

## GLOBAL DIMENSIONS OF PLASTIC [1,2]

### 8.3 BILLION TONNES

of plastic were produced globally between 1950 and 2015

▲

More than **ONE TONNE PER PERSON** living on the planet today

From all the plastic waste the world had ever produced

**only 9% has been recycled**



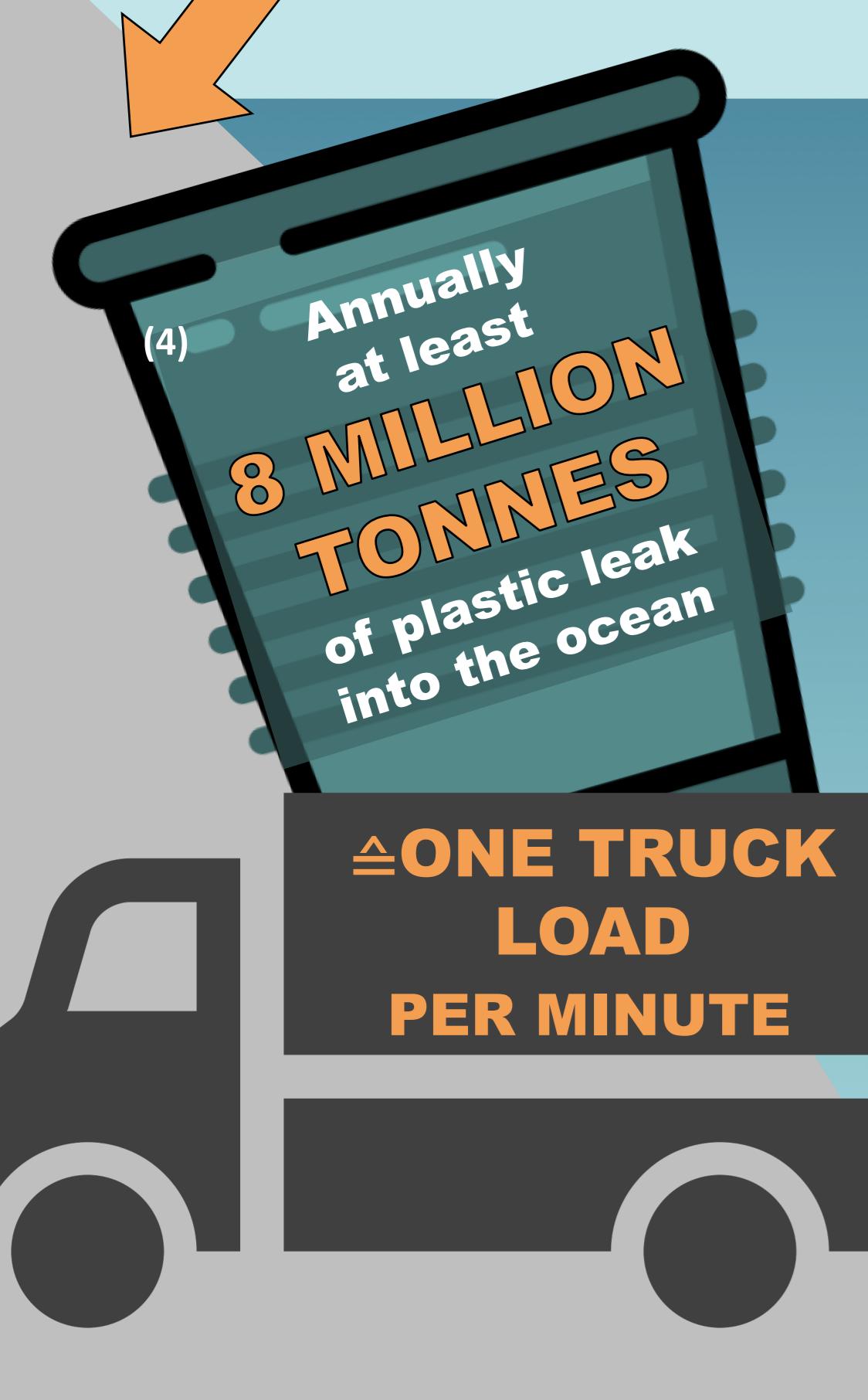
**12% has been incinerated**



**79% has been accumulated**



In landfills, dumps or the natural environment



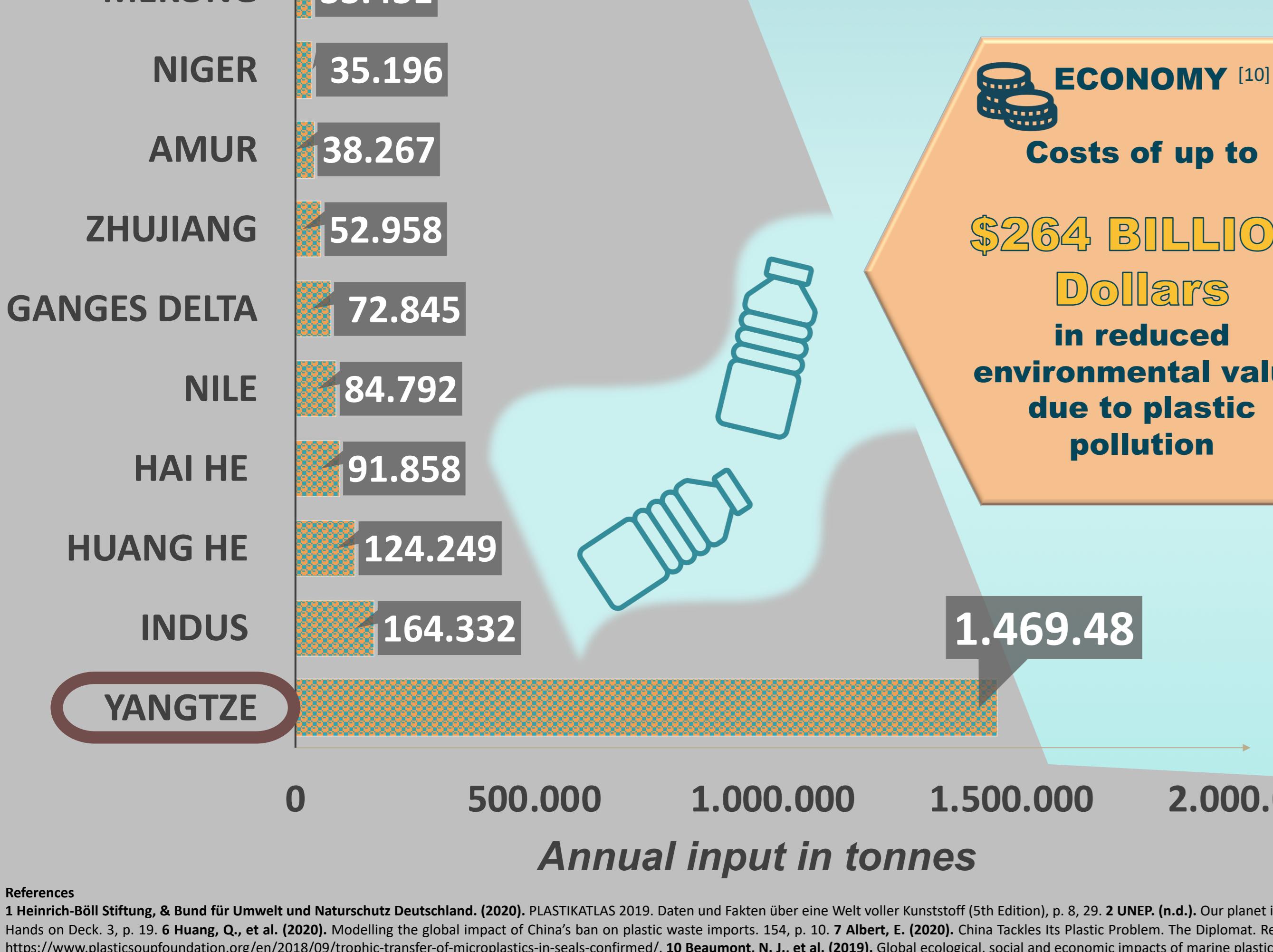
**86<sup>[1]</sup> MILLION TONNES**  
Total amount of plastic that entered the ocean

# THE OCEANS ARE DROWNING IN PLASTIC

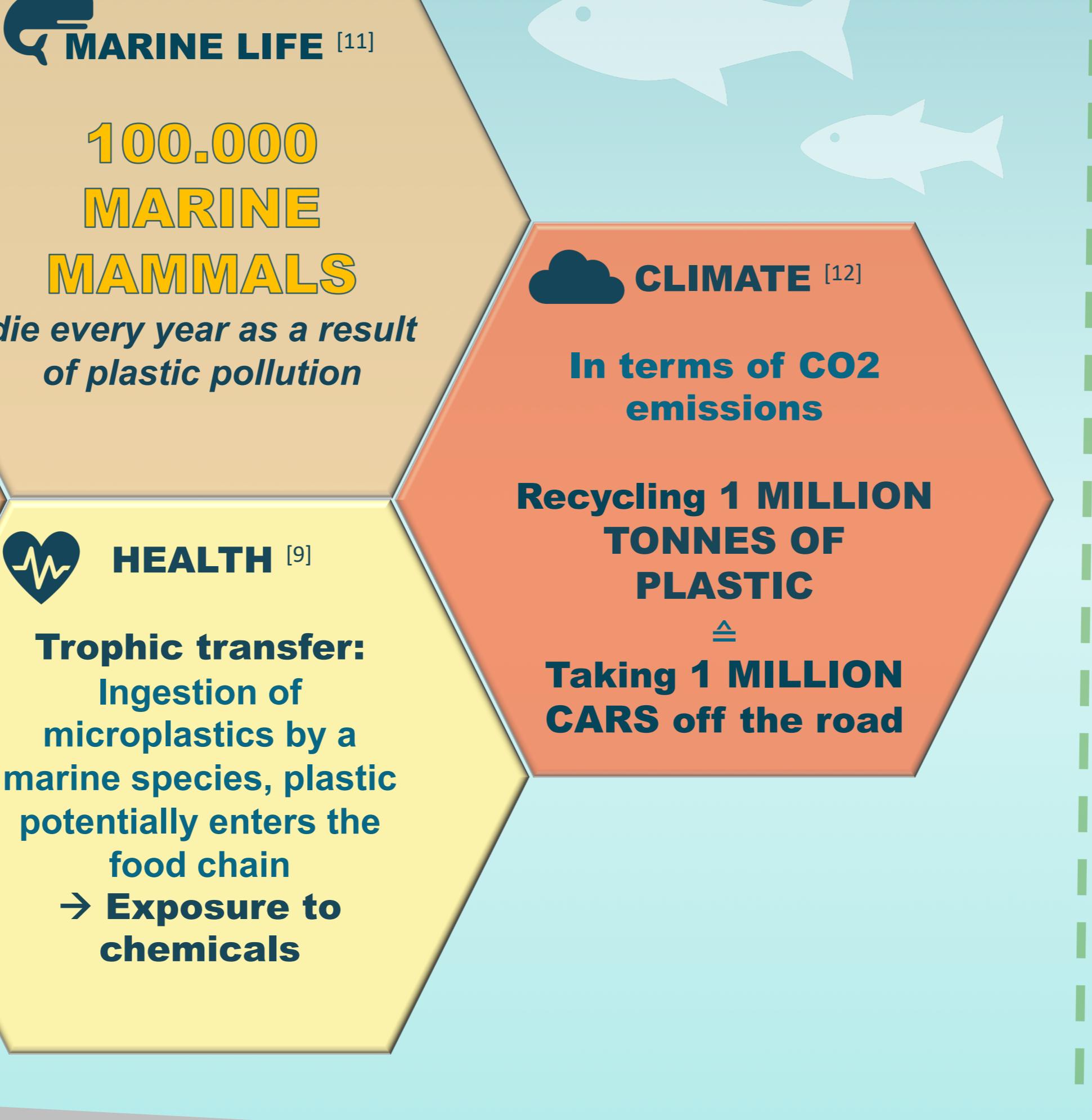
## CHINA'S DECISIVE ROLE IN A GLOBAL MATTER

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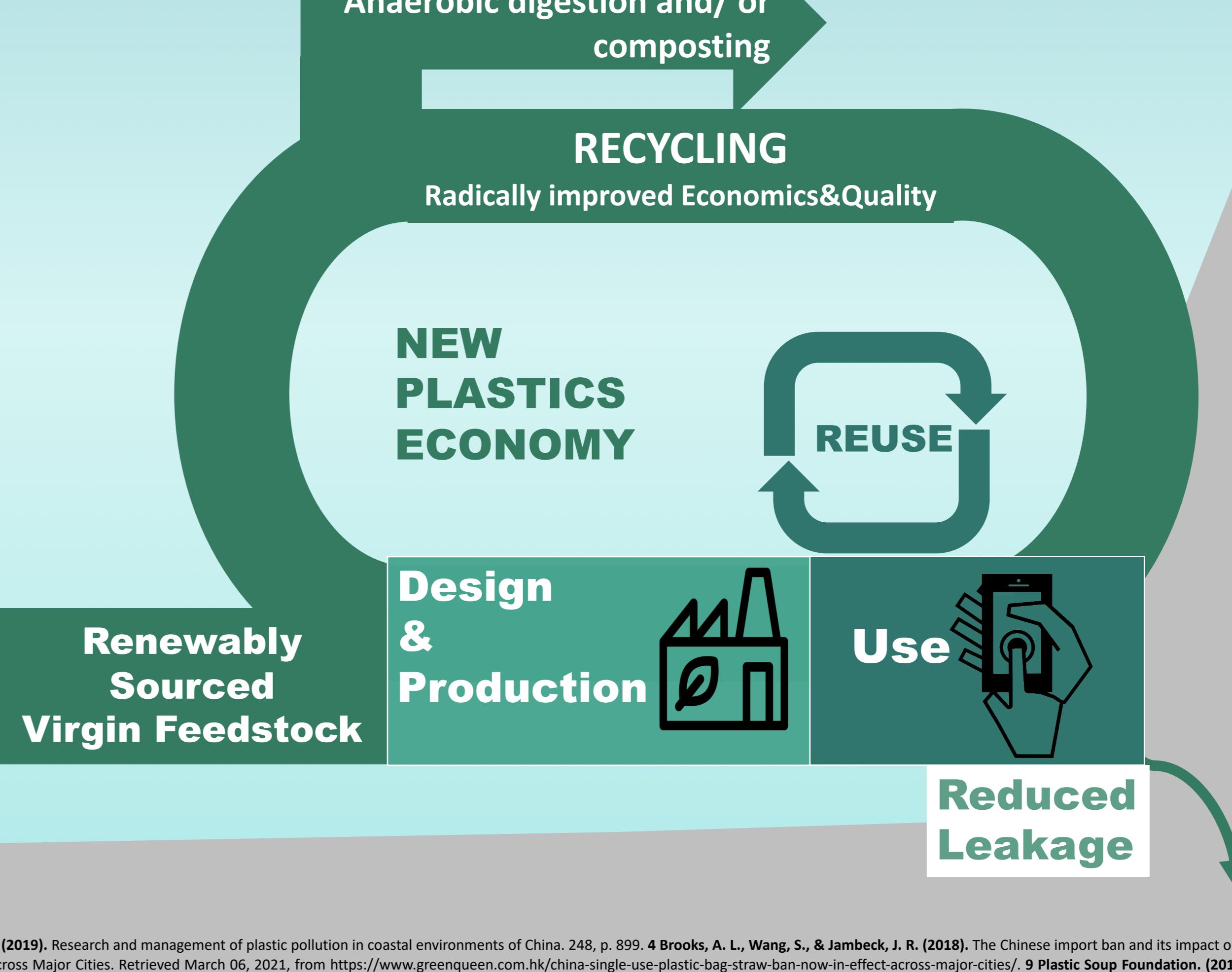
### (5) OCEAN PLASTIC INPUT THROUGH RIVERS



### CONSEQUENCES OF MARINE PLASTIC POLLUTION



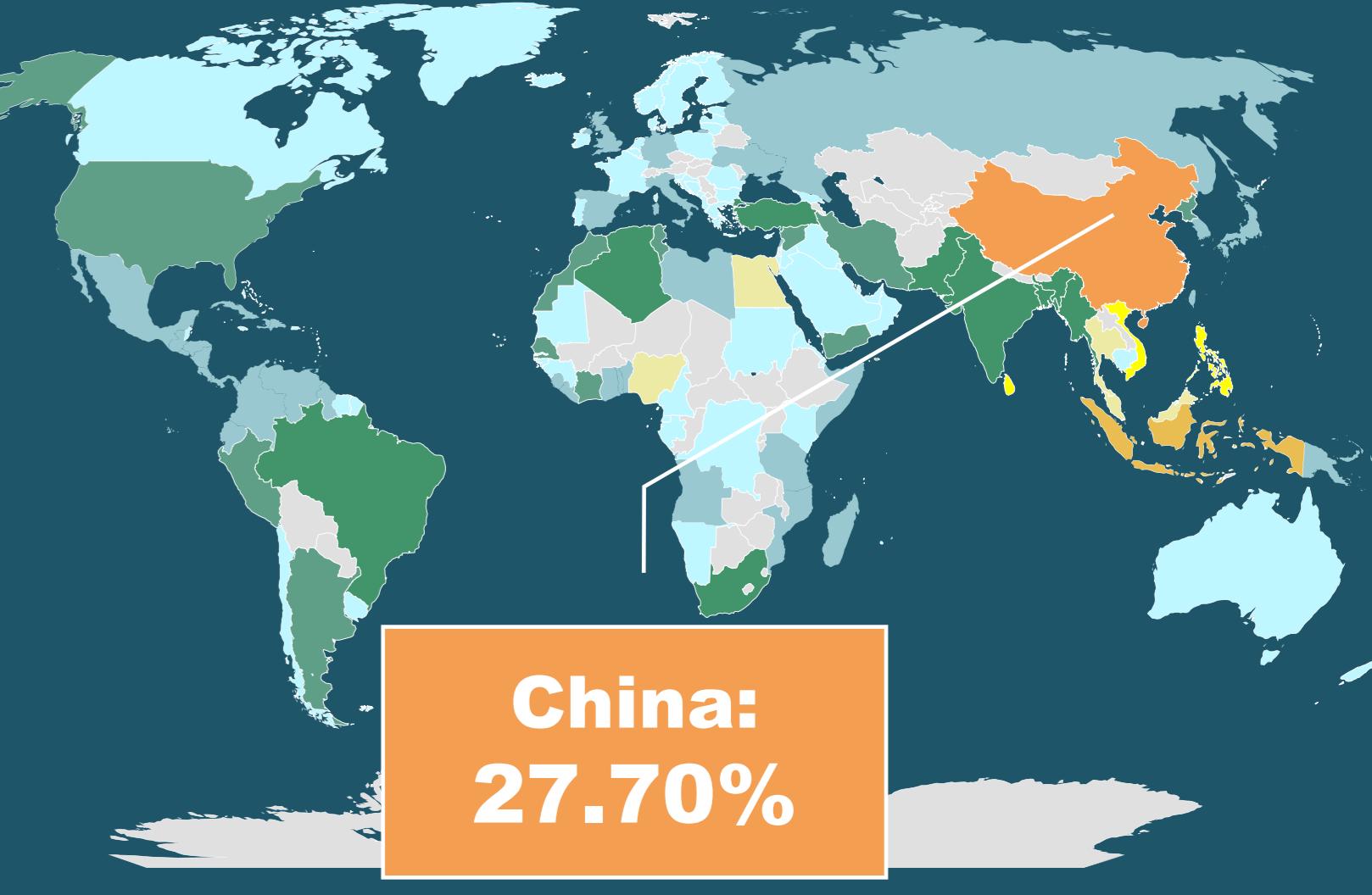
### (3) TRANSFORMATIONAL POTENTIAL



## THE GLOBAL PLASTIC PLAYER

China is by far not only the most populated country in the world but also largest plastic consumer and producer, contributing **29%** of the global thermoplastics and polyurethanes production. For countries of the Global North, such as UK and USA, China had until recently offered the possibility to dispose of plastic waste and prevent it from being landfilled or incinerated in the countries of origin by importing their shipping-processed plastic waste. Estimates assume that in the last two decades, almost half of the planet's plastic waste has been shipped to China to profit its recycling industry. Especially less valuable plastic is regularly discarded with inadequate management, possibly finding its way into the ocean. Data from 2010 to 2016 indicate, that the import of plastic waste adds 10 to 13% of mass to the domestic plastic waste, that is already poorly managed. Overall, China contributes **1.3 million to 3.5 million tonnes of plastic** to the world's oceans annually. [3,4,5]

## (1) SHARE OF GLOBAL MISMANAGED PLASTIC WASTE (2010)



### COURSES OF ACTION

In 2018 China's central government has implemented an **import waste ban**, which has lowered the plastic imports by 99%.

Additionally, the country has revealed a plan to reduce its single-use plastic across all towns and cities by 2022, which began already in 2021 with a ban in every major city. In the future, China's new plastic regulations could lead to a reduction in plastic waste, as well as an improvement in the recycling of its own plastic waste, thus diminishing its share of plastic in the ocean. Given the important role its recycling industry plays for the waste management of other countries and its ban on waste imports, illegal plastic disposals and ocean littering might even increase in the beginning. At the same time, it can also provide food for thought in the handling of plastic and its subsequent disposal in large parts of the world, as the **global dumping ground**. China is no longer available. In addition, **global cooperation will be necessary** in the future to strive for an overall reduction in plastic production and a more stable recycling industry. Models of action such as the **New Plastics Economy** could play a leading role in this context.

[5,6,7,8,13]