



2016

South Africa - International Coastal Clean-up

Northern, Western and Eastern Cape Provinces



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This year was the 20th time that this event was held in the three Cape provinces. To celebrate this, the clean-up was dedicated to one of the finest leaders that South Africa has ever produced, **Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela**.

The total number of volunteers that participated during the 2016 cleanups was **9 243** (3 170 audited cleanups and 6 073 non-audited cleanups). The severe weather experienced during the cleanup period led to a drop in volunteer numbers compared to the large number in 2015.

More emphasis was placed on cleaning areas with none or little area cleansing done by local authorities. Large school group clean-ups still occurred in areas that are well serviced by local authorities as they tend to be safer.

After the International Coastal Cleanup, the reports and data provide an assessment of the scale of debris pollution affecting the South African aquatic environment. A positive outcome of the last few years' clean-ups 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. **The use of data is becoming an integral part of our Clean-up campaigns and education.**

Northern Cape

Audited cleanups = 312
Non-audited cleanups = 303

Total: 615

Western Cape

Audited Cleanup = 1 988
Non-audited cleanups = 4 366

Total: 6 354

Eastern Cape

Audited Cleanups = 870
Non-audited cleanups = 1 482

Total: 2 352

**Total
volunteers**

9 321





RESULTS

The number of clean-ups at rivers and estuaries has increased and many of these sites have now generated monthly clean-ups. A comment that was echoed by some coordinators was that there was less waste on the beaches than in the past. Unfortunately the data does not support these sentiments but it might be true for areas with monthly clean-ups.

Statistics obtained by conceivably the largest citizen scientist program in South Africa is providing a sound assessment of the state of marine debris in South Africa. 20 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).

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) 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 2016:

- *There has been a marked increase in paper bags as used by the fast food industry.*
- *Glass bottles have entered the top ten list for the first time in 20 years and pieces of glass are also to be found in the top ten list.*
- *Food wrappers (especially chip packets) were the most abundant macro item collected and have replaced bottle tops for the first time in many years.*
- *The number of plastic bottles (beverage) has also declined.*

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

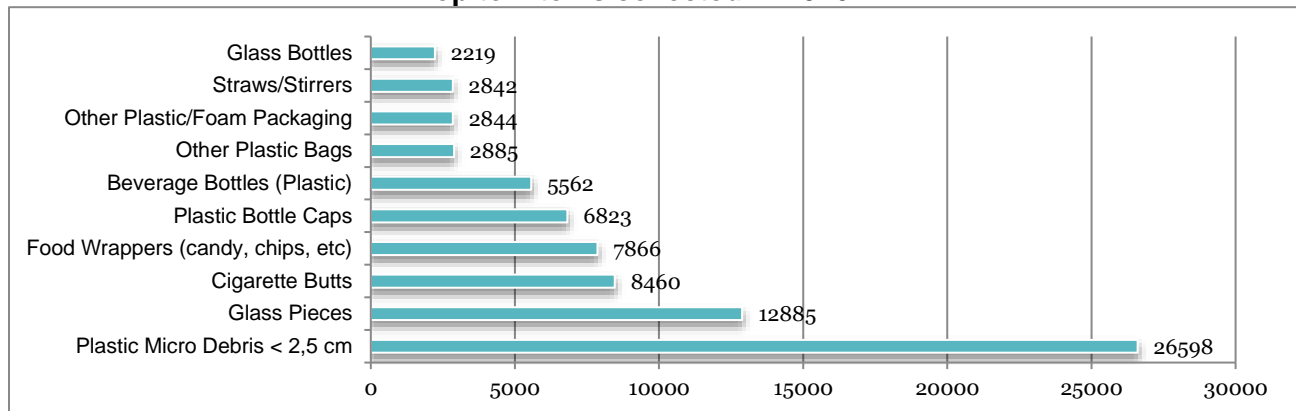
104 396 Items were collected via the audited cleanups.

People, Kilograms and Kilometers

Land Cleanups	
Number of people	6 151 Non-audited cleanups and 3 170 audited cleanups. Total: 9 321.
Weight of debris cleaned	>6,8 Tons*
Distance cleaned	>89.5 Km*
Number of bags filled	>1763*
Underwater Cleanups	
Number of people	80*
Weight of debris cleaned	150 Kg*
Distance cleaned	1000 Meters*
Number of bags filled	26*

**Does not include non-audited cleanup data.*

Top ten items collected in 2016



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.

- **Pick 'n Pay**
- **Kelpak**
- **PETCO**
- **Woolworths**
- **Plastics|SA**

CONCLUSION

Monthly cleanups by volunteer groups have become part of the landscape of volunteering in South Africa and it is encouraging to see this energy ensuring a cleaner and safer environment.

In 2017 we will be coordinating our 21st International Coastal Cleanup (16 September). In one way it is gloomy that we need to celebrate such activities, however the sustainability of the event shows the importance of this event in attempting to address the issue of poor waste management and littering in South Africa.

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



Report compiled by John Kieser
National Coordinator for the Cape Provinces of South Africa.

John.kieser@plasticssa.co.za

