

PLASTIC IN THE WORLD EACH YEAR

On a global scale, plastic wastes have been estimated to cause an annual loss (reduced fishing days or tourist numbers) of \$13.3 billions¹.

Plastic recycling is still limited. According to the Ellen McArthur Foundation (2016), globally only 14% of plastic packaging is collected for recycling: this depends primarily on the type of plastic and on technologies available for recycling¹.

PLASTIC THAT ENTERS THE OCEAN EVERY YEAR

1.2-2.4 MILLION TONNES from rivers⁷

4.8-12.7 MILLION TONNES from coastal areas⁵

GLOBAL ANNUAL PRODUCTION

320 MILLION TONNES
in 2015¹

299 MILLION TONNES
in 2014³

1.7 MILLION TONNES
in the 1950s³

THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA



IT TAKES

80-90 YEARS

to clean and renew itself, because it is an enclosed basin⁹.



The Mediterranean Sea despite being only 0.82% in surface area and 0.32% in volume compared to the global ocean, is a biodiversity hotspot harbouring ~7% of the world's known marine species⁸.

MULTI-SOURCE OF PLASTICS

28.1%

Sea based: fishing, aquaculture and shipping industries⁴



71.9%

Land based: coastal population hotspots (industries, agriculture, transportation, construction and tourism) and major rivers^{4,7}

TYPES OF PLASTICS AND IMPACT ON SEA ORGANISMS

PRIMARY MICROPLASTICS

Are less than 5 mm, they result from industrial or domestic products (e.g. facial scrubs, toothpaste) and they have different size, density, chemical composition and shape³



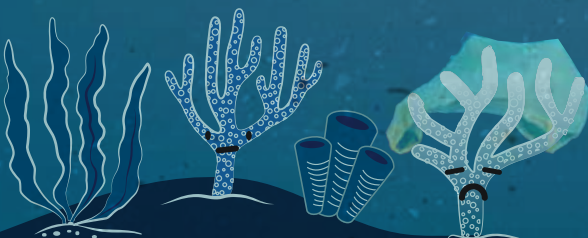
SECONDARY MICROPLASTICS

Are larger plastics debris that over time fragment into smaller particles when exposed to the elements, until they end up as microplastics³



Microplastics have been found in Mediterranean pelagic predators, deep-sea fishes, commercial species⁵ and mussels¹⁰

The likelihood of diseases increases up to **89%** when corals are in contact with plastics⁶



80% of loggerheads turtles ingest plastic that looks like their natural food (e.g. jellyfish), risking death²



“BE THE CHANGE THAT YOU WISH TO SEE IN THE WORLD”

There is a need for people to see the link between their plastic consumption patterns and the consequences in terms of environmental degradation. Awareness and education campaigns targeting schools, communities and industry successfully change people’s behavior, both in children and adults (e.g. reducing single-use bags)^{1, 15}.

Mahatma Gandhi



Scan the QR code to see the reference material

WHAT CAN I DO?

1

Avoid leaving rubbish in the environment (e.g. beach, sea, mountains)



2

Collect the waste that you find in the environment (e.g. clean up beaches, collect the waste that you find while swimming, diving, boating)

3

Recycle plastic products correctly!



4

Avoid single-use plastic objects (e.g. glasses, plates, cutlery)¹³



5

Choose products that respect the environment (e.g. flasks, shopping bags, loose products rather than packaged, choose environmental sustainability labels such as EU Ecolabelling)¹



6

Dispose of fishing lines, fishing nets, etc. and do not discard them at sea (European directives for the disposal of fishing gear, etc.)¹²



7

Choose products without microplastics [check product labels, microplastics include: polyethylene terephthalate (PET), polyethylene (PE), polypropylene (PP), polystyrene (PS) and polyvinyl chloride (PVC)]¹⁴



8

Support projects and associations that deal with the protection and conservation of the environment

9

Participate in educational activities to increase knowledge and awareness of environmental problems

10

Become a sea sentinel and help us protect our sea!

