

# U.S. Marine Debris Monitoring and Data Collection

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G20 Japan Marine Litter Workshop on Harmonizing Monitoring and Data  
Collection

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- **Importance of Monitoring and Data Collection**
- **US Agency Involvement**
- **Marine Debris Monitoring and Assessment Project**
- **Monitoring Success Stories**
- **Marine Debris Shoreline Monitoring Decision Framework**

Topics of Discussion



## Importance of Marine Debris Monitoring and Data Collection

- Having sound data on prevalence of marine debris is critical to understanding true state of the challenge, whether on shorelines, in water column, on seabed, or in biota
- Monitoring allows us to get sense of the scale of problem in specific locations, determine how much debris may be accumulating, and understand what common debris types are occurring
- This information allows better informed decisions on what specific management, policy and regulatory interventions may be needed to address specific issues and locations

# Importance of Marine Debris Monitoring and Data Collection

- Since marine debris types and concentrations vary greatly based on local conditions, implementing well coordinated and comprehensive marine debris monitoring programs help target interventions to local conditions
- Monitoring can also be used to assess whether such interventions have been effective in reducing marine debris
- This is especially important given the lack of resources that governments, particularly local governments, have to address marine debris.
- Collecting accurate information through monitoring help governments to focus resources, management and policies on most troublesome types of marine debris in specific locations



# US Agency Involvement

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Department of Interior (USFW)

US Coast Guard

US Navy

Department of State

US Agency of International Development (USAID)

# Marine Debris Monitoring and Assessment Project (MDMAP)

- Citizen science initiative led by NOAA that engages US partners and volunteers to survey and record the amount and types of marine debris on shorelines
- Each partner in the MDMAP Network selects nearby shoreline monitoring site that they return to monthly to conduct surveys and submit data to NOAA's MDMAP Online Database
- To aid in the collection, NOAA has developed a field guide for conducting shoreline surveys for marine debris which is available on website.
- NOAA also has marine debris tracker and data analysis templates to help partners to collect data that can be compared across the U.S.





## Marine Debris Monitoring and Assessment Project (MDMAP) Examples

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- Gulf of Mexico – Dauphin Island Sea Lab in Alabama established 36 monitoring sites across 6 barrier islands and 4 states
- Oregon Coast – Oregon Sea Grant, Oregon Coastwatch, and Surfrider Foundation established 16 monitoring sites across the Oregon coast
- Virginia Coast – Virginia Coastal Zone Management, Virginia Waterways, and Virginia Aquarium established 4 monitoring sites across the Virginia coast

# Marine Debris Toolkit

*for educators*



## Marine Debris Monitoring Toolkit for Educators

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- Designed to assist teachers in educating their students about marine debris and involving them in marine debris research and outreach
- Using toolkit, students conduct marine debris surveys and enter data into national database
- Also encourages students to analyze marine debris data, better understand impacts, and become better environmental stewards

# New International Collaboration on Marine Debris

- NOAA and State Department will be working with the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Oceans and Fisheries Working Group to develop technical guide on marine debris monitoring
- The goal of this project is to produce a Marine Debris Shoreline Monitoring Decision Framework that will serve as a practical guide for governments, research entities and others to undertake shoreline marine monitoring, based on local conditions, capacities, needs and issues
- U.S. will be working with Mexico and Canada under new trilateral trade agreement (USMCA) to implement program to assess, prevent, and remove marine debris in North America



Thank You