

## Hong Kong Cleanup Celebrates Record-Breaking 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Cleanup Challenge with 75,623 participants

***HKSAR Permanent Secretary for the Environment Ms. Anissa Wong and Celebrity Ambassadors Jocelyn and Tony Sandstrom, Ankie Beilke join co-founders Lisa Christensen and Nissa Marion to show their support for the well-loved initiative***

**Hong Kong, December 17, 2015** – The 2015 Hong Kong Cleanup concluded this month marking the most successful initiative in its 15 year history. During this year’s community Cleanup Challenge event, **75,623 participants** cleaned up an estimated 5,683,891 pieces of trash weighing in total 4,616,067 **kg** from **2,447 kilometres** of Hong Kong’s coastlines, country parks and urban environments.

Hundreds of teams comprising companies from all sectors took part, including CLP, H&M, Fidelity, Hitachi, Bloomberg, and the University of Hong Kong, as well as thought leaders and celebrities, notably Secretary for the Environment KS Wong and celebrities such as Marcus Kwok (郭田蔭) and Rachel Lam (林熹瞳), to name a few.

Official organiser Ecozine and co-organiser The Nature Conservancy were joined by **Permanent Secretary for the Environment Ms. Anissa Wong** as well as **Celebrity Ambassadors Jocelyn and Anthony Sandstrom and Ankie Beilke** in celebration of this success, along with key sponsor Nomura, at a press conference at Kee Club on 17<sup>th</sup> December. Winners for each Cleanup Challenge category were announced, with the grand prize for Most Trash Collected being won by Nomura (by pieces), Standard Chartered Bank (by weight), The Nature Conservancy (per person), and The Canadian Chamber of Commerce (country park trails), respectively.

The Hong Kong Cleanup Challenge is the region’s largest volunteer environmental event; it engages citizens from all walks of life in cleanup activities, which are aimed at not only removing harmful trash from nature, but also raising awareness through hands-on experiences. Hugely popular among corporates and schools, the event also sees clubs, communities, families, NGOs and even government departments joining the annual effort. Over the ten-week 2015 Challenge (Sept 1st – Dec 1st), hundreds of teams carried out cleanups across the region.

**Lisa Christensen, Founder and CEO**, said, “Hong Kong Cleanup has had an unmistakable impact on the environment and community. What started 15 years ago as a simple idea with a few friends has grown into a civic movement empowered by over 250,000 people. It has inspired numerous other NGO and government actions in that time.” However, she added, the work will continue: “With all this momentum, we are confident that together with our community and with increased government action, we can clean up Hong Kong.”

**Cofounder and Event Director Nissa Marion** adds, “The cleanup is only the beginning. Our ultimate end goal is to put ourselves out of a job! We want to eliminate the problem of trash that plagues our ecosystems, and we believe this is possible within our lifetime, through citizen behaviour change supported by zero waste goals, extended producer responsibility and government policy.”

Highlighting the HKSAR Government’s support, **Hong Kong Secretary for the Environment, Wong Kam-sing** offered the following congratulations: “We need the efforts of everybody to reduce waste and keep our city clean and green. The cleanup and public education efforts by Hong Kong Cleanup over the past 15 years have succeeded in mobilising an increasing number of volunteers to clean up coastal areas, as well as hiking trails, country parks, and even schools and offices. This does not just help keep our city clean but is important in reminding everyone the need to reduce waste at source. I wish Hong Kong Cleanup success in achieving its goal to engage 5% of Hong Kong population in their cleanup challenges soon. We all have a role in keeping Hong Kong clean and green. Let’s act now!”



**Permanent Secretary for the Environment Anissa Wong** added her support in person at the press conference, citing the importance of individual responsibility and encouraging Hong Kong citizens to not only join the cleanup effort but to consider their individual waste habits throughout the year.

“Nature offers ‘eco-system’ services to human beings which include food, resources, medicine, and more importantly, solace for urban dwellers like us. Hong Kong is so blessed to have such easy access to hiking trails and sandy, white beaches so nearby. We fully support the Hong Kong Cleanup, which is a great way to raise awareness of the importance of nature conservation and also let people be engaged and have ownership for nature’s future,” said **Louisa Ho, Executive Director of the Hong Kong Program for The Nature Conservancy**, co-organizer of the event.

In addition to being a well-loved household name locally, the Hong Kong Cleanup represents part of a massive global movement that has been led by U.S.-based Ocean Conservancy for 30 years. As official coordinator of Ocean Conservancy’s International Coastal Cleanup (ICC), the Hong Kong event contributes to global cleanup, awareness and solution-seeking efforts.

“Through these impressive results, the Hong Kong Cleanup has demonstrated the positive impact of cooperation and action in helping keep our ocean free from trash,” said **Allison Schutes, Trash Free Seas Program Senior Manager at Ocean Conservancy**. “Along with our congratulations, Ocean Conservancy also extends a hand of friendship to Hong Kong so that together we can find lasting solutions to ensure that Hong Kong’s and global coastlines stay beautiful and that our oceans remain rich and fruitful for this and future generations.”

To this end, Hong Kong Cleanup organisers have set an ambitious goal for its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary: to engage 5% of Hong Kong’s population this year. They are 1/3 of the way to this goal, starting with the 75,623 who have participated during the Cleanup Challenge season, and the 26,600 members of their online community. Looking ahead, the organisers are planning new events and campaigns to increase citizen engagement touch-points throughout 2016 – including launching The Zero Waste Corporate Challenge and a second edition of the successful Zero Waste Week campaign and Global Summit.

For winners of the 2015 Cleanup Challenge, please see appendix below.

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### **About Us**

**The Hong Kong Cleanup**, having engaged over 250,000 volunteers in cleaning up over 22 million pieces of trash and now in its 15th year, is firmly established as a well-loved and vital part of the Hong Kong event landscape. Its aim is to educate, empower and advocate Hong Kong citizens on the subject of waste reduction in support of a cleaner, healthier future for Hong Kong and the planet. [HKcleanup.org](http://HKcleanup.org)

**Ecozine** is an award winning media platform devoted to modern green living, for people who want to enjoy life without costing the Earth. Ecozine’s mission is to make green mainstream, by providing content, experiences, and tools to serve our community. Producing a quarterly print magazine, free weekly e-newsletter, daily-updated website resources and world-class events, Ecozine is a go-to guide for conscious consumers. Ecozine is the Organiser of the Hong Kong Cleanup. [Ecozine.com](http://Ecozine.com)

**The Nature Conservancy (TNC)** is Hong Kong Cleanup’s partner and official co-organiser. TNC is one of the world’s leading non-profit conservation organization working around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters that all life depends. Through their science-based, non-confrontational approach, TNC addresses the most pressing conservation threats at the largest scale. Thanks to the support of more than 1 million members worldwide, TNC has built a tremendous record of success since their founding in 1951. For more information about TNC please visit [tnc.org.hk](http://tnc.org.hk)

**APPENDIX: Hong Kong Cleanup Challenge Winners**

<b>COASTAL</b>	<b>COUNTRY &amp; CITY</b>
<p><u>Weirdest Finds:</u>            Santa Fe Relocations            Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer            Island Cub Scout Pack 1368            DB Green / Plastic Free Seas</p> <p><u>Greenest Teams:</u>            The University of Hong Kong            JP Morgan            Italian Chamber            Hong Kong Academy</p> <p><u>Best Team Spirit:</u>            Kerry Holdings            QI Group international            Oriental Press Group            Bank of America Merrill Lynch            Fidelity</p> <p><u>Largest Non-Corporate Teams:</u>            Victoria Shanghai Academy            ICS Roots &amp; Shoots            The ISF Academy PTA</p> <p><u>Largest Corporate Teams:</u>            Hitachi Group            Zurich            H&amp;M</p> <p><u>Most Trash Collected:</u>            By pieces - Nomura            By weight - Standard Chartered Bank            Per person - The Nature Conservancy            Bay By Bay            Victoria Shanghai Academy</p>	<p><u>Weirdest Find:</u>            Hong Kong Hiking Meetup</p> <p><u>Greenest Team:</u>            Lingnan Dr Chung Wing Kwong Memorial            Secondary School</p> <p><u>Best Team Spirit:</u>            "Team ROB" (Rubbish Off Beaches) - Rob and            Ros Barker</p> <p><u>Largest Non-Corporate Teams:</u>            The Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Hong            Kong            Hong Kong Hiking Meetup            CanCham</p> <p><u>Largest Corporate Teams:</u>            Nomura            Quintiles Hong Kong            Robeco</p> <p><u>Most Trash Collected:</u>            The Green Race            CanCham            Robeco</p>