

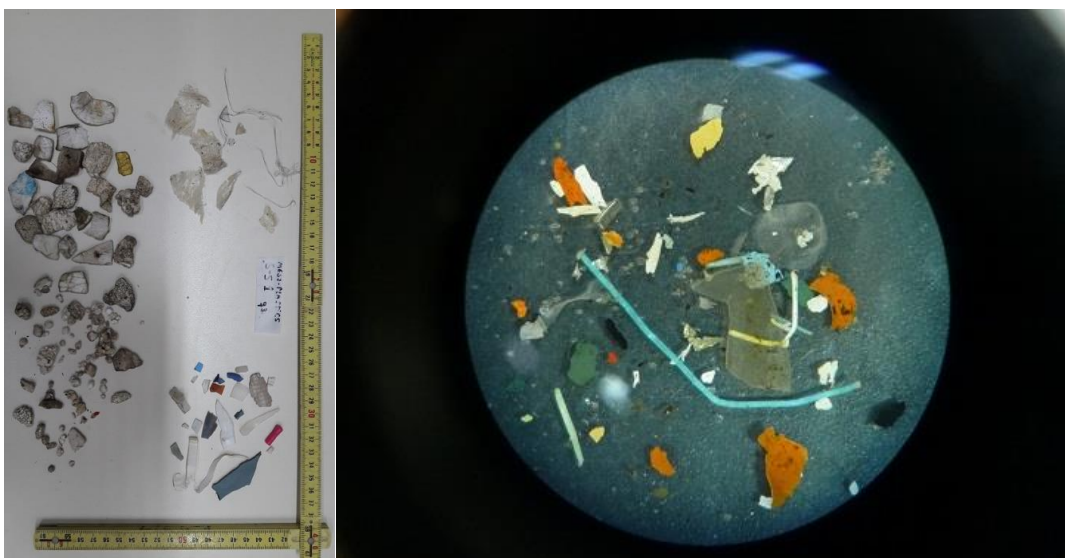
Project Update: April 2017

At the present we have performed two sampling trips in sandy sediments, the first of them in the Setúbal Lake (31°36'46" S; 60°40'0.1" W) and the second one in the Paraná River (31°42'0.9" S; 60°28'27" W). Food wrappers (36.5 items 100 m⁻²; mainly polypropylene and polystyrene), bags (high- and low-density polyethylene), disposable foam food containers (expanded polystyrene) and beverage bottles (polyethylene terephthalate) were the dominant macro-items recorded in this study. On the other hand, an average of 25 meso-plastic and 704 micro-plastic particles were recorded per m² of sediment.

In general terms, our results are in concordance with other studies performed in polluted beaches from freshwater and marine environments, indicating a similar relevance of plastic contamination. We are demonstrating that plastic pollution is a serious problem, at least at local scale, in the Paraná River. This fact is also significant from a social/educational point of view, since plastic waste is often ignored as a problem pollutant.



Left: Plastic sampling in a beach of the Paraná River (Entre Ríos, Argentina) (31°42'0.9" S; 60°28'27" W). Right: Macroplastic items observed in a beach of the Paraná River (Entre Ríos, Argentina) (31°42'0.9" S; 60°28'27" W).



Left: Mesoplastic items collected from a quadrat of 1 m². Right: Microplastic items under binocular microscope (4x magnification) from a sediment sample (0.25 x 0.25 m).