

A diver is shown underwater, holding a camera, against a background of sunlight filtering through the water.

# COMING SOON

## Massive Open Online Course on Marine Litter



In 2015 the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in cooperation with the Open University of the Netherlands, will launch a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on Marine Litter. The MOOC has been created in order to stimulate leadership and offers opportunities for actionable and change oriented learning related to marine litter within the framework of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter. The MOOC will be disseminated through the Global Universities Partnership on Environment and Sustainability (GUPES) which currently comprises of over 520 universities globally

### Features

First MOOC focusing on marine litter;

Case studies from around the world;

Expert faculty and distinguished visiting lecturers;

Courses taught at a BSc level;

Open to all without restrictions;

The course is FREE of charge.

### WHY A COURSE ON MARINE LITTER ?

Marine litter is a global problem that affects every ocean of the world. Litter is an environmental, human health and socio-economic problem that is a symptom of a highly disposable society. With worldwide growth in the amount of solid debris thrown away every day and slow rates of degradation, the amount of debris present in the marine environment is increasing. This course seeks to inspire students to take action and leadership in the arena of marine litter through stimulating interaction with all stakeholder groups.

The MOOC on marine litter strives to teach students through action oriented learning how they can apply successful and inspiring activities to their own local context, regardless of their profession or location. The course will present different options and tools to combat marine pollution such as the use of effective and legitimate tools like the Honolulu Strategy.

The course will provide examples and case studies that will inspire leadership at all levels, thereby increasing awareness of and stimulating creative solutions to marine litter problems. Moreover, this course will benefit policymakers, practitioners, and managers who wish to connect with other professionals in order to enhance their knowledge of marine litter issues.

UNEP and its partners have developed, over the past decade, a number of training courses.

UNEP and the Open University have created this MOOC in order to address public interest in capacity building and actionable learning on marine litter, as well as to make opportunities available to a wider audience. Our goal is **to reach 2,000,000 people over the next five years**, regardless of their academic or professional background, or their location.

## COURSE OPTIONS

**Leadership Track:** 8 hours of learning introducing the student to the basic characteristics and concepts of the marine litter issue and various strategies to prevent and reduce marine litter. This track consists of 2 blocks geared towards policymakers, managers and professionals who require an overview of the topic in order to integrate the concepts of the MOOC into their professions. Students are encouraged to complete this track whether or not they are an official leader.

**Expert Track:** 32 additional hours consisting of 6 blocks and a final assignment for professionals and students who want to acquire more in-depth knowledge, insights and skills relating to prevention of marine litter. Students undertaking the Expert Track must also complete the Leadership Track for a total of 40 hours of instruction.

The MOOC will start in October 2015 with the Leadership Track taking place over a course of 2 weeks. Those students who wish to remain in the course will continue to the Expert Track, which will be completed by mid-December 2015 (total of 8 weeks).

## WHAT WILL YOU LEARN IN THIS COURSE?

Within the course there will be a series of lectures, case studies and videos, along with additional study materials. Lectures will be available through videos as well as online documents within an online interactive platform. This course will cover the following topics:

“ Marine debris is a complex cultural and multi-sectoral problem that exacts tremendous ecological, economic, and social costs around the globe Honolulu Strategy, ESI

- The environmental impact and societal relevance of marine litter problems;
- Technical solutions, including alternatives and recycling;
- The governance of marine litter;;
- Sources, processes, modelling and monitoring of marine litter;
- Designing and selecting effective strategies for marine litter;
- Awareness raising, education and outreach, and capacity building;
- Implementation of policies, laws, and market-based instruments;
- Skills to develop an action plan to reduce marine litter pollution.

## WHAT WILL STUDENTS GAIN?

After the Leadership Track students should be able to understand the environmental and socio-economic impacts of marine litter, indicate the sources of marine litter, understand monitoring methods, indicate knowledge gaps and be acquainted with strategies to reduce marine litter.

Students that complete the Expert Track should additionally be able to explain the effects of microplastics and abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear, be aware of tools and instruments used to prevent marine litter and have an understanding of the current role of policies and laws.

A certificate of participation can be obtained by students after their completion of both the Leadership Track and the Expert Track. Students will also receive free access to all course materials on a 24 hour online platform.



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