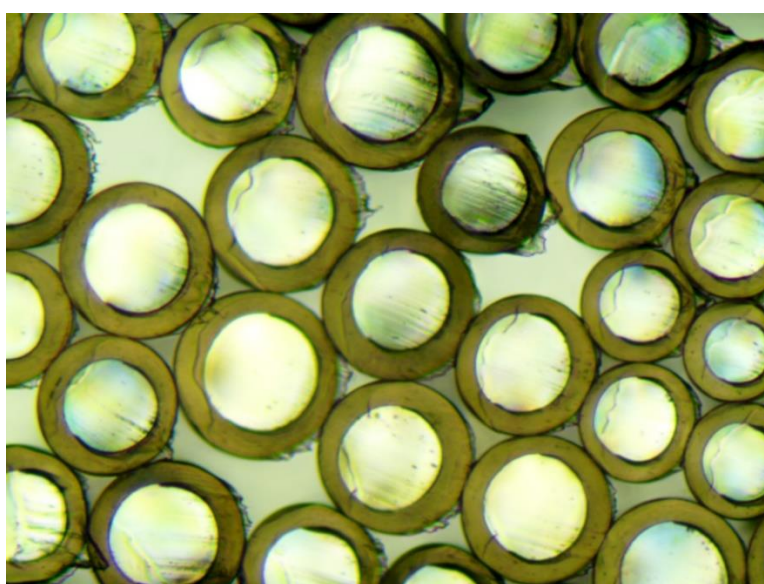


Press Release

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New project launched to tackle the use of harmful oil-based composites in the marine environment



Biocomponent filament cross sections © Centexbel

SeaBioComp, is a new collaborative project that has been launched to develop and produce novel bio-based thermoplastic composite materials and the analytical protocols to evaluate long-term durability and reduced ecological impact on the marine environment.

The **SeaBioComp** project held a successful kick-off meeting in Lille in April 2019 bringing together all 11 partners from the 2Seas region covering the coastal regions along the southern North Sea and the Channel area including 4 EU-member states: England, France, the Netherlands and Belgium.

The project will develop 'demonstrator' bio-based composite alternatives to potentially replace traditional fibre-reinforced composites commonly used in the marine industries. Traditional oil-based products including fishing and seaweed farming components, energy harvesting equipment, boats, pontoons, anchoring and buoy parts are potentially being

SeaBioComp is an Interreg 2 Seas 2014-2020 project covering England, France, the Netherlands and Belgium. The programme is part funded by the European Regional Development Fund.

addressed by the project. The bio-composites will not only reduce the depletion of fossil-based resources but should also limit the emission of greenhouse gases and the ecotoxic impact of microplastics, while allowing recycling through the use of thermoplastic biopolymers. Through the development of the bio-composite demonstrators, the project aims to significantly shift the perception within the marine industries that the use of bio-based composites can offer a realistic and viable alternative. The demonstrators and developed analytical protocols will help both industry and public authorities to address the growing concern regarding the global production and consumption of oil-based plastic materials and the long-term ecological impact of plastic litter and microplastics in the marine environment.

The group of research institutions, university research groups, SME's and specialist cluster organizations have come together under the EU Interreg 2 Seas programme, within the Technological Innovation theme. SeaBioComp is led by Centexbel (BE) and combines experts in polymer research, textile and composite formation with marine institutes, sector cluster organisations and public authorities.

Centexbel is the **project manager** of this project and will also be heavily involved in the development of all demonstrators, but mostly in the development of a **self-reinforced biocomposite**. Furthermore, Centexbel will support the partnership with our expertise regarding textile reinforcements, thermoplastic biopolymers and composite formation but also with the identification of potential leachates in the ocean using liquid chromatography techniques.

More details including the specific aims, objectives and work packages of the project will be distributed throughout the duration of the project which runs from March 2019 to August 2022. SeaBioComp has an overall budget of €4,1M, supported by €2.5M (60%) from the European Regional Development Fund. A new website will shortly be launched at <http://www.seabiocomp.eu/>

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Meet the project partners:

