



Summer 2018

# SEEDS *of* CHANGE

## Ocean Plastics Deep Dive



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## THE LAST FOAM CUP — McDonald's and Dunkin' Donuts

In 1948, McDonald's sparked a disposable revolution when they quit using reusable plates and utensils. Non-degradable polystyrene foam — often called styrofoam — became king, with foam cups and cheeseburger boxes filling landfills and oceans day after day. In 1990, McDonald's did away with foam "clam shell" boxes, but it still goes through about a **billion** foam cups a year.

Polystyrene foam is one of the greatest of ocean plastics scourges. It breaks down into tiny pieces that marine animals mistake for food, and it lasts — literally — *forever*. An astounding amount of ocean plastic debris is foam or plastic packaging.

Shareholders get it on foam. It takes a lot of power to alter the path of a corporate behemoth like McDonald's, but with shareholder power complementing grassroots activism and legislation, it can be done. With a 30% shareholder vote on our shareholder resolution, McDonald's investors told the

company they wanted it to quit its polystyrene habit. And McDonald's listened. The company will get rid of foam packaging entirely — **globally** — by the end of 2018.

McDonald's action is a resounding victory for oceans, ecosystems, landfills, and marine life — thanks to you. And Dunkin' Donuts followed McDonald's lead. Dunkin' uses around a billion foam cups a year, too — they've announced they'll quit foam by 2020.

That's **2 billion foam cups every year** between McDonald's and Dunkin' that won't ever see a customer — or the ocean, or the inside of a sea turtle's stomach.

That's the power of shareholder action. Your gift matters — it's your support that's stopping the flow of plastics at the source: giant global corporations.



# Starbucks' Throwaway Cups — there is no "away"

## *The Ocean Can't Wait*

Coffee giant Starbucks uses between 8 and 10 million single-use throwaway cups every day. But there is no "away" — there's only landfill, litter, incineration, ocean trash — or recycling. Ten years ago, Starbucks promised that by 2015, 100% of its cups would be reusable or recyclable, 25% of beverages would be served in reusable containers, and they'd have recycling capability in every store. It's 2018 and the company's nowhere close.

So this year shareholders spoke up, using a shareholder resolution to demand that Starbucks accelerate and live up to its recycling goals. Nearly 30% of Starbucks shares — worth \$54 billion — voted in favor. At the same time, grassroots activists



presented the CEO with a petition from nearly 1 million citizens asking the company to act.

The powerful vote result means Starbucks knows it can't rest on its mediocre performance — you're stopping this problem at its source. Because there is no "away," and the ocean can't wait.



As You Sow thanks **Our Children's Earth** for sponsoring this newsletter. **Our Children's Earth** advocates on behalf of children, who are most vulnerable to pollution, to enable them to breathe clean air and use clean water. They educate the public about the health problems caused by pollution in their neighborhoods, and empower affected communities to take action to reduce pollution. In addition to challenging dirty coal plants, fossil fuel refineries, diesel buses, and mega-factory farms, OCE is active in ocean and clean water campaigns, fighting to stop sewage, stormwater, and industrial water pollution at the source.



# UN Sustainable Development Goals: Ocean Plastics

193 of the world's 195 countries have agreed on a set of 17 goals that, taken together, imagine a world rid of poverty and hunger, and safe from the worst effects of climate change. These are the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, a shared global vision that embraces government, civil, and corporate action. The goals are ambitious, but achievable if we all do our part.

Because of you, we are doing our part for all of us. We're active on 16 of those 17 goals — with Ocean Plastics, it's Goal #6, Goal #12 and Goal #14. For instance, Goal #12 calls for reducing waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling, and reuse — exactly what we're pushing these mammoth global corporations to do with their packaging. Goal #14 calls for preventing and reducing marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities — plastics pollution has become a worldwide ocean crisis.

Together, we CAN make a difference — together, we ARE making a difference.

## What's the big deal with ocean plastics, anyway?

Oceans and ocean life are under siege from plastic waste. Ocean plastic is by many accounts one of the most significant environmental challenges facing the world today. Plastics, much of it from consumer packaging, degrades into tiny particles that harm and kill marine animals — and at this level, plastics are virtually impossible to clean up.

- The equivalent of a full garbage truck of plastic is dumped in the ocean every minute.
- Scientists found nearly 18 tons of plastic on one of the world's most remote islands, an uninhabited coral atoll in the South Pacific.
- Just this April, a sperm whale was found with 64 pounds of plastic in its stomach, likely its cause of death.

*Without action, the ocean will likely contain more plastic than fish by 2050.*

We're working to stem the flow at its source: the endless tsunami of single-use plastics and plastic packaging from global corporations.

These corporations — the ones putting single use plastics and plastic packaging into commerce without regard or responsibility for its recyclability or recycling systems — MUST be part of the solution. Shareholders are a strong, powerful force for creating lasting change in corporate behavior — your gift makes it possible to use that power, to create that change.

**AS YOU SOW**

Contributing to 16 of the UN's 17 SDGs

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

1. NO POVERTY	2. ZERO HUNGER	3. GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	4. QUALITY EDUCATION	5. GENDER EQUALITY	6. CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
7. AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY	8. DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH	9. INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	10. REDUCED INEQUALITIES	11. SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES	12. RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
13. CLIMATE ACTION	14. LIFE BELOW WATER	15. LIFE ON LAND	16. PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS	17. PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



# Plastics and Fossil Fuels: *a match made in h\*ll*

The union between plastics and fossil fuels is mushrooming to new level of h\*ll for climate and oceans and people.

As the cost of renewable energy drops and sales of electric cars grow, demand for fossil fuel diminishes, eating into oil company profits. But demand for plastics — especially single-use plastics — is expected to triple by 2050, and plastics are made from petroleum.

## *Oil companies are looking to plastics to drive new demand for their oil.*

Led by familiar names like Exxon, Shell, and Chevron, more plants to create plastic from petroleum are popping up across the country. The chemical industry



says there's a whopping \$164 billion worth of new investment in such facilities in the pipeline.

So just as we're coming to grips with plastics' devastating and lasting



harm, the oil industry steps up as a champion of plastics production — especially the worst, single-use kind.

We **MUST** find a way to stop the plastics/oil loop. And it's crucial that we find a way **NOW** — before even more long-term fossil fuel infrastructure is built, locking us in to years of plastic production that our climate and the oceans can't withstand.

**WILL YOU HELP?** Your donation **TODAY** helps figure out how to force an annulment, before this match from h\*ll wreaks massive, irreversible damage.

Thanks to a generous sponsor, your gift will be **MATCHED X3!** If you can make a donation today, you'll **triple your impact**. Please, don't miss this opportunity to take on a clear and present danger. Donate today.

# Yes.

Your Gift  
Multiplies  
**x3!**

**I want to tackle** ocean plastic pollution at the source —  
**I want to hold corporations** accountable.

**Give online today: [asousow.org/donate](https://asousow.org/donate)**

### **ABOUT AS YOU SOW**

As You Sow gets big companies to make big changes, to benefit people, planet, and profit. Because the corporations creating the problems have got to be part of the solution.

