

WORLDWIDE



World Cleanup Day

World Cleanup Day is the flagship initiative of the Let's Do It movement, which originated in Estonia in 2008, when 50,000 people came together to clean up the entire country in just five hours, sparking a worldwide movement. This unprecedented success inspired the founders to take the concept globally. In 2011, the Let's Do It Foundation was established to coordinate a worldwide cleanup effort. By 2012, the movement had reached new heights, with cleanups taking place in 96 countries and territories under the banner of "World Cleanup 2012." In 2014, the movement set an ambitious new goal: to transition from months-long cleanup campaigns to a single, coordinated global event. This bold vision aimed to engage 5% of the world's population in a massive, one-day cleanup effort.

As the central initiative of Let's Do It, World Cleanup Day, the first ever coordinated, single-day cleanup, was first launched in 2018 as a global environmental movement, with 18 million participants from 157 countries. Since then, the World Cleanup Day is held annually on the third Saturday of September, mobilizing people from all corners of the world to participate in community-driven cleanup activities, ranging from beaches and rivers to streets and forests. It is one of the largest civic actions in human history, with millions of volunteers participating annually worldwide. The initiative embodies the core values of Let's Do It: community action, environmental stewardship, and the belief that collective efforts can lead to transformative change.

The impact of World Cleanup Day goes beyond just collecting waste; it raises awareness about the global waste crisis and encourages communities to adopt more sustainable practices. The event also fosters collaboration between citizens, businesses, and governments, highlighting the importance of collective action in addressing environmental challenges. Through this global effort, World Cleanup Day aims to create a cleaner planet, reduce pollution, and inspire ongoing efforts to protect the environment for future generations.





IMPACTS

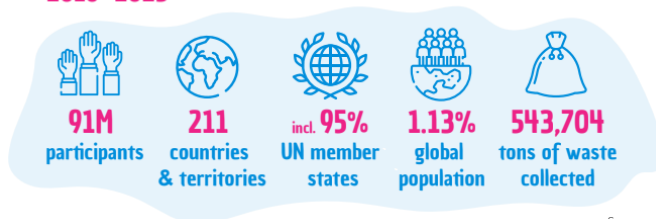
- 2019: 100,000 tonnes of waste picked up globally; 9 SDGs supported (3, 6, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17);
- 2020: 43,000 tonnes of waste picked up globally; 12 million cigarette butts picked up; 12 billion litres of water saved from being polluted; 33 million volunteer hours picking up waste;
- 2021: 53,000 tonnes of waste picked up globally; 10 million cigarette butts picked up; 81% of countries' governments involved; 7/10 impact on waste awareness reported in participating countries; 26 million volunteer hours picking up waste;
- 2022: 60,000 tonnes of waste picked up globally; 19% of participating countries did their best clean-ups compared to previous years; 45% of all participating countries had higher participation numbers compared to the previous year; 30 million volunteer hours picking up waste;
- 2023: 219,000 tonnes of waste picked up globally; 6 new countries have participated for the first time; surveys in 86 countries showed that a global average of 47% reported a positive evaluation of their country's World Cleanup Day result.

Yearly Progress

	participants	countries & territories	% UN member states incl.
2018	18.0M	157	76%
2019	21.2M	180	83%
2020	8.9M	166	77%
2021	8.6M	191	85%
2022	14.8M	190	86%
2023	19.1M	198	90%

Source: World Clean Up Day

2018-2023



Source: World Clean Up Day



AWARDS

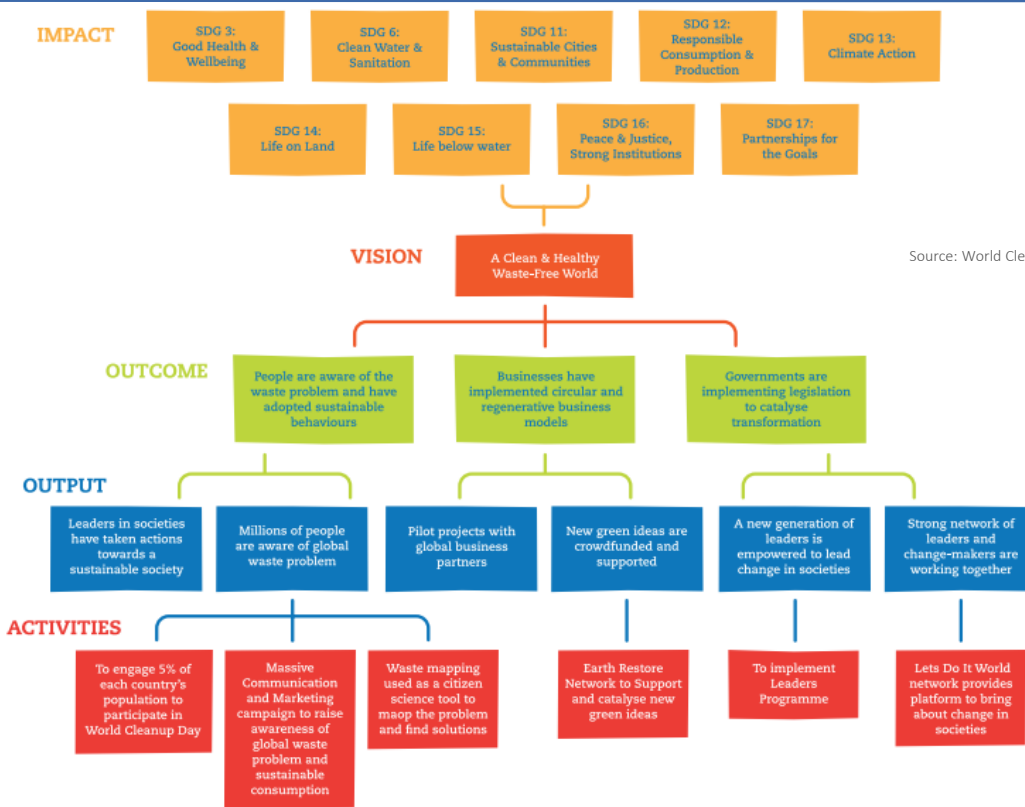
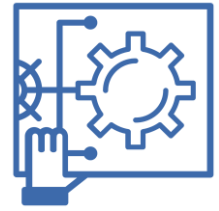
- 2018: the World Cleanup Day action was given by the UNESCO and Japan—the UNESCO-Japan Education of Sustainable Development prize.
- 2021: Let's Do It World won UN-Habitat Scroll of Honour award, a prestigious recognition for efforts in sustainable urbanization. The award was given for organizing three World Cleanup Days, addressing the global waste crisis and reducing carbon emissions, chosen from over 170 nominations. Let's Do It Ukraine received an 'Honourable Mention' UN SDG Action Award for the implementation of their international humanitarian project, "Let's do it Ukraine SOS".
- 2022: Let's Do It Turkey received the Zero Waste NGO Award 2022 for the World Cleanup Day in Türkiye.
- 2023: Let's Do It World received the honorable Mobilization Award of the UN SDG Action Awards for its work with the flagship campaign World Cleanup Day.

'Honourable Mention' UN SDG Action Award - Ukraine



Source: World Clean Up Day, Annual Report 2022

THEORY OF CHANGE



Source: World Clean Up Day, Annual Report 2019

PLANNING & MONITORING



World Cleanup Day is monitored using a blend of data collection, technology, and collaboration with local and international organizations. Participating countries report their cleanup results, including the amount and types of waste collected. Advanced technologies such as GPS tracking, drones, and satellite imagery help verify cleanup efforts and ensure accurate data collection. Collaboration with local partners, including government agencies and NGOs, plays a crucial role in coordinating activities and ensuring proper waste disposal. Post-event, the data is analyzed to assess the impact, with results published in reports to highlight successes and areas for improvement. Feedback from participants is also gathered to enhance future events, ensuring that World Cleanup Day remains impactful, transparent, and accountable in its mission for environmental sustainability.

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT



World Cleanup Day (WCD) exemplifies global stakeholder engagement through the Let's Do It World (LDIW) organization, which boasts member organizations in nearly every country and territory. As LDIW's flagship event, WCD relies on a diverse network of dedicated leaders who, often as volunteers, work to mobilize their communities. These leaders are drawn from all walks of life, including strong women breaking societal norms, environmentalists advocating for a sustainable future, and organizations rallying concerned citizens. LDIW supports these leaders with guidance, advice, and leadership training, empowering them to address their specific waste-related challenges.

Over the past five years, WCD has successfully engaged 95% of UN-listed countries, showcasing the power of collective action in tackling global environmental issues.



SOURCES

- World Clean Up Day – <https://www.worldcleanupday.org/about> ; <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Pa57ZPth-S7pzL4rA39DBFVaNX8RSUEM/view> ; https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jJaH5-pe_8m1GQbQ5688roBSLw70gSWD/view ; <https://drive.google.com/file/d/13sqfTARZRTbssLeP4DpGpMgFTzBy-uM7/view> ; <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pROZ0dyVnc1jkTXXwc03vzK0DT4GJzYV/view> ; <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hfmW96lABJMP7oVOXViQrtjhLhi8OpqY/view>
- Let's Do It Ghana – <https://www.letsdoitghana.org/index.php/letsdoitghana-media/news/68-world-cleanup-day-2023-kicked-off-at-the-european-parliament>
- SDG Action Awards – <https://sdgactionawards.org/world-cleanup-day/>



UN-HABITAT

P.O. Box 30030, Nairobi 00100, Kenya
T: +254-20-76263120
E: unhabitat-info@un.org



Andre Dzikus,
Chief Urban Basic Services Section

accp@un.org
#AfricanCleanCities

