

Clean Up Australia Campaign



Clean Up Australia is the idea of Ian Kiernan.

In 1986-1987 Ian sailed in a world yacht race. The race visited parts of the world he had dreamed about. But his experience was not a happy one because he found lots of rubbish floating in the sea. He was disgusted to find old thongs, buckets, disposable nappies, toothpaste tubes and plastic bags amongst the seaweed.

When Ian returned to Australia he decided to try to fix the pollution problem, starting with Sydney Harbour. He asked friends to help and they formed a committee to plan a clean up around the harbour. He was very surprised when 40,000 volunteers turned out to help, and very shocked by the 5,000 tonnes of rubbish they collected.

Clean Up Australia now covers all of Australia. The volunteers who help are all kinds of community members. Businesses and industries as members of their communities also help to make each Clean Up Day a success.

The campaign has grown into an international event where about 40 million people in 110 countries participate in Clean Up the World.

Ian says, 'I'm positive about the future because I've seen that individuals can make a difference.'

Adapted from Clean Up Australia Ltd 1997, *Clean Up Day: Background – the story so far*, 2 March