

PLASTIC OVERSHOOT DAY – 28TH JULY 2023

EDITOR,

In April scientists from the University of Vienna published research revealing plastic particles can enter the brains of mice within just two hours of ingestion.ⁱ While a scientific study led by researchers at Boston College earlier this year linked plastic to a range of conditions including lung disease, cancer, and birth defects.ⁱⁱ

The production and mismanagement of plastic waste is a leading driver of this crisis. In 2023, 43 percent of plastic that is produced and used is mismanaged as waste, thus likely to end up in the Earth's air, water, or soil.ⁱⁱⁱ This means some 68.6 million metric tonnes of additional plastic waste will end up in the natural environment this year.^{iv}

The world's ability to deal with waste currently falls far short of the volume of plastic it produces. This year the Earth will exceed its annual plastic waste management capacity on 28th July – known internationally as Plastic Overshoot Day.

By 8 January 2023, it is estimated that 40% of the world's population was living in areas where plastic waste had already exceeded the capacity to manage it, indicating a pressing need for action to address the plastic waste crisis.

Just 12 countries are responsible for 52 percent of the world's mismanaged plastic.^v Now more than ever before, it is clear mismanaged plastic waste is a significant threat to global ecosystems and by extension, the health of humans and all living things.

Governments around the world must urgently clamp down on plastic production and use, improve viable waste management systems, advocate for sustainable alternatives to plastic and sign an ambitious and legally binding Global Plastics Treaty by 2025.

Furthermore, we call on corporations to support the Treaty process while measuring their plastic footprint to promote responsible production practices.

We must reset the course of the plastic pollution crisis and put protecting the health of humans and all living things at the heart of the Global Plastics Treaty negotiations.

SIGNED:

- *Dr Julien Boucher PhD, EA Environmental Action*
- *Heidi Hautala MEP, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance*
- *Frédérique Ries MEP, Renew Europe Group*
- *Sirpa Pietikäinen MEP, European People's Party*
- *Malte Gallee MEP, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance*
- *Sara Cerdas MEP, Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats*
- *Michele Rivasi MEP, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance*
- *Grace O'Sullivan MEP, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance*
- *Maria Danzi MEP, Non-attached Member*
- *Antoni Comín MEP, Non-attached Member*
- *Karen Melchior MEP, Renew Europe Group*

- Céline Vara, Member of the Council of States of Switzerland
- Dr Barbro Melgert, Associate Professor Pharmaceutical Immunology at University of Groningen
- Caterina Delucia PhD, Associate Professor at Università Di Foggia
- Prof. Dr. Yolanda Pico, Universitat de Valencia
- Prof. Terrence Collins, Carnegie Mellon University
- Esther Kentin, Lecturer and Sustainability Officer, Leiden Law School
- Dr Jane Muncke, Food Packaging Forum
- Luca Zerbini, Una Terra
- Dominic Santschi, Ampliphi
- Meegan Jones, The Ocean Race
- Maria Westerbos, Plastic Soup Foundation
- Katherine Foster, GDF Alliance
- Victoria Brownlie, British Beauty Council
- Tristan Lecomte, Second Life
- Sabine Roux de Bézieux, Fondation de la Mer
- Shajeeshan Lingeswaran, SystemIQ
- Antoinette Vermilye, Gallifrey Foundation
- Joel Tasche, CleanHub
- Vincent Decap, ZERO PLASTIC OCEANS
- Svanika Balasubramanian, rePurpose Global
- Laura Peano, Quantis
- Jo Royle, Common Seas
- Dominic Dyer, Nature 2030

ⁱ <https://www.mdpi.com/2079-4991/13/8/1404>

ⁱⁱ <https://annalsofglobalhealth.org/articles/10.5334/aogh.4056>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://plasticovershoot.earth/>

^{iv} Ibid

^v https://plasticovershoot.earth/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/EA_POD_report_2023-expanded.pdf