

# Increase In Global Plastic Pollution: Threat to Our Planet



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Since the late 20th century, we have depended on plastic as an affordable, versatile, and durable material. We all are surrounded by plastics. The same properties that make plastics so useful are their durability and resistance to degradation and that also makes them nearly impossible for nature to completely break down. Most plastics are never fully degraded, they just break down into smaller pieces. Much of our furniture, clothing, electronics, and food packaging is made from plastic. Over the past decades, plastic has replaced various natural materials used in manufacturing such as paper, glass, cotton, etc. This ubiquitous use of plastics has led to extreme plastic pollution of our environment.

Single-use plastic is being one of the biggest causes of plastic pollution.

Of all the plastic 40% is used just for a single time. Every year in fact every day we use several plastic items such as bags, bottles, food packaging, etc.

## Most relevant causes of plastic pollution:

1. Since plastic is an affordable and durable material, it can be found in everything from packaging materials to plastic bottles, straws plastic bags, and much more.
2. Due to rapid urbanization the demand for cheap materials are increased and plastic is more cheap than other materials so the uses of plastic are increased which led to extreme plastic pollution of our environment.
3. We have a disposable mentality when it comes to plastic because they are so

cheaper in price.

## Effect of Plastic pollution On our planet:

3. **Effect on humans:** We eat, drink and breathe microplastics every day. These small plastic particles may harm our health once they have entered our bodies exposure to microplastics could lead to oxidative stress, DNA damage inflammation among their health problems.
4. **Effect on animals:** The accumulation of microplastic has affected very adversely to the animals. Harmful toxic chemicals present in plastic can led to death of several animals.



1. **Effect of plastic bags on the environment:** The toxic substances released from plastic bags into the soil are very harmful for the whole environment. Plastic bags, if not appropriately decomposed and animals consume these plastic bags. Thousands of seabirds and sea turtles, seals and other marine



Source: <https://cleanstreets.westminster.gov.uk/>

mammals are killed each year for consuming plastic bags.

#### 4. **Habitat degradation and its effect adversely to people's livelihoods:**

Plastic pollution can alter habitats and natural processes, reducing ecosystems' ability to adapt to climate change, and directly affecting millions of people's livelihoods, food production capabilities and social well-being.

#### **Some Initiative that we can take to save our planet:**

The plastics invasion of the planet is a reality. If we want to save the planet, the time has come for each and every one of us to take action.

1. Avoid single-use plastics
2. Use reusable bags instead of plastic bags.
3. Disposable containers are inundating supermarkets (polystyrene trays, PET bottles, tetra packs, plastic containers, etc.). But there is an alternative: more and more establishments are offering the possibility to buy in bulk.
4. Replace plastic containers to glass or steel containers because some of these plastic containers can release harmful substances.
5. If you have no choice but to buy a plastic bottle or a plastic container at the supermarket, reuse it instead of throwing it away.



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