



Clean up Svalbard

Information for expedition and tour leaders

2023



Background

Large amounts of waste are washed ashore on many of Svalbard's beaches. Much of the waste comes from shipping, especially from the fishing fleet in the Barents Sea and in the waters around Svalbard. Plastic waste is very persistent. Large plastic objects eventually break down into microplastics after enduring UV-radiation, wind, and waves. It is obvious that this litter does not belong on the beaches in Svalbard. Garbage is a threat to wildlife in Svalbard. Reindeers can get their antlers stuck in fishing nets and scrap metal, suffer a long and painful death. The colours of the garbage are also glaring in contrast with the nature's mellow colours and are representing a considerable esthetical littering.

The Governor of Svalbard has collected waste around the islands for many years, but we welcome more assistance to maintain a cleaner environment. The Governor has therefore invited inhabitants in Svalbard to participate in yearly trips, where cleaning up beaches is the main purpose. The response has been high, and many people want to take part in this.

Still, there are infinite amounts of waste and there are many areas that we are not able to reach. It is therefore with great pleasure that we are getting help from tour operators and their participants in this work. We have a simple ambition: a cleaner Svalbard! With many dedicated hands helping, we hope we will be able to reach our goal.

Thank you for helping us!

Practical information

Cleaning equipment

The Governor provides reusable polyethylene bags in two different sizes: smaller bags for collecting waste on beaches, and big bags for storing waste on boats and for bigger items.

The expedition leader must contact the Governor ahead of the cleaning action and agree when equipment can be picked up at *Sjøgarasjen*. You find contact details on the last page of this document.

We kindly ask you to think about how many bags you need in advance. Our experience is that one small bag can be shared by 2-5 people.

Please keep used bags for next season and reuse them. If you do not plan any future actions, return bags to the operations manager at *Sjøgarasjen*.

See below for information on where waste is delivered. It cannot be delivered to *Sjøgarasjen*.

How to deposit garbage

There will be a special container at *Bykaia*, *Gamlekaia* and *Kullkaia* at Hotellneset where you can empty garbage bags. The container is yellow and will be marked with the Clean up Svalbard and the Governor's logos. Please use this container for the Clean Up Svalbard beach-garbage and avoid mixing it with the ship's garbage. By doing this, we can get the weight of the garbage picked every year and hopefully better statistics. **Only garbage from beach cleaning actions on Svalbard can be thrown in these containers.** Remember to separate metal and chemicals by putting this in the orange bags. If the container is full or there are other problems, please contact us. Please do not leave anything outside the container or at the dock. The locks are code locks, and the code is **1408**.

The Governor recommends that you bring all the garbage to Longyearbyen in your ship. If there are places where you observe more than you can bring, please leave it, and report the GPS position to the Governor (see below for contact details). In addition, the Governor has three field inspector teams in the area between Hornsund and Woodfjorden during summer who may be contacted by radio (VHF).

Rules for handling of garbage

- Waste will be grinded and sent to the mainland for further treatment. Therefore, please separate metal (wires, metal trawl floats), thick hawsers/ropes and plastic trawl floats from the burnable garbage, as this can damage the grinding mill at the waste disposal plant. In addition, chemicals must be separated, as this can be dangerous for the people working there. If you put such objects in the orange bags in the Clean up Svalbard-container, they are visible among other garbage in the container and can be removed before garbage is fed in the grinding mill.

- Do not throw reusable polyethylene bags in the bin/container. Both small and big bags can be used for storage aboard ships but shall be emptied in the bin/container and used over again.
- You can throw ordinary plastic bags in the container/bin.
- Do not pick up wood, driftwood, etc.
- Do not burn garbage.
- You will probably find many plastic trawl floats. We recommend threading the floats on a rope for easier handling (photo 1).



Photo 1: Handling of trawl floats

Be aware of cultural remains

As you may be aware of, there are many cultural remains all over Svalbard. It is important to inform the participants about the cultural remains and the regulations concerning cultural heritage, to avoid valuable items to be removed. Glass can also be cultural remains. If you are in doubt, leave it where it is, take the GPS position and a picture and send this to us.



Photo 2: Example for cultural heritage objects

The Governor's registration areas

Please **do not pick garbage** in the following areas as the Governor is doing registrations of amounts and type of beach garbage for [MOSJ](#) and [OSPAR](#):

Poolepynten, Brucebukta between the positions UTM 33X 8709893 0429822 (WGS 84) and UTM 33X 8709901 0430022



Luftskipodden between the positions UTM 33X 8849261 0415272 (WGS 84) and UTM 33X 8848556 0415262



Reporting of cleaning actions

Please use the digital clean-up tool *Rent Hav* to register when, where, and approximately how much garbage has been picked. It has also an offline function for iOS and Android. On mainland, it is used by many different actors who clean beaches, and it thus provides a good data base for all who are interested in marine litter data in Norway. The tool can also be used for registering littering which needs to be cleaned (large items). When registering, please include if the actions are affiliated with an organization (e.g. AECO members). Read more about the tool at <https://www.marfo.no/en/rent-hav/>.

Contact details



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