



Together FOR OUR Ocean



International Coastal Cleanup 2017 Report





In partnership with volunteer organizations and individuals around the globe, Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup engages people to remove trash from the world's

beaches and waterways, identify the sources of debris and change the behaviors that cause marine debris in the first place.

국제연안정화

Nettoyage des Côtes

国际海滩清洁日

Limpieza Internacional de

Международная акция по очистке побережья



USA



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC



BANGLADESH

Limpeza Costeira Internacional

Internationales

التنظيف الدولي للسواحل

ΠΑΓΚΟΣΜΙΟΣ
ΕΘΕΛΟΝΤΙΚΟΣ
ΚΑΘΑΡΙΣΜΟΣ ΑΚΤΩΝ

अंतरराष्ट्रीय तटीय सफाई

国際海岸クリーンアップ

Costas

Usafishaji wa Kimataifa wa Pwani



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PEOPLE: 504,583



POUNDS: 18,399,900
KILOGRAMS: 8,346,055



MILES: 14,997
KILOMETERS: 24,136



TOTAL ITEMS: 13,840,398

On behalf of all of us at Ocean Conservancy, I would like to thank the more than half a million volunteers who made the 2016 International Coastal Cleanup a success. We simply couldn't do it without YOU. From 112 countries around the world, volunteers, site captains, state and county coordinators worked tirelessly to collect over 18 million pounds of trash.

Thanks to you, we covered enough miles of coastline to walk around the moon twice. We've collected enough balloons to lift a 2,200 lb. walrus and enough fishing line to reach the bottom of the Mariana Trench – the ocean's deepest point – nine times over.

It is people like you that continue to inspire my optimism for the future of our ocean. For more than 30 years, volunteers across the world have come together to become a global force for good. Together, we can achieve a positive future for our ocean.

My sincerest thanks,

Janis Jones
Chief Executive Officer
Ocean Conservancy

Perspectives from the Field



U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

■ If A Goat Will Eat It

Diana McCaulay, Jamaica

When I was a child, my family had a rule for littering: You can throw it on the ground or out of a car window if a goat can eat it. It was a reasonable rule for that time. Most of what we threw away during a road trip was biodegradable – banana peel, roast corn, paper. But within a single generation – mine – the type of waste produced in Jamaica changed dramatically. Starting in the 1990s, single-use packaging exploded. Soft drink containers, especially, made a transition from glass to plastic. Foam plastic became much more common. Shoppers used plastic bags. Lifestyles changed, too, as people started eating more takeout food. Although the waste stream was completely different, people all over the Caribbean still behaved as though a goat could eat what they were throwing away. And this new waste made its way from open lots and roadsides to the Caribbean Sea. Within a very short time, plastics could be seen on even the remotest of beaches.

We love our beaches in the Caribbean. We go there to relax, have fun with friends, take a sea bath. Our tourism industry largely depends on attractive beaches, but our poor practices inland are turning many beaches

into dumps. My own International Coastal Cleanup experience began when I took a houseguest to a beach I had loved as a child and found it covered with garbage. It was a life-changing moment which led to a career as an environmental activist, but there remains much work to be done in the Caribbean to keep garbage off beaches and out of the sea.

JAMAICA



SWEDEN

■ Two Seas, Many Hands for a Clean Sweden

Anton Hedlund, Sweden

We all love beaches, right? They have so much to offer – relaxing time with beautiful views, sports, swimming and more. To not have clean beaches, we believe, is a threat to our freedom. Sweden is a small country in terms of population, with approximately 10 million inhabitants. However, by surface, it is the fifth largest country in Europe and has 43,400 kilometers of coastline, along the Baltic Sea and the North Sea. The Baltic Sea has encountered problems in recent decades with eutrophication, overfishing and environmental toxins. On the west coast of Sweden, the North Sea is subject to intensive fishing.

These issues result in a lot of litter, such as fish boxes, ropes and oil cans, floating onto the shore. Combine that with the litter left by beach visitors, and the ocean trash conditions can become quite overwhelming. In these situations you can either look the other way or actually do something about it.

We chose the latter.

We may be a small country, but we can make a difference. We can be a role model. With help from the Swedish enterprise and municipalities, we have managed to

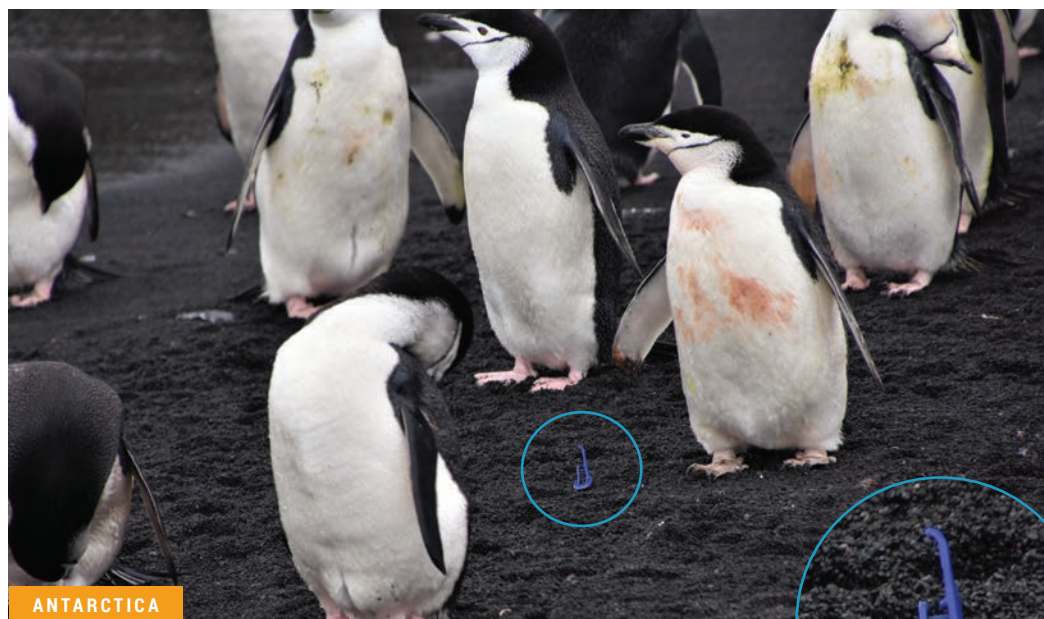
organize cleanups all over the country. One of the greatest parts of our project is having thousands of local youth from sport clubs who want to be involved and who will do anything to collect litter – hike, wade through mud, climb and even repel from bridges. Youth participation is obviously great for the environment, but it also helps contribute to their own future by taking small visions and dreams and collectively making a better tomorrow.

■ Penguins and Plastics in Antarctica

Anne Christianson, USA

Antarctica is the last great wilderness on Earth – a place where humans have barely gained a foothold, but where colonies of hundreds of thousands of penguins thrive, whales charge through swarms of krill and seals haul out on floating sheets of ice, completely unfazed by infrequent passing ships. Through extraordinary adaptations, Antarctic wildlife has evolved to not only live but flourish in the most extreme conditions on Earth.

Throughout most of the twentieth century, the only people on Antarctica were researchers and a handful of military personnel. Now, tens of thousands of tourists from around the globe sail to the southern continent every

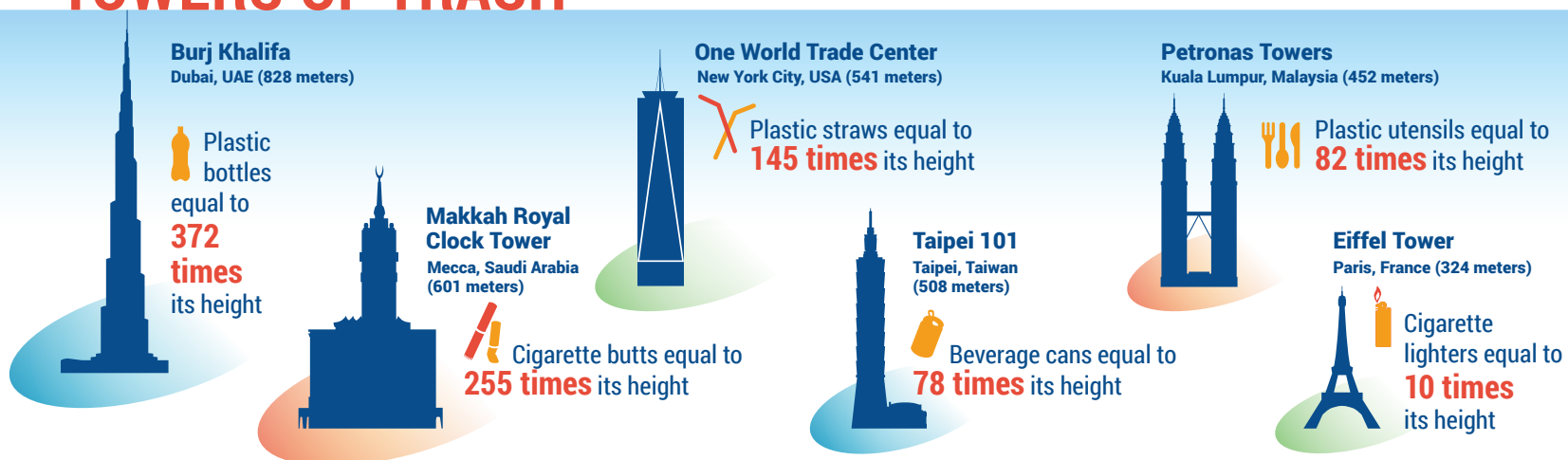


Antarctic summer (Dec – Feb), with little legal oversight from the multi-lateral organizations that protect and manage it. The lifeblood of Antarctica is the ocean. Each species in the Southern Ocean evolved to survive in a unique ecosystem niche, and if humans disrupt these relationship balances, the entire system is in danger of collapse.

Although the Antarctic waters are still relatively devoid of debris, I found fishing nets

and plastic bottles and spotted chinstrap penguins playing with a piece of blue plastic in my limited time there. Even in the most remote corners of the planet, our human presence is increasingly felt and is altering this pristine landscape. Our work is critical to ensure that majestic and vulnerable landscapes, like the Antarctic wilderness, are protected for generations to come.

TOWERS OF TRASH



Volunteers Making a Splash



JAMAICA

Building an Ocean of Support in Mexico

People! People are what give Alejandra López de Román hope for the future. Alejandra was first inspired to organize cleanups by a former dive instructor. When



MEXICO

water conditions were not suitable for diving one day, the divers began to clean up along the rocks and jetty. Alejandra was deeply impacted by the amount of trash they collected that stormy afternoon nearly 15 years ago. Inspired to do more, Alejandra became Mexico's International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) Coordinator in 2004. This past year was an incredibly exciting and momentous year for the ICC in Mexico. Participation topped 20,000 volunteers, and Alejandra describes that milestone as "definitely one of the best feelings!" She is also quick to attribute much of Mexico's success to fellow Coordinators, "I am grateful to have such wonderful state and local coordinators, who have made it possible to increase our impact

year after year. In Mexico, that means every year there are more advocates for the ocean and all living things in and around it."

Nuh Dutty Up Jamaica: How the ICC Led to a National Campaign

The Jamaica Environment Trust (JET) started doing beach cleanups in 1994; around the same time significantly more disposable packaging began to be used in Jamaica. There was a lot of learning and some memorable challenges in the early days. Most notably, at the very first cleanup, the truck driver who was hired to take the garbage to a waste disposal site merely dumped the garbage a few miles away in some mangroves.

Environment & Culture: A Strong Link in Kiribati

After years of dreaming about bringing the ICC to Kiribati, Erietera Aram and the Kiribati Islands Conservation Society made the dream a reality in 2015. Driven by patriotism and the desire to restore the natural beauty of Kiribati beaches, Erietera became a leading example of how individual actions can change a nation. The Kiribati Islands Conservation Society is the first ever NGO of its kind in Kiribati. The

organization consists of young concerned Kiribati citizens focused on protecting and preserving its culture and environment. And while the path has not been without challenges, Erietera has learned he has the incredible ability to motivate and encourage those around him. Erietera adds, "It is amazing to finally learn something new about yourself and use it to the best to help your fellow brothers and sisters. It feels good to do good!"



"That was a tough day," says JET's founder and CEO Diana McCaulay. "We removed some of the garbage, but more was left behind in the mangroves. I wondered if our first beach cleanup had made things worse."

Despite this daunting beginning, JET continued conducting beach cleanups, convinced that they were an effective way to educate participants about the impact to the sea by littering on land. JET became Jamaica's ICC Coordinator in 2008 and set about building a movement. "We knew we had to make it an event that appealed to young people," says Carlette Falloon, JET's then Program Director. "We started having music. Celebrities. Ministers of Government. Photographers. We got it all in the press – TV, radio, print and more recently, on social media." The numbers grew steadily, but the JET team noticed that even as volunteers cleaned the beach, they were still inclined to litter in rest areas.

"We realized we needed to change deep-seated attitudes to solid waste," says JET's Deputy CEO, Suzanne Stanley. "So in 2014, we developed the Clean Coasts Project, including a national public education campaign called Nuh Dutty Up Jamaica, which was funded by our long time ICC donor, the Tourism Enhancement Fund."

The Clean Coasts Project does underwater cleanups, has built a Debris Containment Boom across the mouth of a gully in Montego Bay, conducts research and holds educational

events. Nuh Dutty Up Jamaica has been rolled out island-wide and has received high praise.

Last year, ICC day in Jamaica attracted 9,276 volunteers who cleaned more than 90 miles of coastline. "The numbers are encouraging, but we are working towards nothing less than acceptance of personal responsibility for what we use and throw away," says Suzanne.

Celebrating Independence with Clean Beaches

Fifty cleanups for fifty years! The Caribbean Youth Environment Network (CYEN) Barbados successfully completed this goal in 2016. This past year marked the 50th Anniversary celebration of Barbados' independence, so CYEN Barbados, who has led the ICC for over a decade, wanted to celebrate in a big way. Organizers worked tirelessly to plan and promote the cleanups taking place throughout September and October. Furthering their mission of empowering young people to engage in programs and actions that improve community and environmental health, CYEN has established a cohort of incredible youth members who are keenly aware of environmental issues such as ocean trash and who lead by example in their own communities and neighborhoods.

Ocean Conservancy's Trash Free Seas team visited Barbados in early October to



participate in a whirlwind weekend as part of the Anniversary celebration. The team was inspired by the dedication of CYEN staff and was also thrilled to meet a number of their youth members who demonstrate what is truly possible when young people come together behind the common goal of change.



VOLUNTEERS MAKING A SPLASH

Diving Deeper

Youth Drives Change
and Clean Coasts in Colombia

For Rommy Schreiber of EcoPazifico Foundation, based in Cali, Colombia, ocean trash has been a personal nuisance since childhood. The debris situation in her town and surrounding area can be daunting but, she insists, it cannot be ignored. Beyond securing the health and livelihood for many Colombians, Colombia's Pacific coastline is an ecologically important gathering place for humpback whales migrating north from Chilean waters to birth their calves each year.

Leading cleanup efforts for EcoPazifico, Rommy finds inspiration from youth who are "full of energy and hungry to learn." The Foundation's efforts are receiving recognition as community leaders have expressed appreciation for its steadfast efforts in a location and climate that often sees environmental groups come and go. The 2016 ICC was an especially exciting time for the EcoPazifico team. It successfully synchronized a permaculture action week with the ICC topping off the events. Next it will work with local businesses and focus on implementing new technology to enable the



DUBAI

reuse and repurposing of the plastic that is collected during cleanups.

Daring Dives: The Kuwait Dive Team

Though the Middle East is more commonly linked with war than the environment, the Kuwait Dive Team is proud to highlight the region's beautiful seas and rich marine



UNDERWATER CLEANUPS

236
miles of waterways
(380 KM)

41,141
(18,661 KG)
pounds of
trash collected

2,825
divers

46,855
Items Collected



To find out more or to get involved under the surface, check out our partner **Project AWARE** at www.projectaware.org/diveagainstdebris.

biodiversity. Coral ecosystems thrive in the Middle East's waters such as the Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea, and Arabian Gulf. Unfortunately, as is true worldwide, the region's waters are threatened by pollution and debris.

Working with schoolchildren and volunteers, the Kuwait Dive Team has directly removed more than 2,700 tons of marine debris in the last decade, yet that's only a small fraction of what remains. Under the water are other dangers; the most common of which is ghost nets. As a major hub for commercial fishing, the Gulf is littered with deserted gear. The Kuwait Dive Team has lifted 200 tons of ghost nets and 650 submerged boats from local waters, and they are always on the lookout for more.

Furthermore, the scars of armed conflict are keenly felt by marine ecosystems in the region. The Kuwait Dive Team still finds the occasional unexploded ordnance, and oil spills continue to harm the reefs. Despite how much work is yet to be done, the Team remains hopeful and is constantly reminded of how beautiful and fascinating the ocean truly is.

More than Just Collecting Rubbish in Australia

Tangaroa Blue's mission from day one has been about prevention. Heidi Taylor, Tangaroa Blue's cofounder, describes, "It was pretty clear straight away that if our only strategy in dealing with ocean pollution was to pick it up, we would be doing it forever." Rather, the organization focused on understanding what was in the ocean, where it came from and what needed to change to prevent marine debris from occurring in the first place. Starting as a small community group focused on marine debris in the southwest corner of Western Australia in 2004, Tangaroa Blue now organizes cleanups, data collection and outreach activities all over Australia.

"When I first started Tangaroa Blue, there were people that thought I was referring to driftwood when I was talking about marine debris," Heidi notes. Not anymore. The



Australian Marine Debris Initiative Database, managed by Tangaroa Blue, just surpassed 7 million pieces of debris data logged. Their map highlights over 2,100 sites across Australia, representing more than 75,000 volunteers who have helped to clean up and collect data on what they are removing. Heidi concludes, "Our volunteers are not rubbish collectors; they are citizen scientists whose efforts are informing policy, education and enforcement."

Pollution in Paradise: An Island Nation Takes Action

After nearly 10 years living in paradise, Courtney Jenkins had seen enough. Even idyllic islands are not spared by the impacts of trash. "I witnessed the deterioration and the pollution of these areas, and there seemed to be little action," Jenkins describes of what drew her to become part of the ICC. Working with Belle Verte, Ltd. and collaborating with schools such as Clavis International Primary School and Le Bocage International School, Jenkins set off on a mission to change hearts and minds across



Mauritius. Despite some skepticism about the value of beach cleanups and environmental conservation, the reaction from the community has been overwhelmingly positive, with participation in the ICC growing each year. Jenkins concludes, "Witnessing the shock on the students' faces when they see all the things that they accumulated, it really brings the issue to life. If this feeling can permeate other sectors, we will start to 'win' the battle."

Global Spotlight: Stories from Africa



MOROCCO

As urbanization and population growth increase at a rapid rate in developing countries in Africa, the management of solid waste has become a major public health and environmental concern and challenge. The lack of waste management strategies, planning and facilities is resulting in uncontrolled solid waste pollution of both terrestrial and marine environments. With 26,000 kilometers of coastline and its great lakes and rivers, the continent has an important role to play in reducing the amount of solid waste materials finding its way to the sea.

Historically, marine litter received limited attention in Africa. It wasn't until 2013 that a summit, supported by UNEP, was held in

South Africa to establish a network bringing together marine debris researchers, natural resource managers, policy makers, industry representatives and the non-governmental community from across Africa to try to raise awareness and take action to reduce marine litter.

While some policies and laws are in place at national and local levels, most countries are currently deemed to have inadequate levels of the basic institutional capacity for waste management. Thus, the development and operation of basic solid waste management facilities throughout urban areas are critical. It is also key for governments and municipal authorities to encourage community-based

recycling small business enterprises. Experts believe turning plastic waste into a commodity of value which can be easily accessed by local communities is one way to significantly reduce marine litter in Africa and protect the vast and beautiful African coastline.

Waves of Impact

Yassine Belhouari is an avid surfer and photographer. Like many who enjoy the water and spend time on the coast, he is well aware of the ocean trash problem. He spends much of his time in Safi, Morocco, a popular surfing locale and coastal community. Recognizing the problem and lack of public awareness, Yassine began inviting friends and fellow surfers to join him in removing debris from the beach. Now he leads a major cleanup each year on Lalla Fatna Beach, just north of Safi City. Through his photography and volunteer work with Surfrider Foundation, Yassine was inspired to start a digital magazine called *Safi Surfing Magazine*. Through the publication he's able to share amazing images of the beautiful Moroccan coastline while also exposing a large audience to local environmental issues such as ocean trash. Ultimately, Yassine hopes that the same community that enjoys the beach and water every day can become advocates who encourage others to do their part,

Innovation and Collaboration in Port Elizabeth

In July 2017, the African Marine Waste Network will host the African Marine Waste Conference in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. The Conference will provide a global interdisciplinary platform for stakeholders to present and discuss the most recent innovations, trends and concerns, as well as practical challenges encountered and solutions adopted in the field of debris and marine waste.



reduce littering behavior and improve waste management in Safi and beyond.

Turning “Trash Into Cash” on Kenya’s Beaches

In Watamu Marine National Park, community-based entrepreneurship is turning the tide on the marine trash impacting its beaches. Watamu Marine Association (WMA) operates marine conservation projects, community-based ecotourism and community-based waste management enterprises. WMA started its beach cleaning and waste management activities in 2009 by forming award-winning dynamic partnerships between the local tourism industry and the community sector. It has set up a plastic, glass and flip-flop recycling center and created a waste recycling value chain for Watamu community members. Twenty-four local people earn an income as beach cleaners and recyclers, supported by many Watamu hotels and residents.

The latest construction at the Recycling Centre has walls made from 5,000 waste glass and plastic bottles, and the Centre known as “EcoWorld Watamu” is becoming a growing public and tourist attraction. WMA demonstrates local solutions to the global problem of marine trash and shows that local communities can benefit from best waste management practices by turning “Trash into Cash” and generating incomes for impoverished communities.

Building on the entrepreneurial spirit, Ocean Sole has transformed discarded flip-flops found littered on beaches and in waterways of Kenya into unique products handmade by a team of skilled artisans in Kenya. Ocean Sole exports these magnificent creations to over 25 countries around the world. Each product carries a message about the importance of our oceans and the need to reduce plastic waste, while also bringing smiles to people all over the world through one-of-a-kind artistic masterpieces. Visit www.watamu.biz and www.ocean-sole.com for more information.

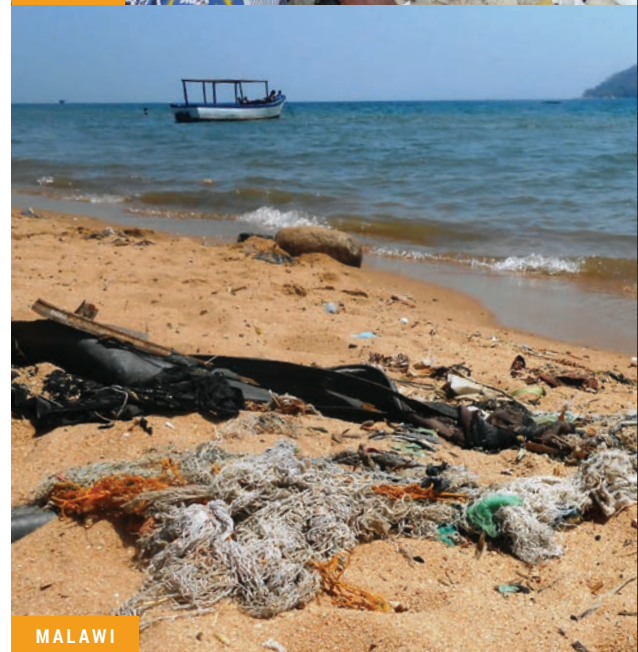
A Pioneering Force in South Africa

The ICC has been an unwavering platform to raise awareness on marine pollution, inadequate waste management, the need for recycling and non-littering in South Africa for the past 20 years. Since they founded the ICC in South Africa, Plastics|SA and KZN Wildlife have been managing, organizing, sponsoring and implementing the event annually. The ICC is a non-political action with an unbiased evaluation of the manmade material found in the environment.

Waves from two distinct oceans wash onto the shores of South Africa, and this annual event enables citizens to actively do something to improve the health of their marine resources. The ICC has been an incubator for the government project “Working for the Coast” to combat the issue of debris on the shoreline. The project works to improve waste management in areas where waste is being lost into the environment and to increase the frequency of citizen cleanups. Although South Africa has a robust extended producer responsibility system, it will be imperative to ensure recycling and proper waste management meet South Africa’s continued population and economic growth. Calendar events come and go, but the sustainability of the ICC serves as a strong indicator for the private sector and policymakers on what citizens desire – a clean, safe ocean and environment.



KENYA



MALAWI



SOUTH AFRICA

Weird Finds

AROUND THE WORLD



TOP 20 PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

SWEDEN



Mop

17

UNITED KINGDOM

HONG KONG



Toy House

NORTHERN
MARIANA ISLANDS



Bucket of Nails

19

CHINA

15

JAPAN

HONG KONG

2

7

TAIWAN

INDIA

9

20

THAILAND

18

GUAM

SRI LANKA

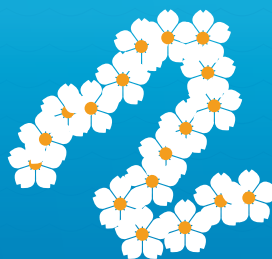
16

GUAM



Slide

INDIA



Garland

SOUTH AFRICA



Tennis Racket

AUSTRALIA

13

DATA SPOTLIGHT

Enough balloons
were collected to
lift a walrus.



Enough miles
were covered to
**walk around
the moon
twice**



The beverage
cans collected
weigh as much
as a safari
Jeep®



Enough fishing line
was collected for
9 people
to drop a hook to
the bottom of the
Mariana Trench.



The Total Global Weight Collected
is more than the combined weight of...

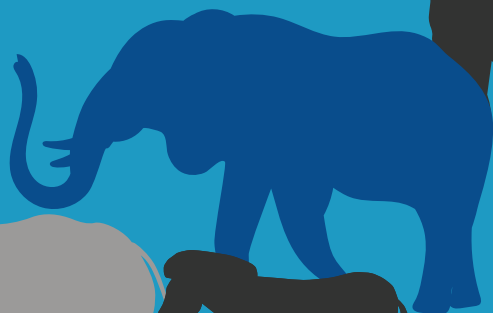
300
Nile
Crocodiles



600
White Rhinos



700
African Elephants



400
Giraffes



500
Hippos



200
Zebras



100
Lions





TINY TRASH, BIG IMPACTS

Tiny Trash are items measuring less than 2.5 cm.

1,212,602 Plastic Pieces
1,066,644 Foam Pieces
496,640 Glass Pieces

WEIRD FINDS



56
Toilets



8
Microwaves



15
Brooms



5
Selfie Sticks



4
Drones



2
Typewriters



1
Piano

TOP 10 ITEMS COLLECTED



1. CIGARETTE BUTTS
1,863,838



2. PLASTIC BEVERAGE BOTTLES
1,578,834



3. PLASTIC BOTTLE CAPS
822,227



4. FOOD WRAPPERS
762,353



5. PLASTIC GROCERY BAGS
520,900



6. PLASTIC LIDS
419,380



7. STRAWS, STIRRERS
409,087



8. GLASS BEVERAGE BOTTLES
390,468



9. OTHER PLASTIC BAGS
368,655



10. FOAM TAKE-AWAY CONTAINERS
365,584

U.S. CLEANUPS

2016 Ocean Trash Index

STATE/LOCATION				
	PEOPLE	POUNDS KILOGRAMS	MILES KILOMETERS	TOTAL ITEMS COLLECTED
ALABAMA	3,785	32,647 14,808	311.4 501.2	117,405
ALASKA	420	1,696 769	36.4 58.6	13,783
ARIZONA	45	426 193	10.3 16.6	1,924
ARKANSAS	59	1,800 816	36.0 57.9	7,953
CALIFORNIA	59,141	708,024 321,154	2,024.4 3,257.7	767,990
COLORADO	2,389	29,142 13,219	119.5 192.4	449
CONNECTICUT	158	768 348	45.0 72.4	7,101
DELAWARE	1,581	12,144 5,508	65.5 105.4	57,083
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	445	2,896 1,314	28.4 45.6	10,848
FLORIDA	26,898	281,915 127,874	2,035.0 3,275.2	977,096
GEORGIA	17,095	307,400 139,434	484.4 779.6	74,353
HAWAII	2,010	20,949 9,502	78.7 126.6	108,765
IDAHO	15	37 17	1.3 2.1	309
ILLINOIS	1,765	3,204 1,453	22.7 36.5	78,164
INDIANA	897	1,228 557	12.1 19.5	28,122
IOWA	1	2 1	0.8 2.0	8
KANSAS	22	250 113	2.3 3.6	2,808
LOUISIANA	1,285	3,902 1,770	124.7 200.7	42,329
MAINE	2,002	7,219 3,274	97.6 157.0	72,182
MARYLAND	837	38,080 17,273	72.0 115.9	78,859
MASSACHUSETTS	2,563	13,778 6,250	164.4 264.5	147,654
MICHIGAN	2,306	7,162 3,249	106.7 171.6	112,050
MINNESOTA	142	304 138	10.6 17.1	11,310
MISSISSIPPI	2,169	28,079 12,736	202.0 325.1	129,570
MISSOURI	106	1,924 873	14.0 22.5	8,447
NEBRASKA	1,000	1,663 754	43.5 70.0	27,674
NEW HAMPSHIRE	940	4,948 2,244	10.7 17.2	45,228
NEW JERSEY	2,269	30,280 13,735	105.6 170.0	89,642
NEW YORK	6,952	67,390 30,568	240.2 386.4	302,773
NORTH CAROLINA	3,598	42,352 19,211	253.3 407.6	80,964
OHIO	1,140	26,694 12,108	44.1 70.8	69,244
OKLAHOMA	23	1,006 456	1.5 2.4	2,678
OREGON	4,217	69,261 31,416	238.1 383.3	17,074
PENNSYLVANIA	13,781	849,123 385,156	540.3 869.5	88,125
RHODE ISLAND	2,252	15,030 6,817	133.5 214.8	153,090
SOUTH CAROLINA	3,499	47,636 21,608	235.7 379.3	119,619
SOUTH DAKOTA	1	2 1	0.4 0.7	-
TEXAS	4,435	69,382 31,471	169.5 272.7	147,254
UTAH	51	75 34	1.5 2.4	401
VERMONT	14	250 113	0.4 0.7	1,074
VIRGINIA	7,098	324,629 147,249	359.0 577.8	163,013
WASHINGTON	1,185	27,960 12,682	120.4 193.7	51,551
WISCONSIN	1,386	2,658 1,206	35.0 56.3	38,337
*STATE NOT RECORDED	1,344	39,333 17,841	32.8 52.8	28,686
GRAND TOTAL	183,321	3,124,644 1,417,315	8,672 13,956	4,282,989



STATUS REPORT:

Science, Policy & Partners

Science: Now Is the Time to Act

Recently, Ocean Conservancy convened an international working group of leading scientists. Their task? Dig into the scientific evidence and synthesize what researchers know about how much plastic is in the ocean, where it comes from and how it affects animals we know and love.

Their findings? First, roughly 15 to 51 trillion plastic pieces (93,000 to 236,000 tonnes) float in the oceans at any given time. Second, 8 million metric tons of plastic enters the oceans each year. Let's break this down. This means the equivalent of 22,000 747-jumbo jets in plastic enters the oceans annually and that floating plastic weighs as much as 30,000 elephants!

What is the impact to wildlife? Plastic can impact animals at every level of biological organization – altering genes, cells and tissues, causing death and/or altering the size of a population or the structure of a community. In 2015, there was little evidence of this impact, particularly at higher, ecologically-relevant levels. But today, the evidence is much more robust and researchers now know that small microplastics can impact the reproductive success and/or development of fish, oysters, barnacles and copepods. Moreover, microplastics can alter how invertebrate

species function and assemble.

This evidence regarding ecological impacts, combined with solid evidence about widespread distribution of plastic debris in the environment, wildlife, seafood and sea salt, suggests the time is now to stem the tide of plastic pollution before we have evidence of irreversible harm on our oceans.

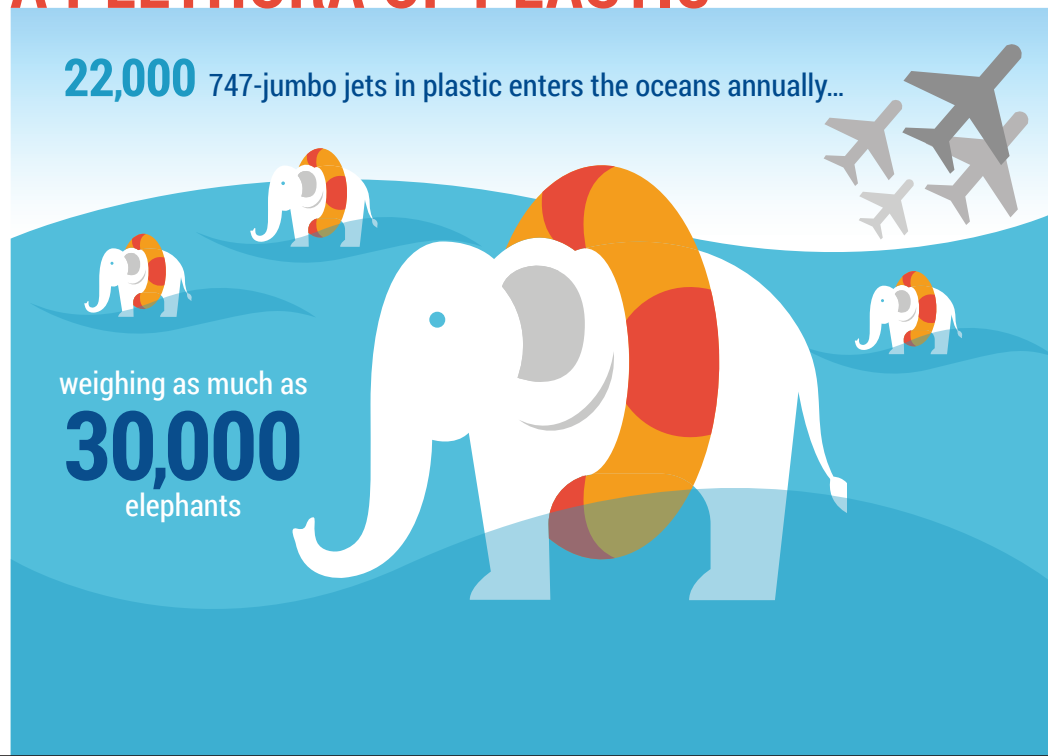
California Votes Yes (again) to Ban Plastic Bags

Single-use plastic bags are one of the most challenging marine debris issues we face, residing in the top 5 most frequently collected items in California for decades. Local cities and counties have passed bans on plastic bags and regulated their use in order to prevent plastic

A PLETHORA OF PLASTIC

22,000 747-jumbo jets in plastic enters the oceans annually...

weighing as much as
30,000
elephants



bags from entering the environment. On ICC Day in 2014, after years of work by grassroots NGOs, California Governor Jerry Brown signed AB 270, banning single-use plastic carry-out bags from grocery stores across the state and placing a \$0.10 fee on recycled paper bags at checkout. Just like that, California became the first state in the nation to ban plastic bags, and as the 6th largest economy in the world, the ban sent a strong message that significant action is needed globally.

The fight wasn't over however, and the law was delayed by the American Progressive Bag Alliance, an industry lobbying group made up of plastic bag manufacturers (among other entities), which placed a veto referendum on the November 2016 ballot that halted AB 270's implementation.

Last November, Californians voted to uphold the plastic bag ban, winning 53% of the total vote – that's more than 7,000,000 votes in favor of banning plastic bags. The ban took effect immediately. Now California grocery stores are free of single-use plastic carry-out bags, and our environment is on the road to becoming a cleaner and healthier place for the incredible

wildlife and scenery that make California such a phenomenal place to live and visit.

Racing Against Ocean Trash

11th Hour Racing, a program of The Schmidt Family Foundation, establishes strategic partnerships within the sailing and marine communities to promote collaborative systemic change for the health of our ocean. Based in Newport, Rhode Island, 11th Hour Racing harnesses the power of sport to increase understanding of marine environments, find innovative solutions to issues that impact these resources and promote stewardship and sustainable use of the seas. Ocean Conservancy's partnership with 11th Hour Racing has enabled us to expand our efforts on sustainable boating within the competitive sailing community and inspire others to become committed stewards of our ocean.

One highlight from this partnership occurred on a perfect Saturday morning in March 2017. Ocean Conservancy and 11th Hour Racing teamed up with the 52 Super Series and local Miami cleanup partner VolunteerCleanup.org to host an ocean trash discussion and cleanup event in Miami, Florida. The event, held as part of the Miami Royal Cup Sailing Race, started at race headquarters where race teams, local environmental organizations and other ocean advocates were able to meet, mingle and discuss the ocean trash issue. Following a tour through the race village and a dock walk focusing on the sustainability efforts of the Cup, participants joined others to collect plastics and other debris littering the beach, lodged in the jetty and scattered along the rocks of the park's busy pedestrian walkway. In total, volunteers removed over 320 pounds of trash from South Pointe Park and beach.

Events like this are key to expanding awareness and understanding of ocean trash, and well-known cleanup locations like South Beach provide an eye-opening experience for volunteers as they realize that ocean trash is everywhere once you start looking.



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CREATE A CLEAN SWELL

With Clean Swell™, join a global community working to improve our ocean by adding vital data to the world's largest database on marine debris. This database is used by scientists, conservation groups, governments and industry leaders to study ocean trash and take action to ensure trash never reaches our beaches.





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