



ZONTA
INTERNATIONAL

BUILD A BETTER WORLD
FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS



zonta.org/zontasaysnow



Toxic Truths: Plastic, Pollution & Health

Intercontinental Think Tank
Sunday 14 September, 6 pm UTC

Housekeeping



- Use the chat line to ask questions and make comments
- Mute your audio and turn off your video to help with the technical quality of our meeting today
- Answer questions or comment respectfully
- Ask short, succinct questions
- Use welcoming and inclusive language

Today's Team



Julie
Trone
USA



Teena
Halbig
USA



Dr. Megan
Wolff
USA



Angela
Brokmann
USA



Errick
Elavia
India



Joan
Kabayambi
Kenya



Our Journey Today

Welcome and
introductions

Plastics
Pollution & Health
Speakers: Megan
Wolff and
Teena Halbig

Issues and Solutions
around the World
Speaker: Errick Elavia and
Joan Kabayambi

Zonta News

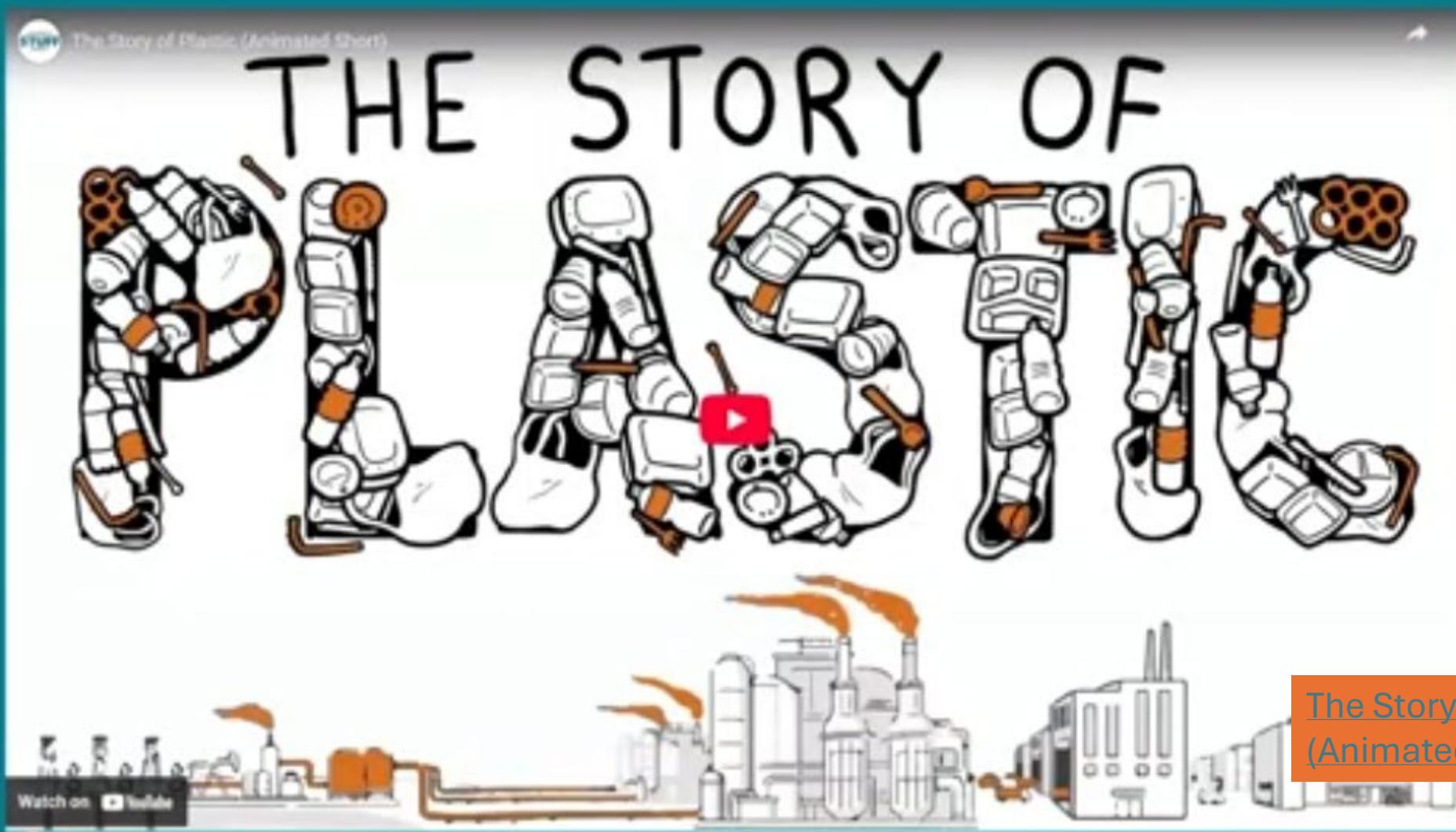
Discussion

Why should Zontians
Advocate and Take
Action?

Summary and
Closing

What Can Zontians Do?

Video Presentation

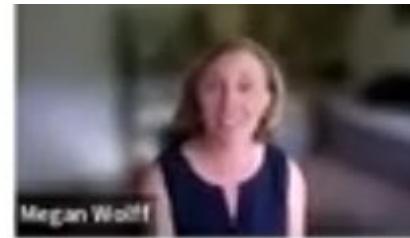


Speaker – Megan Wolff



- Executive director of P-SNAP, a network of physicians and scientists
- Adjunct faculty member at Cooper Medical School of Rowan University
- Served on the Minderoo-Monaco Commission on Plastic and Human Health, 2022-2023
- Health Policy Director at Beyond Plastics from 2021-2024

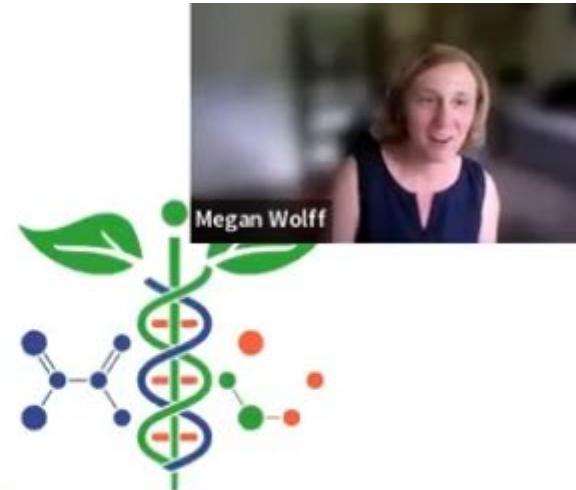




Megan Wolff

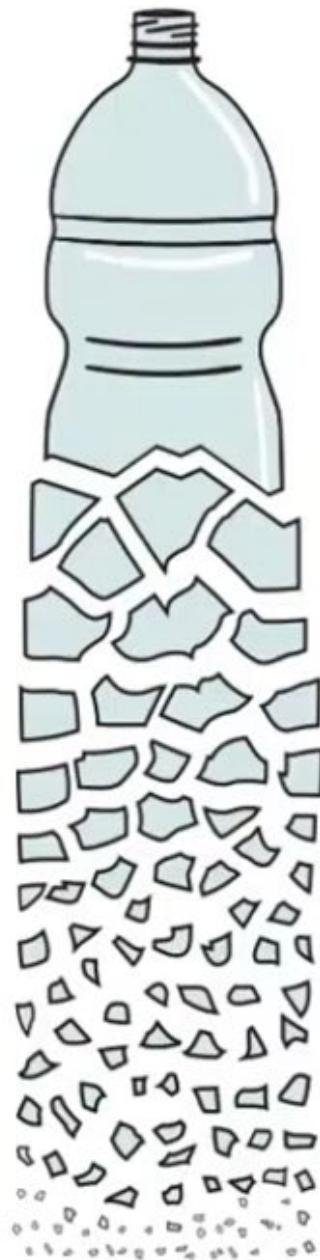
The Race to Research: Plastics and Human Health

Megan J. Wolff, PhD MPH
Executive Director
megan@psnap.org
Sept 2025



P-SNAP
PHYSICIAN AND SCIENTIST
NETWORK ADDRESSING
PLASTICS AND HEALTH

- **100 Participants**
- **25 Specialties**
- **21 States**



PLASTIC WASTE

PLASTIC
BREAKDOWN

MACROPLASTICS
>5mm



MICROPLASTICS
5mm-0.1μm

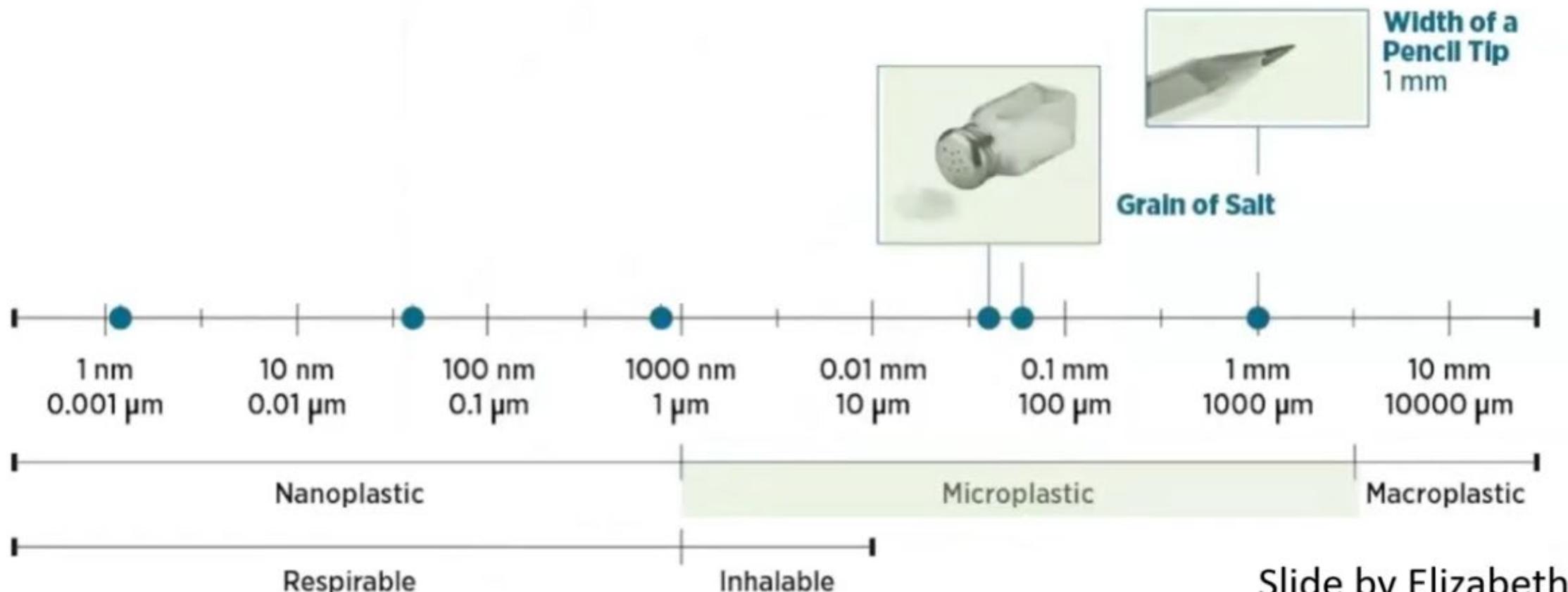


NANOPLASTICS
<0.1μm

<https://www.iucn.org/story/202207/plastic-pollution-crisis>



Microplastics and nanoplastics are very small



Where are the microplastics



Lung - May 2021

Meconium - June 2021

Sputum - Jan 2022

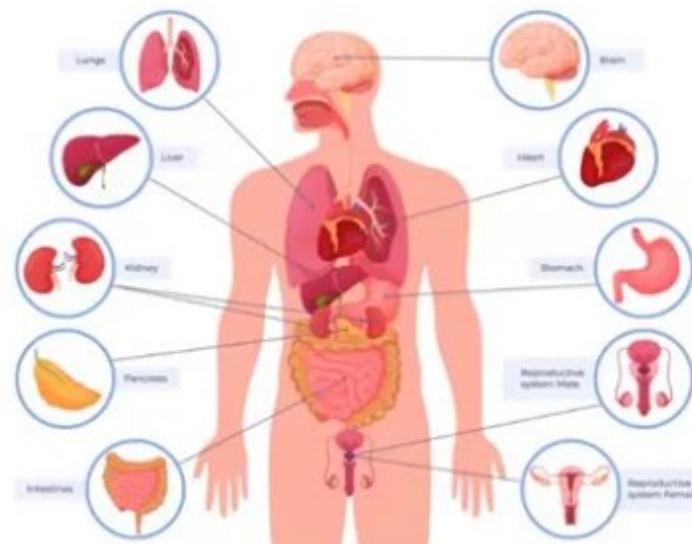
Blood - May 2022

Breast Milk - June 2022

Liver - Aug 2022

Urine - Dec 2022

Veins - Feb 2023



Testes/Semen - March 2023

Heart Tissue - Aug 2023

Kidney - Feb 2024

Carotid plaque - March 2024

Brain - May 2024

Olfactory Bulb - Sept 2024





ORIGINAL ARTICLE

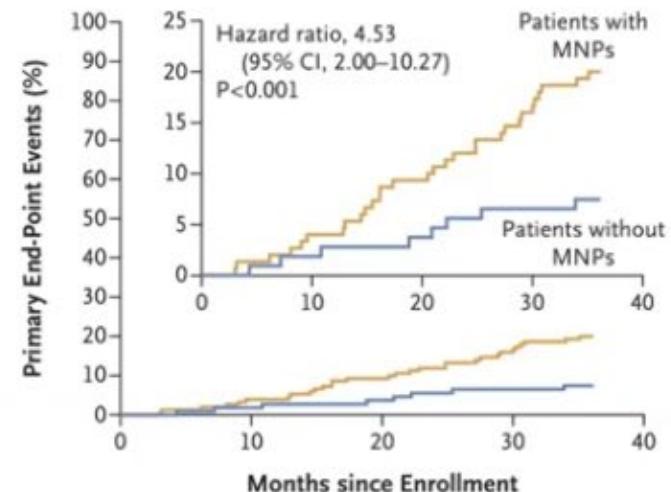
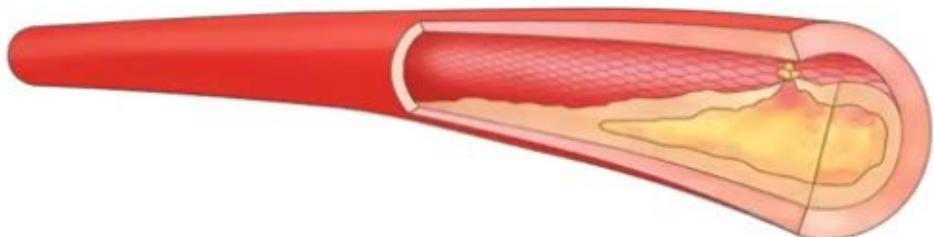
Microplastics and Nanoplastics in Atheromas and Cardiovascular Events

R. Marfella, F. Prattichizzo, C. Sardu, G. Fulgenzi, L. Graciotti, T. Spadoni, N. D'Onofrio, L. Scisciola, R. La Grotta, C. Frigé, V. Pellegrini, M. Municinò,

N Engl J Med 2024;390:900-10.

DOI: 10.1056/NEJMoa2309822

Copyright © 2024 Massachusetts Medical Society.



No. at Risk	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5
Patients with MNPs	150	144	136	126	120
Patients without MNPs	107	105	103	99	99

Figure 4. Associations between the Presence of MNPs and Cardiovascular Events.





Megan Wolff

Brief Communication

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41591-024-03453-1>

Bioaccumulation of microplastics in decedent human brains

Received: 29 April 2024

Accepted: 9 December 2024

Published online: 03 February 2025

Check for updates

Alexander J. Nihart ^{1,12}, Marcus A. Garcia ^{1,12}, Eliane El Hayek ^{1,12}, Rui Liu ¹, Marian Olewine ¹, Josiah D. Kingston ¹, Eliseo F. Castillo ², Rama R. Gullapalli ³, Tamara Howard ⁴, Barry Bleske ⁵, Justin Scott ⁶, Jorge Gonzalez-Estrella ⁶, Jessica M. Gross ⁷, Michael Spilde ⁸, Natalie L. Adolphi ⁹, Daniel F. Gallego ⁹, Heather S. Jarrell ⁹, Gabrielle Dvorscak ⁹, Maria E. Zuluaga-Ruiz ¹⁰, Andrew B. West ¹¹ & Matthew J. Campen ¹

- “Polyethylene was the predominant polymer”
- “MNP are **selectively accumulated** into the human brain.”
- The brains of people with a history of alzheimer’s or dementia contained 5-10x more plastic
- “...total plastics mass concentration in brains increased over 50% in the past 8 years.”



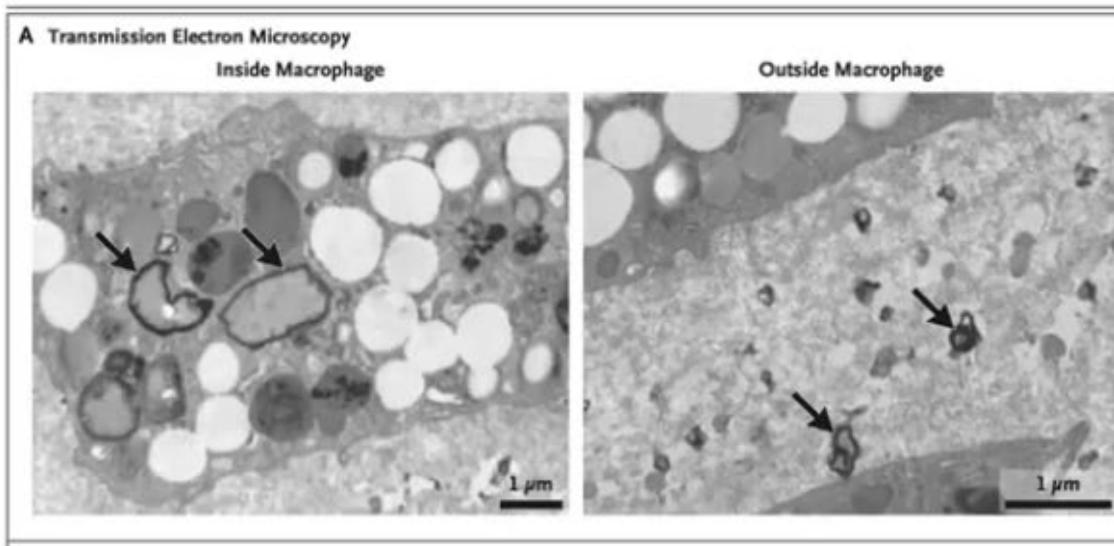
Mo



The Effects of Plastics on Health



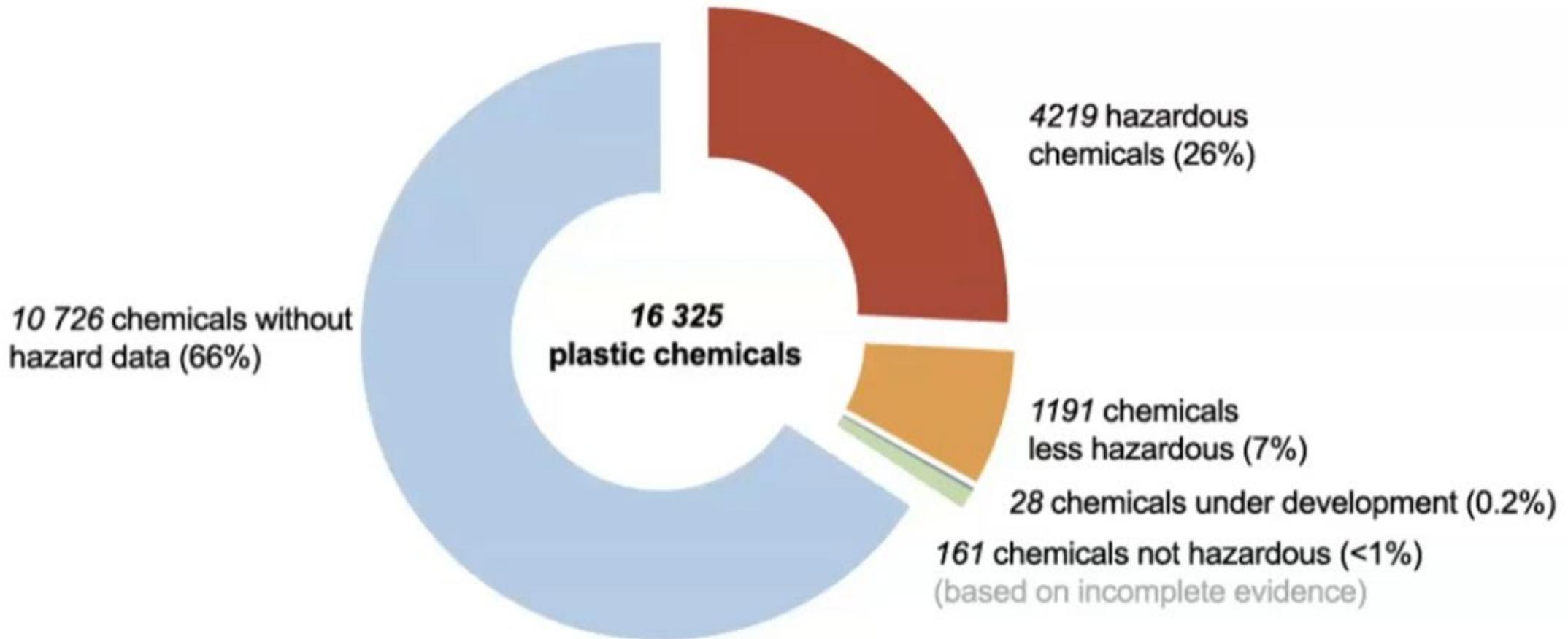
Particle Effects

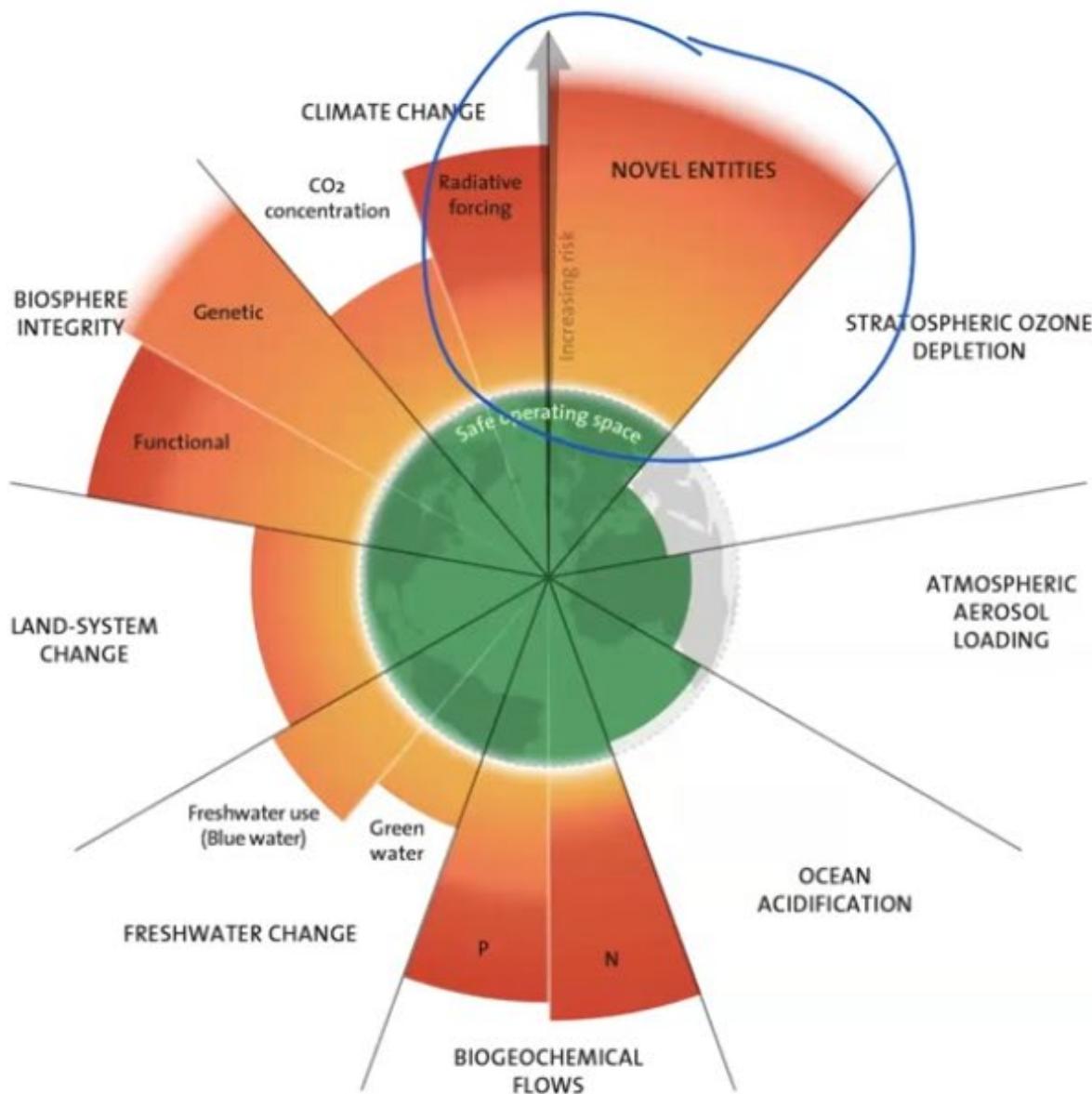


Chemical Effects



Researchers have identified 16,325 chemicals in plastics.





350,000 novel chemicals registered for global production (wang et al 2020)

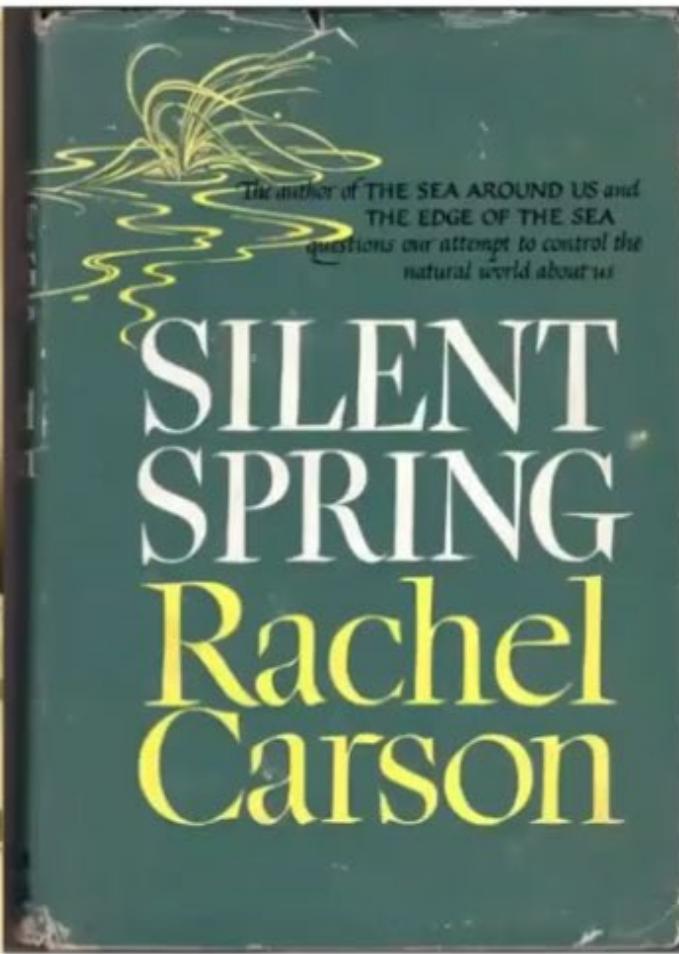
- 50,000 are “confidential”
- 70,000 are ambiguously described
- How many have been studied?
 - About 3500
- **But we only understand the large scale environmental impacts of 65**



Megan Wolff

The 2023 update to the Planetary boundaries. Licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 3.0. Credit: "Azote for Stockholm Resilience Centre, based on analysis in Richardson et al 2023". [Download the illustration here](#).





Rachel Carson photo credit: Science History Images / Alamy



“Given time – time not in years, but in millenia – life adjusts, and a balance has been reached. For time is an essential ingredient; but in the modern world, there is no time.”

Rachel Carson

Plastics comprise 70% of the synthetic chemical industry.

We manufacture ten times more plastic than pesticides annually, but...

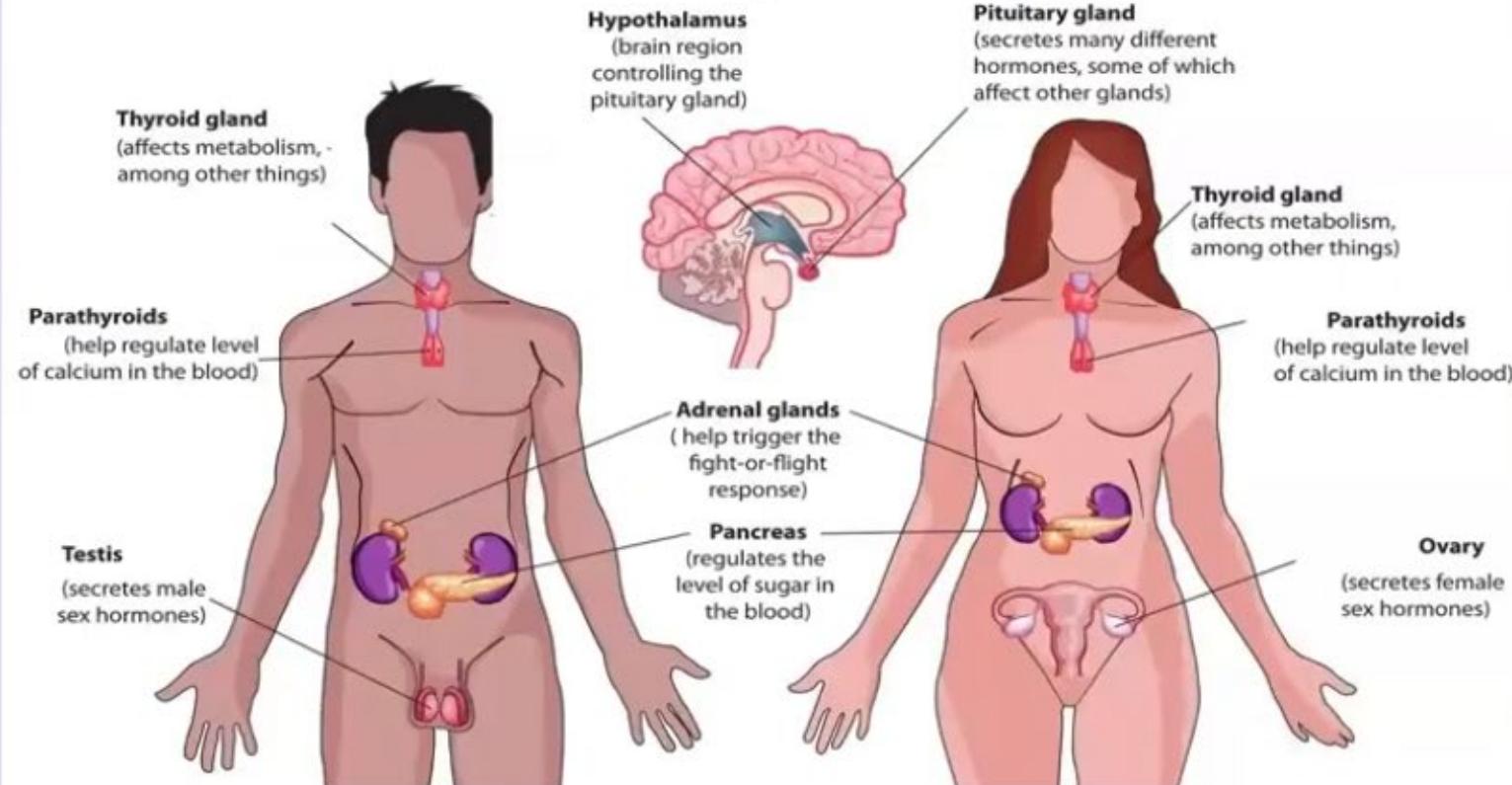
- The majority of chemicals remain untested.
- Ingredients are unknown
- The country of origin is unlabelled.
- There is chronic universal human exposure.
- But plastics have received virtually no attention from EPA.





Megan Wolff

Endocrine System Diagram



Hormones are the signalling system that conducts the symphony of life.



Periods of Greatest Vulnerability



The timing makes the poison.



Prenatal Dose:

1 part per billion

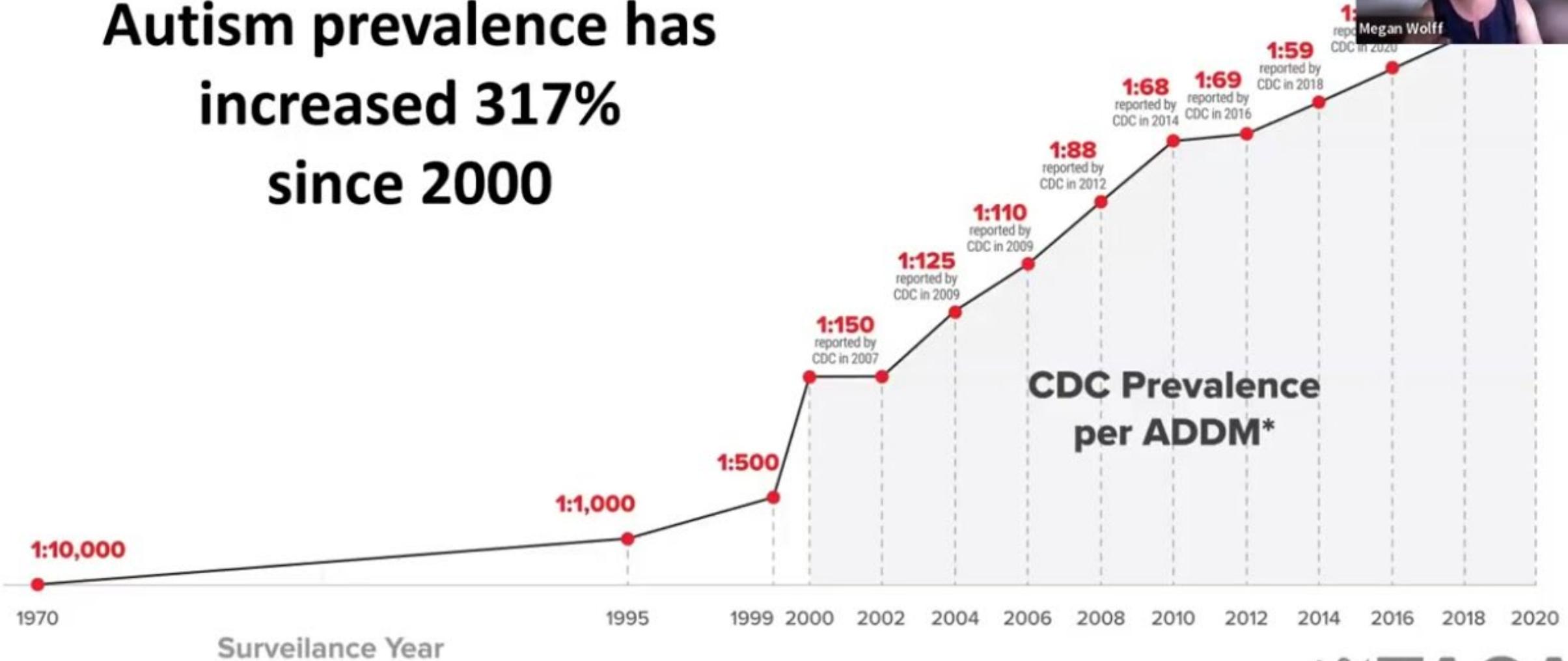
9-16 days gestation

Newbold et al (2009). *Molecular and cellular endocrinology*, 304(1-2), 84-89.

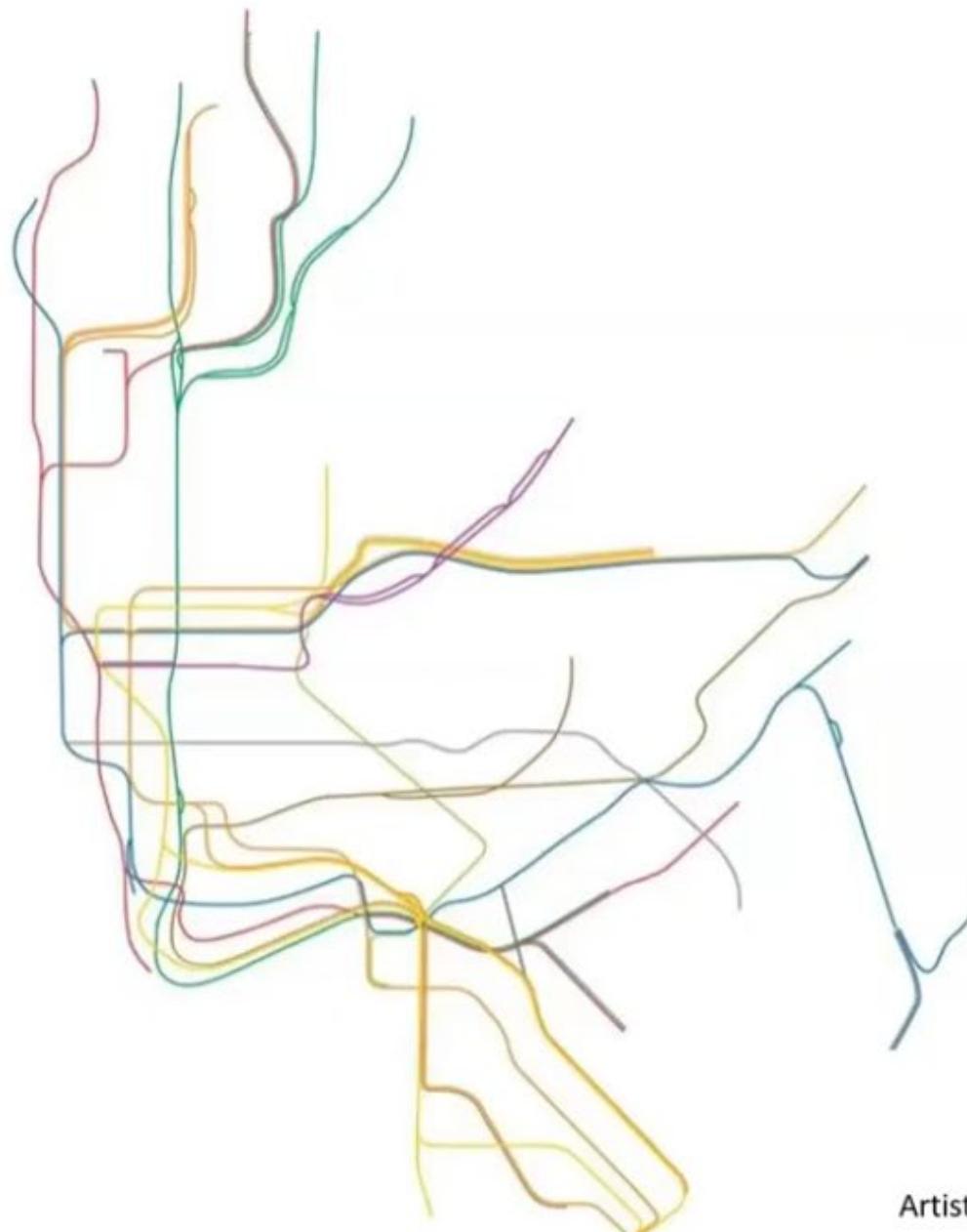




Autism prevalence has increased 317% since 2000



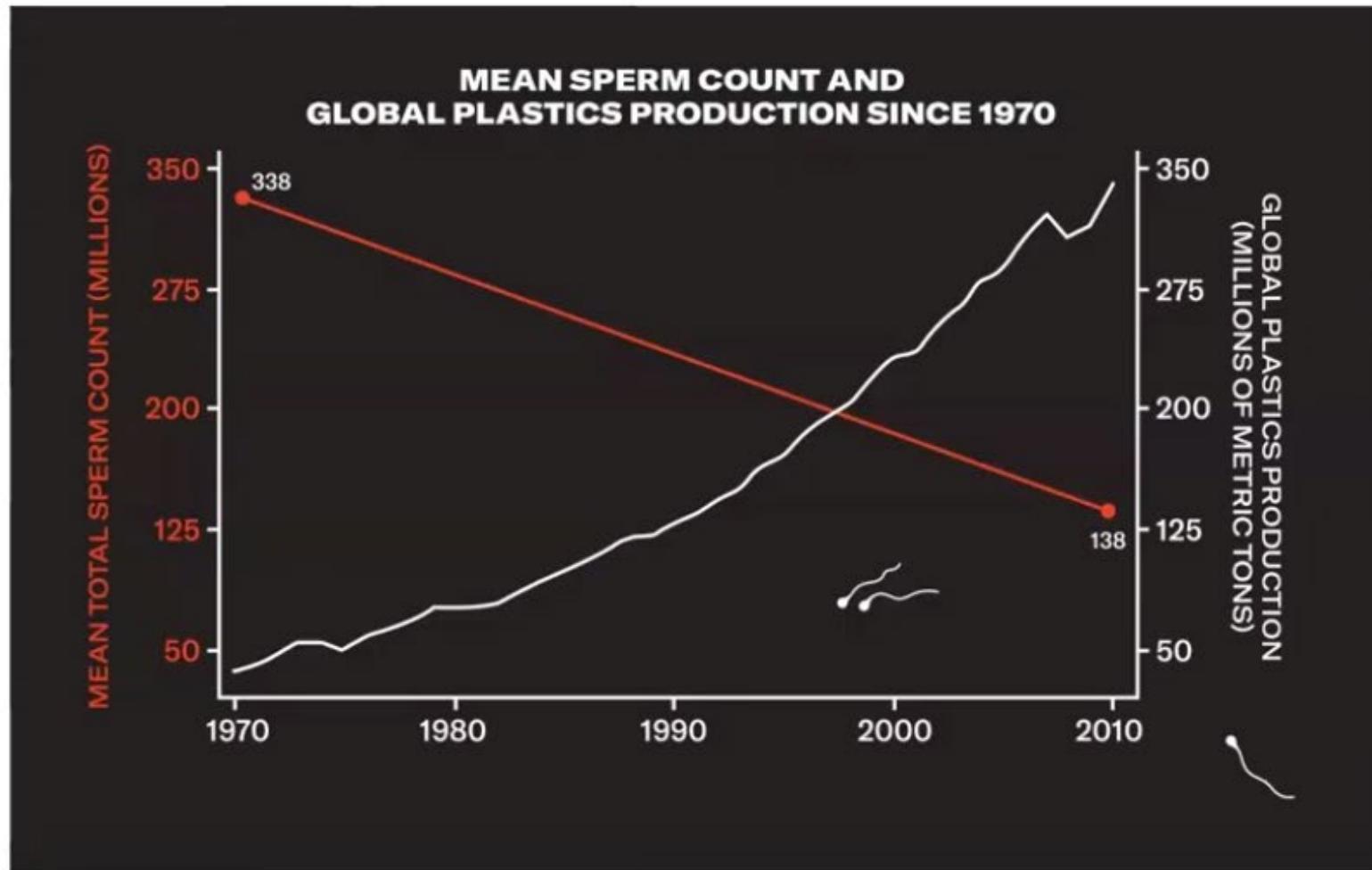
*ADDM (Autism and Development Disabilities Monitoring Network)



Artist: ThisCityMaps

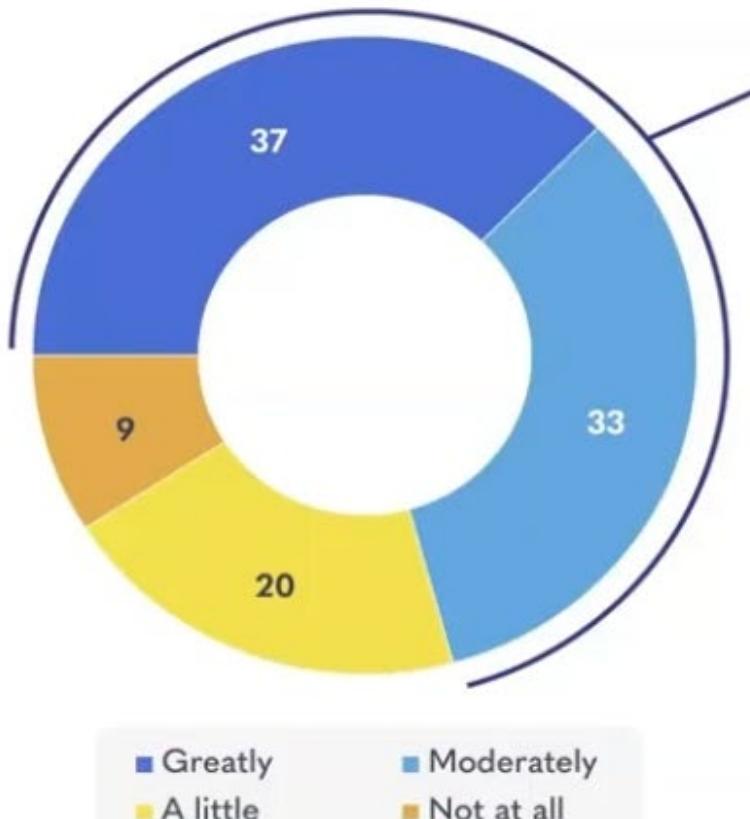


Coincidence?



Halpern (2018). Sperm count zero. GQ Magazine.

Plastics Treaty Talks Stall While Public Feels Impacted by Plastics and Sees Health Risks as Top Concern



70%

say they are greatly or moderately affected by single-use plastic waste.

Consumers' concerns about single-use plastics:

- Human health impacts affecting our bodies (35%)
- Impacts on animals/biodiversity (20%)
- Climate change (18%)
- Plastics in the ocean (18%)
- Litter in cities/towns (9%)

Extent Personally Affected by Single-use Plastic Waste, Average of 31 Markets, 2024; Greatest Concerns about Plastics, Subsample: Those Who Say Single-use Plastic Waste Is "Very Serious," Average of 31 Markets, 2024

Source: GlobeScan *Healthy & Sustainable Living Report* (survey of 30,216 people in the general public in July – August 2024)



P-SNAP

**PHYSICIAN AND SCIENTIST
NETWORK ADDRESSING
PLASTICS AND HEALTH**



Thank you!!
megan@psnap.org
www.psnap.org

Regulatory systems are the most efficient and the most **just**.



Megan Wolff



Questions for Megan



Speaker – Teena Halbig



- Co-Founder – Floyds Fork Environmental Association
- Medical Technologist
- Clinical Laboratory Scientist
- Jewish Hospital Microbiologist and Virology Supervisor
- Leadership focus –
 - Dangers of PFAs
 - Human Trafficking/Extortion



Angela Brokmann



Microplastics & Health: Amplifying Awareness



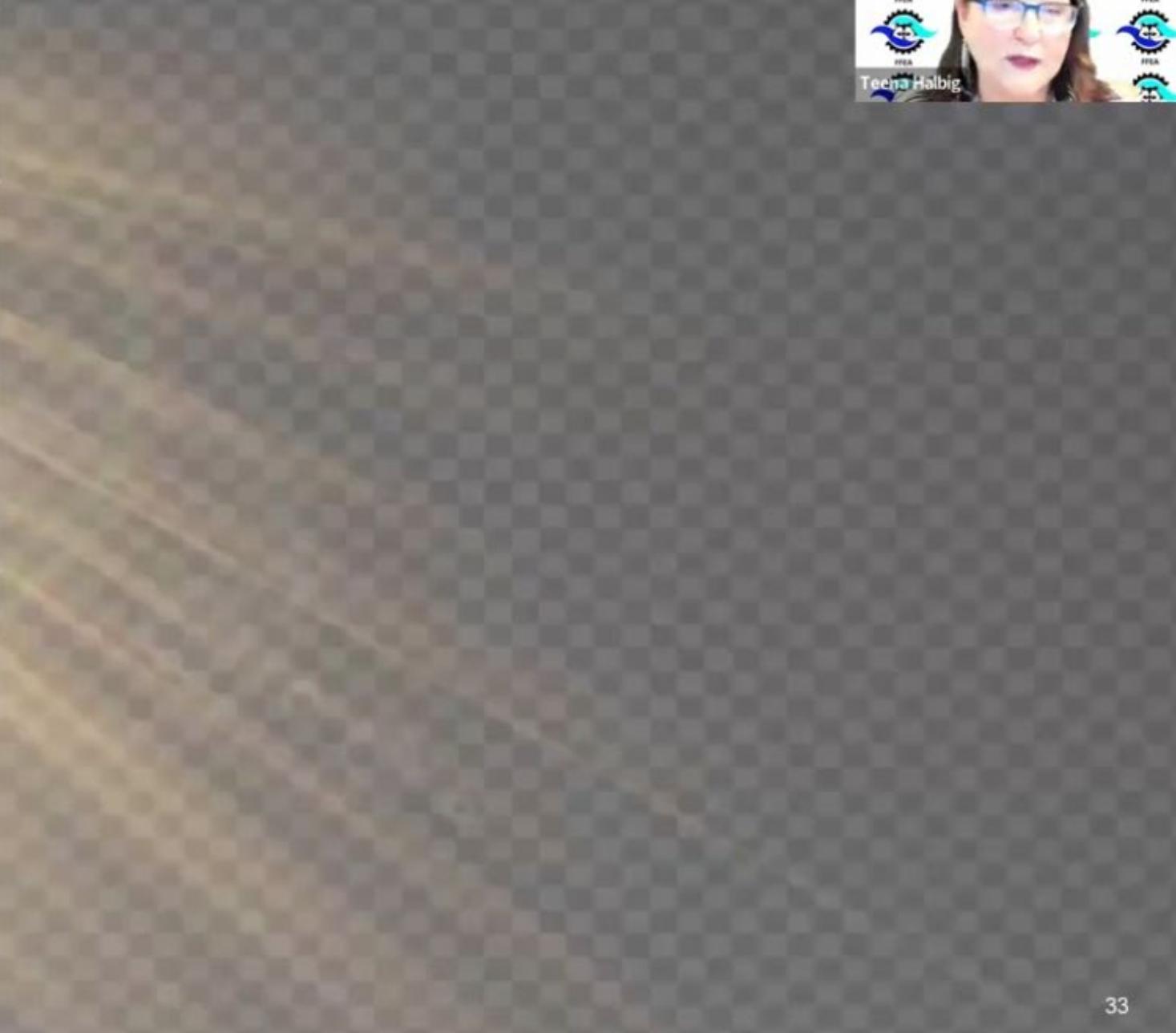
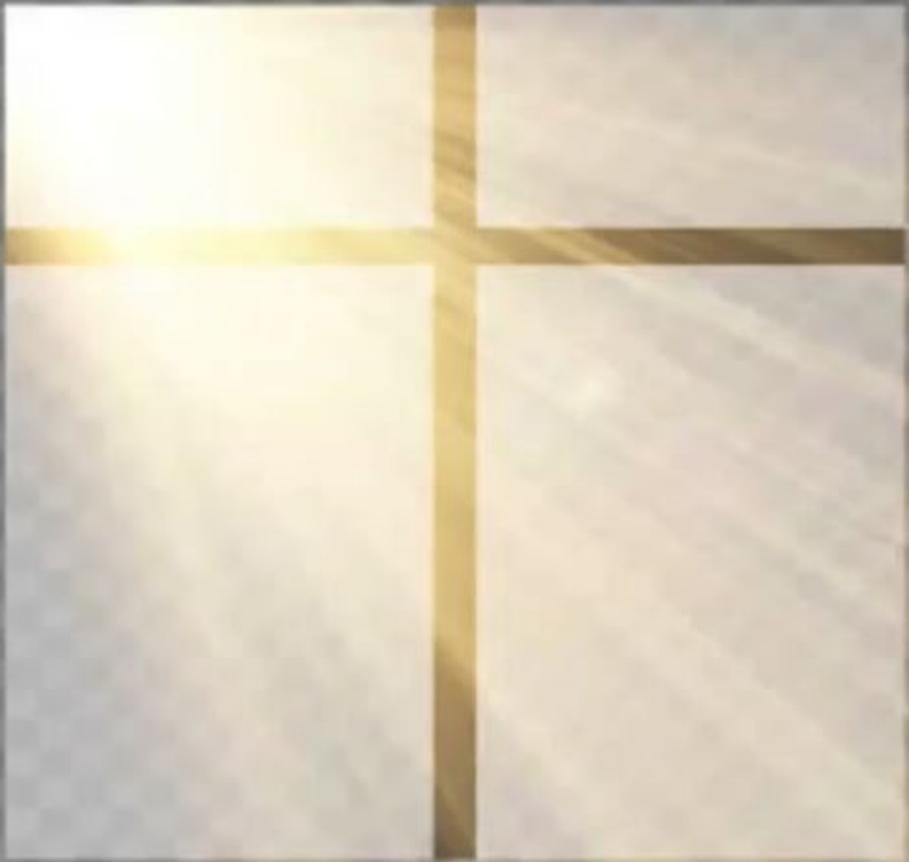
Teena Halbig



Microplastic particles. A-TS / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

By
Teena Halbig
TeenaHal@aol.com,
502 777-5192
9-14-25

Do you think only DUST particles in sun



Teena Halbig

Size Matters:

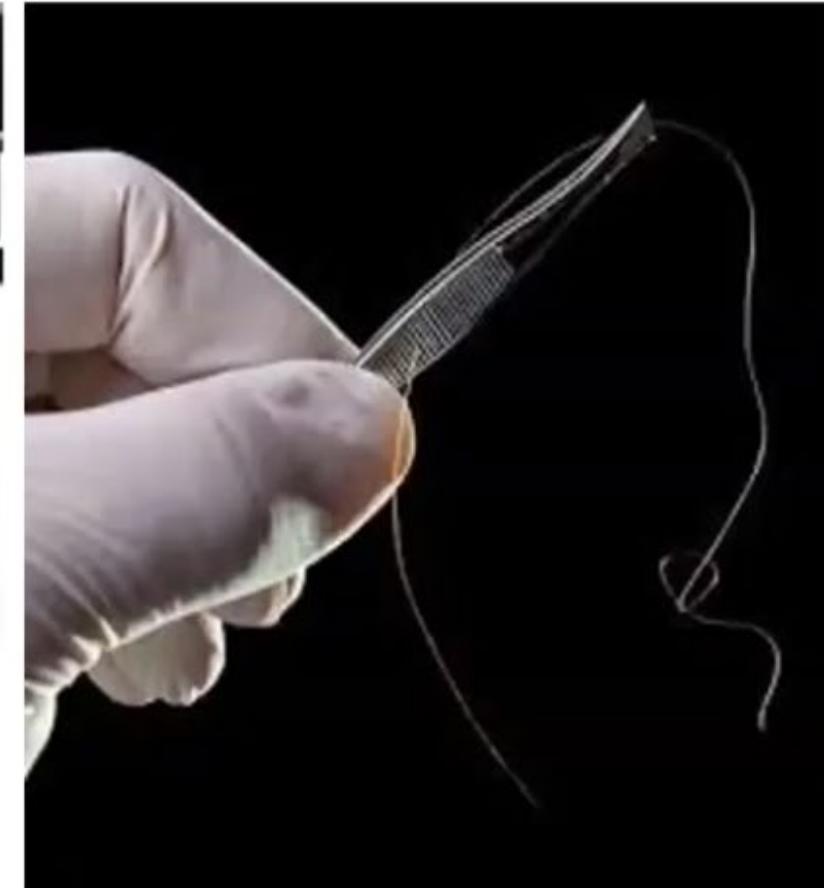
Microplastics: > 5mm

Nanoplastics: < 1um or .001 mm – think “itsy-bitsy”



1 mm =
1000 microns

human whole blood



Creator: Timothy Evans / Alamy Stock Photo | Credit: Alamy Stock Photo



1 Billion

Plastic toothbrushes are thrown away annually, generating around 50 million pounds of waste.

A single plastic toothbrush can take up to 500 years to decompose, meaning every toothbrush EVER MADE still exists in some form.

Plastic toothbrushes are a significant contributor to ocean pollution — studies estimate that toothbrushes make up about 1% of ALL plastic waste in the oceans.

Consider switching to Bamboo Toothbrushes



HEALTH MATTERS!



Teena Halbig

EWG = Environmental Working Group

ewg@ewg.org

Research estimates adults can ingest up to 12 plastic bags worth of plastic per year!|||

Long-term exposure to plastic particles can lead to serious health issues, including
respiratory problems,
hormone disruption, and
increased risk of cancer

Studies have found micro and nanoplastics in:

Human placenta
Lungs
Blood
Breast milk, etc.

The chemicals in micro-and nano plastics (MNPs) cause a plethora of health impacts including harm to **hormonal systems leading to infertility**, and **neurological and behavior disorders among others**.
a new review (<https://www.mdpi.com/1422-0067/26/13/6156>, June 26, 2025) which unpacks the mechanisms of how plastics affect health.



Main Routes of Exposure:

- Ingestion/Consume: drinking bottled water or other drinks in plastic & food
- Respiratory/Inhalation: breathing in particles to reach lungs
- Reproductive: clothing contact, tampons, etc.
- Dermal: Skin absorption

Typically, people consume microplastics from contaminated *food and drinking water*, ingesting around 50,000 particles each year.

People can also inhale micro- and nano plastics and absorb them through skin contact.

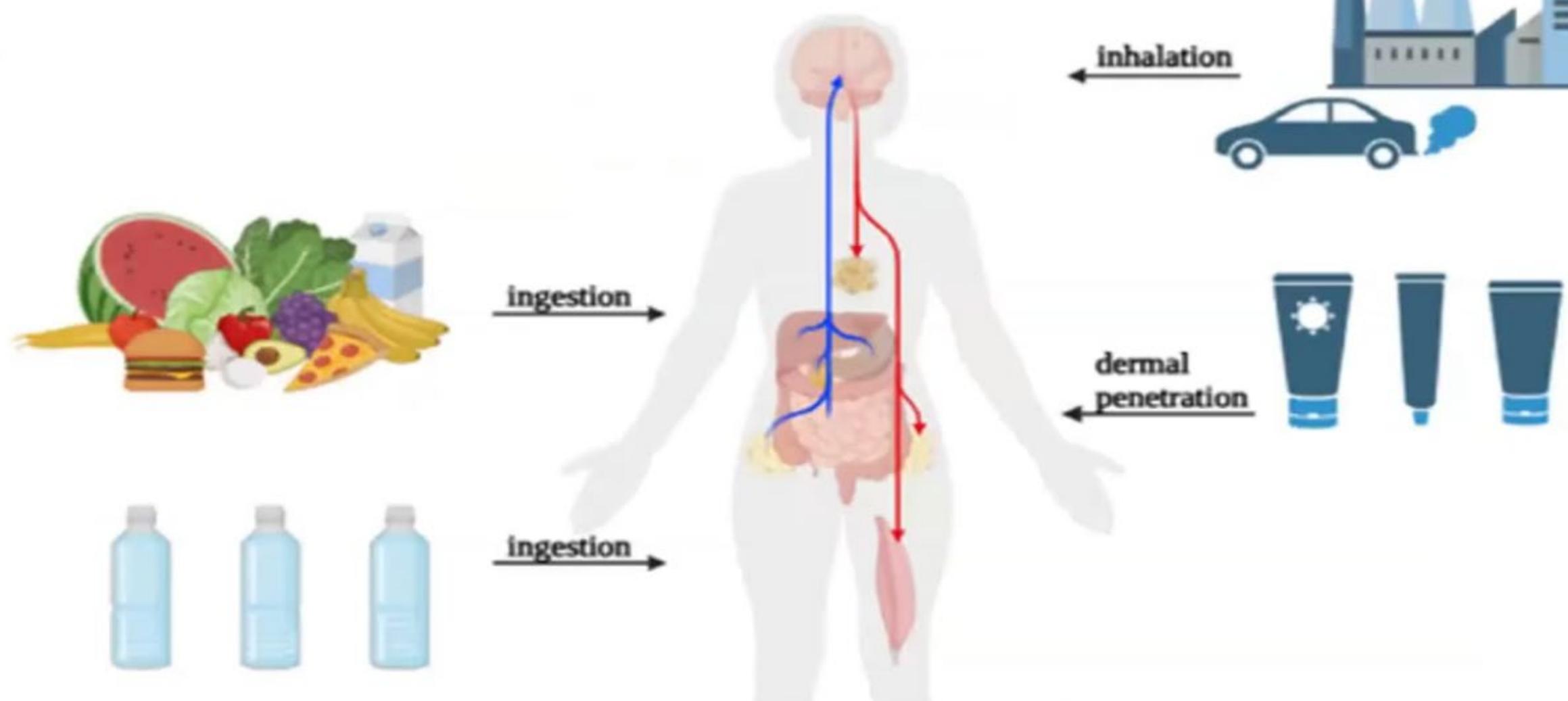


Most microplastics in the atmosphere come from the wear and tear of vehicle tires and brake pads. Photo credit: Tires Wikipedia

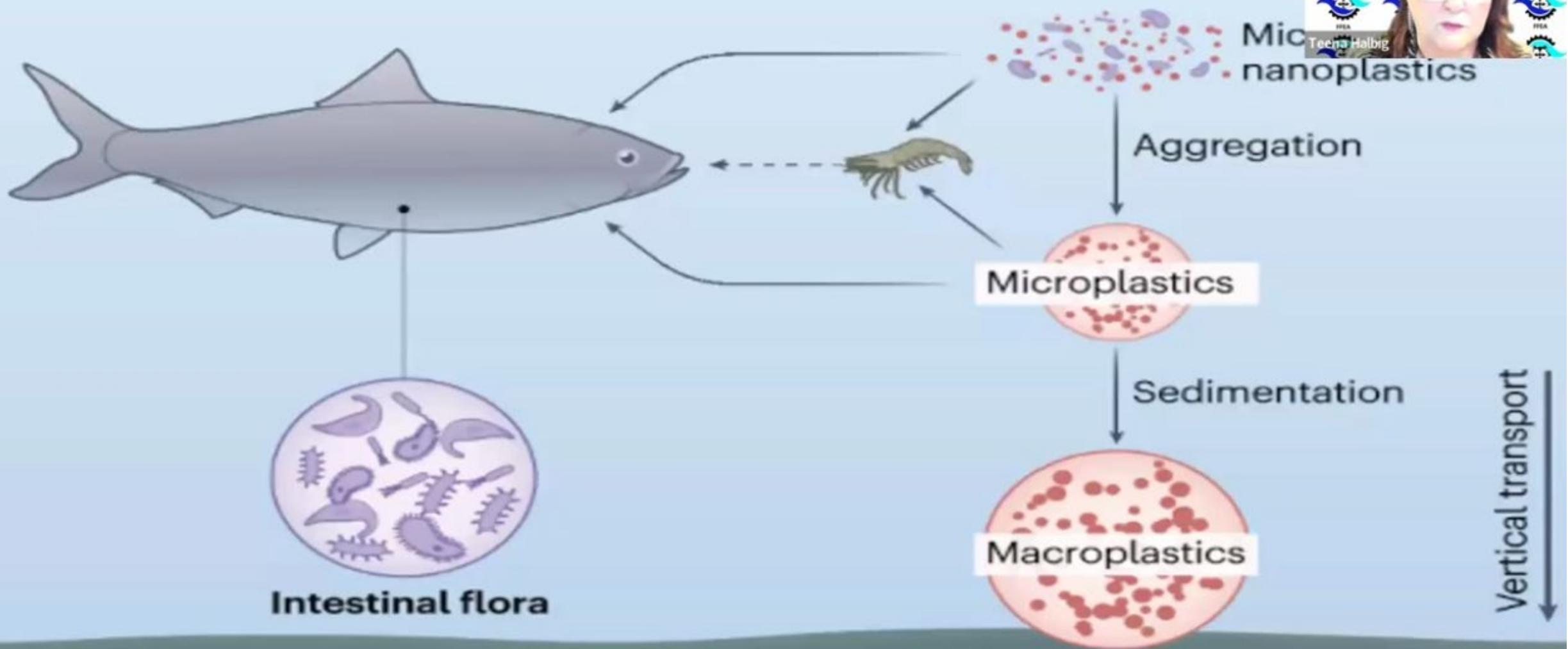
Researchers estimate that the harmful health effects from toxic chemicals in microplastics cost the United States nearly \$250 billion in health care expenses in one year.

ewg.org

Micro- and Nanoplastics (MNP) as Disruptors of the Endocrine System— A Review of the Threats and Consequences Associated with Plastic Exposure



Bioaccumulation



Micro- and nanoplastics can help water-borne pathogens accumulate and evolve. These plastics accumulate in fresh- and seawater as a result of industrial runoff and plastic waste, and give microbes a surface to adhere to. This allows them to form a biofilm, which can protect the microbes and promote gene transfer between individuals. The plastics can also accumulate in the food chain, and with them, the microbes they've collected. Those microbes can then disrupt the gut microbiota of larger organisms.

([Nature Water](#) | 49 min read) (Liu, X., Wei, W., Chen, Z. et al./*Nat. Water* (2025))

Microplastics spread from household waste to soils, animals, & human



Credit: Irina Shatilova/Big Stock Photo https://www.ehn.org/microplastics-spread-from-household-waste-to-soils-animals-and-human-food-chains?vgo_ee=xuYvGC1umZSta4Ap3oa2eszCjIYmoaOzwIK8rHaVA%3D%63A

Global production today is **400 million metric tons of plastic**;
United Nations projects great increase to **1,100 million metric tons by 2050**.



Protect yourself:

1. Drink tap water in metal or glass; do not use water or drinks in plastic
2. Do not microwave in plastic containers; do use Pyrex glass or ceramic
3. Do not use plastic kitchenware; use stainless steel, glass, ceramic, bamboo, & stoneware and non-plastic sponges, steel wool scrubbers, and dish brushes with non-plastic bristles (ditto for toothbrushes)
4. Choose natural fibers for clothing, carpets, furnishings, etc.; choose cotton, linen, bamboo, silk, and wool instead of synthetics and blends. Wood floors are better than carpeting.
5. Avoid plastic tea bags; choose non-plastic tea bags or use loose-leaf tea in a metal tea strainer or a reusable cotton tea bag.
6. Reusable ceramic or stainless steel cup instead of hot beverages or acidic soda or carbonated beverages in plastic cups which leach more microplastics.
7. Don't use PLASTIC BABY BOTTLES which leach harmful chemicals, including bottles that are *supposedly* free of the hormone disruptor BPA; instead, use shatter-resistant glass bottles.
8. Do not use TEFILON PANS; Teflon was found to release millions of microplastics and nanoplastics during use; instead, use stainless steel, cast iron or ceramic.
9. Feminine Hygiene: A single tampon can release billions of micro- and nanoplastics. Alternatives include tampons that are made from 100 percent cotton and have a non-plastic or no applicator, reusable cotton pads, silicone cups, and PFAS-free cotton period underwear. (mamavation.org)
10. Leave-on personal care and cosmetic products, such as lotion and lipstick, may contain micro or nanoplastics so look for ingredients to avoid like polyethylene, polypropylene, polyurethane, acrylates, polymers, and microbeads.
11. Teena says: Write & talk to elected officials & ask for a reply!

<https://www.nrdc.org/resources/microplastics-are-growing-threat>

https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/2025-06/microplastic_deluge_how_these_small_plastic_particles_harm_our_health_and_the_environment.pdf

Brett



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives



Teena Halbig

7-25-25

Dear Ms. Halbig,

Thank you for your recent correspondence regarding **S. 2324, the Pesticide Accountability Act**. I appreciate you taking the time to share your thoughts with me on this important matter.

S. 2324 would amend federal pesticide law to allow individuals who are harmed by pesticides to file lawsuits directly

Currently, legal action under this law is limited to enforcement by government agencies like the EPA. This legislation was referred to the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry. While I am not a member of the Senate, nor has this legislation been introduced in the House to my knowledge, I will be sure to keep your views in mind should this legislation come before me for a vote on the House Floor.

If you would like to stay connected to my office with updates on the latest news, legislation, and other useful information, please sign up for my e-newsletter on my website, <https://guthrie.house.gov>. If you haven't done so already, "like" my Facebook page or follow me on Twitter at [@RepGuthrie](https://twitter.com/RepGuthrie) to stay up-to-date on my efforts representing you and all of Kentucky's Second District. Thank you again for your communication and please do not hesitate to contact my office with any future questions or comments.



Plastic degradation into **AIR**, **WATER**, **SOIL**, **FOOD**, with **Microplastics & Toxic Chemicals** to **Harm Human Health** <https://usrtk.org/healthwire/microplastics-wreaking-havoc-on-human-hormones-fertility/> 7-24-25
Photo Credit: Kirti Nagar for Unsplash; read **The Lancet Countdown**; read **Minderoo-Monaco Commission 2023**, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5334/aogh.4056>



Photo Credit:
Teena Halbig



A Mandate for a UN Plastics Treaty

At the conclusion of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-5.2) in March 2022, heads of State, environment ministers, and other representatives from 175 nations agreed on a mandate to create a first-of-its-kind international legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution. Central to this agreement is the establishment of an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) tasked with producing a legally binding instrument—a UN Plastics Treaty. 4 meetings held (3,300 attended the 4th meeting) and the 5th meeting scheduled on August 5, 2025 in Geneva, Switzerland. <https://www.globalplasticlaws.org/un-global-plastics-treaty>

Questions for Teena





Excess Consumption & Throw Away Society



POLL 1:

Do you participate in recycling in your community?

POLL 2:

Do you know how your community recycles plastic waste?

POLL 3:

Would you support and/or advocate for eliminating plastic shopping bags in stores in your community?



Plastic Around the World



Angela Brokmann

Where does the USA send their plastic waste:

Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Phillipines, Bangladesh, and Indonesia
Latin American Countries – Nicaragua, Mexico, Ecuador and El Salvador
African countries – Ghana and Senegal

Where does Canada send their plastic waste:

86% end up in a landfill, 8% is recycled, some is burned.
A portion of is shipped outside of North America, primarily Southeast Asia.

Plastic Around the World



Where does Central American countries and Caribbean Island nations send their plastic waste:

Their own rivers, lakes, and coastlines

Horse drinking out of a plastic polluted Central American River

Speaker- Errick Elavia



- Core Committee Zonta International Diversity Working Group member and Asia Representative
- Former Zonta District 25 Governor
- School Principal for 15 years
- Educator for over 28 years
- Principal of the Year 2024
- Recipient of the Star Education Award 2023
- Awarded 50 most influential Principals of India in 2019
- Champion of He For She and Gender Equality for 15 years

A dense forest scene with sunlight filtering through the trees.

Erick Elavia

Plastic Pollution Crisis

Asia's Environmental Challenge

Addressing the urgent need for sustainable solutions to combat plastic waste across Asian nations

Plastic Pollution in Asia

Errick Elavia

Contents

01 Regional Impact Overview

02 Marine Life Effects

03 Current Solutions Efforts

04 Future Action Plans

Crisis Overview



Erick Elavia

81%

Asian Contribution

199M

Tonnes Ocean

8M

Annual Input

92%

Microplastics Found

Regional Impact

Asia accounts for 81% of global ocean plastic pollution worldwide

- Philippines, India, Malaysia lead in ocean waste generation
- Poor waste management systems contribute to marine pollution significantly
- Middle-income countries face greatest infrastructure challenges currently

Marine Ecosystem

Devastating effects on marine life and food chain systems

- 100% of baby sea turtles contain plastic in stomachs
- 1 million seabirds die annually from plastic pollution
- 60% of consumed fish contain harmful microplastics

Economic Impact

Significant costs to communities and fishing industries globally

- 13 billion dollars annual damage to marine ecosystems worldwide
- 3 billion people depend on oceans for livelihoods
- Declining fish stocks affect coastal communities throughout Asia

Activate Windows
Go to Settings to activate Windows.

Asian Plastic Impact

Ernick Elavia

81%

of global ocean plastic pollution originates from Asian countries due to infrastructure challenges

Activate Windows
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Key Contributing Factors in Asia

Erick Elavia



Poor waste management infrastructure systems

Infrastructure Gaps

- Inadequate recycling facilities and processing capabilities throughout region
- Limited waste collection systems in rural areas
- Insufficient funding for sustainable waste management



High single-use plastic consumption patterns

Consumption Patterns

- Rapid urbanization increases packaging waste generation significantly
- Growing middle class demands convenience products
- Limited awareness about sustainable alternatives available



Geographic and environmental vulnerability factors

Geographic Factors

- Extensive coastlines increase ocean pollution risks
- Monsoon seasons carry waste to waterways
- River systems transport plastic to oceans

Marine Life Impact in Asia

Errick Elavia



Sea Turtle Crisis

100% of baby sea turtles now contain plastic in their stomachs, threatening species survival across Asian waters



Seabird Mortality Rates

Over 1 million seabirds die annually from plastic pollution, with 90% of species affected by debris ingestion



Fish Contamination

60% of fish consumed by humans contain microplastics, affecting food safety and human health

Source: UN Environment

UN Environment

Crisis Timeline

Erick Elavia



1950s

Plastic Production Begins

Mass plastic production started, laying foundation for future environmental challenges

1990s

Asian Economic Growth

Rapid industrialization and urbanization increased plastic consumption across Asian countries significantly

2024

Current Crisis State

Asia now responsible for 81% of global ocean plastic pollution with urgent action needed

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Solution Phases

Errick Elavia



Immediate Actions

Implement emergency waste collection systems and strengthen existing infrastructure to prevent further ocean contamination across Asian regions

System Development

Build comprehensive recycling facilities and establish sustainable waste management systems throughout Asian countries for long-term impact

Prevention Strategy

Develop alternative materials and implement policy changes to reduce single-use plastic consumption patterns across Asian markets

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Progress Analysis



Erick Elavia

Current Cleanup Efforts

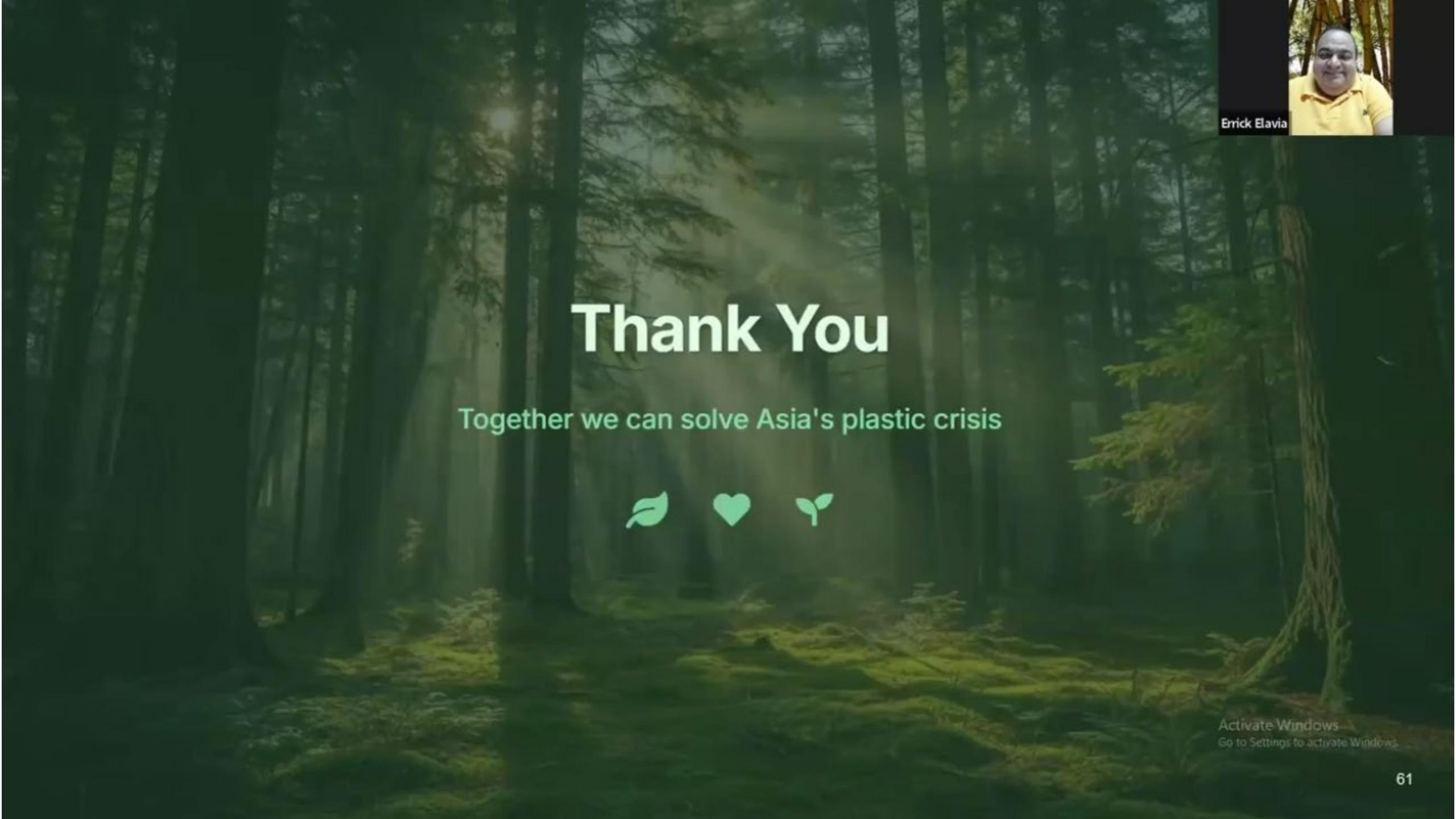
Organizations like The Ocean Cleanup have removed over 11.5 million kilos of trash from oceans and rivers worldwide in 2024

- The Ocean Cleanup removed record amounts of plastic debris this year
- River interceptors deployed in Bangkok, Guatemala, and Jamaica successfully
- Great Pacific Garbage Patch cleanup estimated at 7.5 billion cost
- 4ocean has removed 35 million pounds of ocean plastic since 2017
- Parley created 30 million shoes from upcycled ocean plastic materials

Regional Cleanup Progress



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Ernick Elavia

Thank You

Together we can solve Asia's plastic crisis



Activate Windows
Go to Settings to activate Windows.

Speaker- Joan Kabayambi



- Zonta Says NOW to Gender Equal Climate Action Intercontinental Representative - Africa
- Zonta Club of Kampala, Uganda
- UNEP member
- Contributor and researcher for the Global Plastics Treaty

Scope



- Overview of what the UNEP does
- Personal account of my UNEP experience so far?
- What Zonta can learn
- How we can best work with the UNEP to achieve our mission?
- What are our priorities?

UNEP

Joan Kabayambi - Z...

United Nation Environment Programme – UNEP-Nairobi



- UN global authority on the environment
- Works with Govts, CSOs, Private sector and UN entities to address pressing environment challenges
- Drives transformational change on the triple planetary crises: a) Climate Change; b) Nature and Bio-diversity loss; and c)Pollution
- Provides evidence to inform policy decisions

Zonta UNEP accreditation



- Process begun in April 2023 completed in June
- Z I having met certain standards of UN Environment programme stds
- Our cause of Gender-Equal climate Action Now
 - Attend regional meetings
 - Contribute to civil society statements
 - Receive UN working documents
 - Make written contributions to UN documents
 - Attend public meetings: UN committees, assemblies, global group meetings etc
 - make oral statements



Observer status

Joan Kabayambi - Z...



STATES MEMBERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS, MEMBERS OF UNITED NATIONS SPECIALIZED AGENCIES* AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION ORGANIZATIONS

OBSERVERS FROM INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (IGOs) AND OTHER ENTITIES

OBSERVERS FROM UNITED NATIONS ENTITIES

OBSERVERS FROM NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS



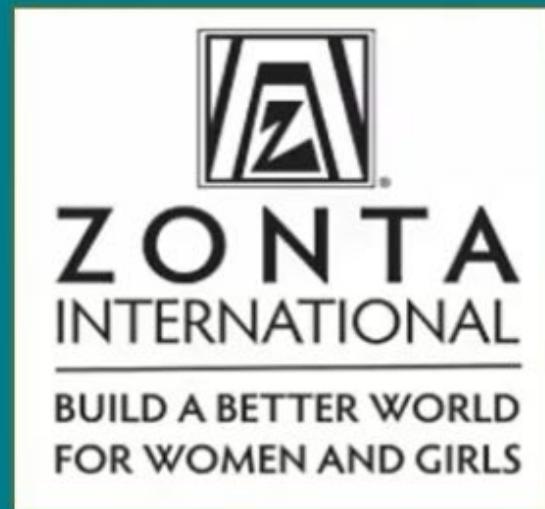
Zonta UNEP accreditation



Joan Kabayambi - Z...

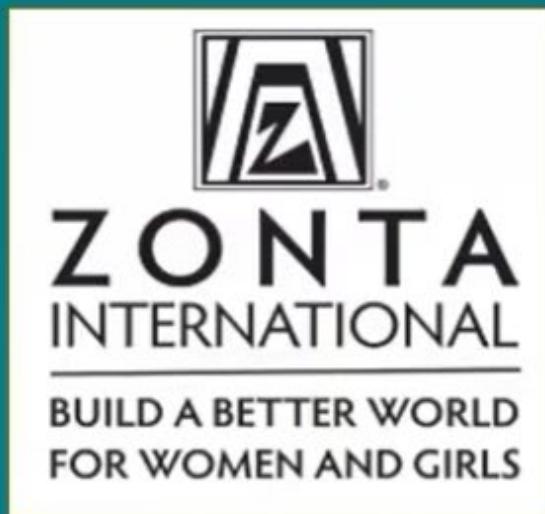
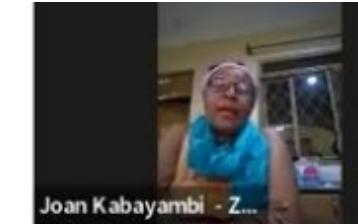


UNEP- INC-3 (Third session) 13-19 N Nairobi



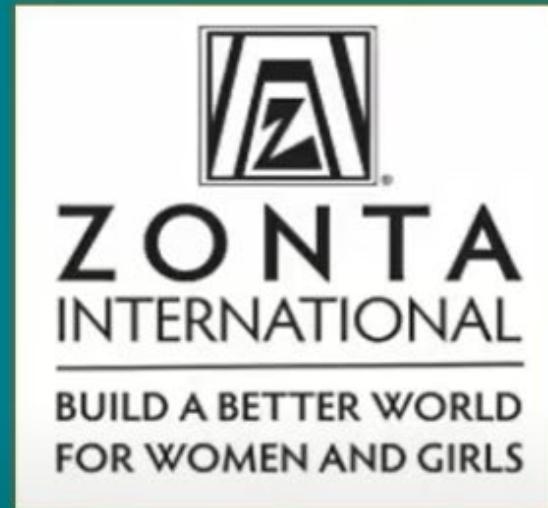
- Background to the Treaty?
 - UNEP @50 a resolution
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- High temperature
- Extreme weather events occurring faster and intense
- Most affected are not the ones who cause the problem.

Background to INC-3



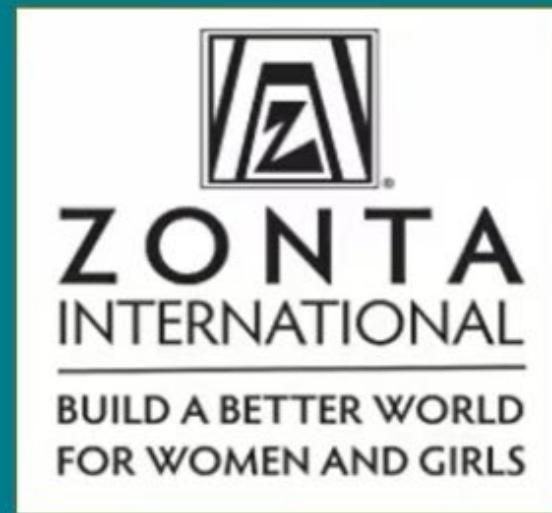
- Fossil fuels (non-renewable energy sources (coal, crude oils, petroleum products, nonrenewable wastes) are great contributors of CC
- They are slow acting poisons in the veins of our planet and economies

What can Zonta pick out of INC-



- Join other voices to support the Treaty
- No matter how much our water is filtered, it can never get back to its pure form, and this has a negative impact on health

What can Zonta pick out of INC-3?



- Waste management: sort and separate plastics from other waste products
- Plastics destroy nature due to its harmful effects
- Plastic bags are the main cause of land pollution, they enter water bodies



What UNEP can pick from Zonta



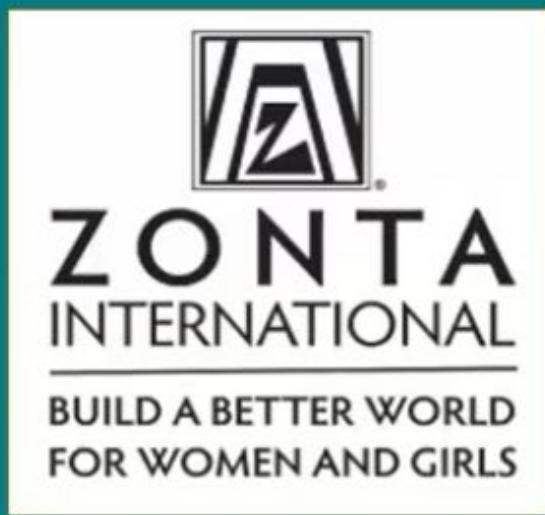
- Women and girls' needs are unique regarding the environment
- They have unique health and safety concerns
- Gender-based violence concerns



What UNEP can pick from Zonta



Joan Kabayamby - Z...



- Gender related consequences of Climate Change
- Gender disaggregated CC actions
- Climate literacy for girls in school
- Women's full participation in the economy

Autosave On Search

SUMMARY STATUS ON PLASTIC TREATY INC Joan Kabayambo Last Modified: 1h ago

File Home Insert Draw Design Layout References Mailings Review View Help Acrobat

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Joan Kabayambo - Z...

Summary: INC Plastics Treaty Status -2025

What is the INC / Treaty on Plastics?

- The Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) was established by UNEP in 2022 to develop an **international legally binding instrument** to end plastic pollution, including in marine environments.
- Its mandate covers the **full lifecycle** of plastics: design, production, use, disposal, and the chemicals/additives involved.

Key Milestones

Session	Place & Time	Outcome / Key Issues
INC-1 (Nov 2022, Uruguay)	Punta del Este	Start of negotiations. Agreement on mandate.
INC-2 (June 2023, Paris)	Paris	Progress on draft texts, more stakeholder inputs.
INC-3 (Nov 2023, Nairobi)	Nairobi	Frustration: no consensus on how to handle plastic production caps, chemicals of concern.
INC-4 (April 2024, Ottawa)	Ottawa	Further refinement, still divergence over key issues.
INC-5.1 / INC-5 (Nov-Dec 2024, Busan)	Busan, South Korea	Key disagreements remained unresolved. Treaty not finalized. Many countries pushed for binding production limits; others resisted.
INC-5.2 (Aug 2025, Geneva)	Geneva, Switzerland	Intended as the final session to approve treaty text and prepare for adoption. Talks adjourned without consensus . Core sticking points included binding limits on plastic production, regulation of chemicals of concern, finance and obligations on countries. No agreement on final text.

communities) have taken could shape any re-negotiated draft.

- Monitoring whether countries form "ambition coalitions" (groups pushing for stronger treaty language), and whether there's movement on production caps, chemicals, financing.

Where Things Stand

- **No legally binding treaty yet.** The process remains incomplete.)
- **Major divides remain** especially between:
 - Countries wanting **strong, binding commitments** including production caps, lifecycle approaches, chemicals regulation.
 - Countries (often plastics/petrochemical producers) preferring narrower scope: focus on waste, recycling, product design rather than limiting production or regulating additives.)
- **Delayed deadlines.** Originally the goal was to have the treaty finalized by end-2024 (after INC-5 / Busan). That didn't happen; INC-5.2 (Aug 2025) was the extra/"overtime" session.
- **Uncertain timeline for next steps.** There's no final plan yet for when the treaty will be concluded. Talks are expected to resume but dates, venue, and scope are not finalized.

Challenges & Tensions

- Difficulty in reaching global consensus, especially on production limits and chemicals of concern.
- Tensions between ambition vs political and economic concerns (e.g., for countries heavily invested in petrochemicals).
- Disagreements on whether treaty obligations should be **binding** versus more voluntary or flexible.
- Finance, support for implementation (especially for developing countries), and equitable responsibilities remain unsolved.

Implications & What to Watch

- Because no treaty has been adopted, global coordination on plastics remains fragmented: many national/regional initiatives continue, but no unified legal framework yet.
- The outcome of INC-5.2 means more time is needed; risk is that momentum could wane.
- The positions that smaller or less-powerful states (or vulnerable

Page 1 of 2 452 words English (United States) Text Predictions: On Accessibility: Good to go



Why should Zontians Advocate and Take Action?



Julie Trone

Climate Justice includes advocating for gender equality because for women and girls, climate change worsens:

- Gender inequalities and inequities**
- Health caused by pollution, lack of access and care**
- Economic and Educational opportunities**
- Sexual and domestic violence**
- Weather disaster recovery**
- Poverty**



Why should Zontians Advocate and Take Action?



Zonta International urges leaders and citizens alike to stand up, speak out, and take decisive action to ensure that gender equality remains at the forefront of global development efforts. **Our shared future depends on it, and the moment to make a difference is now.**

What Can Zontians Do?



- **Advocate** – Contact your state legislators to ban single use plastics
Contact local recycling services – Learn about local recycling efforts
Make sure you and your peers sign up for Fast Action Friday
Contact your local grocery stores to stop using single use plastic
- **Collaborate** – with local organizations to educate citizens about plastic waste.
- **Lead** – Use your voices to talk about plastic waste and find alternatives to using less plastic
- **Encourage** fellow citizens and club members to become climate justice champions – Fast Action Friday, STEM scholarship awards, Community projects, and more...



Be Plastic Free

Make it a club competition



We have no meetings in July, can we do it another time?

Resources

- <https://www.beyondplastics.org/learn>
- <https://www.plasticfreejuly.org/>
- <https://nextrex.com/view/programs>

PLASTICFREEJULY.ORG 18 YEARS

2025 JOIN THE CHALLENGE

Plastic Free 31 Day

Angela Brokmann

ZONTA SAYS NOW
TO GENDER-EQUAL CLIMATE ACTION

Choosing one small step	1	Using what we have	2	Refusing plastic bags	3	Ditching disposable cups	4
Avoiding bottled drinks	5	Choosing plastic free packaging	6	Avoiding pre-packed produce	7	Avoiding plastic food wrap	8
Skiping the straw	10	Plastic free celebrations	11	Swapping bottled soaps for bars	12	Avoiding plastic bin liners	13
Reducing plastic in the bathroom	16	Hosting a morning tea	17	Staying and enjoying	18	Choosing loose tea	14
Shopping in bulk food stores	21	Reducing plastic when travelling	22	Trying reusable period products	23	Reducing plastic with pets	24
Making personal care products	27	Switching to plastic free stationery	28	Choosing plastic free toys	29	Learning more	30
				Small steps, big difference			31

Join millions of people worldwide choosing to refuse single-use plastic.

82



Zonta Says NOW Activities & Resources



Virtual Art Gallery Now Open for 2026 Collection



[Virtual Art Gallery](#)

Women and Sustainable Decision-Making Resources

FACT SHEET: Women and Sustainable Decision Making

RESEARCH PAPER: ZONTA SAYS NOW 2024-2026: WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE DECISION-MAKING

INFOGRAPHIC: Women and Sustainable Decision Making

The infographic highlights the following statistics:

- Representation:** Globally, 27% of parliamentary seats are held by women.
- Economic Participation:** 32% of the global average workforce are women.
- Education and Skills:** 36% of national average representatives are women.
- Leadership and Influence:** Women hold 8.01% of global CEO roles.
- Challenging gender norms:** Closing gender gaps could increase global GDP by up to 8%.
- Leadership and Influence:** Countries with more women in government adopt stronger environmental policies.
- Women control around 75% of global decision-making and are more likely to have efficient environmental policies.**

[Zonta Says NOW Resources](#)

Art as Voice

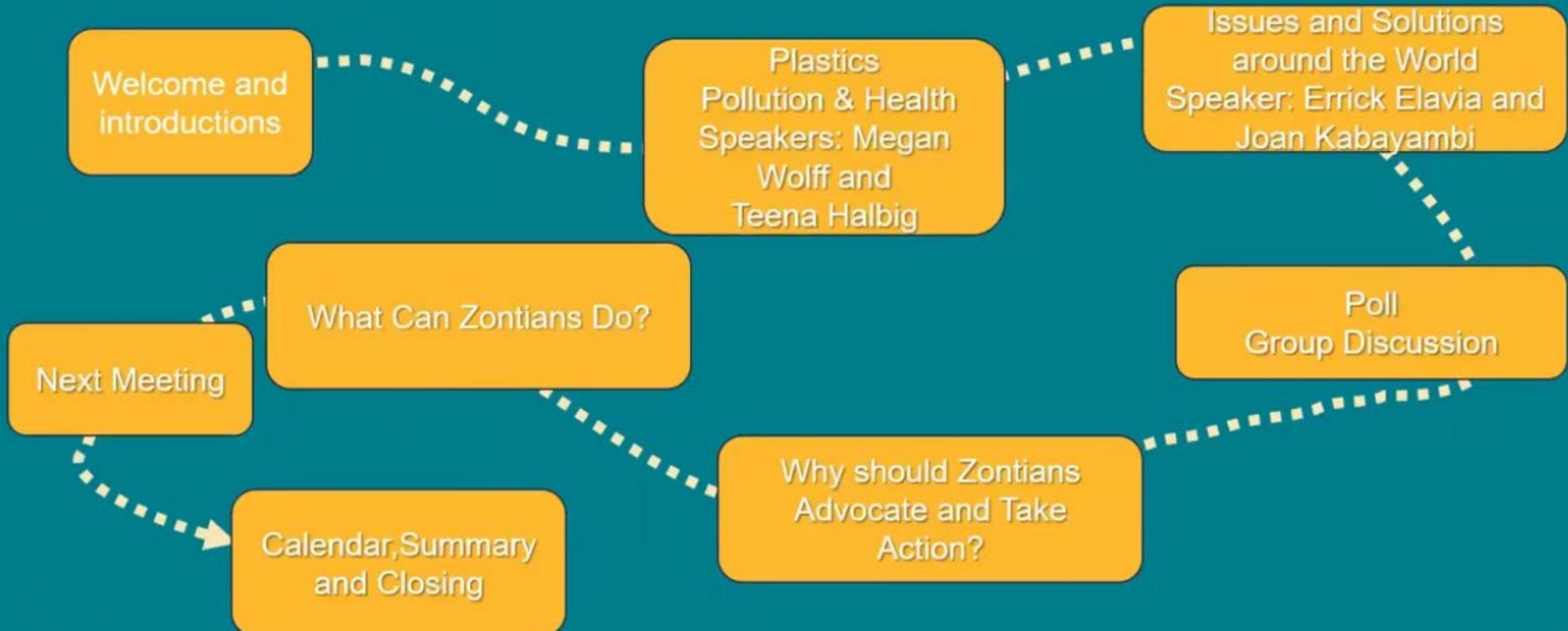
Titled 'The Thinkers Burden'
By Artist Van Wong

The artist said, 'It's a visual representation of the growing burden we bear to resolve the plastic pollution crisis for this generation, and all future generations to come. We must act decisively and fight for human health across the entire lifecycle of plastics."

This installation is at Place des Nations, Geneva during the Global Plastics Treaty negotiations. 2025



Our Journey Today



Next Meetings



SUNDAY 9 NOVEMBER – 10 am UTC

- Theme: Women, Climate and Conflict
- Hosted by Zontians from Europe and Africa

**Register today at
[zonta.org/Events](https://www.zonta.org/Events)**



Next Meetings



SUNDAY 28 September – 7:00 pm MT

- Theme: Single Use Plastics
- Hosted by Zonta District 12 Action for Environment and Gender Equality Committee
- <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/peFsy69CTPalllfMhBurzA>

Summary

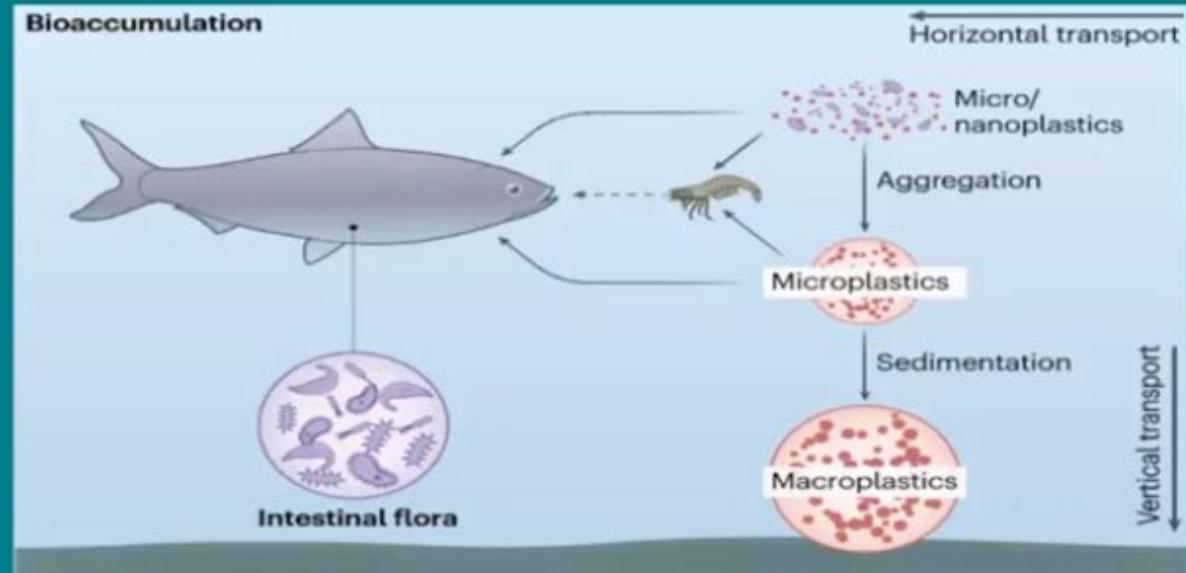


Periods of Greatest Vulnerability



The timing makes the poison.

What happens in the womb doesn't stay in the womb.



Micro- and nanoplastics can help water-borne pathogens accumulate and evolve. These plastics accumulate in fresh- and seawater as a result of industrial runoff and plastic waste, and give microbes a surface to adhere to. This allows them to form a biofilm, which can protect the microbes and promote gene transfer between individuals. The plastics can also accumulate in the food chain, and with them, the microbes they've collected. Those microbes can then disrupt the gut microbiota of larger organisms.

(Nature Water 1 49 min read) (Liu, X., Wei, W., Chen, Z. et al./Nat. Water (2025))

Plastic exposure harms our bodies and our planet

Summary



Julie Trone



Plastics are shipped from North America to Central America and Asian Countries

Key Contributing Factors in Asia



Factor	Description
Poor waste management infrastructure systems	Infrastructure Gaps
High single-use plastic consumption patterns	Consumption Patterns
Geographic and environmental vulnerability factors	Geographic Factors



What can Zonta pick out of INC-3?



- Join other voices to support the Treaty
- No matter how much our water is filtered, it can never get back to its pure form, and this has a negative impact on health



ZONTA
INTERNATIONAL

BUILD A BETTER WORLD
FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS



Julie Trone

Find out more about
Zonta Says NOW
at

zonta.org/zontasaysnow

or
email

info@zontasaysnow.org.au

Thank you.



Stick Around – to watch and listen



Julie Trone

1M♀ YOU'RE THE VOICE - An Anthem From Women For Climate Action & Hope | 1 Million Women

Climate change • Climate change refers to
long-term shifts in temperatures and...



I'm the Voice - 1 Million Women

1 Million Women
Production

Watch on YouTube