



# CLEAN CLASS GUIDEBOOK

# ABOUT CLEAN CLASS

Sailors for the Sea Powered by Oceana (SfS) is the world's leading ocean conservation organization that engages, educates and activates the sailing and boating community toward restoring ocean health. Boaters see firsthand many of the issues that our oceans face, from plastic pollution inundating our waterways to the depletion of sensitive underwater habitats and wildlife. Through the Clean Regattas program, many organizers have made significant changes to event and club operations for the benefit of our oceans and our planet. The Clean Class initiative was born out of a desire to make these changes more permanent for current organizers and accessible to new organizers. Moving beyond individual event-level decision making to incorporating sustainability efforts into regular class operations increases the reach and impact of your efforts.

The Clean Class initiative is a new structure that supports one design fleets in incorporating sustainability practices across their full seasons and membership. Relying on the Clean Regattas framework, the goal is to incentivize permanent shifts in class operations to prioritize sustainability and reward progress. This guidebook contains requirements and guidance on how to become a Clean Class. The tenets of the being a Clean Class were designed and tested with considerable input from the Thistle Class, who piloted the initiative before the official launch.



# ABOUT CLEAN CLASS

Clean Classes use their structure and internal communications to move sustainability from a “nice to have” to an expected component of all events by utilizing the Clean Regattas program. Incorporating sustainability best practices across class events creates consistent expectations for all participants and provides resources for organizers and class leadership when addressing hurdles that arise. By joining the Clean Class initiative, classes can make strides in sustainability without having to develop their own program.

## THE THISTLE CLASS PILOT INITIATIVE

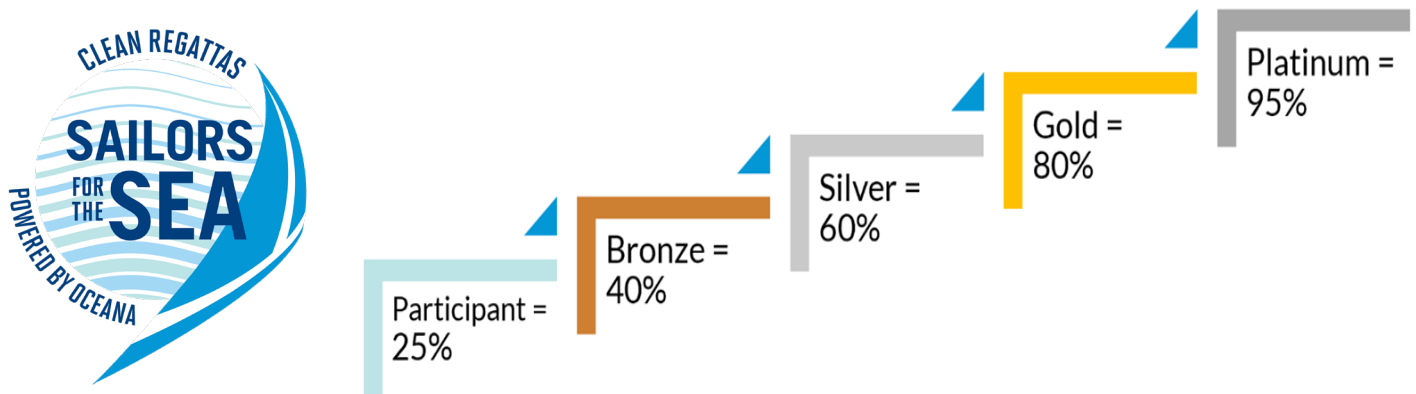
The Clean Class initiative was piloted by the Thistle Class, whose dedicated leadership and volunteers worked together to determine how to encourage sailors and organizations to make lasting sustainable changes. As stated by the Thistle Class, the purpose of the Thistle Clean Class Initiative is to recognize and take responsibility for our impact on the environment. Formed in 2020, their pilot serves as a model to be applied to additional classes. Their goal is to increase the number of Thistle events participating in the Clean Regattas program annually. They provide resources, share successes, educate, and demonstrate effective solutions to achieve this goal, many of which are referenced and included in this guidebook. Sailors for the Sea sincerely thanks the Thistle Class, their Clean Class initiative committee members, and all regatta organizers for their support and ingenuity.



# CLEAN CLASS REQUIREMENTS

## ABOUT THE CLEAN REGATTAS PROGRAM

The Clean Regattas program is the world's leading sustainability certification for all on-the-water events. Since the program's inception in 2006, over 3,400 events have shown their commitment to sustainability, reaching over 850,000 sailors and attendees in 53 countries. The certification process accounts for the range of capabilities and constraints of both large and small events happening all over the world. The Clean Regattas program is a voluntary self-assessment tool and awards certification levels from Participant to Platinum. Each of the 20 Best Practices outlined in our Toolkit has an associated point value based on impact and effort. The level of certification awarded is based on the percentage of points earned.



## HOW TO BECOME A CLEAN CLASS

Clean Class certification is an annual process and is based on participation in the Clean Regattas program. Success will look different for every class and we look forward to working with you to determine the best course of action for your class.

To become certified, classes must:

- Appoint a class liaison. This individual will work directly with the SfS Program Manager to strategize, keep tabs on progress, and address any questions.
- Map the infrastructure of your class and determine which events can be included in Clean Regattas efforts.
- Certify at least 25% of class events as Clean Regattas at or above Bronze level.
- Submit feedback at the end of each year on their experience. This reporting will help us to validate and understand your efforts, as well as give classes an opportunity to share ideas for the future. Hearing from you will help us improve the program and ensure you're getting the support you need to succeed!

# TIPS & TRICKS

Though no two classes are the same, everyone can work within their parameters to make more sustainable choices. Using the Clean Regattas program and learning from the Thistle Class pilot, we outline guidance to get started on your Clean Class journey.

## HOW TO GET STARTED

- **Work within your current class structure.** Presenting the Clean Class information and your goals for becoming more sustainable to your leadership can help them understand what you're trying to do and get everyone onboard.
- **Consider creating a Clean Class Committee.** The Thistle Class works across the United States and created a committee with a representative from each region. Based on how your class is organized, gather interested parties to work together to achieve your goals.
- **Rely on the Clean Regattas Program.** Our Clean Regattas Toolkit, along with other resources listed later in this guidebook, has ideas for everything, from organizing your Green Team to diverting waste from the landfill. Some of the tips and suggestions might work for your organization.
- **Progress, not perfection.** We always encourage participants to make realistic shifts instead of going for every change right out of the gate. Celebrate your small steps instead of holding out for perfection!



# TIPS & TRICKS

## ASK FOR HELP

- We are here to support you! Feel free to [reach out to us with any questions](#) you may have - we are always happy to help. Since this is the first year of sharing the Clean Class initiative more broadly, we are especially interested in your feedback.
- Following the success of their pilot year, the Thistle Class is continuing to lead the way as a Clean Class. [Refer to their webpage](#) to see how they do it.

## CRUISING TO BRONZE

The following eight best practices are easy to start with; achieve Bronze certification by doing these simple things!

- Organize a Green Team
- Eliminate Single-use Water Bottles and Provide Water Refilling Stations
- Eliminate Plastic Straws
- Skip Bags or Go Reusable
- Award Practical Items or Use a Perpetual or Upcycled Trophy
- Prevent Toxins from Entering the Water
- Encourage Green Boating Practices
- Use Paperless Event Management



# RESOURCES

## WE ARE HERE TO HELP

Outside of this guidebook, we have many resources that can support your efforts to become or grow as a Clean Class. Refer to the following links for more information, suggestions, and guidance on your sustainability work to protect the ocean and waterways we love.

- [Clean Regattas](#)
- [Clean Class](#)
- [Clean Regattas Program Overview](#)
- [Clean Regattas Toolkit](#)
- [Suggestions for a Communications Timeline](#)
- [Thistle Clean Class](#)
- [Clean Class Feedback Form](#)

