

# South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP)

United Nations Environment Programme



## Coastal Cleanup Day

September 18, 2006

The September 18th is observed as the "Coastal CleanUp Day".

The coastal cleanup campaign is being organised in India by *UNEP -- South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP)/ South Asian Seas (SAS)* for developing 'Marine Litter Activity'.

- ◆ Marine litter is identified as a priority activity for both the SACEP and UNEP's Regional Seas Programme
- ◆ It is also the world's largest one-day volunteer effort to clean up the marine environment
- ◆ Hundreds of thousands of people worldwide collect debris
- ◆ The volunteers also found 237 entangled animals, in the marine debris. Most of the animals were saved because of the efforts of the volunteers
- ◆ Last year more than 450,000 people from over 90 countries around the world participated in the clean up collecting over 3,424,622.3935 kilograms

In India, during 1995, nearly 15,000 people participated to remove 253 tonnes of marine litter from a coast line of 238 km which was coordinated by Indian Coast Guard

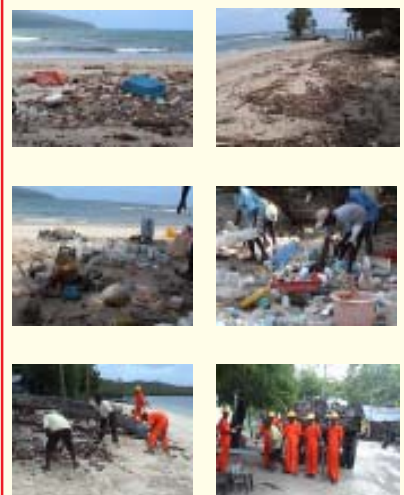
**History:** Once a girl was walking on a beach in Texas, US and she saw a large amount of trash littered around. Much disturbed by the unpleasant site she decided to pick up the trash. Other people on the beach saw what the girl was doing and joined her and in about 3 hrs, close to about three thousand Texans picked up 124 tons of trash from 122 miles of coastline!

### Top few marine litter found during the clean up day

- ❑ Cigarettes and cigarette filters
- ❑ Food wrappers and containers
- ❑ Caps/lids
- ❑ Bottles
- ❑ Tobacco packaging/wrappers
- ❑ Crab and lobster traps, fishing lines, nets – the fishermen usually throw away the old worn out traps and nets in the waters
- ❑ Plastic sheeting's, ropes, trapping bands, syringes, bags, balloons.

All these accounted for 60 to 80 percent of the world's marine pollution.

A glimpse of marine litter and coastal cleanup campaign



### Some of the effects of marine litter:

- ◆ The marine litter not only looks bad on the beaches but it can also be dangerous—to people and to wildlife both in and syringes, fishhooks, and broken bottles—and toxic debris, such as auto or boat batteries.
- ◆ The fishing line and nets, and strapping bands can entangle animals, and some animals may ingest straws, balloons, and plastic bags, mistaking them for food.
- ◆ Items such as broken glass and syringes pose health risks to people, both in and out of the water.
- ◆ The data collected during the cleanups show that a lot of the garbage on the coast and in the oceans came from land-based activities.

**Source :** Much of the debris reaches the ocean by people visiting the beaches and leaving wastes behind, the waste from land is blown into the water, or is carried by creeks, rivers, and storm drains to ocean areas. Other debris comes from activities on the water, including vessels (from small sailboats to large ships), offshore drilling rigs and platforms, and fishing docks.

**Marine flora & fauna:** Data on the effects of marine debris are sketchy, but rope (entanglement) and plastic fragments and pellets (ingestion) appear to pose the greatest threat to wildlife, while sewage, medical debris, and broken bottles/cans appear to pose the greatest threat to human health. Reduced recreational use of fouled shore areas is perhaps the most significant economic impact of marine debris.

**Islands:** Our country has more than 1600 islands. These islands are unique marine ecosystem consisting of corals, marine organisms – some are endangered, unique, mangrove etc., During 2003 & 2004, the marine litter were reported in the beautiful scenic, pristine beaches of Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep group of Islands. A scientific study in Nicobar Islands revealed that floating debris ranged from disposable plastic cups to pressurized containers to automobile parts were brought by surface currents.

**Outcome:** The final information is then used to educate the public about the problem of marine debris and to formulate methodology to control marine litter management.

**Students:** Students can play an active role by organizing coastal cleanup campaign near beaches close to your University/College/School/Residence. Participation of individual or group of students can be involved in this national exercise.

NGOs are invited to associate with us.

### *Post your information to:*

The collected information on location, number of people participated, type and quantity of litter removed can be informed to

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