

# Facts about Plastic Pollution



## Plastic Bottles:

Every day, in the UK alone, we use over 15 million single-use plastic bottles.

Bottled water is commonly more expensive than petrol or diesel, at £1 per 500 ml bottle, compared to petrol and Diesel at £1.40 per litre!

Drinking from a reusable bottle is only around 5p per litre.

Of the estimated 13 billion plastic bottles used in the UK every year, only around 3 billion are put in the recycling bin.

Most plastic bottles put in the recycling bin aren't actually 'recycled'. Instead, they're down-cycled into items like clothing and carpets.

To make your average 500ml bottle of water, 100ml of oil is needed (1/5 of its capacity).

More water is needed to make a plastic bottle of water, than actually contained in it.

Tap water is actually more thoroughly regulated than bottled water.

The UK bottled water market is worth over £2.1 billion.

As a nation we now drink more bottled water than fruit juices, wine or spirits.

## **Plastic Pollution:**

Virtually every single pieces of plastic ever made exists in some form on this planet.

Plastic takes 500 – 1000 years to biodegrade.

Over the last ten years we've produced more plastic than during the whole of the last century.

Approximately a truck load of plastic waste enters our oceans every minute.

Approximately 60% of the plastic that we use is single-use.

Enough plastic is thrown away each year to circle the Earth four times.

Plastic constitutes approximately 90% of all the rubbish floating in the oceans, with 46,000 pieces of plastic per square mile.

One million sea birds and 100,000 sea mammals are killed each year from plastic in the oceans.

44% of seabirds, 22% cetaceans and all sea turtles have been found to have plastic in or around the bodies.

Plastic chemicals can be absorbed by the body.

Some of the compounds found in plastic have been found to alter hormones or have other potential human health effects.

## **Micro-pollution:**

When clothing that contains plastic (e.g. a garment made from polyester) is washed thousands of micro-fibres are released. These are too small to be filtered by the washing machines or water treatment works and end up in our oceans.

Some beauty and household products contain micro-beads made from plastic; these are too small to be filtered and end up in our oceans. Fish and other sea creatures mistake them for food. Laws are changing around the world to stop allowing plastic micro-beads in products.