



VIDEN OM AFFALD  
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EVALUATION REPORT // 2025

# SEA BINS

- collection of voluntarily collected marine litter



# SEA BINS

## A PRICE WORTHY HELPER IN THE SAND

2025 was the year when the Sea Bins both delighted in southern France, grew in number and once again collecting record amounts of marine litter along the west coasts of Denmark. Although the concept now has a few years "in the sand," it never gets boring to conduct an evaluation, as new and exciting things constantly happen that drive the positive development.

Right now (read: January 2026), 216 Sea Bins have been registered along the west coast and along parts of the western Limfjord coast. This is 17 more than last year at this time, and it is in itself clear evidence that the Sea Bin concept fulfill an important task.

These 216 Sea Bins, which this year have also had their 3-year exemption renewed by the Coastal Directorate, have this year helped to remove over 247 tons of marine litter from the coastal areas. That is about 47 tons more than last year. It is truly exceptional and unparalleled on any other public recreational area in Denmark. So heartfelt thanks to all of you who, again and again or for the first time, bend down and help out. Even though we are not out there on the beach to shake your hand, never doubt that your efforts are exceptional and highly appreciated. A THOUSAND THANKS!

In the spring, the Coastal Community had the opportunity to nominate the Sea Bin concept for a European environmental award. It is obvious to share the good results with colleagues outside the country's borders, and this happened in Nice in November. Although, unfortunately, it did not result in a prize for Denmark, the days in Nice highlighted that, across Europe, we share many of the same challenges, but also that we can learn a great deal from each other.

A new sample of the contents of the Sea Bins shows that plastic, in all its forms, makes up 90% of the total contents. This is higher than four years ago, when the analysis was also carried out. This is important information and at the same time a strong motivator to continue the enormous volunteer work along the coasts. Work that is of great benefit to all of us.

Every piece of litter removed from the sand makes a difference – no matter the size!

**ALONE WE CAN DO SOMETHING – BUT TOGETHER WE CAN DO EVERYTHING**

See you outthere ☺





# SEA BINS NOMINATED FOR EUROPEAN AWARD

Since 2017, the Sea Bins has done fantastic work on the Danish west coast, and the concept is by now very well known across Denmark. But now foreign countries have also taken notice of the success, and in the summer of 2025, the concept was nominated for the "European Urban Cleanliness Awards".

The ceremony and award presentation took place in Nice, France, on November 27–28, and representatives from Keep Denmark Tidy and the municipal partners in the concept participated. The ceremony had both a French and a European category. In the European category, concepts from the following countries were represented: England, Sweden, Germany, Belgium, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and of course Denmark.

The award ceremony was organized by AVPU – Association des Villes pour la Propreté Urbaine – which is a French organization and an association of cities that work for cleanliness in urban areas. The organization supports local authorities in improving cleanliness in public spaces through experience sharing, development of measurement tools, networking meetings, and dissemination of "best practice" examples.

## THE EUROPEAN AWARD CEREMONY IS HELD WITHIN TWO DIFFERENT CATEGORIES:

**Equipment & Process**, where technological and infrastructural innovations were highlighted, as well as **Communication & Awareness**, where creative campaigns and citizen-focused initiatives were in focus.

A recurring theme was education and involvement of the younger generation both through teaching and through initiatives where young people spend a day with operations employees to gain insight into the work behind the scenes. In several countries, efforts are also made to integrate citizens who have difficulty entering the labor market, which gives the cleaning sector a strong social dimension.

In addition, a number of special innovative projects were presented. Among the most striking were initiatives that focused on flexible and mobile solutions for waste management, the use of artificial intelligence to prevent graffiti, as well as projects that combined cultural activities with information about cleanliness and waste management.

Several countries also pointed to the increasing challenges with bulky waste dumping, and how new technologies and campaigns are being tried to address the problem. The Sea Bin concept was presented as one of the first in the European category and it was received with great interest and recognition. But although it unfortunately did not result in an award for Denmark, the days in Nice made it clear that across Europe we share many of the same challenges, but also that we can learn enormously from each other.

Thanks to AVPU for some really good days in Nice. It was a great pleasure to participate.



2025

# QUANTITIES AND TYPES OF WASTE COLLECTED IN THE SEA BINS

At the turn of the year 2025/2026, 216 Sea Bins are registered in 9 municipalities in Denmark. These are located partly along the west coast of Jutland, as well as along parts of the Limfjord coast. The vast majority of these Sea Bins are in operation on the coasts throughout the year.

The 9 municipalities estimate that in 2025, they have removed a total of just over 375 tons of marine litter from their coastal areas. Of this, just over 247 tons were voluntarily collected via the Sea Bins.

As can be seen from the figures below, there is a big difference in how much marine litter the individual

municipalities collect on their coasts. There are several reasons for this: the length of the coastline and the nature of their coastal areas, and also the fact that currents and weather conditions 'produce' different amounts of litter, depending on where on the west coast you are.

The litter in the sea around Denmark typically comes from far away and has been in the sea for a long time, where it has traveled with the ocean currents. Therefore, there is also significantly more waste on the coasts that face the open sea, and it is precisely here that you will find the Sea Bins.



This year the Sea Bins have on average removed **79%** of the total amount of marine litter removed from the coasts.

Last year that figure was **58%**, it is a significant increase.

Municipality	Sea Bins, number	Tons of marine litter removed from the coasts in total this year to date (Jan. to Nov. 2025)?	Tons of marine litter collected in the Sea Bins	Percentage in the Sea Bins
Varde	28	53,64	45	84%
Ringkøbing Skjern	56	110,5	81,8	74%
Holstebro	14	24,8	23,7	95%
Frederikshavn	23	29,2	17,5	60%
Hjørring	18	12,3	7	43%
Lemvig	36	56,9	56,9	100%
Thisted	21	24	15,6	65%
Jammerbugt*	18	64	Not accounted	Not accounted
Morsø	2	0,175	0,175	100%
<b>In total</b>	<b>216 stk.</b>	<b>375,5 tons</b>	<b>247,7 tons</b>	

\* The figures from the Municipality of Jammerbugt are not included in the average calculation, as it has not been reported how much waste their beach bins have removed.



# READ & LEARN TYPES OF WASTE

Virtually all the litter that the Sea Bins collects is marine litter, - that is, litter that has washed in with the sea. This type of litter is characterized by being relatively dirty and damaged, as it has often been in the sea for a long time and has traveled many nautical miles.

In 2025, we have delved into the quantities and conducted a sample count of the contents of 4 randomly selected Sea Bins along the Jutland west coast. The purpose of this study is to gain knowledge about the type and origin of the marine litter that reaches the Danish coasts. The study was conducted according to a Nordic monitoring model, which divides the litter into 9 main and 56 subcategories. The figures below show the litter counted in number of pieces per main category.



**PLASTICS**

**90%**

For example ropes and cordage, fishing lines, plastic bottles, take-away packaging, plastic bags, caps, lids, as well as large and small unidentifiable pieces of hard and soft plastic.



**PAPER/CARDBOARD**

**2%**

For example, cardboard cartons, takeaway products, and cotton swabs in cardboard.



**METAL**

**2%**

For example, cans, metal caps and lids, fishing gear, batteries, electronics, as well as large and small unidentifiable pieces of metal.



**TEXTILES**

**1,5%**

For example, shoes, garments, and kites.



**WOOD**

**1%**

For example, remnants of pallets and other leftover wood.



**RUBBER**

**1%**

For example, balloons, rubber bands, and tire remnants.



**ORGANIC**

**1%**

For example, food waste and filled dog bags.



**GLASS**

**1%**

Alcohol bottles, fluorescent tubes, jam jars, bricks, and ceramics.



**CHEMICALS**

**0,5%**

Paraffin, oil residues and liquids.

# A WHALE ON LAND BEACH ART OF DRIFTWOOD IN VEJERS

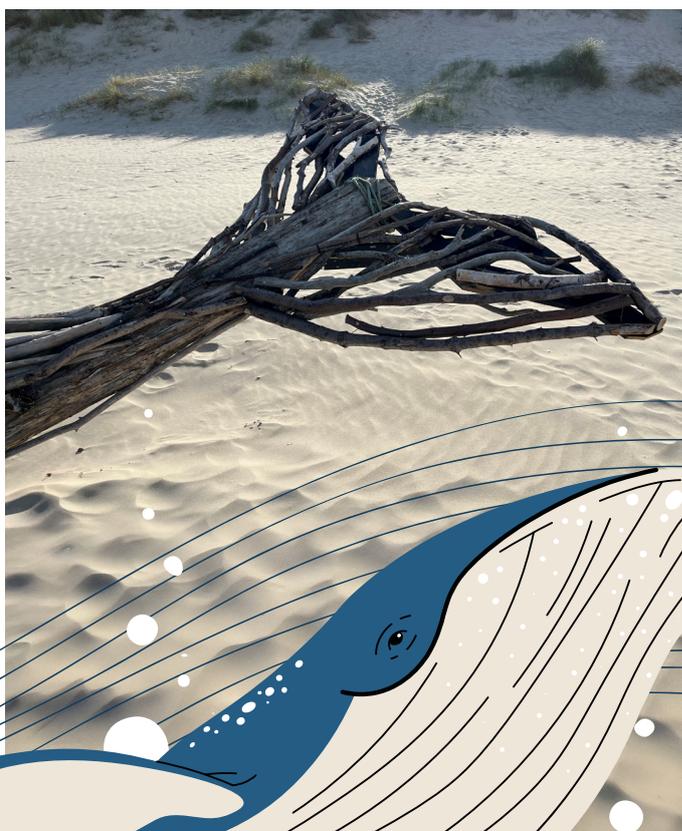
Marine litter arrives on the coasts in many different sizes and materials. Most of it is some form of plastic, but there is also wood, which has often drifted a long way before landing on the Danish coast. The driftwood as such has no value and is removed by the Beach Wardens. But on Vejers Beach in the Municipality of Varde, something different happened with the driftwood in the spring of 2025.

In connection with "Byg25", at Vejers Cultural Weeks, a 1-to-1 sculpture of a gray whale was made. The sculpture was erected by the bio-duo Frederik Fuda Bjare and Peter Skødt Knudsen with help from local beachgoers.

Driftwood and marine litter for the sculpture were collected over a year along the coasts in the Municipality of Varde.

The whale sculpture is, as mentioned, made in a 1-to-1 size and designed so that one can both climb on it and sit "inside the belly." The sculpture is located at Vejers Beach – just to the left of the descent from the town of Vejers.





## FACTS ON THE GRAY WHALE

The gray whale lived in the seas around Denmark until 300 years ago. It was often seen near the coasts of Rømø and Fanø, but it also entered the Baltic Sea. Today it primarily lives in the Pacific, where a conservation effort has saved it from complete extinction.

The gray whale is very curious and often comes very close to people and boats in the water. It is also known for its long migrations, during which it annually covers up to 25,000 km from the Gulf of Mexico, where it gives birth to its young, to the Arctic, where it stays in the summer. Its only natural enemy is the killer whale, which hunts the gray whale's calves along the way on the long journey north.





# NORDIC COASTAL CLEANUP THE VALUABLE NORDIC COOPERATION

Since 2017, Keep Denmark Tidy, now Ren Natur, has represented Denmark in the joint Nordic project Nordic Coastal Cleanup (NCC), which, through the mobilization of volunteers, aims to create greater awareness of litter in our Nordic seas.

Over the years, various joint projects have been carried out – perhaps best known is the “Nordic Beach Cleanup Day.” But NCC is much more than project collaboration! It is to a large extent also about knowledge sharing and the exchange of good ideas. Individually, the destinations distinguish themselves by having different professional competencies available, which often benefit the entire network. In 2026, it will be particularly exciting to follow these local activities:

### GREENLAND:

CSR Greenland initiated a preliminary project in 2024 titled ‘Towards a wa-

ste-free Greenland’. The recommendations from the preliminary project are being carried forward into new initiatives starting in 2026. The ambition is to contribute to working for sustainable development in Greenland. CSR Greenland participates in partnerships and collaborates with public authorities, associations, and national/international organizations to contribute to this development. One focus of the project is, among other things, to strengthen the basic understanding and management of waste in Greenlandic local communities and the associated sectors.

### FAROE-ISLANDS:

In the spring of 2025, Ruddy Føroyar was asked if they were interested in becoming part of the Faroese team on the AMAP project. (AMAP stands for Arctic Monitoring Assessment Programme). They of course said yes, as it would be a way to strengthen

the work that Nordic Coastal Cleanup is already engaged in. Three times a year, the same beaches are cleaned, after which all marine litter is thoroughly documented. The purpose is to scientifically document what types of waste exist and where it comes from.

### NORWAY:

Keep Norway Beautiful has, at the end of 2025, begun an exciting analysis project, which during 2026 will be shared within the NCC. It is about being able to highlight and document the socio-economic value of voluntary cleanup and environmental efforts. Through this analysis, Keep Norway Clean will gain a better knowledge base to show the importance of volunteers in the fight against littering – in terms of economic value, environmental impact, and social engagement.





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# FACTS ON NORDIC COASTAL CLEANUP GROUP

- Established in 2017.
- Project management: Keep Norway Beautiful
- Steering group consisting of management representatives from the member organizations in Norway, Finland, and Denmark.
- Funded by, among others, the Nordic Council of Ministers.
- Participants: Keep Norway Beautiful, Keep Sweden Tidy, Keep the Archipelago Tidy (Åland – Finland), Ruddy Føroyar, CSR Greenland, World Wide Friends (Iceland), Ren NATur (Denmark)
- Read more at [Nordic Coastal Cleanup](#) | [Keep Sweden Clean](#)



# QUICK GUIDE 2025

## A GUIDE TO THE PRACTICAL HANDLING OF CLEANUP ON THE COAST AFTER LARGE AMOUNTS OF GOODS LOST AT SEA.

It is the municipalities that have the overall responsibility for the maintenance of their coastal areas, including the collection and disposal of all waste. This work is carried out through regular daily routines in all coastal municipalities around the country, but takes on a somewhat different scale along the West Coast. This is due to the amounts of marine litter that come in with the waves, which vary annually from 8 to over 100 tons per municipality.

But occasionally, it happens that very large amounts of waste hit the local coasts, and it happens when misfortune occurs at sea and the alarm goes off.

It happened on Saturday, December 23, 2023, when the environmental alarm went off in the Municipality of Jammerbugt.

Reports had been received that larger amounts of stranded waste had washed ashore on the municipality's coasts. Shoes, syringes, refrigerators, styrofoam, and TVs were lying in larger and smaller piles on the beach.

It quickly became clear that the stranded waste came from 46 shipping containers that had gone overboard in high seas – during the storm Pia – from the ship Mayview Maersk on its way from Bremerhaven to Gdansk. And thus the start was made on the cleanup effort, which would prove to be the most extensive of its kind in recent times carried out along a Danish coast.

The colleagues in the Municipality of Jammerbugt quickly became coordinators of the emergency preparedness on the coasts, which began the day before Christmas and was not concluded until well into the new year 2024. With help from the beach wardens, the Emergency Management Agency, and the police, as well as not least both local and visiting volunteers, the large amounts of waste were removed from the beaches and transported safely for processing.

## IMPORTANT LEARNING TO BE PASSED ON

During the spring of 2024, the cleanup effort was thoroughly evaluated in the Municipality of Jammerbugt. It is really important that the experiences of this type are never lost, but are saved and utilized in future emergency plans.

The experiences were also shared with the other municipalities in the Coastal Community at a workshop in the spring of 2025. Here it was decided to record them in a common working tool, which each municipality could use as part of the existing local emergency plans. The work tool was named "The Quick Guide" and was developed in the summer of 2025 by the Coastal Community with special input from the Municipality of Jammerbugt as well as the Municipality of Holstebro and KIMO.

The Quick Guide functions as an interactive product, which is completed by each individual municipality, entering its own data and important information. The Quick Guide is updated annually under the leadership of the Coastal Community.



# FACTS ON A SEA BIN

The Sea Bins on the Danish coasts have been a great success since their inception in 2017 and are filled daily with tons of marine litter! The reason lies in the fact that the bins are the solution to an immediate need that arises spontaneously in the beach visitor, who intuitively follows an impulse to pick up waste and subsequently dispose of it. The most important thing in this context is that the Beach Bin is visible and accessible.

## DIMENSIONS AND MATERIALS

The Sea Bins dimensions are: H 90 x L 120 x W 100 cm, and it has a double bottom made of two pallets, which makes it easier to lift off the sand with a pallet jack when it needs to be emptied. The Sea Bins are made of wood, which is impregnated and has good durability and resistance against wind and weather.

## SIGNAGE

On the side of the Sea Bin, a sign has been mounted that communicates "Strandingsaffald" in three languages. There are also pictures showing marine litter. The signs are made of weather-resistant material that takes into account water, wind, sun, and sand. On the signs, among other things, the municipality's and Keep Denmark Tidy's logos are also shown, as well as a QR code that leads to online information that tells more about the concept.

## OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

The Sea Bins are owned and operated by the individual municipality, which thus has the responsibility to ensure that the bins are at all times in good condition and, most importantly, emptied of waste. Most of the Sea Bins are placed on the coasts all year round. However, some have been moved to the other side of the dunes, where they are sheltered from the winter storms, which would otherwise carry them out to sea. The Sea Bins are inspected on a weekly basis, and in the high season it is not unusual for them to be emptied several times a week. Some bins are emptied by hand, while others are emptied with a tractor and pallet jack onto the bed of a cart.

## DISPENSATION FRA KYSTDIREKTORATET

The coastal areas in Denmark are protected under the provisions of the Nature Protection Act regarding beach protection and dune conservation. The purpose of the protection is to preserve the open coasts and the landscape, natural, and recreational values associated with the coasts. With this legislation in mind, it is necessary to obtain a permit for the installation of Sea Bins, as the vast majority of them are located within the conservation line. It has been Keep Denmark Tidy and is now Ren Natur, which, on behalf of the municipalities, coordinates the application work and handles contact with the Danish Coastal Authority.



# THE SEA BIN CONTRIBUTORS - A HUGE THANKS

In the Sea Bin concept, there is top scoring on all parameters, both regarding the amounts of litter collected, the number of active volunteers involved, and the scope of the supporting partnership between the municipality, sponsor, and organization.

The local municipality ensures that the Sea Bins are available on the coasts and that they are maintained and emptied as needed. Ren Natur facilitates the Coastal Community and collects data for the annual evaluation report. And finally, contributions from the other partners help ensure communication and campaigns related to the Sea Bins' activities.



## WESTWIND

### WESTWIND

#### - donates the sale of plastic bags - THANKS!

Over the past six seasons, the retail chain Westwind has supported the Sea Bins with the proceeds from their bag sales in their nearly 30 stores. Their financial support is invaluable and has, among other things, contributed to the joint communication efforts, which are continuously carried out within the concept.

Likewise, Westwind also supports the volunteer concept Ren Natur, where volunteer associations can earn money by collecting litter, including along the coasts. Here, the Sea Bins are used as drop-off points for the litter.



### NORDIC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

#### supports Ren Natur's work on the coasts - THANKS

Since 2017, Keep Denmark Tidy, now Ren Natur, has represented Denmark in the joint Nordic project Nordic Coastal Cleanup (NCC), which, through the mobilization of volunteers, aims to create greater awareness of litter in our Nordic seas.

Again this year, NCC has received financial support from the Nordic Council of Ministers. The support is intended in particular to contribute to the maintenance and further development of the network, so that there will be even more local activities that mobilize volunteer cleanup on the beaches, and finally, we aim to create greater knowledge about the sources and causes of marine litter in the Nordic seas. In Denmark, we contribute to the Nordic community with the Sea Bin concept. No other country in the Nordic region has this concept, and we are pleased to be able to inspire with the excellent results that the concept generates year after year.

In 2025, the network has developed a new strategic platform from which its future activities will be rooted. Work will begin in 2026, when several new projects and initiatives will see the light of day.



Ren Natur brings people together to make a difference where they live and spend time. Through litter collections, we create cleaner areas and stronger local communities – in collaboration with associations, companies, and municipalities across the country. We believe that responsibility for nature grows when we take on the task together and when it is easy to participate. That is why we work with clear frameworks, good support, and space for engagement. Ren Natur is based on volunteerism, initiative, and the desire to take responsibility for our shared surroundings – for the benefit of both people and the environment.

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