVOLVING FISHERMEN TO REDUCE MARINE LITTER

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In the website of the [Fishing for Litter initiative](#), a new item announces that [KIMO Netherlands and Belgium's Fishing for Litter project](#) has fished up 8.5 million kg of waste from the sea since the project began.

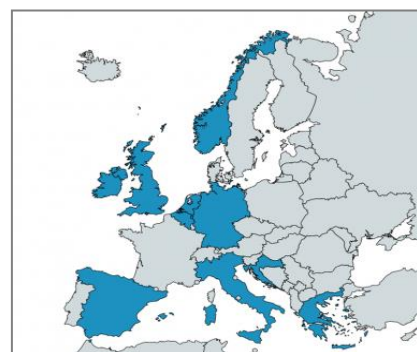
This achievement was announced on October 10, 2024, during the celebration of the KIMO's anniversary conference in the Municipality of Harlingen. KIMO Netherlands and Belgium is an association of coastal municipalities that has been committed to a clean, high-quality, safe and economically strong sustainable coast since 1999. Their Fishing for Litter project is one of the shining examples of what the scheme can accomplish in the hands of skilled administrators, cooperative ports and dedicated fishers.

[Fishing for Litter in the Netherlands is an initiative of KIMO](#), involving fishers of 140 vessels and 13 ports. KIMO Netherlands and Belgium coordinates the project and provides the fishermen with large Big Bags, used by them to collect the waste that has been fished up and bring it back to land. The Dutch ports collect the waste and the waste company Bek & Verburg B.V. takes it and ensures it gets recycled into new raw materials. One hundred percent of the collected waste is given a new destination.

Fishing for Litter receives financial support from the Dutch port companies, Rijkswaterstaat and European funds, requested by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management. The amount of collected waste, 8,500 tonnes (eight and a half million kilograms) proves that *Fishing for Litter* is a success story: an impressive contribution to a cleaner sea. [In 2021 the 20th anniversary of the Fishing for Litter project and its international impact were celebrated](#). Fishing for Litter's success is made possible because of the joint efforts of fishers, ports, waste collectors and local, regional and national authorities. The scheme currently operates in 9 EU Member States already, and more countries will be joining shortly.

[The website of Fishing for Litter in the section International presents the practices which are currently underway in 11 different contexts and countries](#), providing information on the results achieved, the ports and vessels involved and the local organizations managing the initiatives. The website is also disseminating the [Project Report for 2024 of the "Fishing for Litter" project implemented in Greece](#) since 2019 by the Athanassios K. Laskaridis Charitable Foundation in collaboration with the environmental organization iSea and based on the participation of the fishing industry.

Thanks to the important impacts achieved in the various countries, the *Fishing for Litter* scheme has been recognized by several international marine protection bodies, including the United Nations Environment



Programme Mediterranean Action Plan (for the Barcelona Regional Sea Convention) and the OSPAR Regional Sea Convention for the North East Atlantic which actively encourages Contracting Parties to adopt similar schemes in their countries. The European Commission highlights it as best practice and has financed programs based on the Fishing for Litter methodology.

KIMO (Local Authorities International Environment Organization) is a network of local governments, working together to prevent pollution and to protect, preserve and enhance the seas and coastal waters of the North-East Atlantic and Baltic regions. KIMO works to find, implement and share positive solutions for coastal communities and in 2001 they invented the *Fishing for Litter* scheme and first launched it in three ports in The Netherlands. Following the success of the initiative, KIMO created the *Fishing for Litter* international project in 2004.

*Fishing for Litter* aims to reduce marine litter by involving one of the key stakeholders, the fishing industry. Fishing boats are given big bags to collect the plastics, ghost gear and other debris that gathers in their nets during normal fishing activities, instead of returning them to the sea. When the fishing boats come into port, they can unload the bags of litter. These bags are collected, and the rubbish is sorted in view of its recycling or its correct disposal. All the fishers who participate in the project are volunteers committed to a healthy environment and the project covers the costs of collection and disposal. In addition to catching and removing thousands of tonnes of marine litter from the sea, these practices substantially contribute to raising awareness on the problem within the sector and the general public, generating environmental, social, economic and scientific benefits. The operational scheme of *Fishing for Litter* adopted by KIMO in the Netherlands has progressively involved new actors from neighboring countries, generating new practices and expanding its impact.

The KIMO organization, in addition to taking part in projects with local impacts, supports the international promotion strategy of the *Fishing for Litter* scheme, to increase its impact in different contexts. With over 80-member municipalities in eight countries, KIMO encourages their citizens to tackle the most pressing challenges facing the marine environment through the exchange of experiences and innovative knowledge. KIMO frames its actions to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal 14 of the United Nations 2030 Agenda: *Life below water*.

[The Kimo-Fishing for Litter website](#) also directly addresses fishermen from European countries, encouraging them to participate in the movement, which is open to all ports and fishing vessels. If enough vessels from a particular harbor show an interest in joining *Fishing for Litter*, KIMO can approach the port authority to explore options for setting up this innovative and effective scheme of marine litter reduction.

#### To know more

[Fishing for Litter website](#)

[Fishing for Litter in KIMO website](#)

[Article in KIMO International website](#)

[KIMO International website](#)

[Fishing for Litters records in The Netherlands](#)





[Guide on best practices of Fishing for Litter in the Mediterranean  
UNEP](#)

[Fishing for Litter in Plastic Smart Cities website](#)

[Article published in IDEASS website 2021](#)

[To join Fishing for Litter](#)

