

The what and why of micro-plastics

By Chelsea Sheppard

1. What is 'plastic pollution'?

Plastic pollution is the collection of plastic objects or particles in the earth's environment that harmfully affects humans, wildlife and their habitats.



Common plastics found are:

- Bottle caps
- Plastic straws
- Food wrappers
- Single-use bags

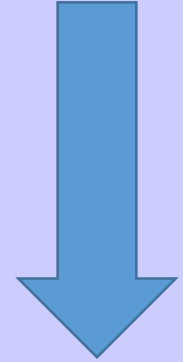


2. What are micro-plastics?

Microplastics are small plastic pieces less than five millimeters long that it harmful to aquatic life.



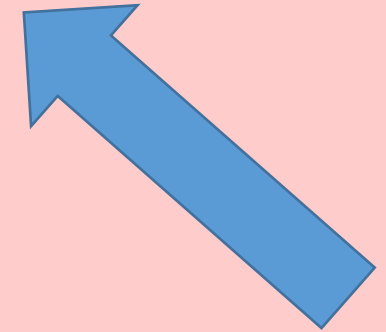
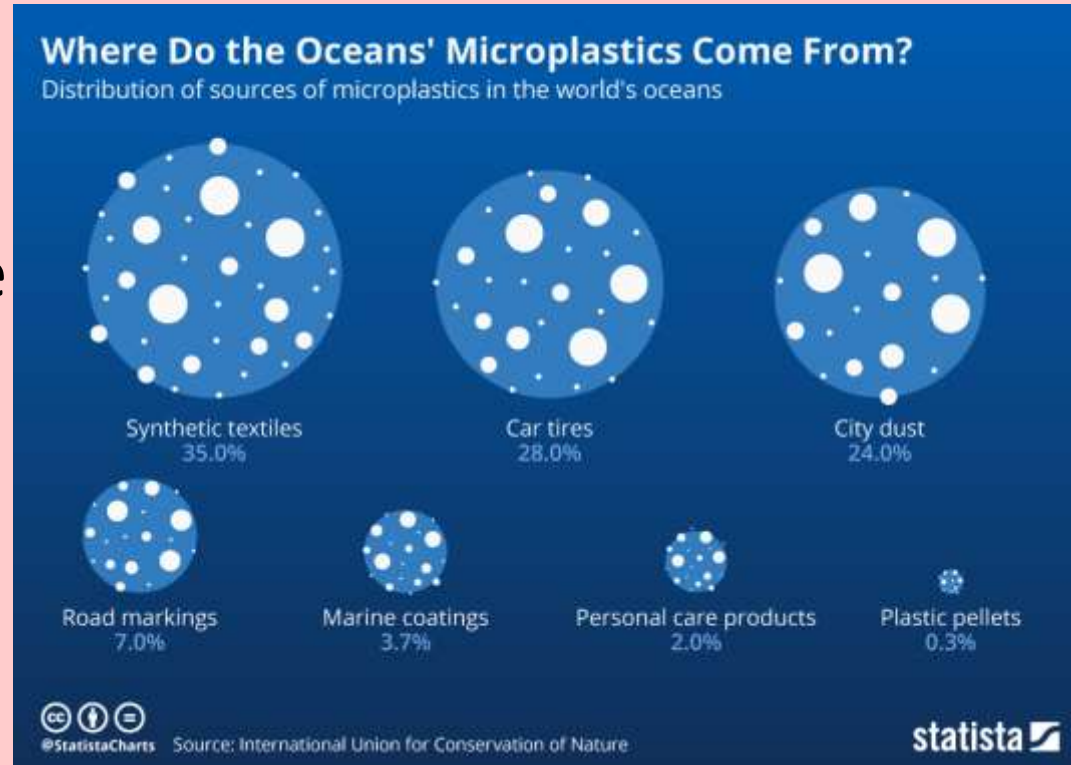
Wildlife like fish can swallow these plastics. When fisherman find these fish they find many micro plastics in them which could've been dangerous to us humans if we bought them from a local fish and chips shop.



3. Where do micro-plastics come from?

Most microplastics come from larger plastics that slowly break down into the micro pieces. Such as

- Bottle caps
 - Plastic bottles
- and more



Here is a chart of the percentages of microplastics in the ocean

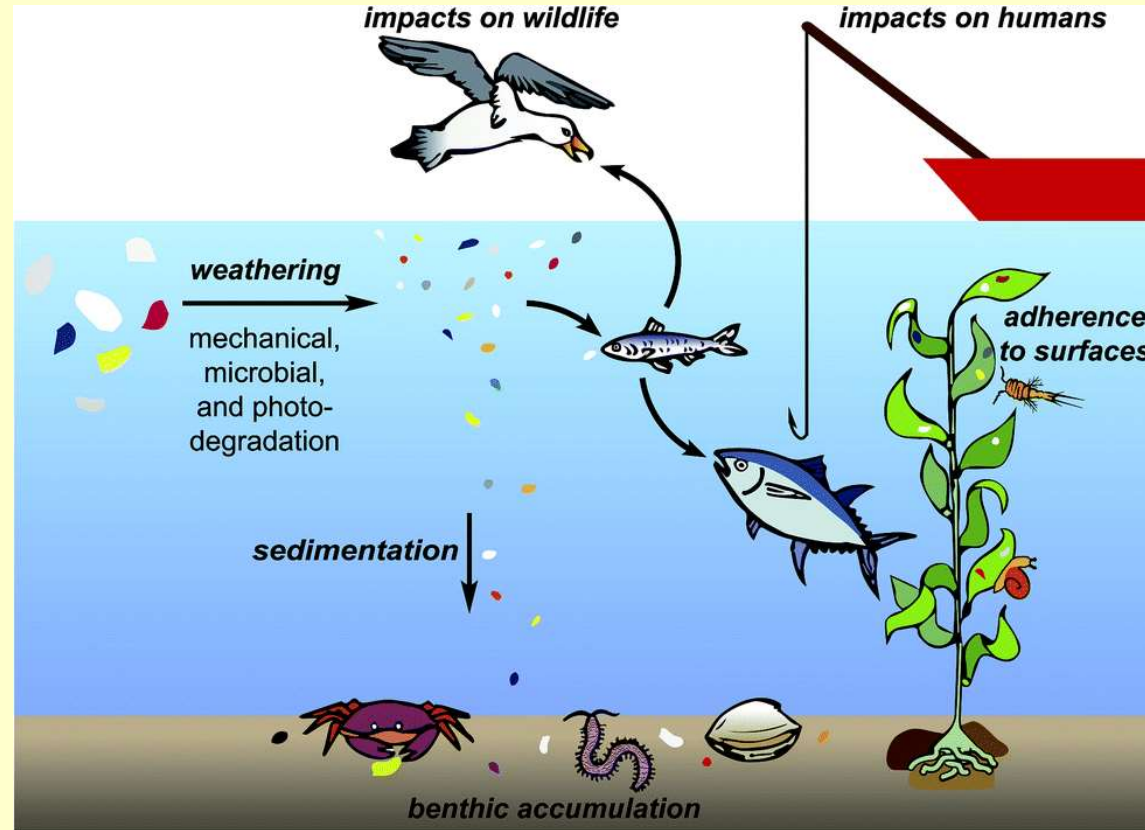
4. How do micro-plastics get into our waterways?

- When rubbish is being transported to landfill, plastic is often blown away because it's so lightweight.
- Littering
- Putting products in the bin when they can be recycled



5. Are humans affected by micro-plastics?

Microplastics are a concern to a humans health. Microplastics both absorb and give off chemicals and harmful pollutants.



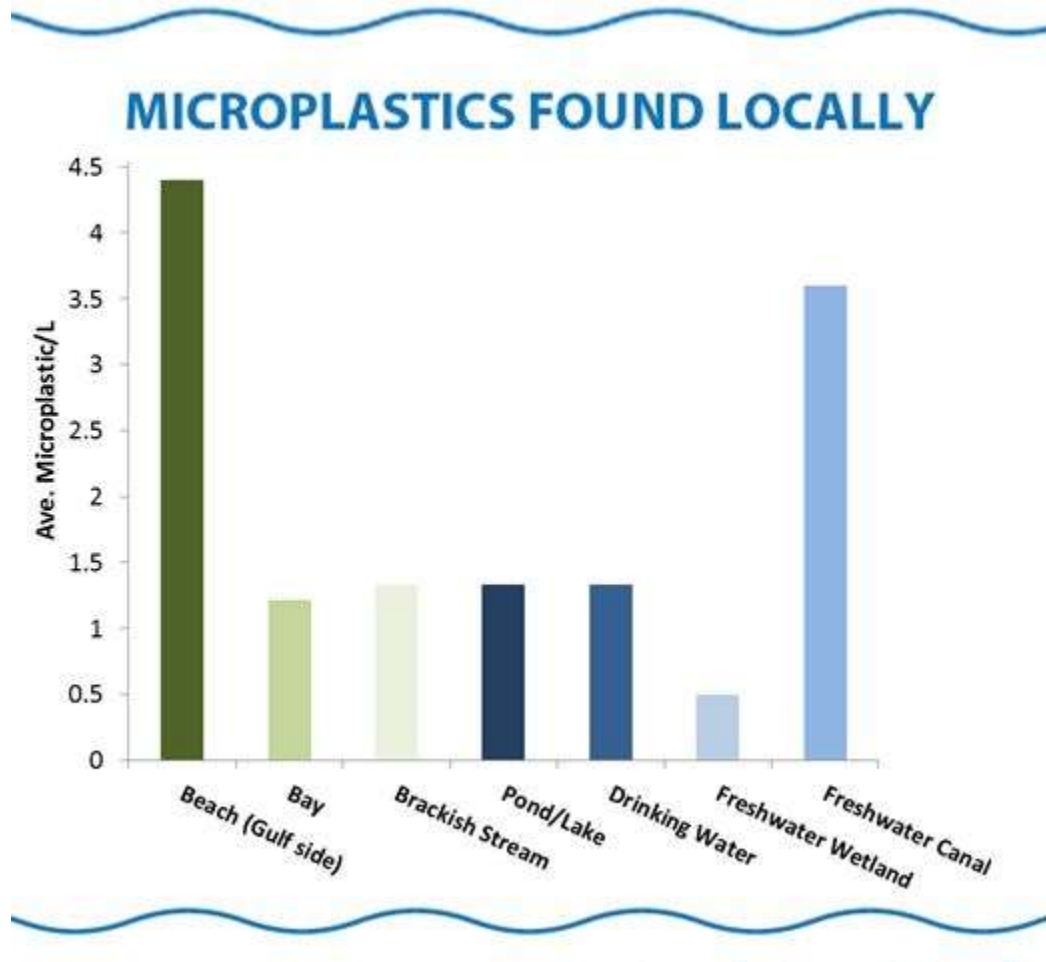
As you can see in this photo aquatic life consumes these plastics as they think its food. Us humans eat these fish which can affect our health because we will get sick as there is a lot of bad chemicals in them.

6. What can be done about micro-plastics?

- Reduce Your Use of Single-Use Plastics
- Recycle properly
- Avoid products containing microbeads
- Spreading the word about microplastics
- Stop littering



7. Graph



I have chosen a graph on where you can find micro plastics. As you can see the most microplastics found is at the beach. The least is at freshwater wetland. Some microplastics are found in drinking water. This isn't good for us humans. There's also a lot in the freshwater canal. That is where animals drink from. As you see this affects a lot of living things on our earth.

8. On a personal level, what can you do about the micro-plastics problem?

After doing a lot of research on this topic I have become more aware of plastic pollution and how this is affecting living things on our earth. I have come up with some ways I can help with this problem.

- Putting rubbish in the correct bins
- Picking up any plastic or rubbish laying around and putting it in bin
- Not littering
- Telling people to do the same

9. Bibliography

Photos:

graph on slide 8-

<http://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/sarasotaco/2017/11/02/microplastic-pollution/>

Photo on slide 6-

<https://pubs.rsc.org/en/content/articlehtml/2016/em/c6em90004f>

The rest are from google images

Information:

<https://pubs.rsc.org/en/content/articlehtml/2016/em/c6em90004f>

<https://toxtown.nlm.nih.gov/sources-of-exposure/microplastics>

<http://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/sarasotaco/2017/11/02/microplastic-pollution/>