



European  
Commission

# TURNING THE TIDE ON SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

New EU rules target the vast amount of **single-use plastic and fishing gear containing plastic** that is polluting our seas, endangering marine life and harming our health.

**The goal?** Reduce litter, help develop a circular economy and promote a sustainable future for everyone!

Environment



# THE PLASTIC PROBLEM IN NUMBERS



**80-85%** of marine litter found on Europe's beaches is plastic



**50%** of EU marine litter consists of single-use plastic items  
**27%** is fishing gear that contains plastic



**EUR 13 billion a year** of damage to global marine ecosystems is caused by plastic



**EUR 630 million a year** estimated losses caused by plastic to European tourism and coastal communities



**EUR 300 million a year** is the estimated impact of plastic on Europe's fishing industry

# OUT ...

Single-use plastic items to be banned by 2021:



**cutlery**



**plates**



**straws**



**drink stirrers**



**cups and food and drink  
containers made of  
polystyrene (including lids)**



**cotton bud and  
balloon sticks**



**all products made of oxo-  
degradable plastic (widely  
used for shopping bags)**

# IN ...

2021

**clear labelling** of cups, wet wipes, sanitary pads, tampons and applicators and tobacco products with filters, highlighting their plastic content, proper disposal methods and environmental risks

2024

lids and caps made to **stay on** drinks containers and bottles of up to 3 litres

2025

plastic bottles made of at least **25% recycled plastic**

**77% separate collection** of plastic bottles of up to 3 litres

2026

EU countries to achieve ambitious and sustained **cuts in consumption** of single-use plastic cups (including lids/covers) and food containers as compared to 2022

2029

**90% separate collection** of plastic bottles of up to 3 litres

2030

plastic bottles made of at least **30% recycled plastic**

# SPOTLIGHT ON PRODUCERS

Producers will help cover the costs of **waste collection** and **treatment**, along with **litter clean-up** and **awareness raising**, for the following single-use plastic items:

- food and drink containers,
- bottles,
- cups,
- crisp packets and sweet wrappers,
- light plastic shopping bags,
- tobacco products with filters.

For wet wipes and balloons, producers will **cover the costs** of awareness raising, cleaning up litter and gathering and reporting data.

# THE NEW RULES



Target the top single-use plastic products found on our beaches: bottles (and caps); cups (and lids); cutlery, plates, straws and stirrers; food containers; lightweight plastic bags; packets and wrappers; cigarette butts; tampons, applicators, sanitary pads and wet wipes; and cotton buds, balloons and balloon sticks. Also take aim at oxo-degradable plastic products and fishing gear containing plastic.

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Aim to curb our once-only usage of plastic products and get us to choose more planet-friendly options.



Give producers a bigger role in waste management, awareness raising and clean-up of litter.

# EXPECTED IMPACT



Cut littering of the top  
10 single-use plastic items by  
**more than 50%**

Prevent CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of  
**3.4 million tonnes  
per year**



Prevent environmental  
damage of **EUR 22 billion**  
by 2030

Save consumers  
**EUR 6.5 billion a year**  
thanks to less spending on  
throwaway products



# ON THE HOOK

Producers of **fishing gear containing plastic** will have to pay for the separate collection, transport and treatment of waste gear, and raise awareness. EU countries are to set up national annual minimum collection rates for recycling, with the aim of establishing binding collection targets.



The new rules cover **70%** of all marine litter found on EU beaches, which is made up of the **top 10 single-use plastics** (43%) and fishing gear containing plastic (27%).



# SMART INNOVATIVE SUSTAINABLE



The new rules reflect Europe's environmental **leadership** and its resolve to protect our planet for future generations.



They will help harness **global action**.



And they will drive investment and innovation in **smart and sustainable circular-economy** solutions.

# NEXT STEPS

EU countries have until **July 2021** to make the new rules part of their national laws.

## EU directive:

<https://europa.eu/!RD46Uw>

## European plastics strategy:

<https://europa.eu/!jB36gv>

#PlasticsStrategy

#ReadyToChange



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