



The 26th edition of the Ocean Initiatives: Surfrider Foundation Europe calls on citizens to fight marine litter through participatory science

As a result of the current health crisis, huge amounts of waste from single-use items, such as masks and gloves, is ending up in the natural environment and polluting the Ocean. Under current social constraints, it is not only possible, but crucial to mobilize citizens in the fight against marine litter. Surfrider Foundation Europe calls on all stakeholders to join Ocean Initiatives by performing a cleanup alone or organizing a small group to collect waste, sort and report the data necessary to stop Ocean pollution at source.

[Ocean Initiatives](#), a waste collection program utilizing participatory science.

Surfrider Foundation Europe is **sounding the alarm on the dangers of aquatic waste due to the current health crisis**. In order to raise **collective awareness** and drive change, it is essential to involve institutions at a local, national and European levels. By utilizing participatory science to share information on the waste collected, citizens actively improve research on pollution and allow Surfrider Europe to **assert its discourse with public decision makers and businesses**. It is through [Ocean Initiatives](#), the association's flagship program, that volunteers have the opportunity to **collect fundamental data to carry out this fight**.

For this 26th edition of Ocean Initiatives, the NGO is simplifying the reporting process by introducing **4 new participatory science tools**. These tools make it **easy** to contribute to Surfrider's **comprehensive marine litter database**.

4 WAYS TO PARTICIPATE IN CITIZEN SCIENCE WITH OCEAN INITIATIVES



Simplified report form

First level of engagement, it provides information on the location of the operation and focuses on quantifying the star item of this edition - the cigarette butt.



Intermediate report form

This intermediate protocol makes it possible to obtain information on the chosen site and to monitor waste pollution quantifying 35 items (in particular those covered by the European Single-Use Plastics Directive).



Marine Debris Tracker application

The mobile application allows you to collect data on 35 items anywhere you are, during a walk along the coast, the lakeside, riverside or during an official waste collection event.



Marine Litter Watch application

Designed by the European Environment Agency, this protocol is the most engaging. It allows complete feedback on the condition of marine litter thanks to the protocol used by European scientists. (quantification of more than 150 items).



Antidia Citores, spokesperson for Surfrider Europe Foundation, insists on the **advantage of new digital tools in data collection**: "We must not forget that masks remain medical waste, therefore potentially dangerous for our health. They are picked up without precaution. The Marine Debris Tracker application will allow them to identify them by entering them into a database and locate them".

All actors of change

Data reported by volunteers during Ocean Initiatives is fundamental for the association to **assert its discourse with public decision makers and the private sector**.

In 2019, thanks to the involvement of volunteers, Surfrider's data contributed to the recognition of plastic bottles as waste requiring the adoption of measures to reduce their leakage into the environment. Faced with a historic 2019 Ocean Initiatives program and a mobilization of **83,417 people**, the NGO is aiming to reach even more people, cover more ground and generate more data in the 2020 season.

Close to home or along the coast, in just 1 second or 1 hour, join Ocean Initiatives and take action to protect the Ocean. By reporting data about the contents of a collection, volunteers become part of a valuable citizen science network. It is by taking first step that everyone can take action against marine litter.

In order to know more about [Surfrider Foundation Europe](#).

In order to know more, Surfrider Foundation Europe has made a [press kit](#) on the 26th edition of [Ocean Initiatives](#)

[#OceanInitiatives](#) [#Just1Thing](#)

In the context of the coronavirus crisis, the Ocean Initiatives team invites you to respect the health and safety measures given by the government of your country of operation. Since Ocean Initiatives are outdoor events, there is no particular contraindication. However, we invite you to inquire according to the situation in your country.

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