

Mapping the Plastic

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Key words: Capacity building; Coastal Zone Management; Hydrography; Remote sensing; surveying plastic waste in waterways

SUMMARY

Mapping the Plastic – A Surveyor’s Response

A presentation by Lester Simon Ironside, Chair of FIG Working Group 4.3

Abstract

The effects of plastic pollution on the Earth’s oceans are well documented, potentially catastrophic and increasing exponentially year on year. The UN Environment Programme has calculated that each year more than 8 million tonnes of plastic ends up in the oceans. Eighty per cent of all litter in our oceans is made of plastic. This is an intolerable problem that needs immediate and far-reaching action to remedy. Eric Solheim, Head of UN Environment, speaking at the launch of the #CleanSeas campaign argued that it was past time to tackle the plastic problem that blights our oceans. ‘We’ve stood by too long as the problem has gotten worse’ he said, ‘it must stop’.

The surveying profession agrees. FIG has formed Working Group 4.3 - Mapping the Plastic - a combined initiative of its Young Surveyors Network and Commission 4 (Hydrographic Surveying), committed to finding solutions to this deeply concerning global environmental problem.

Mr Ironside will update the 2019 Working Week on its objectives, progress and achievements to date.

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