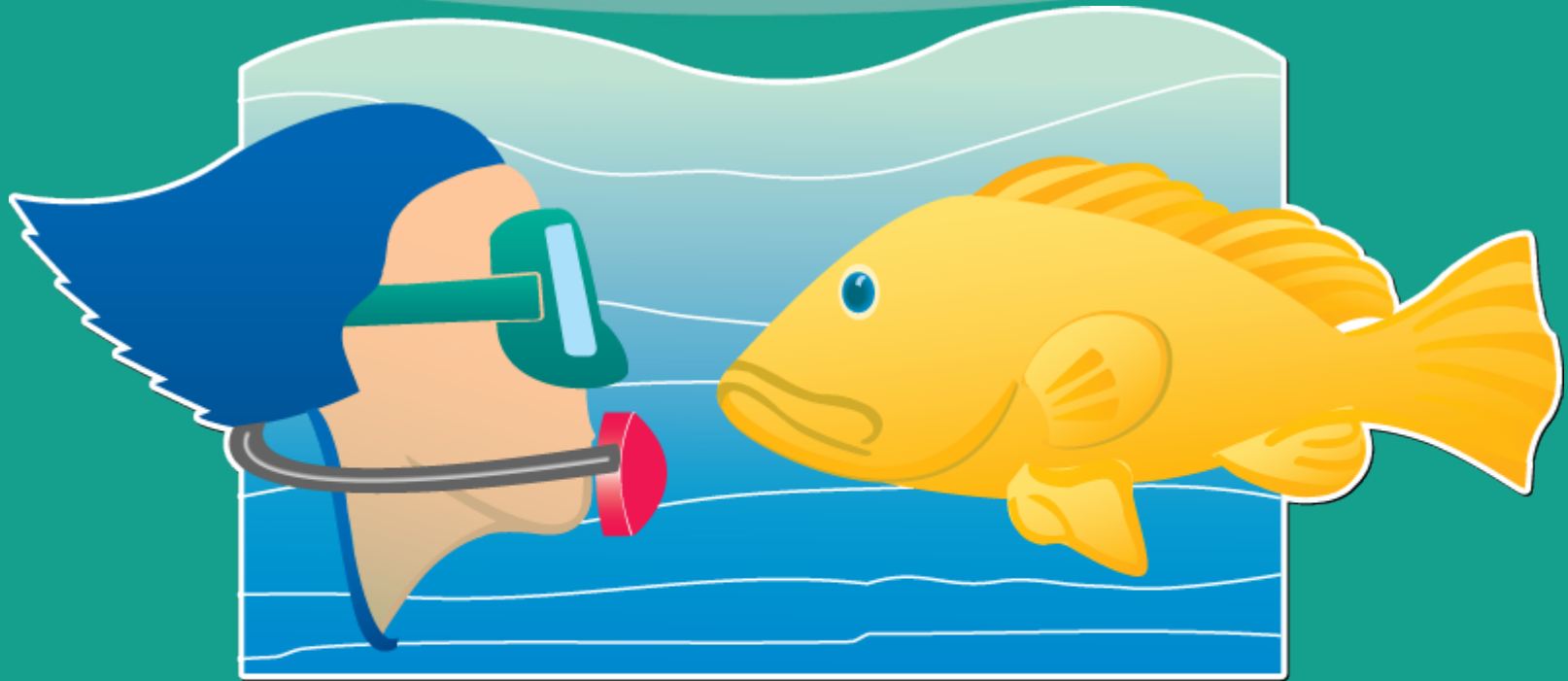


Get Involved



PROJECT[®]
AWARE

Beach and Underwater Cleanup Guide

Divers Make a Difference

Project AWARE Foundation - Divers conserving underwater environments. Project AWARE conserves underwater environments through education, advocacy and action.

Offices in the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Switzerland and Japan combine efforts to protect aquatic resources in 175 countries around the world.

Divers have been actively involved in beach and underwater cleanups for decades. With a unique view to the underwater world, divers see firsthand the effects of debris problems



Debris Problems

- Aquatic debris affects more than 250 species worldwide, including 85% of all sea turtle and 40% of all marine mammal species. Project AWARE Foundation combats debris issues by organizing underwater cleanups in 100 countries worldwide.
- In 2005 participation in International Cleanup Day reached 448,241 people, 7,033 of which were divers.
- Marine debris is not only unsightly but destructive. Debris degrades very slowly and may travel thousands of miles from the original source. Some items may litter the planet for decades.
- A plastic bottle entering the ocean in 1986 won't decompose until the year 2436!



Debris Problems

- Lost or dumped fishing line is responsible for 45% of the animal entanglements in 2005, fishing nets 16% and rope 14%.
- Since 1989 volunteers efforts have collected 12.8 million cigarette filters which are the number one item collected overall.



Cleanup History

Project AWARE coordinates the underwater portion of International Cleanup Day in cooperation with the Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup. Cleanup began in 1986 in Texas, USA with 2800 volunteers and has grown to include events in more than 100 countries. Today, more than half a million volunteers comb shorelines and dive for debris on the third Saturday of September each year.

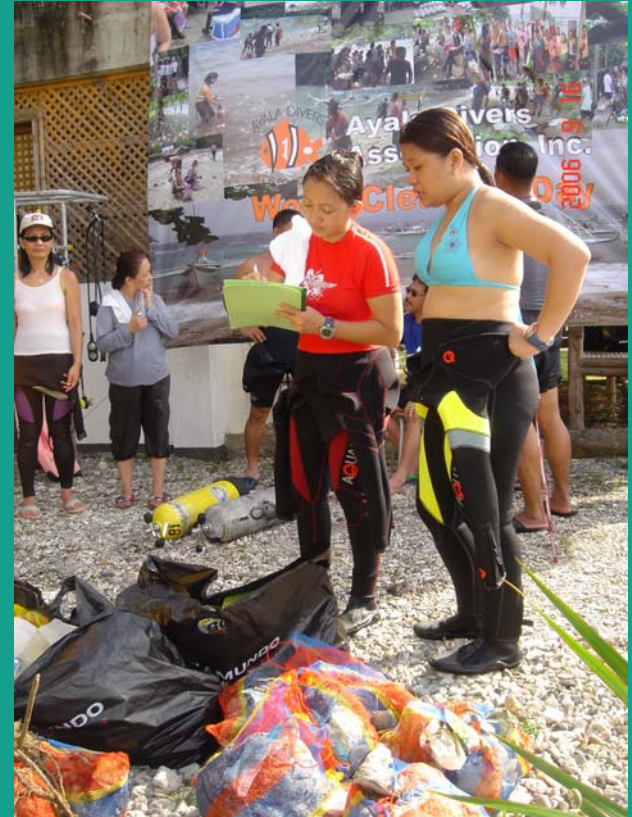


International Cleanup Day

Cleanup events are the only volunteer efforts of their kind actively recording and analyzing data on debris collected.

Goals

- Increase public awareness on debris issues and the impact people have on the environment.
- Gather data used to target sources of debris and create solutions to pollution problems.
- Provide information to local governments and scientists to improve resource management.



Coordinate a Beach and Underwater Cleanup

Step 1: Begin by reading through this information for ideas about how to coordinate an event.

Step 2: Mail, [email](#) or fax the Official Signup Sheet to Project AWARE or sign up [online](#) to receive complimentary support materials.

Step 3: After your cleanup, send completed data cards and a summary sheet to Project AWARE and receive a special recognition award (available for International Cleanup Day only).



Choosing a Project

Projects can range from a small group doing a local cleanup to a regional event. Many dive clubs, dive centers and resorts host cleanup events often and welcome volunteers.

Choose a project you feel strongly about and stay enthusiastic to motivate others. It's a good idea to choose a cleanup area that will benefit from your attention rather than one that is already clean and well maintained.



Choosing a Project

- Listen to the people in your area to find out what concerns them most.
- Choose a location that requires attention.
- Choose a project that you feel strongly about – one that you can commit to.
- Be realistic with your goals and what you expect to accomplish.
- Remember that you are making a difference by **getting involved**; be optimistic.



Planning Your Project

Good planning is key to a successful event. Once you've decided on a project, create a plan. It may be necessary to get permission from the city, agency or party legally responsible for the area. The local department of municipal services or department of parks and recreation should be able to answer your questions or put you in contact with the proper authority.

Have a date, time and expected number of participants in mind when seeking a permit or permission. Once you receive permission, you are ready to take action.



Planning Your Project

Stick to your original objective. It's very easy to get in over your head if you're not careful. Remember you can always plan an additional event in the future.



Planning Your Project

Volunteers

Deciding when to hold your event can play a larger role in your success than you may realize. In many areas, winter events have a high probability of being postponed or cancelled due to bad weather.

Holiday and other community events may prevent people from committing to your project. For added support and exposure, try to plan your event with a nationally or internationally recognized cleanup day.



Planning Your Project

Volunteers

- Give yourself plenty of time to recruit people and plan the event. Two months is usually enough time, but it could vary depending in the size of the event.
- Decide how many people you would like to have at the event and recruit a few extra. Many times people will have to cancel with little or no notice and you don't want to end up shorthanded.



Planning Your Event

Volunteers

- Look for the possibility of community involvement. Many Schools, conservation groups, scout troops, local businesses and other community organizations will gladly volunteer.
- Arrange volunteers into groups to help you with the project. Your main responsibility is to manage the cleanup.



Planning Your Event

Volunteers

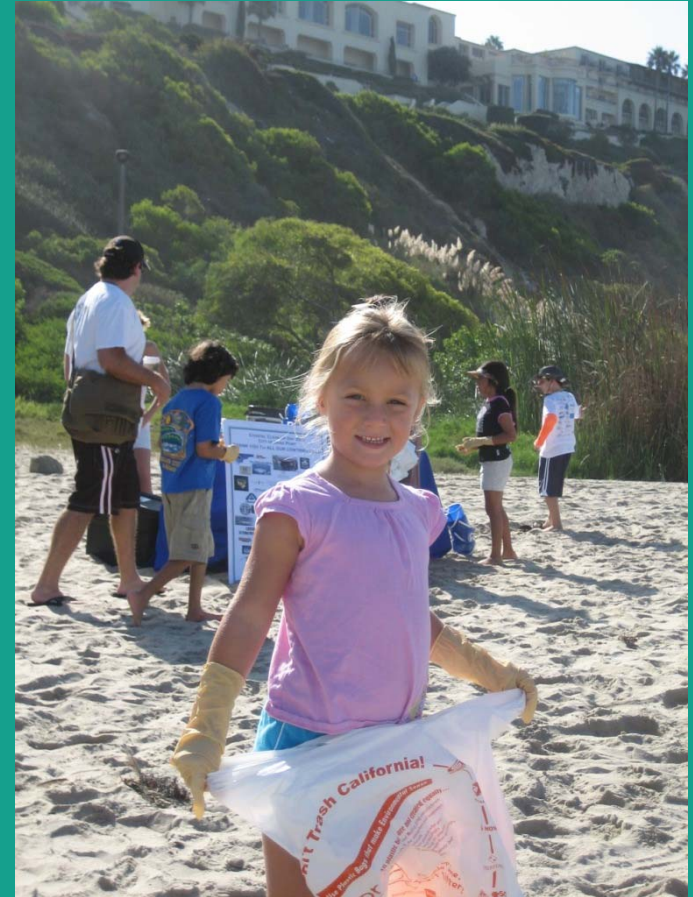
- Volunteers can help you with phone calls, recruiting sponsors, gathering supplies, safety, crowd control, recording data and anything else that needs attention.
- When planning an underwater cleanup, recruit dive instructors and divemasters to assist volunteers with safe entry and exits, underwater debris removal and oversee safety and protection of the environment.



Planning Your Project

Volunteers

Arrange to have trash removed. You can usually get this done by local agencies at no charge. Plan to separate the recyclable materials as well.



Planning Your Event



AWARE Kids

You can conduct the AWARE Kids Mission 1 during your event and involve local schools and youth groups



Planning Your Event

- Require all divers be certified (minimum open water diver).
- Contact local dive stores, dive instructors and/or lifeguards for advice on the dive site if you aren't familiar with the area.
- Expect to pay a fee at some locations. However, many parties may waive the fee for cleanup activities.



Planning Your Project

- Have dive safety officers available to assist divers going into and coming out of the water, keeping track of dives.
- Have plenty of drinking water available and recommend volunteers bring something to eat if refreshments aren't provided.
- Arrange to have designated parking areas for participants and suggest carpooling.



Planning Your Project

- Check with local authorities for free parking areas; they may be able to designate a parking area for the event. Post signs to help people to the event.
- Depending on the size of your cleanup you may want to designate someone to act as a carpool contact person, matching people for carpools.



Forms

Media/Press Release

Use this sample as a guide in creating your press release. You may wish to create your own style or add other areas of interest. Be sure to include the following:

- Date and time of your event
- Purpose of event
- Number of expected participants (including any celebrities, VIP's or sponsors).



Forms

Liability Release

It's a good idea to require that all participants read and sign a liability release before taking part in the event. One release is specifically designed for beach participants and the other for divers. You may find it helpful to photocopy each release on different colors of paper to keep them separate.

Data Cards

This form (provided by Project AWARE or the Ocean Conservancy) is used to document debris items removed from the site. We recommend using one card per group of 2-5 volunteers. After the cleanup is over, please send the completed cards to Project AWARE. In order for your event to be counted in the final statistics on International Cleanup Day, your summary and completed data cards must be returned.



Forms

Summary Sheet

This form summarizes the total number of participants, distance covered and weight of debris collected. Send the completed form to Project AWARE following the cleanup event.

Ten Ways a Diver Can Protect the Aquatic Environment

This brochure outlines important guidelines that divers should follow to prevent damage to aquatic life. Review the brochure with all divers prior to entering the water. Additional copies may be obtained from Project AWARE.



Supplies and Sponsors

- Many factors come into play when attempting to obtain funding or donations. The size, location and purpose of your event will affect the decision of potential supporters.
- Make a list of everything you will need to make the event a success. Include trash bags, liability forms, writing instruments, flyers, signs, prizes, refreshment, fees and any other items needed for the location.



Supplies and Sponsors

- When your list is complete, approach potential contributors based on the benefits they will gain from being a sponsor. For example, if you are looking for refreshments, the local bottled water company may be willing to donate water and cups for some advertisement. Companies may be more willing to help if they receive recognition. In addition, show how businesses can benefit from their involvement in environmental projects.



Supplies and Sponsors

When you approach businesses for support, be sure to make them aware that you are doing this voluntarily and it is nonprofit. Give them plenty of time to meet your needs and give them recognition whenever possible (i.e., newspapers, flyers, signage at the event).

Many states, countries and provinces have nonprofit organizations as well as government organizations that may provide you with needed supplies for environmental cleanups.



Supplies and Sponsors

- Another approach to gaining financial support is to create a co-op program with a local dive center or another business. By joining forces, you not only have the financial support of the business, but you have gained the opportunity to create a larger project. The company may have employees who will volunteer, reducing your recruiting efforts.



Promotion & Advertising

Effective advertising can turn your event into a major success.

When you promote your event, create a theme or come up with a catchy title.

By including the media in what you're doing and why you're doing it, you're likely to get news coverage, which can help when asking for future support.

- Contact your local radio, television and cable stations. Many will air public service announcements at no charge or cover your event on the day it occurs.




Promotion and Advertising

- Many newspapers will not only advertise nonprofit events at no charge, they may consider doing a story on the event.
- A good way to gain media coverage is to invite a celebrity or government official to participate (e.g., a local radio personality, representatives from large corporations, leaders of local nonprofit organizations, or a political representative).



Promotion & Advertising


- Be sure to notify the media if you get a commitment from public figure. A sample media release is provided to assist you.
- Be sure to submit your press release early enough to meet publication deadlines.
- Ask dive stores to distribute or post fliers.



Splash for Trash

Photo courtesy of The Dive Bus

International Cleanup Day
16 September 2006 - 9AM-12PM
Salt Creek Beach, Dana Point
+1 866 80 AWARE
www.projectaware.org



© Project AWARE Foundation 2006



Promotion & Advertising

- Assemble a mailing list to mail all to all of your current contacts.
- To give participants even greater incentive consider planning a raffle or prize giveaway for most trash collected or other cleanup categories.
- Contact local businesses or dive equipment manufacturers for possible assistance in acquiring prizes.



Promotion & Advertising

- Consider producing t-shirts for the cleanup. You may be able to persuade t-shirt companies to donate or give discounts on shirts in exchange for providing exposure in flyers, banners or on the shirts themselves.
- Remember, the way you promote your event will have a great effect on the number of participants you will have.



Safety

Regardless of the cleanup size, safety should be of prime importance. Being prepared is the best way to assure a safe and successful event. Here are some considerations.

- **Evaluate the site prior to the event**

If you are doing an underwater cleanup, dive the site a few times to get a feel for currents and underwater hazards. Talk to other divers who are familiar with the area. If you are cleaning a land site, walk the area to make sure there are no hazardous materials present. If you are planning a cleanup under a pier or dock, warn volunteers of boat traffic, fishing lines etc.



Safety

- **Watch the weather forecast**

Follow the weather forecast a few days prior to the event. If you are organizing an underwater cleanup, take note of tide changes, currents and surf conditions. If stormy weather is forecast for the day of your event, don't hesitate to cancel and reschedule. It's not worth the risk and your turnout will likely be small.



Safety

- **Keep people in groups**

By keeping people in teams, it's more likely that a potential danger will be spotted and avoided before a problem occurs. When doing an underwater cleanup, be sure all divers are properly briefed, have performed their safety checks, are aware of the intended direction, necessary compass headings and their time and depth in the water. Be sure the groups of divers are small (two or three). The environment may be accidentally damaged if divers are crowded. Be sure all divers check in and out with the dive safety manager.

It's a good idea to review the Project AWARE Ten Ways brochure with everyone before they enter the water.



Safety

- **Appoint a safety coordinator**

It's a good idea to have at least one safety coordinator with first aid, CPR and supervisory training. You may choose to have one leader per group, a dive safety officer and one leader for the entire event. The event leader may be responsible for making people aware of potential hazards, checking dive equipment before divers go into the water and having emergency information available. It may be appropriate to have medical supplies, including oxygen at your event. It's highly recommended that the dive safety operator and or the safety coordinator carry PADI-sponsored professional liability insurance providing the event organizer and other parties coverage as additional insured.



Safety

- **Review the program with everyone**

Go over the agenda so all participants are aware of the time schedule. Review all forms and how to fill them out correctly. Be sure to have volunteers check in and out with your beach captain. Review where the trash is to be placed after it has been collected. Warn people of potential hazards such as metal containers, unstable ground, tide changes, muddy areas or weather conditions. Most important, review your purpose for being there. Keep in mind that natural materials such as driftwood or vegetation are not to be removed, only the trash and man-made debris.



Safety

- **Be cautious of the environment**

When conducting underwater cleanups, encourage divers to be patient, so their movements aren't destructive to the environments. Remember that a slow cleanup that doesn't harm the environment is preferable to a fast cleanup that can result in damage to aquatic life. Avoid making contact with coral or other life. Maintain neutral buoyancy and never touch, stand on or kick corals.



Caution!

Underwater volunteers should only take debris that **does not** have growth on it or in it. Some high priority items to remove are: batteries (which leach poison into the water), disposable diapers, towels, other cloth items that can smother growth and plastics that may cause entrapment or entanglement of aquatic life.

Do not take:

- Any debris that has become part of the underwater environment (has growth on it or has become artificial habitat for aquatic life).



Caution!

Do not take:

- Bottles, cans, or other items which openings are not encrusted closed (small fish may live there) unless you can see that there are no aquatic life living in them.
- Nets or abandoned fishing gear which can be dangerous for divers. Inform local marine authorities.
- Medical waste including hypodermic needles or hazardous waste containers should be reported to the local authorities.



Caution!

- If there is a chance of finding firearms or munitions, learn how to deal with them from local law enforcement officials.
- Paint doesn't dry underwater, be sure to protect yourself as well as your dive gear from exposure.
- Be careful to protect yourself from sharp objects. Often one piece of trash can conceal another, such as a jar or slivers of glass.



Caution!

- Once at the surface, make a final check for animals you may have accidentally collected in the trash.
- Throw collected trash items out one at a time rather than dumping your whole bag in the trash at once. Fill a bucket with water to temporarily hold any organisms.
- Complete the data forms as you sort your trash. Collecting data is just as important as removing the debris as it helps with long term solutions.



Caution!

- Various invertebrates such as bristleworms, which live in debris, have defense mechanisms that may cause harm to humans. When removing these creatures, handle them carefully and wear gloves whenever possible.
- Return all marine life to the water. They are much more likely to survive if divers return them to the bottom where they can hide, as opposed to presenting them unprotected to predators by throwing them back.



Guidelines for Collecting Line

- This task is easiest when divers work in buddy teams, swimming along the line while one buddy coils the line as the other untangles it. This method is the most efficient and safest way to collect line for both divers and the environment.

- If you're able to prepare for collecting line before the dive, an empty cavern-diving reel is ideal for handling large amounts. If you find lots of fishing line and need to use items on hand, try coiling line around a soda can or dry box with a hole in it so you can put the hooks into it. This way the line and hooks may be handled safely and disposed of after the dive.



Guidelines for Collecting Line

- Do not collect line without coiling it. Uncoiled line presents a greater danger of diver entanglement.
- When encountering a snarl, work together to untangle line by passing the whole coil underneath or around it.
- Follow the line and take it up as you go, don't stay in one place and pull on it. A taut line may overturn rocks or coral, cut into coral or sponges, or drag whatever happens to catch on it.



Guidelines for Collecting Line

- When the line is coiled, tie the free end around the coil before placing it in your collection bag.
- Coiling is the most efficient way to collect line but when a line is severely snarled, cutting it may be the only way to remove it without damaging marine life.



Guidelines for Collecting Line

- Remember that most fishing lines have hooks on one end so pay close attention while handling the line and deal safely with hooks. Use wire cutters to cut the sharp ends off the hooks and place those in the can used for coiling. If you are not able to transport hooks safely, put them out of harm's way underwater by burying them or embedding them in a piece of wood.



Don't forget

A week before the event, it's a good idea to have all of your supplies accounted for. Below is a checklist of items to help you prepare:

1. Trash bags (have two different colors available if you are separating recyclables)
2. Writing instruments (pencils are preferable because they can be used underwater)
3. Forms (this includes liability releases, data sheets, etc.)
4. Underwater slates
5. List of emergency contacts and phone numbers
6. Emergency supplies and phone numbers



Don't forget

7. Two-way radios for contact with group leaders at the site
8. Cellular phone for emergency use. If a cellular phone is not available make note of the nearest pay phone.
9. First aid kit (including an oxygen kit for underwater events)
10. Rubber gloves for shoreline volunteers (gardening gloves work for underwater debris)
11. Surface support stations



Don't Forget

12. Project AWARE educational materials and cleanup supplies
13. Banners, signs and incentives
14. Checklist for your team leaders to follow
15. Drinking water or other refreshments

You may suggest your volunteers bring the following items:
Warm clothing if applicable, sun block, hat and lunch or snacks.



Don't Forget

In addition to regular dive gear, underwater participants should also bring:

1. Mesh bags for collecting debris underwater (bags should be fairly small to avoid accumulating too much weight)
2. Dive knife and a piece of plastic pipe or wood for coiling fishing line.
3. Shears or wire cutters (to cut fishing line and hooks)
4. Float markers (for items too heavy to move)
5. Dive flags and markers



Don't Forget

Remember:

Your goal is to leave the area cleaner than it was when you arrived. Make sure not to leave anything behind except footprints.

Your project doesn't have to be a beach cleanup. There are plenty of bodies of water as well as land areas that demand attention. You may also choose to speak at a function or educate people in a classroom setting.



Don't Forget

- Don't remove trash if it will cause damage to aquatic or other life (e.g., coral growing on a glass bottle)
- Be careful where you walk, swim or dive. A well-intended person could accidentally damage the environment in the effort to preserve it
- Only remove what doesn't belong in the area. Leave natural materials behind



Don't Forget

- Plan your event far in advance. The more time you allow, the less rushed you will find yourself on event day.
- Document your findings, keep contact numbers for future events and take photos.
- Make sure trash and recyclables are picked up at the event site.



Don't Forget

Have fun with your project! Make it as enjoyable as possible for everyone including yourself.



Thank you for your support of the aquatic environment!



Project AWARE Offices

Project AWARE Foundation (Americas)

30151 Tomas Street, Suite 200

Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

Tel: +1 866 80 AWARE of +1 949 858 7657

Fax: +1 949 267 1221

Email: information@projectaware.org

Project AWARE Foundation (Europe)

Oberwilerstrasse 3

CH-8442 Hettlingen, Switzerland

Tel: +41 52 243 3232

Fax: +41 52 243 3233

Email: aware@padi.ch



Project AWARE Offices

Project AWARE (Japan)

1-20-1 Ebisu – Minami
Shibuya-ku Tokyo 150-002
Japan

Tel: +81 3 5721 1731

Fax: +81 3 5721 1735

Email: planning@padi.co.jp

Project AWARE Foundation (International)

Unit 7, St. Philips Central
Albert Road
St. Philips, Bristol BS2 0PD
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0) 117 300 7313

Fax: +44 (0) 117 300 7270

Email: info@projectaware.org.uk



Project AWARE Offices

Project AWARE Foundation (Asia Pacific)

Unit 3, 4 Skyline Place

Frenchs Forest

New South Wales 2086

Sydney, Australia

Tel: +61 2 944 2890

Fax: +61 2 9451 2999

Email: info@projectaware.org.au

