



This 5th press review is part of the campaigns [to reduce plastic bags](#) and plastic bottles consumption in Europe.

PLASTIC BAGS

2nd June 2016, [Egypt] *Plastic Is Recycled With Ancient Egyptian Weaving Tradition*

“After the onset of the revolution on January 25, 2011, we were highly motivated; we wanted to be part of the change,” says Mariam. “We wanted to find a solution to one of Egypt’s most serious issues: the all-pervading trash,” Mariam adds. So the two researched the topic and talked to some trash men and scavengers around Cairo. They learned that people mostly get rid of plastic by burning it, because it does not decompose. Therefore, Mariam and Hend developed a method to convert bags into long threads. These threads are strung on a loom and manually woven into fabric, which is then used to create chairs, bags and home accessories.

“It is more expensive to recycle plastic bags than it is to make them, which is why only a very small number of Egyptian companies recycle plastic bags”, Hend explains. Plastic that does get recycled is sometimes mixed up with hospital waste in the recycling process, which means that recycled products are of poor quality or even pose a health hazard. “Therefore, the objective of our graduation project was not to recycle plastic bags, but to reuse them.” [...]

They also invite the public to help collect bags on the Reform Studio website.[...]

In their project Reform Studio, Mariam and Hend are fusing two ideas: the new approach of upcycling and the ancient Egyptian tradition of the loom.”

[\[Link to the Planet Experts article\]](#)

3rd September 2016, [Morocco] *Morocco investigates plastic bags smuggling from Melilla two months after the ban*

The General Administration of Customs registered in cities of eastern country flows of bags branded from a Spanish shop.

Morocco, through the Customs Department of the province of Nador, is investigating an alleged smuggling of plastic bags, banned just two months ago, according to the Moroccan City Nador digital diary.

[\[Link to the Mellila Hoy article – Spanish\]](#)

3rd September 2016, [Argentina] *Controversy over the bag ban in shops of Buenos airs*

From 1 January next year the locals must add something else to the grocery list: "Do not forget the bag." From that moment, the super and hypermarkets and supermarkets cannot provide plastic bags to customers. This was decided by the city government announced yesterday novelty in a resolution to be published tomorrow in the Official Gazette.

Therefore, it was explained that the implementation of the ban on the delivery of bags include a control system from January to the affected businesses to detect some kind of default, which will be punishable with fines that could be around 100,000 pesos.

[\[Link to the La Nacion article – Spanish\]](#)

6th September 2016, [Thailand] *Flood threat as plastic bags clog Bangkok's sewers*

"Located just 50 centimeters above sea level and crisscrossed with canals, Thailand's throbbing capital has long had to fight off floods and an encroaching sea.

But the city's insatiable appetite for plastic bags, combined with a poor track record of recycling, is severely hampering those efforts, especially during the monsoon months.

Plastic has become a major scourge for the city's network of pumping stations, clogging vital machinery during the seasonal downpours and regularly turning major thoroughfares into muddy rivers. [...]

The government's own figures suggest the average Thai uses eight plastic bags a day -- in contrast, the average person in France uses around 80 a year."

[\[Link to the National article\]](#)

13th September 2016, [USA] *Grandmas Use Discarded Plastic Bags To Make Beds For The Homeless*

Meeting every Thursday morning, the ladies cut donated plastic bags into strips and then tie them together in order to create what they've dubbed "plarn" AKA plastic yarn. They then use the plarn to crochet the sleeping mats for the homeless. [...] Each bed is a sizable 3-by-6 feet and takes more than 600 bags to make. They've already used thousands of bags this year, putting together 88 mats, some of which have gone to flood victims in Louisiana.

[\[Link to the Huffington Post article\]](#)

16th September 2016, [France] *More than 20% of the wide French marine zone now protected*

Mrs. Royal, also launched in Washington [Our Ocean Conference] a coalition with Morocco and Monaco to generalize the ban of single use plastic bags, which create an important and disastrous pollution for marine ecosystem worldwide. [Australia has joined the coalition]

[\[Link to the RTL Info article – French\]](#)

16th September 2016, [USA] *US President Barack Obama proposes ban on single-use Plastic Bag*

President Barack Obama has proposed a ban on single-use plastic bags. This is a major blow in a small but growing fight against the "disposable society" as referred by environmentalists. At present, only 12 cities in the United States have barred the usage of plastic bags. But those include three of the nation's largest cities: New York, Los Angeles, Chicago.

[\[Link to the Newsgram article\]](#)

16th September 2016, [International] *Global plastic waste reduction initiative launched*

« Ninety non-government organizations have combined to unveil a new 10-point plan to eliminate plastic pollution. [...] "This is the first time that groups from all around the world have come together to find a common solution to the problem of plastic pollution, said Delphine Lévi Alvarès, Zero Waste Europe policy officer and coordinator of the initiative.

She added: "It is the beginning of a movement which will lead to governments, cities and companies taking major action to tackle this ever-growing problem." »

[\[Link to the Plastic News Europe article\]](#)

20th September 2016, [Germany], *Lidl will stop Plastic Bag Sale in 2017*

As the first grocery retailer, the company will stop the sale of the environmentally harmful plastic bags from spring 2017, Wolf Tiedemann from Lidl management announced.

More than 100 million plastic bags a year will be likely to be saved. This corresponds to approximately 3,500 tons of plastic.

Also there will be no more plastic bags in the future in the Lidl branches in Austria and Switzerland, Tiedemann said. The discounter took this step in order to support the efforts of the federal government to reduce the annual consumption of plastic carrier bags by the end of 2025 from around 70 bags per inhabitants to a maximum of 40 bags.

Instead of plastic bags, consumer will be able to buy only bags made of cotton or paper, or have recourse to the reusable tote bags in the future.

In a survey published in the spring by the polling institute YouGov, 53 percent of respondents argued for a complete ban of plastic bags in stores.

[\[Link to the Spiegel Online article – German\]](#)

22nd September 2016, [Switzerland] *Plastic bags in Coop and Migros will be charged*

The two giant retailers will charge single use plastic bags handed out at checkout in order to apply the branch agreement which plan a reduction of 80% of the plastic bags' usage.

[\[Link to the Tribune de Genève article – French\]](#)

22nd September 2016, [Switzerland] *Free plastic bags: the Parliament gives up the ban*

The Council of States [upper house] decided to close the motion proposing to ban single use plastic bags and to charge reusable bags. A branch agreement will allow the reduction of single use plastic bags.

[\[Link to the ARCINFO article – French\]](#)

22nd September 2016, [Spain] *Shops in Palma will not be allowed to give plastic bags from January 1, 2018*

The shops in Palma will not be allowed to give plastic bags from January 1, 2018, except those for bulk and selling of materials that allow more than one use. It is foreseen by the draft ordinance cleaning, trash and solid waste approved on Wednesday the Governing Board.

[...] Businesses that provide plastic bags for single use will have a light penalty, the fine will be up to 750 euros; if they keep doing it, the third time will become serious and the fine will be between 750 and 1,500 euros.

[\[Link to the Ultima Hora article – Spanish\]](#)

PLASTIC BOTTLES

1st June 2016, *Recycling water bottles will never go out of style*

"In the fashion and auto industries, recycling water bottles into ballgowns or car parts is the latest trend to follow the push to reuse paper, plastic and electronics

When the actress Emma Watson stepped onto the red carpet in a gown made of repurposed water bottles at the Met Gala in early May, she established both the versatility and the durability of a new trend in recycling.

Americans use about 50bn plastic water bottles each year, and 38m of those end up in landfills, where they can take up to 1,000 years to decompose. But in a matter of weeks, a recycled water bottle can be made into a lumber alternative, polyester, stadium seating, car parts – or even a dress fit for a gala that’s earned a reputation as “fashion’s Oscars”.

[\[Link to The Guardian article\]](#)

3rd August 2016, [USA] *What you need to know about Oregon's 10 cent bottle deposit*

« Mark your calendars: In April 2017, the bottle deposit in Oregon will go up to 10 cents.

Oregon was the first state in the United States to enact a bottle deposit, in 1971. The bill, which was implemented in 1972, added five cents to the price of canned and bottled beer, malt beverages and carbonated soft drinks (water was added in 2009). To get the five cents back, you'd have to return the bottle or can. Now, for the first time, that amount will increase.

So, here's what you need to know about Oregon's Bottle Bill and the new bottle deposit.

[...] Starting Jan. 1, 2018, that will be expanded to include all beverage containers except distilled liquor, wine, dairy or plant-based milk, and infant formula.

[...] The Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative collects returned containers from about 2,600 retailers and 16 BottleDrop centers across Oregon. The containers are then trucked to one of eight processing plants, where they are sorted, counted, crushed and baled. »

[\[Link to the Oregon Live article\]](#)

6th September 2016, [Australia] *Brisbane's Big Sound festival goes plastic-bottle free*

“Brisbane’s Big Sound music conference and festival, held all this week in the Valley, is taking a step in the right direction - and encouraging all its artists, delegates and punters to ditch their plastic bottles.

Working with Green Music Australia, Big Sound is aiming to be plastic-bottle free - with reusable bottles given in every delegate goodie bag, and extra water refill stations will be put up around the site.”

[\[Link to the ABC article\]](#)

6th September 2016, [Netherlands] *Merijn Tinga crosses the North Sea on a soda bottle-shaped foilboard*

“Merijn Tinga has completed a North Sea kite cross between Scheveningen, in the Netherlands, and Lowestoft, in England.

The Dutch kitesurfer, also known as Plastic Soup Surfer, rode a recycled foil kiteboard in the shape of a soda bottle built by Bram Hoogendijk. Tinga wants to raise awareness about plastic pollution in marine waters.

The 178-kilometer adventure took five hours and 36 minutes to complete. Tinga, who is a biologist, wants Netherlands to implement a law that charges a deposit fee for half-liter drink bottles.”

[\[Link to the Surfer Today article\]](#)

10th September 2016, *Plastic chemicals could ruin your children's teeth*

A study presented at the European Congress of Endocrinology focused on how some chemicals from plastic or fungicides affect tooth enamel, the tough outer layer of the teeth to protect them from harm.

To see the effect that can cause these products, the researchers gave laboratory rats a dose of a common fungicide often found in vegetables and fruits such as raspberries, kiwi, lettuce and onions.

And they gave them an industrial chemical commonly used in plastic water bottles and other food packaging. In both cases the doses were equivalent to those that would expose a human being from birth to 30 days of life.

After sampling of the teeth of rats they found that expression of the genes involved in mineralization of the teeth, and therefore strengthen the enamel had changed due to the exposure of these substances.

[\[Link to La Vanguardia article – Spanish\]](#)

15th September 2016, [Spain] *Valencian Courts give their support to our packaging deposit system*

Yesterday was an important day for our Ministry as the Valencian Parliament approved by a large majority the request to the government (ie, us) to start the implementation of the System of deposit, return and refund of bottles (« Dipòsit, Devolució i Retorn d'envasos (SDDR)»). The Government was convinced of the initiative, it is set as one of the 50 priorities of the second half of 2016, but now, with the support of the legislative power, the project gains a lot of weight.

The case is whether environmental policies should be subordinate to the business or businesses must adapt to environmental policies.

[\[Link to the Bloc de Julià Àlvaro - Spanish\]](#)