AUSMAP

AUSMAP Microplastic Summary Report Georges River Catchment

Sampling Period: April – May 2026

Prepared for
Georges Riverkeeper

August 2026



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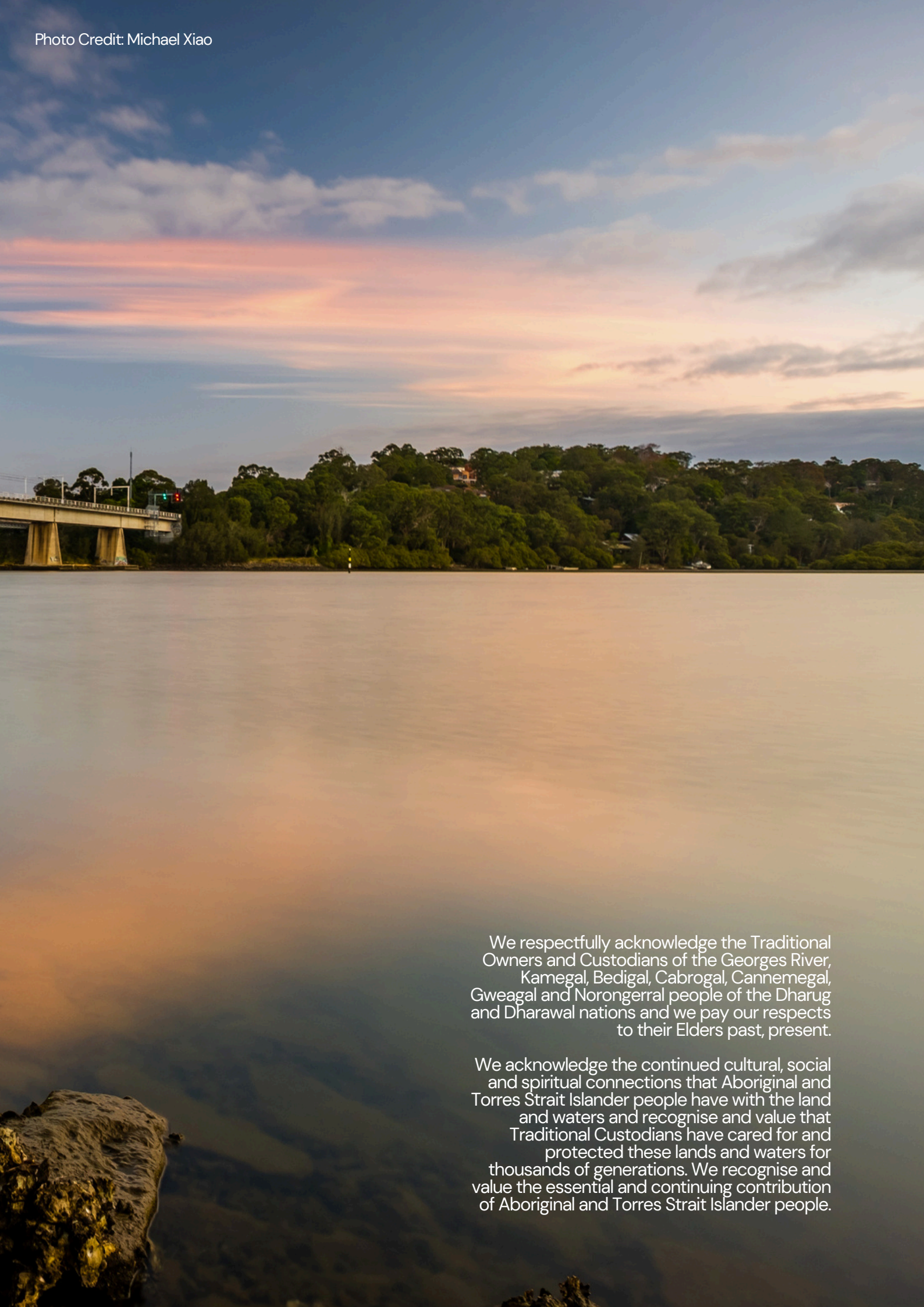


Photo Credit: Michael Xiao

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Georges River, Kamegal, Bedigal, Cabrogal, Cannemegal, Gweagal and Norongerral people of the Dharug and Dharawal nations and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present.

We acknowledge the continued cultural, social and spiritual connections that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have with the land and waters and recognise and value that Traditional Custodians have cared for and protected these lands and waters for thousands of generations. We recognise and value the essential and continuing contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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Project Summary

Sampling Period | April – May 2026



Figure 1. *Microplastic collected from Jewfish Bay Baths*



Figure 2*. Processing microplastics at Simmos Beach*

As part of Georges Riverkeeper's (GRK) ongoing microplastic monitoring program, running since 2018, ten sites across the Georges River and Botany Bay catchment were surveyed between April and May 2026 using the AUSMAP standardised methodology.

Microplastic density varied substantially between sites, ranging from 5 (**Very Low**) to 805 (**High**) particles per square metre (MP/m²). Eora Beach, on the shoreline of Chipping Norton Lake, was the only site to exceed the AUSMAP hotspot threshold of 250 MP/m², consistent with elevated loads recorded at this site in previous surveys. Hard fragments, pellets and foam were the most common particle types recorded, reflecting a combination of widespread urban inputs and more identifiable source pathways. Of the eight sites sampled in both the previous (2024/25) and 2026 rounds, all recorded lower loads in 2026; however, as each sampling round represents a single survey, conducted under generally dry weather conditions, these results provide a snapshot of measured loads rather than evidence of a downward trend.

The 2026 results reinforce that microplastic pollution remains a persistent issue across the Georges River catchment, with recurring elevated loads at particular sites alongside more widespread inputs. The findings highlight the importance of continued standardised monitoring and targeted source-reduction measures, particularly for industrial pellets and other identifiable sources such as foam and synthetic grass. Sampling following significant rainfall or storm events, where feasible, would further strengthen understanding of stormwater-driven microplastic deposition and contribute to a more complete picture of pollution across the catchment.

The Microplastic Issue and AUSMAP

Plastics have become an integral part of modern life, with an estimated 400 million tonnes of plastic waste produced globally each year.

The widespread use of plastics, particularly single-use products, combined with inadequate waste management, has resulted in plastic pollution across terrestrial, freshwater and marine environments.

Once in the environment, larger plastic items are weathered by processes such as sunlight, heat and physical abrasion, gradually breaking down into smaller particles. This ongoing fragmentation contributes to the accumulation of microplastics, generally defined as plastic particles less than five millimetres in size.

Microplastics are now widely detected in water, sediments, soils and air. Their small size and persistence allow them to be readily transported and ingested by aquatic organisms, raising concerns about their potential effects on ecosystems, the broader environment, and human health.





The **Australian Microplastic Assessment Project** (AUSMAP) was established by the Total Environment Centre (TEC) in 2018 to address the need for greater understanding of microplastic pollution in Australia. AUSMAP is a national citizen-science program that brings together scientists, communities, government and other organisations to build a consistent evidence base on microplastic pollution.

Since its establishment, AUSMAP monitoring has identified more than 70 microplastic hotspots across more than 450 Australian beaches, estuaries and waterways. This growing national dataset provides an important foundation for identifying patterns and potential sources of pollution and supporting targeted management and prevention.

AUSMAP combines scientific monitoring with community participation, building both the national evidence base and local capacity to address microplastic pollution

Microplastic Types & Sources

Microplastics arise from both primary and secondary sources. Primary microplastics are **intentionally manufactured** at small sizes for specific uses, while secondary microplastics result from the **fragmentation of larger plastic items** through weathering and abrasion.

HARD FRAGMENTS

Originate from the fragmentation of larger hard plastic items via weathering, abrasion, or mechanical processes. Sources: packaging, consumer products, construction materials, and plastics recycling, etc.

FOAMS (POLYSTYRENE & POLYURETHANE)

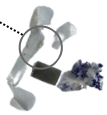
Foam microplastics are mostly polystyrene balls or fragmented sheets (expanded polystyrene, EPS). Sources: mismanaged packaging waste in residential, industrial & commercial centres and loss from construction sites and floating structures

FILM (SOFT PLASTIC)

Thin and flexible soft plastics easily tear and fragment into microplastics. **Sources**: plastic bags, packaging films, plastic wrap, and agricultural sheeting, etc.

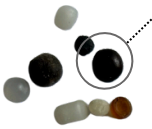






PELLETS / NURDLES & OTHER RAW MATERIALS

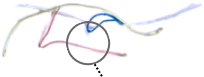
Pre-consumer industrial pellets, flakes, and chips are used as raw material for plastic production (plastic feedstock). **Sources**: spillage during shipping and transport, and poor onsite containment at plastic manufacturers and storage facilities



SYNTHETIC GRASS

Plastic blades and fibres shed from synthetic grass. **Sources**: sports fields, school playgrounds, public spaces, and residential and commercial places







RUBBER CRUMB

Synthetic rubber, including wear fragments and crumb particles. **Sources**: tyre wear from road runoff, crumb infill from synthetic fields, footwear soles, and sporting equipment

FIBRES

Synthetic fibres shed from textiles or from ropes and nets. **Sources:** clothing and laundry discharge, carpets and furnishings, fishing, boating and camping products

OTHER

A mix of microplastic types not captured in the major categories. **Sources**: glitter, paint chips, fertiliser pellets, and others

***Figure 3**. AUSMAP's visual categorisation method used to determine microplastic type*

Sampling Methodology & Sites

Ten sites were sampled over four weeks between 10th April and 8th May 2026. The sampling sites are shown in Figure 4 and span the Georges River from its upper reaches to the estuary, as well as selected sites across Botany Bay. Two sites with established monitoring histories, Plane Spotting Beach (Tower Beach) and Silver Beach, were not resampled in 2026. Instead, Grand Flaneur Beach, previously sampled by GRK during an AUSMAP training event in 2018, was reintroduced, and Jewfish Bay Baths was sampled for the first time. Additional site and survey information is provided in Appendix (Table A1).

Sampling followed AUSMAP standardised methodology. Microplastics (1–5 mm in diameter) were collected from shoreline quadrats within a 30–50 m transect at each site and characterised by type, colour, size and shape, and reported as particles per square metre (MP/m²).

Results were uploaded to the AUSMAP National Hotspot Map (Figure 5), where loads are classified using AUSMAP's six-category scale; Very Low, Low, Moderate, High, Very High, Extreme (Table 1), with greater than 250 MP/m² treated as a hotspot. Macro debris was also collected and categorised at each site, with records submitted to the Australian Marine Debris Initiative (AMDI) database. A subset of the top littered items is provided in Appendix Table A2.

The 2026 monitoring was undertaken in autumn. Rainfall during the lead-up to sampling was low, with no rainfall or only light showers (typically 0–5 mm within the preceding 72 hours) recorded across the sampling period.

The visual categorisation method used to determine microplastic type is outlined in Figure 3.

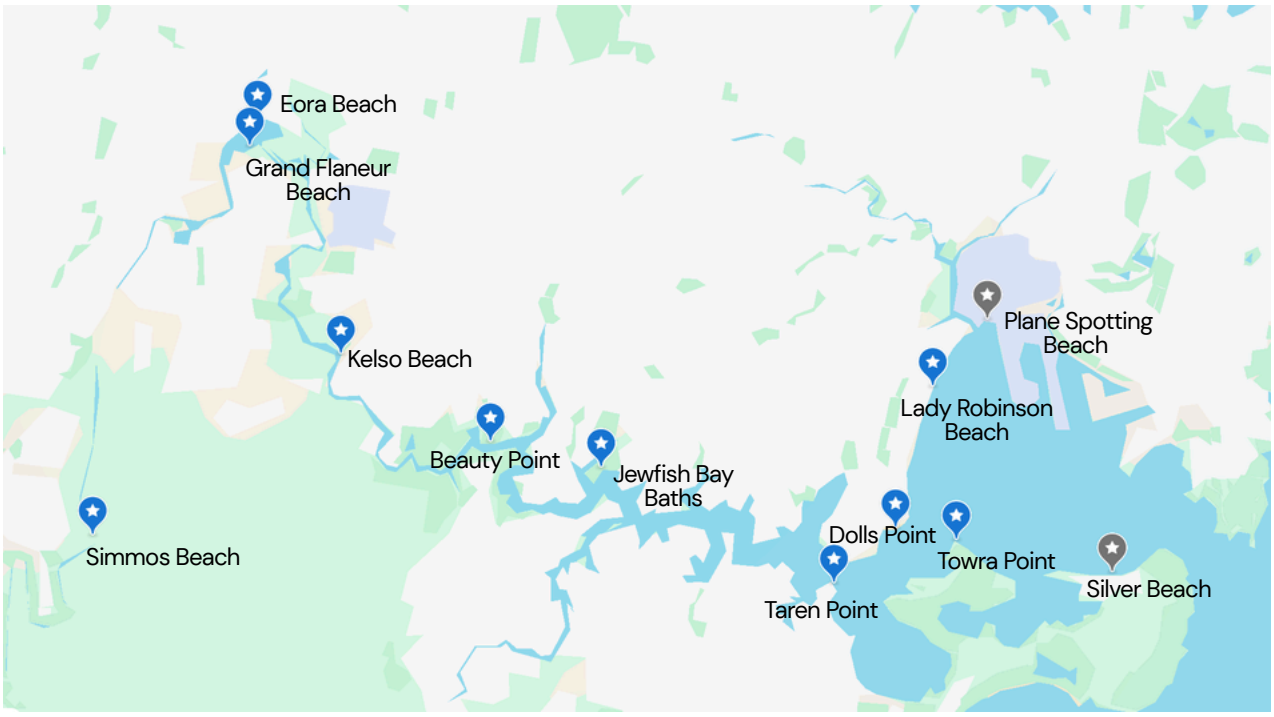


Figure 4. *Location of Georges Riverkeeper survey sites included in the AUSMAP microplastic monitoring program. Sites sampled in 2026 are shown in blue; sites not resampled are shown in grey.*

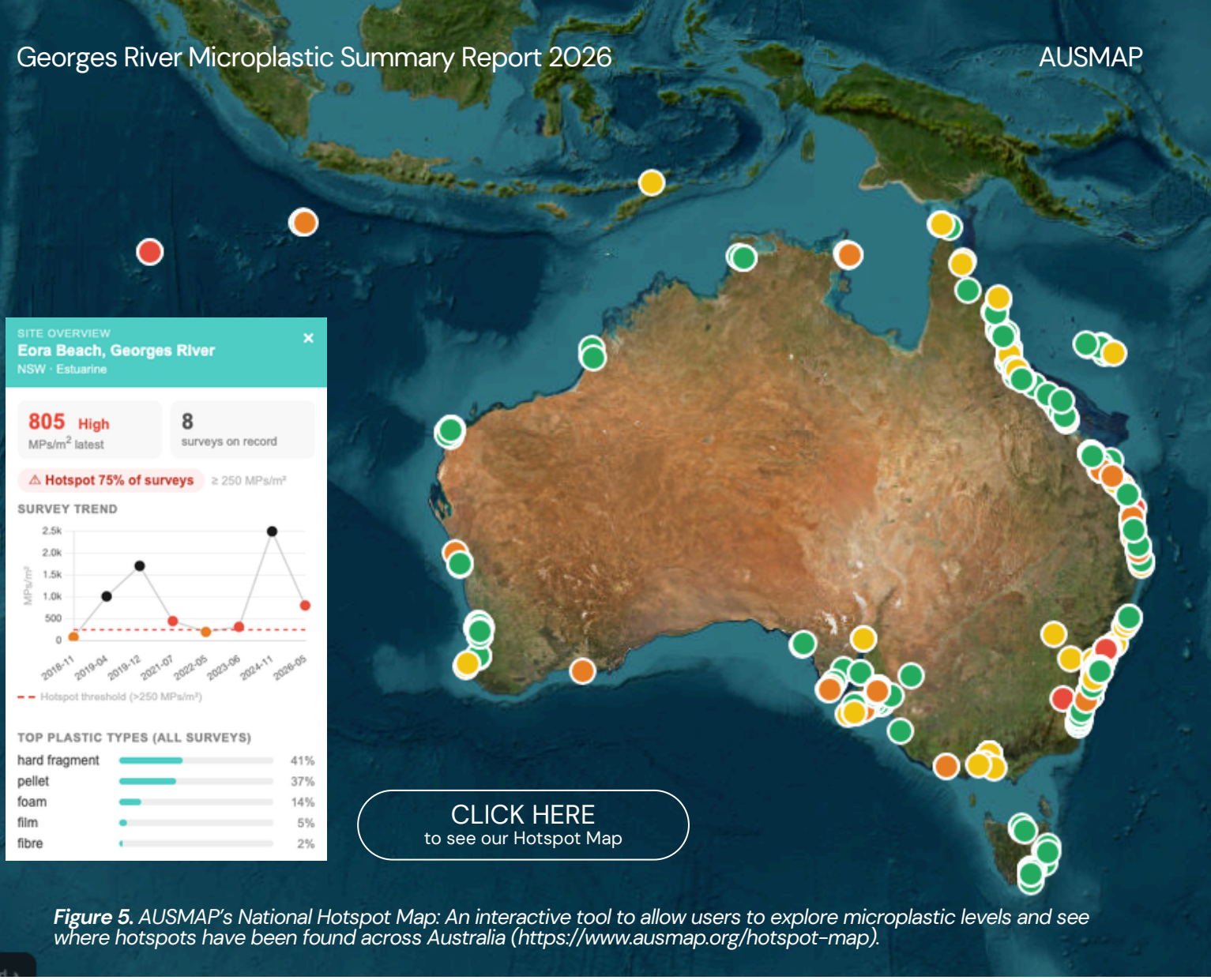


Figure 5. *AUSMAP's National Hotspot Map: An interactive tool to allow users to explore microplastic levels and see where hotspots have been found across Australia (https://www.ausmap.org/hotspot-map).*

Table 1. *AUSMAP Microplastic Grading System.*

MICROPLASTIC LOAD (particles/m²)	GRADING LEVEL	ACTION
<10	Very Low	Maintain infrequent monitoring to ensure baseline. Promote site as reference for non impacted microplastic environment
11–50	Low	Maintain quarterly monitoring. Engage community & schools to build awareness of low but present microplastic pollution
51–250	Moderate	Maintain quarterly monitoring with additional sampling after major weather events. Mobilise community action to raise awareness of sources and early mitigation
251–1000	High	Highlight as a priority monitoring site "hotspot". Engage local government and land managers to explore source reduction measures
1001–10,000	Very High	Flag for coordinated management response. Encourage collaboration between councils, regulators and community groups to address likely sources and prevent further accumulation
>10,000	Extreme	Urgent intervention required. Escalate to government/regulators, and consider targeted remediation and enforcement of source reduction strategies

2026 Microplastic Results:
Key Observations

Microplastics were recorded at all ten sites surveyed in 2026, with loads ranging from Very Low to High across the Georges River and Botany Bay Catchment (Figure 6).

- **Eora Beach** recorded the highest microplastic load at 805 MP/m², classified as High and the only site to exceed the hotspot threshold. While substantially lower than the 2,495 MP/m² (Very High) recorded in November 2024, this result remained considerably higher than all other sites surveyed in 2026, reinforcing Eora Beach's long-standing status as the catchment's most persistent microplastic hotspot.
- **Grand Flaneur Beach** (129 MP/m²) and Jewfish Bay Baths (75 MP/m²) were the next highest microplastic sites and were classified as Moderate.
- **Lady Robinson Beach** (21 MP/m²), Towra Point Beach (19 MP/m²), Beauty Point Beach (18 MP/m²) and Dolls Point Beach (15 MP/m²) were classified as Low.
- **Simmos Beach** (6 MP/m²), **Taren Point Beach** (6 MP/m²) and **Kelso Beach** (5 MP/m²) recorded Very Low microplastic loads, with only a few particles recorded at each site.

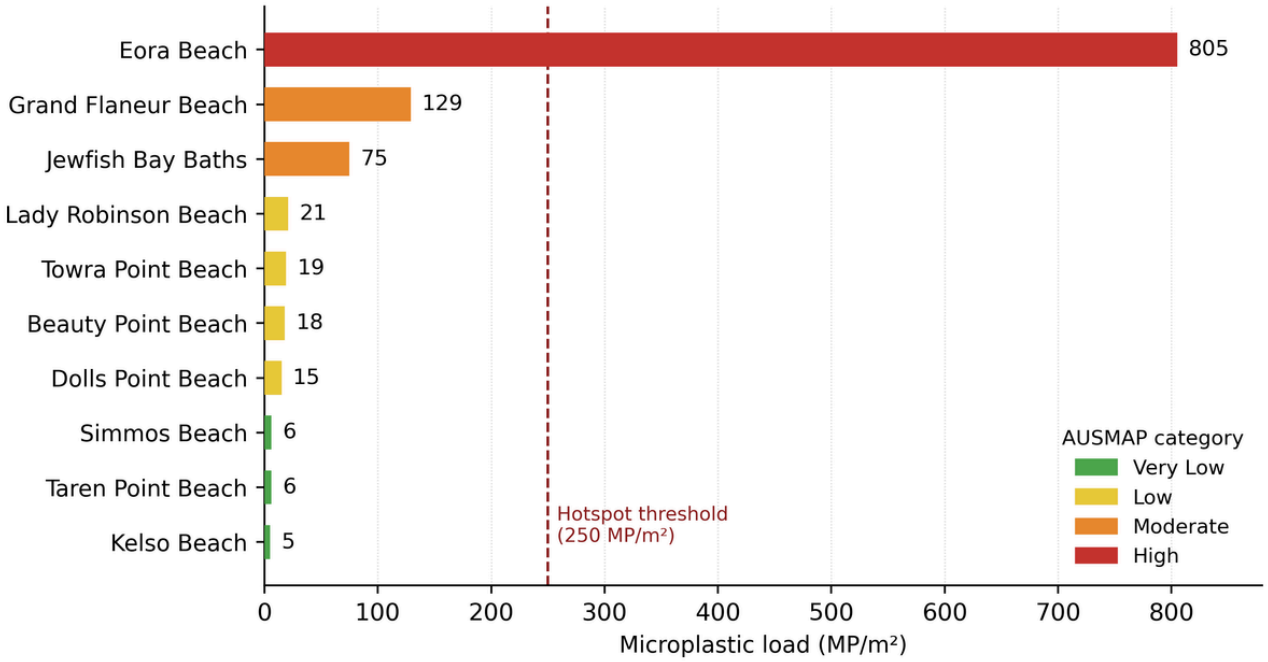


Figure 6. *Average microplastic loads across the selected sites during the 2026 monitoring.*

2026 Microplastic Results:

Microplastic Composition

In addition to abundance, microplastics from each survey were categorised by type, colour, shape and size. Figure 8 summarises the combined results across all ten sites, providing an overview of the composition and characteristics of microplastic across the catchment.

Hard fragments were the largest component of the catchment-wide total, making up 54.4% of all particles recorded. Pellets were the next most common type (23.2%), followed by foam (12.6%). Film, fibre and synthetic grass were each minor contributors, individually accounting for less than 7% of the total (Figure 8a). Colour results were consistent with this plastic type breakdown. Opaque (36.1%) and white (26.4%) particles together made up almost two-thirds of everything recorded; opaque is typically of both pellets and hard fragments, while white is typical of foam. The remaining colours were each minor contributors; green (9.1%) and blue (9.2%) were the next most common, followed by grey/silver (6.2%) and red/orange (3.9%) (Figure 8b). Shape offers a useful complement to the type results, since a particle's form often reflects how it was originally manufactured or how it has broken down over time. Cylindrical particles (22.7%) closely matched the pellet share (23.2%), consistent with their uniform manufactured shape, while angular particles (58.1%) reflected the dominance of fragmented hard plastics across the catchment.

Rounded particles (10.6%) are typically of pellets or fresh foam balls, while irregular particles (6.1%) more often reflect heavily weathered and broken-down foam, film and hard plastic shavings (Figure 8c). Particle size was more evenly distributed, with just over half (52.7%) of particles in the 3–5 mm range and the remainder split between smaller (<3 mm, 23.6%) and larger (>5 mm, 23.8%) particles (Figure 8d). Particles exceeding 5 mm were typically fibrous or elongated, with their diameter remaining below 5 mm and therefore within the size range defined for microplastics.



***Figure 7**. Example of microplastics processed from a single quadrat at Eora Beach*

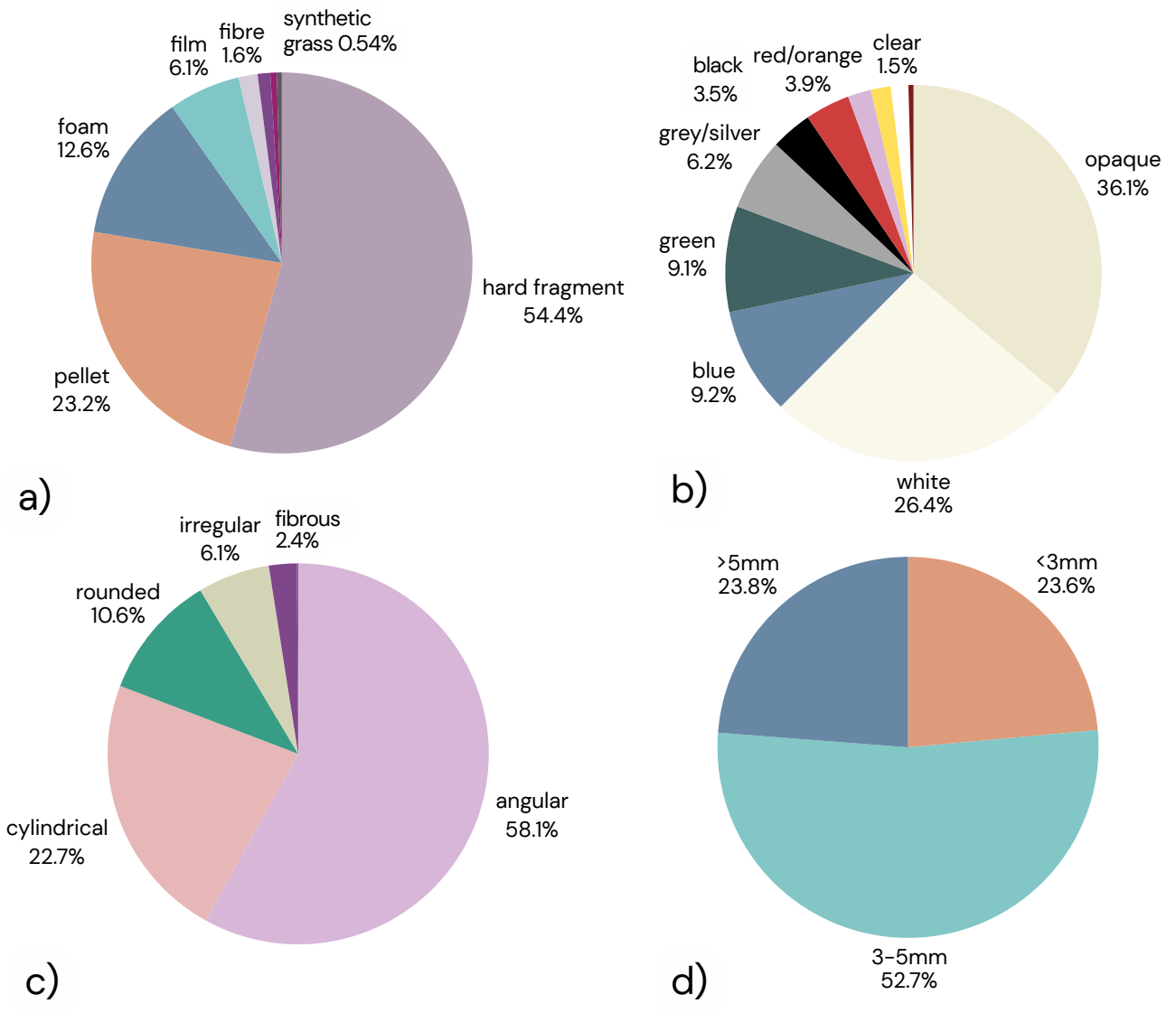


***Figure 8**. Composition of microplastics recorded across all ten GRK 2026 monitoring sites (n = combined dataset of 934 particles), by (a) type, (b) colour, (c) shape and (d) size. Smaller categories not individually labelled: (a) non-plastics 1.1%, other plastics 0.46%; (b) pink/purple 2.0%, yellow 1.7%, brown 0.43%.*

At the site level, differences in plastic type can provide insight into potential localised pollution sources and help inform targeted management actions (Figure 3). Hard fragments were the dominant type at six of the monitored sites, including all three sites with the highest microplastic loads: Eora Beach (55.6%), Grand Flaneur Beach (60.3%) and Jewfish Bay Baths (57.1%). (Table 2). This pattern is consistent with macro-litter data collected on the same day, which recorded hard plastic remnants as a dominant litter category at most monitoring sites (Appendix Table A2). Pellets were recorded at seven of the ten sites, indicating a widespread presence across the catchment, although density varied substantially between locations. No pellets were recorded at Simmos Beach, the uppermost site sampled. In contrast, Eora Beach, located along the shores of Chipping Norton Lake, recorded the highest pellet density of 244 pellets/m², with pellets comprising 30.3% of all microplastics collected (Table 2). Visual assessment of pellet condition identified a mix of fresh and discoloured pellets, indicating the presence of both recent pellet losses and older, weathered material (example shown in Figure 7). Grand Flaneur Beach, on the opposite side of Chipping Norton Lake, also recorded an elevated pellet contribution, with pellets comprising approximately 10% of microplastics collected. Pellets were also present further along the river, contributing around 9% of the total at the mid-catchment site of Jewfish Bay Baths, as well as at Kelso Beach (33.3%) and Towra Point Beach (17%), albeit at very low densities given the few total microplastic recorded at these sites.

Foam microplastics were widely distributed across the catchment, recorded at all sites except Simmos and Kelso Beach. They were the dominant plastic type at Lady Robinson Beach (65.4%) and Towra Point Beach (50.0%) and accounted for 39.1% of microplastics at Beauty Point Beach. At the higher-load sites, foam comprised 7.8% of microplastics at Eora Beach and 17.4% at Grand Flaneur Beach (Table 2). Macro-litter audits also recorded foam insulation and packaging among the top five categories at most sites, broadly mirroring the distribution of foam microplastics (Appendix Table A2).

Synthetic grass was detected at three sites, Eora Beach, Grand Flaneur Beach and Jewfish Bay Baths, all of which recorded Moderate or High microplastic loads. Although present at low proportions at each site (0.3%, 0.6% and 3.6%, respectively), its detection at these sites highlights synthetic grass as a potential localised source of microplastics that warrants further consideration.

Film microplastics were recorded at six of the ten sites, most prevalently at the moderate-load site of Jewfish Bay Baths (14%). This is consistent with the macro-litter audits, which identified food wrap packaging as a common item across most sites (Appendix Table A2).

Fibre microplastics were less prevalent overall, reaching up to 9% at Jewfish Bay Baths. Fishing line fragments were identified at several sites, consistent with its presence in the macro-litter audits, but was not commonly recorded.



***Figure 9**. Community assisting with microplastic survey at Jewfish Bay Baths*

***Table 2**. Microplastic type distribution as a percent of the total recorded across 10 sampled sites in 2026. Other plastics included paint chips, other non plastics included chalk, paper & glass.*

	AUSMAP Grading	Hard Frag.	Pellet	Foam	Film	Fibre	Synthetic grass	Other plastics	Other non plastics
Eora Beach	HIGH	55.63%	30.30%	7.78%	4.80%	0.99%	0.33%	0.17%	–
Grand Flaneur Beach	MODERATE	60.25%	10.56%	17.39%	9.32%	1.86%	0.62%	–	–
Jewfish Bay Baths	MODERATE	57.14%	8.93%	3.57%	14.29%	8.93%	3.57%	–	3.57%
Lady Robinson Beach	MODERATE	23.08%	7.69%	65.38%	3.85%	–	–	–	–
Towra Point Beach	LOW	33.33%	16.67%	50.00%	–	–	–	–	–
Beauty Point (Mickeys) Beach	LOW	43.48%	17.39%	39.13%	–	–	–	–	–
Dolls Point Beach	LOW	63.16%	–	5.26%	10.53%	5.26%	–	10.53%	5.26%
Simmos Beach	VERY LOW	12.50%	–	–	25.00%	–	–	12.50%	50.00%
Taren Point Beach	VERY LOW	57.14%	–	28.57%	–	–	–	–	14.29%
Kelso Beach	VERY LOW	33.33%	33.33%	–	–	–	–	–	33.33%

2018–2026

Long-term Trends

The long-term record of microplastic monitoring by GRK shows that microplastics are a persistent feature of the Georges River and Botany Bay catchment, with substantial variation between sites and sampling years (Appendix Table A3). Eora Beach remains the catchment's most consistent hotspot, exceeding the AUSMAP hotspot threshold of 250 MP/m² in five of the seven years it has been sampled since 2018 (2019, 2021, 2023, 2024 and 2026). Plane Spotting Beach (Tower Beach) has shown a similar pattern, exceeding the threshold in four of the seven years sampled before monitoring there paused in 2025. Additional AUSMAP monitoring at this site in March 2025 recorded its first Extreme rating (>10,000 MP/m²), highlighting the significant and persistent microplastic pollution at this location. Given its positioning within Botany Bay and connection to the highly urbanised Cooks River, we recommend this site be considered for ongoing microplastic monitoring by relevant local stakeholders as part of broader Cooks River–Botany Bay catchment management and waterway strategic planning.

Most other monitored sites have generally recorded Low to Moderate microplastic loads, although several have exceeded the hotspot threshold at least once since 2018 (Appendix Table A3). Towra Point Beach recorded three hotspot years between 2019 and 2021, peaking at 856 MP/m² in 2020, while Beauty Point Beach reached hotspot levels in 2019 (265 MP/m²) and 2024 (313 MP/m²). Kelso Beach (485 MP/m² in 2022), Taren Point Beach (265 MP/m² in 2019) and Lady Robinson Beach (899 MP/m² in 2024) each recorded a single hotspot year. The lower loads recorded in 2026 are therefore more consistent with year-to-year variability than a confirmed reduction in microplastic pollution. The relatively dry conditions preceding the 2026 sampling may also provide context for this variability, particularly compared with wetter years in the monitoring record.

Microplastic deposition on shorelines is influenced by conditions at the time of sampling, including wind, tides and recent rainfall. Specifically, rainfall can increase stormwater flows, potentially mobilising and transporting plastics from local hard surfaces into waterways. The 2026 round was characterised by generally light winds and zero to low rainfall conditions, with many sites showing little to no visible accumulation along the tide line, including organic debris (Appendix Table A1). This suggests limited recent shoreline deposition at the time of sampling and provides important context for the microplastic loads recorded. Continued regular monitoring, complemented by ad hoc sampling following significant rainfall or storm events where feasible, would strengthen the dataset and provide a more complete picture of shoreline microplastic deposition during periods of increased stormwater flow.



***Figure 10**. Georges Riverkeeper and community partners taking an AUSMAP sample at Grand Flaneur Beach.*

Conclusions & Recommendations

The 2026 results confirm that the Georges River catchment remains a microplastic-impacted system, with microplastics detected across the monitored sites and elevated loads recurring at particular locations. Eora Beach remains the most prominent site of concern, with concentrations continuing to exceed the AUSMAP hotspot threshold in 2026.

The composition of microplastics recorded, points to both widespread urban inputs and more specific source pathways. Hard fragments dominated the catchment-wide results, consistent with the ongoing breakdown of larger plastic items within a highly urbanised catchment. Foam (polystyrene) was also widespread, reflecting the continued presence of lightweight foam materials that can readily fragment and be transported by wind and water. Their widespread occurrence highlights the importance of preventing plastic from entering the stormwater system through effective litter and waste management, construction-site containment, and stormwater capture and maintenance.

Pellets provide a more traceable source pathway and a direct opportunity for targeted reduction, particularly in the upper Georges River around Chipping Norton Lake. Existing initiatives such as Operation Clean Sweep and the NSW EPA's recent Pellet Patrol provide valuable foundations for improving industry containment and awareness. However, further action is needed to strengthen these efforts, including mandatory pellet containment and handling requirements, supported by targeted source tracking where feasible and compliance monitoring.

Synthetic grass represents another potential point source that warrants proactive management. Although detected in low numbers at only three sites in 2026, its presence is notable given the increasing demand of synthetic sporting fields and the potential for grass blades and associated infill to be lost through wear, maintenance and weathering.

Stronger controls across installation, operational and end-of-life stages would help minimise microplastic loss to the surrounding environment, particularly where fields are located near waterways or stormwater infrastructure.

More broadly, these findings indicate that microplastic pollution in the catchment reflects a combination of widespread inputs, transport and accumulation, alongside more localised sources that present opportunity for targeted intervention. Stormwater and urban litter provide important pathways for plastics to enter the waterway, while sheltered shorelines can trap and accumulate material once it is transported into the system.

Maintaining a long-term, standardised monitoring record remains important for assessing whether these interventions result in measurable change. Future monitoring should continue to capture baseline conditions, while, where feasible, include sampling following significant rainfall or storm events. Where practical, opportunistic observations between formal survey rounds can provide additional context on short-term variability in shoreline conditions and help inform interpretation of survey results, as outlined in the Appendix Field, *Capturing Variability*.

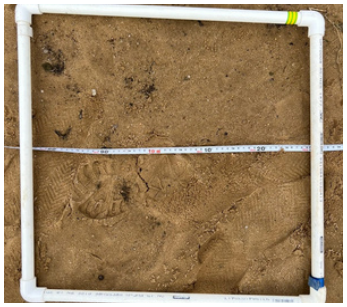
AUSMAP acknowledges Georges Riverkeeper's continued leadership in monitoring and addressing microplastic pollution across the catchment. The inclusion of community participants in the 2026 sampling round further strengthens this work, building local knowledge and environmental stewardship alongside the collection of long-term monitoring data. The value of this work extends beyond the Georges River catchment, contributing to the broader understanding of microplastic pollution across Sydney and other urbanised catchments experiencing similar pressures.



Figure 11. *Microplastic sampling at Grand Flaneur Beach.*

Appendices

Appendix Table A1: *Additional site information. Photo credit GRK*

Site & Conditions	*Transect*	*Example Quadrat*
Eora Beach Date: 6 May 2026 Rainfall (72hr): 4 mm Wind: W, 19 km/h Visible debris load: moderate Participants involved: 4		
Grand Flaneur Beach Date: 21 April 2026 Rainfall (72hr): 1 mm Wind: SW, 2 km/h Visible debris load: low Participants involved: 7		
Jewfish Bay Baths Date: 24 April 2026 Rainfall (72hr): 0 mm Wind: WNW, 15 km/h Visible debris load: moderate Participants involved: 5		
Lady Robinson Beach Date: 1 May 2026 Rainfall (72hr): 0 mm Wind: WNW, 11km/h Visible debris load: low Participants involved: 11		
Towra Point Beach Date: 8 May 2026 Rainfall (72hr): 0 mm Wind: NW, 37 km/h Visible debris load: high Participants involved: 4		

Site Conditions	*Transect*	*Example Quadrat*
Beauty Point Beach Date: 10 April 2026 Rainfall (72hr): 0 mm Wind: WNW, 7 km/h Visible debris load: low Participants involved: 2		
Dolls Point Beach Date: 5 May 2026 Rainfall (72hr): 5 mm Wind: W, 26 km/h Visible debris load: low Participants involved: 7		
Simmos Beach Date: 22 April 2026 Rainfall (72hr): 0 mm Wind: SSW, 13 km/h Visible debris load: low Participants involved: 9		
Taren Point Beach Date: 7 May 2026 Rainfall (72hr): 0 mm Wind: WNW, 13 km/h Visible debris load: low Participants involved: 5		
Kelso Beach Date: 10 April 2026 Rainfall (72hr): 0 mm Wind: WNW, 7 km/h Visible debris load: low Participants involved: 2		

Appendix Table A2: *Top littered macro debris items at 2026 monitoring sites*

Location	Macro Plastic Type						
	Hard plastics remnants/ pieces	Foam insulation/ packaging	Plastic packaging /food	Lids & tops, pump spray, flow restrictor & similar	Cigarette butts	Straws, confection sticks, cups, plates & cutlery	**Total**
Beauty Point (Mickeys) Beach	21	18	2	4	2	6	**53**
Dolls Point Beach	45	4	21	8	7	2	**87**
Eora Beach	141	25	90	205	6	18	**485**
Grand Flaneur Beach	74	30	68	38	16	5	**231**
Jewfish Bay Baths	134	26	48	22	8	10	**248**
Kelso Beach	0	4	16	6	7	2	**35**
Lady Robinson Beach	92	76	14	19	41	0	**242**
Simmos Beach	13	0	31	12	26	7	**89**
Taren Point Beach	1	5	3	3	0	1	**13**
Towra Point Beach	0	4	4	12	2	2	**24**
Total	**521**	**192**	**297**	**329**	**115**	**53**	

Appendix Table A3:

*Microplastic loads by site and year conducted by GRK 2018–2026 (MP/m²), coloured by AUSMAP rating category. Dash cells indicate no survey that year. *Beauty Point Beach was previously known as "Mickeys"*

Site	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Beauty Point Beach*	8	265	1	104	220	11	313	-	18
Dolls Point Beach	1	83 Apr 52 Dec	-	121	228	23	53	-	15
Eora Beach	79	1,011 Apr 1,707 Dec	-	447	200	316	2,495	-	805
Grand Flaneur Beach	318	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	129
Jewfish Bay Baths	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	75
Kelso Beach	84	73 Apr 155 Dec	-	144	485	19	59	-	5
Kyle Bay Beach	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lady Robinson Beach	4	189 Apr 143 Dec	-	-	-	-	899	-	21
Plane Spotting (Tower) Beach	28	2,859	540	331	7	185	896	-	-
Silver Beach	3	25	29	25	36	19	42	-	-
Simmos Beach	3	4 Apr 3 Dec	-	8	0	0	22	-	6
Taren Point Beach	4	265	215	46	43	0	161	-	6
Towra Point Beach	8	331	856	589	63	1	-	91	19
Yarra Bay South	1	19	9	10	-	-	-	-	-

Appendix Field Note: *Capturing Variability*

Beyond the annual standardised surveys, opportunistic site observations can provide useful context on how microplastic deposition varies with changing environmental conditions. The photograph below, taken at Kyeemagh Beach on 20 May 2026, shows substantial tide-line accumulation of pellets and other debris. Located within Botany Bay and close to GRK's regular monitoring site at Lady Robinson Beach, Kyeemagh Beach provides a useful local example of how shoreline deposition can vary between locations and over short periods. The extent and location of tide-line material can change with recent wind direction, tides and rainfall and therefore does not necessarily represent a fixed or typical level of shoreline accumulation.

GRK staff and community visiting shorelines are encouraged, where practical, to photograph notable tide-line debris and record the date and location. These observations are not intended to replace standardised sampling, but can provide additional qualitative information on local and seasonal variability and help build a more complete picture of shoreline conditions between formal survey rounds.





Photo Credit: Marijs Vrancken

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