Changing the way we use plastics

It's light, it's cheap, it's everywhere and we can't live without it. Plastic is fantastic, but it has serious downsides as well. It's time to rethink plastic, and ask some tricky questions:

- How can we get away from single-use plastics?
- Can we make recycling it easier?
- And how can we stop plastic from ending up where it doesn't belong?

It's time to rethink plastics

It's time to change the way we design, produce, use and dispose of them. Let's reinvent plastics!

The EU has a new strategy to address the whole life-cycle of plastics. The aim is to make them:

LONGER LASTING

EASIER TO REUSE & RECYCLE

EASIER TO COLLECT

We also need to stop using plastic where there are better alternatives available, and ensure that the plastics we use keep their economic value for as long as possible, and don't end up in landfills.

By 2030, all plastic packaging placed on the EU market should be reusable or recyclable. As well as cutting the industry's carbon footprint, this will reduce plastic waste and marine litter, and slow the proliferation of microplastics.

10 most common plastic objects found on European beaches

Food containers

Drink bottles

Crisp packets/sweet wrappers

Single-use plastic items represent **50%** of marine litter

Cigarette butts

Bags

Sanitary applicators

Balloons and balloon sticks

Cups & lids

Cotton buds

Cutlery, straws & stirrers

Source: Based on JRC report

Many of these items are packaging for food and drink and most were designed to be used only once ("single-use plastics"). That's a waste of valuable resources.

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