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Better Plastics for Healthier Oceans

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LONDON – Plastics are among the most popular materials in use today. Given the material’s versatility, it is little wonder that some 320 million tons of it are used around the world each year. Indeed, the recent holidays left many with a mountain of plastic products and packaging. But plastics also pose a serious environmental threat.

If not disposed of properly, plastics can lie or float around for decades. In addition to being harmful to terrestrial and aquatic life, free-floating plastics in oceans can adsorb toxins and break up into micro-plastics, which then enter the food chain.

It is this seeming immortality that has led governments to tax certain environmentally damaging plastic products or ban them altogether. Many governments are also encouraging better waste management, and the reuse, redesign, and recycling of plastic products.

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