

**10** Over 100 million marine animals are killed each year due to plastic debris in the ocean. Currently, it is estimated that there are 100 million tons of plastic in oceans around the world.



**11** Plastic that ends up in the ocean breaks down over time and becomes tiny pieces known as microplastics. These microplastics enter the food chain, ushering toxins into the fatty tissues of fish and other animals, which go up the food chain and may then be eaten by humans.



**12** A recent study by Ghent University in Belgium found that people who regularly eat seafood ingest up to 11,000 tiny pieces of plastic each year. Another study by Plymouth University found that one-third of all fish caught in the U.K. contained microplastics.



*The seriousness of the plastic problem requires all of us, individuals, manufacturers, and corporations, to reduce our plastic uses, including the plastic packaging of food and consumer products.*

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# PLASTICS

## 12 reasons to reduce use



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*The amount of plastic produced from 2000-2010 exceeds the amount produced during the entire last century. Of the plastics produced, only 9% has been recycled.*

*Packaging accounts for 40% of plastic use, and the plastic packaging that comes in contact with food includes many “compounds of concern,” meaning that they pose a high risk to human health. Those compounds include bisphenols, phthalates, nonpersistent pesticides, perfluoroalkyl chemicals (PFCs), and perchlorates.*

*Plastics do not biodegrade in our lifetime, but instead, those in our oceans break down into small particles and enter the food chain through fish, sea birds, and other marine life. These particles carry with them adhered chemicals and toxins, posing health impacts to both wildlife and humans.*

*As citizens, we must respond and call for the serious reduction of all our plastic uses—including a reduction in plastic packaging.*



**1** Americans discard about 33.6 million tons of plastic a year. Only 9.5% gets recycled, and 15% gets burned for energy. The discarded plastic ends up in our rivers, lakes, and oceans and goes into our landfills, where it can take up to 500 years to decompose.

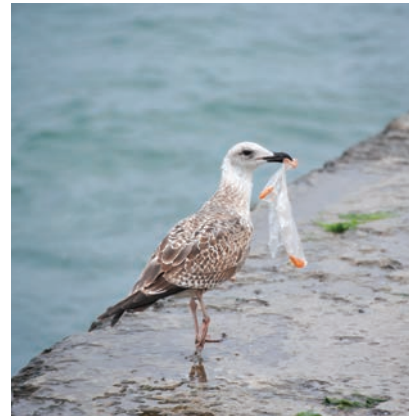
**2** Packaging makes up 40% of all plastic usage. It is the single largest use of plastic.



**3** More than 40% of plastic produced is used only once.



**4** The working life of a single-use plastic bag is about 15 minutes.



**5** A study by the New York State Plastic Bag Task Force concluded that more than 100,000 single-use plastic bags end up in Long Island Sound every year.



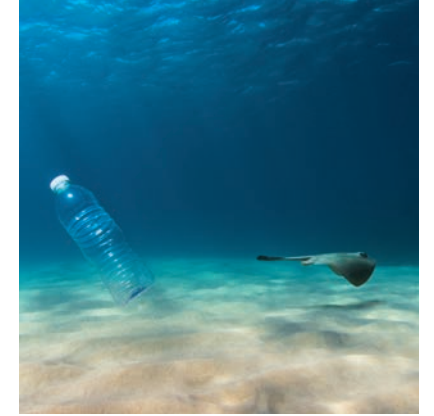
**6** Of the 50 billion water bottles bought each year, 80% end up in a landfill, despite recycling programs and a five-cent redemption program in a few states.



**7** Every second of every day in the U.S., 1,500 plastic bottles are discarded. Americans send more than 38 billion water bottles to landfills every year, the equivalent of 912 million gallons of oil.



**8** 18 billion pounds of plastic end up in the ocean each year.



**9** It is estimated that by 2050 the ocean will contain more plastic by weight than fish.

