

## **NEWSLETTER # 5**

The INDICIT II project is now entering its final months and the last tasks are being performed to finalise all deliverables. This newsletter presents the work carried out over the past 6 months.

### **Activity 2 - Applying the indicator “Litter ingested by sea turtles” to quantify the Programs of Measures at the OSPAR and Barcelona RSCs and MSFD areas**

**Data collection:** Activity 2 has worked to strengthen the implementation of the indicator and partners have continued to collect data in their respective region. Around 250 loggerhead turtles were collected in 2020.

**Data banking:** EPHE worked with its main stakeholders on data banking and adapting the DALI platform, in collaboration with IFREMER (CleanAtlantic project). The protocol for ingestion (result of INDICIT 2017-2019) will be updated considering stakeholders’ feedback on feasibility and the last statistical results.

**Ecotoxicological analysis:** The ongoing ecotoxicological analysis should provide further understanding of the individuals’ health status and on the impact of litter ingestion on health and body condition. During the past 6 months, many tissue samples were collected from dead and living turtles, as well as from living captive turtles (control) were sent to University of Siena for analysis. More will be sent until end of March and the results are expected in May-June.



Blood sampling



Carapace sampling



Biopsy

**GES scenarios, units and constraints at the RSCs scale:** Over the past 6 months, the collaboration between EPHE and Marcus Schulz (AquaEcology, Germany) continued in order to analyse the INDICIT and INDICIT II combined dataset. These results are being compiled in publications for proposing them to peer-reviewed journals and will be validated by blind-tested experts and for international dissemination i.e., sharing the results with the scientific community and also with the administrations.

### Activity 3 - Implementation of the indicator “Entanglement in floating debris by sea turtles, birds and cetaceans at the OSPAR and Barcelona RSCs and MSFD areas)

**Networking:** New stakeholders from other taxa (seabirds and cetaceans) are in the process of being included in the network. The rest of the stakeholders remain involved in data collection and continue collecting new data.

**Standardization of monitoring:** During the past few months the final version of the Standard Protocol (D3.10) has been reviewed by the TG-ML group. We are still waiting for their final approval, but in the absence of feedback the protocol will be considered approved.

**Training sessions:** Several online seminars have been arranged to be conducted in the next couple of months (March-April 2021), to share the final version of Standard Protocol and to finalize the homogenization of data collection within stakeholders.

#### Collection of standard data...



More than 500 videos/images of entangled animals from 2003 to 2020 in the European waters have been collected (+ 160 new data)



More opportunistic data has been collected and updated in the Social media database (+ 34 new images)



Almost 200 new historical and recent data have been collected and updated in the common database

**Evaluation of GES and indicator’s characteristics at the RSC scale:** A deep statistical analysis of data obtained from the social media review and standard data shared by the stakeholders (recent and historical) is in progress to achieve the GES assessment.

### Activity 4 (Implementation of the indicator “Micro-litter ingested by fish” at the OSPAR and Barcelona RSCs and MSFD areas)

**Networking and standardization of monitoring for fish:** The protocol was considered finalised in December 2020, after integrating all the received inputs from MSFD Task Group and TGML experts. It has been consolidated into a Standardised tool kit that will be disseminated in the following months. The protocol will be included in the new Guidance on Monitoring Marine Litter in European Sea, published by the JRC, during 2021.

**Training sessions:** The international training session, with the aim to disseminate the standardised protocol, has been modified into a video-tutorial production to be published on Jove Video Journal.

**Collection of standard data for fish:** The pilot action was considered closed at the end of February 2021, in order to have enough time for data elaboration, discussions and considerations for the Final Report.

**Report on GES and indicator's characteristics at the RSC scale for fish:** Considering the lack of standardised data, it will not be possible to define a Threshold value, but the data analysis will provide insights on the most suitable species and the relevant biological constraints. Preliminary results seem to confirm the use of the chosen target species as a good indicator for monitoring (at least the benthic species and the pelagic one). MSFD TG ML expert's input on the Protocol suggests a more general report, giving suggestions to go in deep at RSC.

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INDICIT II news continues to be communicated through the website and social media platforms. Both have a strong following from the scientific community and general public with the project's online presence growing rapidly (Facebook: 1,307 followers, Twitter: 468 followers, connections with other EU project e.g., Clean Atlantic, Plastic Busters and RAGES and Quiet Med 2). The website is also regularly updated with the latest news from the INDICIT II project.

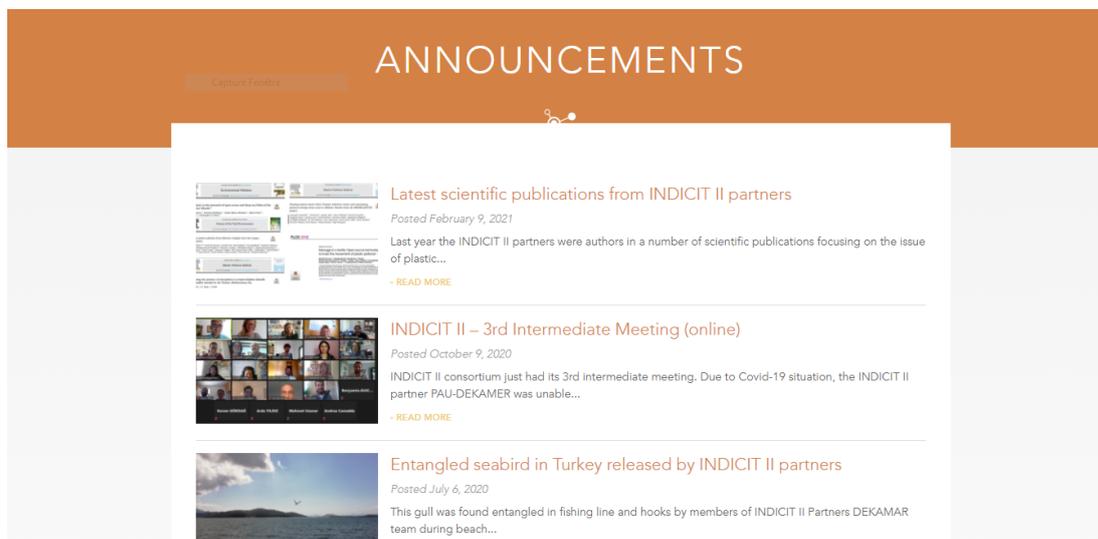


Fig. 1 Announcements page on the INDICIT II website

On behalf the INDICIT-II consortium, we renew our thanks for collaborating with us as members of EAB.

Best regards

Emily Duncan, Sarah Nelms, Brendan Godley Annette Broderick, (Communication team)

Claude Miaud, Gaëlle Darmon, Jessica Martin (Coordination team)