



OUR PURPOSE

1. We work to end plastic pollution, everywhere.
2. We support public policy that protects public health, particularly in environmental justice communities.
3. We reach as many people as possible with our message and policy recommendations.
4. We aim to be effective allies of people in frontline communities and amplify their voices.
5. We transform the mindsets, social structures, industrial trends, and policies that are driving the buildout of plastics manufacturing and use in the United States.

OUR PRINCIPLES

1. We already have the solutions we need to address plastic pollution.

We don't need to wait for a new breakthrough technology to start making less plastic. Many effective alternatives exist today.

Industry representatives and some in government often promote technological solutions focused on waste management. All too often, these are distractions from the principal issue of overproduction.

2. Implementing solutions requires significantly different public policies.

It will take changes at every level of the global economy to stem the tide of plastic pollution, but legally required change is the most effective approach. Governments need to impose bans and adopt laws that compel corporations to change their purchasing and packaging decisions. Investments are needed to reduce the use of plastics and promote alternatives. New regulations must limit fossil fuel extraction and end subsidies.

3. Everyone has the right to clean air and water and a safe and healthful environment.



Plastic pollution disproportionately harms people of color and low-income communities around the world.

This is morally wrong and perpetuates a global history of environmental racism. Lined with more than 150 petrochemical facilities, the 85-mile stretch of the Mississippi River between New Orleans and Baton Rouge is often called “Cancer Alley”— illustrating the extent to which environmental injustice has been normalized. This must change.

We are committed to the 17 [principles of environmental justice](#) developed in 1991 at the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit. Thirty years later, not one of these vital principles has been fully realized.

Fenceline communities should have the dignity of self-determination. We serve in the work to end plastic pollution and environmental injustice.

4. We are supporting the growth of a much-needed grassroots movement to address plastic pollution.

We are trained to educate our communities, legislators, and the media about our message and urge them to take action. We believe that every person has a role to play and something to contribute. We are an organization grounded in inclusiveness, respect, justice, non-violence, creativity, and collaboration. We help individuals cultivate their leadership potential, thereby building bridges to reach as many people as possible with our message.

5. We are committed to stewardship and regeneration of natural resources, and to addressing the upstream causes of plastic pollution.

The extraction, creation, and disposal of plastics is destructive and, for the most part, unnecessary. In addition to reducing plastic pollution through regulation, we must replace our reliance on disposable goods with systems designed for reuse, refill, and repair, using natural and already existing materials which support a regenerative circular economy. Our responsibility to future generations and all life requires nothing less.

OUR CORE MESSAGES



- **Plastic is one of the greatest environmental and health threats of our time.** Plastic pollutes our air, water, soil, and bodies, threatens our wildlife and ecosystems, increases illness, widens inequality, and hastens the climate crisis.
- **Plastic pollution is a major environmental justice issue.** The burden of plastic pollution is disproportionately imposed on low-income communities and communities of color. Plastic facilities emit greenhouse gasses and massive amounts of particulates and other toxic chemicals into the air, threatening residents' health. Landfills and incinerators are also overwhelmingly located in low-income communities and communities of color where residents are sickened by air and water pollution.
- **We cannot recycle our way out of the plastic problem.** Less than 9% of all plastic has been recycled. Plastic pollutes at every stage of its lifecycle, from production to disposal, making the problem far too large and complex to possibly be managed through recycling or waste management practices.
- **Corporations, NOT individuals, are responsible for our plastic pollution crisis.** Plastic pollution is being driven by the petrochemical industry's desire to maintain and increase its profits, not by consumer demand or by poor choices on the part of individuals. While individual action is important, the solution to this crisis must focus on regulating the industries responsible for creating the mess, rather than on convincing people to reduce their "plastic footprints."
- **We reject the false solutions advanced by the plastics and petrochemical industry,** including incineration, burning waste at cement kilns (aka "waste to fuel" and "waste-to-energy"), pyrolysis, gasification, "advanced recycling" and "chemical recycling," bioplastics, and personal responsibility. These false solutions undermine waste reduction efforts and distract society from pursuing the only truly effective solution to the plastic pollution crisis - reducing plastic production and use.
- **Plastic pollution is a significant driver of the climate crisis.** Plastics release climate warming emissions at every stage of their lifecycle, hastening climate change. Here in the U.S., the plastic industry's greenhouse gas emissions are poised to surpass those of the coal industry by 2030. If plastic were a country, it



would be the world's fifth largest greenhouse gas producer. We cannot solve our climate crisis without also solving our plastic pollution crisis.

Please note: We ask that you not advocate against policy positions endorsed by Beyond Plastics in our name as a Local Group or Affiliate. [Click here for more on what our policy positions are](#). If you are ever unsure, please check with Beyond Plastics by reaching out to Alexis Goldsmith, Organizing Director, at alexisgoldsmith@bennington.edu.

*****IMPORTANT! Beyond Plastics' work is *non-partisan* and we do not support or oppose any candidates running for office. Although you are welcome to engage in partisan efforts in a personal capacity, you may never engage in them in Beyond Plastics' name.*****