

Data released by the United States Environmental Protection Agency shows that somewhere between 500 billion and a trillion plastic bags are consumed worldwide each year.

National Geographic News September 2, 2003

Less than 1% of bags are recycled. It cost more to recycle a bag than to produce a new one.



- Christian Science Monitor News Paper

“There's harsh economics behind bag recycling: It costs \$4,000 to process and recycle 1 ton of plastic bags, which can then be sold on the commodities market for \$32”

- Jared Blumenfeld
(Director of San Francisco's Department of the Environment)

Then...
Where Do They Go?

A study in 1975, showed oceangoing vessels together dumped 8 million pounds of plastic annually. The real reason that the world's landfills weren't overflowing with plastic was because most of it ended up in an ocean-fill



Photo Courtesy of Planet A-E

- U.S. National Academy of Sciences



Bags get blown around...



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...to different parts of our lands



...and to our seas, lakes and rivers.

**Bags find their way into the sea
via drains and sewage pipes**



- CNN.com/tecnology November 16, 2007

Plastic bags have been found floating north of the Arctic Circle near Spitzbergen, and as far south as the Falkland Islands



- British Antarctic Survey

Plastic bags account for over 10 percent of the debris washed up on the U.S. coastline



- National Marine Debris Monitoring Program

Plastic bags photodegrade:
Over time they break down into smaller, more toxic petro-polymers



- CNN.com/tecnology November 16, 2007

which eventually contaminate soils and waterways



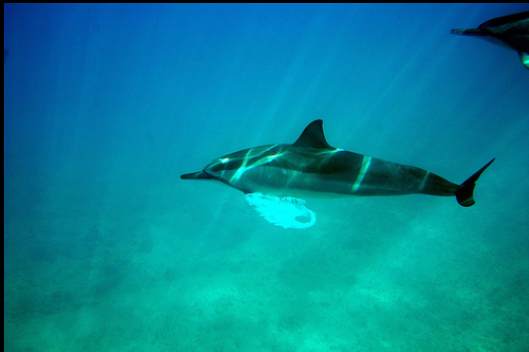
- CNN.com/tecnology November 16, 2007

As a consequence microscopic particles can enter the food chain



- CNN.com/tecnology November 16, 2007

The effect on wildlife can be catastrophic



- World Wildlife Fund Report 2005

Birds become terminally entangled



- World Wildlife Fund Report 2005



Nearly 200 different species of sea life including whales, dolphins, seals and turtles die due to plastic bags



- World Wildlife Fund Report 2005

They die after ingesting plastic bags
which they mistake for food



- World Wildlife Fund Report 2005

So...
What do we do?

If we use a cloth bag,
we can save 6 bags a week



That's 24 bags a month



That's 288 bags a year



That's 22,176 bags
in an average life time



If just **1 out of 5** people in our country did this
we would save
1,330,560,000,000 bags
over our life time



Bangladesh has
banned plastic bags



- MSNBC.com March 8, 2007

China has banned free plastic bags



- CNN.com/asia January 9, 2008

Ireland took the lead in Europe, taxing plastic bags in 2002 and have now reduced plastic bag consumption by 90%



- BBC News August 20, 2002

In 2005 Rwanda banned plastic bags



- Associated Press

Israel, Canada, western India, Botswana, Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, Taiwan, and Singapore have also banned or are moving toward banning the plastic bag



- PlanetSave.com February 16, 2008

On March 27th 2007, San Francisco becomes first U.S. city to ban plastic bags



- NPR.org (National Public Radio)

Oakland and Boston are considering a ban



- The Boston Globe May 20, 2007

Plastic shopping bags are made from polyethylene: a thermoplastic made from oil



- CNN.com/tecnology November 16, 2007

Reducing plastic bags will decrease foreign oil dependency



China will save 37 million barrels of oil each year due to their ban of free plastic bags



- CNN.com/asia January 9, 2008

It is possible...