



# THE GREAT BUBBLE BARRIER

A smart solution to plastic pollution

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## The Great Bubble Barrier is coming to Portugal!

AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS, 16TH SEPTEMBER 2021 - This World Clean Up Day, The Great Bubble Barrier is excited to announce its participation to project MAELSTROM, which will see the implementation of the first Bubble Barrier outside of The Netherlands. This new Bubble Barrier in Portugal is co-funded by the EU as part of project MAELSTROM, which is dedicated to finding ways to intercept and process marine litter and reduce its impact on coastal ecosystems.

### THE FIRST BUBBLE BARRIER OUTSIDE OF THE NETHERLANDS

Following the successful installation of the first long-term [Bubble Barrier at Westerdok](#) in Amsterdam, The Great Bubble Barrier has been working to deploy its technology in other countries. Through project MAELSTROM, the team aims to install the first tidal Bubble Barrier in the Porto region of Portugal. Plastic pollution is threatening coastlines globally, and Portugal is no exception. According to a recent study the Porto region is home to two of the rivers with the highest levels of plastic pollution in Portugal<sup>1</sup>.

"There is an urgent need for measures that stop plastic from flowing into our oceans. With the installation of a Bubble Barrier in the Porto region, we will be able to tackle the problem close to the source" explains co-founder and Chief Technical Officer Philip Ehrhorn. "At the same time, we aim to build awareness among both residents and visitors about the issue of plastic pollution, making the impact of the project bigger than just regional."

### PART OF ONE OF THE LARGEST EU PROJECTS ON MARINE LITTER - MAELSTROM

The new Bubble Barrier in the Porto Region is part of project MAELSTROM, a consortium of 14 European parties. Project MAELSTROM – MARine Litter SusTainable remOval and Management – aims to implement innovative and environmentally sustainable technologies to intercept and remove litter from rivers, as well as from the seabed. The project will assess ecological status before and after implementation of the technologies to assess their impact. The project will investigate new methods for recycling and reusing the marine and riverine litter collected via the Bubble Barrier.

The Great Bubble Barrier is responsible for designing and implementing a Bubble Barrier in the Porto Region as one of two methods for collecting marine and riverine litter. MAELSTROM aims to sort and recycle the collected marine litter and put it to new uses in line with the Circular Economy Action Plan of the European Union. Project MAELSTROM encompasses a series of events where the results of the research will be shared. The Great Bubble Barrier is actively seeking local stakeholders and communities around Porto to join forces on this project and to support the fight against plastic pollution locally.

### BE A PART OF THE PROJECT

The goal of The Great Bubble Barrier is to keep this new Bubble Barrier operational beyond the life of project MAELSTROM. The problem of plastic pollution will not be solved within the four years of the project; leaving the Bubble Barrier in place can have a lasting impact on preventing plastic from reaching the ocean.

**The project team is looking for organisations that want to join forces across industries and make a difference by funding part of the installation and operation of Bubble Barrier Porto Region.** By partnering with The Great Bubble Barrier on this project, you will not only prevent riverine plastic pollution and maintain a healthy ecosystem but become a true changemaker for this region and beyond

### About the author

The Great Bubble Barrier is a multi award-winning Dutch start-up that has developed a simple yet efficient technology to tackle the issue of plastic pollution closer to the source using bubbles.

Find out more: [www.thegreatbubblebarrier.com](http://www.thegreatbubblebarrier.com)

To request interviews and get more information, please contact: [press@thegreatbubblebarrier.com](mailto:press@thegreatbubblebarrier.com)



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### Note to editors

#### HOW DOES A BUBBLE BARRIER WORK?

The Bubble Barrier consists of a bubble curtain, a catchment system and an air supply. The bubble curtain prevents plastics from floating down the river and into our oceans. We create the bubble curtain by pumping air through a perforated tube laying on the bottom of the river. The bubble curtain generates an upward current which directs plastics to the surface. By placing the bubble curtain diagonally across the river, the natural flow of the river will push the plastic waste to the side and into the catchment system.

The catchment system is placed at the end of the bubble curtain and stays in place regardless of water level or the wake from passing ships. The catchment system is modular, making it easily adaptable to specific local requirements and infrastructure.

1. Fernandez et al., Nature Sustainability (2021). Floating macrolitter leaked from Europe into the ocean.