



Plastic Free Avoca Beach
Annual report 2022-23
October 2023



Our group

Plastic Free Avoca Beach was established in late 2019. We aim to share information and ideas on environmentally conscious and sustainable initiatives and to support each other in reducing our use of single-use plastics. We have organised beach clean ups, clothing swaps, photo and art competitions, and kid's craft sessions to raise awareness around single-use plastics and their impact on the marine environment. We use social media to share information and ideas about environmentally conscious and sustainable initiatives.

Our mission

Our mission is to inspire and support local businesses and individuals in the Avoca Beach community to reduce single-use plastics to create a more sustainable future for our children.

Our goals for 2022-23

Project goals	Progress in 2022-23
Develop partnerships with existing groups and initiatives	We supported and promoted Ocean & Coastal Care Initiatives (OCCI) and Sea Shepherd clean up events.
Run a single-use plastic campaign to encourage Avoca Beach community to reduce use of single-use coffee cups	<p>We ran several initiatives to promote Plastic Free July 2022 including a reusable coffee cup competition supported by seven cafes in Avoca Beach, an information and kids craft stall at the Avoca Beach monthly markets, and a community Plastic Free July night where winners were presented their prizes in late July 2022.</p> <p>The NSW single-use plastic ban has been a huge win for the environment with the phasing out of single-use plastic bags. Phase 2 from November 2022 included a ban on plastic straws, single use plastic cutlery and plates, and polystyrene foodware.</p>
Run 4 successful community events including beach clean ups for Clean Up Australia Day and World Ocean Day	We organised 6 free community events including beach clean ups at Avoca Beach in September 2022, March 2023 and June 2023, Plastic Free July community night in July 2022, a plastic free kid's craft event in December 2022 and clothing swap in February 2023. Our events were supported by the Central Coast Council's community grant program.
Communicate effectively to the wider community through Facebook Page, Facebook Group, Instagram and Plastic Free Avoca Beach Website	We shared information and initiatives through our dedicated social media pages and website (https://www.plasticfreeavocabeach.org/).
Support Avoca Beach Public School with sustainable initiatives	We worked with the Avoca Beach Public School P&C and Boomerang Bags Kincumber to collect old school uniform for recycling and upcycling into library bags.

Our achievements in 2022-23

This year we were successful in receiving a community grant for the project from the Central Coast Council. We used these funds to run free community events and purchase promotional equipment including a branded banner for the Plastic Free Avoca Beach project.

We also were successful in listing the Plastic Free Avoca Beach Association as a registered charity under the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

<https://www.acnc.gov.au/charity/charities/4b7cb8d7-dac2-ed11-b597-00224893bfad/profile>

We had great success with the community events throughout the year:

- **July 2022:** We ran a reusable coffee cup competition in Avoca Beach for the month of July in collaboration with 7 coffee shops to promote Plastic Free July. There were 424 entries in total to the competition. We ran a community night with Like Minds Avoca to promote Plastic Free July and present the winners their prizes in late July 2022. The prizes were donated by local businesses including Avoca Beachside Markets, Nurtured Earth Organics, Aussie Bread Bags, Chino Cups, Shady Palms and the Mulled Wine Co. We also had a stall at the Avoca Beachside markets with kids craft made from marine debris and reusable cup giveaways.
- **September 2022:** We completed a successful beach clean on 24 September at Avoca Beach to promote the International Coastal Clean Up initiative. In total 52kg of rubbish was collected including 16kg of glass bottles, 2kg of plastic bottles, hundreds of cigarette butts and 6kg of soft plastics.
- **December 2022:** We ran a craft morning focused on sustainable gifts and present wrapping on 11 December at Like Minds Avoca.
- **February 2023:** We organised a successful clothing swap at Avoca Beach Scout Hall on 19 February to raise awareness around fast fashion and the amount of plastic pollution caused by plastics in textiles.
- **March 2023:** We ran a beach clean up for Clean Up Australia Day on 5 March at Avoca Beach. In just under an hour 38 volunteers collected 22kg of rubbish including 6kg of recyclable bottles and cans.
- **June 2023:** We organised a community beach clean up to raise awareness for World Ocean Day at Avoca Beach on 5 June. On the day we collected and sorted 17kg of rubbish from the beach and surrounding area. Kincumber Mitre10 donated kids-sized gardening gloves to support this event and future clean ups.



Clean up data

Since the Plastic Free Avoca Beach project started in 2019, we have completed 8 clean ups at Avoca Beach. As part of each beach clean-up, we carefully sort all the rubbish collected to record the number and type of each item. We collate this data and send it to Clean up Australia to be included in the **Australian Marine Debris Database** (<https://www.tangaroablue.org/>) a national initiative which documents the amounts and types of marine debris impacting beaches and waterways around the country.

By submitting this data our efforts are supporting government agencies and organisation across Australia to track major items of marine debris and work out practical solutions to reduce the risk of this litter entering our oceans in the first place.



Our thanks

We acknowledge that we operate on Darkinjung Country. We pay our respects to the traditional custodians of Country in the Avoca Beach region and pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

Our community events in 2022-23 were proudly supported by the Central Coast Council's community grant program. A huge thanks to all of our hard-working volunteers who assisted with our beach clean ups and supported our group during 2022-23. This included local artist Jane Gillings for her wonderful children's craft making use of marine debris. We also thank all the local businesses who have supported Plastic Free Avoca Beach including Avoca Beachside Markets, Avoca Sands Café, Avoca Kiosk, Aussie Bread Bags, Becker & Co Café, Boy & The Rose Café, Chino Cup, Like Minds Avoca, Nurtured Earth Organics, Mitre 10 Kincumber, Mr Goaty Gelato, Mulled Wine Co., Shady Palm's Restaurant, The Social Junction Cafe, and Waves Café.