



Conservation
Volunteers
Australia



SeaToSource Report

A SUMMARY OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

March 2020 - March 2023



cva.org.au/seatosource





Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners

Conservation Volunteers Australia respectfully acknowledges Traditional Owners and Indigenous Peoples, their rich and dynamic cultures and their continuing unique affinity and cultural obligations for land and sea.

We pay respect to them and their cultures, and to elders past, present and emerging.

About Conservation Volunteers Australia

Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) is the nation's leading practical environmental group, passionate about creating a world in which people and nature thrive together by making conservation accessible, fun, and fulfilling for all.

Through a storied 40-year legacy of community involvement and app-led conservation activities, CVA is committed to ensuring that Australia's natural wonders and unique biodiversity continues to thrive for generations to come. By building and empowering a community of nature stewards, CVA aims to inspire another million actions for nature.

CVA aims to inspire meaningful action for nature that's informed by science, together with a trusted network of volunteers, communities, businesses, governments, Traditional Owners and research organisations.

As Australia's conservation engagement experts, and with the support of generous partners who believe in making a real difference, CVA teams up with the best and brightest to make sure everything we do is evidence-based and designed to create lasting change at scale.



A Word From **Our CEO**

The more Australians we have taking actions for nature, every day, the more we can demonstrate that people can really make a difference to the world around them.

Modern, people-powered, data-driven programs like SeaToSource, which connect Australians with nature at scale, are critical to ensuring Australia's environment and its people continue to thrive. In delivering SeaToSource, CVA is proud to have partnered with CSIRO, Australia's national science agency, to enhance scientific research through professionally managed citizen science activities and to broaden the opportunities for individuals to actively contribute towards solving one of the greatest environmental issues of our time.

While it's not always a glamorous job, we've been able to use the insights gleaned from counting and classifying thousands of kilograms of litter along waterways and beaches to identify waste hotspots and work with our partners and communities to introduce source reduction and litter diversion measures that have made a real difference in our nine catchments.

This, coupled with the results from voluntary single-use plastic bans, suggests that real progress can be achieved when governments, businesses, scientists, and conservation volunteers all work towards shared, common-sense goals.



Phil Harrison

Chief Executive Officer



An Overview of **CVA's SeaToSource Program**

Research has shown that around 60% to 95% of litter in our ocean and waterways consists of plastic, which we know has a disastrous impact on the environment and the animals that call these places home. This inspired and motivated CVA to create SeaToSource as a national program to empower people to take action on ocean litter.

The SeaToSource program was launched in March 2020 and implemented for three years until March 2023, with grant funding from the Australian Government to conduct activities at eight catchments (Brisbane River, Georges River, Parramatta River, Werribee River and Port Phillip Bay, River Torrens, River Derwent, Tamar River, and the Swan River and surrounding coastline), as well as funding from BHP Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA) to conduct activities at a ninth catchment (Mackay). SeaToSource supported people around the country to take action on one of the world's most solvable environmental issues: ocean litter.

Plastic pollution is pervasive and requires collective action from a range of different stakeholders. To create effective solutions, an inclusive and collaborative approach is needed, and this underpinned CVA's strategic approach to addressing ocean pollution at its source along waterways that feed into the ocean.

The SeaToSource program aimed to reduce the amount of plastic litter entering our creeks, rivers and the ocean by collaborating with communities along nine important catchment areas that flow into the Great Barrier Reef and the Great Southern Reef. SeaToSource focused on where litter starts its journey, encouraging everyone to find ways to eventually make beach clean-ups a thing of the past.

These nine strategic waterways flow into the Great Barrier Reef and the Great Southern Reef, which represent a huge series of connected reefs extending around Australia's coastline from Mackay in Queensland to Kalbarri in Western Australia. Both the Great Southern Reef and Great Barrier Reef are home to a wide variety of endemic plants and animals that are found nowhere else on the planet; and they're in our own backyard.

Recognising that everyone has a role to play in reducing and eliminating litter from waterways and the ocean, SeaToSource headed upstream to the source of much of the pollution, working with communities along waterways to identify and reduce pollution in towns and cities. The ultimate goal being to stop litter from ending up in our rivers and the ocean.

To ensure that SeaToSource had real-world impact and research application, Conservation Volunteers Australia teamed up with CSIRO, Australia's national science agency.

Through a partnership with CSIRO, CVA assisted them to expand their National Plastic Pollution Baseline Survey into the areas where SeaToSource was operational. The National Plastic Pollution Baseline Survey project collects data to understand the scope, scale, and types of litter lost to the environment. This information is then used to inform better management practices and policies.

SeaToSource resulted in more than 10,600 volunteers successfully removing around 19 tonnes of litter comprising over 380,000 debris items, the vast majority (80%) of which were plastic.

Fifty of Australia's largest businesses were involved in the program, 690 SeaToSource events were organised, and over 1,237 hectares of waterways and coastlines were surveyed for litter.

This showcases the incredible power of community action to tackle plastic pollution from sea to source.

SeaToSource Collected Data on Litter to contribute to **CSIRO's National Plastic Pollution Baseline Survey**

Tackling ocean plastics requires understanding the distribution and types of litter found within our environment. Guided by a rigorous survey methodology, developed by our research partners at CSIRO, CVA established 34 national plastic pollution survey sites, which were routinely monitored every three months for the duration of the program.

Data collected during these monitoring activities was fed directly into CSIRO's National Plastic Pollution Baseline Survey. The data is used by CSIRO's world-leading researchers to help Australia respond to the global mismanaged waste problem by informing policy decisions and driving innovation to tackle the most dominant waste sources, such as polystyrene and plastic wrap.

A total of 359 individual litter surveys were completed nationally in the nine catchments over the life of SeaToSource, thanks to over 3500 volunteers who participated in removing over 9000 kilograms of waste and analysing over 181,200 items of litter (the majority of which were plastic). In collaboration with CSIRO, CVA also held a series of training sessions, where landholders, community groups and other key stakeholders learnt how to conduct their own litter monitoring surveys.

"We've been learning the CSIRO litter auditing methodology with the aim to lead future surveys with other CVA volunteers. I actually feel quite confident now especially since we did three transects and got to swap roles as well.

I feel like CSIRO has a very efficient system with the app which is really easy to navigate. I really want to try and make a tangible change and effort. And the only way I could really think of is to try to reduce plastic - and whether that be through beach clean-ups, litter monitoring or becoming a nature ambassador - to actually being a part of source reduction solutions (for example through going to the upcoming source reduction workshop).

It just feels really rewarding to be able to make a difference, especially to an issue that is so prominent right now in society",

said Madeleine H., a CVA volunteer.





SeaToSource Program Activities

The following is a summary of all our SeaToSource program activities carried out between March 2020 and March 2023.

These program activities include:

- Community Catchment Clean-ups,
- Litter Monitoring Surveys,
- the SeaToSource National Day of Action,
- the Beach Patrol and Love Our Street Partnership,
- the annual Sea The Change Youth Art Competition,
- the SeaToSource Corporate Christmas Clean-up Challenges,
- the SeaToSource Source Reduction Workshops, and
- the Nature Ambassadors Program.



Community Catchment Clean-ups

Several community clean-up activities were organised to help reduce debris loads in key catchment areas. These clean-up events also helped to identify debris sources, and raise community awareness about waste and its impact on waterways and the ocean.

All of the cleanup sites were selected based on their high conservation, social, or economic significance. These sites were either known litter hotspots or they were valuable locations for collecting long-term datasets on litter in Australian waterways.



Litter Monitoring Surveys

Regular litter monitoring surveys were conducted at each of the nine catchment areas by CVA officers and local volunteers.

In each of the catchment areas, several survey sites were established to monitor the upper river, middle river, lower river, and beach areas. In total, 34 national survey sites were routinely monitored in accordance with the survey methodology developed by CSIRO. This approach aimed to collect sufficient baseline data to understand regional variances in the type and volume of litter, and to track the impact of national source reduction programs, such as the plastic bag bans, and container refund schemes on the litter found at these catchment areas.

CVA conducted 359 litter monitoring surveys during which more than 3,500 volunteers removed over 9,000 kilograms of waste. Of the 181,200 debris items collected and analysed, most of them were plastic.

This survey data helped CSIRO to expand its National Plastic Pollution Baseline Survey. It also contributed to an ongoing national initiative supported by the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) to gather baseline data on mismanaged waste in the environment.

SeaToSource National Day of Action: A Day of Action to Inspire a Lifetime of Change for our Ocean

The SeaToSource National Day of Action was an annual event-filled day of action on ocean litter, celebrated annually in 2021, 2022 and 2023, that resulted in cleaner waterways. Most importantly, it fostered more informed and connected communities who were involved in taking collective action for nature.

Over the duration of the three year program, 1,150 volunteers participated in the SeaToSource National Day of Action, collectively removing 990 kilograms of litter from waterways.

The SeaToSource National Day of Action was arguably the most significant day of the year for our SeaToSource team. The event extended far beyond an average beach clean-up; the National Day of Action was an opportunity for the CVA community to gather on the same day each year to create a lifetime of change for our oceans by showcasing and celebrating our focus catchment areas.

The event acted as a platform for communities to connect while educating and inspiring attendees to act on ocean litter. Over the 3 years of SeaToSource, our teams collaborated with 136 stallholders, who were instrumental in facilitating a wide range of activities – from smoking ceremonies to trash puppet workshops, plastic upcycling demonstrations, virtual deep-sea diving, and live animal displays.

These activities allowed participants to view waterways in a new light, gaining a newfound appreciation for the coastal and aquatic spaces around them. We'd like to express our sincere gratitude to our many SeaToSource National Day of Action partners, which includes Reverse Garbage, Trash Puppets, and the Great Southern Reef Foundation.

"I enjoyed the informative stalls, enjoyable workshops and the opportunity to make a difference with like-minded people at an extremely well-run event!"

- National Day of Action volunteer.



Partnership with Beach Patrol and Love Our Street

As part of the SeaToSource program, CVA partnered with Beach Patrol, a network of volunteer groups using the power of community spirit to clean local beaches and streets.

Through this partnership, CVA was able to help Beach Patrol expand their network outside of Victoria to operate in our nine catchment areas. This was achieved by SeaToSource volunteers downloading Beach Patrol's Litter Stopper app and using it to record data about their clean-up activities.

Over the course of the SeaToSource program, 2,337 people picked up over 7,200 kilograms of litter from their local beaches and waterways, covering an amazing 765 kilometres of waterways and coastlines, using the Litter Stopper app.

The SeaToSource program launched at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the Litter Stopper app provided the flexibility and freedom for people to clean their own litter hotspots in their own time and space, helping to get people out and contributing to the project. Many families used the Litter Stopper app on their daily walks.

Beach Patrol created the Litter Stopper app to help people record information from their clean-up activities. Recording information about the amount and type of litter found helps to identify where it is

coming from, the different types of litter and the places with high litter loads. This information is useful to inform planning actions to reduce litter at the source.

Not only was Beach Patrol's Litter Stopper app instrumental in helping CVA volunteers to take part in the SeaToSource program, but the partnership with CVA also helped Beach Patrol to expand into other areas.

Initially, Beach Patrol was a single group of residents from Middle Park and Albert Park in Melbourne, Victoria. These suburbs are bordered by Port Phillip Bay which has a nice, sandy stretch of beach that has sadly often been neglected. Some of the local residents realised this neglect and formed 3206 Beach Patrol. Since then, Beach Patrol has grown significantly, with groups in many suburbs around the Bay; each with their own coloured shirts identifying their respective 'hoods'.

In 2015, a member of Elwood Beach Patrol decided to set up Love Our Street (LOS), which uses the same model as Beach Patrol, but is street-based. LOS groups do a great job cleaning streets and villages, and stopping litter before it hits gutters and drains. This removal of litter at the source helps to stop it from getting into waterways and oceans.

From one original group there are now more than 50 Beach Patrol and LOS groups in Victoria. The Beach Patrol model of attracting community members to help voluntarily clean their postcodes and do something positive for their local environment is working, and it is something CVA is happy to support.



Sea The Change Youth Art Competition Winner 2022, Group Category 9-12 year old, by Junction Park State School, QLD

Annual 'Sea the Change Youth Art Competition'

At CVA, we love being inspired by the next generation of future stewards. That's exactly what happened when the submissions for our annual Sea the Change Youth Art Competition started rolling in.

The annual art competition was launched as a way to support teachers across Australia to engage their students with one of the world's most solvable challenges: litter entering our waterways.

Through this annual youth art competition, students were encouraged to explore a plastic item used at home, school, or in the wider community and design either a poster or video showing how they would re-purpose or replace that object with a more ocean-friendly option, or, how they would inspire others to change their use of the plastic object.

CVA provided research topics, teacher resources and champion species from the Great Southern Reef as inspiration. Held annually, the competition involved over 35 schools, with 241 students contributing 79 wonderful entries.

The quality and creativity of the artworks entered into the competition was inspiring. Below are some of the many entries that were received. Some used digital animations and videos, others upcycled plastic waste into new creations like dream catchers or planters, and others created artworks using waste collected from beaches and waterways.



Sea The Change Youth Art Competition Winner 2022, Individual Category 9-12 year old, by Ava, NSW



Sea The Change Youth Art Competition Winner 2022, Individual Category Under 8 years old, by Charlie, NSW



SeaToSource Corporate Christmas Clean-Up Challenges

Each year CVA set a challenge for our corporate partners to come together to collect and sort as much ocean litter as possible within a few short hours, in the lead up to Christmas.

The success of these events was evident from the number of corporates and their staff who participated, and the amount of litter collected from along the coast and waterways. A total of 209 staff from 11 of CVA's corporate partners and supporters attended, representing five capital cities. Participants recorded the collection of 28,920 pieces of litter.

These annual events involving CVA partners and supporters helped create cleaner local waterways and beaches, while fostering collaborative and connected communities.

This annual event also helped to encourage people to make changes to their purchasing habits over the Christmas period, particularly with regard to single-use items and plastic gifts.



#SeaToSource Corporate Clean Up Challenges	 209 staff from 11 Corporate CVA Partners and Supporters
What did you enjoy most?	"The social, in combination with the meaningful / constructive activity & outdoors helping our nature and community."
 Surveyed 28,920 pieces of litter	 And removed 644 kg of rubbish which is as heavy as a healthy crocodile!
100% of surveys participants either agreeing, or strongly agreeing, that they activity has motivated them to guide others to make better choices for nature	 Australian Government #SeaToSource is a project supported through funding from the Australian Government
 5 capital city locations	#SeaToSource Conservation Volunteers Australia

SeaToSource Source Reduction Workshops

A series of SeaToSource source reduction workshops were held in each of our nine river catchment areas with the aim of empowering communities to take action to reduce and manage local waste more effectively, better understand local ocean litter issues, and to spark opportunities for collaboration.

These workshops were a combination of online and in-person events where community members were able to delve deeper into local ocean litter issues and develop targeted action plans for their respective catchments or communities.

Over the course of the SeaToSource program, a total of 20 source reduction workshops were held across Australia, which were attended by a total of 183 participants.

CVA's Project Officers guided workshop participants on how to use litter data collected throughout the program to identify the commonly found items, key barriers and opportunities in their local areas for reducing plastic litter.

Many participants focused on single-use plastic items that had been commonly found during clean ups, such as plastic packaging. A popular outcome was

hands-on beeswax wrap making workshops where participants used repurposed fabric to make their own plastic-free alternatives to plastic packaging.

To further their skills and knowledge about sustainable living, participants were supported with online resources such as the Plastic Waste Challenge Home Audit and the Beating Plastic Pollution course, which were developed by the SeaToSource team. Guest speakers and facilitators contributed their expertise in sustainability and landfill diversion at these workshops. They also provided participants with relevant contacts, networks and ideas that they could take back into their own communities.

The SeaToSource source reduction workshops also provided an opportunity to collaborate with local landholders and councils to install litter diversion infrastructure such as TAngler bins (for recreational fishing waste) and cigarette butt bins.

CVA's Project Officers quickly became familiar with local litter hotspots and identified that these were often places without access to public bins. TAngler bins were installed with council support at three river catchment locations and the success of these bins was evident each time they were emptied for litter data collection. Filled with bait bags, fishing lines and other plastic consumer waste, these bins directly reduced litter entering nearby waterways.

#SeaToSource Source Reduction Workshops	 20 Workshops held across Australia with 183 participant	 94% of participants felt more empowered to lead action in their communities	 I've realised that I'm passionate about recycling and I want to do more with my waste."	"Environmental problems are depressing. If you are facing it alone it can get you down...we give each other ideas and we motivated each other."
 88% believed their participation was contributing to real ecological improvements	The project has motivated me to make a positive impact on climate. Me and my family are wanting to compost and grow our own vegetables to help reduce plastic at the source.	 Three quarters (75%) felt their participation had improved their own wellbeing	 Australian Government #SeaToSource is a project supported through funding from the Australian Government	#SeaToSource Conservation Volunteers Australia



CVA's Nature Ambassadors

A cohort of SeaToSource volunteers were so inspired by the program that they took part in a pilot project, enabling them to become CVA Nature Ambassadors: everyday people who wanted to do more for their local communities and waterways.

A total of 79 individuals signed on to become Nature Ambassadors. Cumulatively, they logged an impressive 260 volunteer hours towards the SeaToSource program.

These Nature Ambassadors participated in training on CSIRO data collection methodology and litter clean ups, often sparking ideas around how to get their communities involved in CSIRO's National Plastic Pollution Baseline Survey.

CVA's Nature Ambassadors also completed training in safety and volunteer management and were an integral part of delivering our National Day of Action each year, as well as inspiring action on ocean litter within their own networks.

Furthermore, through equipping and inspiring people to become leaders for nature, the Coffee Cup Project came to life in three of the river catchments. This project aimed to encourage the switch to reusable coffee cups to avoid single-use plastics.

Nature Ambassadors researched reusable coffee cup networks such as Green Caffeine and RENOME and promoted these programs to their local cafés and restaurants, becoming a local point of contact for many places looking to reduce reliance on single-use cups. By providing support and tailored plans, businesses were encouraged to be ahead of the game and make the transition to reusables as more state-wide single-use plastics bans were introduced.

Several other notable achievements from the Nature Ambassadors project include individuals who spearheaded waste reduction efforts in their workplaces. One Nature Ambassador gave a presentation to her colleagues on ways to reduce medical waste, while another successfully mobilised businesses at his university campus to reduce their use of single-use plastics.

"It's empowering feeling part of a team and feeling like the little guy can make a difference. I could just start a campaign, get a group of like-minded people together; and Nature Ambassadors has made me feel that (rather than feeling [like I'm] one person tackling this systematic problem)."

CVA Nature Ambassador

Summary of the 9 SeaToSource river catchment area projects

The following provides an overview of the activities and impacts at the 9 river catchment areas involved in the SeaToSource program.

1. Brisbane River, Brisbane (Queensland)

Some of the key achievements for this project include:

- **Three National Day of Action events** were held, allowing people to engage with various conservation and ocean litter themed stallholders and providing an opportunity for people to participate in a hands-on clean-up to remove rubbish from the area.
- **The TAngler Fishing Line Bin trial** at the Port of Brisbane Boat Ramp involved the installation, ongoing maintenance and data collection of a bin at a popular fishing spot to encourage proper disposal of fishing line and tackle. This initiative also provides the opportunity for CVA staff and volunteers to chat to local anglers about the bin, highlighting the impacts of fishing line on wildlife to inspire long-term behavioural change.
- **Three Source Reduction Workshops** were hosted in Brisbane (also accessible online), which were focused on education and discussing topics related to tackling ocean litter, such as single use cups and the circular economy.
- **A stall at the Brisbane World Science Fair in 2022/2023** was able to engage many people, providing an opportunity to inform and educate hundreds of people about reducing litter and managing ocean debris.



SeaToSource project summary at Brisbane River, Brisbane

Number of volunteers	1,245
Debris removed	1,748 kgs
Number of litter items counted	68,828
Number of plastic litter items	54,432
Percentage of litter that was plastic	79%

We are grateful to all our partners for supporting this project in the Brisbane River catchment area:



“Volunteering for SeaToSource is providing me with social interaction, meeting like minded people, whilst feeling connected to the community and learning new skills”. -Jacqueline, CVA volunteer.

2. River Derwent, Hobart (Tasmania)

Some of the key achievements for this project include:

- **A Ciggy Ballot Bin was installed at the Claremont Foreshore**, in partnership with Glenorchy City Council. Informed by research to ensure maximum impact and behaviour change, the aim was to engage people who parked their cars to smoke at the bin.
- **A Clean-up Australia event** was held in 2023 at Cleburne Point (an area known for lots of illegal dumping), in partnership with the Derwent Estuary Program. Collectively, with volunteers from the Derwent Estuary Program (including the CEO), the Department of Natural Resources, Environment Tasmania and Sea Shepherd Australia – over 25 kilograms of rubbish were picked up.
- **A Stormwater Drain Stencilling event was held at Kingston Beach**, together with Kingborough Council, where volunteers were able to spray paint stencils near stormwater drains to remind passers-by of the importance of looking after our waterways and keeping stormwater drains clean.



“Some friends think a few people picking up rubbish doesn’t make any difference. I say every little bit counts.” - Albert Kuang, TAS

SeaToSource project summary at River Derwent, Hobart

Number of volunteers	1,797 (combined with Tamar River)
Debris removed	5,896 kgs (combined with Tamar River)
Number of litter items counted	31,088
Number of plastic litter items	23,314
Percentage of litter that was plastic	75%

We are grateful to all our partners for supporting this project in the Derwent River catchment area:



3. Georges River, Sydney (New South Wales)

Some of the key achievements for this project include:

- **3 National Day of Action events** were held in the Georges River catchment, attracting 212 community members and engaging 22 stallholders. The National Day of Action succeeded in bringing together a diversity of people to take action with hands-on clean-up activities as well as hosting educational stalls and workshops to help inform and inspire the community around ocean debris. All events had great turnouts, with the National Day of Action event held at Congwong Beach being joined by Randwick Councillors Bill Burst and Kym Chapple as well as community groups We Are One and the Heads Up Alliance.
- **A Tangler Fishing Line Bin trial in the Chipping Norton Lake Precinct** involved the installation, ongoing maintenance and data collection of a bin at a popular fishing spot to encourage proper disposal of fishing line and tackle in an area where this is a common issue. Staff and volunteers also had the opportunity to chat to local anglers about the bin and highlight the impacts of fishing line on wildlife, to inspire long-term behavioural change.
- **Source reduction workshops** were carried out to educate the community about reducing common single-use plastics. A beeswax wrap-making workshop was held in collaboration with Reverse Garbage to help reduce single-use cling film in the kitchen and spark ideas and action for individuals to reduce their plastic consumption at home.
- **An incursion at Lugarno Public School** aimed to educate primary school children about the impacts of plastic on marine life, the importance of reducing plastic usage, and to provide students with the opportunity to get creative with designing anti-plastic pledges.



“Loved the enthusiasm of all involved”
- Councillor Bill Burst, Randwick Council.

SeaToSource project summary at Georges River, Sydney

Number of volunteers	2,644 (combined with Parramatta River)
Debris removed	5,243 kgs (combined with Parramatta River)
Number of litter items counted	49,632
Number of plastic litter items	45,989
Percentage of litter that was plastic	93%

We are grateful to all our partners for supporting this project in the Georges River catchment area:



4. Parramatta River, Sydney (New South Wales)

Some of the key achievements for this project include:

- **Source reduction workshops** were carried out to educate the community about reducing common single-use plastics. A beeswax wrap-making workshop was held in collaboration with the City of Canada Bay Council for Plastic Free July to help reduce single-use cling film in the kitchen and spark ideas and action for individuals to reduce their plastic consumption at home.
- **An informational stall was held at the Seaside Scavenge at Sydney Olympic Park in 2022** to engage the public about ways to make a difference and reduce litter and use of plastics.
- **Clean Up Australia Day 2023**, held at Kissing Point Park, attracted a large group of community volunteers that all came together to celebrate making Australia litter-free.
- CVA worked with the Parramatta River Catchment Group, the City of Parramatta and the City of Ryde to host a **large community clean-up event for the annual Riverfest in 2022**.



“It was certainly an eye-opening experience, and good to make a small impact.” – Brayden Slade, AON.

SeaToSource project summary at Parramatta River, Sydney

Number of volunteers	2,644 (combined with Georges River)
Debris removed	5,243 kgs (combined with Georges River)
Number of litter items counted	26,112
Number of plastic litter items	22,914
Percentage of litter that was plastic	88%

We are grateful to all our partners for supporting this project in the Parramatta River catchment area:



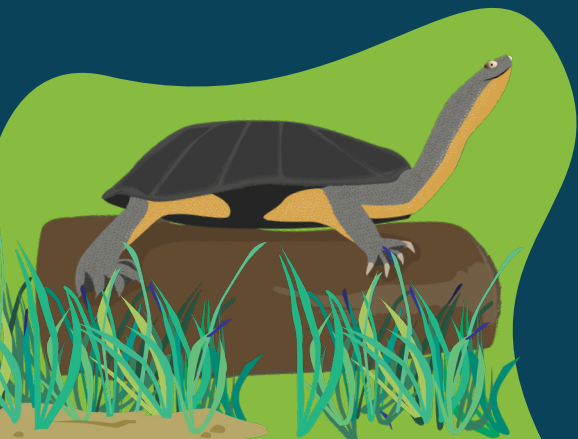
5. Swan River, Perth (Western Australia)

Some of the key achievements for this project include:

- A Ciggy Butt Ballot Bin at Coogee Beach, in partnership with the City of Cockburn**, was established to encourage the community to butt their cigarettes responsibly. By enticing smokers to vote for their favourite West Australian footy team when butting out their cigarettes, we found less butts on the ground and a greater sense of awareness in regards to waste by the ballot bin users. Cigarette butts are a common find at local beaches and parks, so we installed this Ciggy Butt Ballot Bin in a visible location.
- The Renome Reusable Cups Initiative** was borne out of three source reduction workshops that were held to begin a movement towards using reusable cups by local café owners and other small businesses around the Perth metropolitan area. CVA Natura Ambassadors (NAs) were engaged to promote Renome reusable cups, and this sparked a conversation with these small businesses about how they could reduce their waste – particularly plastic waste. This initiative also sparked awareness within the community to make small changes, where possible, when eating out.
- CVA coordinated a Rossmoyne Primary School Clean Up Challenge and excursion** with over 40 school children aged between 9 and 11 years. The students participated in a clean-up activity at the end of the Swan River and were thereafter educated on the importance of reducing reliance on plastic and how to make responsible choices every day.



“Coming from Madrid, there are not as many opportunities like this – to get out and do these clean-ups. It is great to be a part of something bigger than just myself.” - Yulia Kennedy, AON .



SeaToSource project summary at Swan River, Perth

Number of volunteers	1,294
Debris removed	1,344 kgs
Number of litter items counted	61,326
Number of plastic litter items	39,468
Percentage of litter that was plastic	64%

We are grateful to all our partners for supporting this project in the Swan River catchment area:



6. Tamar Estuary, Launceston (Tasmania)

Some of the key achievements for this project include:

- **A National Day of Action event** held in the Tamar Estuary catchment was Launceston's first National Day of Action. The event was held at Riverbend Park in February 2023, and brought together educational stalls from like-minded conservation organisations including Tamar NRM, Tamar Estuary and Esk River Program (TEER), Plastic Free Launceston, and Tasmanians for Marine Parks. Alongside the Redress Hub stall and the Interweave Arts Remade parade, which both promoted the circular economy, upcycling and recycling – the day brought together a diverse range of people to take part in a hands-on clean-up activity and the stall provided inspiration for addressing ocean plastic pollution.
- **Tamar Discovery Day**, organised by the Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers (TEER) Program, is a free community day with engaging displays, presentations and activities. CVA's SeatoSource program held a stall and engaged up to 200 attendees on the day. Various other organisations also hosted stalls there including Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service Discovery Rangers, Fishcare, AMC Search, Marine Life Network and Seadragons Dive Group, BirdLife Tasmania, and Tamar NRM, Plastic Free Launceston and the BioBlitz teams. The CVA SeaToSource stall engaged in discussions with the community on the most common debris items found during clean-ups, raising awareness on waste-free alternatives individuals can use, and discussing the pervasiveness of plastic waste.
- **Source reduction workshops** were held to educate the community about reducing common single-use plastics. The first workshop was held at Hillwood (along the Tamar Estuary) and was entirely plastic-free, with homemade cake in beeswax wrap, loose leaf tea, and ceramic plates and cups. The only plastic items were the stickers on fruit. Everyone made a pledge for Plastic Free July. The second workshop was held in collaboration with House of Prana yoga studio and Your Soul Light and involved a beeswax wrap-making workshop. The aim of this workshop was to help reduce single-use cling film in the kitchen and spark ideas and action for individuals to reduce their plastic consumption at home.





"I find volunteering very rewarding, it's a nice feeling to give time back to things that I value, it's nice to return the good karma. In my younger days, I wasn't aware, and now I want to do good for the planet." - Chris, CVA volunteer.

SeaToSource project summary at Tamar Estuary, Launceston

Number of volunteers	1,797 (combined with River Derwent)
Debris removed	5,896 kgs (combined with River Derwent)
Number of litter items counted	26,548
Number of plastic litter items	18,700
Percentage of litter that was plastic	70%

We are grateful to all our partners for supporting this project in the Tama River catchment area:



7. River Torrens, Adelaide (South Australia)

Some of the key achievements for this project include:

- **A National Day of Action event** was organised at Hallett Cove in 2023, where 70 volunteers participated in a beach clean-up. After the clean-up, volunteers and the Hallett Cove community had the opportunity to interact with stallholders and experience life underwater with virtual reality (VR) displays, learning about the Great Southern Reef and why it's so important that we protect the reef from the impacts of ocean litter. A highlight of the event was when the Marine Discovery Centre found a rare blue-ringed octopus moving about in the rock pools.
- **Source reduction workshops** were held, in partnership with the Port Environment Centre, and included a special screening of the sustainability documentary 'Going Circular'. The documentary challenges our consumerist way of life and explains how a circular economy can provide us with a hopeful future. The workshop also involved several hours of engaging discussions about how to create more sustainable lifestyles to reduce footprints and transform waste practices to be more sustainable.
- **Several clean-up events were run, in partnership with St Peter's College**, along the River Torrens. At each event, over 60 students participated, resulting in significant litter removal impacts.



“We’ve always appreciated the opportunity CVA have given us to do our bit and give back to the environment.”
- Andrew, Alinta Energy volunteer.



SeaToSource project summary at River Torrens, Adelaide

Number of volunteers	1,850
Debris removed	1,456 kgs
Number of litter items counted	66,986
Number of plastic litter items	57,350
Percentage of litter that was plastic	86%

We are grateful to all our partners for supporting this project in the River Torrens catchment area:



8. Werribee River and Port Phillip Bay, Melbourne (Victoria)

Some of the key achievements for this project include:

- A National Day of Action event** at Middle Brighton Beach was organised and attended by over 40 people with the aim of taking action on ocean litter. Participants from diverse backgrounds came together to clean up the beach and engage with interactive stalls and participate in workshops focused on promoting awareness of the impacts of single-use plastics and the dangers of microplastics. The event was made possible by the support of Neil Blake (the bay keeper for Port Phillip Bay's EcoCentre), Emma Grace and Southern Ocean Environmental Link (SOEL). Volunteers participated in a microplastic survey and educational session and enjoyed creating Kokedamas and taking part in a plastic upcycling workshop. Volunteers also collected 50 kilograms of litter and microplastics from the beach and surrounding areas.
- A Clean Up Australia Day event** at Altona Beach, 42 volunteers removed, recorded, and tallied an impressive 1407 pieces of rubbish from the beach and surrounding areas. This effort helped prevent many of these items from making their way into our precious waterways.



SeaToSource project summary at Werribee River and Port Phillip Bay, Melbourne

Number of volunteers	989
Debris removed	2,948 kgs
Number of litter items counted	40,993
Number of plastic litter items	29,028
Percentage of litter that was plastic	71%

We are grateful to all our partners for supporting this project in the Werribee River and Port Phillip Bay catchment area:



9. Mackay Region, Queensland

Some of the key achievements for this project include:

- A Clean Up Australia Day event** was held at Shellgrit Creek in 2022 called Clean Up Mackay Region, organised in partnership with the BHP Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA), Mackay Regional Council, North Queensland Airport (NQA), and Pioneer Landcare. Together we prevented 640 kilogrammes of litter from entering the ocean, and raised awareness about marine debris and plastic pollution in our region.
- An inaugural National Day of Action event** was held at Bucasia Beach in February, 2022, which was attended by 26 community members who helped us to collect 67 kilograms of litter and do their part for litter pollution. Our local partners ran educational stalls and raised awareness about plastic pollution, recycling, waste reduction, turtle conservation and more. This event was made possible by BHP Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA), Mackay Regional Council, Pioneer Landcare, Mackay Turtle Watch, the Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership, and Reef Catchments.

“I so enjoyed volunteering in the SeaToSource program. Being passionate about caring for our environment, the blitz is a great opportunity to participate in active conservation work. It’s a great way to meet like-minded people, exercise and spend some time outdoors. I love ocean swimming and long beach walks, and I try to protect what I love. Every trip to the shore is a chance to pick up rubbish with the hope that it will inspire others to think before dropping a bottle or such like on the beach. We can all do our bit in our daily lives to reduce our impact on the environment and encourage action like SeaToSource data highlighting ocean rubbish and tracing accountability. It’s lots of small efforts from us all that makes a big difference in preserving Australia’s stunning natural beauty.” – Jeanette, CVA volunteer..

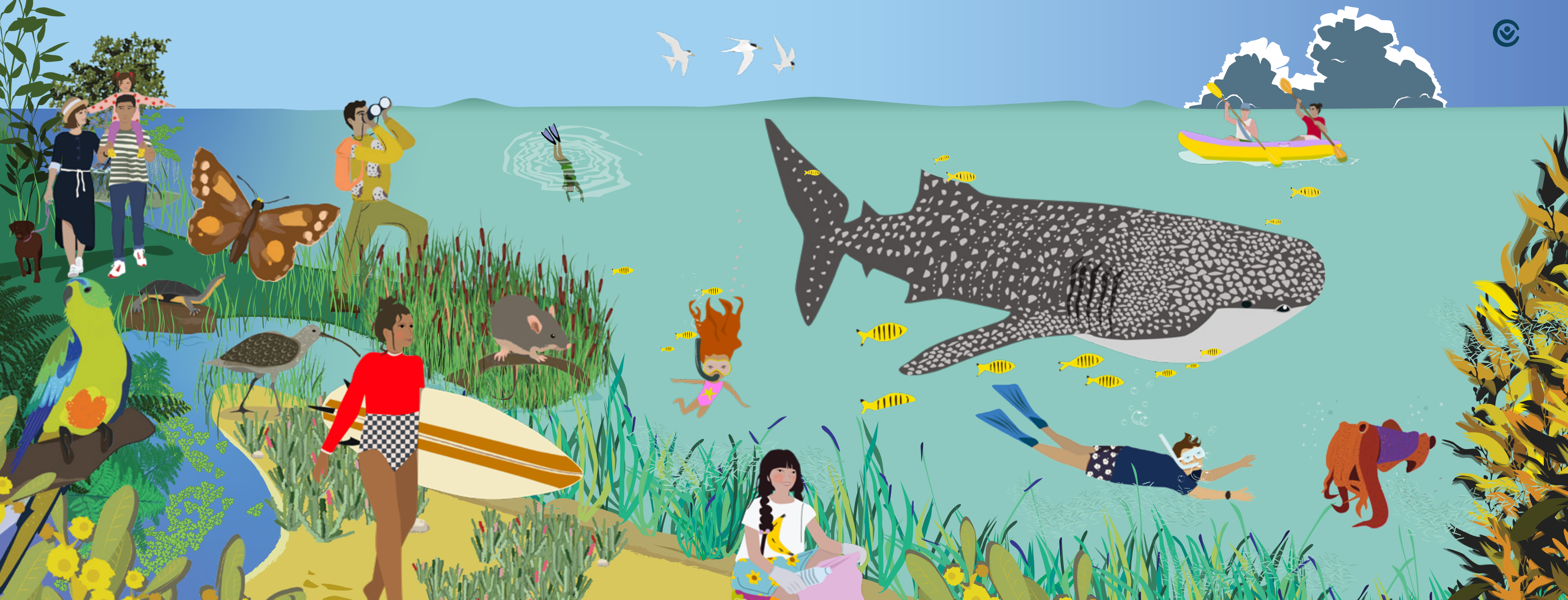


SeaToSource project summary in the Mackay Region

Number of Volunteers	783
Debris removed	2,215 kgs
Number of litter items counted	9,234
Number of plastic litter items	7,901
Percentage of litter that was plastic	86%

We are grateful to all our partners and supporters for supporting this project in the Mackay Region:





Acknowledging our SeaToSource sponsors, supporters, partners and volunteers

Conservation Volunteers Australia would like to thank all our sponsors, supporters, partners and volunteers who have contributed to the success of SeaToSource, both nationally and locally.

We are grateful for your commitment to healthier waterways and a world where we can flourish together. This project received grant funding from the Australian Government. We are also grateful to BHP Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA) for sponsoring activities at the Mackay catchment.

The impacts of ocean litter are immense and diverse, but ultimately solvable. Conservation Volunteers Australia will continue to grow and inspire local communities to care for, and understand the importance of, clean catchments and a clean ocean. You can find more about our current SeaToSource activities on our website. This year, we will continue heading upstream and working with people and communities to identify and reduce pollution originating from households with our SeaToSource Plastic Waste Challenge available from our CVA Community app.

There are many ways you can get involved with CVA to help enhance water ecosystems across Australia. Join us in making ocean litter a thing of the past, by downloading the CVA app and joining one of our many conservation volunteer events across the country.

A special thank you to our corporate partners for their continued support.



Australian Government





The future of Australia's ocean, wetlands and waterways is in our hands.

Help stop litter at its source.

#SeaToSource #SeaTheChange



Are you ready to Dive into the SeaToSource Plastic Waste Challenge?

Visit seathechange.org.au



Impact Partnerships

Momentum is building for businesses to step up and scale up actions and commitments to contribute to the Global Goal for Nature: Zero net loss of nature from 2020, net positive by 2030, and full recovery by 2050. Partnering with CVA means investing in nature conservation and mental health and wellbeing.

More info: partnerships@cva.org.au