

PLASTICS



Plastics SA is calling on all South Africans to participate in the annual Clean-Up & Recycle SA week, taking place from 13 to 18 September 2021.

SA GEARS UP TO CELEBRATE Clean-up & Recycle SA Week

Plastics SA – the umbrella body representing the entire plastics industry – is gearing up to celebrate Clean-up & Recycle SA Week 2021.

This year's week will once again culminate in National Recycling Day on Friday, 17 September 2021 and the International Coastal Clean-up Day/Let's Do It World Clean-up Day on Saturday, 18 September 2021.

Apart from raising awareness and supporting clean-up initiatives by donating refuse bags, gloves and other equipment needed, this will also be the 25th year that Plastics SA will be coordinating South Africa's participation in the International Coastal Clean-up Day – the world's biggest volunteer effort for ocean health.

"Clean-up & Recycle SA Week has become a highlight on our country's environmental calendar. This annual public awareness week is supported by all the packaging streams in South Africa and encourages citizens, corporates and municipalities to help remove all visible litter from our country's neighbourhoods and streets, rivers, streams, beaches and oceans," explains Douw Steyn, sustainability director, Plastics SA.

Plastics SA is hoping that this year will see a repeat of the huge success of last year's Clean-up & Recycle SA Week. Despite Covid-19 restrictions

prohibiting large groups at public clean-ups and gatherings that have become synonymous with this public awareness and volunteer effort, the spirit of camaraderie, positivity and willingness to make a difference in our environment definitely made 2020 one of the most memorable years.

"Like last year, we are once again advocating that South Africans be eco-warriors in their own neighbourhoods by picking up any litter on our beaches or strewn in streets, rivers, streams or canals. Where community clean-ups are planned, we urge the organisers to adhere to safety protocols by limiting the number of volunteers participating, ensuring that participants wear their masks, checking that they maintain social distancing, and that enough sanitising stations are in place," Steyn says.

2020 highlights

Highlights of the 2020 Clean-up & Recycle SA Week included the launch of the Inkwazi Isu (Fish Eagle Project) by the KZN Marine Waste Network South Coast and the participation of Barbara Creecy – Minister of Forestry, Fisheries

and the Environment – in a beach clean-up at Dakota Beach, Umbogintwini in KZN, where 697 bags were collected with a weight of over 2.4 tonnes.

In the Cape provinces, several hundreds of kilometres of the country's coastline were cleaned in more than 72 audited clean-ups, while several more non-audited, informal clean-ups took place during the week.

Fifteen 4x4 clubs hosted their clean-ups, as did several diving groups, who hosted underwater clean-ups. In the Cape provinces, 20 tonnes of litter was removed, separated and sent for recycling on International Coastal Clean-up Day alone!

"South Africa and the rest of the world continues to go through a very difficult period in our history as we are still trying to beat the ravaging effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, lockdowns, riots and public disturbances. However, each year, Clean-up & Recycle SA Week manages to restore hope as South Africans of all ages and walks of life unite in their efforts and volunteer their time and energy to help make South Africa a brighter, cleaner place for all!" Steyn concludes. **3S**

For more information about Clean-up & Recycle SA Week and where organised clean-ups will take place during September 2021, visit www.cleanupandrecycle.co.za or www.plasticsinfo.co.za.