

national cub challenge 2018

rethink
single-use plastic challenge



introduction:

Single-use plastic items are destroying habitats and ecosystems all over the world. Items like plastic shopping bags, drinking straws and plastic water bottles are made to only be used once – but when you throw it away, it stays in nature for thousands of years.

“Every single piece of plastic that has ever been made still exists today. This problem isn’t going away unless we challenge ourselves to change it.”

This year, Cubs are challenged to be friends of nature and learn about the dangers of disposable plastic items, take action to find out about environmentally friendly alternatives and rethink their relationship with single-use plastic.

This challenge is set to Leaders by SCOUTS South Africa in collaboration with the Two Oceans Aquarium.

why is plastic bad for the environment?

Plastic is great stuff. You can mould it into any shape you want, it is cheap and it is durable. The problem is that it is being used to make disposable items which will actually last thousands of years in our environment. Other than being ugly, what’s so bad about this?

- Plastic kills at least 1 million seabirds a year.
- It kills at least 100 000 seals, dolphins and whales a year.
- 83% of all **tap water** contains micro-plastic pollution.
- 90% of all seabirds have consumed plastic – in 1960 that was just 5%.

Plastic does not biodegrade – nature has no way of getting rid of it. It just breaks into smaller and smaller pieces that we can’t see anymore. These tiny pieces are called micro-plastic and they can affect even the smallest animals in nature.

“Plastic never breaks down. It only breaks up!”

how much plastic waste is there?

Surely the one chip packet you litter, or bottle of water you drink can’t be that bad... can it? All these small plastic items add up to a huge problem!

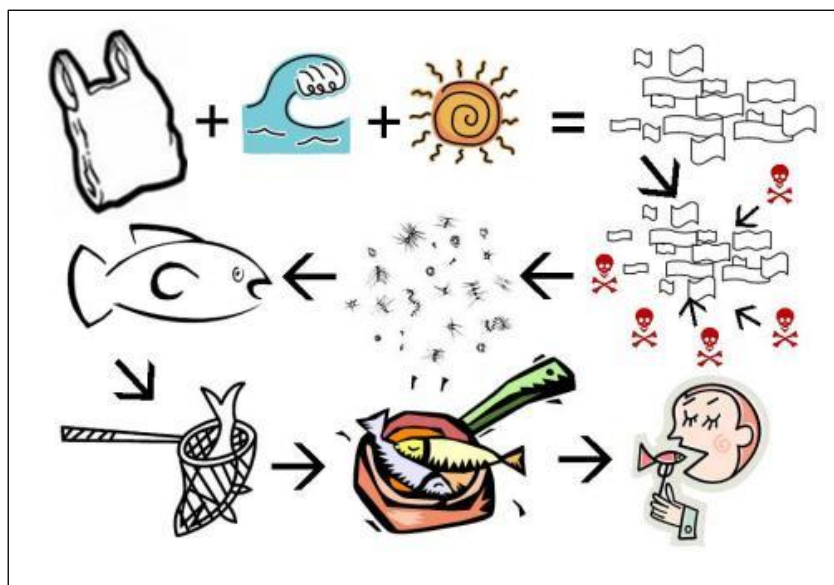
These plastic particles affect every part of our oceans. It's contaminated the darkest reaches of the Mariana Trench, over 10km deep. It becomes frozen into icebergs and Arctic sea ice. Plastic is even affecting volcanoes, creating new rocks that are going to scar our world for millions of years.

- **There are 51 trillion pieces of plastic in the ocean – that’s more than 500 times the number of stars in the galaxy!**
- 8 million tons of plastic dumped in the ocean every year.
- Half of all plastic is used only once and then thrown away!
- Every year, we throw away enough plastic to go around the world 4 times!
- Less than 5% of plastic is recycled.
- Every minute, 1 million shopping bags are used and then thrown away. **South African’s alone use 8 billion shopping bags a year** – that’s 160 bags per person!
- Globally, more than 100 billion single-use cups are used a year.
- Hundreds of billions of plastic straws are used each year – the USA alone throws out half a billion a day!
- More than 100 million disposable bottles are consumed every day. Considering that South Africa is a water-stressed nation, three litres wasted for every one litre bottled is not a fact we are comfortable with.
- 40 billion plastic knives, forks and spoons are used a year – none of these can be recycled.

why is plastic litter bad for humans?

When plastic floats in the ocean, it gathers bits of toxic chemicals that are only toxic when they are in a large amount. The smallest sea animals - like plankton - eat these bits of plastic, and they absorb the toxic chemicals which get more and more concentrated. Bigger animals then eat these small ones and these toxins move up the food chain. Guess who is on top of this chain? We are - and our pollution is affecting us!

“Because we are at the top of the food chain, we get the biggest amount of these toxins!”



how can cubs help?

**"Every piece of litter passed through somebody's hands
who chose to create it."**

YOU have the power to save nature! We are challenging YOU to target 5 plastic items that are greatly destructive – all 5 of these items can be easily eliminated from the environment with your help!

- a) Single-use plastic shopping bags
- b) Plastic drinking straws
- c) Balloons
- d) Plastic water bottles
- e) Littered plastic ropes, straps and nets

**Did you know that most plastic bags are used for only 12 minutes,
but their plastic will last over 1000 years in the environment?**

how can you eliminate plastic from your life?

Next time you reach for an item of plastic packaging, or are offered a shopping bag at the counter, give the 5 "R"'s some thought:

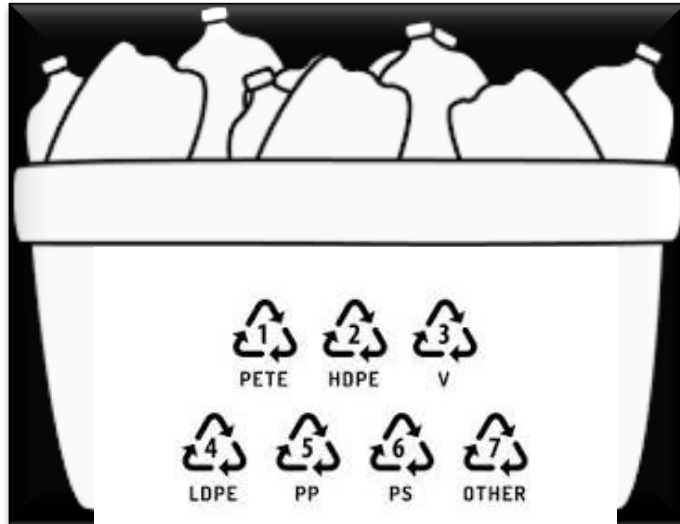
Refuse – Next time you are offered a disposable plastic item - **choose to refuse.**

Reuse – Instead of buying a disposable item every time, why not use a **reusable alternative?**

Reduce – For those items that you simply cannot avoid, pick the option that will produce less waste. Instead of a plastic bottle of cold drink, pick a glass bottle or a can. Instead of lots of small bags of snacks, buy in bulk where possible to reduce the amount of packaging you dispose of.

Recycle – Make the effort to recycle the waste that you do generate. There are plenty of options for those who do not have recycling facilities, and for those of you that can recycle – plastic goods are marked with cool little logos that can help you find out if they are easily recyclable.

Respect – Remember that every piece of plastic you use is going to last forever. Decide if your convenience is worth the permanent impact on nature it will contribute to. **We think nature is more precious than a shopping bag!**



the cub challenge:

1. Take the “Pack” out of “packaging”

As a Pack, work to reduce the amount of plastic pollution that is generated. You should aim to make a change that is sustainable and can be maintained into the future. Here are some ideas:

- Stop selling bottled water at your tuckshop.
- Buy reusable shopping bags for your Pack – use these instead of disposable bags for all your camp, hike, holiday and activity shopping.
- Make your hall a “plastic-free zone” – when Cubs bring snacks to events ask them to only bring snacks in paper bags or reusable containers.

It is suggested that you share this goal with the rest of your Group – working together, greater things are possible.

2. Protect my environment

Every environment in South Africa is littered with discarded plastic junk – parks, mountains, beaches, rivers, city streets and our ocean are filled with it!

With your Cubs, conduct an outdoor activity in nature and collect all the plastic litter that you find. This can be a Pack hike, beach/river clean-up day or even a service project in your community!

While litter is being found, or as a review after the event, have your Cubs discuss the litter they found, focussing on the following questions:

- Where do you think the litter came from?
- Is the item you found something that was lost accidentally, or is it a single-use item that someone threw away on purpose?

- Do you think there is an alternative that someone could have used to prevent this waste from being created?

After the event, dispose of your litter as sustainably as you are able to. If possible try to split it up for recycling, or [build your own Eco brick and use it for another project!](#)

**"Litter belongs to the last person who steps past it
without picking it up."**

3. Plastic - Not so fantastic

Run the attached "Plastic – Not so Fantastic" programme with your Pack. Ideally, this should be run during "**Plastic-Free July**" or on **International Plastic Bag Free Day on 3 July 2018**.

4. "My Plastic-Free Pledge"

After completion of the "Plastic – Not so Fantastic" programme, Cubs will have had the opportunity to make their own personal pledge to give up a plastic item. This pledge should be written down and shared with their parents, guardians or teacher.

Examples of plastic-free pledges:

"For the good of the environment, I pledge to ask my parents to no longer purchase or accept any plastic shopping bags. Instead I will ask them to take their own reusable, long-life shopping bag."

"I know that balloons are bad for the environment and I promise that I'll ask my parents to only use paper decorations at my birthday parties."

"I want to help the turtles and penguins – I will never use a plastic straw again! I can just drink with my lips."

"I promise to always leave the beach with more rubbish than I took with me. Not only will I use less plastic, I will try to clean-up the pollution made by others."

Ask your Cubs about their pledges throughout the year and encourage them to stick to their commitments. You may find it useful to write the pledges down.

5. Plastic at home

Talk to your parents or guardians about the disposable plastic and packaging you use at home. Ask if you can help with the shopping so that you can see the products that your parents or guardians choose to buy. With their help, do the following:

- a) Make a list of the 5 things your household buys the most that you think made the most plastic waste.
- b) For each of these 5 items, think of a reusable or plastic-free alternative that could be used instead.
- c) Tell your parents about what you have learnt about plastic pollution. Ask them to try to give up at least one disposable plastic item. E.g. give up single-use plastic bags and choose reusable ones instead.

Cubs should tell their Pack Scouters about their findings and discussions with their family.

To qualify for the certificate and badge you need to complete all five sections. The Challenge closes on 30 November 2018 and all entries must be submitted to your RTC Cub Programme or Regional Office by no later than 10 December 2018. Please attach any media articles and photographs to your entry forms.

Enjoy the challenge!

national challenge programme:

theme:	plastic – not so fantastic!
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Date:

Duty Six:

Time	Min	Activity	Equipment	Scouter
	05	GRAND HOWL Flag Prayer Register	Totem/skin/rock Flag/flag pole Prayer book Register	
<i>It's a plastic mess! Litter pollution is all sorts of material that can harm the environment. Whatever humans leave behind on the environment affects us and animals.</i>				
	05	ACTIVE GAME: Recycling Bin Race You will need three signs - 'plastic', 'glass' and 'paper'. Hang the signs in different parts of the playing area. Call out different items (plastic bag; milk carton/bottle; newspaper; water bottle; etc.) one at a time. The Cubs have to run and stand next to the sign corresponding to the recycling bin they belong to.		
<i>The Scouts have a law "A Scout is thrifty" – this means they don't waste anything. Do you think buying a plastic shopping bag is wasteful or thrifty? Let's make a reusable bag of our own!</i>				
	25	ACTIVITY: My Reusable Bag Each Cub can easily make their own reusable shopping bag. They just need old t-shirts. Our favourite way of doing this can be found here. If your Pack is unable to make their reusable bags from old t-shirts, you may opt to use a different method of making a reusable bag, or have them decorate a store-bought one as a gift to take home.	Scissors; 1x old t-shirt per Cub	

Time	Min	Activity	Equipment	Scouter
<i>Sea animals don't have arms and hands, once they are tangled in plastic litter they are stuck forever – unless they are lucky enough to meet a kind human.</i>				
	10	<p>TEAM GAME: I'm Tangled!</p> <p>Gather the Pack into a randomly organised group close together in the middle of the meeting place.</p> <p>Everyone holds their plastic bag in their left hand. With their right hand they must hold onto another person's bag. This way each Cub should be attached to two other Cubs, forming a human knot.</p> <p>Working together, Cubs must untangle themselves into circles, without letting go of the bags. They will need to step over or duck under each other.</p>		
<i>Not only does this plastic create lots of litter and waste, it is also harmful to the environment and animals. Here's one animals story.</i>				
	10	<p>YARN: Bob's Story</p> <p>Sit your Cubs down and read them the story of Bob the Turtle's journey. You may choose to show them the attached photos of Bob where appropriate.</p> <p>Questions have been included in the yarn that you may want to ask the Cubs as you read through the story.</p>	Printed yarn	
<i>Poor Bob! Thank you to the people who found him and nursed him back to health again.</i>				
	10	<p>ACTIVE GAME: Snatch the Bag</p> <p>Line up the Pack tallest to shortest – divide the group into 2 teams and have these teams line up facing each other, with a playing area between them.</p> <p>From tallest to shortest, number the Cubs in each team from 1 upwards.</p>	An assortment of discarded plastic items.	

Time	Min	Activity	Equipment	Scouter
		<p>On the floor between the teams, place a bundle of discarded plastic items (they may use their plastic packets if needed). It can consist of plastic bags, straws, bottle tops, etc.</p> <p>When you call a number, the 2 Cubs with that number need to try to snatch an item and return it to their team (or to a scoring area) without the opposing team touching them after they've picked up the item.</p>		
<p><i>Now that you know about the wastefulness of plastic, and the harm it does – would you like to make a promise to reduce the amount of plastic litter you cause?</i></p>				
	15	<p>ACTIVITY: Plastic-free Pledge</p> <p>Have the Cubs sit in a circle. Each Cub should take turns to tell the other Cubs what plastic item they want to give up or use less of and write this pledge on a piece of paper – they should take this home to share with their family.</p> <p>Examples of pledges are in section 4 of the challenge.</p>	1 x sheet of paper per Cub; enough pens or crayons for Cubs to write.	
<p><i>Share your pledge with your family and friends. Let's see how many plastic items we can give up.</i></p>				
	05	NOTICES/BADGES		
	05	<p>GRAND HOWL Flag Prayer Dismiss</p>	<p>Totem/skin/rock Flag/flag pole Prayer book</p>	

Yarn – The Story of Bob the Sea Turtle

Sea turtles live out in the ocean eating seaweed, jellyfish and other small sea creatures as they migrate thousands of kilometres. The only time they ever come to land is to lay eggs, but other than this they are normally far away from us humans.

On a stormy Thursday in 2014, a young green sea turtle named Bob got caught in some strong waves and currents on the seas surface. Bob's friends, other turtles,

all dived deep under the waves where the water was calm and they could wait for the storm to go away. But Bob had a problem...

Bob had been feeling sick for a long time – he thought he'd been eating yummy seaweed like a good turtle, but he actually ate something poisonous by accident! When Bob tried to dive to follow his friends he couldn't, he was feeling too weak and something inside him was making him float on top of the water.

The storm washed Bob up onto the rocks near Cape Agulhas, the southern tip of Africa. He got hurt badly by the rocks because he couldn't swim away, his bottom shell got broken and he got stuck on the beach in the sun for a long time. Bob thought he was going to die.

Luckily, some nice people found Bob and quickly drove all the way to Cape Town to give him to the Two Oceans Aquarium's vets. They warmed Bob up and gave him lots of water to drink (yes turtles get thirsty too). They also fixed his broken shell and gave him a little pool to swim in. But something was still wrong.

Bob was still feeling sick, and didn't want to eat. The vets took x-rays to try and see if there was a problem inside him, but they couldn't see what was wrong.

Bob got worse, he was feeling so sick that he started to go blind – worms started living in his brain because he was too weak to heal properly! Bob was fed with a tube every day, but he kept on losing weight – not a good thing for a turtle! Everyone was very worried about Bob.

Eventually, after almost a month, Bob made a big poo! He pooped out a lot of yucky plastic that he accidentally ate months ago – it looked just like seaweed to Bob, that must have been why he ate it by mistake!

This plastic had been making Bob sick, and after he pooped it all out, he quickly healed and went back to being his old happy self!

Plastic in the ocean looks just like food to many animals. Every year 100 million sea animals die because they eat or become tangled in plastic in the ocean. Most animals are not as lucky as Bob.

Do you think it would be easier to rescue 100 million animals, or just to stop littering lots of junk plastic?

Photos of Bob:



entry form:**'take the pack' out of 'packaging':**

What pledge did your Pack make? Was this effective or did you struggle? Did other parts of your Group support it?

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'protect my environment':

What clean-up activity did you carry out? How much rubbish did the Cubs collect?

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'plastic – not so fantastic':

What was the most valuable lesson you think your Cubs took home?

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'my plastic-free pledge':

Did your Cubs stick to their pledge throughout the year? Did any pledges stand out to you?

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'plastic at home':

Did your Cubs provide feedback about plastic use in their homes? What did they identify as the most commonly waster plastic item? Did they manage to get their families to make a change?

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'general comments':

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Name of Pack:

Number of Cubs who took part:

Date Completed:

Number of Scouters who took part: