

ABSTRACT

Marine plastic pollution has become one of the most pressing environmental issues on a global scale. Hawai‘i is among the regions most severely affected, not because of its local activities, but due to its geographical location along the circulation pathway of the North Pacific Subtropical Gyre. This current system continuously transports plastic debris from various countries across the Pacific region, leading to its accumulation in the Great Pacific Garbage Patch and ultimately affecting the waters of Hawai‘i. This condition reflects the characteristics of Transboundary Environmental Pollution, whereby the regions bearing the greatest burden of environmental impacts are not necessarily those most responsible for generating the pollution. At the same time, the existing framework of Global Environmental Governance has not been able to respond effectively to this issue due to its fragmented nature, thereby creating opportunities for the involvement of non-state actors.

This study aims to describe the characteristics of marine plastic pollution in the waters of Hawai‘i as a transboundary environmental pollution issue, analyze the position of The Ocean Cleanup within the framework of Global Environmental Governance, and examine the contributions of The Ocean Cleanup as a non-governmental organization in addressing this pollution through its roles as an implementer, catalyst, and partner.

This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through a literature review of various secondary sources, including scientific journal articles, reports published by international organizations, and official publications of The Ocean Cleanup. The analytical framework is based on the Global Environmental Governance theory developed by Biermann and Pattberg, the concept of Transboundary Environmental Pollution as proposed by Handl, Sands and Peel, Wirth, and Voigt, and is operationalized through David Lewis's conceptualization of NGO roles, namely implementer, catalyst, and partner.

The findings indicate that The Ocean Cleanup has made significant contributions to addressing marine plastic pollution affecting the waters of Hawai‘i through three complementary roles. As an implementer, the organization conducts cleanup operations in the Great Pacific Garbage Patch using technologies that have continuously evolved from System 001 to System 003, while simultaneously developing the Interceptor system as an upstream preventive measure. As a catalyst, The Ocean Cleanup generates influential scientific knowledge and promotes international policy discussions. As a partner, the organization establishes cross-sector collaborations involving governments, the scientific community, and the private sector. Nevertheless, these contributions continue to face structural limitations because they operate within a fragmented Global Environmental Governance system. Therefore, The Ocean Cleanup is more appropriately understood as an important component of a broader global response rather than as a single solution to the marine plastic crisis affecting the waters of Hawai‘i.

Keywords: *The Ocean Cleanup, marine plastic pollution, transboundary environmental pollution, global environmental governance, NGO roles.*