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Date: Thu, Nov 12, 2015 at 9:00 AM

Subject: **Report - 2015 International Coastal Clean-up for the Cape Provinces.**

**Dear All.**

**Attached please find the report of the 2015 International Coastal Clean-up in the 3 Cape Provinces. The weather was on our side which meant an increase in volunteer numbers as well as material collected. Although there is an increase of recycling of packaging material in South Africa and waste management is increasingly being reinforced by government, the amount of material still found in the environment is concerning.**

**I wish we could echo the mining community at the mouth of the Orange River's view on marine debris where they have ceased coastal clean-ups due to a lack of material at this RAMSAR site. They now target litter next to the road linking Alexander Bay and Port Nolloth.**

**Next year is our 20th International Coastal Clean-up – so please diarise the 17th of September and for those that want to initiate more clean-ups – please let me know if you need any material or support.**

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**WEBSITES:** [www.plasticsinfo.co.za](http://www.plasticsinfo.co.za) |  
[www.cleanup-SA.co.za](http://www.cleanup-SA.co.za) | [www.recyclingday-SA.co.za](http://www.recyclingday-SA.co.za)



### **Report - 2015 International Coastal Clean-up for the Cape Provinces**

In the year when the second African Summit on Marine Debris was held in South Africa and the establishment of a South African Network on Marine Debris started its long arduous journey the 19th International Coastal Cleanup was also held.

Marine Debris is slowly receiving more attention on the African continent but we still have a long way to go.

1996 Saw the first ICC cleanup in South Africa in the province of Kwazulu Natal and in the following year, the other three coastal provinces in South Africa followed suite. In 1997 the volunteer numbers was 850 volunteers in the 3 Cape Provinces.

The total volunteers during the 2014 cleanups was 13 072 (3078 at audited clean-ups and 9994 at non-audited clean-ups) and with even better weather and tide conditions this number increased this year. Even more than in the past, clean-ups took place in areas with none or little area cleansing done by local authorities.

After the International Coastal Cleanup, the reports and data provides an assessment into the scale of debris pollution affecting the South African aquatic environment. A positive outflow of the 2015 cleanup is the use of site data in awareness and education as well as pro-actively reacting to addressing the material of concern within that specific area.

For instance, Whale Coast Conservation in the Overberg is confronting the issue of cigarette buds by the placement of receptacles to capture the discarded material and to make it socially unacceptable to discard the material. Nationally, data of 2015 places cigarette buds as the second most abundant item collected due to their effort with the groups that they interact with. Shark Conservancy, in the same area, is focusing on plastic material that originates from the local Abalone farming industry and is focusing their extension work within this industry to ensure better stewardship of the material such as cable ties etc.

### Northern Cape

Audited cleanups = 474  
Non-audited cleanups = 288

**Total: 762**

### Western Cape

Audited Cleanup = 2 538  
Non-audited cleanups = 6 876

**Total: 9 414**

### Eastern Cape

Audited Cleanups = 1 481  
Non-audited cleanups = 4 484

**Total: 5 965**

**Total  
volunteers**

**16 141**

Statistics obtained by conceivably the largest citizen scientist program in South Africa is providing a sound view of the state of marine debris in South Africa. 19 Years of data provides a historical look at the change in debris over the short, medium and long term as well as confirmation that the situation is not improving (with a few variances).

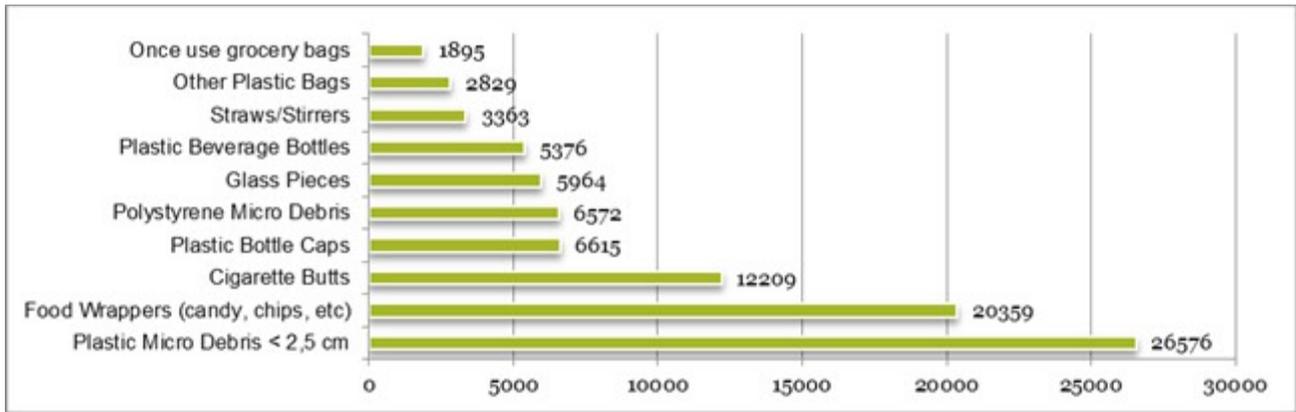
This data is also supported by the seventh survey of South African beach macro and meso-litter was conducted from June to August 2015 by Profs. Peter Ryan and Colleen Moloney. Beaches were sampled from south of the Olifants River on the border between the Northern and Western Capes to Cape Vidal in northern KwaZulu-Natal. In total 38 beaches in the Western Cape, 26 in the Eastern Cape and 18 in KwaZulu-Natal.

In their survey plastic accounted for the vast majority of litter in both size classes: 93.8% of macro-litter and 98.7% of meso-litter. Among macro litter, plastic packaging and one-use applications were the most abundant type of identifiable litter, accounting for 84.1% of the total, followed by fishery and shipping wastes (5.5%), other plastic user items (3.2%), cigarette butts (2.8%) and glass (1.4%), with other non-plastic litter types each contributing less than 1% of the total number of large litter items. Industrial pellets remained the most abundant meso-litter items (53.9%), but their abundance was greatest in accumulation sites (Woody Cape at the east end of Algoa Bay and Olifantsbos in the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve), indicating that the majority of pellets at these sites were 'legacy' pollutants from Port Elizabeth and Cape Town, respectively.

Clean-ups have allowed for greater awareness and monitoring of the problem. Thanks to the ongoing commitment of organisations such as Ocean Conservancy, The United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Plastics SA and the Department of Environmental Affairs, who have added their weight to ensuring that more people in Africa and specifically Southern Africa are familiar with the issue of marine debris?

Some interesting observations via the data collected:

- Baby Nappies, although not at alarming numbers yet, is growing in numbers at both river and beach clean-ups.
- Inhalers is now found at more and more beach cleanups and is not just restricted to the Metropole Cleanups.
- There was a growth in the numbers of candy and chips wrappers/packaging during this year's cleanup. This was reported by monthly clean-ups.
- Straws and stirrers (8). There is a very limited amount of plastic "stirrers" found in South Africa and the majority of this figure is due to earbud sticks which serves as an indicator of the poor waste water management in South Africa.



109 160 Items was collected via the audited cleanups.

Number of people 11 648

Non-audited cleanups and 4 493 audited cleanups. Total: 16 141.

Weight of debris cleaned >5, 3 Tons\*

Distance cleaned >77 Km\*

Number of bags filled 1 292\*

Underwater Cleanups

Number of people 65\*

Weight of debris cleaned 170 Kg\*

Distance cleaned 1000 Meters\*

Number of bags filled 26\*

\*Does not include non-audited cleanup data.

Sponsors

Without the commitment of our partners listed below, these initiatives would not have been possible. In a time of harsh economic conditions companies find themselves having to rethink supporting projects such as these, it is encouraging to see the continued commitment from them.

- Pick 'n Pay
- Kelpak
- Department of Environmental Affairs, Branch - Oceans and Coasts
- Plastics|SA Sustainability Council – PETCO (PET Recycling Company), POLYCO (Polyolefin Recycling Company, SAVA (SA Vinyls Association) and PSPC (Polystyrene Packaging Council of SA)

CONCLUSION

Monthly cleanups by volunteer groups have become part of the landscape of volunteering in South Africa and it is motivating to see this energy ensuring cleaner urban areas where debris can become an eyesore if left to local authorities.

In 2016, we will be holding our 20th International Coastal Cleanup. (17 September). In one way it is sad to celebrate it but the sustainability of the event shows its need in attempting to address the issue of poor waste management and littering.

Thanks to each and every volunteer for caring and giving up your valuable time to make our seas a cleaner and safer environment for all.

**17 September 2016 is our 20 th International Coastal Cleanup Day**

Join our discussion page <http://www.marinelitternetwork.org/groups>

Plastics|SA represents the plastics industry of South Africa. Its members represent all sectors of the SA Plastics Industry including polymer producers and importers, converters, machine suppliers and recyclers.