

#EUBeachCleanup



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What's the #EUBeachCleanup?

- **Worldwide** campaign by DG MARE with EEAS and the UN – and the Smurfs, our mascots
- Inviting everyone to join or organise a **clean-up event**
- **7th edition** in 2024
- **555 clean-up events** in 2023, in 44 Countries
- **Who participates?**
- EU Representation & Delegations, UN offices, Embassies, Europe Direct Centers, EU Funded Projects, EU Climate Pact ambassadors, local authorities, NGOs, citizens...



#EUBeachCleanup objectives

- **Raise awareness** about marine pollution, and how our habits impact our ocean
- Showcase that **the EU walks the talk** – in line with the Green Deal
- Create **links with local partners** and citizens

Marine Litter: A Crash Course



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What is marine pollution?

- **Marine litter** (plastic, wood, metal, etc.)
- **Eutrophication** (nutrient pollution)
- **Contaminants** (pesticides, heavy metals, toxins)
- **Underwater noise** (oil drilling, shipping)
- **Ocean acidification** (atmosphere CO₂ dissolving in ocean)

Source: [EEA](#), 2024

What is marine litter?

- **Marine litter:** all human-made solid items that end up in the coastal or marine environment
- Macro vs micro
- **Major cause:** poor waste management and littering on land, although seaborne activities contribute to the problem
- **Land-based sources** = 80% → 85% of it = plastic

Source: [EEA](#), 2024



The plastic issue

- **Plastic packaging & small plastic items** = nearly 80% of plastic waste on European beaches
- Impact on marine life & human health via the **food chain**
- Persistent nature of plastic: can last up to **500 years**
- At the moment, plastics enter rivers and eventually spill into the sea: **626 million items** flow into European seas per year
- It is estimated that up to **37 million tonnes** of plastic waste will reach the ocean annually by 2040

What does the EU do?



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What does the EU do?

- [Single-Use Plastic Directive](#): tackling the 10 single-use plastic items most commonly found on Europe's beaches and fishing gear containing plastics
- [Measures to restrict intentionally added microplastics](#): preventing the release to the environment of about half a million tonnes of microplastics

What does the EU do?

- [The EU Zero Pollution Action Plan](#): setting targets for marine litter reduction – by 2030, reduce by 50% plastic litter at sea and by 30% microplastics released into the environment
- [Marine Strategy Framework Directive](#): threshold value for beach litter – bringing down the 2016 average of 150 litter items per 100m of coastline to maximum 20 items for every 100m of coastline
- [Circular Economy Action Plan](#)'s [Plastic Strategy](#)



EU-Funded Projects

- [Litter away](#): identifying sources & quantities of marine litter in the Finnish marine environment and how it got there, to explore how to reduce marine litter at source
- [SeaFilm](#): replacing single-use plastic film with algae-based biodegradable edible film
- [STRANDET](#): collecting plastic from local beaches, recycles it and turns it into fins for surfboards.

EU-Funded Projects

- [BLUENET](#): recycling abandoned, lost or discarded fishing and aquaculture gear
- [Gravity Wave](#): making stadium seats with plastic waste from the Mediterranean.
- [FLAGS](#) : scientists and fishers joining forces to remove marine litter



How you can help: Promoting the campaign



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Promoting the Campaign

- **Encourage people** to put up their own event
- **Encourage people** to join an event ([list](#) available on the #EUBeachCleanup Website)
- **Share the campaign on your accounts** – [copies, visuals](#), videos ([horizontal](#) & [vertical](#)) and quizzes all ready and available for all platforms
- Share the campaign with your **networks and stakeholders**

How you can help: Organising a clean-up



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Participating in the Campaign

- **Organise a clean-up!**
- Check out the guidelines on our [website](#)
- Register on the [#EUBeachCleanup](#) website
- Use the #EUBeachCleanup





Getting Volunteers Onboard

- **Spread the word:** announce your event through all available channels and use the hashtag **#EUBeachCleanup**
- **Reach out to local associations** including surf clubs, divers, anglers, as well as private companies like nearby hotels, resorts, harbours, marinas, ports...
- Need an idea for a **team building** exercise? Why not offer to your co-workers to team up!
- The more the merrier of course, but **do not get discouraged if you can't build a big team:** even a team of just five volunteers can do wonders to do a clean-up

Timing

- From 10 June to 31 October
- Key date: **World Cleanup Day – Friday 20 September**





Location, location, location

- Therefore, **#EUBeachCleanup actions are not limited to the coastline, but can be organised everywhere**, including along rivers, at the countryside, in cities, etc..
- A very large quantity of marine litter originates from land sources
- **#TheSeaStartsHere**

Location, location, location

- Think carefully about the location, considering proximity, accessibility, local facilities, access (preferably public transport)...
- Contact **local authorities** to ensure that you have the necessary permits, and agree on the modalities and possible cooperation



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Equipment

- Ensure **basic equipment** to hand-out to participants (gloves, litter sticks and litter bags (best if recyclable, and of uniform size) or warn people to bring some
- If needed, **Surfrider's Ocean Initiative** also has ready-made kits to organise clean-ups

Waste Management

- Provide a space where the waste can be **collected & weighed**
- If you expect that you will be collecting much more than local trashcans or nearby trash containers can take, turn to your local authorities to find out about waste **disposal options and facilities**
- Provide a separate container for dangerous waste such as broken glass, syringes...





Reporting

- Don't forget to [share your results](#) with us!
- How many people? How much waste?
- In line with GDPR, send us pictures and videos from your event so that we can share them on our social media or for future promotional material
- Tag us on social media with the pictures of your event!
- IG: @ourocean_eu
- FB: @EUMaritimeFish
- X: @EU_MARE



#EUBeachCleanup

- Thank you for your attention!
- Any questions? Is there anything I didn't cover?
- oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/eu-beach-cleanup
- EU-Beach-Clean@ec.europa.eu