

{rokbox title=|Map of the central-western Mediterranean Sea showing the locations of all plastitar samples collected during this study :: Image: Authors| thumb=|images/stories/ieo/imagenespublicaciones/centro-oceanografico-baleares-ieo-csic-plastitar-mediterranean-new-records-characterization-compa-et-al-2023-thumb.jpg|}images/stories/ieo/imagenespublicaciones/centro-oceanografico-baleares-ieo-csic-plastitar-mediterranean-new-records-characterization-compa-et-al-2023.jpg{/rokbox}

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[Plastitar in the Mediterranean Sea: New records and the first geochemical characterization of these novel formations](#)

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Abstract: A new geological formation consisting of plastic debris admixed to petroleum oil residue, termed “plastitar”, has been recently described in the Canary Islands. Here, we report its widespread occurrence across the Mediterranean coast and new insights into its biogeochemical composition. Specifically, we found marked differences in the diagenetic stable indicator profiles, suggesting a heterogeneous seeps provenance. Moreover, the 801 plastic particles found in the 1372 g of tar surveyed, with a maximum concentration of 2.0 items/g, showed interesting patterns in the tar mat, with nurdles predominantly layered in the external of the tar mat and lines in the inner core. Overall, the collected observation suggests that tar entraps plastics through a stepwise process and is a sink for them.

Keywords: Microplastics, Plastitar, Marine pollution, Plasticrust, Plastiglomerates, Mediterranean Sea