

News Release Minister Gail Gago

Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
Minister for Forests
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for the Status of Women
Minister for State/Local Government Relations

Wednesday, 5 June, 2013

Beach cleanup program to expand

An aquaculture industry beach monitoring and cleanup program has collected more than 12,000 kg of debris in its first year is now looking to expand.

Launched in March 2012, the *Adopt a Beach* program was created to address concerns from the Eyre Peninsula community about aquaculture-related marine debris.

Fisheries Minister Gail Gago said the program had delivered significant benefits to the coastal environment.

“Thirteen local companies have been involved in the program, conducting 54 cleanups over a year and removing more than 12 tonnes of material – or around a tonne a month,” Ms Gago said.

“All sorts of things have been collected, from land-based debris such as tyres, clothing, refrigerators and food packaging, to materials related to aquaculture and commercial and recreational fishing activities such as rope and plastic.

“It’s great to see industry playing an important role in the protection of our aquatic and coastal environment, which underpins the Government’s strategic priority of Premium Food and Wine from our Clean Environment.

“The State Government has worked closely with the local aquaculture industry to encourage the development of this industry-led program and it’s pleasing to see such a positive outcome.”

ASBTIA Research Manager, David Ellis, said the program has many benefits, including improved relationships between industry and the local community. He also thanked other aquaculture groups involved for their participation and support.

“The program has resulted in a cleaner coastline and created a better understanding at industry and community level of the extent and nature of debris washing up on our coastline,” Mr Ellis said.

“We now aim to involve more stakeholders and marine users in contributing to the program and taking responsibility for the protection of our marine and coastal environment.”

Interested organisations are encouraged to contact Peter Lauer, PIRSA, (08 8226 0352 / peter.lauer@sa.gov.au), or Claire Webber, ASBTIA on (08 8682 3257 / sbt_research@bigpond.com).

The *Adopt a Beach* cleanup area stretches over 155 km from Cape Euler near Tumbly Bay, to MacLaren Point, including Spilsby Island, Boston Island, Grantham Island and Bickers Island.

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If members of the public see aquaculture-related marine debris they can contact Fishwatch on 1800 065 522 or if marine debris is located in the *Adopt a Beach* area it can also be reported to the Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Industry Association on 08 8682 3257.