



Plastic in the World's Oceans Set to Triple over Next Decade

Where Does It Come From?

- Plastic litter is one of the biggest issues facing the world's seas.
- The amount of plastic debris in the world's oceans is predicted to triple by 2028.

Plastic pollution poses a great threat to our delicate marine ecosystems. Plastic isn't **biodegradable** therefore it can remain in the environment for up to 1000 years.

Experts estimate that 12 million tonnes of plastic enters our oceans each year. Plastic on ships is often deposited on beaches. At home, when plastics are flushed down the toilet, they are carried along rivers into the sea. Travelling via ocean currents, plastic debris is washed up on shores all around our planet from uninhabited Pacific islands to the Arctic.

Plastic has a **catastrophic** effect on marine animals. Hundreds of thousands of marine creatures are killed annually because they mistake plastic for food. This results in many organisms choking to death. Scientists have found samples of plastic at every stage of the ocean food chain — even in the seafood on our dinner plates!

The problem is now so severe that 'trash islands' are being discovered. Trash islands are entirely made up of rubbish brought together by ocean currents.

Many organisations, such as Greenpeace and WWF, are working tirelessly to stop the movement of plastic into our oceans. They are calling on big corporations to reduce excessive plastic packaging and governments to act by



Photo: Plastic litter in the ocean.

introducing **microbead** bans and charges for plastic carrier bags. Smaller groups support the cause too. Many nurseries and schools have banned glitter and some cafes and restaurants no longer provide drinking straws. By taking action now, we can prevent further damage to our oceans and protect our precious marine environment for future **generations**.

Glossary

biodegradable	a material which can be easily broken down and decomposed by bacteria
catastrophic	something which causes great harm
microbeads	tiny pieces of plastic found in products such as face scrubs and toothpaste
generations	groups of people born at roughly the same time

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