



May 2017 – With more plastic particles in the oceans [than stars in our galaxy](#) , it is clear that the world has a plastic problem. Luckily, all over the world novel solutions and alternatives are appearing that might hold the key to pushing back the plastic tsunami. And you can also contribute.

At the end of February, the [UN declared war on ocean plastic](#) and launched the [Clean Seas](#) campaign to highlight and share initiatives to restore the oceans to their once pristine states. Both in terms of removing existing contamination and in terms of preventing future pollution.

“Plastic pollution is surfing onto Indonesian beaches, settling onto the ocean floor at the North Pole, and rising through the food chain onto our dinner tables,” as Erik Solheim, executive director of [UNEP](#) , said at the release of the CleanSeas-campaign.

To stop the atrocity, he underscored the urgent need for action. A call that appears to have created ripples of action, as people all over the world are coming together to [combat plastics](#) –

with initiatives ranging from organizing beach cleanings and limiting one's own plastic use, to encouraging workplaces, schools and companies to follow suit.

Several governments are already on board the plastic revolution. For example, several African countries, such as [Kenya](#), have banned or taxed disposable plastic items, and in the beginning of May the [Nordic countries](#) came together to create a new circular vision for sustainable use – and reuse – of the flexible material.

Even before the campaign, several companies have been tackling the trouble with cunning creativity – from turning tourists and Danish kids into ‘[plastic pirates](#)’ in [boats made from recycled plastic](#) in the Copenhagen Harbour, to turning plastic waste into a ‘[green currency](#)’ around the canals of Amsterdam. Also, inspiring individuals, from [schoolboys](#) to [lawyers](#), have almost singlehandedly set out to resolve the plastic problem, both [on beaches](#) and [at sea](#).

Further innovations include [plastic-free ‘water bottles’](#) and biodegradable alternatives to plastic, such as the ones by Finnish company [Sulapac](#) and its Indian, edible equivalent [Bakeys](#). Also, Danish brewer [Carlsberg](#) is developing a biodegradable bottle made from wood fibres.

In spite of such initiatives there is, however, still a long way to go, [explains](#) UNEP Communications Officer Petter Malvik:

“The Clean Seas campaign has already achieved important wins for our oceans, but the job is

far from done. By 2022, we aim to achieve a global ban on microbeads in personal care and cosmetic products and a drastic reduction in the production and use of single-use plastic,” he says.

With demand on plastic on the rise, and with existing garbage already affecting our oceans, ecosystems and even ourselves, everyone must get onboard the ship to sail against the plastic tide.

To find out how you can help, try visiting the [CleanSeas action site](#) or follow [UNRIC Nordic](#)’s weekly tips on Facebook. And if you have a tip up your sleeve as well, do not be shy to share it.

- [UNRIC’s backgrounder on oceans](#)

What can we do?

Advocate for #CleanSeas



Enforce and strengthen legislation to stop marine litter



Ban smoking on beaches



Invest in research to develop non-toxic material



Stop intentional littering



Invest in waste management infrastructures



Ban plastic bags



Use reusable bags



Show the true cost of plastic disposal on products



Clean up beaches and shorelines



Recycle

#CleanSeas

