



South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme & Indian Coast Guard Jointly Organise International Coastal Cleanup Day



September 18, 2009 is observed as "Coastal Cleanup Day".

In India, the international Coastal Cleanup day is organised by Indian Coast Guard supported by Loyola College, TREE Foundation and various other Governmental and Non – Governmental Organisations under the Initiative of SACEP

Ministry of Defense has appointed the Indian Coast Guard as the coordinating agency for the event since environment protection is one of the statutory duties of the Coast Guard.

Every year a large representation of volunteers/participants from the Army, Navy, Coast Guard, Air Force, Central Industrial Security Force, Police, various Government Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations, and a large number of corporate companies and educational Institutions participate in the event.

Marine debris is a problem along shorelines, in coastal waters, estuaries and oceans throughout the world. Marine litter is any manmade solid material that enters our waterways either directly or indirectly. As more people move near the coast each year the production of trash and the potential for marine debris continue to increase. Trash on the beach can be harmful to the health and safety of beach users. It also makes the beach look ugly and dirty. Many types of animals like seals, turtles, birds, fishes and crabs can be wounded, strangled, or unable to swim if they consume or become entangled in marine debris. India has a vast coastline and the quantity and type of marine debris along the Indian coast has not been documented so far.

Mission of the ICC

The International Coastal Cleanup engages people to remove trash and debris from the world's beaches and waterways, to identify the sources of debris and to change the behaviours that cause pollution



Highlights of ICC Day

India During this campaign in 2006, about 30,000 people participated in this social endeavour and collected 307.5 tonnes of marine litter from a stretch of 238 km coastline. In 2007, 20000 people participated and collected 100 tonnes of debris along the Indian coast. On 20 September 2008, nearly 10000 people participated to remove 60 tonnes of debris along the Indian coast.

Global : It is reported that Marine Debris will likely worsen in the 21st Century (Science Daily Sep. 21, 2008). The current measures to prevent and reduce marine debris are inadequate, and the problem will likely worsen. In 2007, more than 378,192 volunteers participated in the International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) worldwide. These volunteers donated their time to remove 6,075,698 pounds of debris from over 33,426 miles of shoreline – approximately 182 pounds of trash collected per mile.

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: India has more than 1600 islands. These islands are unique marine ecosystem consisting of corals, marine organisms – some are endangered, unique, mangrove etc., 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.

South Asia

The South Asian countries: Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have joined together to prepare a Framework for Marine Litter Activity in the South Asian Seas Region.

Source : From the data available, it could be inferred that the major sources of marine pollution including debris/litter in the SAS Region, are domestic/industrial wastes, ports and harbours including fishing harbours and landing centres, ship breaking yards, fish/food processing industries, tourist resorts/beaches, solid waste dumping, urban runoff, oil rigs, coastal aquaculture, fishing industry including fishing gear, shipping including garbage from ships, recreational and leisure use, marine mining, construction activities, etc.

Types : The types of marine litter include plastics, polystyrene, rubber, wood, metals, sanitary or sewage related debris, paper and cardboard, cloth, glass, pottery/ceramic, monofilament fishing line, waxed milk carton, fruit peel, cigarettes, cigarette fibre, cigar tips, and other tobacco related packaging/wrappers, used batteries, building materials, fishing lines, floats, marking buoys and abandoned cut pieces of used nets, etc.

