



TIDE TURNERS POLLUTION CHALLENGE

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

Guidance Note for Colleges | 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: 18 to 25 Years of age group

Timeline:





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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 self-learning video on pollution, its impacts on people and nature, and practical solutions. • Complete 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/UrdtoAM0IbI</p> <p>PLT: https://forms.gle/kqmfuiFFo49YSACu9 Expected outcome: Learners understand pollution challenges and complete the individual learning and assessment.</p>
<p>LEVEL 2 - LEADER <i>Share learning and engage others</i></p>	<p>Spread awareness by using any one or more following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host a campus 'Pollution Awareness Event' with a short quiz, pledge wall, poster display, debate or student-led awareness stall. • Run a 'Refuse Single-Use Plastic' campaign at the canteen, events, festivals and college meetings; promote refillable bottles and reusable cups. • Conduct a peer-to-peer session in classrooms, NSS/NCC units, clubs or hostels; invite housekeeping, canteen and security teams into the conversation. • Create a short evidence-based digital campaign: student-made reels, photo stories, infographics or a campus pollution myth-buster series. • Organise a repair, reuse or swap corner for books, clothes, electronics or stationery; pair it with a waste-awareness exhibit. • Mark a pollution-awareness day and invite a local waste worker, recycler, urban local body representative or environmental practitioner to speak. <p>Keep records of event dates, duration, number of participants, activity details and photos for reporting.</p> <p>Expected outcome: Students build communication, teamwork and peer-leadership skills and can show who they reached and what they learned.</p>
<p>LEVEL 3 - CHAMPION <i>Turn awareness into a measurable campus or community action</i></p>	<p>Refer to below ideas and choose any one or more actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a campus waste audit: record waste types and approximate quantities at selected points, then propose and test improvements. • Pilot source segregation in one building, canteen or event. Agree on labelled bins, collection arrangements and a verified destination for each waste stream. • Map single-use plastic or litter hotspots around the campus and nearby public spaces; work with campus administration or the local body on a practical response. • Run a 'low-waste campus event' pilot using reusable serviceware, water refill



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	<p>points, clear signage and a post-event waste check.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate water pollution: identify litter or discharge concerns around a local waterbody, document observations safely, and share evidence with the responsible authority. • Create a biodiversity-friendly campus such as native plant care, habitat protection or reducing litter near green spaces; track survival or maintenance. Prepare a short action report with baseline, actions, participation, photographs (with consent), results, challenges and next steps. Seek approval before any site activity. <p>Submit here: https://forms.gle/b2AZUhP7QNTff2WT6</p> <p>Expected outcome: Teams implement a feasible response, involve relevant stakeholders and document outputs and results. Recognition as a Tide Turner Champion remains subject to programme criteria.</p>
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How colleges can participate

Nominate a coordinator. Identify a faculty member, environmental club mentor or NSS coordinator to mobilise students and support their journey.

Mobilise students. Circulate the invitation through departments, NSS, student groups and campus communication channels; encourage each student to complete Level 1 individually.

Support Level 2. Help students organise awareness campaigns, quizzes, pledges, exhibitions or other activities appropriate to the campus and community.

Enable Level 3. Support student teams to identify a local issue, plan a feasible response, involve relevant stakeholders and record outcomes.

Share the impact. Encourage students to document participation, photographs, learning and results so that successful initiatives can inform and inspire others.

An invitation to colleges

We invite colleges to join TTPC and help students move from awareness to influence and action. With the support of faculty, NSS units and student groups, young people can contribute to pollution prevention, sustainable campus practices and conservation in their communities.

WATCH. LEARN. INSPIRE OTHERS. TAKE ACTION.

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