

2018 International Coastal Clean-up results reveals SA's top pollutants

The results of the 2018 International Coastal Clean-up, which took place on 15 September, showed that broken down plastic pieces, foam pieces, cigarette butts, bottle caps continue to be some of the biggest pollutants on SA beaches.



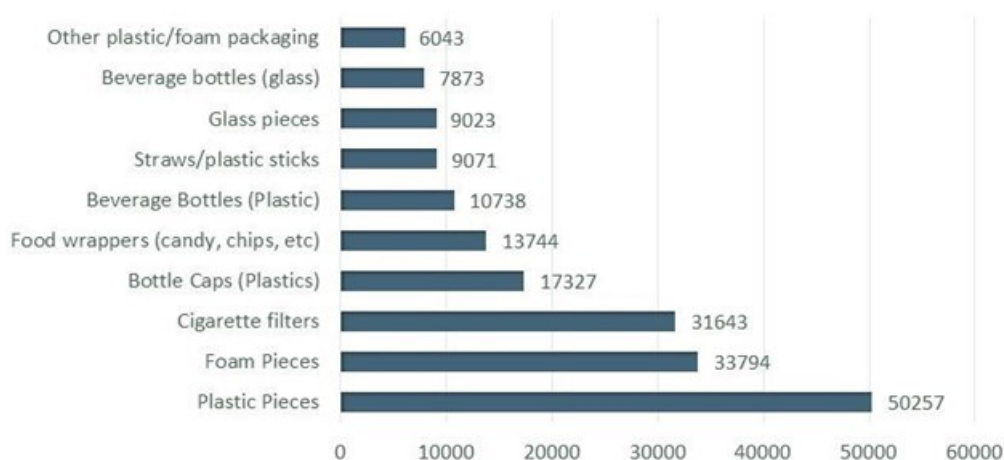
“For more than two decades, thousands of South African volunteers have been joining the rest of the world on the third Saturday of September to remove, collect and document the litter from our country’s coastlines. During the 2018 event, 19,563 volunteers collected 241,425 items nationally in audited clean-ups that took place along the country’s 2,500km long coastline,” reports John Kieser, sustainability manager of Plastics|SA and Western Cape ICC coordinator of the annual event.

2018 South African Volunteer Numbers	
Northern Cape	1 078
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audited Clean-ups Non Audited Clean-ups 	790 288
Western Cape	9 381
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audited Clean-ups Non Audited Clean-ups 	2 476 6 905
Eastern Cape	6 351
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audited Clean-ups Non Audited Clean-ups 	1 867 4 484
KwaZulu-Natal	More than 2 753
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audited Clean-Ups Non Audited Clean-Ups 	2 753 Not available

Top pollutants on South Africa's beaches

According to Kieser, the most recent results showed that broken down plastic pieces, foam pieces, cigarette butts, bottle caps, food wrappers (such as chip packets and sweet wrappers), glass pieces, beverage bottles, straws and lolly sticks continue to be the biggest pollutants on our country's beaches.

Asthma pumps were the most prolific medical items found in the three Cape provinces, whilst in Kwazulu-Natal (especially in urban clean-ups), it was disposable syringes.



2018 top pollutants on SA beaches

“The main cause of litter on our beaches and in the marine environment, is irresponsible human behaviour. The improper disposal of waste and a lack of waste management infrastructure are the two biggest issues that need to be addressed and corrected,” he stressed. Kieser added that the increase in the amount of disposable diapers found illegally dumped

(especially around informal settlements) was another area of concern, whilst nationally, approximately 2,5km of rope/string and 2,8km of monofilament line (fishing line) were also removed from our beaches.

Plastics and packaging industry taking action

“Without the commitment and involvement of our partners, last year’s event 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 large corporates such as Plastics|SA, Dow, Sasol, Coca-Cola, Kelpak, Pick n Pay, Toyota Algoa Bay, UNITRANS, PETCO (PET Recycling Company), POLYCO (Polyolefin Recycling Company), SAVA (SA Vinyls Association), the Polystyrene Association of SA, Tuffy Manufacturing, Woolworths, the National Recycling Forum, the Glass Recycling Company, the Paper Recycling Association of SA, Metpac-SA, Tetrapak, ROSE Foundation, Department of Environmental Affairs, Ocean Conservancy and the African Marine Waste Network,” Kieser said.

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