

Plastics News

Mexico's plastics industry backs effort to clean up beaches

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Mexico's plastics industry is striving to reduce the levels of plastic waste washed into the sea from the country's beaches through a program called "Yo Cuido Mi Playa" (I Take Care of My Beach).

Launched in the Pacific resort of Zihuatanejo during the 2014 Easter holiday season, the pilot program yielded such positive results that national plastics industry association Anipac plans to extend it to

Cancún, Los Cabos, Manzanillo, Veracruz and Acapulco this year, Anipac said April 1.

According to association President Francisco de Caso Peláez, large containers were placed on Zihuatanejo's beaches, allowing tourists to separate and deposit different types of rubbish.

In addition, squads of volunteers distributed 12,000 plastic bags with recommendations printed on the outside on how they should be used. Banners and posters were also hung in hotel lobbies and restaurants in support of the initiative. De Caso said the program avoided half a ton of waste being washed into the Pacific every day.

The Zihuatanejo municipal government has since adopted the initiative on a permanent basis, he said. Anipac has signed formal agreements with the Zihuatanejo authorities, the national restaurants chamber Canirac, the Mexican Navy and national environment protection agency Profepa, he added.

The association, whose title in Spanish is Asociación Nacional de Industrias del Plástico AC, designed the program together with Inboplast, a Morelia, Michoacan-based organization comprising two dozen of Mexico's largest

plastic bag and packaging manufacturers.

According to Anipac, 80 percent of the world's marine litter originates on land.

In 2013 it launched another initiative called *Cero Pellets*, aimed at stopping plastic pellets reaching the oceans. As part of that program Anipac published a good practices manual which is available to all interested parties.

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