

Much of the waste that we produce ends up on our beaches and in the ocean. Once in the sea, plastic and other litter endangers marine life through **entanglement, ingestion and suffocation.**

Marine litter has serious implications for human health! Engaging in coastal activities and eating seafood exposes us to marine litter that can cause physical damage or potential accidental ingestion of toxins/chemicals.

Did you know?
80% of marine litter comes from land based sources!

Tell me something I don't know

Did you know?
Plastic bottles are the most common type of litter found on Irish beaches

Did you know?
Research has shown that plastic litter is to be found **everywhere** in the ocean

Did you know?
A study at NUI Galway found 73% of deepwater fish have ingested microplastics!

But the problem is getting bigger... as things get smaller...

Ocean conditions including wave, current and solar action causes plastic litter to break down into **microplastics**. These can also come from products such as facewash, toothpaste and household cleaning products.



There is evidence to suggest that pollutants can attach to microplastics in the ocean. These microplastics can then be ingested by marine organisms.

Researchers are concerned the current composition of the additives in any plastic object is largely unknown. These are potentially more toxic to marine and human health than the plastic itself.



Beware 'Biodegradable' Plastics!
'Biodegradable' does not necessarily mean that it will degrade in the ocean, as these plastics require specific conditions and temperatures to biodegrade – conditions not available in the marine environment.

Did you know?
The government have recently backed a bill to ban microbeads!

What can YOU do?

- As the largest producers of plastic waste *in the EU*, Irish consumers have a big responsibility to reduce their plastic waste.
- Small changes like choosing products with less packaging, using reusable containers, coffee mugs and water bottles, and recycling correctly all make a difference.
- Avoid products with microbeads! Download the **Beat the Microbead** app to learn more.
- Why not try a **#2MinuteBeachClean** the next time you hit the beach, and don't forget to **Leave no Trace**.

For more information...
Clean Coasts – An Taisce
2 Minute Beach Clean
Beat the Microbead
Plastic Free Kinsale
Leave no Trace Ireland



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