

This is 11th WASTEREDUCE Newsletter

**Dear Readers,
Welcome to the final edition of the WASTEREDUCE
Newsletter!**

Over the past thirty months, from February 2024 to July 2026, WASTEREDUCE has brought together partners from Croatia and Italy with a shared goal: reducing waste in protected and Natura 2000 areas through cooperation, innovation, education, and practical action.

Each Newsletter edition has followed a common structure, exploring one key topic related to waste prevention and management, presenting examples of good practice, highlighting one of our project regions through the Region in Focus section, and sharing the latest project news and activities.

This final issue looks back at that journey. Together, we revisit the topics we explored, the knowledge we shared, and the milestones we achieved throughout the project. Rather than introducing something new, this edition celebrates the collective effort of our partners, stakeholders, and communities who helped turn ideas into action.

We also reflect on the project's legacy. Although WASTEREDUCE officially concludes in July 2026, its results, partnerships, tools, and experiences will continue supporting sustainable waste management and environmental protection across the Adriatic region for years to come.

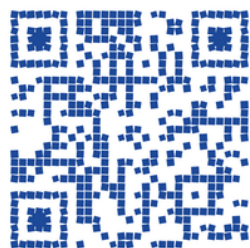
Thank you for following our journey and being part of the WASTEREDUCE community.

Warm regards,
The WASTEREDUCE Team

Partnership
IT - 4
HR - 4

01/02/2024
31/07/2026

Total budget
1.657.742,23
EUR



WASTEREDUCE

is an EU funded project in collaboration with eight partners. Together, we will tackle waste management challenges in protected and Natura 2000 areas across Italy and Croatia. Our goal is to enhance waste prevention, reduce environmental impacts, and improve cooperation among stakeholders.



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Every Edition Tells a Story

Each newsletter captured another chapter of the WASTEREDUCE journey. Together, they tell the story of our partnership, our progress, and our shared commitment to protecting nature.



Newsletter 1

CONTENT



The first newsletter introduced the WASTEREDUCE project, its objectives, partnership and pilot areas. It marked the beginning of a cross-border collaboration dedicated to improving waste management in protected and Natura 2000 areas.

Waste Issue in the Adriatic Sea



About the WASTEREDUCE Project

Partnership



Newsletter 2

CONTENT



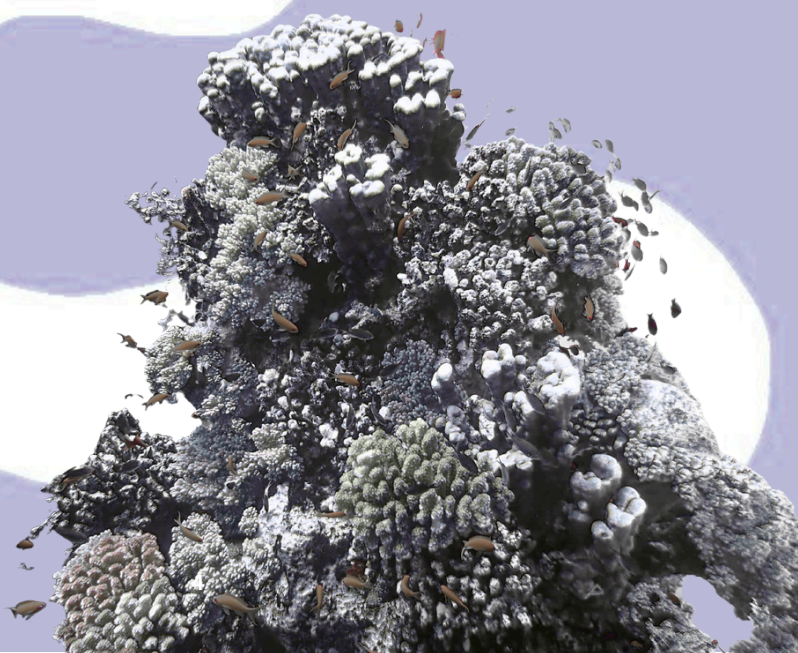
This issue focused on the impact of waste, especially plastic pollution, on biodiversity in the Adriatic Sea. It explained why protecting ecosystems begins with preventing waste from entering nature.

*Waste and
Biodiversity*



*Impact of Plastic on
Biodiversity*

Pilot Areas



Newsletter 3

CONTENT



Newsletter No. 3 explored the causes and consequences of illegal dumping while presenting examples of monitoring, remediation and prevention. It also highlighted practical tools and local initiatives helping communities combat illegal waste disposal.



Newsletter 4

CONTENT



This edition examined one of today's greatest environmental challenges — plastic pollution. It combined European policy, scientific knowledge and local examples showing how innovation can reduce plastic waste.



Plastic Pollution Microplastics

Region in Focus: Friuli Venezia Giulia



Innovative Approaches to Plastic Waste



Newsletter 5

CONTENT



Newsletter No. 5 was focused on waste in waterways, highlighting this widespread environmental challenge and its impact on ecosystems across the cross-border area. The issue explored the current situation and presented measures to address the problem.

Waste Waterways



EU Legislation and Status

Innovative Approaches to Combating Waste Waterways



Region in Focus: Istria, Croatia

News & Announcements



Newsletter 6

CONTENT



This issue examines how insights from behavioral studies can support more effective waste prevention and management strategies. By understanding how people think, decide, and act, we can design better interventions, strengthen cooperation across borders, and accelerate the transition toward a circular and sustainable future.



Behavioral Strategies in Waste Management



Region in Focus: Veneto



PA Visitors' and Stakeholders' Survey

News & Announcements

Newsletter 7

CONTENT



Newsletter No. 7 highlighted the circular economy as a rapidly growing approach to sustainable resource management. By presenting European policies, innovative practices, and real-world examples, it showed how circular solutions are transforming waste from a problem into a valuable resource.

The Power of Circular Economy



Bioecconomy in Action



Region in Focus: Exploring Circular Solutions in the Brenta Area



News and Announcements



Newsletter 8

CONTENT

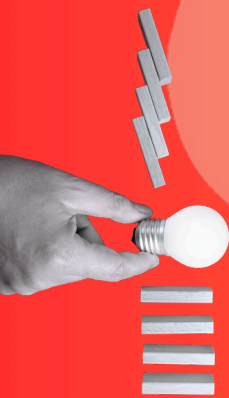


This edition explored the growing connection between sustainable tourism and waste management. It highlighted how innovative practices, responsible visitor behaviour, and coordinated local actions can help reduce the environmental impact of tourism while protecting natural and protected areas.

Embracing Sustainable Tourism



EU Regulations for a Greener Future



Leading by Example: Local Solutions



Plastic Pollution Solutions

Regions in Focus: Field Trips to Istria and Dalmatia



News and Announcements



Newsletter 9

CONTENT



Newsletter No. 9 highlighted the essential role of community engagement and education in achieving lasting waste reduction. It demonstrated how informed citizens, local initiatives, and active participation can inspire long-term behavioural change and build a shared commitment to a cleaner, more sustainable future.



Waste Reduction: From Principles to Practice

European Framework and Academic Foundations



Leading by Example - Local Solutions

Regions in Focus:
Veneto - The Future is
in the Classroom

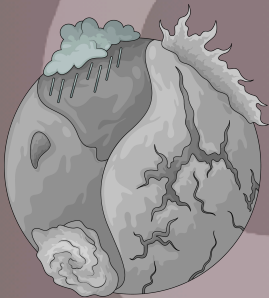


Newsletter 10

CONTENT



In this issue, we explore the complex relationship between waste and climate change, examining how waste generation and management contribute to environmental pressures. From the climate impacts of landfills and plastics to the challenges climate change poses for waste management systems, we highlight the urgent need for more resilient, sustainable, and climate-conscious approaches.

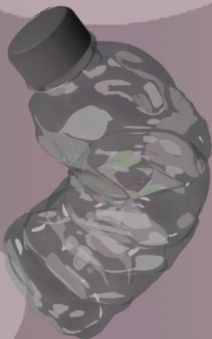


The impact of Waste on Climate Change

Landfills: The Hidden Climate Hotspots



Plastics and Climate Change: A Fossil Fuel Legacy



Climate Change as a Stress Test for Waste Management Systems

Circular Economy: Turning Waste Reduction into Climate Action



News and Announcements





News and Events

Workshops, conferences, meetings, events, public engagement... all of these are part of a project's life cycle.

But we want it to be more than that – a seed for new ideas, a shift in mindset that continues even after the project ends. For us. For better future.



News

Exhibition “When the Sea Says Thank You” in Pula

Our project partner, the Region of Istria, opened the exhibition “When the Sea Says Thank You” on **19 March 2026** at the Max City shopping center in Pula (Croatia).

Combining scientifically grounded facts with creative interpretation, the exhibition highlights the serious environmental, economic, and health impacts of marine pollution. Marine litter has been recognized as one of the key threats to marine ecosystems in the Mediterranean, including the Croatian part of the Adriatic Sea.

The main aim of the exhibition is to raise awareness about marine waste in a way that is accessible and engaging for a wide range of audiences. Through expert-based, educational, and innovative communication, the exhibition delivers clear and impactful messages. In addition to informing visitors, it encourages concrete action and positive changes in everyday habits.

The exhibition was open from 16 March to 16 July 2026.



Joint Networking and Matchmaking Conference (MISSION4WATER Project)

On Wednesday, **15 April 2026**, we participated in the Joint Networking and Matchmaking Conference held at the Coworking Centre in Pula. The event was organized within the framework of the MISSION4WATER project.

The MISSION4WATER project brings together stakeholders from across the Adriatic-Ionian region to foster collaboration and support the development of innovative solutions. These solutions aim to reduce pollutant dispersion in water bodies, thereby improving water quality and long-term environmental sustainability. Our Project Manager, Barbara Sladonja, PhD, actively contributed to the event by participating in the panel discussion titled “Addressing Water Protection Challenges and Initiatives in the Adria Area.” During the panel, she shared insights from our project activities and highlighted the importance of cross-sector collaboration in tackling water pollution and promoting sustainable environmental practices.

ECOMED in Catania

During the latest edition of Ecomed in Catania, Sicily (Italy), **22-24 April 2026**, Andrea Badaile from our partner Etra S.p.A. emphasized the importance of strengthening cooperation between public institutions and the private sector in safeguarding Natura 2000 sites.

He presented a participatory governance model successfully implemented at the “Grave e zone umide del Brenta” WASTEREDUCE pilot site. The initiative demonstrates how biodiversity protection can become a shared objective through concrete territorial agreements, coordinated actions, and jointly developed protocols.

The experience gained through the Wastereduca project confirms that collaboration between public expertise and private initiative can significantly contribute to the protection of ecosystem services while creating scalable and transferable sustainability models for other ecologically valuable areas across Europe.



News

Educational Sessions in Venice

In **May 2026** ARPAV organized a series of three educational and interactive sessions with students from the “P. Calamandreì” middle school of the “Colombo” Institute in Chirignago, Venice. The activities introduced students to the objectives and good practices of both the Wastereduce and MARLESS Interreg Italy–Croatia projects, promoting environmental awareness, active participation, and greater understanding of marine protection among young people.



Strengthening the Voice of Youth through European Projects: WASTEREDUCE on Youth4Sea

WASTEREDUCE participated in the Interreg Italy–Croatia Annual Event 2026 “Youth4Sea” held on **25 May 2026** in Ancona, where it was presented as an example of good practice for successfully engaging young people in environmental initiatives and project activities. Project representatives contributed to discussions on youth participation in European cooperation, sharing experiences on how education, collaboration, and active involvement can inspire the next generation to support a more sustainable Adriatic.



Final Project Meeting & Conference in Poreč

On **2 July 2026**, the WASTEREDUCE Final Project Meeting and Final Conference took place in Poreč, Croatia, bringing together project partners and experts to present the project's achievements, exchange knowledge and experiences, and discuss its long-term impact.

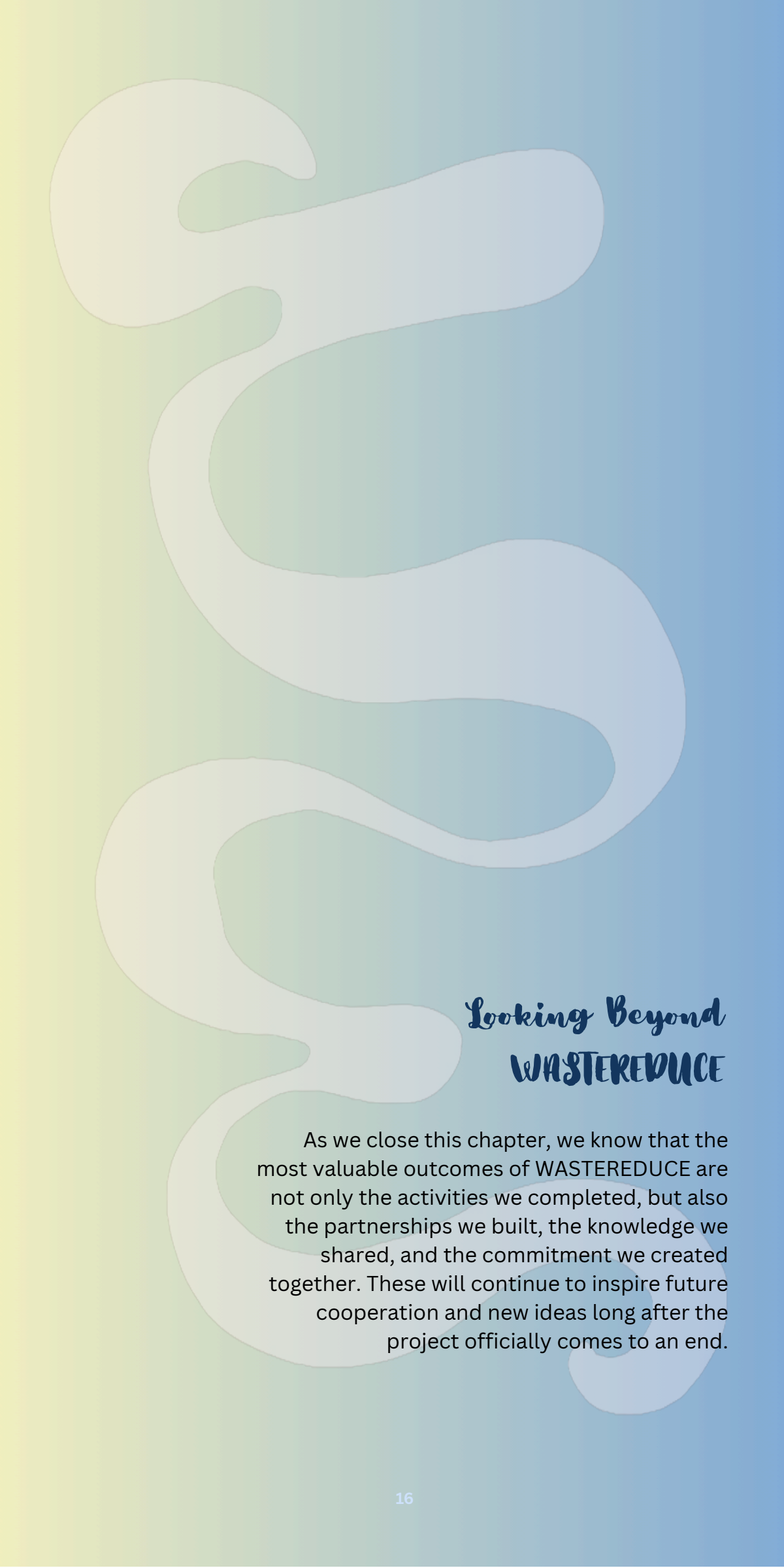
The event also provided an opportunity to discuss current challenges and future perspectives in sustainable waste management and environmental protection.

The conference featured presentations on microplastics and marine litter in the Northern Adriatic, land-based waste in protected areas, the role of behavioural science in promoting sustainable practices, and new participatory strategies for Natura 2000 sites. These discussions highlighted the importance of interdisciplinary cooperation and innovative approaches in addressing environmental challenges.

During the event, the project partners also presented the main outcomes of the WASTEREDUCE project, including the developed Action Plans, research methodologies, educational models, and practical solutions designed to reduce waste and improve the management of protected natural areas.

We would like to thank all project partners, speakers, participants, and guests for their valuable contributions and for making the Final Conference a great success.





Looking Beyond **WASTEREDUCE**

As we close this chapter, we know that the most valuable outcomes of WASTEREDUCE are not only the activities we completed, but also the partnerships we built, the knowledge we shared, and the commitment we created together. These will continue to inspire future cooperation and new ideas long after the project officially comes to an end.

Thank You for Being Part of Our Journey!

As WASTEREDUCE comes to its official conclusion, we look back with gratitude and pride at everything we have achieved together. Over the past thirty months, our project has brought together partners from Croatia and Italy, public institutions, researchers, local authorities, environmental organisations, schools, businesses, and citizens around a shared vision: protecting our natural areas through better waste prevention and more sustainable resource management.

While the project has delivered valuable tools, pilot actions, educational activities, and practical solutions, its greatest achievement lies in something less tangible but even more enduring—the relationships we have built. The trust, cooperation, and mutual understanding developed throughout this journey have created a strong foundation for future initiatives and new cross-border projects. This partnership is the true legacy of WASTEREDUCE.

We would like to sincerely thank all project partners, associated organisations, stakeholders, local communities, volunteers, experts, and everyone who contributed their knowledge, enthusiasm, and time to this shared effort. Your commitment has shown that meaningful change is only possible when people work together across borders and across disciplines.

A special thank you goes to all of you who have followed our newsletters throughout the project. With every edition, we aimed to do more than report on project activities. We wanted to share knowledge, present practical solutions, raise awareness, and encourage positive action. We hope these newsletters have been informative, useful, and inspiring—and that they have strengthened our shared commitment to protecting the environment and reducing waste.

Although this newsletter marks the end of WASTEREDUCE, it is not the end of the journey. The ideas, experiences, and partnerships created through this project will continue to grow, shaping new collaborations and supporting a cleaner, more resilient, and more sustainable Adriatic region.

Thank you for being part of our story. We look forward to continuing this journey together.



The author of the illustrations used in this Newsletter is Marina Uljančić.