

# The Place Library



## WHO IS SUSTAINABLE COASTLINES HAWAII?

Sustainable Coastlines Hawai'i (SCH) emerged from the collective determination of eight friends in Hawai'i who sought to be stewards of their land and community. Established in 2010, SCH's mission was to safeguard the coastlines, combat plastic pollution, and address the detrimental impacts of climate change. Recognizing the limitations of beach cleanups as a reactive measure, SCH, with 14 years of hands-on experience, is now shifting focus to sustainable, proactive solutions, emphasizing education and instilling a sense of responsibility throughout the Hawaiian archipelago.

To make their vision of "a world of inspired people, clean beaches, and healthy coastlines," SCH arranges island-wide cleanups for groups, hosts community events through the (Re)Learning Program, and organizes SustainEvents, turning large-scale events into zero waste or sustainable.

### MY IMPACT

3

large-scale projects completed

4

tabled outreach events

300+

educators reached through (Re)Learning

600+

pounds of garbage removed

### MY CONNECTION

This project was deeply personal to me, rooted in my lifelong connection with the ocean. Growing up in Istanbul and spending summers in Bodrum, Turkey, I witnessed the intricate relationship the ocean shares with its community but also observed the devastating impact of plastic pollution. As a Cognitive Studies and Computer Science major, understanding the relationship between human behavior and the environment and utilizing technology to come up with customized solutions is something that I was deeply passionate about. Therefore, this project embodied my dual commitment to my community: addressing urgent environmental problems and utilizing technology to serve others.

## WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

The critical challenge SCH faced was the need for an information bank detailing culturally and environmentally significant areas in Oahu. This gap hindered their understanding of the intricate relationship between plastic pollution and human activities and slowed their response to environmentally vulnerable areas. Therefore, they were unaware of the problems these places and communities faced and encountered obstacles in formulating effective, sustainable solutions. Their short-term goal is fasten their internal processes, and ultimately give agency to the individuals to protect the Hawaiian coastlines.

## WHY HAWAII?

The Great Pacific Garbage Patch, a massive accumulation of marine debris between California and Hawai'i, primarily targets the Hawaiian coasts with plastic pollution due to currents. About 80% of this garbage originates from land-based sources, posing a significant threat to local communities and marine ecosystems.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, directing solutions towards Oahu, the third-largest island and economic hub, helped protect vital areas, enhanced nonprofit-community relations, and bolster local businesses in the long-term.

## WHO IS THE COMMUNITY?

- Environmentally vulnerable places around Oahu
- Local communities dependent on resources of these locations:
  - Locals living in the area
  - Marine and terrestrial animals
- (re)Learning Program educators
- Wider-island community
- Students in community schools
- Tourists and explorers
- Partner non-profits and agencies
- Inspiration Team of SCH

## WHAT IS THE PROJECT AND SCHOLAR IMPACT?

I built The Place Library, a comprehensive database containing cultural, historical, and environmental information about significant places in Oahu. The Place Library aimed to empower the SCH team to quickly respond to areas threatened by plastic pollution and human waste with specialized solutions. Therefore, I made site visits and researched through Hawaiian libraries about critical information. In addition, I used SCH's 13 years of data to populate information about places where they conducted beach cleanups previously, giving them a valuable understanding of their broader impact. The wider vision for The Place Library extends beyond SCH, as it will be shared with locals, visitors, and partner organizations/agencies until the end of the Fall period. This dissemination aims to provide a rich repository of historical and environmental information, fostering a deeper connection to Hawaiian culture between locals, non-locals, and non-profits. The fundamental goal of the project was to raise awareness of environmentally vulnerable places and highlight their crucial place in Hawaiian culture and economy.

Furthermore, I worked with the Education Team, creating an education dashboard for 300+ SCH educators. This dashboard was used as a hub by educators to organize and plan field trips and classes around plastic pollution and waste management. Additionally, I helped document the (re)Learning Ahupua'a Program to be able to present to donors as well as other stakeholders, such as educators, parents, and schools, aiming to attract more participants. Lastly, I attended 2 beach cleanups at James Cambell Wildlife Refuge and 2 outreach events around the island, meeting with many people who motivated and inspired me to do work for a better future.

### LOGIC MODEL

#### ASSUMPTIONS

- The local community and visitors are willing to engage with and utilize The Place Library to enhance their knowledge and behaviors regarding environmental conservation.
- Partner agencies and non-profits will access The Place Library to organize small-scale beach cleanups and community outreach events for environmental awareness.
- Access to detailed cultural, historical, and environmental information will inspire better consumer behaviors and a deeper appreciation for Oahu.
- Collaboration between non-profits, local communities, and businesses can effectively address environmental challenges.

#### INPUTS

- Expertise and resources from Sustainable Coastlines Hawai'i (SCH) and associated organizations.
- The Place Library project development tools and technologies like Notion, Google Sheets, Canva, and ArcGIS.
- Volunteer and community engagement for interviews, research, and beach cleanup activities.
- Funding for research, development, and maintenance of The Place Library through the Ingram Scholarship Program.
- Personal experience with leading groups and understanding the basics of outreach events through the experience with Project C.U.R.E. Nashville.

#### ACTIVITIES

- Identified and researched culturally and environmentally significant areas on Oahu.
- Conducted interviews with volunteers, locals, and educators.
- Developed The Place Library, integrating cultural, historical, and environmental information using Notion.
- Redesigned the Educator Dashboard and updated the materials used in classes.
- Developed a guide for the (re)Learning Ahupua'a Program, gathering data from the SCH team.
- Led and participated in beach cleanup and restoration projects.
- Collaborated with SCH and other partner organizations to disseminate and promote The Place Library.

#### OUTPUTS

- A comprehensive database (The Place Library) containing detailed information on significant places on Oahu.
- A user-friendly dashboard for SCH educators with updated materials for the 2024-2025 school season.
- An interactive presentation on the (re)Learning Ahupua'a, tailored specifically for stakeholders such as parents and donors.
- Increased awareness and education on cultural and environmental issues through the dissemination of The Place Library and usage of the educator dashboard.
- Successful completion of beach cleanups and restoration projects during the project timeline.

#### SHORT TERM OUTCOMES

- Increased satisfaction with the dashboard by education leaders and educators.
- Improved response and tailored solutions to areas threatened by plastic pollution and human waste by SCH and other stakeholders.
- Strengthened community engagement and participation in environmental conservation efforts.

#### LONG TERM OUTCOMES

- Sustainable behavioral changes among individuals and organizations, leading to reduced plastic pollution and improved environmental health in Oahu.
- Strengthened nonprofit-community-school ties, fostering collaborative solutions to environmental challenges.
- Preservation and appreciation of Hawaiian culture and heritage through informed interactions with the land and sea.

#### IMPACTS

- A cleaner, healthier environment in Oahu, safeguarding its cultural and natural heritage for future generations.
- A model of community-driven environmental stewardship that can be replicated in other vulnerable regions.
- An informed and engaged public, empowered to make sustainable choices and contribute to global environmental conservation efforts.
- A strong network of partner organizations and community members collaborating together to safeguard coastlines and spread awareness about plastic pollution.

1. Adam, Issahaku. "Tourists' Perception of Beach Litter and Willingness to Participate in Beach Clean-Up." *Marine Pollution Bulletin* 170 (September 1, 2021): 112591. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpolbul.2021.112591>.

2. Canva. "2023 Impact Report: SCH." Accessed February 16, 2024. <https://www.canva.com/design/DAF2hrMDpgs/vwBHAKi2bZAF9yNtJaXgDQ/view>.

3. "Great Pacific Garbage Patch." Accessed February 16, 2024. <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/great-pacific-garbage-patch>.

4. Lebreton, L., B. Slat, F. Ferrari, B. Sainte-Rose, J. Aitken, R. Marthouse, S. Hajbane, et al. "Evidence That the Great Pacific Garbage Patch Is Rapidly Accumulating Plastic." *Scientific Reports* 8, no. 1 (March 22, 2018): 4666. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-018-22939-w>.

5. Wyles, Kayleigh J., Sabine Pahl, Matthew Holland, and Richard C. Thompson. "Can Beach Cleans Do More Than Clean-Up Litter? Comparing Beach Cleans to Other Coastal Activities." *Environment and Behavior* 49, no. 5 (June 2017): 509–35. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013916516649442>.