

Plastics in Europe



EUROPE PRODUCES A
HUGE AMOUNT OF PLASTIC:
58 MILLION TONNES
EVERY YEAR



Most of the raw material is fossil fuel based. Thus, if the current production trends continue, **by 2050** plastics could account for 20% of oil consumption, 15% of greenhouse gas emissions, and **there could be more plastics than fish in the sea.**

Source: PlasticsEurope

EUROPE PRODUCES
25 MILLION TONNES
OF PLASTIC WASTE



Source: PlasticsEurope, 2014

EU initiatives like higher recycling targets and more effective legislation for drinking water (cutting the need for bottled water) are improving the situation, but stronger action is needed.

More than 60% of plastic waste still comes from packaging, but only 40% of that packaging is recycled.

Sources: PlasticsEurope and Eurostat



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Plastic leakage

Plastics are very durable, so they accumulate in nature, damaging ecosystems we rely on. In the oceans they break down into tiny fragments, which enter the food chain. The microplastics are eaten by plankton, which are eaten by fish, which are eaten by... us.



Source: IP-13-1017

10 most common plastic objects found on European beaches



Source: Based on JRC report

It's time to rethink plastics

It's time to change the way we design, produce, use and dispose of them. Let's reinvent plastics!

The EU has a new strategy to address the whole life-cycle of plastics. The aim is to make them:

**LONGER
LASTING**

**EASIER
TO REUSE &
RECYCLE**

**EASIER
TO
COLLECT**

We also need to stop using plastic where there are better alternatives available, and ensure that the plastics we use keep their economic value for as long as possible, and don't end up in landfills.

By 2030, all plastic packaging placed on the EU market should be reusable or recyclable. As well as cutting the industry's carbon footprint, this will reduce plastic waste and marine litter, and slow the proliferation of microplastics.



Europe is tackling the 10 most found plastic waste items on Europe's beaches promoting sustainable alternatives.



Cotton buds

Ban on single use **cotton buds** made with plastic, to be replaced on the market with sustainable alternatives.



Cutlery, plates, straws & stirrers

Ban on single use **cutlery, plates, straws and stirrers** made with plastics, to be replaced with more sustainable alternatives.



Sticks for balloons and balloons

Plastic **sticks** for balloons to be banned and replaced with sustainable alternatives. On **balloons**, producers to contribute to awareness-raising, clean-up, collection, waste treatment and introduce new labelling on the environmental impact of the product and recycling options for consumers.



Food containers

Significant national consumption reduction of plastic **food containers**. Producers to contribute to awareness-raising, clean-up, collection and waste treatment.



Cups for beverages

Significant national consumption reduction of plastic **cups for beverages**. Producers to contribute to awareness-raising, clean-up, collection and waste treatment.



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Beverage containers

Producers to contribute to awareness-raising, clean-up, collection and waste treatment of **beverage containers**; product design requirements to attach **caps and lids** to beverage containers; **90% separate collection target for plastic bottles**.



Cigarette butts

Producers to contribute to awareness-raising, clean-up, collection and waste treatment of **cigarette butts** and other plastic tobacco product filters.



Bags

Producers to contribute to awareness-raising, clean-up, collection and waste treatment of lightweight **plastic carrier bags**, in addition to existing measures in the existing Plastic Bags Directive.



Crisp packets/ sweet wrappers

Producers to contribute to awareness-raising, clean-up, collection and waste treatment of **plastic packets and wrappers**.



Wet wipes and sanitary items

New labelling requirements for **sanitary towels and wet wipes** to inform consumers on environmental impact of the product and how to dispose of it properly. Producers to contribute to awareness-raising, clean-up, collection and waste treatment of **wet wipes**.

Fishing gear

Producers of fishing gear containing plastics will be required to cover the costs of waste collection from port reception facilities and its transport and treatment. They will also cover the costs of awareness-raising measures.

CO₂ BENEFITS OF PLASTICS RECYCLING



Plastics production and the incineration of plastic waste give rise globally to approximately 400 million tonnes of CO₂ a year



Learn more about the plastics strategy and the circular economy:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/circular-economy/index_en.htm