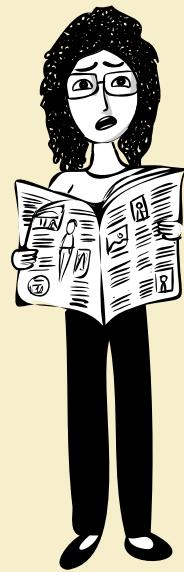


# Marine Plastics



Marine plastics

- What is the issue?
- Why is it important?
- What can be done?

What is the issue?

Plastic is a synthetic organic polymer made from petroleum with properties ideally suited for a wide variety of applications, including packaging, building and construction, household and sports equipment, vehicles, electronics and agriculture. Plastic is cheap, lightweight, strong and malleable. Over 300 million tons of plastic are produced every year, half of which is used to design single-use items such as shopping bags, cups and straws.

At least 8 million tons of plastic end up in our oceans every year. Floating plastic debris are currently the most abundant items of marine litter. Waste plastic makes up 80% of all marine debris from surface waters to deep-sea sediments. Plastic has been detected on shorelines of all the continents, with more plastic materials found near popular tourist destinations and densely populated areas.

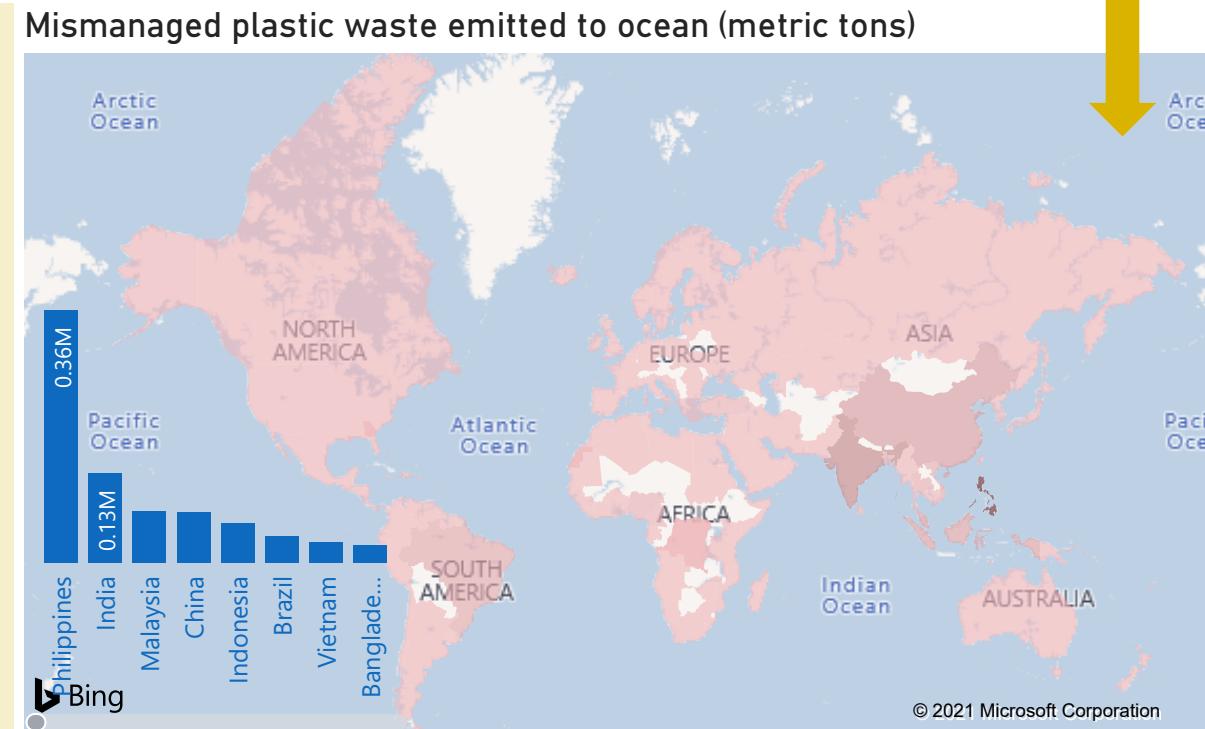
Plastic waste in ocean is indeed a big concern! Wonder where all this plastic comes from?



Now...what could the reasons be for smaller countries like Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia to emit more plastic waste compared to other larger countries?



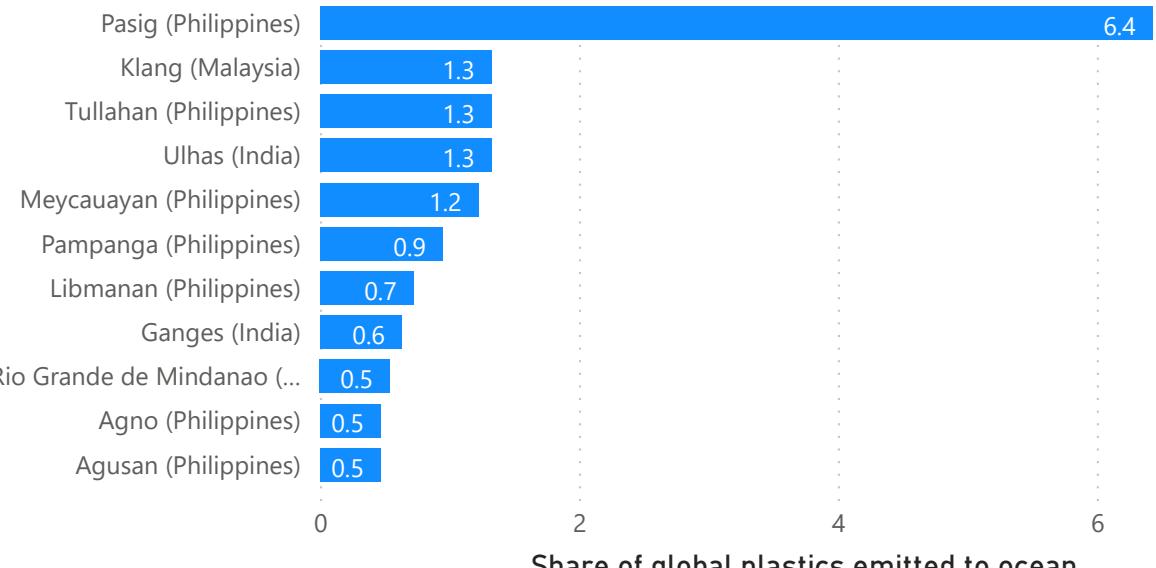
Contrary to what I thought... Philippines, Malaysia & Indonesia are in the top contributors of the plastic waste into the ocean.



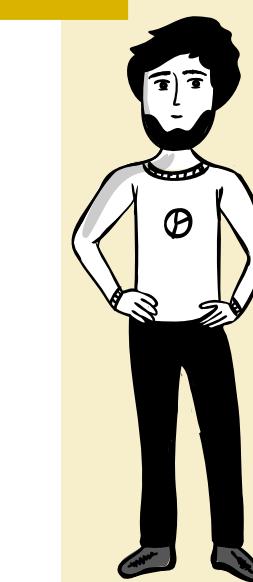
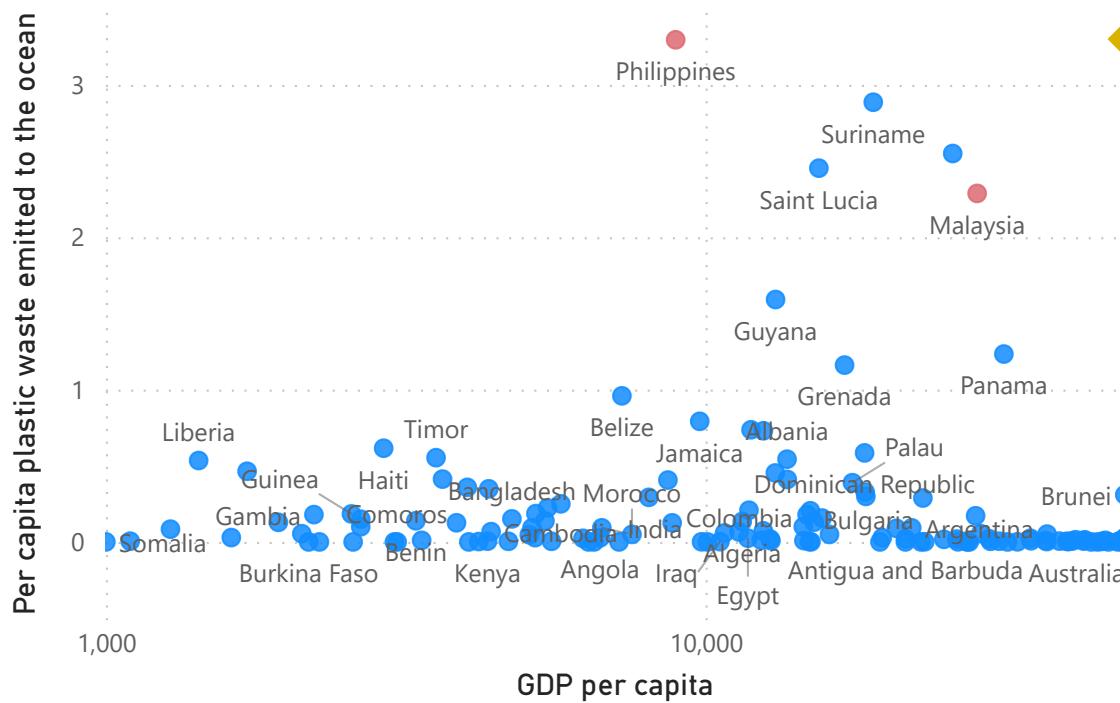


*One primary reason is the poor waste management. This leads to more poorly disposed plastic waste entering rivers and subsequently the oceans. The proximity of the cities to the oceans and coastlines further increases the amount of plastic waste entering the oceans*

### Share of global plastics emitted to ocean via rivers



### Plastic waste emitted to the ocean per capita vs. GDP per capita



*Contrary to the popular belief that rich countries emit more plastic waste, it is the countries which fall in middle income groups that emit most plastic waste into the ocean.*

*The reason again is simple - poor waste management practices in these countries!*

*Though they might be generating more plastic waste, the rich countries have better waste management practices*



A cartoon illustration of a woman with dark hair and glasses, wearing a white t-shirt and black pants, standing with her hands clasped near her chin in a thoughtful pose. To her right is a light blue speech bubble containing text.

*Ah!! It's clear...the focus then should be to improve the **waste management infrastructure** in these countries so that the plastic waste is collected and disposed appropriately!*

A flow diagram titled "EPR" (Extended Producer Responsibility) showing the life cycle of a product and its waste management. The process starts with a factory icon labeled "producer or brand-owner manufactures and packages product". An arrow leads to a person icon labeled "retailers sell the product", then to a consumer icon labeled "consumers purchase the product". Another arrow leads to a truck and bin icon labeled "Plastic waste generation". A final arrow points to a recycling symbol and text labeled "Plastic waste disposal by Pyrolysis (funded by producers and brand owners)" and "take back programs: retailer take back, mail-back, collection sites, haulers, local governments".

A cartoon illustration of a man with a beard and short dark hair, wearing a white t-shirt and black pants, standing with his hands raised in a thumbs-up gesture. To his right is a light blue speech bubble containing text.

*Right!! And maybe we should reduce the usage of the single-use plastic which is the bane of the plastic pollution problem!!*

A graphic of a red circle with a diagonal slash over a collection of single-use plastic items, including a bottle, a cup with a straw, a fork, and a knife, indicating that their use is prohibited or discouraged.