



GLOBAL ALERT

SEE | SHARE | SOLVE

FLOATING TRASH



Critical Need

Healthy marine and coastal ecosystems are critical to all life on earth and provide necessary services, including food security, resources for economic growth, recreation and tourism. Roughly 11 billion pounds of plastic enters the oceans each year. The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) has estimated that up to 80% of marine debris starts out on land. From there it makes its way into the lakes, rivers and streams that form an extensive network—a circulatory system—that can carry trash across continents and straight into the heart of the world’s ocean. Floating trash has no geographic or political boundaries, so solutions must involve scalable international collaboration, yet be local in scope and reach.

Solution: GLOBAL ALERT | Floating Trash

To address the problem of increasing marine debris flowing to our ocean, the Ocean Recovery Alliance has created Global Alert, an innovative, online tool that will increase interaction and connectivity to the issue by allowing users to report, rate and map plastic pollution levels in their rivers via mobile devices and web-based platforms. This will broaden awareness, aggregate information flow, and spur solutions to reduce plastic debris outflows via the world’s rivers. Global Alert will accomplish this goal by addressing a number of issues that include:

- **Enabling community participation for reporting and problem solving**, thus shrinking the gap in awareness about floating trash for those living “upriver” and the ocean. This will be accomplished through visual online maps, clear data comparisons, empowered community engagement and effective communication.
- Highlighting the need for consistent and **active stewardship focusing on rivers** as a source of debris outflow, and the responsibility that local communities and governments have towards keeping them clean.
- Providing a **global awareness and monitoring tool** to allow broad audiences to gain knowledge of “hotspots”, or troubled areas, stimulating the potential for cleanup or capture of debris.



*Rivers are like arteries that flow into the heart, the ocean.
The Global Alert tool links constituents of inland watersheds on a global basis with the ocean.*

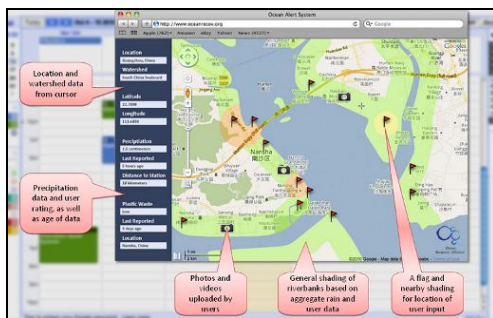
SEE.

Global Alert will harness the input of “**citizen science**” and create **plastic pollution “neighborhood watch”** programs for communities around the world. Users, including citizens, NGOs, schools, governments or community groups, can participate in Global Alert by uploading plastic pollution data (pictures or video) with their mobile devices or normal web-based platforms. Users then give the images a rating that’s based on the volume of trash they see. They can also enter water flow data, weather conditions and other important metrics. This data populates the Global Alert map with color coded alerts to help local, national or international agencies to better understand where problem areas exist.



SHARE.

Users can get involved by **connecting with local community groups and NGOs** to learn more, or can share their updates with friends and other concerned citizens around the world using social media. Using mapping technologies, Global Alert provides a “**visual snapshot**” of **trash hotspots** that will **empower community groups**, and local, national and international agencies to reduce trash in their waterways. Global Alert is **easy for youth to use**, and will provide teachers and classes the opportunity to consistently monitor, and take care of, sections of rivers. Global Alert will shape the way that communities play an integral role in bettering their environments; inspiring cooperation, collaboration and solutions. Together we can leave a legacy of healthy oceans, rivers and engaged communities.



SOLVE.

Global Alert is an **international tool** to tackle a problem that none of us can escape, but that all of us can work to solve. With GPS and mapping capabilities, hot-spots will be highlighted, while clean areas with no problems can also be promoted, particularly if improvements have been made. The Global Alert website has a section to **share best practices, catchment methods, and new recycling or re-use opportunities**. It’s easy for monitoring agencies to use the robust back-end tools to add, review, visualize and analyze their own data as well as Global Alert data that is added by users. Global Alert will drive sustainable change globally through the following:

1. **Scalable Sharing:** Global Alert will foster improved sharing of standardized data best practices and educational resources.

2. **Water Resource and Waste Management Tool:** Global Alert is an integrated water resource management tool, creating benchmarks for the improvement of freshwater and adjacent coastal regions, while having positive impacts on drinking water, tourism, fishing and habitat preservation.
3. **Awareness/Capacity Building:** Global Alert partners with NGO's, universities, community groups, and government agencies to be actively engaged as stakeholders in the data collection and protection of rivers and waterways in their areas of influence.
4. **Citizen Science and Reporting:** Global Alert is built on data collection and community reporting via smart phones, or other mobile devices, empowering communities to play an integral role in bettering their environments.



Collaboration and Partners

We believe that collaboration leads to action. Global Alert is built upon a collaborative framework which approaches problem solving from a long-term systems thinking perspective. Community stakeholders are involved in development, beta testing and implementation of the Global Alert platform through a series of facilitated working sessions. By leveraging partner organization's strengths, we can accelerate and enhance the Global Alert platform and positively improve communities and the environment. Global Alert partners include:

- **The Baum Foundation** supports creativity in the arts, providing educational opportunities for youth and putting programs in place to preserve the environment
- **Blackstone Ranch Institute** supports results-oriented activities on environmental challenges
- **EcoLayers** hosts a web-based software platform for information sharing, collaboration and integrated management of the water cycle across stakeholders, organizations, watersheds, and jurisdictions over any geographic scale
- **International Futures Forum** supports transformative responses to complex challenges and restoring capacity for effective action
- **Millennium ART** creates dynamic visual experiences that engage and empower audiences in advancing social progress for a peaceful, equitable, and sustainable future
- **Obscura Digital** delivers groundbreaking immersive, interactive experiences and technologies that ignite the sparks of imagination

