

# A Virtual Community Center Addressing the Challenge of Marine Debris

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Marine debris poses a growing threat to the marine biosphere and, through contamination of marine food sources, also to human health. Many efforts are under way to monitor and understand the impacts of marine debris, but the many stakeholders are not well connected. Existing social media and newly developing platforms are limited in cross-sectoral community support. The Marine Debris Virtual Community Center (MDVCC) offers a place for the stakeholders to interact from local to global scales in communities of practice. The MDVCC focuses on literacy, access to knowledge, education, training, collaboration, citizen science, in-group communication, and outreach.

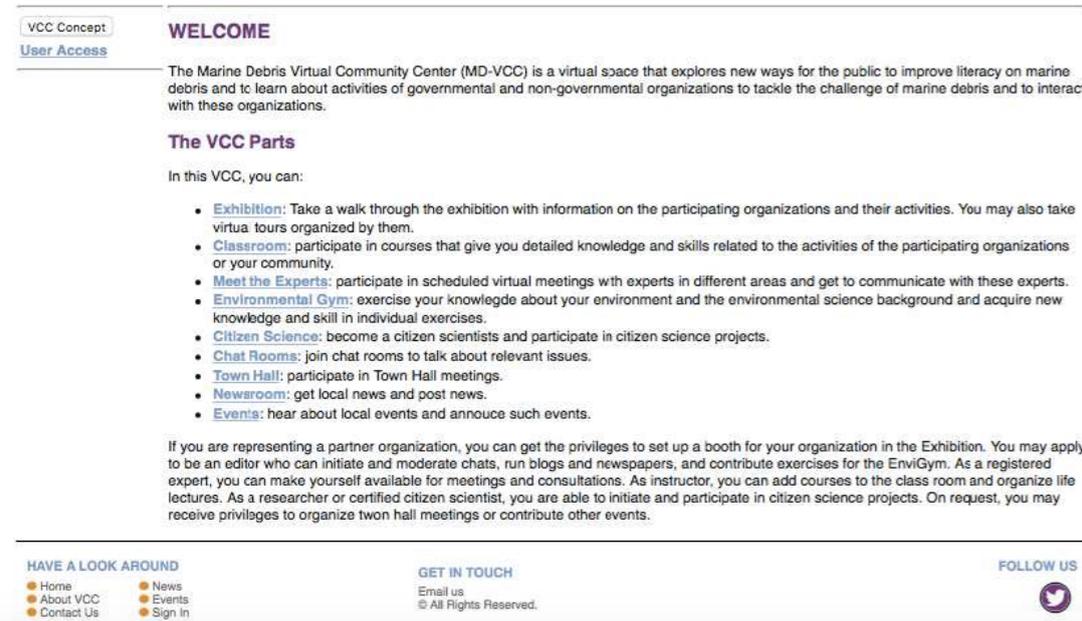
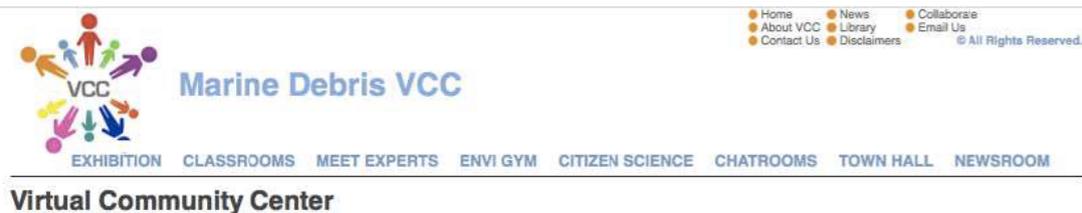


Fig. 1: Concept of the Virtual Community Center. The darker shaded components are those that inform community members and the general public about the VCC and provide access to relevant knowledge. The lighter shaded components facilitate learning, collaboration, and deliberations. From Plag et al. (2021).

A VCC combines elements for learning and skill development with elements for collaboration, activities, and information (Fig. 1). There is emphasis on citizen science.

### Focus on Literacy:

- Information literacy
- Sustainability literacy
- Risk and Resilience Literacy

### Built around 5 Pillars:

- Environmental and sustainability literacy skills
- Modeling, simulation and visualization
- Storytelling and narrative skills
- Community advocacy skills
- Environmental justice

### References

Plag, H.-P., Jones, K., Garello, R., 2021. A Virtual Center for the Community Addressing the Challenge of Marine Debris. IEEE Xpore, .

Fig. 2. The Marine Debris Virtual Community Center (MD-VCC) is a place for the cross-sectoral dialog and collaboration of stakeholders engaged in tackling the wicked problem of reducing marine debris and limiting the impacts of marine debris on the marine biosphere and humanity.