



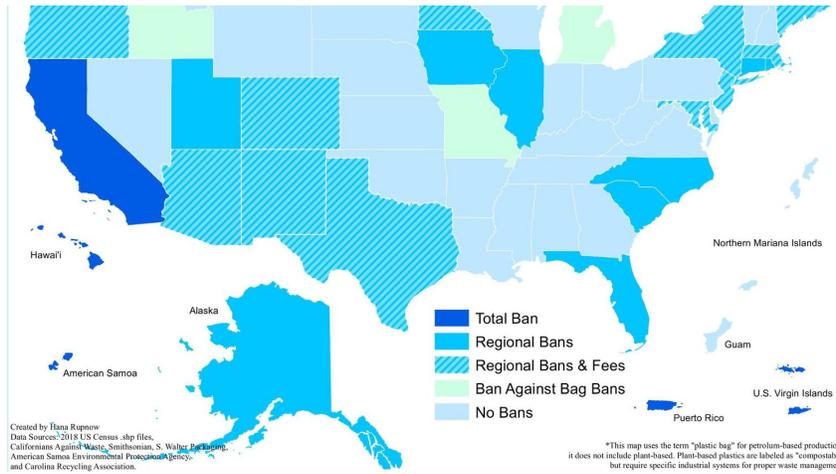
## 12 MINUTES.

That's the average amount of time a plastic bag is used. Yet plastic bags impact our environment—and our health—for decades. These products made our [BAN List 2.0](#) as some of the world's worst plastic items from both an environmental and toxic chemicals perspective. Globally, *one million single-use plastic bags are used every minute* and [only one percent of plastic bags are recycled each year](#). [Many end up in our ocean where they can harm animals](#) and the ecosystem.

Along with other partner organizations, 5 Gyres has fought to solve this problem. In addition to providing scientific research and testifying about single-use plastic bags, our 2009 JUNKride tour—in which our co-founders Anna Cummins and Marcus Eriksen cycled from Vancouver to Mexico to raise awareness about plastic pollution—included a call to action on a nation-wide plastic bag ban.

In 2014, California became the first state to ban plastic bags, which made international news—especially after an industry-supported referendum suspended the law in 2015. Finally, in 2016, Californians voted to overturn SB-270 and ban the bag once and for all. The decision could set the tone for how the rest of the country deals with the plastic bag problem: According to [PlasticBagLaw.org](#), as of March 2018 311 local bag ordinances have been adopted in 24 states, including Hawaii (which didn't pass a statewide ban but implemented bag bans in 100% of its counties).





Map created by 5 Gyres Ambassador, Hana Rupnow

The thing to remember about single-use plastic bags is *you can avoid them*. Pledge to go **#plasticfree**:

- Bring your own reusable bag to the store—or carry out your items if you forget.
- Ask store managers to switch to a “bag on request” policy, rather than putting items in bags when they’re not asked for.

## TAKE THE PLEDGE TODAY!

I PLEDGE TO GO #PLASTICFREE

Sources:

Renee Cho, “What Happens to All That Plastic?” State of the Planet, Columbia University.

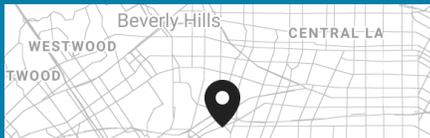
John Roach, “Are Plastic Grocery Bags Sacking the Environment?” National Geographic.

Katrina Kazda, “The Plastic Bag Problem” Sustainable America.

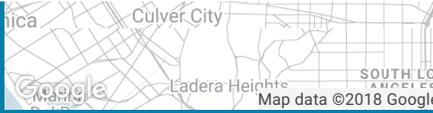


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SCIENCE TO SOLUTIONS

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**PLANET**

The 5 Gyre Institute is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 2017. Our mission is to empower action against the global health crisis of plastic pollution through science, education, and adventure.

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