



NOAA NATIONAL OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



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Nation's First Marine Debris Action Plan Implemented in Hawaii

Today, NOAA and several partners in Hawaii announced a comprehensive long-term plan to actively assess and remove plastics, derelict fishing gear, and other human sources of marine debris from coastal waters and coral reefs along the island chain. The plan, a first of its kind for the nation, will be instrumental in protecting the state's coastal communities and marine life from the thousands of pounds of marine debris that wash ashore each year.

"For too long marine debris has marred the natural beauty of our ocean and threatened our marine ecosystem," said Sen. Daniel K. Inouye of Hawaii. "I have long championed a coordinated effort to mitigate the many tons of debris that suffocate our coral, kill our fish and aquatic mammals and blanket our coastlines. This is a critical issue for our state and I am proud that Hawaii is taking the lead in finding a solution to this global problem."

For the last two years, numerous governmental, non-governmental, academic, industry, and private business partners from across the state worked alongside NOAA's Marine Debris Program to develop the Hawaii Marine Debris Action Plan. Building on significant ongoing and past marine debris community efforts, the plan establishes a comprehensive and cooperative framework for marine debris activities and projects across the state to reduce:

- the current backlog of marine debris;
- the number of abandoned and derelict vessels;
- land-based debris in waterways; and
- fishing gear and solid waste disposal at sea

Numerous strategies and activities fall under each of these goal areas, many of them already underway by Hawaii's marine debris partners. These include debris removal efforts, emergency response, prevention and outreach campaigns as well as increasing research and technology development. Progress will be tracked and measured for each of these areas.

"We've all been working to address marine debris in Hawai'i in our own way for years. It's great to have a plan that we can all contribute to and work together on to tackle marine debris in Hawaii," said Marvin Heskett, member of the Surfrider Foundation's Oahu Chapter.

"This roll-out demonstrates NOAA's continued commitment to working with partners from across the state of Hawai'i on the issue of marine debris," said David M. Kennedy, acting assistant administrator for NOAA's National Ocean Service. "We are proud to take part in the development of the nation's first marine debris action plan in Hawaii."

The plan, supported and coordinated by NOAA with assistance from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, is available online: <http://marinedebris.noaa.gov/projects/himdap.html>. Video is also available for download on the site.

NOAA understands and predicts changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and conserves and manages our coastal and marine resources. Visit: <http://www.noaa.gov>.

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On the Web:

NOAA Marine Debris Program: <http://www.marinedebris.noaa.gov>

Hawai'i Marine Debris Action Plan & Supporting Video:

<http://marinedebris.noaa.gov/projects/himdap.html>