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6,000kg of plastic waste collected along Kenya's South Coast in clean-up exercise

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The exercise was organized and carried out by various conservation partners including World Wildlife Fund Kenya, Base Titanium, Kwale County government and over 300 community volunteers/FILE

By CORRESPONDENT, KWALE, Kenya, Sep 18 – Over 6,000kg of plastic waste was collected on Saturday along the Kenyan coastal strip in an effort to reduce the amount of plastic waste dumped into the ocean.

The exercise was organized and carried out by various conservation partners including World Wildlife Fund Kenya, Base Titanium, Kwale County government and over 300 community volunteers.

The event was part of the global marine cleaning initiative dubbed "The International Coastal Cleanup" that takes place annually.

Overview

- Hundreds of volunteers in Kenya participate in the global exercise
- 6000 kg of waste collected in Shimoni, Msambweni and Mkwiro

Manager said during the clean-up exercise in Msambweni.

"Through Base Titanium's various environmental programmes, we are able to mobilise local communities to be champions in protecting and conserving the environment," he added.

The initiative aims at creating awareness about marine conservation and to reduce marine pollution.

Experts estimate that over 8 billion tons of plastic are dumped into the oceans every year.

The waste is broken down into small pieces and is mistaken for food by birds, fish, turtles, and whales.

This then enters the human food chain through fish, soil and water. Its chemicals are also leached out into the water and other environments.

Environmental scientists estimate that by 2050, there will be more waste in our oceans than fish globally.

The international coastal clean-up though small is a giant step in addressing the growing problem of plastic waste.

Last year, the South Coast clean-up saw about 200 volunteers in Kwale county come together to collect over 1,600kg of plastic waste in the beach clean-up exercise.

In 2015, over 8.5 tons of plastic waste was collected on the Kenyan coast by 2,500 volunteers in 2-3 hours covering about 35kms of the beach.

Globally, about 800,000 volunteers collected more than 8 million kilos of plastic waste during the 2015 International Coastal Clean Up.

"We are proud to be part of this global initiative and more specifically here in Kwale. We want to leave a more sustainable Kwale community for generations to come. We thank our partners and all the volunteers for their support and effort," Forbes said. ■

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