



TIDE TURNERS POLLUTION CHALLENGE

Youth-led movement to prevent pollution of freshwater and marine ecosystems from source to sea

Guidance Note for Schools | 2026–27

From learning about pollution to leading conservation action

The Tide Turners Pollution Challenge (TTPC) is a youth-focused environmental initiative led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in partnership with the Centre for Environment Education (CEE). It helps young people build knowledge, influence behaviour and lead practical action for pollution prevention and conservation.

About the Partners

UNEP is the UN's leading global authority on the environment. UNEP works with governments, partners and communities to address environmental challenges and advance solutions for a healthier planet. TTPC is part of UNEP's youth engagement and pollution-prevention work.

CEE was established in 1984 as a Centre of Excellence supported by the MoEFCC, Govt. of India. Centre is a national institution headquartered in Ahmedabad. It develops environmental education programmes and resources; and builds capacity to connect learning with sustainability action.

The Journey of TTPC Globally and in India

The initiative began globally in 2018 as the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge under UNEP's Beat Plastic Pollution campaign. It was introduced in India in 2019, with CEE and WWF-India as implementation and knowledge partners. The programme has since engaged young people through progressive learning, behaviour change, community outreach and youth-led action. This phase builds on this foundation and expands the focus from plastic pollution to broader source-to-sea pollution and conservation challenges.

Eligibility: 11 to 18 Years of age group

Timeline:





TIDE TURNERS POLLUTION CHALLENGE

Youth-led movement to prevent pollution of freshwater and marine ecosystems from source to sea

The Three levels of the Challenge

<p>LEVEL 1 - ENTRY <i>Build pollution knowledge and awareness</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch the TTPC learning video and discuss how pollution affects people, wildlife, land and water. • Each eligible student completes the individual Pollution Literacy Test (PLT). • Students scoring 50% or above receive a digital UNEP–CEE certificate by email, according to programme criteria. <p>English video: https://youtu.be/KVO_rDnqYPg Hindi video: https://youtu.be/UrdtoAM0Ibl PLT: https://forms.gle/kqmfuiFFo49YSACu9</p> <p>Expected outcome: Students gain a shared understanding of pollution and complete the individual learning and assessment step.</p>
<p>LEVEL 2 - LEADER <i>Help classmates and the school community learn and change habits</i></p>	<p>Spread awareness by using any one or more following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a 10–15 minute classroom 'Pollution Talk' led by students, using a poster, quiz or short presentation. • Start a 'Say No to Single-Use Plastic' pledge and encourage reusable water bottles, lunch boxes and cutlery where feasible. • Organise a class or school assembly, slogan/poster contest, debate, quiz, skit or wall display on plastic, waste, water pollution or biodiversity. • Conduct a 'Waste Detective' observation: identify where litter is found in school and share suggestions respectfully—without handling hazardous waste. • Create a student-made announcement, newsletter item, noticeboard display or short video in the school's preferred language. • Engage families through a simple home challenge, such as avoiding disposable bags for a week or checking how household waste is sorted. <p>Keep records of event dates, duration, number of participants, activity details and photos for reporting.</p> <p>Expected outcome: Students practise communication, teamwork and peer leadership, and encourage others to adopt pollution-preventing habits.</p>
<p>LEVEL 3 - CHAMPION <i>Carry out a small, safe and measurable school or neighbourhood action</i></p>	<p>Refer to below ideas and choose any one or more actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up or improve waste segregation in one classroom, corridor or event. Make sure the school has a clear collection and handover arrangement before adding bins. • Run a litter audit of a defined school area before and after a student-led intervention; record the number of litter items or bags collected without touching sharp or hazardous waste. • Plan a low-waste school event: avoid disposable decorations and single-use serveware where possible, provide refill access, and review the waste generated afterwards.



TIDE TURNERS POLLUTION CHALLENGE

Youth-led movement to prevent pollution of freshwater and marine ecosystems from source to sea

- Work with the **school canteen** to promote reusable containers, reduce unnecessary packaging and display clear messages on waste prevention.
 - Conduct a **water-saving and pollution-prevention** check: identify leaking taps, litter near drains or unsafe disposal practices and report them to the responsible adult.
 - Create or **care for a biodiversity** patch, plant native-plant, protect existing habitat, and record plant survival or observations over time.
 - **Map litter hotspots** around the school boundary with adult supervision and share a practical proposal with the school management or relevant local authority.
- Document the issue, baseline, action, participation and results in a short student report, with teacher guidance and permission for any off-campus activity.
- Submit here:** <https://forms.gle/dEhsyyYPoZ3vrivs8>
- Expected outcome:** Students demonstrate a sustained, practical response and record what changed. Recognition as a Tide Turner Champion remains subject to programme criteria.

How schools can participate

Nominate a teacher coordinator and, where appropriate, form a small student TTPC team or eco-club group.

Share the invitation with eligible students and the eco club. Encourage each eligible student to complete Level 1 individually. Encourage all students from grade 6-12 to watch video and complete PLT.

Support Level 2 by giving students a short assembly slot, classroom time, noticeboard space or permission to run a simple awareness activity.

Support Level 3 by helping students select one achievable issue, agree on a baseline, obtain permissions and work safely with school staff or community partners.

Record participation and results. Obtain consent before taking or sharing identifiable photographs of students and follow school safeguarding procedures.

AN INVITATION TO SCHOOLS

Join TTPC and help students move from awareness to action. Small, consistent actions, supported by teachers and the school community, can help prevent pollution and build responsible habits that extend beyond school.

WATCH. LEARN. INSPIRE OTHERS. TAKE ACTION.

Tide Turners Pollution Challenge Team | Centre for Environment Education (CEE), India