

# **Influence of Tourist Pressure on Beach Litter and Microbial Quality – Case Study of Two Beach Resorts in Ghana**

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## **Abstract**

Beach litter accumulation and reduced water quality are important aspects of beach degradation which have adverse effects on the users of the beach and marine life. The study aims at determining how the degree of human pressure at the La and Korle Beach resorts in Accra, Ghana, which serve different social communities, contributes to beach degradation. A weekly collection of fresh and accumulated litter from a belt transect of 500 m<sup>2</sup> and samples of seawater from each beach were obtained during a 3-week festive period (Dec. 26, 2005–Jan. 9, 2006) and a 3-week non-festive period (Jan. 23, 2006–Feb. 6, 2006). Thirty-two types of litter were identified and the total number and weight of litter collected from La were 2261 and 72695 g, and that of Korle were 2691 and 43239 g, respectively. Plastic material dominated the total litter at 66% for Korle and 53% for La, respectively. The numbers of litter increased with increasing visitor pressure during the festive season for Korle, although the type and diversity of the beach litter was location specific irrespective of the season for both sites. Microbial values for coliforms were higher for Korle than La, with significant increase in Korle during the festive season. The implications for leisure activity like swimming at both sites has minimal health risks since the mean levels of the indicators are within the WHO international permissible range.