



“Harnessing the power of people to fight ocean trash” - International Coastal Cleanup 2020

The International Coastal Cleanup began more than 30 years ago, when communities rallied together with the common goal of collecting and documenting the trash littering their coastline. The movement was catalyzed by the passion and spirit of two committed individuals. Back in 1986, Linda Maraniss moved to Texas from Washington, DC, where she had been working for Ocean Conservancy. She'd been inspired by the work her Ocean Conservancy colleague Kathy O'Hara was doing on a groundbreaking report called *Plastics in the Ocean: More than a Litter Problem* that would be published the next year. Linda and Kathy reached out to the Texas General Land Office, local businesses and other dedicated ocean-lovers, and planned what would become Ocean Conservancy's first cleanup. **They asked volunteers to go beyond picking up trash and record each item collected on a standardized data card in order to identify ways to eliminate ocean trash in the future.** More than three decades later, ICC has grown into the largest global volunteer effort for the protection of the environment with participants from more than 100 countries.

The Caribbean Youth Environment Network Guyana Chapter and the Environmental Protection Agency have been collaborating for the past six years to coordinate and execute activities for the coastal cleanup. The event in Guyana mirrors that which takes place on a global scale; from an ever growing number of volunteers, to the type of litter collected and recorded. Last year, approximately 500 volunteers joined the 3 day effort and collected more than 36, 849 pieces of litter from our coastlines at the Kingston Seawall and at #63 Beach. During the cleanup in 2019, here's what we found:

Item	Total number
Plastic beverage bottles	10, 680
Plastic bottle caps	2, 833
Plastic pieces	2, 237
Glass beverage bottles	2, 003
Plastic cups and plates	1, 764
Metal bottle caps	1, 523
Beverage cans	1, 363
Straws and stirrers	1, 333
Other plastic bags	1, 080

#CleanOn - Cleanup during COVID

This year, the International Coastal Cleanup will be held under the theme **“Harnessing the power of people to fight ocean trash”**. Given the current COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent restrictions on large gatherings, the CYEN Guyana Chapter as the National Coordinating Body, has taken the decision to postpone the activity to a later, safer date. Where safe, small cleanups can happen, and volunteers are asked to track their impact, collecting important data on the amount and types of trash collected and submitting it all through Ocean Conservancy’s app, Clean Swell.

Here’s what you can do beyond ICC:

- In your community: If you can, do an individual or small-scale, socially distant cleanup in your neighborhood;
- At home: Learn how you can reduce waste; and
- Support the ban on single use plastics and other waste management legislation.

The EPA wishes to thank all groups and individuals involved in the coordination and execution of ICC over the years - for their unwavering support, time and effort.

The full ICC Guyana report can be downloaded from the EPA website

<http://www.epaguyana.org/epa/forms-downloads/epa-reports/category/18-epa-reports>

Source: <https://oceanconservancy.org/trash-free-seas/international-coastal-cleanup/clean-icc-2020/>

Remember to stay safe and follow the guidelines for protecting yourself and others from COVID-19!

You can share your ideas and questions by sending letters to: “Our Earth, Our Environment”, C/O ECEA Programme, Environmental Protection Agency, Ganges Street, Sophia, GEORGETOWN, or email us at: eit.epaguyana@gmail.com. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram and subscribe to our YouTube channel.