



With the contribution of the LIFE financial instrument of the EU

## Cigarette Butts

### 7 reasons not to litter

Integrated information campaign for the reduction of smoking related litter on beaches

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1. **Cigarette butts are the most frequently littered item:** about **4 trillion cigarette butts** are discarded into the environment each year all over the world.
2. **40%** of the litter found on the shores of the **Mediterranean** were cigarette butts.
3. Cigarette filters are **non-biodegradable**. They are composed of **plastic fibers** (cellulose acetate) which may take up to 15 years to break down.
4. Cigarette butts contain numerous **toxic chemicals** such as **nicotine, cadmium, lead and arsenic**, which are partially filtered out during smoking. When the butts are discarded, these chemicals leach into the environment adding to the existing **water and soil pollution** and posing a threat to living organisms.

5. Cigarette butts as other small plastic litter are often **swallowed by birds, fish and marine animals**. This may lead to **blockage of the digestive tract, poisoning with toxins and reduction in the food intake** due to a false sense of satiation, when litter are accumulated in the stomach, which results in the **death of the animals from starvation**.
6. Approximately **1 cigarette butt per 1 litre of water** is the median **lethal dose** for both freshwater and saltwater test fish species.
7. It is estimated that over **4,500 fires a year** are caused by discarded cigarettes and smoker's materials.



**MARC** A.E.