

# The foam on the shore is really styrofoam

## DIRTIEST BEACHES

- 1 Pulau Ubin
- 2 East Coast
- 3 Changi
- 4 Punggol
- 5 Pasir Ris

## TOP 5 RUBBISH ITEMS

- 1 Styrofoam pieces
- 2 Food wrappers / containers
- 3 Cigarettes / cigarette filters
- 4 Bags
- 5 Straws and stirrers

## WORLD'S DIRTIEST TOWNS & CITIES

- 1 Sumgayit, Azerbaijan
- 2 Linfen, China
- 3 Tianying, China
- 4 Sukinda, India
- 5 Vapi, India
- 6 La Oroya, Peru
- 7 Dzerzhinsk, Russia
- 8 Norilsk, Russia
- 9 Chernobyl, Ukraine
- 10 Kabwe, Zambia

HAI SING CATHOLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS were among 350 volunteers who helped out in the annual clean-up event at the coastal area at Pasir Ris Park yesterday.

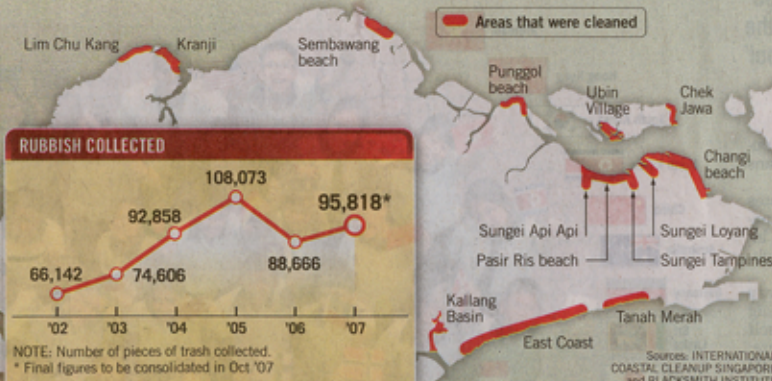


PHOTO: LIANNE ZAOBAO ST GRAPHICS: LEE CHEE CHEW and LIM YONG

It tops list of junk washing up on coasts here. What's worse, it fragments badly and poses threat to marine life

► Shobana Kesava

UNLIKE anywhere else in the world where cigarettes make up the bulk of junk collected on beaches, in Singapore it is styrofoam.

This material has been picked up in increasing amounts over the last five years, said Mr N. Sivasothi, coordinator of the International Coastal Cleanup Singapore (ICCS).

The ICCS, an annual clean-up event, is the only concerted effort by volunteers here to analyse the kinds of trash that land up on local shores.

"Styrofoam is potentially much more damaging because it can fragment badly, whereas cigarette butts stay whole," said Mr Sivasothi.

"The overwhelming problem we have is of plastic consumer items in the sea. As they break down, the chemicals that leach from them can be toxic." Plastics are also a threat to birds, which are known to mistake them for food.

Preliminary data from this weekend's coastal clean-up saw styrofoam caking up the coastlines of both mangrove swamps and beaches.

While the most litter - all 29,801 pieces of it - was collected along the East Coast, Pulau Ubin Beach proved the dirtiest when factors such as the density of the litter collected by volunteers were factored in.

Mr Sivasothi attributed the problem at Ubin in part to dumping.

"There is a lot of heavy litter like oil drums and furniture parts. Offshore farms may have contributed to this load."

The litter at the East Coast beaches was linked to heavy usage.

"Where there is recreation, there is rubbish," he said.

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