

# Plastics | SA



2023

## Clean-Up and Recycle South Africa Annual Report



# Introduction

## The Waste Management Issue in Africa

Africa is experiencing unprecedented population growth with predictions that it will add 1.3 billion people to the planet by 2050. This is the equivalent of 3.5 million more people per month, or 80 additional people per minute, thus making Africa the biggest contributor to the future global population growth.

Furthermore, the highest rates of population growth and urbanisation are expected in the coastal zone with an estimated 49 million more people in low elevation coastal flood plains by 2060. Alongside this rapid rate of urbanisation, Africa's growing middle class is creating large consumer markets for packaged goods.

The increasing trend in per capita consumption, urbanisation, and population growth is concerning when combined with a lack of sufficient infrastructure to manage the increased waste generation. Packaging waste presents not only an environmental issue for African countries but also a major socio-economic development challenge which impacts biodiversity, infrastructure, tourism and fisheries livelihoods. The lack of clean drinking water only exacerbates the problem, as in many city centers, even drinking water is packaged in single use sachets and plastic bags

A recent study estimates the quantity of mismanaged packaging waste, especially plastics, available to enter the ocean from each of Africa's coastal and island countries. Of particular relevance are Egypt, Nigeria, South Africa, Algeria and Morocco which are estimated to be among the top 20 countries around the world contributing to marine debris each year.

A change in consumer behavior and growing population has resulted in increasing plastic consumption in Africa

With growing consumption and weak municipal solid waste collection systems, Africa is at risk of increasing packaging litter in the environment. If Africa does not put measures in place to mitigate the flow of packaging waste, increasing pollution is likely to negatively impact African countries economies."

## Solutions and innovation for Africa

### Education, litter awareness and clean-up campaigns

**Littering** results in waste leaking into the environment, posing a serious threat to marine life, human health and economies on local, regional, national and global levels. Littering creates visual pollution and damages the aesthetics of an area, further negatively impacting the South African tourism industry and job creation.

Research has shown that education and awareness raising programs are correlated with reduced litter. Fast-tracking education and understanding to promote behavioral changes while creating a platform for sharing educational resources and best practices could prove beneficial towards reducing waste inputs to the environment. Working with manufacturers, distributors and retailers to increase understanding of the impacts of packaging losses to the environment could also help to identify and reduce leakage points.



*Images showing polluted environment caused by littering and illegal dumping. Photos Courtesy of Plastics SA*

## **Clean-up and Recycle SA Campaign in Action 2023**

In order to tackle the environmental pollution, the plastics industry and partners has been collaborating with Government, Producer Responsibility Organisations (PRO`s), Community Based Organisations and other Non-Governmental Organisations, through clean-up and recycling projects. For the past 27 years, Plastics SA has been coordinating, with the support from our partners, provincial coordinators and supporting organisations clean-ups along our roadsides, beaches and river catchment projects along the coastline, as well as inland rivers.

### **Clean-up bags sponsored in 2023**

Over **700 000 plastic bags** were sponsored in 2023 for clean-up campaigns and distributed by provincial coordinators to volunteers, NGOs, businesses and communities during September to clean neighborhoods, removing waste from beaches, rivers, parks, and streets in South Africa. People usually do not weigh the refuse bags after clean-up campaigns as they do not have scales, but on average a bag filled with waste and recyclables weigh 3 Kilograms. Thus over **2100 tons** of waste was diverted away from the ocean and the natural environment during this period.

*Note:100 000 bags are used and sponsored to other clean-ups eg Waterweek (March), World Environment Week (June), World Oceans Day (June) and Marine Week (October)*

During clean-up campaigns, thousands of refuse bags are filled with waste, however only a small percentage is taken for recycling after clean-up campaigns, and the rest is transported to the landfill. More work and resources need to be invested in clean-up and awareness campaigns, to encourage people to separate recyclables from the waste during clean-up campaigns and sell the recyclables to create income opportunities.

## Plastics clean-up bags – Sponsors and Partners

### Let's Clean-up & Recycle!

[www.cleanupandrecycle.co.za](http://www.cleanupandrecycle.co.za)

This bag is made from 100% recycled plastics and is fully recyclable

### Clean-up and Recycle 2023

[www.cleanupandrecycle.co.za](http://www.cleanupandrecycle.co.za)

Thank you to all our partners and volunteers!

This bag is made from 100% recycled plastics and is fully recyclable

## Launch of Clean-up and Recycle SA campaign 2023 18 July 2023, Johannesburg

The Launch of Clean-up and Recycle Campaign took place on Mandela Day, 18 July 2023, in collaboration with CleanCity SA, a Johannesburg based clean-up organisation and enjoyed the publicity and reach of their campaign as well as our own reach.

**Clean City SA**  
in association with  
**Clean-up & Recycle Week SA**  
invites your organisation and its employees to participate on the Mandela Day 2023.  
Hosted at  
**CONSTITUTION HILL**

**2nd Annual Mandela Day**  
JULY 18, 2023  
Time: 8am - 4pm  
**PLAY YOUR PART TO CURB THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN FOOD SECURITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

To register: visit [www.cleancity.org.za](http://www.cleancity.org.za) or email [info@cleancity.org.za](mailto:info@cleancity.org.za)

Clean-up | Clean-up & Recycle Week Launch | Food and Tree Planting | Exhibitions | Theme Talks | History Museum Tours | Food | Music |

**Marketing drive – Cleanup and Recycle Week 2023**

*Note: We encourage sponsors and partners to drive their own marketing campaigns re the Clean-up and Recycle SA Week. Below is what Plastics SA have placed.*

**Adverts:**

The following adverts were shared extensively on our websites [www.plasticsinfo.co.za](http://www.plasticsinfo.co.za) and [www.cleanupandrecyclesa.co.za](http://www.cleanupandrecyclesa.co.za). They also featured in digital and printed publications nationwide. Organisations involved in clean-ups during this Week also shared them within their own networks.

**THROW TRASH in the Bin AND NOT in the OCEAN**

**Clean-Up & Recycle South Africa!**

<b>Clean-up &amp; Recycle Week</b> 11 - 16 September 2023	<b>National Clean-up Day</b> 13 September 2023	<b>National Recycling Day</b> 15 September 2023	<b>World Recycling Day</b> 16 September 2023	<b>International Coastal Clean-up</b> 16 September 2023
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The Plastics Industry and Partners Taking Action  
[www.cleanupandrecycle.co.za](http://www.cleanupandrecycle.co.za)

Plastics SA | [www.plasticsinfo.co.za](http://www.plasticsinfo.co.za)

WORLD CLEANUP DAY | MARINE LITTER SOLUTIONS | Ocean Conservancy | SSI AFRICAN NETWORK

**Keep TRASH in the Bin AND NOT in the OCEAN**

**Clean-Up & Recycle, South Africa!**

<b>Clean-up &amp; Recycle Week</b> 11 - 16 September 2023	<b>National River Clean-up Day</b> 13 September 2023	<b>National Recycling Day</b> 15 September 2023	<b>World Clean-up Day</b> 16 September 2023	<b>International Coastal Clean-up</b> 16 September 2023
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WORLD CLEANUP DAY | MARINE LITTER SOLUTIONS | Ocean Conservancy | SSI AFRICAN NETWORK

Supported by global plastics

**Clean-Up & Recycle SOUTH AFRICA**

## The plastics industry taking action

<p>More than <b>80%</b> of marine litter originates from inland sources and the plastics industry in SA has identified river catchment projects to mitigate environmental pollution.</p>	<p><b>RIVER CATCHMENT PROJECTS</b></p> <p>Waste Management      Recycling</p>		<p>Education, Training and Awareness</p>	<p>Litter booms</p>
	<p>Clean-up campaigns</p>	<p><b>OPERATION CLEAN SWEEP</b></p>	<p><b>GLOBAL NETWORKS</b></p>	<p>With your support, Clean-up &amp; Recycle last year saw</p> <p><b>1 000+</b> clean-ups      <b>500 000</b> refuse bags distributed      <b>1 600</b> tons of litter removed</p>

**CLEAN-UP ACTIONS IN SEPTEMBER 2023**

<b>Clean-up and Recycle SA Week</b> 11 - 17 September 2023	<b>National River Clean-up Day</b> 13 September 2023	<b>Recycling Day SA</b> 15 September 2023	<b>International Coastal Clean-up Day</b> 16 September 2023	<b>World Clean-Up Day</b> 16 September 2023
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The success of these projects is due to the dedicated support of and collaboration with our industry partners such as the raw material producers, converters, recyclers, Producer Responsibility Organisations, brand owners, retailers, the packaging industry, Government, Non-Government Organisations and volunteers.

**Plastics SA**  
[www.plasticsinfo.co.za](http://www.plasticsinfo.co.za)

Clean-up and Recycle SA website: [www.cleanupandrecycle.co.za](http://www.cleanupandrecycle.co.za)

These adverts and posts for Cleanup and Recycle Week 2023, reached more than **820 000 viewers** during August and September 2023.

28 Aug – 03 Sep	C&R Ocean	195,970 viewers
04 Sep – 10 Sep	C&R Ocean	231,749 viewers
11 Sep – 17 Sep	C&R Ocean	201,112 viewers
18 Sep – 24 Sep	C&R Ocean You did again	202,718 viewers

**List of publications that the Cleanup and Recycle Week activities appeared in:**

- Cape Business News
- Cape Town Etc
- Supplier & Retailer
- Engineering News
- Business Day
- Saturday Star
- IOL
- Municipal Focus
- The Green Times
- Tygerburger (Dubanville and Kraaifontein)
- International Retail Management
- Food Review
- Mining Weekly

**Printed and digital media values for Clean-up and Recycle SA Campaign: R720 000.00**

**International Coastal Clean – up Day  
16 September 2023**

The Clean-Up and Recycle SA Campaign supports **the International Coastal Clean-up Day (ICC)** with Plastics SA as the National ICC coordinators with Sustainable Seas Trust for Cape Provinces and Sea World, Durban for Kwa-Zulu Natal coastline.

SST compiled the final ICC-SA report to be submitted to Ocean Conservancy in USA – thank you SST!!! The theme **"Clean Seas for Healthy Fisheries"** was carried by the 2023 ICC which aligns closely with the objectives of the United Nations (UN) Ocean Decade Challenge 3 which is to "Sustainably Feed the Global Population".

The International Coastal Cleanup® began more than 35 years ago, when communities rallied together with the common goal of collecting and documenting the trash littering their coastline.

Plastics SA, together with Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, initiated and supported the ICC since 1996.



INCORPORATING



Helping people to care for our ocean



## Data Cards

Data collected during The Ocean Conservancy's **International Coastal Cleanup™** is used to educate people and create solutions to the problems of solid waste

**INTERNATIONAL COASTAL CLEANUP™ DATA CARD**

The Ocean Conservancy

**Thank you for participating in the International Coastal Cleanup!** The effort you are making today is the first step to ensuring there are cleaner oceans and waterways year-round. By taking the time to fill out both sides of this data card, The Ocean Conservancy will be able to compile and analyze data collected by over 300,000 volunteers in over 90 countries, and be able to identify the activities and general sources causing the debris. An annual report will then be created and distributed to help educate the public, business, industry, and government officials about marine debris issues. Your work today truly makes a world of difference.

**I. CLEANUP SITE INFORMATION**

Type of Cleanup:  Shoreline/Beach  Underwater  River/Stream/Tributary  Lake

Location of Cleanup Site \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zone or County Cleared \_\_\_\_\_

Cleanup Site Name (beach, park, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Number of People Working on This Card \_\_\_\_\_ Distance Cleaned \_\_\_\_\_ miles or \_\_\_\_\_ km

Number of Trash Bags Filled \_\_\_\_\_ Total Estimated Weight Collected \_\_\_\_\_ lbs. or \_\_\_\_\_ kgs.

Estimated Time Spent on Cleanup: \_\_\_\_\_

**II. CONTACT INFORMATION (EACH INDIVIDUAL TEAM MEMBER)**

1. Name _____	3. Name _____
Email Address _____	Email Address _____
2. Name _____	4. Name _____
Email Address _____	Email Address _____

**III. ENTANGLED ANIMALS:**  Dead or  Alive. List all the entangled animals found during the Cleanup. Tell us what they were entangled in (fishing line, ropes, net, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT WAS THE MOST PECULIAR ITEM YOU COLLECTED?** \_\_\_\_\_

The following national and international organizations endorse and/or support the International Coastal Cleanup:  
• NOAA-Marine Debris Program  
• U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
• IUCN-The World Conservation Union  
• Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Please return this card to your area coordinator or mail it to:  
The Ocean Conservancy  
2025 K Street NW  
Washington, DC 20006  
Phone: 202-426-9600  
Fax: 202-426-9619  
www.oceanconservancy.org

**International Coastal Cleanup**  
The Ocean Conservancy



Volunteer Ocean Trash Data Form. Litter data is recorded by Citizen Scientists

### Top 20 items collected from South African beaches:

1. Plastic/foam pieces
2. Cigarette butts
3. Plastic bottle caps
4. Food wrappers (candy, chips, etc.)
5. Fishing lines, nets, traps, ropes, etc.
6. Other plastic bags
7. Plastic straws/stirrers
8. Foam packaging
9. Plastic beverage bottles
10. Miscellaneous plastic waste
11. Metal bottle caps
12. Glass beverage bottles
13. Cotton bud sticks (swabs)
14. Beverage sachets/pouches
15. Strapping bands
16. Tobacco products (lighters, cigar tips, wraps)
17. Plastic utensils
18. Plastic grocery bags
19. Paper cups and plates
20. Beverage cans

## Pictures from beach clean-ups – Cape Provinces:



## Kwa-Zulu Natal Coastal Clean-up

Supported by 16 coordinators, over 11 000 bags distributed and over 2000 volunteers that cleaned KZN beaches from Leisure Bay up to Sodwana Bay in the north

### Top items collected:

1. Small plastics and foam pieces
2. Bottle caps
3. Cigarette butts
4. Straws/lollipop sticks
5. Plastics bottles

## Pictures from beach clean-ups – Kwa-Zulu Natal:







## World Clean-up Day 16 September 2023



The Clean-up and Recycle SA Campaign supported the World Clean-up Day which took place on Saturday, 16 September 2023. Clean-up bags were provided to the World Clean-up Coordinators in South Africa.



### Inland Clean-ups

Provincial coordinators from the various provinces such as Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Free State, North West, Limpopo, Kwa-Zulu Natal and Cape Provinces, who supported the Clean-up and Recycle Campaign were identified. They received clean-up bags from Plastics SA and distributed them within

their provinces to schools, communities, businesses, churches and various environmental NGOs and municipalities. They provided a report to the Plastics SA National Coordinator.

Clean-ups took place along roadsides, schools, parks, rivers and in community residential areas. A BIG THANK YOU to our provincial coordinators!!

**Clean-Up & Recycle SOUTH AFRICA**

**CLEAN-UP RECYCLE & SOUTH AFRICA REPORT**

According to the United Nations Environmental Programme report, South Africa discharges between 90 000 and 250 000 tonnes of waste into the environment annually. Poor waste management, limited awareness and recycling efforts are a big part of the problem. In response to this challenge, government, the local plastics industry and other organisations work together to raise awareness on problems that littering creates in our environment, economy and health. This helps to encourage people to change their behaviour on littering and waste management.

Clean-up campaigns are one of the main ways used to bring communities together and ensure people take ownership of their neighbourhoods and keep them clean. In contribution to this effort the Clean-Up & Recycle South Africa managed by Plastics SA work with sponsors, partners and provincial coordinators to prepare and distribute refuse bags for clean-up campaigns across the country.

To monitor the effective usage of these refuse bags supplied, the below template should be completed for reporting purposes:

Provincial Coordinator: Mr. Clean Neighbourhood  
 Province: Limpopo  
 Total number of bags supplied: 1000  
 Period covered by report: 1/09/2021 – 30/11/2021

<b>Musina adopt a park clean-up campaign</b>	
Date of Event	16/10/2021
Number of bags received	50
Collected by	Ms. Mpho Mashego
Collector's Organisation	Baobab Environmental Warriors
Location	Irwin Street Park, Sekelbos Cres, Masina
Organisations involved	10 Expanded Public Works Programme workers; 8 Masina Local Municipality officials; 13 Community Members and 4 Waste pickers
Number of participants	35
Weight/Number of	408 kg, 42 bags

The Clean-Up & Recycle South Africa Campaign is managed by Plastics SA together with sponsors, partners and provincial coordinators who prepare and distribute refuse bags for clean-ups across the country. To monitor the effective usage of the refuse bags supplied, the template on the left is used by the coordinators to collect data on any clean-up activity that takes place, and we have supplied the bags.

**Plastic bags in ACTION!**





### Clean-up Tools Support:

We noticed more and more dumping in our communities and although the clean-up bags are a very important tool in clean-ups, we decided that actual tools to do the tiresome job of removing the litter, would make a difference to these organisations and groups!

To assist the clean-up organisations that are making a difference on a daily basis, conducting clean-up activities in our communities, our roadsides, rivers and beaches, the Plastics SA Clean-up Coordination Team identified **clean-up tools** that would make life easier for these clean-up teams. It is no easy task to pick up litter by hand and especially from dumpsites. The toolkits consist of **clean-up bags, gloves, gumboots, overalls, hats, t-shirts, rakes and shovels.**



### Toolkits sponsored to:

- ARMOUR (Action for Responsible Management of OUR Rivers) – Gauteng river groups

- Dakota Community Project (Isipingo Durnban)
- Mpumalanga (Thaba Chweu, LM, City of Mbombela LM, Cleanup teams, Nkomazi LM)
- Cetric Foundation (Gauteng)
- Enviro Care (Gauteng)
- Live life Always (Gauteng)

**Thank you to our sponsors and supporters who made it possible to provide the toolkits:**

- Coca- Cola Beverages SA
- eWASA (EPR Waste Association of SA)
- Neptun Boots
- BBF Safety Group
- Plastics SA
- SA Vinyls Association
- Petco (Producer Responsibility Organisation)
- Polyco (Plastics Packaging Recycling PRO)

**Opportunities and the way forward**

The goal is to divert all recyclables collected during clean-up campaigns, from the landfill. To achieve this goal, the current situations present opportunities including:

**1) Education and Awareness**

- Intensify awareness creation (materials translated into all languages) of the effects of littering on nature and the wellbeing of people.
- Institutionalized education should influence the change in perception. It should encourage learners to see waste as valuable income opportunities, rather than someone else's problem to solve.
- Amplification of the existing awareness activities including exhibitions, community education workshops, mall activations etc. especially in township and rural areas.

**2) Infrastructure**

- Increased investment on street waste management furniture e.g. street bins.
- More buyback centers needed in township and rural areas.
- Localized and practical waste separation at source technology e.g. centralized collection points for informal settlements or densely populated areas.

**3) Training**

- Clean-up coordinators and volunteer training on data collection during clean-up campaigns.
- Training on separation of recyclables from waste during clean-up campaigns.
- Political principals and company executives training on current waste management challenges in order to get increased financial resources investment in a more sustainable waste management industry.

**4) Public, Private Partnerships**

- Coordinated clean-up campaigns information management between government and the private sector to avoid misinformation and duplication.
- Standardized clean-up data collection method to determine how much waste is removed from the environment and improve data accuracy.
- Coordinated activities (one message) on influencing human behavior towards realizing Section 24 of the constitution.

## Education and Awareness

Although waste is removed, the main objective of clean-up campaigns through the Clean-up and Recycle South Africa Campaign is raising awareness of the effects of littering and promoting the best waste practices to ensure the environment stays clean and people take responsibility for their own waste. Clean-up campaigns encourage cohesion in communities and highlight the importance of a clean and healthy environment, building a sense of civic pride, appreciating their common environment.

Plastics SA supports the national mascot, **Billy Bin**, which was unveiled as part of the National Good Green Deeds Programme, by President Ramaphosa in March 2019. Billy Bin's mission is to create awareness of the effects of littering and illegal dumping, and remind everyone to keep their environment clean, promote good waste management practices and stop littering.



## Clean-up and Recycle 2023

[www.cleanupandrecycle.co.za](http://www.cleanupandrecycle.co.za)



A dirty environment can cause a general feeling of helplessness and hopelessness in the community. Through clean-ups and awareness campaigns, residents can experience how much can be accomplished, when there are many hands and minimal coordination. They learn how to address other issues at the same time e.g. crime and violence prevention, working together with government to improve local services etc.

## Recommendations and Conclusion

In view of the fact that littering is a behavioral issue, it will take time to change people's bad habits and get everyone to manage their waste better. However, awareness of the many green deeds that people are involved with, nationally, will assist in diverting the waste from landfill and reminding communities of what they could be doing to change the trajectory. These efforts need to be maximized and supported in order to get more people involved. To achieve this, more investment is needed to support the Clean-Up and Recycle SA project so that more bags and equipment can be procured to ensure successful clean-ups e.g. scales, protective clothing, advertisement on billboards, TV adverts, radio etc.

**Project made possible by funding and support from:**

*Ocean Conservancy, Pick n Pay, Plastics|SA, PETCO (PET Recycling Company), POLYCO (Polyolefin Recycling Company), SAVA (SA Vinyls Association), Packaging SA, Polo, Aquelle, Coca-Cola Beverages South Africa, The Glass Recycling Company, Paper Manufacturing Association of SA, Sasol, Safripol, Tuffy, Dow, Polo, EPR Waste Association of Southern Africa, Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment, Department of Water and Sanitation, Sustainable Seas Trust (African Marine Network), Inkwazi Isu Project and World Clean-up Day and our 1000's of volunteers across the country!!*

**Thank you go to the provincial Clean-Up coordinators for their dedication and hard work.**



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