

A brief report on
International Coastal Clean-up Day-2017
at
Elliot's Beach, Besant Nagar Chennai
on
16th September, 2017



Integrated Coastal and Marine Area Management (ICMAM)-PD
Ministry of Earth Sciences, Govt. of India
Chennai
2017

The International coastal clean-up day is being celebrated Globally on the third Saturday of September every year under the aegis of United Nations Environment programme (UNEP) and South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) in the South Asian Region. This day was established by the Ocean Conservancy, an organization devoted to protect and create an awareness among the people about our seas and coasts that are facing multifarious challenges from various sources on daily basis. The Indian Government has initiated the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan with an aim of a cleaner India and this coastal clean-up program helps general public and coastal stake holders to care their coastline. Urbanization and population growth increasing at a rapid rate in developing countries like India, the management of solid waste has become a major public health and environmental concern and challenge. The lack of waste management strategies, planning and facilities is resulting in uncontrolled solid waste pollution of both terrestrial and marine environments.

Integrated Coastal and Marine Area Management Project Directorate (ICMAM-PD) in association with Indian Coast Guard (ICG), South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), Surfers Against Sewage (SAS) and United Nation conducted the International Coastal Cleanup Day on 16th September 2017. The programme was held at Elliot's Beach, Besant Nagar, Chennai. Students from Kendriya Vidyalayas (CLRI and IIT KVs), local schools, Participants from NGO's, local fisher community and municipality personnel were participated in the programme.



The Programme began at Elliot's Beach at 7:00 am. The programme was initiated by talks given by the Inspector General (IG) Rajan Bargotra, Commander of coast guard (Eastern region). Dr. D. Mohan, Senior Scientist ICMAM-PD shared his views in Tamil for the benefit of the locals, on the importance of coasts and necessity to keep the coastal ocean clean. Dr. Pulkesh Mandal, Sr. Program officer, SACEP and Dr. Supraja Dharani, NGO has address the gathering with their inspiring words and highlighted the importance of coastal cleanness and their consequences. Following this, IG Rajan flagged off to begin the clean-up activities.



Necessary gears such as, caps, gloves and masks were provided to the volunteers to ensure personal hygiene and safety. During one hour of cleaning operation, around 100 bags filled with wastes and derbies collected from the beach. There was waste of all kinds on the beach, wrapper, shoes, remains of food stuffs, papers, food packages, and dangerous objects such as broken bottles, sharp metallic objects. Some part of the beach was littered with human and animal faeces, indicating the use of this area for open defecation. The most collected item was gutka packets, chocolate and ice cream wrappers and straws. These small plastic pieces pose a huge threat to ocean animals that can ingest them. Some of these wastes are carried by the ocean from distant places which than wash up on the shore while other garbage is left behind on the beach by visitors. Many of the waste was found stranded in the sand vegetation.



To popularise the Coastal Cleanup day and for larger coverage, live telecast was arranged on the ICMAM- PD website (<http://www.icmam.gov.in/clean12017/index.htm>). Dr. D.Mohan, scientist, ICMAM delivered a talk in All India Radio in local language (Tamil) on 15th September 2017 as part of awareness program (Annexure -I: English translation of the talk). Mr. Alok Kumar Ojha, Chief Post Master, General Post Office (GPO) was invited by ICMAM, shared his views with the participants in the Clean-up program. Mr Ojha during his interaction with the scientists of ICMAM and higher officials of Indian Coast Guard appreciated for their activities and promised for larger such participations in the future. Certificate of Participation was given to the school and college students, acknowledging and inspiring their support to this cause. Refreshments were provided to all the participants.

Through this programme, we aim to set an example to the people of the city and encourage them to be an active and conscious part of the cause towards a cleaner city. Also, such events allow highlighting the fact that the every citizen of the country is responsible for keeping the environment clean and pollution-free, and not just the Government. Knowing the effect of open defecation on the health of the beach ecosystem

and to the health of thousands of people visiting the beach, some urgent actions need to be taken by local authorities.

The programme co-ordinator Dr. P Mishra, Scientist-F on behalf of ICMAM-PD thanked the volunteers, all the partners, participants and especially the school students who enthusiastically participated in the programme and made the Cleanup a reality.

Pollution of coastal environments limits our ability to use beaches for economic, recreational, and aesthetic purposes. Such cleanup programmes inculcate a sense of responsibility among general public and young generations, on the problem of garbage dumped into the sea and its effects on marine ecosystem.

Thanks to all volunteers of ICMAM-PD and other participating organisations for making the clean-up program successful. The International Coastal Clean-up is a better mode of demonstration, leading and inspiring action in support of keeping our coast clean.



Annexure- I

English translation of Coastal Clean-up Awareness through All India Radio (AIR) on 15th September 2017

Around the world human beings are benefited and enjoy near to the coast and coastlines where fresh air, peace of mind and relaxation. The population and their livelihood along the coastal cities are believed to be important for our national, industrial and economic development. India extends about 7500 km of coastline. The beaches adjacent to the cities are being a better tourist spots and visitors are intend to throw directly the leftover food packets, plastic bottles, empty ice cream cups and other wastes everywhere instead of using dustbins kept in the beaches. Similarly, a large amount of various solid and liquid wastes like sewage and industrial effluents are generated and disposed to the sea and the marine organisms are being affected including humans due to contaminated seafood consumption. Hence a regulatory action is necessarily taken. Considering this fact, for the past 25 years the Ministry of Earth Sciences (the then Department of Ocean Development (DOD), Govt. of India has been implementing a Seawater Quality Monitoring programme covering about 25 locations along Indian coast. The seawater quality report of 25 locations were submitted to State Pollution Control Boards of concerned coastal districts and the data are also uploaded for public use into the website of Indian National Coastal Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad. This project has been implemented through grant-in-aid and coordinated by our Integrated Coastal and Marine Area Management Project Directorate (ICMAM-PD), Ministry of Earth Sciences, Govt. of India.

The seawater in the coastal regions is being used for various designated uses and the water quality criteria/standards are developed based on the several uses along the coastal water body. As per the Gazette notification of Environmental Protection Act (1986) and as amended in 1998, the water quality standards for certain physical and chemical parameters should be maintained. However, some of the toxic heavy metals like Cr, As and Pb were not notified in the and seawater quality standards for these metals are also important in order to

protect aquatic life as well as humans. Hence, ICMAM-PD also implementing a 'Marine Ecotoxicology' project for the conduct of toxicity bioassays and development of water quality criteria for priority metals and pesticides. This Water Quality Criteria for heavy metals was submitted to Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for review.

The coastal environment like estuaries, lagoons and lakes are also polluted by land based activities. A pilot project on ecological risk assessment was carried out by ICMAM-PD for classifying the level of risk for selected heavy metals at Ennore creek. Based on the findings of the study, the programme is planned to implement during this year (2017-18) for ecological risk assessment of heavy metals in other estuaries and lakes. Considering the importance of coastal cleanliness, the International Coastal Cleanup day is being celebrated during the third Saturday of September every year. In this regard, The South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), UNEP, Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) and Indian Coast Guard is planning to commemorate International **Coastal Clean-up Day' 2017** on 16thSeptember' 2017 at Elliot's Beach, Besant Nagar, Chennai, in order to create awareness and motivation to public, NGOs students and beach users on par with the memorable slogan of Prime Minister's campaign 'Swatch Bharat'. In this connection, we are inviting NGOs, Social volunteers, school and college students for their participation in the cleaning of coast at 7.00 am

'Friends we will meet tomorrow at 7.00 am in the Elliot's Beach, Besant Nagar'

"Pollution free Sea is the human's wealth"

