



PLASTIC PIRVATES

1ST MAY TO 30TH JUNE 2017

VISIT YOUR GERMAN
PARTNER SCHOOL AND
RESEARCH AS A TEAM!

An Initiative of the Federal Ministry
of Education and Research

Science Year 2016★17

SEAS
AND OCEANS

ALL WATERWAYS LEAD TO THE SEA – WITH PLASTIC WASTE ALONG FOR THE RIDE

There is a lot of plastic waste in our seas and oceans. This includes macroplastic – such as torn bags, discarded plastic bottles and tangled fishing lines – and minute particles that we can barely detect, known as microplastic. Plastic can be carried into the sea by rivers. Once there, it endangers wildlife, enters the marine food chain, and eventually lands on our plates.

The plastic that is currently floating in the Rhine, Elbe, Thames and Severn could end up in the North Sea or Atlantic Ocean tomorrow. Little research has been carried out on the prevalence of plastic waste, as well as its distribution and range in German waterways. This is set to change with the help of the citizen science project as part of Science Year 2016*17 – Seas and Oceans. As 'Plastic Pirates', young people will make an important contribution to researching the spread of macroplastic and microplastic.

Citizen science projects give people interested in science an opportunity to play a hands-on role in the research process, with scientists and researchers working hand in hand with citizens.



Calling everyone aged 10 to 16

BECOME PLASTIC PIRATES!

From the ISS to the Antarctic, international teams are conducting research everywhere. As Plastic Pirates, you can now work together across borders. You will look for microplastic, document rubbish patches on the riverbank, and measure flow speeds. Just like real international research teams, you will embark on a joint scientific expedition.

How does the project work?

You and your class will travel to Germany between 1st May and 30th June 2017. Here, you will work with your partner school to take samples from rivers and the surrounding areas. How much plastic waste can be found, and what kind? Where does the waste build up? Using scientific methods you will collect, count, measure, and document – and you will record your results on a digital map of Germany online.

What will the data be used for?

You might be wondering what German rivers have got to do with you. It's quite simple: our two countries are connected by the sea. Plastic waste that enters the sea via German rivers may be eaten by fish that land in the nets of British fishermen. And vice versa! Marine protection affects us all. You can help – as the data you gather will be scientifically evaluated and may be used to develop protective measures.



For teachers

FREE MATERIALS FREE TRIP

The travel and accommodation costs will be paid for the first ten UK schools who sign up. So don't delay!

You can download the free project booklet, as well as teaching materials and worksheets, from our website. The materials were commissioned by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research and composed by experienced scientists and teachers.

They are suitable for supporting lessons at all kinds of schools. Use the project as a starting point for practical lessons in biology, geography, chemistry and social studies, as well as during the joint project week with your partner school in Germany.



The materials

The **teaching materials and worksheets** for teachers contain background information on the topic of seas and oceans, as well as exercises that can be photocopied. The materials can be used independently of river sampling and beyond the period of the project. The **project booklet** helps the young people and serves as a scientific guide to data collection for your excursion between **1st May and 30th June 2017**.

The materials will be sent to your German partner school.

For more information and downloads, please visit
www.plasticpirates.sciencesyear.de

PLASTIC PIRATES – RESEARCHING AS A TEAM

How bad is the plastic waste pollution of flowing waterways? And what impact does this have on our seas and oceans? Visit Germany for a citizen science project and work with your partner school to find the answers. For free! That's because the costs will be paid for the first ten schools from the UK.

From 1st May to 30th June 2017, school classes will become research teams in order to study the presence and spread of plastic waste in and around German rivers.

UK school classes are invited to travel to Germany during this period to be a part of this exciting and informative experience. In a joint project week, British, Northern Irish and German Plastic Pirates can join forces to tackle key environmental questions and strengthen their partnerships.

The German Federal Ministry of Education and Research will pay the travel and accommodation costs for the first ten partner schools. So don't delay!

The United Kingdom and Germany have long had close ties in the field of marine research. The UK is now the partner country for Science Year 2016*17. The two countries are working together to research, use and protect the world's seas and oceans.



FIND OUT MORE AND GET INVOLVED

Would you and your pupils like to become Plastic Pirates? If so, get in touch with your German partner school and find out if they want to take part in the programme. They should then let us know and we will help you organise your research trip to Germany.

Here's how to contact us:

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For more information on the project and to sign up,
please visit

www.plasticpirates.scienceyear.de

Imprint

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The Science Years are an initiative of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and Wissenschaft im Dialog (WiD). As the central instrument for scientific communication, they make research available to the public and support the dialogue between the research community and society at large. The Science Year 2016*17 is supported by the German Marine Research Consortium (KDM) as a specialist partner.

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