

# Marine Pollution

## Why is this a Global Justice Issue?

Our oceans have become our dumpsters. Marine pollution threatens the health of our coasts and ocean and it comes in many different forms. Marine pollution can mean plastic litter, other litter such as glass bottles and cans, oil and chemical spills or polluted stormwater drains and rivers flowing into the sea.

The global throwaway culture has created a cross-ecosystem plastic pollution injustice. The first to suffer this injustice will be the most vulnerable. The throwaway culture has created a disrespect of material goods that has turned the earth's resources into rubbish after a single use. Plastic has destroyed ecosystems, robbing impoverished communities of natural resources and of a healthy and safe living environment. First to suffer the injustices of plastic pollution are marine life living in the dumping ground of throwaway culture.

It is already known that plastic micro-beads enter the food chain by fish that then pass on the plastic particles for human consumption. Humans are consuming more and more plastic from fish but are also consuming the toxins absorbed by the plastic micro-beads. The injustice of throwaway culture and plastic pollution is heavily supported by scientific evidence, but often facts need to become feelings in order for social change to occur. Every person has a right to access to an environment free of plastic debris and toxins associated with its improper disposal.

## GLOBAL GOAL INDICATOR:

**Goal no. 14** – Life below Water (Target 14.1)

## SUGGESTED CURRICULUM LINKS:

- Business Studies
- Home Economics
- Religious Education
- Modern Foreign Languages
- Science
- Gaeilge
- Maths
- Geography
- History
- CSPE
- SPHE

## Educational Toolkits (Active Learning Methodologies)

**Climate Education Week Toolkit – End Plastic Pollution**

Link: <https://160g7a3snaig2i1r662yjd5r-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/Education-Toolkit-022718.pdf>

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### **Marine Debris Toolkit for Educators**

Link: <https://marinedebris.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/publications-files/MarineDebrisMonitoringToolkitForEducators.pdf>

### **World Wild Life Educational Toolkit**

Link: <https://www.worldwildlife.org/teaching-resources/toolkits/sea-turtle-toolkit>

### **Plastic Pollution – Curriculum & Activity Guide**

Link: <https://seagrant.psu.edu/sites/default/files/Lessons%20for%20NIE%202%20and%203%205GyresALLACTIVITIESPlasticPollutionCurriculum.pdf>

### **World Oceans Day – Plastic Pollution lesson Plan**

Link: [https://www.worldoceansday.org/resources/Plastic%20Pollution/8134115\\_8\\_WOD%20Lesson%20Plan%20-%20Updated.pdf](https://www.worldoceansday.org/resources/Plastic%20Pollution/8134115_8_WOD%20Lesson%20Plan%20-%20Updated.pdf)

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS**

### **Useful Websites:**

#### **Plastic Free 4 Schools**

Link: <https://www.changex.org/ie/plasticfree4schools>

#### **Plastic Free Schools**

Link: <http://susanadams.ie/plastic-free-schools/>

**The Royal Geographical Society:** have an array of online resources & articles on Marine Pollution:

Link: <https://www.rgs.org/support-pages/search-results/?searchtext=marine%20pollution&searchlocation=0> or <https://www.rgs.org/schools/teaching-resources/plastic-pollution-in-the-oceans/>

**Green Seas Trust** – campaign to stop ocean plastic pollution

Link: <https://www.greenseas.org/#what-can-you-do>

**The NRDC** - The NRDC works to ensure the rights of all people to the air, the water and the wild, and to prevent special interests from undermining public interests.

Link: <https://www.nrdc.org/stories>

### **News Articles:**

**The stark truth about how long your plastic footprint will last on the planet**

**Link:** <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/01/10/stark-truth-long-plastic-footprint-will-last-planet/>

### **Marine Pollution, explained**

**Link:** <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/oceans/critical-issues-marine-pollution/>

### **Short Video Clips:**

**Plastic Outta the park – RTE Report on Newpark’s Plastic Free Policy:** Newpark students lead the way in banning single use plastic from the school. The launch of the plastic free policy was on Friday 16th March in the GPA. From here on in students are encouraged to begin the process of eliminating single use plastic from the campus.

**Link:** <https://www.newparkschool.ie/plastic-outta-the-park-rte-report-on-newparks-plastic-free-policy>

### **Documentaries:**

**A plastic Ocean** - This film’s producer joins an expedition to the Great Pacific Garbage Patch to investigate the extent of plastic pollution. The filmmakers brought in scientists and researchers to help tell the story and lay out the facts. If you want to see the impact of our plastic consumption, this documentary is sure to inspire.

**Link:** available on Netflix

**Chasing Coral**- Coral reefs are vanishing at an astonishing rate. Corals teem with life, but it is easy as land-dwelling creatures to forget about the magnificence of the underwater environment. This documentary shows how corals are dying and will hopefully rouse people to action. It is action-packed and visually stunning.

**Link:** available on Netflix

**The Blue Planet** – *The Blue Planet* is a captivating series that dives under the ocean’s surface to examine its watery depths. The more we know and appreciate the ocean, the more likely we are to take steps to protect her. The ocean is how to a fascinating array of creatures that are sure to stretch your imagination.

**Link:** available on Netflix

**Mission Blue** – Oceanographer Sylvia Earle is campaigning to save the oceans. This film is about her life and work. It focuses on her mission to protect marine areas like underwater national parks.

**Link:** available on Netflix

**Plastic China** - Prior to 2018, China received ten million tons of plastic waste every year from developed countries around the world. The plastic is often sorted and processed in unregulated family-run recycling workshops. *Plastic China* follows the lives of two workshop families: Pen and his daughter Yi Jie, who grows up playing in sprawling hills of

plastic waste without an education; and their boss. Over time, one man prospers through the exploitation of other, shining a light on the realities of global consumer capitalism. Link: available Google Play, iTunes, Vimeo On Demand

**Vice Garbage Island: An Ocean full of Plastic** - Vice explored the North Pacific Gyre, home of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch: a mythical, Texas-sized island made entirely of our trash.

**Link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D41rO7mL6zM>

**Waste Land** - *Waste Land* follows artist Vik Muniz's journey from Brooklyn to the world's largest garbage dump, Jardim Gramacho, located on the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. There he captures the lives of an eclectic band of catadores — recyclable materials garbage pickers.

**Link:** available Google Play, iTunes, Vimeo On Demand

### **A Plastic Ocean**

Plastic is intertwined throughout our everyday life: straws, shopping bags, toothbrush, face wash, pens, and even clothes. But plastic isn't fantastic. In *A Plastic Ocean*, Australian journalist Craig Lesson teamed up with free diver Tanya Streeter, scientists and researchers to uncover the alarming impact of plastic on marine ecosystems around the world.

**Link:** available on Netflix, Amazon, Google Play, Vudu, iTunes

### **Ted talks:**

**How Pollution is changing the ocean's chemistry** – Triona McGrath

**Link:** [https://www.ted.com/talks/triona\\_mcgrath\\_how\\_pollution\\_is\\_changing\\_the\\_ocean\\_s\\_chemistry?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/triona_mcgrath_how_pollution_is_changing_the_ocean_s_chemistry?language=en)

**Natalie Fee: Plastic pollution, our toilets and us** - Those of us who recycle diligently and turn down plastic bags at the supermarket tend to think of plastic pollution as someone else's problem. Environmental campaigner Natalie Fee begs to differ. A significant portion of the plastic contaminants choking our oceans comes from the myriad of objects we flush down our toilets.

**Link:** [https://www.ted.com/talks/natalie\\_fee\\_why\\_plastic\\_pollution\\_is\\_personal](https://www.ted.com/talks/natalie_fee_why_plastic_pollution_is_personal)

### **CREATING CHANGE - ACTION:**

#### **10 Ways to reduce Plastic Pollution**

**Link:** <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/10-ways-reduce-plastic-pollution>

#### **7 Ways to reduce Ocean Plastic Pollution Today:**

**Link:** <https://www.oceanicsociety.org/blog/1720/7-ways-to-reduce-ocean-plastic-pollution-today>

## **Preventing Plastic Pollution**

**Link:** <https://www.greenpeace.org/usa/oceans/preventing-plastic-pollution/>

**A running list of action on plastic pollution** – Case Studies on successful action on marine pollution

**Link:** <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/2018/07/ocean-plastic-pollution-solutions/>