



Reef Check
MALAYSIA



2023

**INTERNATIONAL
COASTAL CLEAN-UP
REPORT**



APPRECIATION NOTE FROM:

REEF CHECK MALAYSIA

We would like to extend a huge thank you to everyone who participated in the 2023 underwater and beach cleanup initiatives in conjunction with the International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) campaign. Your hard work and dedication in preserving our environment is truly inspiring. Together, we were able to collect an incredible amount of litter and debris from nature, making it a safer and more beautiful place for all to enjoy.

Your efforts have not gone unnoticed, and we are grateful for the time and energy you put into volunteering. We hope that the cleanup serves as a reminder of the impact that we all can have when we come together to work towards a common goal. Let's continue to support and care for our planet, one beach clean-up at a time.

We also want to highlight the importance of proper waste disposal and recycling. It is essential that we all do our part in reducing our environmental footprint and minimizing the amount of waste that ends up in our oceans and on our beaches.

We encourage you to continue to spread the word and educate others about the importance of keeping our planet clean and healthy. Remember that every action, no matter how small, can have a significant impact. Let's continue to be proactive in protecting our environment and preserving it for future generations.

Once again, thank you for your dedication and commitment to this cause. We are proud to have you as a part of our community and look forward to working together again next year.

THERESA NG

Chief Operations Officer



What is ICC?

The International Coastal Clean-up Day (ICC) is a nationwide event that happens every year in September. This annual volunteer effort was started by Ocean Conservancy in 1986 and has continued until today.

“Reef Check Malaysia (RCM) began coordinating ICC in Malaysia in 2018”

This year, we saw a slightly higher number of volunteers joining us for #ICCMY2023 as compared to last year. Participants included large corporate companies, independent organisations, various educational institutions, dive shop operators and passionate individuals, including children.

Organizers would pick a suitable location, seek permission from the relevant local authorities and gather supplies leading up to the event. We ensure that health and safety protocols are adhered to and that the trash collected is disposed responsibly.

“These events are mostly conducted independently by organizers themselves with our guidance”

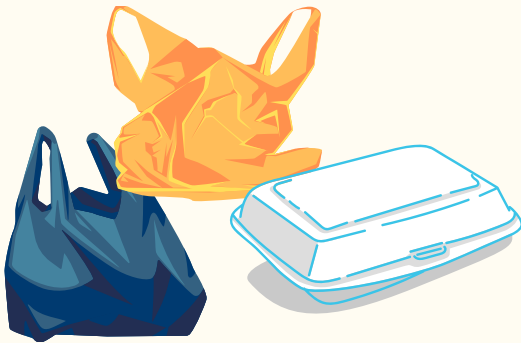
Annual clean-up in Pantai Morib, Selangor



#ICCMY2023

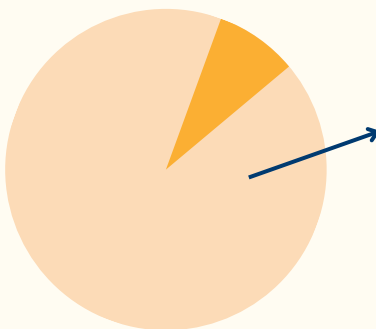
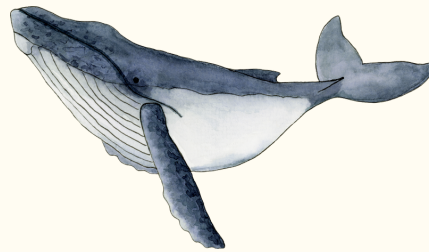
WITH THE EFFORT OF 11,254 VOLUNTEERS THIS YEAR ACROSS MALAYSIA COASTLINES, 29,466.06 KGS OF MARINE LITTER COMPRISING 273,807 ITEMS WERE COLLECTED AND DISPOSED.

ICC 2023 AT A GLANCE



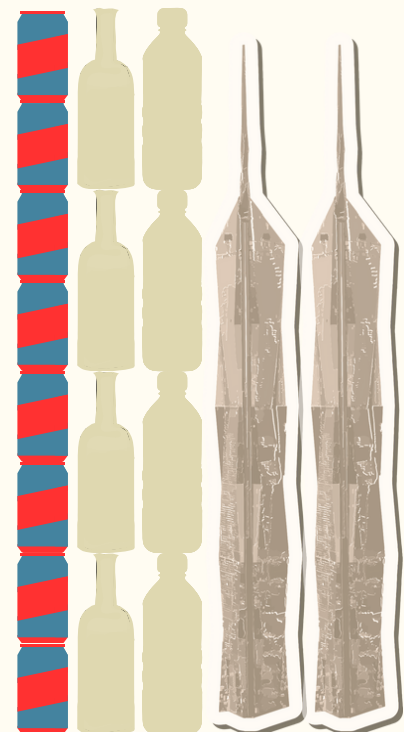
About 31,210 plastic/foam pieces were collected. These pieces can be ingested by marine life such as seabirds. When their stomachs are full of plastics, they won't feel hungry and can starve to death.

Weight of this year's trash is approximately equivalent to the weight of an adult Humpback Whale.



98% of items collected were made from non-biodegradable materials.

If all the plastic bottles, glass bottles and beverage cans collected were stacked on each other, its height would be equivalent to 22 times that of the highest building in Malaysia, The Exchange TRX.



COMMONLY FOUND ITEMS

These are the **top 5 most commonly found items**, most of which are plastics. Collectively, they account for **60%** of all the trash collected in 2023.

The numbers below represent the total amount collected for each item.

Comparatively, in 2022, we collected lesser numbers of all these items. This could be due to many factors, but one possible positive factor is the change in people's habits when it comes to consumerism and dealing with waste.

PLASTIC BOTTLES
47,382



CIGARETTE BUTTS
39,839



**PLASTIC/FOAM
PIECES**
31,210

PLASTIC BAGS
28,012



**PLASTIC BOTTLES
CAPS**
14,974

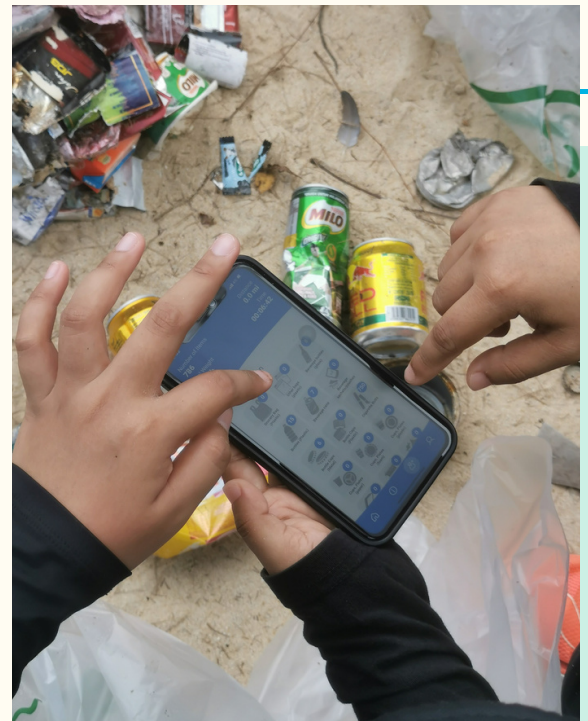


SO WHY ICC?

Aside from direct benefits to the environment, beach clean-ups also raise awareness about marine debris and its effects. Volunteers experience first-hand the types of trash collected and are presented visually with the composition of trash. This is in line with our commitment to highlight the severity of plastic pollution and how it affects us. Having multiple large scale beach clean-ups also encourages dialogue among the public.

CLEAN SWELL APP

The Clean Swell App developed by Ocean Conservancy offers a pragmatic solution to capture important data on the trash collected. It is designed to be used in real time so the data recorded is accurate and consistent. Aside from the key metrics like weight and distance, the app offers a breakdown of trash categories. This allows us to have a detailed record of the types and amount of trash collected.



“Volunteers were asked to record the data collected with the Clean Swell App which will be uploaded to an online database available to the public.”

GLOBAL DATA AVAILABLE FROM TIDES ONLINE DATABASE:

<https://www.coastalcleanupdata.org/>

Sighting of fishing net in Pantai Morib, Selangor



WHY DO WE COLLECT DATA?

The data collected by ICC volunteers contribute to the world's largest database on marine debris. Scientists build upon ICC data to conduct research and increase our understanding on plastic pollution.

Last year, trash data from ICC volunteers were featured in 27 peer-reviewed scientific journals worldwide, showing its importance.

These resources also support plastic abatement policies. As one of the top plastic polluters in the world, these findings apply pressure to local corporates and policymakers to take action against plastic pollution.

RCM contributed to the National Marine Litter Policy and Action Plan 2021 - 2030 supported by the data we have from ICC.

Children also took part in ICC 2023



A GLIMPSE OF

ICC 2022

In 2022, we had 9,129 volunteers, gathering 24,301kg of trash along 394km of coastlines across Malaysia.

In 2023, we had more volunteers and collected more trash (in kilograms).



THIS YEAR...

ICC 2023



Non-biodegradable waste accounts for **98%** of the trash collected, raising concerns on the well-being of marine life. Such items are ingested by marine animals, makes its way up the food chain and (more often than not) finally ends up back on our plates.

ICC is one step in the right direction towards improved plastic waste management and awareness. We hope to receive continued support from the public in the coming years.



WHAT OUR VOLUNTEERS SAY



“Being part of the ICC program has been an incredibly personal experience for me. It’s not just about cleaning up the shores; it’s about connecting with nature on a deeper level. Together, with every step we take and every piece of trash we remove, we are creating a brighter and cleaner future for the generations to come.”

Fizz Zaabah,
Head of Social License & Community Relations, Coca-Cola Malaysia



“Beaches are delicate ecosystems that provide habitat for various species of plants and animals. Litter and pollution can harm marine life, disrupt ecosystems, and damage natural beauty. By cleaning beaches, we help preserve these fragile environments. Appreciate and protect the natural world!”

Nordiana Samat
Sustainable Development Lead, TechnipFMC KL

SILVER SPONSOR:



TechnipFMC



RCM would like to express our sincere appreciation to TechnipFMC for being our Silver Sponsor. TechnipFMC conducted 2 clean-ups this year, which took place in Pantai Remis, Selangor and Pantai Batu Layar, Kota Tinggi.



BRONZE SPONSOR:

RCM would like to thank Zoom for participating in ICCMY2023 and for being our Bronze Sponsor. Zoom had mobilised volunteers in the Pantai Bagan Lalang clean-up on September 10.

zoom

THANK YOU TO:

Our Partners

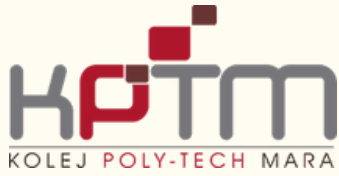


TAYLOR'S COLLEGE



THANK YOU TO:

Our Partners



PEEK THROUGH OUR JOURNEY THIS YEAR



Beach Clean-Up in Pantai Marina Kuala Kedah led by KPTM



Pantai Morib Clean-Up on 9 September



Clean-Up led by Scuba Junkie



Beach Clean-Up with Coca Cola



Beach Clean-Up in Pantai Stulang, Johor



Laguna Park Klang Clean-Up by Taylor's College



Volunteers with their gears



ICC 2023 in Sarawak



Pantai Pasir Panjang Clean-Up



Human chain to transport bags of trash



Clean-Up in Zero Beach Tanjung Aru by Shang-ri La Tanjung Aru



Beach Clean-Up during Kod Blue: Laut Needs You



Beach Clean-Up in Pantai Teluk Kemang



Pantai Dickson Clean-Up on 16 September

APPENDIX:

ICC 2023 MALAYSIA TRASH AUDIT

| CATEGORY | NUMBER OF ITEMS | % OF TOTAL |
|----------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Grocery Bags (Plastic) | 10,587 | 3.87% |
| Other Bags (Plastic) | 17,425 | 6.36% |
| Beverage Bottles (Glass) | 5,239 | 1.91% |
| Beverage Bottles (Plastic) | 47,382 | 17.3% |
| Beverage Cans | 4,033 | 1.47% |
| Beverage Sachets/Pouches | 2,736 | 1.0% |
| Bottle Caps (Metal) | 1,779 | 0.65% |
| Bottle Caps (Plastic) | 14,974 | 5.47% |
| Cigarette Butts | 39,839 | 14.55% |
| Cups, Plates (Foam) | 2,461 | 0.9% |
| Cups, Plates (Paper) | 4,553 | 1.66% |
| Cups, Plates (Plastic) | 9,766 | 3.57% |
| Food Containers (Foam) | 4,398 | 1.61% |
| Food Containers (Plastic) | 4,650 | 1.7% |

| CATEGORY | NUMBER OF ITEMS | % OF TOTAL |
|---|-----------------|------------|
| Food Wraps (Candy, chips, etc) | 12,370 | 4.52% |
| Lids (Plastic) | 2,545 | 0.93% |
| Straws/Stirrers (Plastic) | 7,644 | 2.79% |
| Utensils (Plastic) | 4,598 | 1.68% |
| Lines, Nets, Traps, Ropes, etc | 3,932 | 1.44% |
| Foam Dock Pieces | 2,822 | 1.03% |
| Appliances (Refrigerators, Washers, etc) | 112 | 0.04% |
| Construction Materials | 1,614 | 0.59% |
| Tires | 112 | 0.04% |
| 6-Pack Holders | 87 | 0.03% |
| Foam Packagings | 5,863 | 2.14% |
| Other Plastic Bottles (Oil, Bleach, etc) | 1,909 | 0.7% |
| Strapping Bands | 1,812 | 0.66% |
| Balloons | 389 | 0.14% |
| Clothing | 1,199 | 0.44% |
| E-cigarettes | 180 | 0.07% |
| Electronic Waste (Phones, Batteries, etc) | 239 | 0.09% |
| Footwear (Shoes, Slippers) | 2,015 | 0.74% |

| CATEGORY | NUMBER OF ITEMS | % OF TOTAL |
|--|-----------------|------------|
| Paper Bags | 1,074 | 0.39% |
| Tobacco Products (Lighters, Cigar Tips, Wraps) | 2,189 | 0.8% |
| Toys | 1,219 | 0.45% |
| Other Plastic Wastes | 6,945 | 2.54% |
| Other Wastes (Metal, Paper, etc) | 9,779 | 3.57% |
| Condoms | 44 | 0.02% |
| Cotton Bud Sticks (Swabs) | 213 | 0.08% |
| Diapers | 620 | 0.23% |
| Gloves, Masks (PPE) | 1,084 | 0.4% |
| Syringes | 77 | 0.03% |
| Tampons and Applicators | 89 | 0.03% |
| Plastic/Foam Pieces | 31,210 | 11.4% |

TOTAL ITEMS COLLECTED :

273,807