# Theory of Change



#### VISION

Plastic-free rivers

#### MISSION

We are on a mission to clean rivers by empowering people, preventing pollution, and accelerating change

#### IMPACT

(1) Macroplastic-free rivers (2) Microplastic-free rivers (3) Ocean leakage Benefits: flourishing ecosystems, restored biodiversity, reduced GHG emissions, clean water, sustainable development, cost saving, job creation, poverty reduction, better river management, healthier & happier people around the world.



#### PILLAR 1 **EMPOWER**

#### KEY OUTCOMES

Less plastic use & waste No plastic leakage

#### **KEY OUTPUTS**

# students / people reached problem solution awareness willingness to change # active local leaders

#### **ACTIVITIES**

- · Awareness campaigns
- · Educational programs
- · Local Leadership programs

#### PILLAR 2 **PREVENT**

#### KEY OUTCOMES

Less plastic use & waste # kg virgin plastic avoided # km river (bank) plastic-free

#### **KEY OUTPUTS**

# solutions adopted

# kg plastic reduced & substituted # kg/m3 plastics collected & sorted # kg/m3 waste recovered from nature # kg repurposed

#### **ACTIVITIES**

- · Promoting sustainable alternatives
- Implementing plastic reduction projects
- Sharing knowledge & best practices Deploying accessible collection systems
  - · Remove riverine pollution
  - · Repurpose recovered materials · Promote circular economy solutions

#### PILLAR 3 **ACCELERATE**

#### OUTCOMES

No leakage Less plastic use & waste # kg virgin plastic avoided

#### **KEY OUTPUTS**

# Policy changes # Implemented remediations # Implemented structural solutions # Compliance metrics maintained # Countries covered on platform

# Subscribers & contributors on platform # Strategic partnerships

#### # Common campaigns & projects

#### **ACTIVITIES**

- · Generate statistics & provide insights
- · Inform authorities on root-causes of river pollution
- Propose short-term remediations & structural solutions.
- · Clarify and monitor compliance with relevant regulation
- · Develop a Global Plastic Pollution Dashboard (platform)
- Actively expand our network with like-minded profit & nonprofit organizations



Continuous monitoring and impact evaluation ensure that the activities stay on track to deliver the desired results.

### **PLANNING & FINANCING**

A river-specific action plan featuring early plastic lifecycle interventions aimed at empowering people, preventing pollution and accelerating change.



WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY: Integrated system change can reduce plastic pollution by 80% in 2040 compared to business as usual.

#### ASSESSMENT

A solid understanding of the problem (incl. root causes, river parameters, ecosystem services, current interventions, stakeholder analysis) is key to select the most effective and efficient interventions.



#### PROBLEM STATEMENT

Every day, 10 million kg of plastics are mismanaged in nature and along rivers. Unless the plastics value chain is transformed in the next two decades, the compounding risks for ecosystems, climate, economy, and communities become unmanageable.



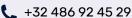
#### PROBLEM DRIVERS

Josti Gadeyne

Head of Partnerships & Philanthropy



josti@river-cleanup.org



## Clean River Model



### THE CLEAN RIVER MODEL CONSISTS OF THE FOLLOWING

# **PILLARS**



Create local **awareness campaigns** to generate enthusiasm and make people see the problem and become part of the solution. Activate people to **become ambassadors** within their schools and communities. Empower local leaders to take **ownership** of sustainable initiatives and anchor change within their communities.



**Reduce single-use plastics** by promoting sustainable alternatives, implementing plastic reduction projects, and sharing knowledge & best practices. **Prevent plastic waste** from entering nature by deploying accessible collection systems. **Remove riverine pollution**, repurpose recovered materials, and promote circular economy solutions.



Generate data, provide insights, and inform authorities on sources of river pollution, propose short-term remediations, promote structural solutions, and **advocate policy change.** Clarify and **monitor compliance** with relevant regulation, e.g. UN Global Plastic Treaty. Actively engage and collaborate within a **network** of like-minded organizations, both nonprofit and for-profit.

### **ENABLERS**



**Prioritization** of intervention areas based on potential impact, feasibility and viability. A solid **understanding of the problem**, including root causes, river parameters, ecosystem services, current interventions, and stakeholder analysis, is key to design and implement a **river-specific action plan**. Such a plan features early plastic lifecycle interventions aimed at empowering people, preventing pollution, and accelerating change. This forms the baseline for continuous monitoring and impact evaluation.



Continuous impact evaluation by actively measuring, benchmarking, and monitoring KPIs contributing to plastic-free rivers, e.g. plastic usage in communities, plastic leakage in rivers, environmental stewardship by individuals, authorities and corporations. Ensure transparency & traceability by standardizing all quantitative & qualitative measurement methods. Visualize progress in a Global Plastic Pollution Dashboard, translate the indicators into information to initiate & improve actions to accelerate change.