

# How to know if you're swimming in it



By [Ilse van den Berg](#)

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On day three at Design Indaba 2017, [Carina Bonse](#) art director and design graduate from Red & Yellow, introduced attendees to Swimming In It (Sii).

When tasked with identifying, researching and understanding an NGO or a cause they decided to focus on the issue of raw sewage being pumped into our oceans. Over 55 million litres of raw sewage is dumped just a kilometre away from Table Bay and False Bay's coast on a daily basis. The bacteria in this water can cause diarrhoea, vomiting, hepatitis, ear infections and other diseases.

"We came up with an awareness campaign to help people in Cape Town understand what they are swimming in," she explained.

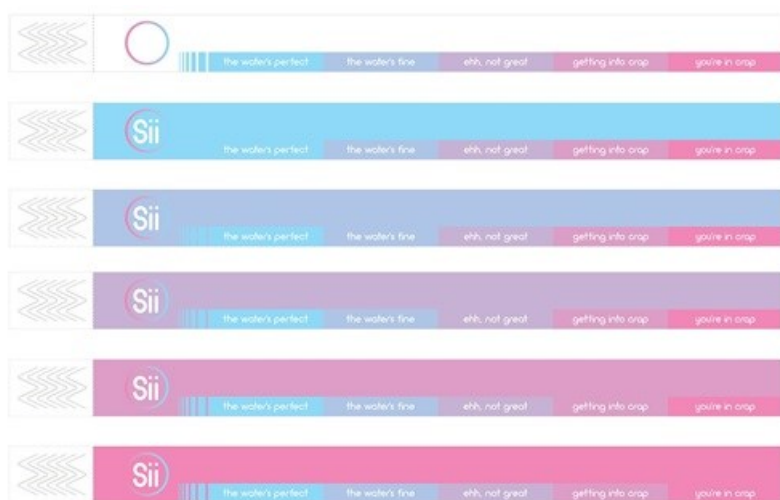
Bonse found doing research for her [Swimming In It](#) campaign really eye opening and says it felt great to come up with a solution for a subject that people were struggling to relate to. There are so many people that want to make a difference, but don't have the platform or solutions to do so.



Sewage being dumped in our oceans is a reality that has some of the most damaging effects on our coastline and on our health, yet it has received hardly any attention and no action.

## The armband

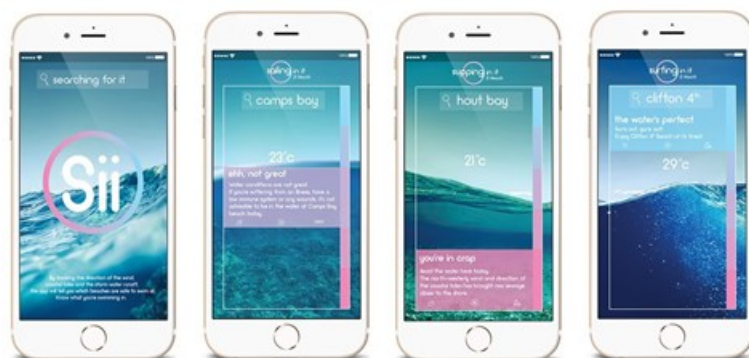
The Sii armband is made out of litmus paper that has the ability to test the E.coli level of ocean water. Once the armband has been used, the litmus paper will change colour according to how badly the coastline is affected with raw sewage. There are also buoys in selected areas that change colour according to the E.coli levels of the water. This allows individuals to become aware of when they should or shouldn't swim, preventing water-borne diseases.



[click to enlarge](#)

## The app

The Sii app is available for download by any beachgoers, surfers, and locals and will notify them about the daily waste condition at Cape Town beaches.



By tracking the direction of the wind, coastal tides and the storm water runoff, the app is able to communicate which beaches are safe to swim at and which are not. This allows for safer swimming and surfing in Cape Town's waters every single day.

## Just because you can't see it, doesn't mean it isn't there

Remember, just because you can't see or smell it, doesn't mean it isn't there.

Keep your eyes peeled for the Swimming In It truck which is driving between popular Cape Town beaches offering information about the raw sewage that is damaging our oceans and our health. The drivers also hand out E.coli testing armbands and will answer any questions you may have regarding the raw sewage situation.



Know what you're surfing, swimming, sailing, or snorkelling in. [#SwimmingInIt](#)

## ABOUT ILSE VAN DEN BERG

Ilse is a freelance journalist and editor with a passion for people & their stories (check out Passing Stories). She is also the editor of Go & Travel, a platform connecting all the stakeholders in the travel & tourism industry. You can check out her work here and here. Contact Ilse through her website here.

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