

Brief overview of the Regional workshop on microplastics abundance in river runoff of the NOWPAP region

The Regional workshop on microplastics abundance in river runoff of the NOWPAP region was opened on 1 November 2019 at 9.00 am by Dr. Anatolii KACHUR, the director of NOWPAP POMRAC. After his proposal, the participants agreed to nominate Dr. Vladimir SHULKIN as the chairperson of the Workshop.

The opening presentation was made by Dr. Ning LIU, the representative of NOWPAP RCU. It referred to the decisions of the 2018 NOWPAP Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP MALI) Focal Points Meeting which was held in Busan, Korea on 6 June 2018 and the recommendations of the second micro-plastics expert meeting held on 27 September 2019 in Dalian, China including details of planned NOWPAP special project on microplastic.

The presenters from the four NOWPAP member states followed. Mr. Shoufeng Zhang from China, Ms. Hee Jee Lee From Korea, Mr. Yuta Shinpo from Japan and Mr. Nikolai Kozlovskii from Russia shared the current results on contamination in rivers and coastal areas with microplastics.

As it was decided earlier during the 16th FPM, the work plan and budget for continuation of POMRAC activity “Microplastics abundance in river runoff of the NOWPAP region” in the biennium of 2020-2021 (UNEP/NOWPAP/POMRAC/FPM 16/10) would be discussed after the member states provide their presentations on contamination of rivers with microplastic. Therefore, the next agenda item was further discussion of the activity for recommending it to the 24th IGM.

According to the recommendations from the POMRAC Focal Points and Experts, the tasks of the project were revised as follows:

- 1) To describe and compare current monitoring methods of microplastics in rivers (sampling, sample treatment protocols, methods of analysis) applied in the NOWPAP countries.
- 2) To compile and analyze available data on river input of microplastics in the NOWPAP region.
- 3) To continue seasonal monitoring of microplastic concentration in the rivers of Russia within the NOWPAP region including Amur/Heilong River.

After these revisions, the activity was approved by the Focal Points as recommended for the 24th IGM.