How the expedition cruise industry can lead the fight against plastic marine litter

POLICY AND ACTION ON PLASTIC IN THE ARCTIC OCEAN

AECO’s Clean Seas Project
AECO’s overall objectives

• Ensure environmentally friendly, responsible and safe cruise tourism in the Arctic

• Advocate for the expedition cruise industry, and AECO’s members’ interests
Clean Seas project goals

1. Significantly reduce the use of single-use plastics
2. Enhance cleanup efforts
3. Educate and motivate passengers, staff and crew
4. Share knowledge and best practices
Clean Up Svalbard

- Cooperation between the Governor of Svalbard and mainly AECO-members
- Findings are reported to build knowledge and statistics

2018 reported cleanup efforts
Contributions to research

**SALT Deep Dive Workshops:**
- Origin, composition and distribution (2018)
- Link to different nationality vessels operating in the area (2019)

**Akvaplan-niva MALINOR Project**
- Scientists participated in voyages to collect data and engage passenger in citizen science activities
Educational materials - Guidelines

Clean up Svalbard
A joint effort to remove waste from the shores of Svalbard

Join the Clean up Svalbard campaign
Waste is carried by ocean currents and washes ashore in the Svalbard archipelago. For almost 30 years, inhabitants and visitors have been encouraged to pick up marine debris when they visit the coast.

What is Clean up Svalbard?
- Almost 30 years ago, an expedition cruise company saw an opportunity to help clean-up marine debris around Svalbard during a cruise. The operator approached the Governor of Svalbard who offered logistical support to handle the waste.
- Clean-up Svalbard was born, and many AECO members and local organizations got involved.
- In recent years, about 20 tons of waste have been removed from beaches in Svalbard by cruises.
- Expeditions typically remove between 1-4 tons per season.
- The Governor of Svalbard organizes dedicated clean-up trips for locals twice a year, while other local associations hold additional events, mostly in February.
- According to studies of the collected waste in 2005 and 2010, 40-80% of it comes from other Arctic regions.

Clean Seas Guidelines for Visitors to the Arctic
Tips to reduce your plastic footprint

Be part of the solution
When travelling to the polar regions, there are steps you can take to reduce the amount of plastic and other waste produced. In the Arctic, you will sail remote areas with limited waste management facilities. Depending on your location, waste may be landfilled locally or compacted and shipped elsewhere for treatment.

Your operator is working towards reducing single-use plastic in its operations. You could support their efforts by helping reduce your plastic footprint.

Tips for reducing plastic waste:
- Be careful what you eat and drink. Avoid bottled water and avoid single-use plastics when dining.
- Use reusable water bottles and food containers.
- When buying souvenirs, choose items made from natural materials.
- Support local efforts to clean up waste.