



SÉGOLÈNE ROYAL

PRESIDENT OF COP21

STOP PLASTIC WASTE

*Launch of the international
coalition*





The Paris Agreement on Climate change enters into force less than one year after its adoption in December 2015. For the first time in history, the oceans and the seas have been at the centre of climate negotiations. Oceans are strongly impacted by climate change and by the pollution that destroys its biodiversity.

The concentration of plastic waste has led to the creation of a veritable 7th continent. In 20 years, if no action is taken, this continent of waste will be a large as Europe.

By launching this international coalition to reduce pollution by plastic waste, all countries are mobilising to protect the oceans with concrete action. Combating plastic waste starts by reducing the use of plastic bags. Used only once time and produced from hydrocarbons which generate greenhouse gases, they pollute the land, rivers and then the seas, and they have become the symbol of a model of non-sustainable production and consumption.

I hope that by means of the commitments that will be made, the States and all of the partners who have already launched initiatives to draw attention to this scourge and to reduce plastic waste will share their experience and propose concrete solutions.

I know that I can count on your mobilisation.

*Minister of Environment, Energy and the Sea,
in charge of International Relations on Climate,
President of COP21*

An international awareness

The coalition was created at the initiative of France. Morocco, Monaco, Chile and Australia have already joined. The United States, as well as several European countries, such as Germany, Ireland, Norway and Sweden have taken up this ambition. According to the data collected by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), at the international level in 2016 some thirty countries adopted national or local measures intended to combat marine litter by means of provisions addressing the production, sale or distribution of certain products.

The NGOs are committed

The coalition also relies on civil society. More than 500 NGOs from Asia, as well as from Europe and North America have launched the Break Free From Plastic movement. Its objective is to combat the use of plastic and to confirm the importance of preventing waste. The movement recalls in particular the connection between plastic and petroleum and defends the idea that combating climate change involves revising the production, consumption and management of plastic.

In France, the movement is federated by Surfrider Foundation. At the international level, the organisation is supporting the Ban the Bag initiative which seeks to influence decision makers and to sensitise citizens and merchants. The objective is to eliminate single-use bags in favour of reusables.

DECLARATION OF INTENT

*We, representatives of States
and national and local Governments,*

Recognizing that marine litter, in particular plastic marine litter, represents a major global issue which has a direct and long-term impact on the oceans;

Stressing that 80% of marine litter comes from land-based anthropic activities,

Stressing that plastic packaging waste, including single-use plastic bags, are among the most significant and widespread wastes in the marine environment;

Recalling that this pollution, as other marine pollutions, impacts marine biodiversity and affects the oceans ability to play a key role in the regulation of the global climate;

Considering the declarations of the Heads of State and Governments commitment adopted in the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio, to significantly reduce the amount of marine litter by 2025;

Further recalling the importance to pursue the momentum initiated by the 2015 Paris agreement on climate change to preserve the oceans, and the need to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on sustainable development, and in particular its objectives 12 and 14;

Decide by mutual agreement :

- ★ to work in close cooperation to give a strong impetus to marine litter related efforts towards 2020 ;
- ★ to promote, strengthen and coordinate existing related actions undertaken by signatory countries, in order to reduce the availability of single-use plastic bags, including marketing restrictions and raising consumer education and awareness ;
- ★ to promote the elimination of single-use plastic bags in a consistent manner with existing international instruments and policies ;
- ★ to learn from experience gained by each parties in plastic bags pollution response ;
- ★ to promote exchanges of expertise and best practices, such as :
 - existing regulations aiming at reducing single-use plastic bags consumption and marketing restrictions of products leading to marine litter ;
 - tried and tested environmentally sound alternatives to single use plastic bags ;

Welcome the commitments of non-governmental actors towards the reduction of marine plastic pollution and encourage them to pursue their mobilization and to collaborate with this coalition, so as to rapidly achieve an ambitious result.

KEY FIGURES

75% of the wastes in the seas are plastic



5,000 trillion

plastic particles float on the surface of the seas.



over 260

marine species are impacted by plastic waste: 86% of the marine turtle species eat plastics that they confuse with jelly fish.



In France

the use of single-use plastic bags in stores has been prohibited since 1 July 2016. Other single-use plastic bags will be prohibited starting 1 January 2017.

PLASTIC BAGS LIKE TO TRAVEL!

