



## Consulate General of India Durban

May 21, 2023

### Press Release G20 India - South Africa Mega Beach Clean-up, Durban

The Consulate General of India, Durban in partnership with eThekweni Municipality organized a G20 Beach Clean-up at the Beachwood Mangroves Nature Reserve in Durban on 21 May 2023 as an initiative under India's G-20 presidency, in addition to celebrating 30 years of re-establishment of diplomatic relations between India and South Africa.

2. "Addressing marine litter" is one of the focus areas under India's G20 presidency. The beach clean-up drive in Durban is part of India's global initiative to bring attention to the problem of marine litter and the need to work together towards sustainable development of oceans.

3. It is one of the largest 'Jan Bhagidari' (community participation) campaigns under India's G-20 presidency. India also aims to enhance cooperation among G20 nations in promoting sustainable ocean management and marine biodiversity conservation.

4. In India, this event started with a Mega Beach Clean Up campaign in Mumbai, followed by deliberations on the Ocean20 dialogue. Ocean20 serves as a platform for sharing best practices in science & technology, innovation, policy, governance, participation, and blue finance mechanisms, all aimed at ensuring a sustainable and climate-resilient blue economy.

5. Speaking on the occasion, Consul General of India, Dr. Thelma John David highlighted the powerful message behind the theme of India's G20 Presidency - "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" i.e., 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'. She emphasised the importance of Mission LiFE (Lifestyle For Environment) and need to adopt sustainable and environment-friendly lifestyles as highlighted by our Honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. Underscoring India's sustained efforts to mitigate marine litter, she mentioned that the large-scale 'Jan Bhagidari' (People's movement) initiative stands as a testament to India's commitment to preserving coastal and marine ecosystems during its G20 Presidency. India also seeks to enhance collaboration among G20 nations in promoting sustainable ocean management and marine biodiversity conservation

6. The eThekweni Municipality was represented by Mr. Eric Apple Green, Head of Department - International and Governance Relations at eThekweni Municipality. Mr. Eric appreciated India's commitment to promote international cooperation in addressing challenges of environment pollution and climate change. He reiterated the fact that every

small step that we take towards preserving and conserving nature would come back to us in a big way.

7. Consul General of USA, H.E Ms. Anne Linnee highlighted that every single action of humans has an impact on the nature and oceans including what products we choose to consume and how we use them matters too. She mentioned that 'Blue Economy' is estimated at \$3 trillion by 2030 and Durban, KwaZulu-Natal has enormous coastline that they could benefit from. She said that India took a positive and powerful role through G-20 presidency.

8. Scientist and lecturer Mr. Trevor Ganesan Govender from Mangosuthu University of Technology explained that oceans hold 90% of the biomass of world and the Oceans' microalgae is the major producer of the planet's lifeline- oxygen. This initiative under Indian G-20 presidency to protect oceans is very significant considering the number of livelihoods dependent on it.

9. Professor Akash Anandraj from Mangosuthu University of Technology explained about the damaging effects of microplastics not only on marine life but also on humans through the food chain. Therefore, he stressed that there is an urgent need to protect our oceans from plastic.

10. More than 850 people including school children from Maidstone Primary School, Lyndhurst Primary School, Durban Girls College, Glenwood School and university students from Durban University of Technology apart from local community, actively participated in the beach clean-up drive and jointly collected over 3000 kgs of marine litter. Civil society organizations in the Durban working on conservation- Adopt a River, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife were also part of the campaign who supported this entire programme. MANCOSA's volunteers guided the participants throughout Beach clean-up drive. An 'open air marine animal awareness exhibition' was also arranged, which was visited by hundreds of people. Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife honorary rangers organised guided mangrove nature walks to promote awareness about importance of mangroves and conservation among the school students and public.

11. Swami Vivekananda Cultural Center, Durban also organized 'Yoga on the Beach' to promote holistic wellness and healthy lifestyle among the local community. Millet based refreshments were distributed to participants to promote millet based healthy diet. A sand art to promote awareness to avoid plastic littering, yoga and beach clean-up was also commissioned at Golden Mile drive, Durban.

12. All the G20 members and guest countries have joined hands with India to raise public awareness regarding marine litter. India's Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change has organised a beach cleaning drive involving the delegations from various G20 Members and Guest countries on 21 May 2023 in Mumbai, on the side-lines of the G20 meetings on environment. The initiative will draw global attention to the need to combat coastal and marine pollution and the role of citizens and their participation in preventing and cleaning up marine litter.

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