



Beach clean-up with the story of a sunken ship that helps water sport practitioners to understand impacts of waste and plastics in the sea (or river).



Learning experience



Topic

Littering



30-60 min



Participants

- understand the quantity and type of litter in the ocean that gets washed up on the beach
- know about the problems of litter for fauna, water pollution etc.
- are able to take action for reducing and avoiding litter



Suitable for  
outdoor sport instructors  
(and course participants)



Practical sessions  
(Theoretical lessons)



Outdoor F2F



Materials needed

Initial story card and then set of treasures



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## Preparation

Have the group gathered at the beach and the list of items printed out in the number of groups.

## Activity instruction

Tell a story relevant to the area about a sunken treasure ship. Could have been pirates or other ship. The treasure has recently started to be washed up on the shore as the boat has broken up in the storm (See example story).

Provide groups of 4-5 with a laminated card with a list of treasure items to be found such as:

1. A feather from the captain's parrot
2. The captain's eye patch
3. An empty bottle of rum
4. Precious jewels that come in a range of colours
5. The cabin boy's shoe
6. The first mate's glove
7. Precious metals – silver and gold
8. A rare fossil dinosaur egg
9. Pieces of eight
10. A piece of the rigging

etc.....

They have to use their imagination to find the "treasure"



# SHIP WRECK ON THE BEACH



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## Reflection and discussion

Bring everyone together and talk about the items that belong on the beach and those that do not. Think about how they got there and what implications they might have for wildlife and water pollution.

Facilitate the search for solutions how everybody can help to avoid and reduce litter – personally, during the sports activity and within the sport centre/school (no single use plastics, unnecessary wrapping etc.).

How can we take action beyond beach clean-ups? A good example of sports enthusiasts getting active in a monitoring project is the plastic origins project of Surfrider Foundation Europe (see background knowledge).

## Potential variations

- Can be adjusted to any sport and environment – airplane crash in the forest or smugglers in the mountains – whatever suits the area and cultural background. If you develop the story wisely, you can add some cultural information of the area at the same time.
- Good to combine with “the breakdown game” to add info on rotting times of different litter items. More easily, you can also give participants the task to arrange the litter in a row from first to last to decompose.



## Background knowledge

80% of marine litter comes from inland origins. To reduce marine litter, we have to think beyond beach clean-ups and act directly at the source of the problem. Plastic Origins, a Surfrider Europe program, invites volunteers on a river quest to monitor inland plastic pollution and build local solutions to prevent it from reaching the Ocean.

For more info see: Surfrider Foundation Europe (n.d.). Plastic Origins.

<https://surfrider.eu/en/our-missions/marine-litter/plastic-origins-70172.html>



# SHIP WRECK ON THE BEACH



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## Plastic Pollution Key Facts:

- Plastic waste makes up 80% of all marine pollution and around 8 to 10 million metric tons of plastic end up in the ocean each year.
- It is estimated that by 2050, plastic will likely outweigh all fish in the sea.
- In the last ten years, we have produced more plastic products than in the previous century.
- Approximately 100% of all plastics human beings have ever created are still in existence.
- Plastic generally takes between 500-1000 years to degrade. Even then, it becomes microplastics, without fully degrading.
- Currently, there are about 50-75 trillion pieces of plastic and micro plastics in the ocean.



### Key words

#litter  
#clean-up  
#marine sports  
#water sports



### Source

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### Presented by

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## Materials

### Example story

#### Shipwreck on the beach

On 10<sup>th</sup> November in 1595 a Caravela called the Sustentar was caught in a storm of Viana and floundered on the entrance to the safety of the river estuary.

Caravelas were small highly-maneuvrable sailing ships developed in the 15th century by the Portuguese to explore the West African coast and into the Atlantic Ocean. They were small but capable of carrying great loads.

Captain Tiago had been in South Africa but was exploiting the local tribes by raiding their treasures. He overfilled the boat and had taken so much that the Sustentar was overladen and had become unwieldy in the heavy seas, His first mate Luis had tried to persuade him not to take all the plunder and tried to make him see the madness of his greed but to no avail.

Tiago wanted more – much more than he needed and he ended up paying a heavy price for it.

The ship was close to home on Viana when a Westerly gale hit Northern Portugal. Luis had tried to persuade Tiago to run into Porto but Tiago was determined to get all his treasures straight to Viana. He reefed in the sails and bolted the holds to stop any of the crew jettisoning their precious cargo. The seas grew rougher and with the reefed sails he wasn't able to make enough headway. Waves were breaking over the deck and then with an almighty bang the rudder broke and they were at the mercy of the seas.

A huge wave broke over the ship as they were now in shallow water and smashed the main mast and rigging. The boat lurched sideways to the waves and another huge wave broke over her. With water now in the holds she was listing terribly. One more wave will finish her though Luis and he was right. The next wave broke her in midships and she started to sink. A number of crew members had been washed off the deck including the cabin boy whose shoes had been sucked from his feet by the waves.

Tiago was still at the wheel with a mad look in his eye determined to take her in – but instead Sustentar took him down. Luis was washed up on the shore but the ship's treasures went down with their captain. Luis was the sole survivor and told the tale of the Sustentar to all who would listen and take note.

Recent storms and shifting sands have started to send the treasures and some of the artefacts ashore. Lets see what we can find.