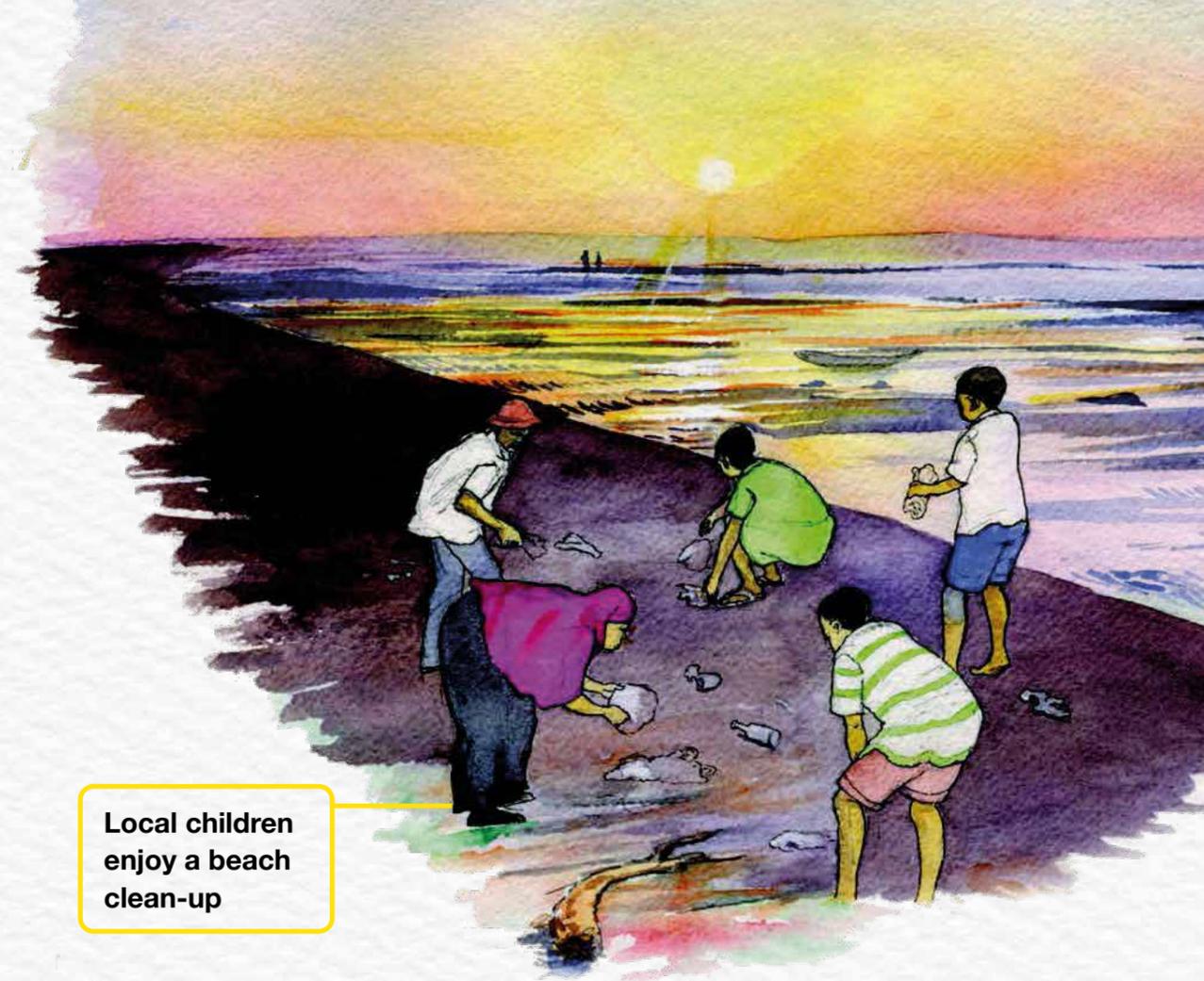


TREASURE

How can we children combat the damage to this most precious resource? Gaze at the sea. It is a huge jewel of great beauty, laden with gifts of great practical value to humans. Think about every object you own. Be responsible for where it ends up. Never throw things into the sea. You can organise a beach clean up through your school or in your village, just as these people, pictured, have done. Perhaps some of the things you find will have a value. One women's group in Kiunga Marine National Reserve, Kenya, is using discarded beach sandals to make necklaces which they sell. Perhaps the elders in your village can organise a community plan to agree on how the coast is looked after and used.

retraining

In this picture, a man has lost his hands while fishing with explosives. He has retrained, learned to speak a foreign language, and has become a guide for eco-tourists. His detailed knowledge of the coastal animals, learned from a lifetime of fishing, means he has much to explain to these visitors.



Local children enjoy a beach clean-up

Eco-tourism is an excellent way of using the coast sustainably. People will travel from thousands of miles away, paying hundreds of dollars to see the creatures which live in Africa's seas. Spectacular animals such as humpback whales and whale sharks are especially interesting, but turtles and reef fish and birds are all attractive and wonderful too.

To make it truly work for you and for the environment, every aspect of the tourism, from the activities of the tourists, what they eat and where they stay needs to be considered. Eco-tourism should put more back than it takes out. The environment must be undamaged, and local people should benefit. Far too often tourism has negative effects on local culture and the environment and all the money earned stays in the hands of few large, often foreign companies.

Conservation tourism is when people pay to stay in an area and help with conservation work. They may clean beaches, plant trees, collect data for researchers, even make films. It is a successful way to bring money to communities, share understanding and protect our natural heritage.