

Local news

Sibaya precinct keeps litter out of the ocean

By collecting litter, the team prevents plastic pollution from entering the ocean.

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Danica Hansen 2 minutes read



Siyananda Gumede is gathering litter off the beach.

THE Sibaya Coastal Precinct (SCP) recently collected 83 refuse bags of litter from the beach and coastal forest between the oHlanga River and eMdloti South Beach. The precinct works to keep this stretch of coastline clean, with a dedicated team picking up litter on a daily basis. By collecting litter, the team prevents plastic pollution from entering the ocean.

Manager of the precinct, Gray Braatvedt said their team consists of two utility workers and a supervisor who rotate shifts so the beach is cleaned seven days a week.

"We have a team that goes down onto the beach to clean up on a regular basis, especially after storms when a lot of plastic has been washed out to sea. Some of the plastic washes up on the shore and we clean that up. We work very closely with the municipality, they supply us with bags," said Braatvedt.

Picking up litter, is the backbone of the Clear Rivers Campaign this year, an annual initiative of the Department of Water and Sanitation.

The campaign usually sees thousands of South Africans banding together to remove litter from the country's polluted rivers.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this year, the department has encouraged the community to start at the source and pick up litter in their communities.

"(Communities) should not litter or throw foreign objects into rivers that will impact negatively on the lives of downstream users. Rivers carry water and nutrients, and they play an important part in the water cycle. We use rivers for water supply, which we use for drinking in our homes, watering on farms, making products in factories and generating electricity," the department said in a statement.

Braatvedt said the SCP clean up initiative started in December 2018.

"On a daily basis, we have a team that nips down to the beach and does a quick clean up, but when there are heavy rains, then the team spends a lot of time down there cleaning up," he said.

"If people could stop littering upstream it would prevent plastic pollution coming downstream to the coast," he added.

SCP takes over from the uMhlanga Urban Improvement Precinct (UIP) which covers the stretch of coast on the other side of the oHlanga River.

"Our company also manages the uMhlanga UIP. They do the same thing from Durban View Park to the oHlanga River. We work really closely together," said Braatvedt.