



CEC Preventing Plastic Pollution through Education:  
CCA Engaging Local Communities across North America  
CCE to Reduce Marine Litter

Regional Workshop on Tackling Plastic Pollution: Cooperation, Best Practices and Sustainable Solution (12 March 2025)



# CEC Mission

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Facilitate cooperation and community participation for the conservation, protection and enhancement of the North American environment.

Support sustainable development in benefit of present and future generations.





Building Community Solutions to Marine Litter	Building Community Solutions to Marine Litter	Building Community Solutions to Marine Litter
<p>Case Study Tlaxiaco River Watershed</p>	<p>Project Overview</p> <p>The Tlaxiaco River Watershed is a small, rural community in the mountains of Costa Rica. The watershed is home to a diverse range of ecosystems, including forests, grasslands, and agricultural lands. The community is facing a significant challenge: marine litter. Every year, thousands of pieces of plastic waste are washed into the river, eventually making their way to the ocean. This litter is not only a threat to the local environment but also a major source of income for the community. The project aims to address this issue by working with the community to identify and implement low-cost, low-technology solutions to reduce marine litter.</p>	<p>Case Study Salt Sho Watershed</p>

# REDUCING MARINE LITTER THROUGH LOCAL ACTION

A Toolkit for Community Engagement

## PART I: DEFINING YOUR VISION AND SETTING GOALS

## PART II: BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

## PART III: PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING SOLUTIONS

## COLLECTING BASELINE INFORMATION

Most marine litter reduction initiatives begin with one or more community members recognizing marine litter as an issue. Remember, just because you recognize the problem doesn't mean that others will have noticed, considered, or understood the extent of its impact. Collecting and presenting data about the state of litter in your community can help present the problem and ensure that your perception is based on evidence. Metrics and measurement are explored in greater detail in [Part IV](#).

## POP-UPS

### WHAT IS THIS EVENT?

**Pop-ups** are dedicated tables, booths or tents at larger, more diverse local events that allow organizers to meet members of their community—residents, community organizers, the media and business professionals—where they are. Pop-ups can pique curiosity and get people to ask what you are doing here. This is a way to broaden the traditional reach of your efforts.

**TIME:** 1-8 hours | **Who leads:** Two or three organizers

## BUILDING AN ACTION PLAN

### WHAT IS AN ACTION PLAN?

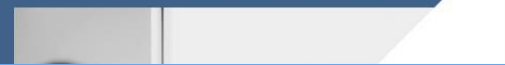
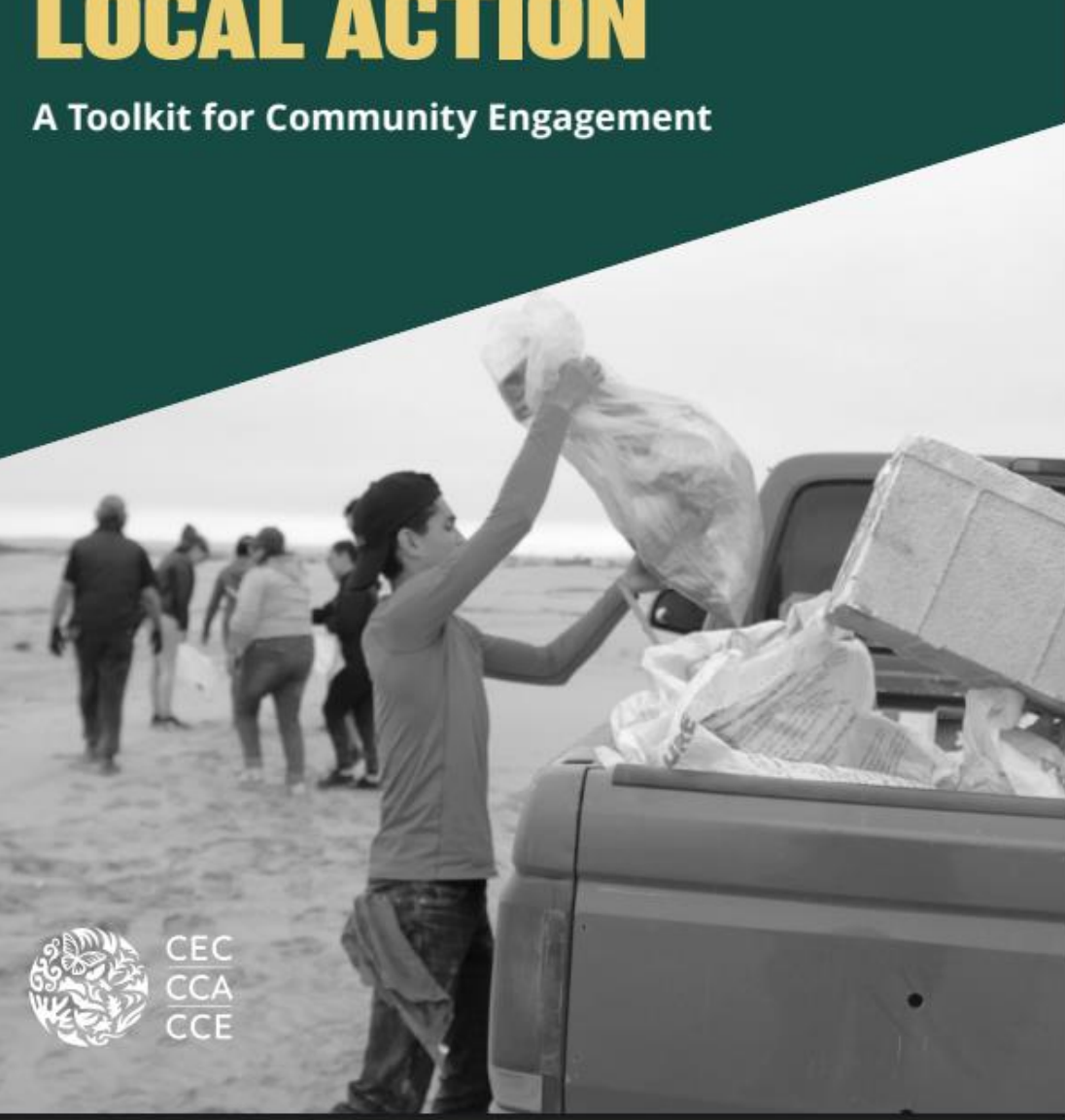
An action plan is a management tool to keep projects moving in a timely and cost-effective manner. It identifies milestones and when they should be achieved, and it details how metrics and measures (explained in [Part IV](#)) will be considered and consistently tracked through the project.

Project champions are often project managers and so this tool may include every aspect of implementation and execution.

## FINAL TIPS

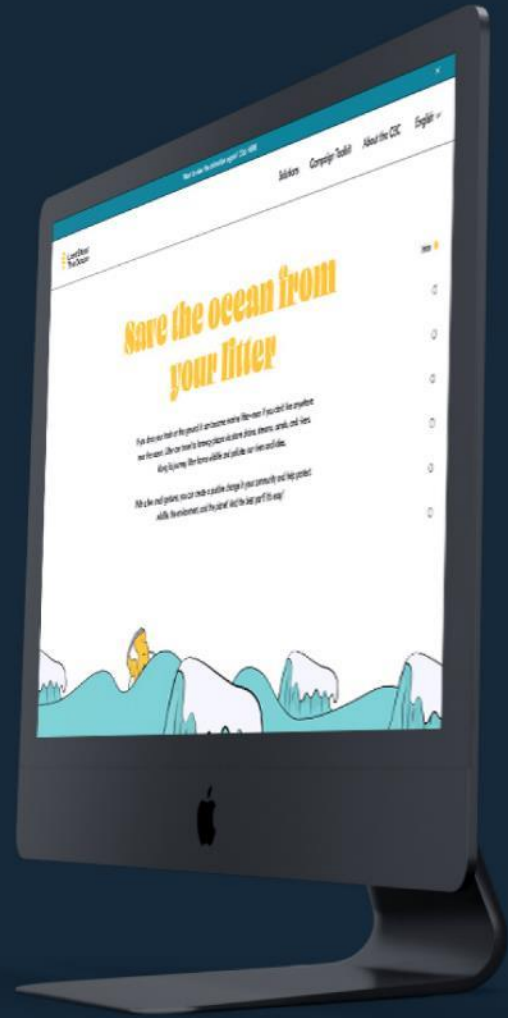
### HOW TO KEEP THE MOMENTUM GOING AND ACHIEVE RESULTS

The steps outlined in this toolkit build on one another to create self-sustaining momentum, energy, and capacity to address marine litter through community engagement. This energy should be channeled to encourage, produce and build ownership of piloted and implemented



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# Last Stop: The Ocean



laststoptheocean.com

# How does inland litter end up in the ocean?

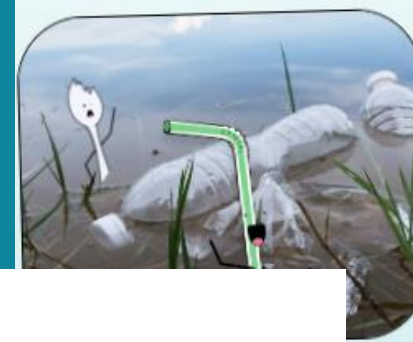
Pilot Cities

Solutions

Campaign Toolkit

About the CEC

English



## You can protect North America's watersheds

A significant amount of waste created on land ends up reaching the ocean after traveling down watersheds. Watersheds are the land areas that funnel all surface water towards the ocean. By creating less waste and disposing of your trash wisely, you will help keep the land and waters around you clean and keep the ocean litter-free.

# Save the ocean from your litter

## Don't abandon your trash

Stop your litter's ocean-bound journey before it even begins! Put your waste in its place, especially when you are outside. In most cases, nobody will pick up the empty cup you forgot on a bench or the crinkled wrapper you left next to a full trash can.

If you drop your trash on the ground, it can become marine litter—even if you don't live anywhere near the ocean. Litter can travel to faraway places via storm drains, streams, canals, and rivers. Along its journey, litter harms wildlife and pollutes our rivers and lakes.

With a few small gestures, you can create a positive change in your community and help protect wildlife, the environment, and the planet! And the best part? It's easy!

## You can help the economy

Rivers and beaches polluted with litter are not attractive to tourists—which means less opportunities for the local economy. Add the costs of cleaning up and you have a very expensive problem on your shores. By creating less waste, taking care of your trash, and recycling when you can, you can help the economy. Less litter = more prosperity.

# It's up to you and me

## A free toolkit for your next marine litter awareness campaign

Spread the word that marine litter pollution—and solutions!—start at home. This free material was designed to create awareness on water and trash flows and provide simple solutions for individuals to prevent and reduce land-based marine litter. So go ahead, and start making meaningful change in your community by downloading the toolkit (available in English, French or Spanish) below!

[DOWNLOAD TOOLKIT](#)[CONTACT US](#)

SAVE ME!

# City litter is marine litter.

Trash dropped on the ground can make its way to the ocean — even if you don't live anywhere near it. Wind and water send litter into storm drains, where it rides the flow to streams and rivers. Last Stop: The Ocean.

Learn how you can prevent marine litter at [www.laststoptheocean.com](http://www.laststoptheocean.com)



Last Stop:  
The Ocean  
Trash Can



Le voyage des déchets  
vers l'océan commence

# Ici

# La basura no conoce fronteras.

Así como una gota de lluvia puede viajar desde un arroyo hasta el océano, la basura suele encontrar su camino desde localidades del interior de un país hasta el mar. Cuando te deshaces en forma adecuada de la basura, estás ayudando a mantener limpia a toda América del Norte y sus océanos.

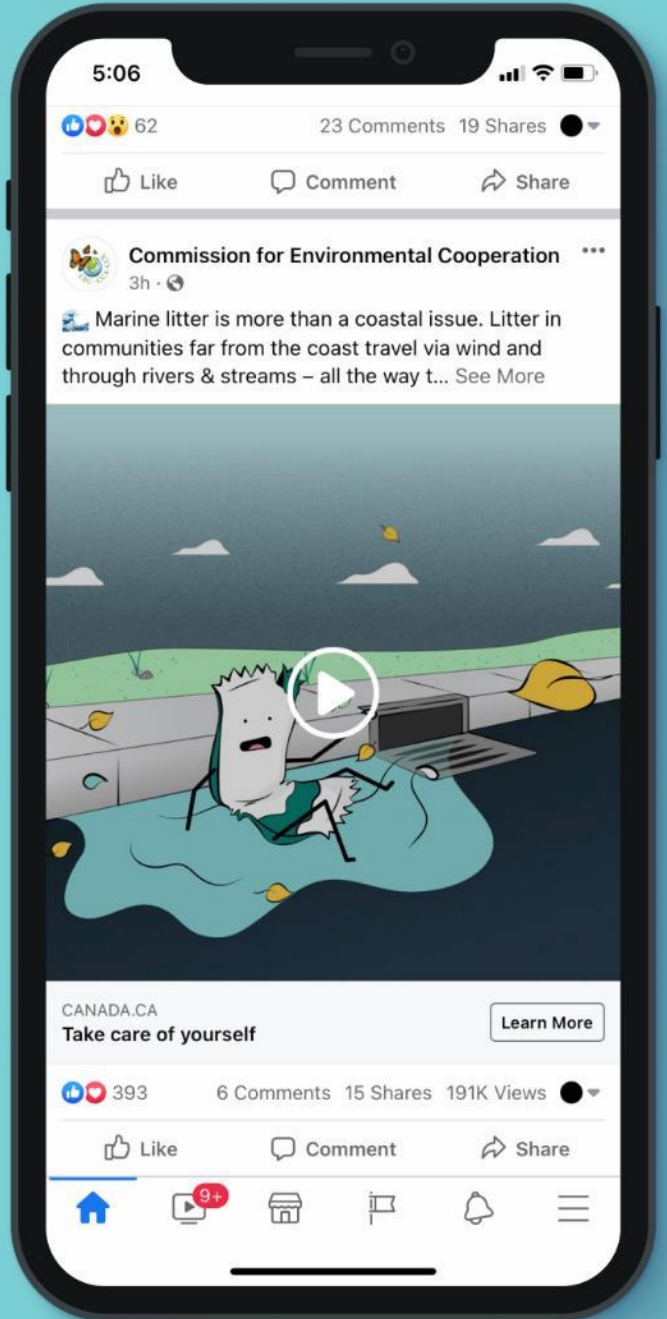
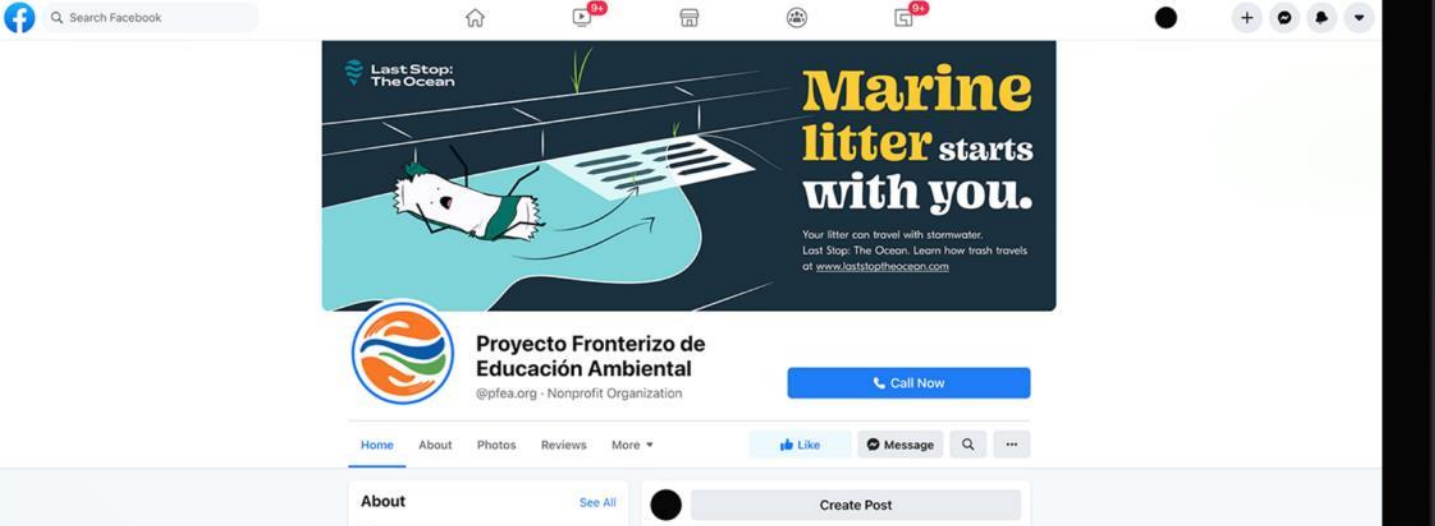
Descubre cómo viajan tus desechos, en: [www.ultima-parada-el-océano.mx](http://www.ultima-parada-el-océano.mx)



Última parada:  
el océano  
El bote de basura







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## Marine litter starts at home.

Plastic litter is the most common type of marine litter. It is made from fossil fuels and can take up to 1000 years to decompose. It is a major threat to marine life and the environment.

**USE THE BIN!**

Leading the Charge

**BIN ME!**

## City litter is marine litter.

Each day, we throw away 100 tonnes of litter in the UK. Most of it ends up in the sea. This is because we do not use the bins properly.

**USE THE BIN!**

Leading the Charge

**I HATE SWIMMING!**

## Rivers carry litter to the ocean.

Every year, 1000 tonnes of litter are carried down rivers to the sea. This is because we do not use the bins properly.

Leading the Charge

## Trash knows no boundaries.

Litter does not know where it is going. It can travel thousands of miles from where it is thrown away.

Leading the Charge

## Put litter in its place.

Litter is a problem for the environment and for us. It is a major threat to marine life and the environment.

**USE A TRASH CAN. ISSUES THE OCEAN!**

Leading the Charge





## Add your logo to print ready posters and other materials

You can download material for digital, outdoor and indoor use; print ads that can be displayed in magazines, newsletters or catalogues; along with guidelines for their use. We invite you to co-brand all materials with your organization's logo.

DOWNLOAD TOOLKIT



## Reach diverse audiences

The illustrated universe is designed to make the complex issue of marine litter accessible to English, Spanish, and French-speaking urban and rural communities throughout North America, allowing a wide diversity of audiences to relate to the campaign materials.

DOWNLOAD TOOLKIT



## Further educate and inspire

The Last Stop: The Ocean website also presents the animated journey of marine litter and offers simple solutions to prevent it.



# North American communities taking action to reduce marine litter

- ✓ empowering local actors to prevent marine litter **at the source**
- ✓ **demonstrating, educating, and communicating** about the **flow of litter** from inland communities to the marine environment.





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**City litter**  
is marine litter.

Trash dropped on the ground can make its way to the ocean — even if you don't live anywhere near it. Wind and water carry litter that starts where it falls into the sea to oceans and rivers. Let Stop The Ocean.

Learn how you can prevent marine litter at [www.letstoptheocean.com](http://www.letstoptheocean.com)

Let Stop The Ocean Trash Can

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**Trash** knows  
no boundaries.

Just like a road trip can travel from a stream to the ocean litter can find its way from the middle of the country to the sea. When you dispose of your trash wisely, you're helping to keep all of North America — and our oceans — clean.

Learn how your litter travels at [www.letstoptheocean.com](http://www.letstoptheocean.com)

Let Stop The Ocean Trash Can

Thank you!

**laststoptheocean.com**

**LSTO@cec.org**

***[cec.org/topics/ecosystems/reducingmarinelitter](http://cec.org/topics/ecosystems/reducingmarinelitter)***



Three countries. One environment.  
Tres países. Un medio ambiente.  
Trois pays. Un environnement.



COMMISSION FOR  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
COOPERATION

COMISIÓN PARA  
LA COOPERACIÓN  
AMBIENTAL

COMMISSION  
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ENVIRONNEMENTALE

