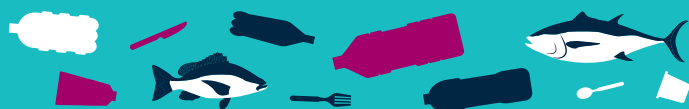




MARINE POLLUTION

Cleaning up the oceans to protect ecosystems, wildlife and our health

By 2050 there could be more plastic in our oceans than fish.



The situation

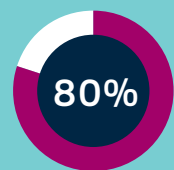
Marine litter



10 MILLION TONNES

of litter are dumped in our ocean every year.¹

Marine pollution is caused by our lives on land



of marine litter comes from land sources: rivers, sewage, air and landfills² (though shipping, fishing and aquaculture are also important sources).

Organic pollution



Excessive nutrients from sewage outfalls and agriculture contribute to **low oxygen (hypoxic) areas known as dead zones**, where most marine life cannot survive.³

Economic impact

Around **€170 billion** is annually lost through poor ocean management practices.

Nearly **€45 billion** in estimated losses for the fisheries sector.

Maritime Affairs and Fisheries

The solution

Reducing waste is more efficient than clearing it up

The goal

UN Sustainable Development Goals:

by 2025

prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution.⁴

EU target: reduce marine litter

by 2020



for the ten most common types of litter found on beaches.⁵

The cost⁶

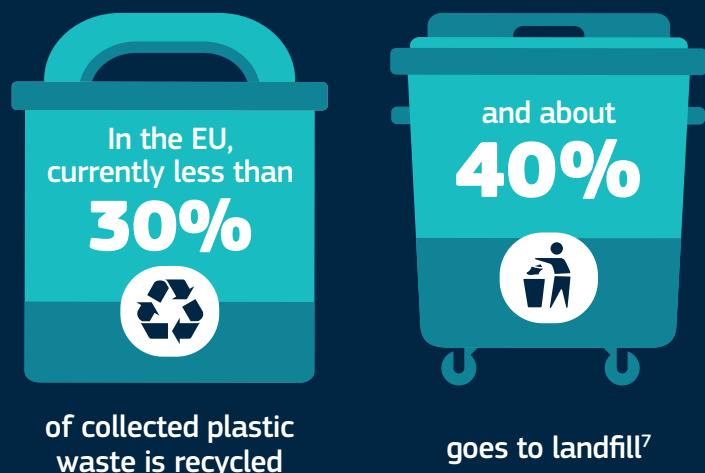
€27 billion of one-off public costs + **€18 billion** in yearly investments

ARE REQUIRED TO SUSTAIN THE QUALITY OF GLOBAL OCEANS.

Progress report

What's being done to address the issue?

Recycling



But **7 EU countries plus Norway and Switzerland** recover more than



Policy



Numerous UN activities and resolutions; **the UN launched the #CleanSeas campaign**, urging governments to pass plastic reduction policies.⁹



EU law on plastic bags, waste and ports. **Strategy on Plastics in 2017.**



Indonesia has committed to slash its marine litter by **70 per cent by 2025** and other countries are taking measures to reduce single-use plastic.¹⁰



The European Environmental Agency has developed **Marine LitterWatch**, a tool for citizens to help monitor marine pollution.

Next steps

Marine litter can be prevented through improved waste management.

Governments and industry can:



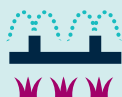
Organise clean-up actions



Improve product design



Cooperate with neighbouring countries and at a global level



Reduce organic pollutants from sewage and agriculture



Promote the circular economy and reduce waste

Citizens can:



Put litter in bins



Increase recycling at home



Choose reusable products



Help clean up existing pollution

Together we must reduce waste to protect the oceans and marine life.

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Sources: 1, 2. European Commission. 3. unesco.org. 4. United Nations. 5. European Commission. 6. United Nations. 7. PlasticsEurope 8. unesco.org. 9,10. European Commission.

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