



PLASTICS FACT SHEET

- Over **99%** of plastics are made from petroleum chemicals like ethane.
- **50%** of the plastics market is **single-use** disposables and **89%** of plastic waste exports are made up of plastics from **single-use packaging**.
- Nearly **one-third** of all plastic packaging is currently **designed NOT** for reuse or recycling, but for landfill, incineration, energy recovery, and/or environmental pollution:
 - small-format packaging (e.g. sachets, tear-offs, caps, lids)
 - nutrient-contaminated packaging (e.g. fast food);
 - multiple different materials stuck together, unable to be separated (to enhance packaging functionality);
 - and uncommon packaging materials, like PVC or Styrofoam.
- Currently, over **80%** of the world's plastic waste is not recycled. The U.S. recycling rate for plastic is 9%.
- Since 1988, **87%** of all plastic exports have been from high-income countries, while the majority of the importing countries are middle to low-income.
- Since 1992, China has imported **45%** of post-consumer plastic globally.
- If plastic production continues at the current rate, by 2050, it will be responsible for **20%** of total **oil** production and **15%** of annual **carbon** emissions— and the billions of tons of plastic polluting the ocean will **outweigh** all of the ocean's fish.
- **Solutions** to the plastic problem:
 - **30%** of plastic packaging needs to be **re-designed** (in terms of package format, polymer choice, pigments, and additives) for the after-use purpose of recycling or reuse.
 - At least **20%** of plastic packaging can economically be reused, as is, or replaced with **reusable** alternatives.
 - For the remaining 50% of plastic packaging, **recycling** is an economical opportunity, especially with further improvements to packaging design, harmonization of **collection and sorting** systems, and the scaling-up of high-quality recycling.

Recycling is changing.

Found out how with the What Goes Where app.

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