



Marine Litter Stats

- Marine litter poses a vast and growing threat to the marine and coastal environment. Around 8 million items of litter enter the marine environment every day. ¹
- An estimated 70 per cent of marine litter ends up on the sea bed, 15 per cent on beaches and the remaining floats to the surface. ¹
- An estimated 80% of marine debris is from land based sources 20% sea based. ¹
- It is estimated three times as much rubbish is dumped into the world's oceans annually as the weight of fish caught. ⁵
- Around 7 billion tonnes of plastic litter enter the ocean every year. ²
- It is estimated that over 13, 000 pieces of plastic litter float on every square kilometre of ocean and this figure continues to grow. ⁸
- Plastics make up about 60% of marine debris, with an estimated 100,000 marine mammals and turtles killed by plastic litter every year around the world. ⁵
- Plastic bags on the ocean floor take 10-20 years to decompose. Plastic bottles take much longer. Because of this, one piece can kill more than one animal. An animal killed by swallowing plastic will decompose long before the plastic does, leaving the plastic free to kill again. ¹



Sources

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- 2: *Australian Marine Conservation Society*
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- 5: *Faris, J& K. Hart (1995) Seas of Debris: A summary of the Third International Conference on Marine Debris, Alaska Fisheries Science Centre, National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration*
- 6: *Queensland Department of Environment & Resource Management*
- 7: *GhostNets Australia*
- 8: *Derraik, J.G.B. 2002: The pollution of the marine environment by plastic debris: a review. Marine Pollution Bulletin*
- 9: *Earthwatch: Dr Kathy Townsend*
- 10: *Plastic ingestion by Flesh-footed Shearwaters (puffinus carneipes) by Ian Hutton, Nicholas Carlile and David Priddel*