CLEANING MUI NE BEECH

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The country of Vietnam releases plastic waste equal to the weight of 105 thousand African elephants or 100 Eiffel towers. It is ranked 4th in the world for plastic waste emission. This was a haunting fact for me as a nature-loving person. Even when I was a child, I decided to reduce clean the beaches as much as possible. I wanted to prove to the world that with ample determination and commitment, a little boy can also make a change. I believed that the only impossible journey is the one that never starts. The first step was to start this journey from home and insist on my family use paper bags and bamboo straws instead of plastic bags. When I was in the 7th grade, I began my journey as a mission, and when my friends were busy in their games, I became the youngest volunteer in the district. I started spending 4 hours every weekend in collecting trash and repainting graffitied walls. As a child, I lacked money to carry out all this, so I went door to door asking people for funds.

In the summer of 2016, I heard news on television that a group of Russian tourists was cleaning up trash on Mui Ne beach. This news moved my heart, and without any fear and hesitation, I gathered my friends and took permission from my manager to go there and help them. With the will and enthusiasm for change and working with new people from a developed country, I traveled 100 miles to further continue on my mission. When we reached there, I was expecting a lot of local people to be there and helping them, but I find myself disappointed when I couldn’t find a single local person. We worked two weeks on the beech to clean it; during this time, we also attracted the attention of many citizens and government officials. I can proudly say that my little contribution has led Mui Ne beaches to transform into one of the ten most beautiful beaches in Vietnam (Forbes).

However, that said, the amount of trash is still enormous in Vietnam, and picking it up is not its solution. To preserve nature and avoid any pollution proper knowledge should be conveyed. Every summer, I fly back to Vietnam to help raise the issue of pollution through social media. I also give lectures to many students about its consequences and prevention. Trash-packer organization has helped me a lot in this, and this is only possible through their support and guidance. This mission and journey have taught me that for a person to have leadership, teamwork, communication, and web development skills, he needs to travel and come out of his comfort zone.