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WRITTEN DECLARATION

submitted under Rule 136 of the Rules of Procedure

on the international mapping of floating garbage patches

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Written declaration, under Rule 136 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, on the international mapping of floating garbage patches¹

1. Oceans cover 70 % of the earth's surface, contain 97 % of the planet's water and make up 99 % of available living space on earth by volume.
2. Floating marine debris is a serious threat to marine biodiversity and living organisms. It poses risks to human health, is an obstacle to maritime activities, particularly fishing and maritime transport, and affects the quality of seawater.
3. According to research published in the journal PLOS ONE, 250 000 tonnes of plastic debris is floating on the surface of the world's oceans. These patches of debris, which accumulate in circular current systems known as 'ocean gyres', can vary in size from a few square metres up to 3 million square kilometres and are threatening the ecological health of our oceans.
4. In the context of the international dimension of the Integrated Maritime Policy, regional cooperation with third countries and the protection of marine biodiversity, including on the high seas, an international map of floating debris should be established on the basis of data from the Member States and data gathered by international bodies.
5. This declaration, together with the names of the signatories, is forwarded to the Council and the Commission.

¹ Under Rule 136(4) and (5) of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, where a declaration is signed by a majority of Parliament's component Members, it is published in the minutes with the names of its signatories and forwarded to the addressees, without however binding Parliament.