



PLASTIC FREE JULY

July 2023

Cause Toolkit

This toolkit is intended to provide your company with inspiration and resources to best engage employees in your Groundswell Workplace Giving Program by highlighting Plastic Free July.

Choose from the resources included in this toolkit to determine what works best to educate and engage your employees around this cause.

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Overview



Plastic Free July is a global movement that helps mobilize support for the solutions to plastic pollution. Human beings have produced more than 8 billion tons of plastic since the 1950s; but less than 10% has been recycled. Until recently, the U.S. outsourced a significant portion of its plastic, but import bans in countries like China and Turkey have fueled a decline in recycling.

The detrimental effects of plastic waste on ecosystems are profound. Marine animals often mistake plastic items for food, leading to entanglement, ingestion, and suffocation. This results in the death of countless marine species, including seabirds, turtles, whales, and dolphins. Plastic waste can also disrupt the balance of marine ecosystems, impacting biodiversity and overall ecological health.

Plastic pollution also has a significant impact on land-based ecosystems. Plastic debris can leach harmful chemicals into the soil, affecting plant growth and soil fertility. When ingested by land animals, plastics can cause digestive problems, organ damage, and even death. The presence of plastic waste in natural habitats not only threatens wildlife but also undermines the delicate balance of entire ecosystems.

Despite the challenges - there are signs of hope. In June, the world's governments agreed to draft a new treaty to control plastics, and if it goes into effect, the United Nations says it could cut production by a massive 80% by 2040. Companies can play a role in supporting efforts to reduce plastic waste by examining their own operations, as well as signaling support for UN-led efforts.

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Facts and Data

400 tons

amount of plastic waste
generated globally every
year



2.5 million bottles
... every hour

Every hour, 2.5 million
plastic bottles are thrown
away in the U.S. Plastic
bottles take upwards of 450
years to degrade.



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Nonprofit Spotlights

There are many nonprofit organizations working to stem the tide of plastics, from landfills to oceans. Listed below are a selection of nonprofits you can find on the Groundswell app:



Post-Landfill Action Network

The Post-Landfill Action Network (PLAN) supports students in reimagining systems beyond the Linear Consumption Economy. They equip students with the resources and tools necessary to holistically understand the Global Waste Crisis and lead solutions on their campuses. Collectively, they can build a world beyond waste.



Plastic Oceans International

Plastic Oceans International is a US-based 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization whose goal is to end plastic pollution and to foster sustainable communities worldwide. They operate with the belief that we can and must act locally in order to create change globally, and we do so through four key pillars of activity: Education, Activism, Advocacy and Science.



The Story of Stuff Project

The Story of Stuff inspires and encourages the civic engagement of the more than one million members of our global Community. They invite you to be inspired by and share our movies, participate in our study programs, and take part in campaigns on the environmental and social issues you care about.



Ocean Blue Project

Ocean Blue Project is a ocean cleanup organization that is working to rehabilitate and conserve the world's Ocean, beaches, and rivers through clean ups, solutions to keep pollutants from entering ecosystems, community-driven service learning and youth education. Their Ocean conservation projects are advancing the path to a better future for our one world Ocean.



Plastic Tides

At Plastic Tides, they believe the solution to plastic pollution is rooted in grassroots movements and initiatives. With a global community of motivated changemakers, supporters can move forward together. They call this community The Rising Tide. Join now and help us make a difference.



5 GYRES

The 5 Gyres Institute is a leader in the global movement against plastic pollution with more than 10 years of expertise in scientific research and engagement on plastic pollution issues. Since 2009, the team has completed 19 expeditions, bringing more than 300 citizen scientists, corporate executives, brands, and celebrities to the gyres, lakes, and rivers to conduct firsthand research on plastic pollution.



Alliance to End Plastic Waste

They are working together to end plastic waste. Ending plastic waste is ambitious. But it is through collaboration and collective action that this complex problem can be solved.



The Ocean Cleanup

The Ocean Cleanup, a non-profit organization, is developing and scaling technologies to rid the world's oceans of plastic. Their aim is to put ourselves out of business once the oceans are clean.

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Engage Your Employees

Kickoff

Company-wide email or blog post at the start of the month stating your company's support for Plastic Free July, and your call to action. This could include links to resources, actions the company may be taking around recycling or reducing plastic use, and highlighting nonprofits featured on the Groundswell app dashboard for Plastic Free July.

Mid-Month

Share nonprofit recommendations from your Sustainability team (or from Groundswell's impact team) as well as links to what to READ, WATCH, or LISTEN to better understand the challenges of plastics on land and sea, as well as efforts to reduce and mitigate the effects of plastic waste.

End of the Month

Share the results of your company's Plastic Free July campaign: how many employees participated/donated, number and amount of donations, top charities, etc.

If there is a time-sensitive match that expires at the end of month, remind employees to log into their Groundswell account to contribute and donate

Employee Engagement

Encourage employees to engage in discussions about the environment and the importance of more sustainable practices both at home and at work - including reducing reliance on plastics. This could include brown bag lunches in-person or virtually, or hosting guest speakers to inspire dialogue - and action - around environmental issues.

Support employees who are involved with local environmental charities to create volunteer opportunities. This could include participating in local beach clean-up events or other conservation-focused work.

Solicit recommendations from employees for books to read, films and documentaries to watch, and podcasts to listen to, in addition to those recommended by the Groundswell team.

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Shareable Resources

Read

- [Planet or Plastic](#) by National Geographic
- [Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things](#) by William McDonough and Michael Braungart
- [Plastic-Free: How I Kicked the Plastic Habit and How You Can Too](#) by Beth Terry



Watch

- ["The Story of Plastic"](#)
- ["Plastic Paradise: The Great Pacific Garbage Patch"](#)
- ["Addicted to Plastic"](#)
- ["A Plastic Ocean"](#)

Listen

- [The Circular Economy Podcast](#): This podcast delves into the concept of the circular economy and its relevance to environmental sustainability - including reducing plastic waste and shifting toward a more circular model.
- [Sustainability Defined](#): This podcast explores sustainability concepts, including episodes specifically focused on plastic waste reduction.
- [Plastisphere](#): A podcast on plastic pollution in the environment. Each episode explores the issue from a different angle, and features a diverse set of voices and viewpoints.

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Social Media Templates

"Join us in our commitment to a #PlasticFreeJuly! [Company Name] is committed to reducing plastic use, because every step matters when it comes to preserving our planet. #GoGreen #Sustainability"

"We don't need a handful of people doing zero waste perfectly. We need millions of people doing it imperfectly. Join us and start your #PlasticFreeJuly journey. #ZeroWaste #Sustainability"

"It's #PlasticFreeJuly and we're stepping up to make a difference. Join the movement and help us clean up our planet one piece of plastic at a time. #SaveOurOceans"

Sample Hashtags

#PLASTICFREEJULY

#SUSTAINABILITY

#GOGREEN



Groundswell is your ally in corporate philanthropy.

Corporate giving programs aim to empower employees and help companies facilitate and support philanthropic efforts. As global access grows and corporations become more diverse, employee representation becomes an increasingly important subject.

Groundswell enables companies to lay the foundation for their employees to adopt a generous giving attitude towards charities and world-shaping efforts.

Contact

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