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# TOP 10 REASONS TO REDUCE PLASTIC PRODUCTION

There are countless examples of plastic's negative impact on our planet, but these top 10 facts provide a brief yet compelling argument for reducing production of this harmful pollutant. Stopping plastic pollution at the source is the only way we can reverse this crisis and protect our planet's future.

- 1 About 8 million metric tons (17.6 billion pounds) of plastic enters the ocean every year. This is roughly equivalent to dumping a garbage truck full of plastic into the ocean every minute.
- 2 Plastic waste is everywhere. It has been found floating on the sea surface, washing up on the world's most remote coastlines, melting out of Arctic sea ice and sitting at the deepest point of the ocean floor.
- 3 Tens of thousands of individual marine animals have been observed to be suffering from entanglement in or ingestion of plastic.
- 4 Experts estimate that 90% of seabird species have swallowed plastic, which can be fatal. One hundred percent of the world's sea turtle species have swallowed plastic debris.
- 5 Plastic products are flawed by design: Companies are using a material that's made to last forever to produce something that is designed to be thrown away after a single use.



6 Plastics never go away. Instead, they break up into smaller and smaller pieces, ultimately becoming microplastics that act as magnets for harmful chemical pollutants. When eaten by fish and shellfish, some of those contaminants from microplastics work their way into our food supply. Everything from salt to honey to beer has been found to contain microplastics.

7 Plastic is harming human health through every single stage of its life cycle, from extraction and production to consumer use. It is making its way into our food, water and air. Scientists continue to study what our plastic consumption may be doing to our bodies.

8 As of 2015, approximately 8.3 billion metric tons of plastic had been produced, of which 6.3 billion metric tons became plastic waste. Between 2017 and 2026, plastic production is expected to increase 40%.

9 Recycling is an inadequate solution. Of all the plastic waste generated, only about 9% has been recycled. Twelve percent was incinerated, and 79% accumulated in landfills, on the ground or in the ocean. Recycling cannot keep up with current levels of plastic production, much less its projected increase.

10 Wealthier nations like the U.S. have been sending plastic waste to developing countries with less robust waste management systems. China has imported a cumulative 45% of plastic waste since 1992. However, starting January 1, 2018, China permanently banned the import of nonindustrial plastic waste. This has resulted in plastic waste backing up at waste management facilities or being sent straight to landfills. Some recyclables are still being exported to developing countries.

