

## Picking up trash while having fun: from “plogging” to “pick up plastic” trips

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There are a lot of new trends connected to the “**zerowaste**” philosophy, to the **waste collection** and to the recovery of those left here and there, which besides polluting, **disfigure our landscapes**, whether they are more or less urban.

For example, it is called **plogging** the original physical activity which promotes love and attention towards ourselves and the environment. This is a discipline that today boasts more and more **followers** worldwide, and its name derives from the union of the term “**jogging**” which is a slow-paced run and the Swedish verb “**plocka upp**”: pick up.

The idea, created by the Scandinavian **Erik Ahlström**, is easy and also brilliant: doing sport outdoor and at the same time cleaning streets and paths from abandoned waste by people that are less sensitive towards ecology. It is an activity that combines business with pleasure, allowing people to keep fit helping the environment.

You do not need much to get started. Just “arm yourself” with comfortable clothes and cleats, protective gloves, **bags where you can put rubbish in** and a lot of determination. The rest will follow. According to those who have already tried, it actually seems that this practice also creates a lot of fun as well as “addiction”: It allows you to admire the local beauties, it promotes the birth of new friendships, it helps

to sculpt the body and burn a lot of calories, by collecting anything. From plastic bottles and glass bottles, to wastepaper, cans and disposable face masks.

The initiative is **spreading throughout Europe** and **Brussels** itself is supporting it through a series of real projects and ad hoc financing, such as the **Eu Eco-Tandem** project, promoted by **ENIT, the Italian Government Tourist Board**, and co-financed by the European Union, which aims to support, especially in this particular and difficult period for everyone due to Covid 19, a **sustainable Tourism**. This is a complex project, which includes a series of activities capable of encourage small and medium-sized enterprises, linked to a traditional tourism so far, by facilitating the birth of new synergies.



Sharon from CinCi photos

And not only on foot: some people choose to cover thousands of kilometres with a special non-electric cargo bike equipped with a “trash grabber”. This is the case of Myra Stals who, with her “Cycle 2 Recycle” project, has covered more than 16,000 km around Europe between 2016 and 2020, collecting tons of plastic. The main objective of Cycle 2 Recycle is to raise awareness about plastic pollution and inspire people to stop using single-use plastic “No mountain is too high and no valley too low: to raise awareness”, reads the project website.

These are activities that are good for our health and the health of the planet, and we can only hope that they become more and more popular.

Have you ever participated in a similar initiative? Have you ever pick up litter while out for a walk? Tell us about your experiences, write to [martinellieleonora@gmail.com](mailto:martinellieleonora@gmail.com)

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