



During a recent test mission, the Ocean Cleanup removed 28,659kg of plastic from the sea | Photo source The Ocean Cleanup

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A NEW FLEET OF GIANT FLOATING BARRIERS IS SET TO TACKLE PACIFIC POLLUTION

 SUSTAINABILITY

Fresh from successful testing, the Ocean Cleanup plans to deploy a system capable of collecting 50 percent of the 'Great Pacific Garbage Patch' every five years

Spotted: A physical embodiment of mankind's wastefulness, the Great Pacific Garbage Patch is a collection of man-made marine debris trapped in circular currents in the North Pacific Ocean. Since 2013, non-profit the Ocean Cleanup has been on a mission to collect plastic from the high seas with huge floating barriers. This year, the project's most recent and largest design—known as 'Jenny'—has taken on this vortex of Pacific rubbish, removing large amounts of debris while proving the viability of its technology.

Jenny consists of an 800m-long barrier drawn through the water between two manned vessels (provided by shipping company Maersk). During a test mission earlier this year, the Ocean Cleanup team estimates that 28,659kg of plastic waste was removed from the ocean. The haul of rubbish included toilet seats, toothbrushes and discarded fishing gear. The goal is to recycle 95 percent of the waste collected.

'While it's just the tip of the iceberg, these kilograms are the most important ones we will ever collect, because they are proof that cleanup is possible.' [explains](#) Boyan Slat, Founder and CEO of the Ocean Cleanup.

Hot on the heels of Jenny's success, the Ocean Cleanup is now developing an even larger 2.5km-long system. It is hoped that this will pave the way for a fleet of ten System 003s (Jenny was System 002). This fleet will be capable of cleaning half of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch every half-decade. In the meantime, Jenny will continue to remove rubbish in the Pacific.

The Ocean Cleanup says that, as operations move forward, environmental protection is paramount. All carbon emissions from the recent campaign will be offset, with the goal of reaching carbon neutrality. Maersk is also helping to explore low-carbon fuels for support vessels.

Ocean-borne rubbish has been a powerful issue for the public, and a prime target for innovation. For example, at Springwise, we have spotted an [automated beach cleaner](#), an [app](#) designed to track sources of sea plastic pollution and [autonomous drones](#) that collect rubbish from the ocean floor.

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Takeaway:

As of last year, the Great Pacific Garbage Patch [covered 1.6 million square kilometres](#) – that's twice the size of Texas or three times the size of France. The Ocean Cleanup's progress is exciting, but we are only at the beginning of a journey towards ambitious cleanup goals. It's also equally important to note that—for all Jenny's achievements—the mission cleaned up the consequences of a problem rather than solving its causes.