

ARE YOU PART OF THE POLLUTION? OR THE SOLUTION?

Every year about 8 million tonnes of plastic waste enters the ocean, where it damages ecosystems. Most of this waste is disposable plastic that is thrown away after a single use.

Be part of the solution and reduce your plastic waste.

Cling wrap and resealable bags

The chemicals added to cling wrap to make it stretchy also make it difficult to recycle.

Solutions:

- Use re-usable containers
- Use beeswax or silicone wraps
- Use aluminium foil, which can be recycled

Straws

It's estimated that 8.3 billion straws litter the world's coastlines.

Solutions:

- Refuse plastic straws
- Use a paper or re-usable straw

Shopping bags

Up to 5 trillion plastic bags are produced globally every year. Less than 1% are recycled.

Solutions:

- Refuse unnecessary bags
- Carry a canvas bag, handbag or backpack

Plastic bottles

One million plastic bottles are bought worldwide every minute.

Solutions:

- Use a re-usable drink bottle
- Drink safe tap water

Takeaway containers

The convenience of fast food comes at a huge environmental cost.

Solutions:

- When dining out, bring your own
- Use beeswax or silicone wraps
- Ask for paper bags instead
- Dine in instead of ordering takeaway

Takeaway cups

Most cups are either plastic or lined with a thin layer of plastic to stop liquids soaking through.

Solutions:

- Carry a re-usable cup or drink bottle
- Drink in at a cafe or restaurant

On March 16, 2019, a dead whale washed up in the Philippines. Its stomach contained 40 kg of plastic.

Soft packaging

Soft plastics keep food fresh but are soon discarded.

Many chocolate wrappers and chip bags appear to be foil but are actually plastic coated in a metallic film.

Solutions:

- Choose products with less or no packaging
- Find out where you can recycle soft plastics in your area

Plastic cutlery

Plastic knives, forks and spoons are among the most common items washed up on beaches.

Solutions:

- Use biodegradable bamboo or wooden cutlery
- Carry re-usable metal cutlery
- Reconsider if you need cutlery, – will your hands do?
- Refuse cutlery when ordering food delivery

Impact on ecosystems



Ingestion

Plastic pieces have been found in over 240 species. They often collect in the stomach, preventing digestion and leading to a slow, painful death.



Toxins

Poisonous substances in plastics can be passed up the food chain, potentially causing nerve damage, infertility and death.



Entanglement

Over 270 animal species have been found entangled in plastic, often causing injury, suffocation or death.



Habitat damage

Plastic pollution can damage coral, which provides habitats for many other species.