

A GOOD CATCH

To celebrate World Oceans Day, a litter boom installed across the Ohlanga River aims to lessen the amount of pollution that flows down the river ending up in the sea and on the beaches at uMhlanga Lagoon

Visible on the sea side of the M4 highway, and not to be mistaken for a fishing net, the litter boom has been installed to intercept floating litter which pollutes our oceans, river systems and beaches. The boom has been carefully designed to work with river currents and prevailing winds, and is able to cope with flood conditions as well as to be as unattractive as possible to vandals.

*LOCAL LITTER FACTS

- The uMhlanga UIP collected over 35 000 bags of refuse in uMhlanga Rocks in the first five months of 2018 – with much of the litter washing up on to the beaches.
- The uMhlanga UIP teams up with eThekweni Municipality to attend to the daily cleaning of the uMhlanga beaches.
- The Clean Blue Lagoon team of volunteers have picked up over 7 200 bags of litter in one year, all at the mouth of the uMngeni River (Blue Lagoon).

“Litter always covers our beaches after the rains and we had been looking at possible solutions to intercept some of it at the beach stormwater outfalls. Then we heard about litter booms that were successfully deployed on the Umgeni and Seekoiespruit River systems as part of an initiative by Durbanites Against Plastic Pollution (DAPP) and Durban Green Corridor (DGC) to keep plastics out of our oceans. “We made contact and an immediate partnership was established, with DAPP and DGC providing the expertise, and the



UUST garnering community support and raising the required funds,” said Andrew Fraser, chairman of the Upper Umhlanga Security Trust (UUST).

The UUST approached the uMhlanga UIP for support, part-funding and future cleaning. “Rivers and estuaries connect communities, and the environmental challenges faced by one have a knock-on effect on the other, so the idea of the boom was something we jumped at as real support to our beach cleaning efforts,” said UIP precinct manager Dewet Geldenhuys.

Most of the litter emanates from the N2 and M4 freeway stormwater runoff and from areas upstream, but will be “caught” by

the litter boom, which is fully serviceable and will be cleaned by the uMhlanga UIP. Litter collected will be recycled where possible or sent to landfill, and data on refuse collected will be used to inform a city-wide effort to stop ocean-bound plastic.

Plastics SA were also hugely supportive and engaged the support of one of their members, DPI Plastics, who generously donated the long length of hard pipe required to make the litter boom. The local uMhlanga community initiatives of Park to Park, uMhlanga Manors and the UUST generously provided the balance of funding and the litter boom became a reality.

In celebration of World Oceans Day on June 8, the litter boom will be officially opened, followed by a community beach/lagoon clean-up on June 9. *

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