

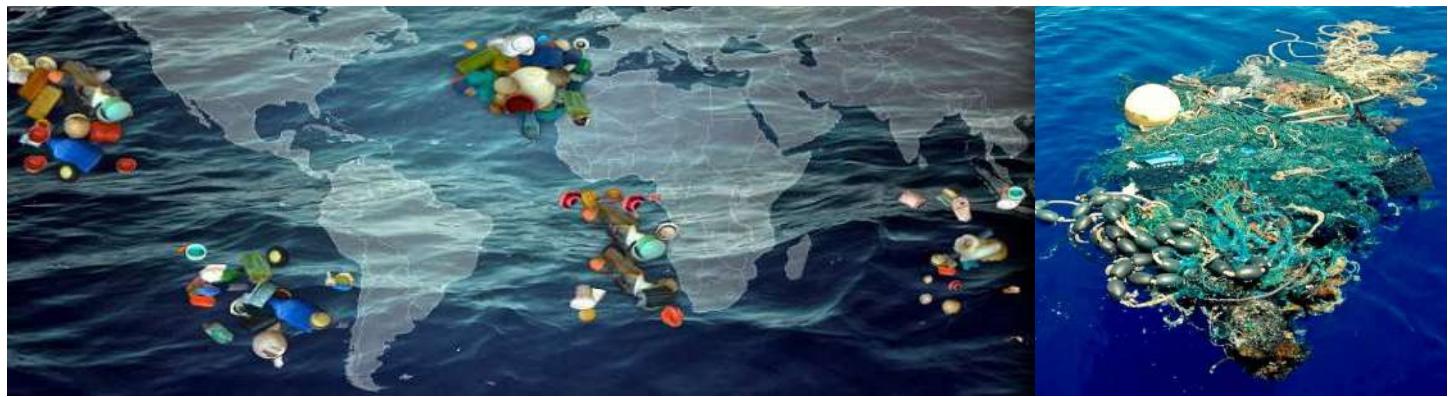
# USING WATER RESPONSIBLY - SUPPORT PACKAGE



## Ocean Plastics

Every bit of plastic that has ever been created is still on Earth! It may be microscopic but it's still here!

Plastic can be recycled but over time plastic degrades and eventually ends up in landfills or worse in our waterways. The plastic in our marine environments comes in all shapes and sizes, ranging from large nets to microplastic. We hear stories of the super-size garbage patches of plastic in every ocean ([National Geographic overview](#)); beaches that are overcome with plastics ([Midway Story](#)); and how microplastics are found in the cells of fish we eat ([The Guardian story](#)). These stories sound unbelievable, even incomprehensible. The point is that we have a HUGE plastic problem. Rather than getting overwhelmed by the problem we can focus on solutions, starting with our choices. There are things you can do everyday, both at school and at home, to reduce plastic in everyday life and therefore prevent plastic from entering the marine environment.



<https://wastewatchers.wordpress.com/tag/north-atlantic/> / [http://www.bluebird-electric.net/oceanography/Ocean\\_Plastic\\_International\\_Rescue/Plastic\\_The\\_Great\\_North\\_Pacific\\_Garbage\\_Patch.htm](http://www.bluebird-electric.net/oceanography/Ocean_Plastic_International_Rescue/Plastic_The_Great_North_Pacific_Garbage_Patch.htm)

## Action Plan

**Learn.** Take some time to learn about this impact to inspire your team or class to make a change. Why do we need to reduce our plastic use? If students understand the impact plastics are having on the earth they are more likely to make a change. This [video](#) has many images that show why plastic is a problem. Determine your [Plastic Footprint](#). Artist Chris Jordan has both [photo](#) and [video](#) projects on the problem of plastic pollution, best for ages 12 and up. Before you begin to make changes, ask students to list, save or photograph the plastic they use in one day. Then ask them what they could do instead of using plastic. Brainstorm as a group to find solutions and options.

**Develop a Plan.** Decide what are you going to do. Although it is tempting to try to do everything at once, please start small with one initiative that will make a big impact and help students change one habit at a time. [One Green Planet](#) lists '10 Simple Actions That Might Save Our World's Oceans From Plastics'. Some of these ideas are listed below.

### Reduce:

- Say no to single use plastic bottles and always use a reusable bottle. Install a water bottle refill station at your school, there is a support package available for this initiative.



- Say no to plastic bags. Take a reusable cotton bag when you shop.
- Never litter.
- Say no to plastic straws.
- Buy food with the least amount of plastic packaging or no packaging at all.
- Say no to plastic cutlery, plates and bowls. Find ways for your school to purchase and use reusable dishes and utensils.
- Host regular litterless lunch days. There is a support package available.

**Reuse:**

- Host a clothing swap or book swap. There is a support package available for this initiative.
- Host a 'make your own reusable bag or sandwich container' workshop.

**Recycle:**

- Host a school yard, roadside or beach cleanup, and make sure you recycle the plastic collected. There is a support package available to help get you started.
- Encourage local fishermen to take part in [Clean NS's Ship to Shore Project](#).

**Engage.** Get other teachers and students excited by sharing this support package. Each class can learn about why they need to reduce their plastic use, and how to get started. Invite your Green Schools NS Engagement Officer to do a virtual engagement to help get your school started. If you want to do student-to-student education, share some of the pictures and video mentioned here. Ask your Green Schools Engagement Officer for any of the related Support Packages. Also check out [CaNOE](#)- Canadian Network for Ocean Education.

**School Announcement:** Did you know that it is estimated there will be more plastic than fish in the ocean by 2040! I know that is unbelievable! But we can make a difference by choosing everyday to use less plastic. We are going to focus on \*state your initiative\* and we all need to do our part. Let's work together to take care of this one and only earth!

**Share.** Encourage students to draw or write about their experience reducing their dependance on plastic. Take lots of pictures of everyone during your initiative and share them with us. We'll make sure they go up on our website and social media channels so your actions inspire others, in Nova Scotian Green Schools and beyond!



<http://www.craftaholicsanonymous.net/no-sew-t-shirt-bag-tutorial>

## Other Resources

[Green Schools NS Pinterest - Using Water Responsibility](#)

Green Schools NS Gift of Time Support Package

Green Schools NS Water Bottle Refilling Station Support Package

Green Schools NS Wasteless Wednesday Support Package

Green Schools NS School Clothing Swap Guide Support Package



## Green Schools NS School Yard & Roadside Clean-up Support Package

[France bans plastic utensils - Science Alert](#)

[Delhi bans disposable plastic - Independent](#)

### **Events**

[Canada World Water Day](#)

[World Water Day](#)

### **Local Initiatives**

[Blue Dream Project](#)

### **Videos**

[The Story of Microfibers](#)

[Let's Ban the Bead](#)

[The Story of Bottled Water](#)

[The Plastic Age](#)

[TED Talk- Seas of Plastic](#)

[Plastic pollution, our oceans, our future](#)

### **Documentaries**

[Plastic Paradise: The Great Pacific Garbage Patch](#)

[Bag It: Is your life too plastic?](#)

[Plastic Oceans](#)

