

# MICRO 2018

## FATE AND IMPACT OF MICROPLASTICS: KNOWLEDGE, ACTIONS AND SOLUTIONS.

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS



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## Contents

<b>Organizing Board, Scientific and Artistic Committee *</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>Oral presentations, by day and panel</b> .....	<b>23</b>
<b>November 19th</b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b>November 19th – Plenary 1: 10h - 12h (El Cabildo)</b> .....	<b>24</b>
Degradation of Polyolefin Plastics Under Marine Exposure Conditions.....	24
Clean Coast: project for the study and management of oceanic waste in the Peninsula de Guanahacabibes Biosphere Reserve, Cuba.....	24
Do antifouling paint particles pose a risk to sediment-dwelling biota?.....	25
Global Plastic Waste Fluxes from Coastal and Riverine Sources Doubled between 1990 and 2015.....	26
Use of the risk assessment paradigm to organise and prioritize microplastic research needs. .	27
Understanding the effects of the plastic additive Bisphenol A (BPA) on estuarine food webs	28
<b>November 19th – Plenary 2: 14h30 - 17h (Arrecife Gran Hotel)</b> .....	<b>29</b>
Are there microplastics in drinking water? – A study on microplastics occurrence at different water treatment plants, Central Europe region.....	29
Accumulation of plastic debris and associated contaminants in aquatic food webs.....	30
What about us? Effects of nano- and microplastics on human immune cells.....	30
Occurrence of Microplastics in Commercial Seafood from Korea and Human Exposure.....	31
Investigating the presence of microplastic in Danish drinking water.....	32
Development of a jet pump based microplastic sampling system for freshwaters.....	33
High Concentrations of Microplastics in the Bed Sediments of the Rhine River.....	34
A methodology to characterize macroplastic dynamics in rivers.....	35
<b>November 20th</b> .....	<b>36</b>
<b>November 20th – Panel 5.1: 8h30 - 10h (AGH), Panel chaired by Mateo Cordier</b> .....	<b>36</b>
OC-TECH: PROTECTING THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT THROUGH INNOVATION.	36
The Plastics Manufacturers efforts to prevent marine litter.....	37
Acute need of Legal Framework for management of marine debris and Microplastics in India .....	38
Development of a novel technological approach for the reduction of microplastic pollution in seawater desalination plants and for sea salt extraction.....	38
Treatment stage effect on microplastic abundance and fate during passage through a tertiary wastewater treatment plant.....	39
Understanding the retention of nanoplastics at rock and mineral surfaces.....	40
<b>November 20th – Panel 5.2: 8h30 - 10h (EC), Panel chaired by Pennie Lindeque</b> .....	<b>42</b>
From the sewer to the sea - microplastic transport and fate in freshwater systems.....	42
Microplastics going Dutch: A systems approach to understand microplastics measured in riverine surface waters and sediments.....	43
Laboratory and numerical testing of transport mechanisms of microplastics in rivers.....	44
Numerical modelling of microplastic transport in Weser estuary and Wadden Sea.....	45
Giving value to plastic bottles: an effective solution for the top ocean polluter.....	46
Plastic input from the Seine River into the oceans: first results from the MacroPLAST project .....	47
<b>November 20th – Panel 6.1: 10h30 - 12h30 (AGH), Panel chaired by Juliana-A. Ivar-do-Sul</b> .....	<b>48</b>

Microplastic pollution of the Akyatan Beach one of the most important sea turtle nesting area at NE Mediterranean Coasts of Turkey.....	48
Marine litter monitoring in the Neva Bay (Baltic Sea): first results.....	48
Microplastics pollution on the beaches at the northern Black Sea coast during the monitoring of beaches sediments in 2016–2018.....	49
Accumulation of microplastics on sandy beaches of Mediterranean islands as an effect of tourism.....	50
Microplastic pollution on Gran Canaria island beaches.....	51
Quantity and type of plastics in the beaches of the region of Murcia (SE Spain): towards a monitoring of marine litter in the marine spatial planning.....	52
The french approach for msfd beach microplastic monitoring : presentation and first results.....	53
<b>November 20th – Panel 6.2: 10h30 - 12h30 (EC), Panel chaired by Martin Wagner.....</b>	<b>54</b>
Effects of microplastics presence on different developmental stages in invertebrate species.....	54
The impact of microplastic ingestion on the behaviour of the Common Periwinkle Littorina littorea.....	55
Food quality and microplastics alter feeding behavior and digestive enzyme activities in marine isopods.....	56
Do synthetic and natural microparticles cause similar cellular effects in marine invertebrates? .....	56
Zebrafish exposure to high-density polyethylene and polystyrene microplastics: effects on liver transcriptome and gastrointestinal histology.....	57
Bioaccumulation and gut microbiome response in the great pond snail Lymnaea stagnalis exposed to PBDEs in the presence and absence of nylon microplastics.....	58
TROPHIC TRANSFER OF MICROPLASTICS FROM COPEPODS TO PLANKTIVOROUS AND THEIR IMPACTS.....	59
<b>November 20th – Panel 7.1: 14h - 15h30 (AGH), Panel chaired by Tania Montoto.....</b>	<b>61</b>
PHOTOCHEMICAL FRAGMENTATION OF FRESHWATER (MICRO)PLASTICS UNDER UV IRRADIATIONS.....	61
Influence of environment and polymer morphology on fragmentation and production of micro/nanoplastics.....	62
Characterization of nanoplastic aggregation as a function of temperature and ionic strength.....	63
Photodegradation of PE small microplastics : erosion vs fragmentation.....	64
Woven metal filter media for microplastics sampling from water.....	65
An unexplored type of microplastics revealing a neglected way of plastic fragmentation found in the beaches of Hong Kong.....	65
<b>November 20th – Panel 7.2: 14h - 15h30 (EC), Panel chaired by Bethany Jorgensen.....</b>	<b>67</b>
Freshwater plastic pollution: recognizing research biases and identifying knowledge gaps....	67
Sampling microplastics in turbulent rivers using a stationary net from a bridge: what should be the sampling duration? How many samples are needed to reduce bias?.....	68
Evaluating citizen science as a technique for spatial analysis in freshwater ecosystems: A case study in the Ottawa River watershed, Canada.....	69
Microplastic pollution in the River Trent UK, and the use of EASYLIFT to optimise microplastic recovery.....	70
Effectiveness of distinct methods for isolation of microplastics in freshwater systems.....	71
Toward automated plastic detection in rivers.....	72
<b>November 20th – Panel 8.1: 15h45 - 17h30 (AGH), Panel chaired by Matthew Cole.....</b>	<b>73</b>
Impacts and implications of plastic adhesion to corals surface.....	73

Bioavailability and ingestion of microplastic by zooplankton in the natural environment.....	73
Mechanisms and effects of microplastic ingestion by planktivorous fish.....	74
Novel methods for the determination of microplastic in sediment and biota from the Norwegian continental shelf.....	75
Gastropod pedal mucus facilitates uptake of microplastics by marine periwinkles.....	76
Are sea squirts playing a role in the transportation of marine plastics?.....	76
Microalgae as Microplastics Biofloculators.....	77
Does heat stress increase the susceptibility of marine bivalves to microplastic pollution?.....	78
<b>November 20th – Panel 8.2: 15h45 - 17h30 (EC), Panel chaired by Melanie Bergmann.....</b>	<b>80</b>
The role of vertical mixing on the global distribution of near-surface microplastic.....	80
How do different physical processes affect the pathways of floating microplastic? The Parcels Lagrangian Ocean analysis framework.....	81
A large scale mesocosm approach to simulate chemical and biological effects of microplastics in a high-plastic ocean.....	82
MODELING PLASTIC WASTE FLOWS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN ENVIRONMENT: A SOURCE TO SINK APPROACH.....	83
Numerical Model Simulation to improve the understanding of Micro-Plastics Debris in marine environments: sensitivity of microplastics fate to particles physical properties and behaviour.....	84
Laboratory experiments and numerical modelling of plastic particles beaching.....	85
Why does floating microplastic accumulate in the subtropical gyre of the North Atlantic Ocean?.....	86
Tracking nanoplastics in aquatic organisms at environmentally realistic concentrations.....	87
<b>November 20th, JPI Oceans panels, Microplastics Projects Joint Final Meeting (AGH).....</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>November 21st.....</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>November 21st – Panel 10.1: 8h30 - 10h (AGH), Panel chaired by Paula Sobral.....</b>	<b>93</b>
Microplastic distribution in coastal waters.....	93
Spatio-temporal monitoring of coastal marine plastics.....	94
From coastal to oceanic micro-meso and macroplastics in the SE Bay of Biscay.....	94
Microplastics in the Sea Surface Microlayer in Southampton Water, UK.....	95
Distribution of microlitter in a gradient from a city to sea to identify main sources.....	96
<b>November 21st – Panel 10.2: 8h30 - 10h (AGH), Panel chaired by Jesús Gago.....</b>	<b>98</b>
Can a microbial community be artificially evolved to degrade plastic?.....	98
A deeper look into the biodegradation of micro-plastics through metabolomics approach.....	99
Beyond oil degradation: Enzymatic potential of Alcanivorax strain to degrade other natural and synthetic polymers.....	100
Can biodegradable plastic contribute to the mitigation of marine plastic pollution?.....	101
The determination of half-life of biodegradable polymers in the marine environment.....	102
Nanoparticles produced from the degradation of biodegradable microplastic severely affect aquatic microorganisms.....	103
<b>November 21st – Panel 10.3: 8h30 - 10h (AGH), Panel chaired by Gunnar Gerdt.....</b>	<b>104</b>
Effects of nylon microplastic on development and energy reserves in coldwater copepods.....	104
Microplastics prevail at all ocean depths of the HAUSGARTEN observatory (Arctic).....	105
An investigation of microplastic contamination in the Arctic Central Basin.....	106
Blown to the North? Microplastic in snow fallen out from the atmosphere of Europe and the Arctic.....	107



May waterborne polyethylene affect gilthead sea bream eggs hatching and hatchlings survival, by inducing changes in lipid metabolism?.....	108
<b>November 21st – Panel 11.1: 10h30 - 12h30 (AGH), Chaired by Juliana-A. Ivar-do-Sul and Jesús Gago.....</b>	<b>110</b>
Microplastic release by Wastewater Treatment Plants and study on ecotoxicological effects induced by virgin microbeads on zebra mussel <i>Dreissena polymorpha</i> .....	110
Sources of microplastics pollution into the marine environment: importance of wastewater treatment plant and coastal dump.....	111
Microplastic dynamics in agricultural systems: Insights from Spanish and Canadian case studies.....	112
Synthetic fibers affecting soil animals - soil animals affecting synthetic fibers.....	112
Microplastics in urban stormwaters – designing a method to evaluate the microplastic discharges via stormwaters.....	113
Industrial compost as an important source of microplastics.....	114
Release of synthetic microplastic fibres from domestic washing machines: Effects of fabric type and washing conditions.....	115
Shipyards: a source of microplastic and micro-paint particles spreading to the marine environment.....	115
<b>November 21st – Panel 11.2: 10h30 - 12h30 (AGH), Panel chaired by Salud Deudero.....</b>	<b>117</b>
Sampling microplastics –a comparative study of a manta trawl and a filtering pump.....	117
Distribution of microplastics in the mixed layer; results from the Volvo Ocean Race.....	117
Microplastics at the first 200 meters of the water column in the Atlantic Ocean.....	118
Floating microplastics in the Western Mediterranean Sea and their export by marine aggregates.....	119
PLASTICS AND EPIPLASTIC COMMUNITIES IN SURFACE WATERS OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC AND AUSTRAL OCEANS.....	120
Monitoring plastic pollution in the Azores Archipelago: from surface down to the deep seafloor and in biota.....	121
Spatial distribution of microplastics in North Sea surface waters and sediments.....	122
Tracing microplastic pollution in the Atlantic Ocean.....	123
<b>November 21st – Panel 11.3: 10h30 – 12h30 (AGH), Panel chaired by Lisa Devriese.....</b>	<b>124</b>
Development of a Py-GC/MS method and its application to identify marine microplastics..	124
ADVANCES IN HIGH THROUGHPUT ANALYSIS OF MICROPLASTICS.....	124
Freshwater compartments: Screening method for polymer identification and mass contents of microplastic particles using TED-GC-MS.....	125
Solvent extraction combined with Py-GCMS: A fast tool for microplastics analysis?.....	126
Identification of microplastic particles and fibers using vibrational spectroscopy coupled to multivariate analysis.....	127
Deep Learning vs Classical Computer Vision Techniques for Microplastics Classification..	128
Microplastics identification and quantification with Py-GCMS – an improved method for reliable weight related data.....	129
Identification and characterization of biocidal microlitter particles from leisure boat and commercial ship antifouling paint, using correlative microscopy (LM and SEM-EDS).....	130
<b>November 21st – Panel 12.1: 14h30 - 16h (AGH), Panel chaired by Annika Jahnke.....</b>	<b>132</b>
Microplastics in marine sediments of the Mississippi River delta (Gulf of Mexico).....	132
Concentrations and morphology of microplastic in the Seine River estuary.....	133
Microplastics in sediments from stormwater retention ponds.....	134

Process controls on microplastic recontamination in fluvial sediments due to flooding.....	135
Microplastic particles in the Ebro Delta, Spain: occurrence, composition and sources.....	136
Assessing microplastic abundance and distribution in the surface waters of the Mondego river estuary (Portugal).....	137
<b>November 21st – Panel 12.2: 14h30 - 16h (AGH), Panel chaired by TBD.....</b>	<b>138</b>
MICROFIBER INGESTION IN OTARIIDS ALONG CHILEAN AND PERUVIAN COAST: A POSSIBLE SENTINEL OF BIOMAGNIFICATION?.....	138
A STOCHASTIC MATRIX POPULATION MODEL REVEAL SUBTLE, BUT IMPORTANT, POPULATION-LEVEL EFFECTS, OF THE ENTANGLEMENT WITH MACROPLASTICS IN A SOUTHERN FUR SEAL POPULATION FROM NORTH PATAGONIA, CHILE.....	139
Marine plastic pollution in the Southern Ocean.....	140
Microplastic Pollution in the Southern Ocean.....	141
Beyond 62°S: Plastic litter on the coasts of King George Island, Antarctica.....	141
Plastic pollution around Antarctica – preliminary results from the Antarctic Circumnavigation Expedition (ACE).....	142
<b>November 21st – Panel 12.3: 14h30 - 16h (AGH), Panel chaired by Paula Sobral.....</b>	<b>144</b>
Microplastic pollution in upstream river catchments.....	144
An opportunistic monitoring approach for the evaluation of surface plastic debris pollution in Western Mediterranean Sea, Iberian Coasts and Macaronesia.....	144
Citizen Observatories to reduce and identify marine plastic pollution loads.....	145
Aerial detection of plastic pollution in the marine environment using a novel, hyperspectral infrared camera on a UAV.....	146
Experiences and potentiality of a continuous microplastic sampler: performance onboard opportunity vessels to increase oceanic sampling efforts.....	147
Microplastics in European Fleur de Sel and Sea Salts – a qualitative and mass-quantitative geographic comparison.....	148
<b>November 21st – Panel 13.1: 16h30 - 18h30 (AGH), Panel chaired by Gunnar Gerdt.....</b>	<b>150</b>
Analytical approach for the identification and quantification of microplastic particles in aquatic samples by a combination of particle analysis with FTIR and Raman microscopy...	150
Optimising the Workflow for Microplastic Analysis by FTIR Microscopy.....	151
Measuring the sub 10 µm fraction - Microplastic analysis of particles < 10 µm using µFTIR imaging.....	151
nano-FTIR - from defined to environmental (nano)plastic samples.....	152
Comparison of µ-ATR-FTIR spectroscopy and py-GCMS as identification tools for microplastic particles and fibers isolated from river sediments.....	153
The use of spiked samples for the validation of microplastic recovery and analysis methods: density separation, enzymatic purification and FTIR analysis.....	154
A freeware tool for the manufacturer independent analysis of microplastics allowing the automated analysis of FTIR imaging data.....	155
<b>November 21st – Panel 13.2: 16h30 – 18h30 (AGH), Panel chaired by Lars Gutow.....</b>	<b>156</b>
First data on plastic litter ingested by seabirds in the Bay of Biscay.....	156
Double trouble in the South Pacific subtropical gyre: Increased plastic ingestion by fish in the oceanic accumulation zone.....	157
Ingestion of plastic by fish: a comparison of Thames Estuary and Firth of Clyde populations .....	158
Microplastic monitoring in the Orkney Islands, Scotland.....	158

DISTRIBUTION AND BIOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF MICROPLASTICS IN MARINE ORGANISMS FROM THE ADRIATIC SEA.....	159
Long-term community effects of nano- and microplastics on freshwater benthic macroinvertebrates.....	160
From Science to Solutions: Investigating the Impacts of Marine Litter on the Galapagos Marine Foodweb.....	160
Microplastics in small coastal and off-shore fishes in the Baltic Sea.....	161
<b>November 21st – Panel 13.3: 16h30 - 18h30 (AGH), Panel chaired by Andy Booth.....</b>	<b>163</b>
A standard protocol for the assessment of microplastics toxicity using planktonic marine organisms.....	163
ADSORPTION OF MERCURY TO MICROPLASTICS AND VECTORIZATION TO MARINE ORGANISMS.....	164
Are microplastics facilitating the accumulation of organic pollutants in benthic bivalves?...	165
Microplastics as vectors of organic contaminants in the marine environment.....	166
Plastics debris as organic pollutants vector between littoral areas and the sea.....	167
Comparison of sorption capacity of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) on plastic resin pellets from different origins using a quick sorption method.....	168
Effects of Leachates from Weathered Microplastic in Cell-Based Bioassays.....	169
<b>November 22nd.....</b>	<b>170</b>
<b>November 22nd – Panel 15.1: 8h30 - 10h (AGH), Panel chaired by TBD.....</b>	<b>170</b>
Trace nanoplastic and microplastic fiber analysis in wastewaters and activated sludge: synthesis and utility of metal doped plastics.....	170
A NOVEL MICROPLASTIC EXTRACTION TECHNIQUE FOR THE DETECTION OF MICROPLASTICS IN THE LIVER, BLOOD AND FILLET OF EUROPEAN SEA BASS, DICENTRARCHUS LABRAX.....	171
New methodologies to collect and analyse micro-debris ingested by loggerhead turtle ( <i>Caretta caretta</i> ).....	172
Comparison of chemical extraction and microwave-assisted digestion techniques for metal desorption from plastic pellets by ICP-MS.....	173
Fingerprinting of chemicals released from plastic polymers by UV-light.....	174
<b>November 22nd – Panel 15.2: 8h30 - 10h (AGH), Panel chaired by TBD.....</b>	<b>175</b>
Inter-annual monitoring of microplastics in marine intertidal sediments of the Firth of Forth .....	175
THE CONTRIBUTION OF AQUACULTURE INDUSTRY IN THE GLOBAL MARINE MICROPLASTICS POLLUTION: FIRST RECORD OF LEVELS AND DISTRIBUTION IN COASTAL SEDIMENTS COLLECTED NEAR A PRODUCTION SITE IN THE SOUTH WEST OF NORWAY.....	176
Fast and manageable determination of the microplastics in the sediment.....	177
Sediment trapping – A method for monitoring microplastic litter influx in aquatic sediments .....	178
The First Occurrence, Spatial Distribution and Characteristics of Microplastic Particles in Sediments from Banten Bay, Indonesia: Potential Impact for Benthic-Pelagic Coupling Food Web.....	179
Combining hydrodynamic modelling-based sampling with FPA- $\mu$ FTIR-Imaging automated analysis: first evidence of microplastic pollution in the sediments of the Limfjord (Denmark) .....	180

<b>November 22nd – Panel 16.1: 10h30' - 12h30' (AGH), Panel chaired by François Galgani.</b>	<b>181</b>
Microplastics in the deep: an assessment from the Rockall Trough, Northeast Atlantic Ocean	181
The imprint of microplastics from textiles in southern European deep seas.....	182
Microplastic occurrence and distribution from discharge points to deep basins in an urban model fjord.....	183
The role of bioturbation in distributing secondary microplastics in soft marine sediments... 184	184
Assessing the overlap between plastics in seafloor habitats and ingested in species.....	184
Current data does not confirm that deep sea sediments are the final sink for all microplastics. A meta-analysis.....	185
Do microplastics in marine sediments affect inbenthic organisms?.....	186
Tracing microplastics in aquatic environments based on sediment analogies.....	187
<b>November 22nd – Panel 16.2: 10h30' - 12h30' (AGH), Panel chaired by TBD.....</b>	<b>188</b>
A holistic approach to address plastic pollution on a local scale - The Roskilde Fjord case. 188	188
University Freshmen’s Conceptions about Microplastics in Aquatic Ecosystems.....	188
Principe Island UNESCO Biosphere Reserve - Towards a plastic free Island in 2020.....	189
”OceanWise - Promoting social change”.....	190
“Less Plastic more Mediterranean”: a Research and Awareness campaign in the Mediterranean Sea.....	191
A social-ecological framework tackling plastic pollution.....	192
Plastic in the Environment – Sources, Sinks, Solutions.....	193
Putting the ‘Work’ back into Workshop – the EPHEMARE stakeholder workshop on microplastics in the marine environment.....	194
<b>November 22nd – Panel 17.1: 14h30 - 16h (AGH), Panel chaired by Julie Forgues, Bettina Hutschek and Lionel Jaffrès.....</b>	<b>195</b>
Communicating Plastic Pollution through Art.....	195
Simple Visuals = Powerful Messages = Real Change.....	195
Marine Plastic Pollution in the Media: A Survey on German Daily Newspapers 2007 – 2017	196
Telling stories about (micro)plastic pollution: Media images, public perceptions and social change.....	197
Marine Debris: art, science and education to awaken environmental values.....	198
Consumer responses to single-use packaging.....	199
Microplastics and Medusae – Expeditions into H2O. Art as a “mastic medium” to foster the interdisciplinary exchange on plastic pollution of aquatic environments.....	200
<b>November 22nd – Panel 17.2: 14h30 - 16h (AGH), Panel chaired by Arnaud Huvet.....</b>	<b>201</b>
Microplastics: an unexplored journey inside zebrafish embryos.....	201
Differential effects of pollutant-spiked microplastics on two model fish, zebrafish and marine medaka.....	202
Contamination of the ichthyofauna by the microplastics in the catches of some species in the southern Cameroon coast.....	203
Effects of small-sized plastics in marine organisms: mussels and fish.....	204
Physiological consequences of chronic exposure of marine medaka to microplastics.....	205
Investigating marine litter in remote Arctic Islands.....	206
<b>November 22nd – Panel 18.1: 16h30 - 18h30 (AGH), Panel chaired by Tania Montoto.....</b>	<b>207</b>

LITTERBASE: An Online Portal for Marine Litter and Microplastics and Their Impacts for Marine Life.....	207
Lessons from the past: Using Machine Learning to mine the literature for past observations of marine litter.....	208
Sustained ocean observations of marine plastic contaminants as an essential component of the Global Ocean Observing System.....	209
Plastic pollution from a Civic Ecology perspective: A Lanzarote case study.....	210
From the Plastics Strategy to microplastics: the policy framework.....	210
REACH Restriction on intentional uses of microplastics.....	211
Identification and Quantification of Microfibers and Microparticles via Automated Analysis .....	212
Future scenarios of global plastic waste production and disposal.....	213
<b>November 22nd – Panel 18.2: 16h30 - 18h30 (AGH), Panel chaired by Ricardo Beiras.....</b>	<b>214</b>
A long term exposure experiment tests the effects of irregular and spherical microplastics on juvenile blue mussels <i>Mytilus edulis</i> .....	214
Differential responses between two marine bivalves to environmentally relevant concentrations of microplastics.....	215
Effects of exposure to microplastics alone and with adsorbed benzo(a)pyrene on marine mussels <i>M. galloprovincialis</i> at cell, tissue and physiological levels.....	216
Furthering the dynamic uptake model for virgin microplastics: application to the blue mussel ( <i>Mytilus edulis</i> ).....	217
Physiological effects of small micro- and nanoparticles - A comprehensive review.....	218
<i>Mytilus</i> spp. as sentinel species for marine water-borne microplastic pollution; a case study from the Norwegian environment.....	218
Transfer of microplastics from the water column to sediments by the suspension- feeder <i>Mytilus galloprovincialis</i> .....	219
<b>November 23rd.....</b>	<b>221</b>
<b>November 23rd – Panel 20.1: 8h30' – 10h (AGH), Panel chaired by Carolin Völker.....</b>	<b>221</b>
Speculative ecologies: How to deal yet unpredictable effects of microplastics in the ocean from a social science perspective?.....	221
Reducing and eliminating plastic waste via change in social behaviour.....	222
Ecological risk assessment of microplastics in the marine environment.....	223
Risk perception of microplastics. An explorative study identifying aspects potentially influential in risk perception of microplastics.....	223
A risk in the making – discussions on microplastics in science, media and public.....	224
“An invisible threat” – Representations of microplastics in the German media.....	225
<b>November 23rd – Panel 20.2: 8h30' – 10h (AGH), Panel chaired by TBD.....</b>	<b>227</b>
Recycled low-density polyethylene and tyre rubber cause erratic behaviour, oxidative stress and mortality in brackish water copepod <i>Limnocalanus macrurus</i> in laboratory experiments .....	227
Microplastics alter feeding selectivity and faecal density in the copepod <i>Calanus helgolandicus</i> .....	228
Microplastic Ingestion by Calanoid Copepods in the SE Black Sea.....	229
Microplastic properties and environmental conditions influence PAH sorption and bioavailability to copepods.....	229
Benchmarking the uptake and excretion dynamics of microplastics in the marine copepod <i>Calanus finmarchicus</i> .....	230

Are fish that live in different zones reliable indicators of microplastic pollution?.....	231
<b>November 23rd – Panel 21.1: 10h30' - 12h30' (AGH), Panel chaired by Martin Wagner..</b>	<b>233</b>
Bioavailability of microplastic to marine zooplankton: effect of shape and infochemicals...	233
The translocation of microplastics to lipid droplets of <i>Daphnia magna</i> is an artefact.....	234
Effects of low density polyethylene microplastics contaminated with PFOS on <i>Daphnia magna</i> .....	235
Effect of chemical and biological ageing on polyethylene and the subsequent toxicity in <i>D. magna</i> .....	235
Microplastics- <i>Daphnia</i> interactions: importance of surfactant.....	236
Exposure to conventional but not biodegradable microplastics decreases fitness in <i>Daphnia magna</i> .....	237
Towards improved predictions of dispersal of weathering microplastics in the aquatic environment by numerical modelling.....	238
Microplastics Disrupting the Biological Pump?.....	239
<b>November 23rd – Panel 21.2: 10h30' – 12h30' (AGH), Panel chaired by Gunnar Gerdtts..</b>	<b>240</b>
Microplastics concentrations in freshwater during a flood event, a case study of the Seine river catchment.....	240
Seasonal Patterns of Microplastic Occurrence and Affiliated Bacterial Communities.....	241
Characterization of microplastics from sea turtles ( <i>Caretta caretta</i> ) stranded along the northern adriatic sea.....	242
Dissolved organic carbon leaching from plastics stimulates microbial activity in the ocean.....	243
Plastic intake in mediterranean sea birds.....	243
Evaluating the effect of plastics on marine microbial communities.....	244
Microplastic presence in loggerhead turtles ( <i>Caretta caretta</i> ) stranded in Gran Canaria Island.....	245
.....	.....
COLONIZATION OF MICROPLASTICS AND TRANSFORMATION OF SORBED PCBs BY A MARINE MICROBIAL COMMUNITY.....	246
<b>November 23rd – Panel 22.1: 14h30' – 16h30' (AGH), Panel chaired by Arnaud Huvet..</b>	<b>248</b>
Nanoplastics exposures to gametes and embryos affect larval development of oyster.....	248
Eat microplastics, die early? Do microplastics lead to higher mortality of barnacle larvae...	249
Physiological responses of <i>Crassostrea virginica</i> larvae exposed to microplastics.....	249
Assessing effects of microplastics' ingestion in fish: from innate immune responses and intestinal barrier function to hepatic stress.....	250
Do chemicals transfer to or from microplastics in the gut?.....	251
Effects of polystyrene microplastics in different life stages of brown trout ( <i>Salmo trutta f. fario</i> ).....	252
Assessing the impact of environmental microplastics in fish using cell line, embryos, larvae and juvenile.....	253
A mid-scale temporal and spatial analysis of microplastic ingestion in the deep-water red shrimp <i>Aristeus antennatus</i> .....	254
<b>November 23rd – Panel 22.2: 14h30' – 16h30' (AGH), Panel chaired by Carolin Völker..</b>	<b>256</b>
Riverine macroplastics in Jakarta.....	256
Microplastic prevalence in benthic macroinvertebrates: preliminary evidence of microplastic particles among primary consumers in a lotic environment.....	257
(Micro)plastics in Sediment and Water Samples of the Rivers Elbe and Lahn, Germany....	258
Spatio-temporal distribution of microplastics in water and sediments of a southern european river (Antuã river, Portugal).....	259

Microplastics in two contrasted rivers discharging into the Northwestern Mediterranean Sea	260
Microplastics in the Italian lakes: main results of two monitoring years.....	261
Microplastics monitoring in water bodies of the North-West of Russia.....	261
<b>Posters.....</b>	<b>263</b>
Microplastics distribution in surface waters in the Western Mediterranean Sea.....	264
Microplastics in sea water of Cienfuegos bay, Cuba.....	265
Osteotoxic effects of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons adsorbed to microplastics.....	265
On the representativeness of bulk water samples versus manta sampling in microplastic analysis.....	266
Microplastics in the municipal wastewater treatment plants at Turkey: Comparison of the influent and secondary effluent concentrations.....	267
Distribution of microplastics along the Scottish coastline using standardized sampling and extraction methods.....	268
Antifouling paint particles in coastal and estuarine ecosystems.....	269
Who bit it? A field guide to bite marks on plastic pollution.....	270
Is Phytoplankton dying to tell us its Nanoplastic story?.....	270
Evaluation of various digestion protocols within microplastic sample processing concerning their efficiency of organic matter destruction and the resistance of different polymers.....	271
First assessment of driving factors for microplastic pollution within the Lake Tollense catchment.....	272
Exploring the impact of microplastic on the Humboldt large marine ecosystem.....	273
Can oysters be used as “passive samplers” for microplastics?.....	274
Macro- and microplastics in sediments from Lake Tollense, Germany.....	275
Correlations between the small scaled microplastic pollution and grain size distribution of beach sediments on the Isle of Rügen, Baltic Sea, Germany.....	276
The impact of polystyrene microplastic on physiological activities of <i>Calanus helgolandicus</i> in the Marmara Sea.....	277
Biomacromolecules and bioplastics from fish waste for high added value applications.....	278
Spatial analysis and prediction of microplastics concentrations using geostatistics and optimization.....	278
The OceanWise European project.....	279
Plastic fluxes toward the oceans, contribution of the Schelde River (Belgium).....	280
The Baltic Sea in the microplastic research map: a model from sources to sinks.....	281
PAEs level in European sea bass <i>Dicentrarchus labrax</i> experimentally exposed to PVC microplastics.....	282
Review on microplastic studies in Brazilian aquatic ecosystems.....	283
Hanging by a fibre: the risk of sample contamination by airborne plastic fibres.....	284
Microplastic particles in atmospheric deposition of the metropolitan area of Hamburg, Germany.....	284
Marine Microplastic: Realistic test materials for laboratory studies of ecosystem impacts...	285
Thermoanalytical methods for the optimisation of microplastic detection in freshwater sediment samples.....	286
Sublethal effect of cadmium in <i>Donax trunculus</i> (mollusca, bivalvia): Variation in vitellogenin rates during the exposure and depuration period.....	287
Introducing quality criteria for the analysis of microplastic in biota samples.....	288

Study of Microplastic formation: Accelerated degradation of polyamide 6 in thermal and hygrothermal environment.....	288
Macro-plastic occurrence and flows in large European rivers draining the Mediterranean Sea: the Rhône (France).....	289
Microplastic pollution in aquatic environments of Estonia.....	290
Litter rim of the Baltic Sea coast: monitoring, impact, and remediation.....	291
MICROPLASTICS IN THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT: IMPLICATIONS ON COMMERCIALY IMPORTANT FISH AND INVERTEBRATE SPECIES OF THE EASTERN AEGEAN SEA.....	292
Variations in phthalates concentration present in fin whales ( <i>Balaenoptera physalus</i> ), gray whales ( <i>Eschrichtius robustus</i> ) and humpback whales ( <i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i> ) in Mexican Pacific.....	293
Modeling approach of micro- and nanoplastics in aqueous and cell environments.....	294
Ingestion of plastic debris (Macro and micro) by longnose lancetfish ( <i>Alepisaurus ferox</i> ) in the North Atlantic Ocean.....	294
Influence of solar radiation and plastic type on the bacterial community composition of plastic's biofilm in the North Adriatic Sea.....	295
Characterisation of microplastics (floating and ingested by mussels) in the harbor of Marseille (French Western Mediterranean).....	296
Actions of a marine natural Park in France to reduce impact of marine debris and microplastics in Iroise sea.....	297
The microplastic abundance in surface water increases and the size of plastic particles decreases near urban wastewater and stormwater sources in Lake Kallavesi, Finland.....	298
Perception and consumption of plastic: A case study to provide research priority.....	299
Impacts of microplastics on the duckweed <i>Lemna minor</i> and potential trophic transfer to the amphipod <i>Gammarus pulex</i> .....	300
Microplastics in wild mussels ( <i>Mytilus</i> sp.) from the north coast of Spain: Comparison between digestive treatments.....	301
Cross-border assessment of microplastics in seafood and salt.....	302
Narrative role playing - a science multiplication tool- at the AWI school lab OPENSEA on Helgoland.....	303
A "green" analytical approach for the detection of plastic organic additives and related compounds in marine organisms.....	303
Ingestion, Depuration and Translocation Kinetics of Microplastics in Blue Mussels ( <i>Mytilus edulis</i> ).....	304
Microplastics as a vector for exposure to hydrophobic organic chemicals in fish; a comparison of two polymers and silica particles, using three different model compounds.....	305
Exposure to Polystyrene microbeads induced behavioural changes in <i>Daphnia magna</i> .....	306
Studying (micro)plastics in sediments of Lake Biel, Switzerland.....	307
IMPACT OF RECOVERED MARINE DEBRIS: ECOTOXICOLOGICAL ANALYSIS USING MARINE ZOOPLANKTON.....	308
Assessment of polystyrene uptake by analytical pyrolysis and relationships with physiological responses in the Mediterranean mussel, <i>Mytilus galloprovincialis</i> .....	309
Microplastic ingestion in fish larvae in the western English Channel.....	310
Reporting on Microplastic in the Marine Environment: Does Coverage in German Print Media meet the Standards of Quality Journalism?.....	310



Compost - a potential source of microplastics: amount, source and composition of plastic materials in feedstock organic wastes.....	311
Comparison of one-time spiking, multiple spiking and dialysis tubing methods for the determination of plastic-water partition coefficient of one polycyclic hydrocarbons on microplastic.....	312
Investigating tyre-road wear particles as contributors to microplastic waste.....	313
Abundance and composition of floating marine macro litter on the eastern sector of the Mediterranean Sea.....	314
Polystyrene microplastics did not affect body growth and swimming activity in <i>Xenopus laevis</i> tadpoles.....	315
Importance of micro and nano-plastics characterization to assess biodegradation processes. ....	315
Standardised Protocol for Monitoring Microplastics in Sediments.....	316
A comparison of new and conventional methods for isolating microplastics ingested by fish .....	317
Plastic debris in <i>Posidonia oceanica</i> eagrripiles in coastal waters.....	318
Sub-lethal and embryo-toxicological effects of chrysene-loaded microplastics on the Mediterranean mussel <i>Mytilus galloprovincialis</i> .....	319
Marine litter, a threat to biodiversity conservation in the Santa Luzia Marine Reserve.....	320
Praia limpa é a minha praia: An environmental project to reduce plastics and microplastics in marine and coastal environments.....	321
Preliminary study on microplastic assessment in the digestive system of marine mammals and turtles found stranded on Samos Island, Eastern Aegean Sea.....	321
Dynamics of floating marine debris in the northern Iberian waters: A model approach.....	322
The relevance of particle characterization for microplastic particles (MP) in the environment .....	323
Multimedia modeling of nano- and microplastics in the environment.....	324
Microplastics in the Belgian Part of the North Sea: Spatial variability and ingestion by benthic biota.....	325
Fish, bivalves and polychaeta: microplastics ingestion in Portuguese Coastal waters.....	326
Unravelling the pathogenic potential of microplastics in the Weser estuary (Germany).....	327
Plastics in the beach sands of the Baltic Sea: Can some “background contamination” be defined?.....	327
The Marine Plastic Microbiome: Microbial Colonization of Polymer Surfaces in the Arctic Marine Environment.....	328
Microplastics off Italian Coasts: A Comparison between Water Sampling Techniques.....	329
Assessment of semi-persistent and emerging pollutants in microplastics on four Canary Islands beaches.....	330
The retention time of microplastics in barnacle naupliar larvae.....	331
Do polystyrene microplastic particles modulate the toxicity of pesticides? Mortality and biochemical responses of the snail <i>Marisa cornuarietis</i> and the non-biting midge <i>Chironomus riparius</i> .....	332
Pollution of Algerian coastal marine ecosystems by plastic waste.....	333
The Plastic-Seine research program: Integrated approach of microplastic fate and effects in the Seine estuary.....	333
Microplastics in Galway Bay: Preliminary results.....	334
Snow as a route of microplastics from urban areas to sea.....	335

Assessment of the Trojan horse effect using PAH-contaminated polystyrene microplastics: sorption studies and responses of adult zebrafish.....	336
Microplastics in freshwater: surface water, sediments and benthos – a review.....	337
Numerical tracking of debris from a shipping containers spill in the East coast of Australia	338
Bioavailability of microplastic in laboratory exposure studies: What are we exposing to?...	339
Toxicity of microplastic fibres and their role as a source of emerging pollutants.....	340
Detection, characterization and removal of microplastics in wastewater treatment plants: Conventional vs innovative process.....	341
Impact of microplastics on phytoplankton.....	342
The molecular effect of polystyrene microplastics in marine copepod <i>Tigriopus japonicus</i> .	343
Bioavailability of benzo[a]pyrene transferred via microplastics to early life-stages of fish through experimental trophic food chains.....	343
Identification and environmental evaluation of compounds migrated from polymers in marine medium biodegradation studies.....	344
Review of existing monitoring programs for marine litter in the Mediterranean Sea.....	345
Is <i>Mullus barbatus</i> a good bioindicator of microplastic marine pollution? Spatial and temporal comparison of microplastic occurrence in the NW Mediterranean.....	346
Microplastic retention in a Danish storm water pond.....	347
Pilot study on possible micro plastic occurrence in marine mammals from German waters.	348
Biodegradability of pristine and weathered car tire particles and their individual components .....	349
Have your say: What are the risks of microplastics?.....	350
Adsorption of natural organic matter on microplastic and its effect on dispersion stability. .	350
Microplastic at Slovenian beaches: Study repeated.....	351
Do micoplastics induce oxidative stress in marine invertebrates?.....	352
Combined effects of microplastics and gold nanoparticles on the marine microalgae <i>Tetraselmis chuii</i> .....	353
May polyethylene microplastics affect ephyrae jellyfish survival and behaviour?.....	353
Biological Effects of virgin and weathered Microplastic Particles and their Leachates.....	354
Microplastics in benthic, pelagic and demersal species along the North Sea coastline of Schleswig-Holstein, Germany.....	355
Microplastics in the Marine Environment and Biota of Israeli Coastal Waters.....	356
Uptake of differently sized microplastics in gut passage by different species of <i>Daphnia</i> .....	357
Exposure to microplastic: ingestion/egestion rates and behavioural impact on <i>Solea solea</i> . .	358
Preliminary results of plastic pollution analysis in the White, Barents and Kara Seas.....	359
How to get rid of ingested microplastic fibers? A demonstration by the shrimp <i>Palaemon varians</i> .....	359
Microplastics in cosmetics in the italian market: an overview.....	360
In vitro effects of polyethylene microplastics on primary cultures and cell lines of fish.....	361
Monitoring litter inputs from a river to the marine environment: Presence, diversity and seasonal trends in two beaches located close to its mouth.....	362
Microplastic prevalence in the River Weser.....	363
Fate and Transport of Particulate Plastics in a Pilot Scale Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP).....	364
Toxicological effects of <i>Solea senegalensis</i> larvae after exposure to PCB contaminated microplastics.....	365

Exposure of juvenile turbot ( <i>Scophthalmus maximus</i> ) to contaminated microplastic diet: Oxidative stress biomarkers, erythrocytic nuclear abnormalities and histopathological effects.....	366
Evaluation of a microplastic sediment separator in the context of MSFD beach microplastic monitoring.....	367
Adsorption rate study of persistent organic pollutants in function of physical and chemical degradation of marine microplastics.....	368
Microplastics ingestion by deep-water catsharks <i>Galeus melastomus</i> and <i>Scyliorhinus canicula</i> (Chondrichthyes) in the Tyrrhenian sea (Western Mediterranean Sea).....	369
The sorption potential of 9 pharmaceuticals on the surface of microplastics.....	370
Swimming behaviour as a new endpoint to assess microplastic effects on marine invertebrates.....	370
Microplastic marine pollution: European policy needs.....	371
Numerical modelling of plastic movement in coastal regions.....	372
Microplastics in freshwater systems ( southeast Poland) - preliminary results.....	373
Three-dimensional numerical simulation of microplastics dispersal from point sources in the Baltic Sea region.....	374
Tracking plastic incorporation into biogeochemical cycles.....	375
Citizen science: a useful tool for both microplastic research and environmental engagement.....	375
Microplastics in polychaetes from the Norwegian continental shelf. Methods for determination and preliminary results from analysis.....	376
Another top predator in the list: microplastics in Mediterranean Monk Seals.....	377
Textual synthetic fibres from machine washing and tumble drying: emissions and their reduction.....	377
Antioxidant and immune status of European sea bass after ingestion, combined or separately, of polyethylene microplastics and oxybenzone.....	378
Developing baseline for future research on microplastic contamination in urban waters of Gujarat, through rapid evaluation of major water bodies in Ahmedabad.....	379
Exploring public views on the issue of microplastics in relation to the recent government imposed plastic ban in western part of India: Perceived causes, perception of stakeholders and the degree of change in the understanding of the issue.....	380
Occurrence and identification of small plastic litter in Algerian beaches.....	381
Performance of bio-degradable plastic in the marine environment.....	382
Microplastics presence in Fuerteventura beaches (Cofete and Gran Tarajal).....	383
Detecting microplastics pollution in world oceans using radar satellites.....	384
Exposure of polystyrene microplastics on +0 juvenile <i>Sparus aurata</i> : An assessment on ingestion and fatty acid metabolism.....	385
Isolation of Plasticsphere phototrophs and a look at the early stage plastic colonisation in the Mediterranean Sea.....	385
Characteristics of conventional and bio-based polymers during sewage sludge treatment....	386
Are drifting microplastics entry vectors of alien species in the Canary Islands?.....	387
Are microplastics vehicles of bacteria or virus pathogens for marine bivalves?.....	388
Nanofragmentation of polyethylene and polystyrene macro-plastics under simulated environmental weathering (thermooxidation and hydrodynamic turbulence).....	389
Evaluation of systems for reduction of fibre emissions from washing machines.....	390
Plastics in freshwater dams with human impacts: microbial colonization and distribution...391	

Microplastic load from different land-based sources and reflection in abundances in coastal waters and sediment in the eastern Baltic Sea.....	392
Plastic litters from the coastal inlets of the northeastern Sea of Marmara: Awareness and some misapplications.....	392
Object detection for microplastic using deep learning on microscopic images.....	393
Macro and Micro(plastics) in the Environment of Some French Rivers.....	394
Comparison of microplastic content in digestive tracts of two marine vertebrate species in the Mediterranean: loggerhead turtles ( <i>Caretta caretta</i> ) and striped dolphins ( <i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i> ).....	394
Marine bacteria colonize and enrich on plastic pellets.....	395
CRISS project: an opportunity to integrate marine litter and micro plastics problematic within interdisciplinary projects, while working Digital Competence in the school.....	396
A protocol to successfully extract DNA from different polymers to investigate microbial diversity and the capacity of polymers to spread harmful marine micro-organisms.....	397
Comparative weathering of the nine polymers that constitute the 'Baseman's Kit'.....	398
A Comparison between chemical and enzymatic digestion for the analysis of microplastics in plankton.....	399
Direct determination of antimony in microplastics by ultrasonic slurry sampling and electrothermal atomization atomic absorption spectrometry.....	400
The use of Polysorbate 20 as an "optimizer" component in the alkaline digestion of fatty fish digestive tract for microplastic extraction.....	401
The use of Polysorbate 20 as an "optimizer" component in the alkaline digestion of fatty fish digestive tract for microplastic extraction.....	402
Chronic effects of polystyrene microplastics on two crayfish species.....	403
Marine plastic pollution as a planetary boundary threat – The drifting piece in the sustainability puzzle.....	404
Bisphenol A and its effect on photoautrophic and heterotrophic organisms.....	404
Bisphenol A as an environmental pollutant with genotoxic effect on human lymphocytes..	405
Impact of microplastics alone or with adsorbed oil compounds from the water accommodated fraction of a North Sea crude oil on marine mussels <i>Mytilus galloprovincialis</i> .....	406
Microplastics in the Portuguese coastal waters.....	407
Individual and mixture exposures of polyethylene, polypropylene and polystyrene micro- and nanoplastics to freshwater microbial communities.....	407
List of participants.....	410

suspended particles. The particles are mostly of natural origin, i.e. fine sand grains, diatoms shells, cellulose fibres or chitinous fragments. Since several decades, however, man-made synthetic plastic particles are accumulating in the environment. The later are of great interest in environmental and toxicological sciences as they are suspected to induce cellular modifications and stress in organisms upon ingestion. This situation raises a number of questions whether natural and synthetic microparticles induce similar effects and damage in cells and organisms. In order to investigate this issue, marine organisms with different feeding modes will be subjected to natural and synthetic particles. Blue mussels (*Mytilus edulis*) and brown shrimps (*Crangon crangon*) will be collected from the field, acclimatized to laboratory conditions, and exposed to natural and synthetic particles for 6, 24, and 48 hours. Microscopic analysis will be done to localize the particles in digestive organs. Histochemical and biochemical analyses will be used to detect stress markers in cells and tissues. The goal of this doctoral project is to understand the hazardous effects of microparticles and to differentiate between anthropogenic and natural items. The findings will be beneficial in estimating the actual hazard potential of microplastics and in defining actual threat boundaries for marine invertebrates.

Keywords: Crustacea, Bivalvia, Oxidative Stress, Histochemical and Biochemical Analyses

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## Zebrafish exposure to high-density polyethylene and polystyrene microplastics: effects on liver transcriptome and gastrointestinal histology

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Due to the constant increase of plastic use and production, microplastics (MPs) have become a contaminant of serious concern for the aquatic environment. However, the biological pathways affected by the exposure to different MP polymers still needs to be elucidated, in particular at the "omic" level. The present study focuses on the identification of the molecular pathways affected by the exposure of zebrafish (*Danio rerio*) to different concentrations of a mixture of two environmentally relevant MPs. Adult zebrafish were fed daily with dry fish food (control group, N=12) and food supplemented with a mix of pristine high-density polyethylene and polystyrene microplastics (two experimental groups: 0.1 and 1 mg/L, N=12 each) for 20 days. The MPs

dimension ranged from 25  $\mu\text{m}$  to 90  $\mu\text{m}$  for both polymers.

At the end of the exposure period, the fish liver was dissected, and its whole transcriptome was analyzed by next-generation RNA-sequencing technologies on an Illumina platform. In addition, the gastrointestinal tract and the gills were dissected and fixed for histology and immunohistochemistry. The exposure to polyethylene and polystyrene microplastics affected the liver transcriptome in a dose-dependent way, inducing the differential regulation of specific suites of genes compared to the control. Histological analyses evidenced changes in the inflammatory response occurring at the two mucosal tissues selected for observation in the MPs treated fish. The correlation of histological alterations with differential gene expression could represent a useful approach to decipher early warning for effects at higher biological organization. This study provides a comprehensive transcriptomic dataset, useful to understand a wide range of biological pathways affected by MPs exposure as a model for studies on fish also in the field.

Keywords: microplastics, polyethylene, polystyrene, zebrafish, liver transcriptome, histology

\*Speaker

## Bioaccumulation and gut microbiome response in the great pond snail *Lymnaea stagnalis* exposed to PBDEs in the presence and absence of nylon microplastics

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It is recognised that microplastics will associate with persistent organic chemicals within the environment, potentially changing their bioavailability and the interaction of organisms with these chemicals. The aims of this study were to investigate how the presence of microplastics affect PBDE bioaccumulation and the gut microbiome in the great pond snail *Lymnaea stagnalis*. Snails were exposed to microplastics and PBDEs independently and in combination for 96 hours. Microplastic particles (13-15  $\mu\text{m}$  nylon powder) were mixed with quartz sand sediment at 1% w/w. A PBDE mix (containing BDE-47, 99, 100, 153 and PBB-153) was added to the sediment-microplastic mix in glass vessels at six environmentally relevant concentrations (94, 188, 375, 750, 1500, 3000 ng g<sup>-1</sup> each PBDE), with six replicates consisting of one snail per treatment. There was no significant