

## TIDAL WAVE OF TRASH LASHES HONG KONG BEACHES

*Public, Volunteers and Organizers of Hong Kong Cleanup Issue Sharp Call For More Government Action*

*Tuesday 5th July, Hong Kong Island* – The long weekend in Hong Kong was marred by a torrent of plastic and solid waste that turned the coastal waters into a virtual cesspool, with beaches caked in layers of trash. Public outcry from thousands of concerned citizens resulting in viral posts being shared on social media, demanding the Government take more serious action.

“It should be the Government's responsibility to effectively address major environmental concerns such as marine debris; to consider its effects on citizens' health and safety, economy, and natural resources, and act accordingly,” said Lisa Christensen, Founder and CEO of Hong Kong Cleanup.

Concerned citizens and the NGO community within Hong Kong shared disturbing images, while Christensen sent to local Government leaders a strong demand for action. In the letter, she noted, “We are on the brink of an absolute waste crisis, and yet we seem to be taking small, hesitant steps in the face of it!... It's time for the Hong Kong Government to invest serious capital into a massive clean up effort, and start working on upstream solutions to stop the trash at source.”

### **Public Action Needed Now More Than Ever**

In the midst of the outcry, the Hong Kong Cleanup Challenge officially started its 16th year of mobilizing a volunteer army to address the growing emergency. Registrations for the Challenge are now open, with more information found [here](#).

The Challenge, organized by [Ecozine](#) and part of Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup in Hong Kong, will take place between 1st September and 1st December across beaches, country trails and urban areas throughout Hong Kong. Registration details and more information can be found at [HKcleanup.org](http://HKcleanup.org)

The Hong Kong Cleanup Challenge has firmly established itself as a vital part of the local environmental landscape. Participation has grown by 30% every year, with over 270,000 volunteers cleaning up over 22 million pieces of trash since 2000. Last year, over 75,000 participants removed over 4 million kg of trash last year. Full data can be found in the [2015 Hong Kong Cleanup Report](#). The Challenge also supports Ocean Conservancy, the official charity partner for the event.

15 years' collation of trash and data, coupled with volunteer feedback, have shown a need for even greater community engagement and action, and regional cooperation. The Hong Kong Cleanup team will be proudly hosting a global coordinators conference, in November of this year. Celebrating Ocean Conservancy's 30th year running the International Coastal Cleanup, the event will bring together the influencers and leaders of the clean oceans movement from all over the world.

Nicholas Mallos, director of the Trash Free Seas Program at Ocean Conservancy, said, “There is an alarming volume of trash in the ocean, and we need to take action to stem the tide and ultimately

reverse this trend. If this trend continues, it is projected that by 2025 there could be one ton of plastic for every three tons of fin fish. With activities like the Hong Kong Cleanup, the amount of trash that people working together picked up, can result in cleaner beaches, rivers and lakes for all to enjoy.”

The Hong Kong Cleanup team urges all Hong Kong citizens to show their concern by gathering a team and signing up for the 2016 Cleanup Challenge. Registration is NOW OPEN, and joining is simple as 1-2-3:

1. Get a group of colleagues, friends, family or community members together and choose your favorite beach, country trail or urban area;
2. Pick a date between 1 September – 1 December, and;
3. [REGISTER](#) online today!

## Notes to Editors

### HONG KONG CLEANUP CHALLENGE REGISTRATION INCLUDES:

- Team registration and participation in the 2016 Cleanup Challenge
- Opportunity to win gold, silver or bronze awards in the Challenge and be recognized at the 2016 Awards Ceremony
- Team Captain invitation to the 2016 Awards Ceremony event
- Guides, Tips and Data Materials for your cleanup
- Attendance at a 'how-to' cleanup seminar
- Limited edition 2016 Hong Kong Cleanup t-shirt from Tsunami Sportswear
- A Hong Kong Cleanup reusable water bottle for the Team Captain
- “10 Ways To Reduce Marine Litter” infographic poster
- Charity discount on custom team t-shirts and other partner merchandise
- Access to 2016 campaign materials to promote each team’s efforts
- Team name acknowledged in the official 2015 Hong Kong Cleanup Report and on website

### YEAR-LONG MEMBERSHIP:

- A one-year subscription to *Ecozine* quarterly eco-lifestyle magazine
- 'Make a Pledge': opportunities to reduce personal and corporate waste footprint throughout the year
- Access to regular updates, news and invitations throughout the year
- Discounts on tickets for Ecozine and Hong Kong Cleanup conferences and events

For more information on the Hong Kong Cleanup Challenge visit [HKcleanup.org](http://HKcleanup.org), or the Hong Kong Cleanup [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) pages

Image bank here: <https://goo.gl/J47V4c>

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## **About The Hong Kong Cleanup**

The Hong Kong Cleanup is a year-long education platform that works with communities, schools, government and businesses to provide practical solutions to help us all live more sustainably every day of the year. Throughout the year, the Hong Kong Cleanup team organizes managed cleanup events for corporations wishing to plan a day out doing something meaningful with their employees and coworkers, as well as campaigns and educational activities. The Hong Kong Cleanup is the official coordinator of the global cleanup movement on behalf of Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup, and Let's Do It! World Cleanup, which is sanctioned by UNEP.

## **About Ecozine**

Ecozine is a premier multi-award-winning sustainable lifestyle magazine, for people who want to live well without costing the Earth. Its mission is to make green mainstream, by providing content, experiences, and tools to serve the community. It is a go-to guide for smarter living, offering print, digital and events, including the signature events Hong Kong Cleanup and Zero Waste Week.

## **About the International Coastal Cleanup**

The International Coastal Cleanup has reached its 30<sup>th</sup> year. Over 30 years, more than 225 million items of trash have been logged and removed from our beaches and waterways. Last year, more than eight million kilograms of trash—equivalent to the weight of over 100 Boeing 737s—was collected by nearly 800,000 volunteers. Together with its charity partners, it produces [The Ocean Trash Index](#), the world's largest item-by-item, location-by-location database of trash found in near-shore environments. This database is the cumulative result of more than 11.5 million volunteers helping to better assess the problem of trash in near-shore environments over 30 years.