



Australian Government

Microplastic pollution from ports and shipping activities in the Indo-Pacific: Potential risks and mitigation strategies



UNIVERSITY of TASMANIA

A research project supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Government of Australia

What is the project about?

Microplastics (plastic particles <5 mm) are detrimental to the environment and our health. Once present in the marine environment, they are very difficult to remove. Ports and shipping activities are suspected of introducing them into the oceans in a number of ways: through discharge of sewage and grey water; anti-fouling paints and coatings; shipping accidents; loss of containers/cargoes overboard; abrasion of ropes and netting; garbage and litter. Microplastics can also occur due to breakdown of larger plastic materials. However, there is limited information available to the maritime community on how ports and shipping activities actually contribute to microplastics pollution and how to manage this problem.

This project seeks to examine microplastic pollution associated with ports and shipping activities and to assist maritime industry stakeholders in finding practical and viable solutions for reducing ocean plastic contamination.



What will the project achieve?

Project findings will contribute to improved knowledge base for maritime stakeholders to make informed decisions regarding microplastics pollution in areas of shipping policy, port management, ship operations and governance. The project will release a white paper, specifically to inform maritime industry stakeholders.

Who is conducting the research?

The project is led by researchers from the University of Tasmania in partnership with researchers from the University of Mumbai and Bombay College of Pharmacy.

How to participate in the project?

As a key stakeholder, your opinions will greatly assist in developing recommendations for policy imperatives and microplastic pollution mitigation strategies for the maritime industry. You may be invited to participate in a short online survey and/or a workshop with other stakeholders.

Want to know more about the project?

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