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Global movement envisions a future free from plastic pollution: *Major U.S. companies must rise to the challenge*

TODAY, a [groundbreaking new global vision for a future free from plastic pollution](#) has been released by a network of 90 NGOs. The vision lays out 10 principles with the ultimate goal being “a future free from plastic pollution.” It represents the first step in a global movement to change society's perception and use of plastics.

Scientists predict that without urgent action there will be more plastic than fish in the ocean by 2050, threatening marine biodiversity and posing a risk to human health. Yet, despite the danger that plastic pollution poses to our planet and to human well-being, industry and governments have so far failed to face up to the systemic change required to solve the issue.

"This is the first time that groups from all around the world have come together to find a common solution to plastic pollution," said Monica Wilson from GAIA. "It shows the evolution of a movement that is pushing governments, cities and major companies to solve this ever-growing problem. This isn't just about managing the problem. It's about preventing it in the first place. "

The environmental impacts of plastic pollution are now well understood. A significant amount of plastic production is for single-use disposable applications. Nearly a third of plastic packaging escapes collection systems and winds up in the oceans. Once there, sunlight and ocean currents shred plastic debris into smaller particles called microplastics, which attract and concentrate toxic chemicals up the marine food chain and into our bodies.

Plastic is also a human rights issue. Increasingly, consumer goods companies sell goods wrapped in plastic into markets without waste management systems that can adequately capture the plastic waste. Most plastic ends up in incinerators and landfills in the U.S. endangering nearby communities, which are frequently low-income communities and communities of color.

"Any strategy to combat the plague of plastic needs buy-in from both frontline communities in the Global South and in the Global North," said Stiv Wilson from the Story of Stuff Project. "For the first time in history, that is happening. This is what a movement looks like."

"Many of the major consumer goods companies, packaging suppliers and plastics manufacturers are headquartered here in the United States. The decisions made in board rooms here have negative ripple effects throughout the world," said Matt Prindiville from UPSTREAM. "It's time for these companies to face up to their responsibility for creating plastic pollution, and change."

The United States and the major consumer goods corporations headquartered here are driving the irresponsible use of plastics and the resulting environmental damage around the world, which often affects the most vulnerable globally. It is clear that without strong and coordinated effort by policy makers, businesses will continue to use plastic indiscriminately and the pollution will intensify.

"For years, the plastics industry has been telling us that all plastics are recyclable, but what we find in the field demonstrates that we can not recycle our way out of the plastic pollution problem," said Martin Bourque, Executive Director of the Ecology Center who runs the United States' longest-operating curbside recycling program.

We call on US corporations and governments to lead the way to a future free from plastic pollution.

We also stand in solidarity with people around the world who are implementing real community-based solutions. Today, we also announce a new initiative to support zero waste system implementation in cities in the Philippines and Indonesia, by the Mother Earth Foundation (Philippines), YPBB (Indonesia), and GAIA (a global network). This initiative will be supported in the US by the 5 Gyres Institute, Story of Stuff Project, and UPSTREAM. Together, these organizations will work to apply successful approaches to comprehensive waste prevention, plastics-use reduction, composting and recycling systems, and generate new information about the need for material and system redesign.

Go to breakfreefromplastic.org to see the vision statement in video, read more about the project and to see the nearly 100 organizations who have signed the statement

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