



# Beach Cleanup



Suggested use: Families Community groups



**Australian Government**  
**Great Barrier Reef**  
**Marine Park Authority**

Funded by the Australian Government's Caring for our Country

## The Sea Country Guardian messages

**Celebration and use of language.**

**Developing and showing respect**

**Walking on country – getting to know yourself and where you belong**

**Caring for country to know it and sustain it**

**Combining traditional and Western knowledge for a sustainable future**

**Look, Listen and Learn**



Artwork by Patricia Galvin and Shenoa Sultana

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## Acknowledgments

Developed by Paul Sutton and Michelle Williams of Digital Learning Futures

We would like to acknowledge the input of Heidi Taylor from Tangaroa Blue and Karlena Seekee from The Great Barrier Reef Marine park Authority (GBRMPA) for the idea.

## 1: The Task

# Clean the beach together



Decide to participate. Decide - who, when, where, what, how and why

Do training with an experienced cleanup group to learn about recording data. Plan out ways young people and their families can learn about caring for sea country while at the beach.

Lead a family or other group in a clean up, recording data and enjoy learning while being on sea country.

**CELEBRATE:** put a hand print signpost at the beach showing many hands cleaned the beach. Take photos and put on a website. Children take photos to school for morning talk to share what they did and what they learned. Send your data to the relevant agency.

Often this is helped by visiting the target site to consider the practical issues about beach cleanups

Learn traditional sea country knowledge

Learn about new ways of caring for the reef from a scientist or reef expert.

Collecting data about the rubbish on the beach, so that those who litter the Marine Park are prosecuted and Shamed.

Learning about how rubbish injured wildlife.

Learning about sea country and how to care for it

### The Sea Country Guardian message in this activity

Celebration and use of language developing and showing respect.

walking on country - getting to know yourself and where you belong.

Caring for country to know it and sustain it.

Combining traditional and western knowledge for a sustainable future.

Look, listen and learn.

## Hints

Contact a beach cleanup partner to organise training and get general advice on how to organise a cleanup. They may be able to provide training and resources.

Think about who else can help; for example, the council might provide transport and pick up the rubbish.

Use the 5W's and a H process to plan out all parts of the project. It is often helpful to answer questions in this order; Where, who, what, when, how and why.

Talk to people who have done a clean up before about ideas for organising the rubbish and recording data.

Invite a Reef expert to tell the scientific story about caring or the reef. For example, National Parks people, scientists or people from the GBRMPA.

Plan in specific ways for each person or group to tell their story, including ideas families might want to share.

If you spot any special animals, complete a sightings network form and post it off.

Remember to enjoy the time with family on the beach and use the time to learn more about sea country.

## What families might learn while doing a cleanup of a beach?

Language names for places and things at the beach.

Stories about how the beach was formed and other stories.

What hunting is allowed here, and who traditionally hunted on this beach and how Fishing, gathering and hunting skills.

Making fire and cooking.

How to find fresh water and other resources.

Beach and camping safety

The impact of marine debris on animals.

Marine debris which is biodegradable and debris that is not.

How to record data carefully.

How beaches change over time and how climate change and other human interference is impacting on the beach and reef ecosystem are being.

Showing feelings about a place – pride, respect, happiness, well being.

Communication and leadership skills.



## 2: Activity Leaders Guide

### 2.1 In brief

This is a project for families and community groups to learn from each other while cleaning up a beach. There are three main steps to beach cleanups.

1. Deciding with others – who, when, where, what, how and why. Often this is helped by visiting a target site to consider the practical issues.
2. Participating in training with an experienced trainer – to learn about recording and using data and to talk about how young people can learn about caring for sea country.
3. Leading the clean up, recording data and enjoying learning on sea country. Learning about traditional and new ways to care.

Collecting rubbish data helps stop litter at source and prosecute offenders.

### 2.2 Why clean up the beach?

It is opportunity for your family or community to be involved that makes a difference beyond your community. Marine debris and rubbish hurts wildlife and may be dangerous to humans using the beach and waterways. Rubbish is ugly. Cleaning up saves the lives of wildlife and provides a safer, clean and pleasant environment for people. It shows respect for sea country and the Great Barrier Reef.

Research from Tangaroa Blue, one of the organisations of volunteers who support beach cleanups in North Queensland, shows about 50% of the rubbish on beaches in urban areas is washed in from the sea. It is probably higher in remote beaches. It is important to collect data about the rubbish. Accurate data can lead to prosecutions against those who dump the rubbish. It is important thing to get the data right. Training develops data collection and analysis skills.

The training program provides you with a chance to gain:

The training program provides you with a chance to gain:

- organisational skills
- rubbish identification and sorting skills
- data collection and analysis skills
- general environmental knowledge about wildlife, reef and beach health, and impact of rubbish
- scientific knowledge about biodegradable materials, tides, dune and beach changes

After your training, you will know how to lead your family/community to get them involved and share your learning. You will be able to combine scientific and cultural knowledge to best care for country and to encourage others to learn and help you care for country.

While working on sea country to clean up rubbish, you have an opportunity to learn about it from those around you. Enjoy being on your country.

A very important reason for doing this project is that you spend time with your family on country.

You and your cleanup partners could:

- talk to your family about how the beach used to be and could be again
- tell stories about that part of country including who belongs there
- use language names and practice language
- get to know your country and how it is changing
- talk about issues and ideas for caring for country including endangered species
- learn how rubbish affects wildlife and the environment
- be a role model for others and encourage them to respect the country through the family's actions

- show how new and old knowledge combines to care for country
- practice the new skills you gained in the training
- have a great time together

## 2.3 Working with others

### Beach cleanup specialists

This project involves communities working with Tangaroa Blue, or the Cape York Marine Advisory Group (CYMAG) or others, to conduct multiple local beach cleanups over time.

The rubbish on beaches grows unless there is some cleaning up and so communities often do local cleanups so the beach looks and feels better for them and for visitors. The enthusiasm for beach cleanups wains when it is necessary to do it over and over, especially when the rubbish does not come from the community doing the cleanup.

They're boring home is where you know that there are similar in concept and Lyndal today said she thought a review of the conference is Tangaroa Blue is a non-profit association who undertakes beach cleanups with an extra purpose. They survey the rubbish collected and collate the data over time to begin to understand where rubbish comes from and how it might be prevented. They help with prosecutions when data clearly points to a villain. Collecting data for a group whose work extends across many areas appeals to communities who want to have local impact and contribute to a larger purpose.

To accurately collect useful data, several groups and/or individuals in a community would benefit from the training offered by Tangaroa Blue volunteers. Tangaroa Blue also offers resources, such as:

- bags
- gloves
- sharps containers
- waterproof data sheets
- information kits

The Tangaroa Blue website provides information on clean up processes, provides web exposure and celebrates community cleanups and collated data. Communities need to organise the events, transport and people, catering and other logistics, local celebration and recognition.

Local Marine Advisory Groups members have also been organising and managing beach cleanups and are part of a data collection program. See your local LMAC member for details.

### Local helping hands

The council may be able to help provide:

Transport – getting people to the clean up site and meetings

Rubbish removal – especially if there is a lot of rubbish and big items

Some labour or machinery to move big items

A sign and some paint so the Helping Hands or similar signage can be placed at the clean up sites

Other community groups may be able to help by:

Catering for events

Helping with transport

Joining in, telling stories and helping young people learn skills about being on Sea Country

Talking up the contribution young people have made for the family and community

At the IKC or library, build a display about sea animals and marine debris, point out relevant books and provide a wall of photos from the cleanup to celebrate what happened. The web resources in this kit may be useful to put on bookmarks on the IKC network.

Telling the scientific and environmental side of changing beach conditions and the impact of rubbish on the beach, marine life and the reef.

Making a rubbish monument – use the rubbish to make a secure artistic sculpture reminding people to bring their rubbish home. Make sure all the pieces are firmly linked together so bits don't blow away again.

### The GBRMPA

The GBRMPA may be able to help with a beach cleanup especially where the activity plans to use the sea country messages to help young people learn. They may be able to support the local organising group or invited group to train the community and help with data collection. They may be able to supply personnel to come and talk about the dangers of litter for wildlife to volunteers, family and the school.

GRMPA hope on-country activities meet practical needs, assist young people to learn cultural knowledge and to develop strong caring values to protect the Great Barrier Reef as far into the future as the caring stretches back through the past.

A sample application to the GBRMPA is included in this information kit.

### Schools

Schools can assist by helping children:

- Understand which types of rubbish are biodegradable
- Understand the currents around the local beaches that bring rubbish in
- Make the links between rubbish and the impact on sea mammals and coral
- Learn to communicate knowledge and feelings about sea country
- Further information for schools is included in this information kit

## **2.4 Talking sea country**

A Sea Country Guardians Project aims to provide the opportunities for young people and their families to share knowledge about sea country – old knowledge and new. As part of the cleanup, there will be times for people to talk, to eat together and maybe fish or gather food which is a special treat when at the beach.

Plan the event so that young people do learn. Some ideas include:

“Look, listen and learn” as a way of developing practical skills like spearing, finding oysters, catching prawns, making a fire, finding fresh water and making a shelter.

Using old rules and lore to prepare and serve food. (Who can eat what individuals cook?)

Using language names for resources

Telling and retelling stories about the area or animals. Tell one group of young people and let them tell the story to another group.

What is the same and different about how the beach area used to be and is now.

Inviting young people to ask you three questions each about cultural and local knowledge. This tells you what they know and want to know.

Taking photos in a “how to” sequence, so they can make photostories back in the community at school or in the IKC.

Checking the data young people collect – putting young people in groups or 2/3 and encourage them to check each other first and then with you. You can encourage them to be strong, persistent and careful with their work.

Talking about what was collected and see if they can find evidence of where it comes from – ask them to play detective looking for clues. Photograph clues and bring back this evidence if it is small enough. Send it to your partnering organisation.

Having fun – children learn most through enjoyable play, so provide chances for relaxations and laughter.

## **2.5 Planning a program**

A program leading to the first cleanups may involve the following steps:

- Community awareness and information gathering
- Organisation of training
- Organisation of cleanup day

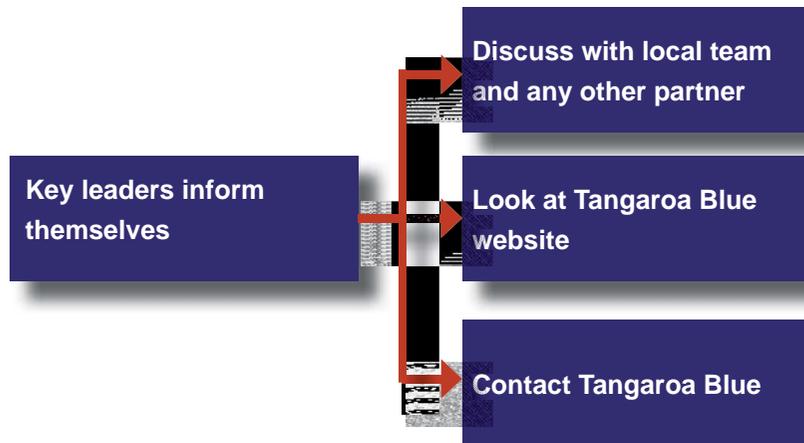
Cleanup day

Celebration of success

In working out the detail of each of these steps, it is suggested that a simple thinking and planning strategy be applied, called 5W's and a H (Who, when, where, what, how and why).

In some cases, all these steps will not be necessary. However, they are good to think about, so you know how to organise the event with others.

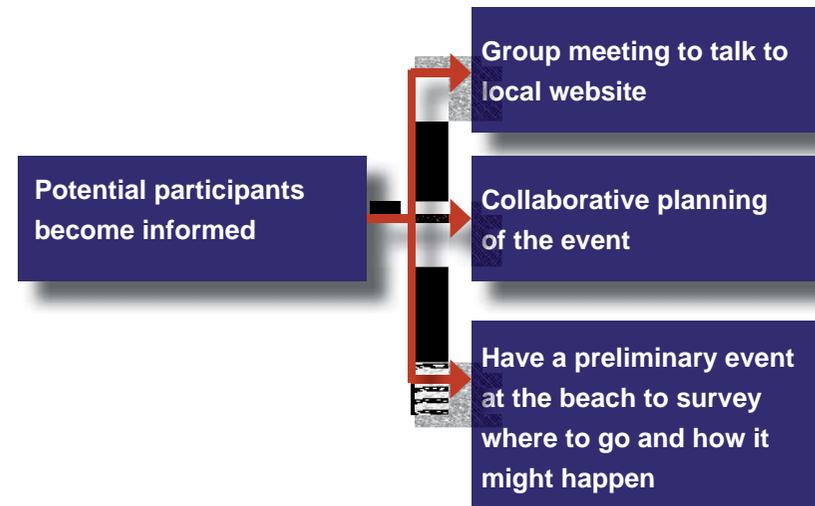
### Community awareness and information gathering



The leader of the project in a community needs to make sure partners can help when you are planning to be involved.

The GBRMPA and Tangaroa Blue or the LMAC may have resources and people power to offer.

Use websites to read and then think about organising a beach cleanup.

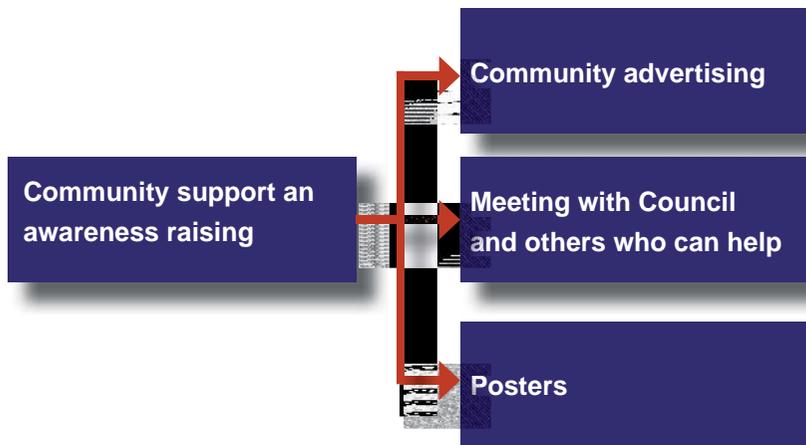


Talk to the target groups in your community. The school, council and other groups will probably be happy to help once they are informed and asked as long as you do the organisation for them.

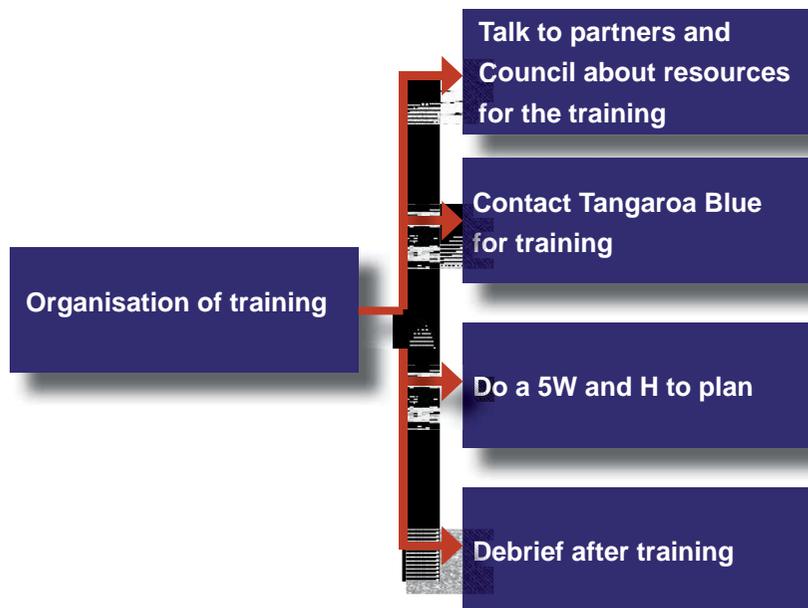
Visit the site where the clean up is needed to develop enthusiasm and clarify planning. Collect one or 2 bags of rubbish and try to classify the rubbish according to the broad categories – plastics, cans, rope, nets etc – see Tangaroa Blue website for categories. Try the planning questions at the beach to allow everyone to participate in the decision-making. Ask someone to take notes.

The planning questions are Who, What, When, Where, How and Why. Asking Why last is best. Remember there are lots of mini-questions with each question. For example, who can drive us here, who can organise lunch, who would come and clean up, who will bring their family, who in the elders or traditional owners group would come, who will record data, who will send it to the partner group (say Tangaroa Blue)?

Ensure the community knows so they can speak positively of the work done before and after the event.



**Organisation of training**



Data analysis training is a chance for a practice clean up and getting key people there to do the job.

Choose people in the community who may lead their own cleanups as well as all the very enthusiastic people. If you can include some young people with leadership potential, that will help when you run cleanups on your own.

See if the school or other community groups want to use your training as a chance for their key people to learn collection and analysis skills too.

Make sure you have funded the costs for the trainers. Although they love coming to your country and volunteering, they will really value a contribution to their costs. Take lots of photos, including many how-to sequences, so you can show others how to collect and analyse the rubbish later.

Have fun, so everyone enjoys so much they will come back and do more cleanups with their family or group.

A few days after the training, have a meeting/lunch to enjoy the photos and talk about what was learned and how you can improve the events in future. Perhaps record your own clean up plan with diagrams and photos – make a chart about what to do.



Deciding how to celebrate is an important step. People need to be recognised for their contribution. Ideas include:

Plan a handprints sign can be as simple as a part sheet of galvanised iron with the handprints of everyone in the cleanup and some words like These hands cleaned this beach. Ask council for some materials to put up a safe sign.

Plan before and after shots for a community poster.

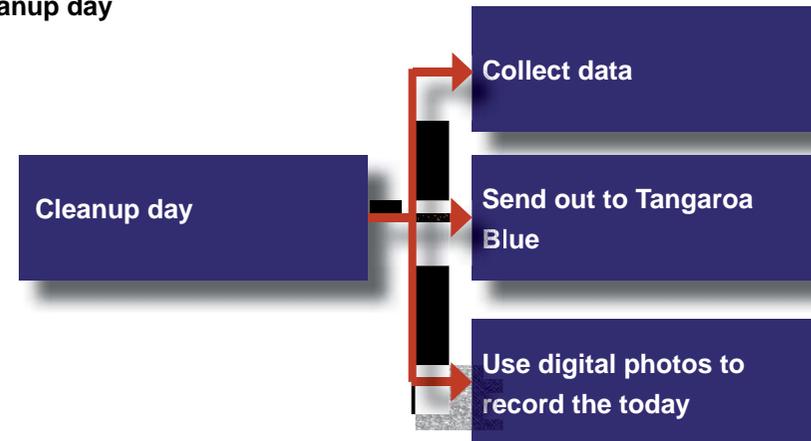
Plan to give any young people copies of all the photos to take to school for show and tell. Copies on a CD will be okay. There are computers in every classroom.

Use planning and practice photos to advertise the cleanup.

After experience of planning the training, you should be able to plan the major event. Talk to all the people and double check they understand what you need and when you need it.

Plan lots of opportunity to learn about sea country and how to preserve the reef and its flora and fauna

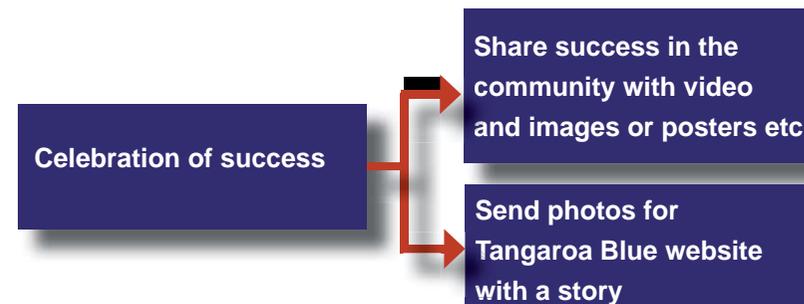
### Cleanup day



Ensure data is carefully recorded and stored.

Take lots of photos to use for promotion and celebration.

Ensure there is time for learning about sea country while doing the clean up task.



Tell Tangaroa Blue what happened. Send in data and photos for their web site. Tell the GBRMPA and other partners in a short report. Include a short discussion of what children learned about sea country and some photos.

Ensure all young people receive a CD of the photos of the day and know how to use them to “show and tell” what they learned and contributed.

Build a display in the community to show off the results for both the beach clean up and development of sea country knowledge.

### Options

Build a Marine Debris monument.

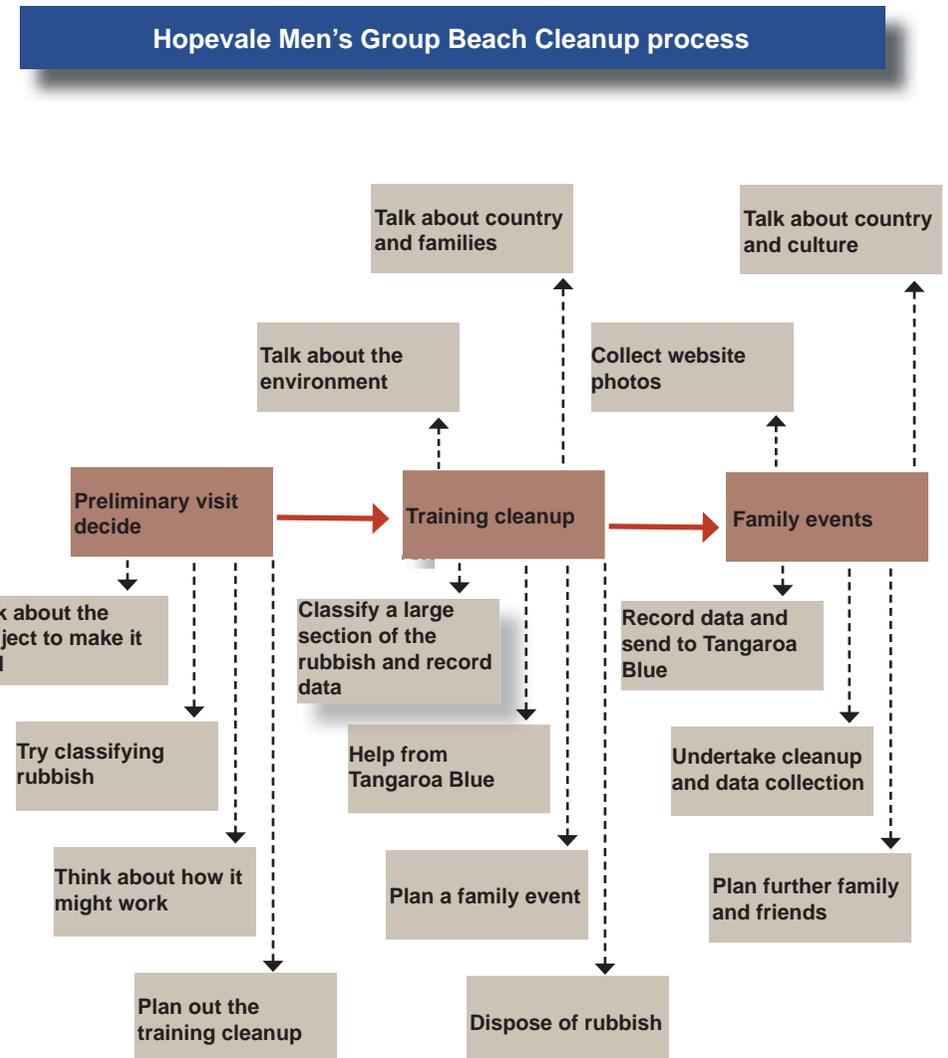
Develop some marine debris art to emphasise to the community about helping to keep beaches clean.

## 2.6 A case study – Hopevale mens group

A workshop and meetings in Hopevale with members of the Men’s Group led to the idea. Led by Russell Gibson, they will plan a beach visit and be trained by Tangaroa Blue for data collection and analysis.

For the Men’s Group, participation is about developing skills and confidence, 40 providing a time to talk and join into a worthwhile community event. The goal is for the men to develop sufficient confidence to take their families on a beach clean up and mentor/train other people.

The 5 W’s and a H strategy (Who, What, When, Where, How and Why) was used by the Men’s Group to plan out the overall concept and the first visit to the beach. The following diagram describes the overall project plan which resulted from the process.



## 2.7 Websites about beach clean ups

*Clean up Australia website*

<http://www.cleanup.org.au/au/>

Lots of good news stories about beach cleanups. The interactive game for children is fun to play.

*United Nations Environment Programme*

<http://www.unep.org/regionalseas/marinelitter/other/cleanups/default.asp>

A good summary of the globe's most significant beach cleanup and other cleanup projects.

*A beach cleanup data collection sheet*

[http://www.reefed.edu.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/17928/plastics\\_survey.pdf](http://www.reefed.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/17928/plastics_survey.pdf)

This is a clear and easy data collection sheet to use. It comes from the WWF World Wildlife Fund and has been reproduced with permission by the Reef Guardian Schools website by GBRMPA.

*Ocean care*

<http://www.oceancare.org.au>

Contains Tangaroa Blue's manual, resources and ways of contacting the organisation. Also contains great celebratory stories and pictures.

**Proposal to:** Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA)  
Sea Country Guardians Education Program

Att: Karen Vohland and Megan Sperring

**From:** Organisation name

**Contact:** main contact. Include Email and phone contacts.

**Date:** Date of submission

**Title:** Provide a title which gives your beach cleanup a local identity

### Brief description

Describe your version of the beach cleanup you are doing very briefly.

For example:

The Kids Club, Lockhart River will clean up Quintell Beach on Easter Monday. We are inviting Tangaroa Blue to come and teach us how to do cleanups and data collection. When we know how to clean up the beach and share our data, we will run our own cleanups every school holidays. We will take the elders to the beach, so they can share stories and language about Quintell Beach and show us some hunting skills. We will learn how to cook damper and build a safe cooking fire with the right types of driftwood. We are going to paint a handprints sign, to tell our community and all our visitors that many hands cleaned up our beach.

### Rationale

Why are you going the cleanup? Provide three or four reasons including how you will learn about sea country. Some example reasons:

We want to shame the local people into not leaving rubbish around campsites.

We want to make sure marine animals do not swallow the plastic from our beach.

We want the elders to know we care about our country and that we want to learn from them.

We have asked the council to do regular wheelie bin cleanups there in return for our holiday cleanup time. Everybody will win, including the environment.

## Who is contributing?

List all the tasks and who will be involved. An example is provided below.

Organisation	Youth coordinators and a team of teenage leaders from Kids club
Transport for the elders	HAAC in their new bus
Transport for the young people	School Troop carrier and a teacher to drive
Food organisation and cooking equipment	Women's group and teenagers team
Rubbish collection	Teenagers team approach council for help.
Training in rubbish analysis and recording	Tangaroa Blue
Supply of rubbish bags and safety gear	Tangaroa Blue and the council
Time to teach hunting skills, tell stories and point out the animals on the beach	Men's group, Women's group and a Land and Sea ranger
Camera to record the event	IKC Coordinator
Paint and materials to make our handprints sign	Council

## Resources requested from GBRMPA

Provide a list of the money and non-money resources you need. An example is given below.

Transport costs for 2 Tangaroa Blue volunteers and accommodation for them	\$2000
Food for lunch	\$500
Total request	\$2500

## What will the GBRMPA and other partners get back?

A copy of the newsletter article celebrating the first cleanup.

A photo with permission slips signed so GBRMPA can promote beach cleanups as a Sea Country Guardians Activity.

GOOD OPTION: Photos of the event made into a DVD by youth leaders with help from IKC coordinator.

## 2.8 Schools – what to do – resources for you

Schools might participate in a beach cleanup with the community. The significant difference between most community cleanups and the ones GBRMPA would like to support is that data is collected about the cleanup and contributed to a database and that beach cleanups provide young people with a chance to learn about sea country from Indigenous Elders. Community beach cleanups enable young people and their families to learn about sea country from both a traditional cultural perspective and by considering current scientific and environmental data.

Schools might undertake pre and post clean up activities, enabling students to build on what they already know and to celebrate what they have contributed and learned.

Photos from the day can be used to write stories.

Schools might assist students to develop knowledge and skills in the broad areas of:

- Data gathering, understanding data and decision making with data
- Data manipulation skills and mathematical skills, including numeracy understanding
- Information skills
- ICT skills
- Communication skills
- General literacy skills
- Environmental issues

## Great resource

The Tangaroa Blue organisation has compiled an excellent CD of education materials including a large selection around marine debris, photographs, lesson plans, PowerPoint's, articles and posters. The educational materials have thinking skills and information skills embedded in them. There is a range of climate change resources from GBRMPA and elsewhere collated onto the CD with permission. This can be obtained from Heidi at Tangaroa Blue [heidi@tangaroablue.com](mailto:heidi@tangaroablue.com)

## Search for resources

Use your education system resource centre or EdNA to search for educational resources specific for Australian schools. The following search phrases may be useful:

Climate change and marine animals

Marine debris (search for images on Google Images or search for text)

Climate change games

Human impact on the Great Barrier Reef.

Risks marine animals

