



## **Ocean Conservancy Launches Trash Free Seas Alliance as 2011 Commitment to Action at Clinton Global Initiative**

### **Alliance pledges to make trash too valuable to toss**

WASHINGTON, Sept. 21, 2011 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Ocean Conservancy today announced the creation of a Trash Free Seas Alliance as their 2011 Commitment to Action at the Annual Meeting of the Clinton Global Initiative in New York City. The Alliance will unite industry, science and conservation leaders who share a common goal for a healthy ocean free of trash.

Trash is one of the most widespread pollution problems facing our ocean and waterways. The ocean currently serves as the end of the pipeline for products that are not recycled, repurposed or properly discarded. The glut of items polluting our seas kills wildlife, chokes economies and impacts human health around the world.

"Members of the Trash Free Seas Alliance will first and foremost have a safe place for dialogue and a safe place to imagine solutions with others who are equally committed on this issue," said Vikki Spruill, president and CEO of Ocean Conservancy, at the Waste to Wealth panel discussion on Wednesday. "By bringing influence, brilliance and passion together in one room, we can truly create cutting-edge solutions that make trash too valuable to toss."

Alliance members will pledge an individual responsibility to take immediate steps as well as advance long-term solutions to trash free seas. Members will also seek to reduce and, where possible, reinvent products and services that damage ocean wildlife or ecosystems. Founding members of the Trash Free Seas Alliance include The Coca-Cola Company, Surfrider Foundation, the Ocean Recovery Alliance, ITW, the Marine Mammal Center and Covanta Energy. More information is available at <http://www.trashfreeseasalliance.org>

"Our goal is not small. We seek to eliminate all trash as we know it from the ocean, and that is too big to do alone," said Spruill. "The ocean is our planet's life-support system, and if we take care of it, the ocean will take care of us."

Just this past weekend, hundreds of thousands of volunteers participated in cleanups of beaches and waterways across the globe in the International Coastal Cleanup coordinated by Ocean Conservancy.

This past spring, Ocean Conservancy released a report from the 25th annual International Coastal Cleanup titled "Tracking Trash: 25 Years of Action for the Ocean." This milestone report compiles stories about trash in the ocean, known as marine debris, and data on collected items from every participating state and country in 2010 as well as throughout 25 years of International Coastal Cleanups—the largest volunteer effort for ocean health. The report also highlights solutions from individuals to inspire behavior change and from companies to accelerate product innovation. With this report, Ocean Conservancy expanded its efforts from an annual cleanup day to a year-round campaign for "Trash Free Seas." Photos, volunteer quotes and graphics are available at [www.oceanconservancy.org/iccmedia](http://www.oceanconservancy.org/iccmedia).

### **Highlighted Results from the Past 25 Years of Cleanups**

- 53 million cigarettes/cigarette filters found would fill 100 Olympic-size swimming pools
- Appliances collected over 25 years of Cleanups (117,356) would fill 32,600 dump trucks
- Over 863,000 (863,135) diapers would be enough to put one on every child born in the U.K. last year
- Over the past 25 years, more than 8.5 million (8,763,377) volunteers have removed 145 million (144,606,491) pounds of trash in 152 countries and locations
- Volunteers have collected enough cups, plates, forks, knives and spoons over 25 years to host a picnic for 2 million people

*Ocean Conservancy is the world's foremost advocate for the ocean. Through science-based advocacy, research and public education, we inform, inspire and empower people to speak and act for the ocean. Ocean Conservancy is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and has offices in Florida, the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific, with support from more than half a million members and volunteers. To learn more about Ocean Conservancy, visit [www.oceanconservancy.org](http://www.oceanconservancy.org).*

*Established in 2005 by President Bill Clinton, the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) convenes global leaders to devise and implement innovative solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges. Since 2005, CGI Annual Meetings have brought together nearly 150 current and former heads of state, 18 Nobel Prize laureates, hundreds of leading CEOs, heads of foundations, major philanthropists, directors of the most effective nongovernmental organizations and prominent members of the media. These CGI members have made nearly 2,000 commitments, which have already improved the lives of 300 million people in more than 180 countries. When fully funded and implemented, these commitments will be valued in excess of \$63 billion. The 2011 Annual Meeting will take place Sept. 20-22 in New York City. For more information, visit [www.clintonglobalinitiative.org](http://www.clintonglobalinitiative.org).*

### **Additional Quotes from Founding Members of the Trash Free Seas Alliance**

"Joining forces as a founding member of the Trash Free Seas Alliance is a natural evolution of The Coca-Cola Company's 16-year partnership with Ocean Conservancy. We expect this new Alliance to help convene and better leverage the knowledge and resources currently operating in isolation. Through Ocean Conservancy's leadership we will be bringing together a diverse set of stakeholders to facilitate productive dialogues to drive meaningful solutions." April Crow, Global Sustainable Packaging Director, The Coca-Cola Company.

"Covanta Energy is excited to join the Trash Free Seas Alliance as a founding member. We are eager to build upon the inroads we've made in creating awareness around this very serious global threat to our planet's oceans in collaboration with other Alliance members who share our sense of urgency in finding innovative and lasting solutions." Paul Gilman, Ph.D., chief sustainability officer for Covanta Energy.

"ITW recognizes we have a special obligation to protect our environment. We rely on and consume natural resources to make our products, and our role in the industrial supply chain creates opportunities for sustainable practices. We are thrilled to join the Trash Free Seas Alliance as a founding member and work with other experts to address the issue of ocean trash." Tim Gardner, Executive Vice President, ITW.

"The Marine Mammal Center is proud to be a founding member of the Trash Free Seas Alliance. As a nonprofit organization focused on marine mammal rehabilitation, research and education, and treating 17,000 patients in its 36-year history, the Center sees firsthand the impact of trash on ocean wildlife. Treating marine mammal patients, while educating the public as to each person's role in ocean stewardship, is an enormously important goal of ours. The Trash Free Seas Alliance provides an exciting forum for identifying creative solutions to this global problem." Dr. Jeff Boehm, Executive Director of the Marine Mammal Center.

"Ocean Recovery Alliance brings two promising solutions, both launched at the 2010 Clinton Global Initiative, to the Trash Free Seas Alliance. Global Alert: Floating Trash is an innovative online platform, designed to empower local communities via citizen reporting to address the growing problem of trash flowing to the ocean through the world's rivers by giving them the ability to report, rate and geo-code plastic pollution levels in their rivers, waterways or coastlines on a global map. The second solution is the Plastic Disclosure Project (PDP), which is set to engage hundreds of companies and institutions around the world to assess and report their annual use of plastic, much like companies do today with carbon analysis. We applaud the work the Ocean Conservancy has successfully led over the past decades to leverage citizens and partner organizations. Their efforts are accelerating awareness and bringing global improvements to the significant problem of ocean trash." Doug Woodring, Co-founder of Ocean Recovery Alliance.

"Plastic debris poses a particularly grievous threat to our world's oceans, resulting in the deaths of scores of sea birds, reptiles and marine mammals annually. What's more, virtually all of this litter comes from land based sources, which means that it is up to each of us to solve this crisis. The Surfrider Foundation is proud to stand alongside some of the nation's top companies and NGO's as a part of the Trash Free Seas Alliance, as we work to stem the tide of plastic litter now spoiling our marine environment." Jim Moriarty, CEO Surfrider Foundation.

**Contact:** (at CGI) Shannon Crownover, 202-316-6994  
David Willett, 202-351-0465, [dwillett@oceanconservancy.org](mailto:dwillett@oceanconservancy.org)

SOURCE Ocean Conservancy

[Back to top](#)

RELATED LINKS

<http://www.oceanconservancy.org>

<http://www.trashfreeseasalliance.org>