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## SENSIBILIZATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

# PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR ORGANIZING AND CARRYING OUT BEACH CLEANUPS

A PRODUCT DEVELOPED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF:



On behalf of:



Federal Ministry  
for the Environment, Nature Conservation,  
Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection

of the Federal Republic of Germany

adelphi 



PARLEY

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# PROLOG

## ABOUT THE PROMAR PROJECT

The PROMAR - Prevention of Marine Litter in the Caribbean Sea project aims to reduce the flows of plastic waste (mainly plastic packaging and single-use plastics) reaching the Caribbean Sea by promoting Circular Economy solutions in the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica and Colombia. The project is funded by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV) and led by the German organization adelphi.

In the course of the project, the PROMAR BlueBox was created. It is a collection of various tools, guidelines, tutorials and materials to help you implement circular economy solutions to reduce marine litter in your municipality. This Practical Guide for Organizing Beach Cleanups is part of the PROMAR BlueBox. This guide offers guidelines for planning and executing beach cleanups under an educational approach, guided and inspired by the organizing criteria of the Parley for the Oceans Global Cleanup Network.

The guide is aimed at municipalities, educational institutions, environmental groups, NGOs, community organizations, private companies and the general public who are related to ocean conservation and marine pollution. The publication of the tools is expected to motivate their use in coastal communities and thereby contribute to the reduction of terrestrial waste streams that reach marine environments.



Photograph taken by Parley for the Oceans - Dominican Republic





Photography taken by Parley for the Oceans - Dominican Republic

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Photography taken by Parley for the Oceans - Dominican Republic

# INTRODUCTION

The Blue Box has been designed to provide a detailed overview of effective tools to combat marine pollution. The aim of this guide is to help organize a cleanup by promoting awareness and best practice strategies.

Plastic is a failed design. If the material is not properly recycled or, in a pinch, incinerated in waste incineration plants, it can take centuries for it to completely degrade in the environment. The problem is not only unsightly, plastic kills and harms marine wildlife and introduces toxic chemicals into the marine food chain and our bodies. Every plastic debris removed from shorelines and waterways is one less threat to marine life and our future. A cleanup is a powerful tool to spread awareness, collect data and educate communities about the impacts of plastic. Beach cleanups meet two key objectives of the project:

a.) **Strengthen stakeholder capacity** in marine litter prevention and to develop mechanisms for the interception of plastic debris on Caribbean coasts.

b.) To put a definitive end to the cycle of plastic pollution, we must **reinvent the materials, processes and thinking that got us into this problem**. To do this, we devised a replicable strategy:

**Parley AIR (Abandon, Intercept, Redesign).**

The following guide will provide you with suggestions, tools and resources on how to conduct a beach, riverbank or mangrove cleanup with the participation of volunteers. The expected result is a proper management of intercepted plastic waste with the highest standards to achieve a greater impact.



# ABOUT BEACH CLEAN-UPS

While beach cleanups do not represent a direct action to prevent marine debris, they do function as a mechanism to promote public participation and consumer awareness for the behavioral change needed to prevent marine pollution.







# STEP 1: MAKE A PLAN





**WHO?**

**WHO** are you going to involve and how big will your cleanup be?

- Contact local groups to invite them to join the movement. For example: local schools, community groups, NGOs, surfing community.
- Consider formally inviting local partners to the cleanup to strengthen the movement.
- Gather and empower a network of volunteers.

**WHERE?**

**WHERE** will the cleanup day take place?

- Investigate which areas need cleaning. For example: a beach shoreline, riverbank, coastal community or island.
- Obtain permits from the municipality or beach owner.
- Obtain other necessary permits (e.g., from the protected area).
- Post-cleanup plan: Where will the collected waste go?

**WHEN?**

**WHEN** will the cleanup day take place?

- Check the tide and plan to clean during a low tide.
- Take into account seasons and weather patterns. Plan cleanup before and after storms.
- Check the schedule of other local activities and events.

**HOW?**

**HOW** will you keep yourself and others safe?

- Conduct a risk assessment and avoid dangerous areas. Make sure the terrain is safe for volunteers.
- Research local wildlife activity, especially if it is a nesting or breeding season.
- Gather phone numbers for local emergency services (human and wildlife).



# WHAT DO YOU NEED FOR CLEANING?

When planning your cleanup, avoid single-use plastic whenever possible.  
Keep the event free of single-use plastic.



GLOVES



COLLECTION BAGS



HAND SANITIZER



REUSABLE WATER BOTTLES AND GALLONS



FIRST AID KIT AND EMERGENCY CONTACTS



FORMS



SUNSCREEN



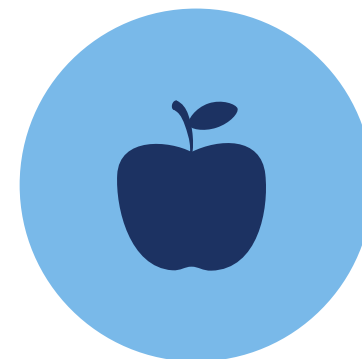
WEATHER-APPROPRIATE CLOTHING



CLOSED SHOES



TENTS AND FOLDING TABLES



PLASTIC-FREE SNACKS AND REFRESHMENTS



SCALES (IF POSSIBLE)

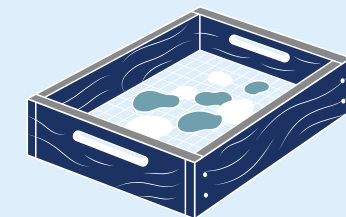
## CLEANING TOOLS



RAKES



SHOVELS



SAND SIFTERS



WASTE BAGS





## STEP 2: ASSEMBLE THE TEAM







### **BUILD YOUR TEAM**

It is important to have a team of people who can help you realize the different tasks for the cleanup.

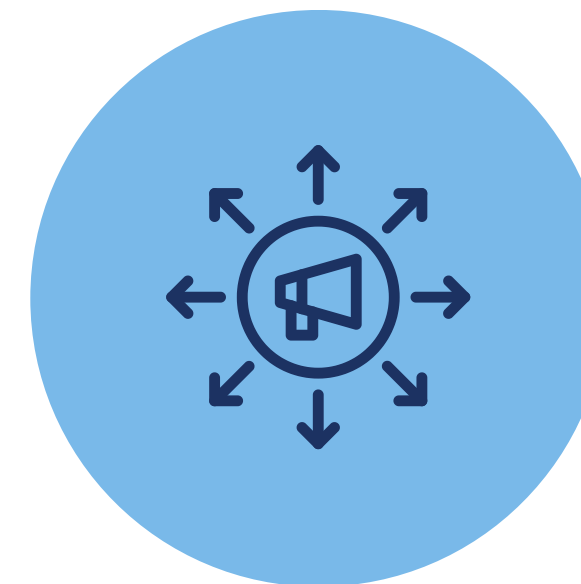
The size of the team will depend on the number of volunteers you will involve on that day, and the level of contamination on the beach.



### **CALLS FOR VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers are the driving force behind the cleanup day. It is important that you call the group well in advance.

Remember to send them information about the date, time, location and timing of the cleanup, as well as any needs that need to be communicated.



### **SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT THE ACTIVITY**

Sharing information about the cleanup activity on social networks is an efficient alternative for large groups.

Use the most efficient and relevant communication channels when doing so. You can also inform the municipality or the local press. A good alternative is also to have an online registration form that allows you to have an overview of how many people will attend the activity.



# THE DAY BEFORE CLEANING

## 01

### EVALUATE THE SITE

Visit the site prior to cleanup and determine if there are any safety concerns or potential hazards to volunteers. Make sure a person trained in first aid attends. Carry a first aid kit with you.

## 02

### DEFINE THE SCHEME OF ACTIVITY

We recommend that you prepare a detailed document with the members of your team, the responsibilities and the moments in which you will divide the activities.

## 03

### SEND REMINDER

Meeting place, clean-up time, what to bring, host contact, emergency numbers, etc.  
clean-up time, what to bring, host contact, emergency numbers, etc.

## 04

### ORGANIZE CLEANING DOCUMENTATION

Designate a team member to take photos (and possibly videos) before, during and after the cleanup. These can be shared on social media.





## STEP 3: LET'S GET TO WORK





# THE CLEANING DAY

**01****ARRIVE EARLY**

If you are the host, it is essential to arrive before the rest of the volunteers.

**02****PREPARE A PLAN**

We recommend that you prepare a detailed document with the members of your team, the responsibilities and the moments in which you will divide the activity.

**03****WELCOME ADDRESS**

Start the day with a briefing of your team. Motivate your team by reminding them why they are all there and give an overview of the cleanup (tips on the next page).

**04****HANDING OUT THE TOOLS**

Have the tools ready in a predefined area, you can deliver them before or after the introductory summary.

**05****PREPARE FOR THE CLEANING**

Always keep an eye out for hazardous waste and keep them safe. You can use music or group dynamics to liven up the activity.

**06****DOCUMENT THE CLEANING ACTIVITY**

Make sure you have hired a photographer or designated someone to take pictures and collect data.



# BRIEFING FOR THE VOLUNTEERS

## MARINE PLASTIC POLLUTION

- Plastic lasts for very long in the environment, when it decomposes, micro and nanoplastics are formed.
- The equivalent of a dump truck full of plastic waste enters the oceans every minute.
- Every second breath we take is generated thanks to oxygen generated from the oceans.

## GENERAL GUIDANCE

- Introduces the cleanup area and boundaries.
- Explains where to take and how to sort marine debris.
- Point out the location of restrooms and other facilities.
- Share emergency contacts.

## SECURITY

- Explain the hazards you identified in the site risk assessment.
- Verify that volunteers have the proper equipment and tools.
- Don't touch anything that looks dangerous or put your hands in places you can't see.
- Be careful when lifting heavy objects and traversing slippery rocks or unstable shorelines.

## MORE INFORMATION TO MAKE THE BRIEFING...



Discover the Oceans and Marine Plastic Pollution Educational Workshop, another PROMAR BlueBox tool where you will find educational content and recommendations on how to prepare your talk for the cleanup day.



# DURING THE CLEANING

**01****FORM GROUPS**

Smaller groups can cover more territory and have a greater impact.

**02****CLEAN THE SELECTED AREA**

Clean only the defined area while protecting and not affecting the natural habitat or disturbing wildlife.

**03****TAKE FOTOS DURING CLEANING**

Be sure to take pictures before, during and after.

**04****DOCUMENT THE FOUND OBJECTS**

Take note of items and/or debris found, notable marks, etc.

**05****SORTING AND WEIGHING WASTE**

Sort the collected waste according to categories that you can use for your purposes.

**06****GROUP PHOTO**

Gather the entire team of volunteers and take a photo with the collected waste.

**07****DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION**

Brainstorm ideas by discussing the group's learnings and possible solutions to the threats facing the oceans. Make it fun!

**08****FINAL DISPOSAL OF WASTE**

Ensure waste removal at the end of the day. This varies according to location and potential waste management partners.



# PHOTOGRAPHIC EXAMPLES



Photographs taken by Parley for the Oceans - Dominican Republic



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Photographs taken by Parley for the Oceans - Dominican Republic



# CRITERIA FOR WASTE SEPARATION



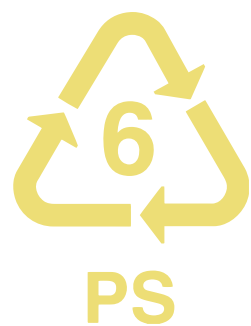
## POLYETHYLENTEREPHTHALAT

- PET bottles go together in silo bags.
- It is OK to leave the caps on.
- For safety: do not empty if they contain liquids.
- It is not necessary to divide by color.



## HDPE (HIGH DENSITY POLYETHYLENE)

- Hard plastics (unidentifiable) go together in silo bags.
- ONLY detergent size containers or smaller will be shipped. If the item is larger it should be shipped in pieces.
- Separate HDPE pieces from all other items collected.
- It is NOT necessary to separate by color.
- Remove liquid or trash from inside.



## POLYSTYRENE (FOAM)

- Polystyrene containers go together in silo bags (sacks).
- It is NOT necessary to divide by color.
- Remove liquid or trash from inside the containers.

## OTHER PLASTIC CONTAINERS AND PACKAGING



## OTHER PLASTIC CONTAINERS AND PACKAGING

- This category includes: plastic bags, single-use plastic containers (spoons, forks...), pens, disposable cups, multi-material packaging (cookie packaging...).
- Shavers and toothbrushes are also included.
- These wastes are not deposited in sacks but in bags, but must be weighed.



# POST-EVENT WASTE MANAGEMENT

Below, we provide you with hard data that you can use for proper preparation (when contacting authorities and recycling companies, for example) and for the correct handling of the collected waste. This data will also help participants to better understand the situation.



## LOCAL WASTE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

How does the responsible authority usually dispose of waste in this area? Is this an acceptable waste management solution?

If yes - How do we work with this solution for the event?

If no - Where should the waste be disposed of and how can this be achieved?

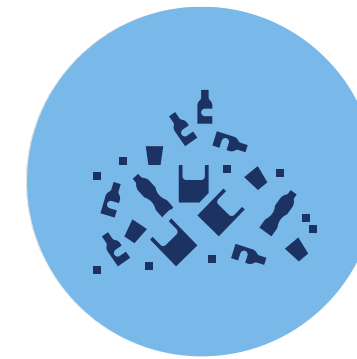


## RECYCLING COMPANIES

Where is the nearest company? Can they collect plastics, paper and metals? If not, how do we get the material to them?

In what condition (cleaned, packed, etc.) should the waste arrive?  
What type of material do you accept (aluminum, tin, steel, etc.)?

What types of plastics, paper, glass, electronic waste, batteries?



## WHAT IS AN 'ACCEPTABLE' WASTE MANAGEMENT SOLUTION?

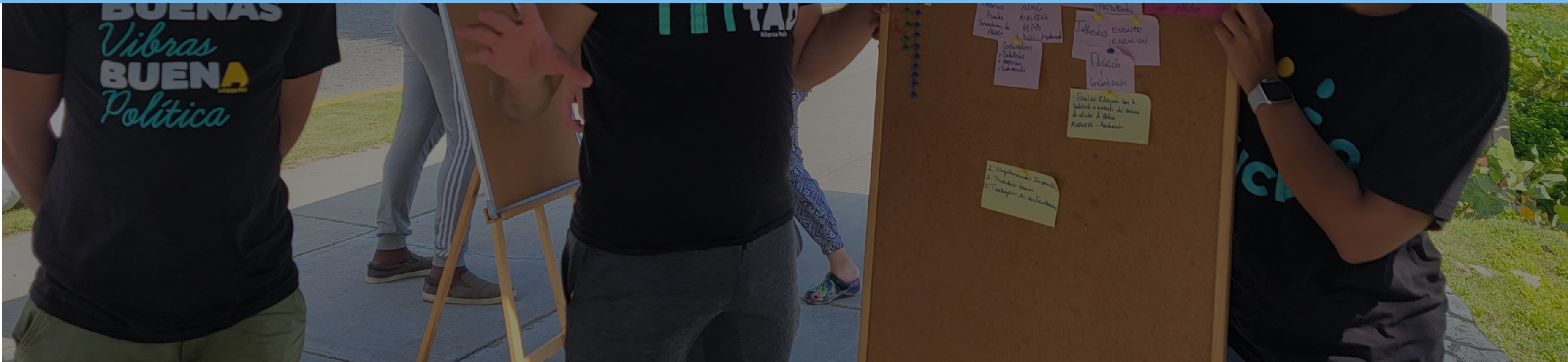
Ensure that waste goes to a properly managed and lined landfill. If the ground is low, landfill may not be an option; this could lead to water contamination of local water supplies and surrounding waters.

If in doubt, contact a Parley representative.





## STEP 4: DISSEMINATE THE RESULTS



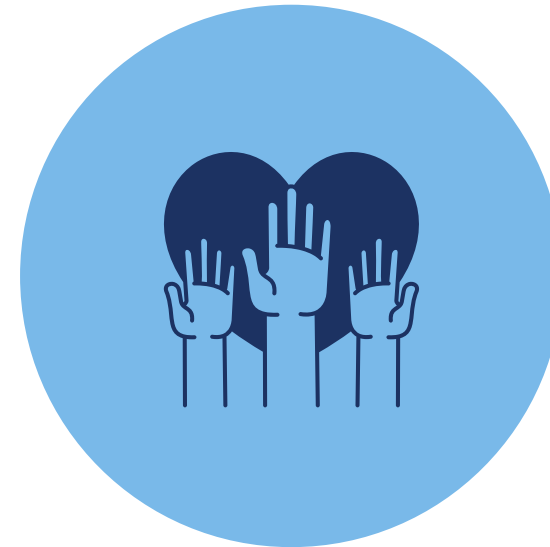


# DISSEMINATES THE RESULTS

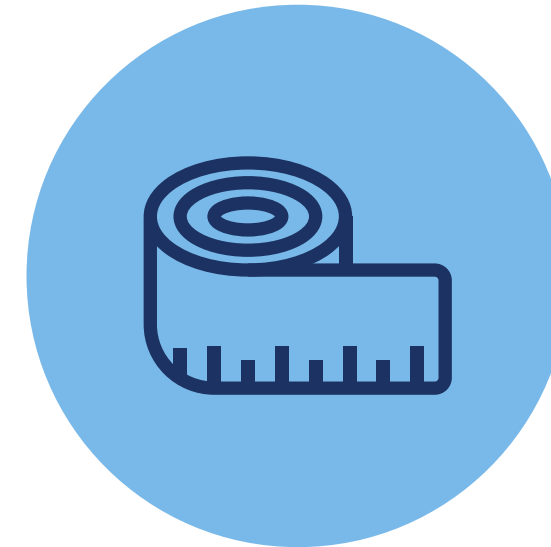
Talking about your cleanup results, it's important to spread the facts about marine pollution. Here are some impact data that you can use to spread the word about your cleanup.



**FIGURES ON INTERCEPTED WASTE** (total kilograms, fractions)



**NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING VOLUNTEERS**



**SQUARE METERS OF BEACH CLEANED**



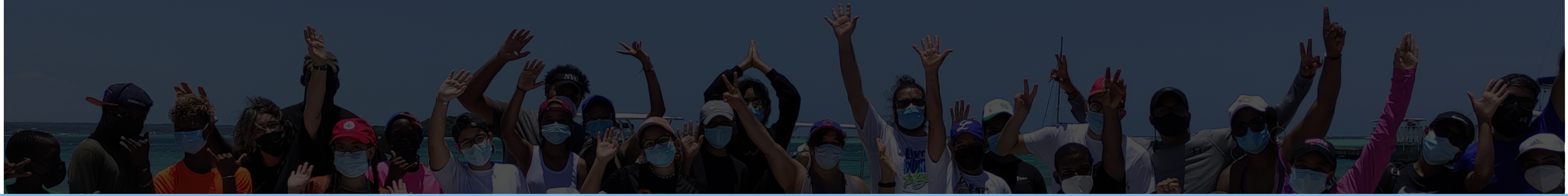
**STORIES, TESTIMONIALS AND INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT CLEANLINESS**



## REMEMBER THAT...

Cleanup days help consumers learn first-hand about the reality of marine pollution - and executed under an educational approach, they can help raise awareness of the actions needed to reduce plastic pollution.





# THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF THE MOVEMENT



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