



ANNUAL REPORT

2022



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Message from the Nicoya Peninsula Waterkeeper Team

We are very excited to share the results of this year's hard and heartfelt work with all of you. 2022 was special for us at Nicoya Peninsula Waterkeeper as we celebrated **10 years** of working to keep water clean. We have learned so much throughout the years and, the more we learn, the more we realize that we don't know much about how to live on this planet without destroying it. Ay ay ay humans!

In these coastal beautiful touristic towns, us humans have been increasingly polluting water with solid waste, wastewater, and fertilizers. Generalized lack of environmental awareness and very low law enforcement capacities aggravate the issue.

As we study the issue of water pollution in this area, we realize that the first step to reorient the destructive path we have been taking is to educate ourselves and become aware of the impact of our actions and choices.

Every action we take has an impact on nature, are we aware of this? Are we aware of how we can reduce this impact? You do see how it is in everyone's best interest to reduce it, right?

Our mission at Nicoya Peninsula Waterkeeper is to analyze the issues, look for or create solutions, share them, and bring them closer to the population so that we all have the possibility of choosing better and of contributing to the eco systemic balance of life.

No one is going to come and save us from the destruction we are all creating. It is up to **ALL OF US**. We invite everyone in this community (and everywhere in the world) to take responsibility for what we are doing. Let's care enough to get informed and choose better. Let's be wiser. Let's take action to reduce our negative impact on nature. Let's make it nice.

We do care. Do you?

- Nicoya Peninsula Waterkeeper Team



Nicoya Península Waterkeeper is a Costa Rican non-profit organization, whose mission is to monitor, protect and restore water quality in the coastal watershed and marine ecosystem between the Cabo Blanco Absolute Nature Reserve and the Caletas-Ario National Wildlife Refuge through research, field work, education and advocacy.



We have
4 lines of action:

01

**Wastewater
Management**



02

**Solid Waste
Management**



03

**Education and
Awareness Raising**



04

**Advocacy and
Law Enforcement**



01.

We do water quality monitoring of **20 rivers and streams** once a month.

Join us! We are opening 2-3 spaces for community members to join our monthly monitoring, where you can learn more about town's rivers and streams, while you help us measure their pollution levels.

Coliform quantity fecal (NMP/100ML)	Classification
<20	■ NO POLLUTION
20 A 1000	■ INCIPIENT POLLUTION
1000 A 2000	■ MODERATE POLLUTION
2000 A 5000	■ SEVERE POLLUTION
>5000	■ HIGHLY POLLUTED WATER

We collect monthly data from 20 rivers and ocean water samples to

CHECK THEIR POLLUTION LEVELS



■ Danta River

Highly Polluted Water

>160000 UFC/100ml

■ Carmen River

Highly Polluted Water

92000 UFC/100ml



According to the macroinvertebrates biological parameter, both rivers are classified in **CLASS 5** due to a *low diversity of species found in them.*

PLAYA MALPAIS

February	July
INCIPIENT POLLUTION ■	SEVERE POLLUTION ■

PLAYA CARMEN

February	July
NO POLLUTION ■	HIGHLY POLLUTED WATER ■

PLAYA ST. TERESA

February	May
HIGHLY POLLUTED WATER ■	NO POLLUTION ■

PLAYA HERMOSA

February	May
NO POLLUTION ■	NO POLLUTION ■

PLAYA MANZANILLO

February	May
NO POLLUTION ■	HIGHLY POLLUTED WATER ■

▶ POLLUTION LEVELS



Fecal Coliform Quantity (NMP/100ML)	Fecal Streptococcus	Classification
<100	10	■ NO POLLUTION
100 A 240	10-50	■ INCIPIENT POLLUTION
240 A 500	50-100	■ MODERATE POLLUTION
500 A 1000	100-200	■ SEVERE POLLUTION
>1000	>200	■ HIGHLY POLLUTED WATER

* We took as reference the highest point of pollution of each date.

WE WORK TOWARDS
LASTING SOLUTIONS FOR
THE TOWN'S MAIN ISSUE

Together with the **Interamerican Development Bank**, we are working on preliminary studies to find mid and long term solutions to the wastewater issues in the area.



12 TRAININGS
TO 102 PEOPLE

WASTEWATER

MANAGEMENT ADVICE

Inadequate wastewater management is one of the biggest challenges that the Southern Nicoya Peninsula is experiencing.

Through the Ocean Friendly Business® project, we give advice to businesses, rental house owners and staff, schools, and neighbours so that they understand the impact of human activity on the environment, providing them the necessary tools to know how to reduce it by implementing efficient wastewater treatment systems and other sustainable practices.

02.

We encourage constant questioning of consumption habits, **AF9: I G-B; 'K <5HA -G'BCH'B99898 "**

We have the individual responsibility to choose what we are going to consume, as well as the way in which we are going to return the waste to the environment.



In NP Waterkeeper shares information with the community, looks for and provides solutions, tools, and mechanisms to allow solid waste to be managed adequately:

- Recycling
- Organic waste
- Special waste (stay tuned to our campaigns)

THERE

IS NO

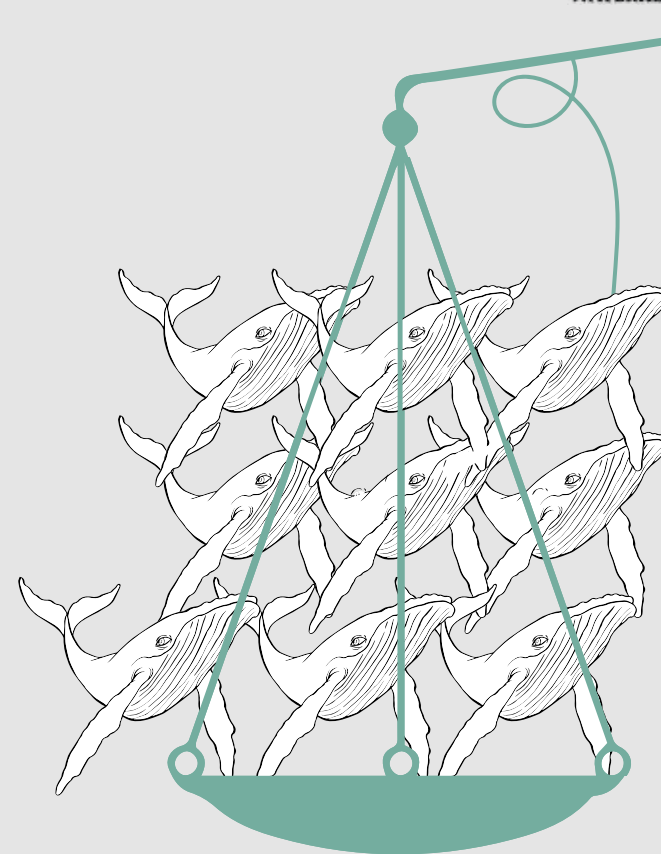
THROWING "AWAY"

Thanks to the support of our partner BIONIC®, we run weekly routes, collecting all the recyclables from town and pre-process the materials.

In 2022
we collected

275 TONS OF
RECYCLABLES

Since we began the recycling center's operations in January 2019,
279 BUSINESSES AND 413 HOUSES
started recycling!



9 HUMPBACK WHALES

= 275 TONS

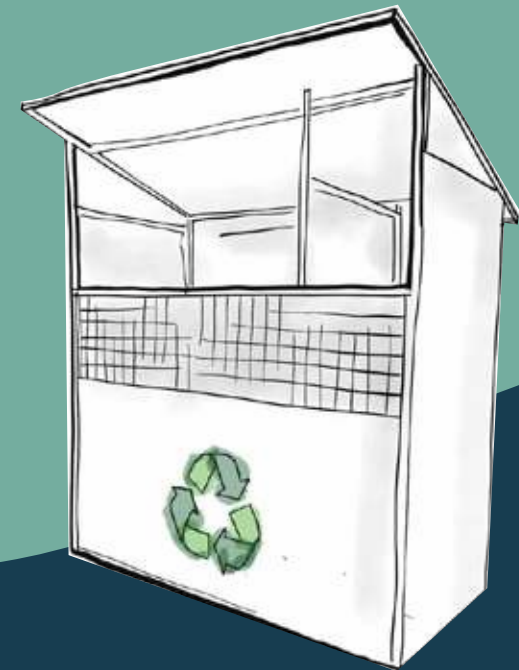


We give maintenance to

11 RECYCLING STATIONS

so that all the neighbors and businesses can dispose of their recyclables at any time during the week.

We remind you to use them properly, to respect the list of recyclable materials that we receive, so we can keep them nice and clean!





WE EXPORTED 15 TONS OF PLASTIC

Thanks to the support of our friends from BIONIC®, we were able to process **15 tons** of coastal plastic at the Waterkeeper-Bionic® Recycling Center and send it for **recycling and transformation into new products.**



BEACH CLEANUPS

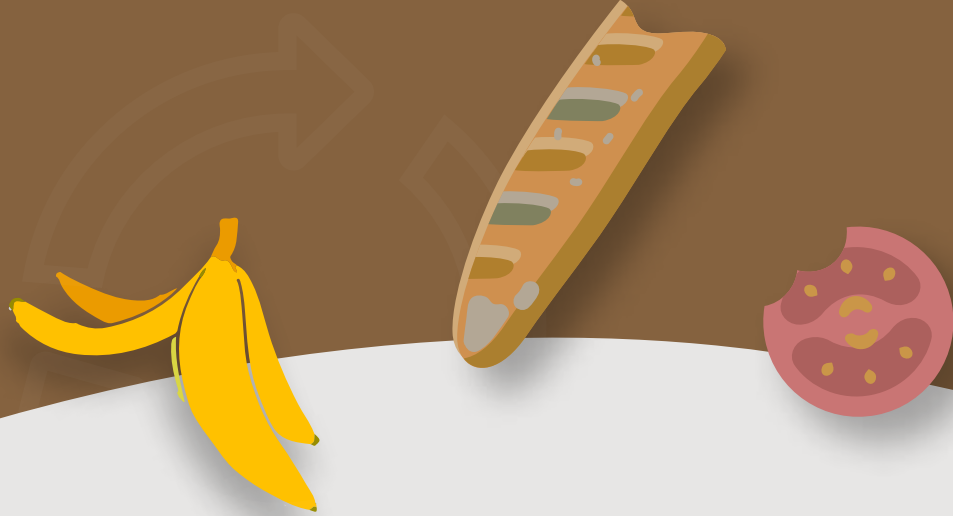


We collected more than

1,3 TONS

of solid waste during

**23 BEACH
CLEAN-UPS**



ORGANIC WASTE

Through the **Ocean Friendly Business®**, project, we promote **on-site composting** through trainings and follow-up visits.

We also support local farmers who collect organic waste from restaurants, giving value to this waste while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

In **2022** we prevented

597 TONS

of organic waste from being disposed of in the trash and ending up in a landfill.



We prevent

EXPIRED MEDICATIONS

FROM POLLUTING THE WATER



In alliance with **Punto Seguro**, a Costa Rican company dedicated to appropriately managing medical waste, we have **TWO MEDICATION COLLECTION BINS**, one at our office in Santa Teresa and another at the recycling center in Cóbano.

LET'S TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS OPPORTUNITY TO PROPERLY DISPOSE OF THE MEDICINES THAT WE NO LONGER USE, SO THEY DO NOT END UP POLLUTING THE WATER!



▶ Electronic WASTE COLLECTION CAMPAIGN

In alliance with the Municipality
and private donors, we collected

13 TONS

of electronic waste for its
proper processing and recycling.



As a result of NP Waterkeeper's solid waste improvement activities in this area, such as the Recycling Center operations, the Electronic Waste Collection Campaign, and the local management of organic waste, a total of:

▶ 886 TONS

of solid waste were reintegrated into the economy instead of being collected by the municipal service and ending up in a landfill.

If we all assume our individual responsibility as a community, we can achieve great changes that are visible in town!



03.

It is essential that we all understand that our way of relating with nature must change.

In **2022**, we held

70 TALKS
AND TRAININGS

for businesses and houses about
recycling, composting, and wastewater,

reaching

690 PEOPLE.

We must face the problem and see it deeply, with the aim of realizing the environmental impact of human activities and knowing how to reduce it, taking responsibility for valuing and protecting the natural resources that make life on this planet possible.

<https://www.nicoyawaterkeeper.org/en/>





OCEAN
FRIENDLY
BUSINESS®



OCEAN FRIENDLY BUSINESS®

Ocean Friendly Business® is a project that supports businesses in their transformation process towards implementing sustainable practices that contribute to ocean health.

We are providing restaurants, hotels, and rental houses with a framework which outlines how they can contribute to reduce their ocean pollution through simple, practical actions.





OCEAN
FRIENDLY
BUSINESS®



To become an
Ocean Friendly Business®
they need to:

- ✓ recycle,
- ✓ compost or correctly dispose of their organic waste,
- ✓ treat their wastewater appropriately,
- ✓ stop using single-use plastics,
- ✓ use non-polluting cleaning products,
- ✓ comply with the country's current legislation.



15 RESTAURANTS AND
3 ACCOMMODATIONS

are certified as
OCEAN FRIENDLY BUSINESS®
and **20 are underway!**



These 18 OFB have reduced an average of:

43.200 units of plastic bottles
108.000 units of plastic straws
108.000 units of plastic bags

*Numbers per year

**The more businesses join, the
greater impact we will achieve!**

04.

We work together with the authorities to encourage law enforcement.

We are part of the **Wastewater working group** together with the Municipality and the Ministry of Health **aiming at addressing pollution cases more efficiently.**



CLAIMS

During 2022, our law enforcement efforts derived in 5 businesses getting wastewater treatment plants. On the other hand, we filed 57 wastewater pollution claims (31 new cases and 26 follow-up cases).



¿Qué hacer si ves a un camión arrojando lodos sépticos a un río, terreno o carretera?

Contact us! These trucks have the duty to dispose of the septic sludge at a treatment plant.

Together with CATUZA (the Blue Zone Tourism Chamber) we asked the Banco Nacional to create a service that could offer a loan with special rates to make it more affordable to build a wastewater treatment system at a house or business for the district's population.



Thank you to all our members, donors, and collaborators for supporting our mission in 2022!

Our purpose is that all of us, as a community, assume our responsibility and work together to find solutions to common problems.

Your collaboration is essential for us to continue implementing activities that increase the awareness and knowledge of the population and thus, establish a relationship of greater respect and harmony with nature, for this and future generations.



Acknowledgements

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