



Monterey Bay Aquarium has eliminated all single-use plastic in its café.

Photo courtesy of Monterey Bay Aquarium.



Find out more at ourhands.org.

For more information

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The Aquarium Conservation Partnership (ACP)

Plastic Pollution Business Commitment & Aquarium Accomplishments

Fact Sheet

The Aquarium Conservation Partnership (ACP) is a first-of-its-kind collaboration of 19 U.S. aquariums that have joined together to take collective action on science-based ocean and freshwater conservation priorities. The primary focus of ACP member aquariums is to reduce the sources of ocean and freshwater plastic pollution.

ACP Plastic Pollution Business Commitment

All ACP member aquariums have joined the following ACP Business Commitment. We are announcing this commitment at the same time as the launch of our consumer-facing campaign, which aims to raise awareness of the problem of ocean and freshwater plastic pollution, and encourage our audience members to join aquariums in taking steps to reduce their single-use plastic footprint.

Our aquariums have committed to reducing single-use plastic in our institutions. As a starting point, we will:

- Eliminate plastic straws and single-use carryout plastic bags by July 10, 2017;
- Significantly reduce or eliminate single-use plastic beverage bottles by December 1, 2020;
- Provide and showcase innovative alternatives to single-use plastic for our visitors.

ACP Aquarium Accomplishments

Our aquariums are taking action to greatly decrease our individual and collective plastic footprint. We're doing this by collaborating with each other, and with our vendors and suppliers to make changes for the health of our ocean, rivers and lakes. These changes include offering products and packaging made of alternative materials, installing water refilling stations, and messaging to our visitors about the reason behind these changes. We



Photo courtesy of Seattle Aquarium.

In 2017, 19 aquarium members supported the reauthorization of the NOAA Marine Debris Program.



One of the winners of New York Aquarium's 2017 Mural Competition by artist Sheena Wong Shue.

Photo courtesy of New York Aquarium/WCS.

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also hope that by showcasing innovative alternatives to single-use plastic in our institutions, we can help increase demand for these products in the broader marketplace.

All of the 19 ACP members have already taken significant steps to reduce their use of single-use plastic. A few highlights include:

Single-Use Plastic in Retail and Food Service:

- Many of our aquariums have eliminated single-use plastic water and/or beverage bottles, including Monterey Bay Aquarium, National Aquarium, Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium, California Academy of Science, North Carolina Aquarium at Fort Fisher, Tennessee Aquarium, Wildlife Conservation Society/New York Aquarium and Seattle Aquarium.
- Virginia Aquarium, Aquarium of the Pacific, Seattle Aquarium, California Academy of Science, Shedd Aquarium, Monterey Bay Aquarium and National Aquarium do not offer single-use plastic utensils.
- National Aquarium and Monterey Bay Aquarium have eliminated all single-use plastic foodware.
- Shedd Aquarium was the 2015 recipient of the Illinois Recycling Association's award for "Outstanding Non-Profit Recycling & Waste Reduction Program".
- As of June 1, 2017, Mystic Aquarium has switched from plastic bottles to aluminum cans for soda and pitchers of water for all its internal meetings. Real glasses are also now used at all our interior internal meetings and events.
- As of July 1, the policy of the North Carolina Aquariums will be to eliminate single-use plastics from inventory.
- The California Academy of Sciences has eliminated plastic condiment packets in its café.

Policy Support

- In 2015, Shedd Aquarium helped Illinois become the first state in the nation to ban the sale of cosmetics containing plastic microbeads.
- In 2015, 15 aquarium members supported the federal Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015.
- In 2016, Monterey Bay Aquarium urged Californians to vote yes on Proposition 67 to uphold the nation's first statewide ban single-use plastic carryout bags.
- In 2017, 19 aquarium members supported reauthorization of the NOAA Marine Debris Program.
- In 2017, experts from the South Carolina Aquarium presented information relevant to single-use plastic bag ban ordinances in Isle of Palms and Folly Beach.

Exhibitions

- Wildlife Conservation Society/New York Aquarium's mural competition by the Wildlife Conservation Society/New York Aquarium.



Photo courtesy of ©WashedAshore.org

In March 2017, South Carolina Aquarium hosted the Breaking Down Plastic Summit in Charleston, SC that brought together thought leaders, plastic experts, innovative entrepreneurs, scientific researchers, and public policy advisors to generate long-term solution to plastic pollution.

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- Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium, Shedd Aquarium, Audubon Aquarium of the Americas, Mystic Aquarium and Virginia Aquarium have or will host the Washed Ashore: Art to Save the Sea traveling exhibit.
- The California Academy of Sciences facilitates an activity about packing a plastic-free lunch, highlights alternatives to single-use plastic, and shows demos of how plastic bags in jars look like jellyfish.
- Monterey Bay Aquarium has a permanent plastic pollution exhibition in its Ocean Travelers Gallery.

Campaigns

- Wildlife Conservation Society/New York Aquarium hosted a 30 day plastic challenge, “Don’t Splash Your Trash” campaign.
- Shedd Aquarium recently launched the Shedd the Straw Campaign.
- Mystic Aquarium and 11 other pilot sites mobilized their guests to pledge to reduce plastic pollution on and around World Oceans Day (coordinated by the Ocean Project).
- The South Carolina Aquarium launched a new Citizen Science App in collaboration with the Mount Desert Biological Laboratory (Litter Free Legacy Digital Library) to promote coordinated aquatic waste removal and data collection.

Major Meetings

- In December 2016, Monterey Bay Aquarium hosted the Aquarium Plastic Pollution Symposium that brought together aquariums to discuss how to work together to tackle the problem of plastic pollution in our ocean, rivers and lakes.
- In March 2017, South Carolina Aquarium hosted the Breaking Down Plastic Summit in Charleston, SC that brought together thought leaders, plastic experts, innovative entrepreneurs, scientific researchers, and public policy advisors to generate long-term solutions to plastic pollution.

For more information about what your local aquarium is doing to reduce single-use plastic, visit www.ourhands.org.

About the ACP

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