

AECO's Clean Seas efforts

This document provides an overview of AECO's Clean Seas efforts. AECO would like to share our experience and insight in how the private sector can contribute to combating marine plastic pollution. AECO is available to participate in relevant conferences and events as a speaker, panelist and participant. A list of AECO spokespeople can be found on the second page of this document.

About AECO's Clean Seas efforts

The Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO) is working to combat marine plastic pollution. As part of these efforts, AECO will work to drastically cut back on single-use plastics on Arctic expedition cruise vessels, as well as enhance cruise passengers' involvement in regular beach cleanups. AECO will also focus on educating passengers, staff and the public on what can be done to prevent marine plastic pollution.

AECO has signed a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) and will work with UN Environment on the prevention and reduction of marine litter. AECO will contribute to #CleanSeas, a UN-led campaign to combat marine plastic pollution.

AECO's Clean Seas project has been made possible by a total of NOK 2.4 million (USD 310,000) in external funding. In April 2018, the Svalbard Environmental Protection Fund awarded NOK 1.8 million (USD 230,000) in funding to the project, while the Norwegian Environmental Directorate allocated NOK 634,000 (USD 80,000) to AECO's coordination of beach cleanups.

In May 2018, AECO hired seasoned polar tourism professional Sarah Auffret as AECO's new environmental agent. AECO's environmental agent manages AECO's Clean Seas project, as well as coordinating beach cleaning efforts. Focus areas are education, developing and sharing best practices, as well as facilitating the logistics around beach cleanups. Among other things, AECO collects, systematizes and shares best practices to help reduce plastics consumption on expedition cruise ships.

Background

Members of AECO have been involved in beach cleanings in the Arctic for over almost two decades. AECO's decision to initiate the Clean Seas project was sparked by a letter from UN Environment Executive Director Erik Solheim inviting the association to join the #CleanSeas campaign, a UN-led campaign to combat marine plastic pollution.

AECO is also working with International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO) on this project, as many of the planned measures may be applied to expedition cruise ships in Antarctica as well as the Arctic.

About the Clean Seas campaign

UN Environment launched #CleanSeas in February 2017, with the aim of engaging governments, the general public, civil society and the private sector in the fight against marine plastic litter. Over the next five years, the campaign will address the root-cause of marine litter by targeting the production and consumption of non-recoverable and single-use plastic. By connecting individuals, civil society groups, industry and governments, UN Environment aims to transform habits, practices, standards and policies

around the globe to dramatically reduce marine litter and the harm it causes. Website:
<http://www.cleanseas.org/>

About the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO)

Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators is an international organization for expedition cruise operators and associates in the Arctic, dedicated to managing environmentally friendly, safe and considerate cruise tourism. With close to 70 international members – including 40 vessel operators, owners and management, and 50 expedition cruise vessels that are organized by the association – AECO represent the great majority of these operations in the Arctic. Website: www.aeco.no.

Available speakers



Sarah Auffret, Environmental Agent

Sarah is responsible for AECO's Clean Seas initiatives. Sarah leads AECO's efforts to drastically cut back on single-use plastics on Arctic expedition cruise vessels, as well as enhance cruise passengers' involvement in regular beach clean-ups. *Based in Tromsø. Speaks French, English, Spanish and German and has a basic understanding of Japanese and Norwegian.*



Frigg Jørgensen, Executive Director

Frigg has been executive director of AECO since 2006. Her background and current portfolio includes a wide range of projects within polar tourism, the marine sector and environmental issues. She has been project manager for several environmental projects, including guidelines, Clean Up Svalbard. She holds the overall responsibility for AECO's Clean Seas efforts. *Based in Longyearbyen. Speaks Norwegian, English and some German.*



Ilja Leo Lang, Assistant Director

Ilja has been working with AECO since 2012. His focus areas include Canada, Greenland, Russia, wildlife guidelines and a number of marine and environmental issues. Ilja holds a master's degree in political science from the University of Copenhagen, has lived in Greenland and worked as a lecturer at the University of Greenland and been involved with the expedition cruise industry since. *Based in Copenhagen. Speaks Danish, English and German.*



Edda Falk, Communications Manager

Edda is responsible for AECO's communications, outreach, strategic planning and advocacy efforts. She is involved in efforts to develop education material and online content about plastic pollution targeted at cruise passengers and staff. *Based in Oslo. Speaks Norwegian, English, Spanish and French.*