

January 2019

SLC Footprint

Monthly Theme: Plastic Waste

"Today we use plastic- a material that is supposed to last forever for products designed to last a couple of minutes"- Anonymous



More Plastic than Fish by 2050

Organizations That Work to Solve Plastic Waste.

4Ocean- Removes plastic from the ocean to remake into bracelets!

Ocean Cleanup- Utilizing innovative tech to clean up the ocean!

5Gyres- Reduces plastic use through science, adventure, and education!

Sea Shepherd- Since 1977 they've been protecting the oceans health and bio-diversity!

Do Something Drastic, Cut the Plastic

Plastic is any synthetic or semi-synthetic organic polymer. In other words, while other elements may be present, plastics always includes carbon and hydrogen. Most industrial plastic is made from petroleum. The name "plastic" refers to the property of plasticity, which is the ability to deform without breaking down (Helmenstine, 2018).

Currently, according to the United Nations only 9% of plastics are recycled in the world. This is a problem due to the non-biodegradable materials which usually take up to 400 years to bio-degrade (Ritschet, 2018).

Businesses and governments transitioning to a circular economy will reduce single-use plastic waste while ensuring our oceans, lakes, and rivers stay clean!

Refuse. Reduce. Reuse. Recycle

Key Facts About Plastic Waste

The Great Pacific Garbage Patch

The Great Pacific Garbage Patch (GPGP) is the largest of the five offshore plastic accumulation zones in the world's oceans. It is located halfway between Hawaii and California.

In March, National Geographic published evidence that the Great Pacific Garbage Patch—contains about 80,000 tons of plastic, 16 times larger than previously thought and is the equivalent to about 500 jumbo jets, larger plastics linger in the water, they break down into micro plastics that scientists are now finding everywhere: in fish, fertilizers, table salt, and in 93 percent of bottled water (Parker, 2018).

Plastic Waste's Impact on Wildlife

Plastic has increasingly become a ubiquitous substance in the ocean. Due to its size and color, animals confuse the plastic for food, causing malnutrition, it poses entanglement risks and threatens their overall behavior, health and existence.

Studies have shown that about 700 species have encountered marine debris, and 92% of these interactions are with plastic. 17% of the species affected by plastic are on the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List of Threatened Species (Gall, Thompson, 2015).

Fishing nets account for 46% of the mass in the GPGP and they can be dangerous for animals who swim or collide into them since they extract themselves from the net. Interaction with these discarded nets, also known as ghost nets often results in the death of the marine life involved (Gall, Thompson, 2015).

What is a Circular Economy?

A circular economy aims to eliminate waste, not just from recycling processes, but throughout the lifecycles of products and packaging.

A circular economy aims to maximize value and eliminate waste by improving the design of materials, products, and business models.

A circular economy goes beyond recycling. The goal is not just to design for better end-of-life recovery, but to minimize the use of raw materials and energy through a restorative system. In a circular economy, the value of products and materials is maintained for as long as possible.

Waste is minimized and resources are kept within the economy when a product has reached the end of its life, to be used again to create further value.

*All information cited from [The Strategy for a Waste-Free Ontario 2017](#)



January Events



What's happening SLC?

Have an upcoming event you want to have appear in the Footprint Newsletter? Just email the details to footprint@sl.on.ca

Documentary Night-Kingston Campus

The Green Team will be hosting A Plastic Ocean in the Innovation Hub January 31st at 6:00 pm snacks and light refreshments will be made available! Check out the trailer here [//www.youtube.com/watch?v=6zrn4-FfbXw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6zrn4-FfbXw)

E-Waste Sorting & Collection!

Footprint and the Green Team need help sorting and collecting e-waste to ensure electronic waste at the college is diverted from landfills and recycled! Email Brooke Gilmour (bgilmour@sl.on.ca) to help out!

Kingston Climate Change Symposium

On Thursday January 17th, from 1:00 pm to 9:00 pm Sustainable Kingston is hosting a Climate Change Symposium which will feature several guest speakers, food, and networking opportunities! Tickets start at \$35 for adults and \$20 for students. Find your tickets here

[//www.kingstongrand.ca/events/kingston-climate-change-symposium](https://www.kingstongrand.ca/events/kingston-climate-change-symposium)



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