

2017



South Africa – International Coastal Cleanup

Northern, Western and Eastern Cape Provinces



South Africa - International Coastal Cleanup Northern, Western and Eastern Cape



Cleanup in the De Hoop area.

The maturity of coastal clean-ups, as measured in weekly and monthly actions, is having a domino effect on clean-ups away from waterways. Never before has there been such a focus on the presence of waste material in the South African environment by a swelling number of organisations and individuals. It is wonderful to have so many more voices speaking out about the presence of material littered, dumped, improper waste management and a lack of recycling facilities. We cannot highlight one clean-up above all of the great efforts, nevertheless the efforts done by volunteers to clean within informal settlements are truly in a category of their own. Poverty is definitely the major reason for waste finding its way into the environment in South Africa. In the 2018 International Coastal Cleanup, we are collaborating with the “Let’s Do It” project as well as maintaining our own datasheets to complement the work of the present international datasheets. What is particularly motivational is the fact that the section – “six pack holders” is as always, a blank. We wish we could achieve the same with some of the other material with major entanglement possibilities, such as “Fishing Line” and “Strapping Bands”.

The total number of volunteers that participated during the 2017 clean-ups was 16 298 (4 755 audited clean-ups and 11 543 non-audited clean-ups).

We still experience that more emphasis is placed on cleaning areas with none or little area cleansing done by local authorities. Large school groups and corporate clean-ups still occur in areas that are serviced by local authorities, as they tend to be safer.

Northern Cape

Audited clean-ups = 723

Non-audited clean-ups = 288

Total: 1 011

Western Cape

Audited Cleanup = 2 423

Non-audited clean-ups = 6 771

Total: 9 194

Eastern Cape

Audited Clean-ups = 1 609

Non-audited clean-ups = 4 484

Total: 6 093

**Total
volunteers**

16 298

RESULTS

Focus on the issue of plastics in the environment has never received such attention in South Africa before. As reported in the 2016 report, the number of clean-ups at rivers and estuaries has increased and many of these sites have now generated monthly clean-ups.

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), The African Waste Network and Plastics|SA, 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 in 2017:

- *Food wrappers, (especially chip packets) made from multi-layered plastics have been increasing in numbers. It was the fourth highest item collected in 2016. In the 2017, clean-up it is the second most prolific item collected.*
- *Asthma pumps is the most prolific item found of medicinal origin. Of concern is the fact that disposable syringes have been recorded in larger numbers in the 2017 clean up.*
- *The improper disposing of one-use baby nappies has shown an increase year on year.*
- *The need for groups to sort material for recycling purposes has increased and has become standard procedure in many areas.*

Site data can be viewed at <http://www.coastalcleanupdata.org/>

92 240 Items were collected via the audited clean-ups.

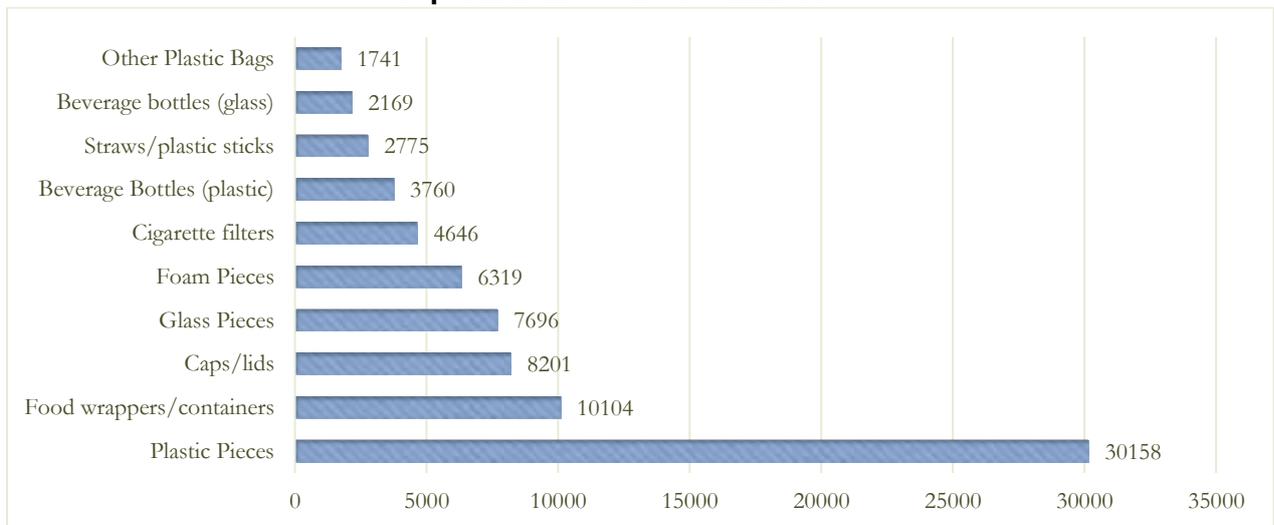
People, Kilograms and Kilometres

2017 International Coastal Cleanup: Northern, Western and Eastern Cape Provinces of South Africa

Land Clean-ups	
Number of people	11 543 Non-audited clean-ups and 4 775 audited clean-ups. Total: 16 298
Weight of debris cleaned	>5,174 Tons*
Distance cleaned	>100.5 Km*
Number of bags filled	>1917*
Underwater Clean-ups	
Number of people	38*
Weight of debris cleaned	248 Kg*
Distance cleaned	500 Meter*
Number of bags filled	58*

**Does not include non-audited clean-up data.*

Top ten items collected in 2017



Sponsors

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

Kelpak, Pick n Pay, Plastics|SA Sustainability Council, PETCO (PET Recycling Company), POLYCO (Polyolefin Recycling Company), SAVA (SA Vinyls Association) and PSPC (Polystyrene Packaging Council of SA), Packaging, Engen, Tuffy Manufacturing, Woolworths, ABI, National Recycling Forum, Glass Recycling Company, Collect-a-Can, Paper Recycling Association of SA, Tetrapak, ROSE Foundation, Brand SA, Nelson Mandela Foundation, Department of Environmental Affairs.

CONCLUSION

Focus on plastics in the marine environment is now receiving more attention in South Africa than ever before. There has been a marked increase in research on the issue and an increase in activity to stop the use of some single use plastics. For a long time the International Coastal Cleanup has been the single

2017 International Coastal Cleanup: Northern, Western and Eastern Cape Provinces of South Africa

voice and this increased attention on the scourge of littering has led to an increase in volunteers. In 2018, we will be working together with the “Let’s Do It, World Cleanup” (<https://www.letsdoitworld.org/>) and we are looking forward to an even bigger volunteer turnout to make our country cleaner.

