

# IMPACT REPORT 2022







Globally, 29% of consumers are aware of Plastic Free July, with an estimated 140 million people taking part in 2022.

# CHAIR’S MESSAGE

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Geoff Donohue	Chair
Rebecca Prince-Ruiz	Founder, Executive Director
Dan Dragovic	Director
Leesa Muirhead	Director

## AMBASSADORS & PATRONS

Jack Johnson	Musician
Her Excellency Mrs Linda Hurley	Patron, Plastic Free Schools challenge



If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together.

Plastic Free Foundation, is a not-for profit global social movement that stops around 300 million kgs of plastic polluting the world each year.

Our global impact is testament to the power of taking collective action to help end plastic waste.

Our flagship Plastic Free July® initiative is making a difference. In 2022, almost 90% of our participants had made at least one lasting conscious change. By choosing to refuse single-use plastics, they had reduced their household waste and recycling by a staggering 4.1%.

Our new 2030 strategy contains a roadmap to achieve the following objectives:

- 1. The majority of consumers choose to refuse single-use plastics
- 2. Global brands commit and act to be plastic waste free
- 3. Governments globally legislate and implement plastic waste bans

We must take a collective approach to achieve these ambitions. Our partnerships with the corporate, philanthropic and community sectors are vital to progress, and we acknowledge each and all for their commitment.

On behalf of the Foundation, I sincerely thank the Minderoo Foundation. Their support helps to raise the profile of plastic as a critical human health issue. We are immensely proud of this partnership’s impact in advocating for change.

Plastic Free Foundation’s incredible achievements are driven by our team of employees, Directors, consultants and volunteers. I thank all of our team for their efforts throughout the year, it is both a pleasure and an honour to be involved.

By sharing solutions with communities, organisations and governments, we can help everyone take action to help end plastic waste. We can then enjoy a low-waste, sustainable, and healthy world.

There is power in collective action. I invite you to all get involved, together we can turn the tide.

Geoff Donohue  
CHAIR



# FOUNDER'S MESSAGE

Plastic Free July is an initiative that truly elevates the power of the individual and spotlights the core truth that anyone can have an impact in building a better future for all.

SANDRA UWERA, GLOBAL CEO, FAIRTRADE INTERNATIONAL AND UN SDG ACTION AWARDS JUDGE



**This year's theme for Plastic Free July was 'Turning the Tide', describing the concerted global efforts required to tackle the scale and urgency of the plastic pollution crisis.**

Without collective intervention, a 'business as usual' scenario is expected to double our plastic generation by 2040. This will triple our plastic leakage into the ocean, in turn quadrupling levels of plastic pollution. There are still, however, signs of hope.

### GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

In 2022, Plastic Free July was marked worldwide by a record 140 million participants making conscious changes and reducing their waste by 2.6 million tonnes – that's the equivalent of around 13 thousand blue whales.

We saw an ever-increasing participation from schools, councils, businesses, partners organisations and government agencies. This global trend is strong: 87% of people support policies and action to reduce plastic waste.

Plastic Free Foundation has played an integral role in championing this public voice by positively influencing global policy development through research, engagement, behaviour change and advocacy efforts.

### GLOBAL ACTION

On 2 March 2022, in Nairobi, United Nations Member States endorsed a historic resolution to commence a global treaty to end plastic pollution by the end of 2024. It will address the full plastic lifecycle: from extraction, to production, design, use and disposal. It was an honour to attend the UN Environment Assembly as an Accredited NGO, to represent the millions of participants in Plastic Free July.

**"I am deeply impressed by the broad network of activities Plastic Free July set up...triggering sustainable behaviour in so many people. Every individual decision, every little step counts – and together they form collective action that has a strong and clearly measurable direct impact".**

JENNIFER MORGAN, STATE SECRETARY AND SPECIAL ENVOY FOR INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE ACTION FOR THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

In the lead up to the Assembly, Plastic Free Foundation partnered with Ipsos to undertake a global survey to understand public opinions on actions to combat plastic pollution. The Foundation partnered with WWF-International to analyse and publish a report on global public opinion on a plastic treaty.

Our research found that nearly 90% of people surveyed – over 20,000 adults across 28 countries – believe that having a global plastics treaty will help to effectively address the plastic pollution crisis. This shows an extremely high level of public support for a legally-binding global agreement to combat plastic pollution.

**"Our collaboration with the Plastic Free Foundation and Ipsos has been absolutely critical to ensuring that people's views on a plastic pollution treaty are put clearly on the public record... this research to explore people's expectations of a treaty is more important than ever, and provides a strong public mandate for governments to negotiate a comprehensive and ambitious treaty by 2025."**

ELENA KHISHCHENKO, HEAD OF GLOBAL CAMPAIGNS AT WWF-INTERNATIONAL

The 'Rising Tides' report received significant media attention, with over 1,000 mentions totalling a reach of 1.8 – 5 billion readership, including major wire agencies, Reuters, AFP, and EFE.

### GLOBAL RECOGNITION

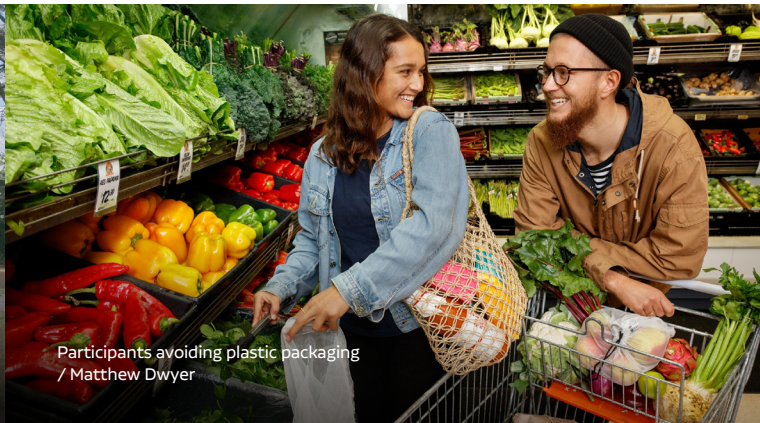
Another 2022 highlight was the recognition Plastic Free Foundation received by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Action Awards.

We were selected as one of two finalists for the 'Mobilize' award, from over 3,000 applications from 150 countries, as initiatives that mobilise, inspire and connect people to drive action towards a more sustainable future.

It was inspiring to meet the eight other category finalists aspiring for a healthier planet at the Ceremony at UN Bonn in Germany in September 2022.

This global recognition shows the collective power of individual action, and the difference we can all make for a low-waste, sustainable world. The next two years are critical to turn the tide on plastic pollution: our community, corporates, and governments all must play in creating a healthy future for our children and the planet.

Rebecca Prince-Ruiz  
FOUNDER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR







**Iran & USA:** The community group **Afrooz School** translated the Plastic Free July calendar into Persian for their teachers and students, and shared by the Department of Islamic Republic of Iran.



**USA:** In an effort to reduce waste and curb the proliferation of plastic packaging, team members at **NASA's** Marshall Space Flight Center are encouraged to take part in Plastic Free July.



**Canada:** Mayor John Tory proclaims July 11, 2022 as 'Single-Use Plastic Free Day' in the **City of Toronto**.

**Greece:** The NGO **Common Seas** ran 'The Community Dishes' project which helped avoid 8,000 pieces of single-use plastic at events.



**Austria:** During July, thanks to the **Austrian National Tourist Office**, around 500 participants cleaned almost 1,000 kilometres of hiking trails in the Tyrolean countryside from rubbish left behind.



**UK:** In Bournemouth, nearly 20,000 plastic bottles were avoided during Plastic Free July after **BCP Council** and NGO **City to Sea** banned plastic bottles and cups and introduced free water refilling stations along the seafront.



**UK:** The luxury department store **Harrods** took part with numerous plastic reduction solutions across the business including switching all outbound packaging to plastic free.

**USA:** Senators **Sheldon Whitehouse** and **Jeff Merkley** introduced legislation proclaiming July as 'Plastic Pollution Action' month.



**USA:** **New York Times** staff joined the challenge, starting off with an online event to engage staff across the region.



**St Kitts and Nevis, Caribbean:** For Plastic Free July 2022, **St. Kitts Sustainable Destination Council** distributed reusable shopping bags with PM Harris and Minister Byron-Nisbett.



**China:** The NGO **Plastic Free China** introduced a plastic reduction program focusing on reducing plastic with delivery and shipping items with large scale application.



**India:** On 1 July, 2022, the **Indian Government** banned the use of 19 single-use plastic items with high littering potential including plastic plates, cups, cutlery, trays and stirrers.



**Maldives:** **Raffles Hotel** joined the challenge, sharing plastic pollution information, inspiration and solutions to their internal network throughout July.



**Pakistan & Sri Lanka:** **Interloop**, the textile manufacturer, encouraged all of their colleagues and 24,000 staff members to pledge to avoid using single-use plastic products.

**United Arab Emirates:** **UAE** joined over 90 countries worldwide banning single-use plastic bags.



**Argentina:** **Bioguia**, the largest Spanish-speaking sustainable online community worldwide, shared the challenge and plastic reduction solutions with their social media audience of over 18M.



**Africa:** In Africa, the NGO network **GAIA** took part by campaigning across the continent to end single-use plastic with a focus on plastic bag policies. East African NGO members ran a petition showcasing actions to take throughout July and beyond.



**New Zealand:** The supermarket chain **Countdown** removed plastic produce bags from 19 stores to phase out single-use plastic ahead of a government ban.



**Australia:** We partnered with **NSW EPA** to help drive social change to support the state's phase-out of single-use plastics.



**Oman:** **National Finance** launched a company-wide 'Use Less Plastic' campaign in response to Plastic Free July.



**Australia:** The **City of Fremantle** became the first local government in Australia to formally declare July to be Plastic Free July.

## 2022 IN ACTION

During Plastic Free July 2022 a record number of businesses, organisations, NGOs and governments took part in the challenge. From engaging employees in workplace challenges, to removing single-use plastic from operations and changing procurement practices, to changing policies, together these actions helped avoid 300 million kgs of plastic. This is just a small handful of the incredible stories of change from across the globe.



# LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Plastic Free July provides a great opportunity to raise awareness among our residents and businesses of the alternatives to single-use plastics that are available.

CITY OF FREMANTLE MAYOR, HANNAH FITZHARDINGE

**Plastic Free July is a valuable way for local governments to engage their communities and local businesses in efforts to reduce plastic waste.**

Together, by avoiding landfill and litter, we can create cleaner communities and positive impacts, and mitigate the increasing costs of waste management and recycling. Participating authorities reported that taking part in the challenge helped them to achieve their waste reduction goals.

Across the globe, we see city and regional governments engage in Plastic Free July through a variety of creative initiatives. In the UK, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council prevented the equivalent of 20,000 single-use plastic bottles from being thrown out as rubbish during Plastic Free July by installing and revamping water dispensers along the seafront.

From providing reusable bottles for the staff at the City of Hollywood in Florida USA, to colourful pop-up information booths across the South Australian regions managed by EastWaste, and Ku-Ring-Gai council in Sydney lining major highways with our colourful 9 Ideas for Plastic Free Living posters, authorities undertook a variety of Plastic Free July programs.

These authorities can be responsive to their community's goals, needs and behaviours and benefit from Plastic Free July's unique approach to the plastic pollution crisis and encouraging waste avoidance behaviours.

All metropolitan and regional areas have different goals, needs, and behaviours with plastic waste. Who better to understand and respond to their communities than their representative authorities?

The Plastic Free Foundation empowers authorities with the tailored Council Membership Program, which provided curated resources and assets to a record 93 councils and authorities in 2022. Together they avoided an incredible 17.9 million kgs of waste and recycling.

**"I really enjoyed rolling out this campaign - thank you for making it really easy!"**

CITY OF JOONDALUP

# 2022 CAMPAIGNS



## PLASTICS AND HUMAN HEALTH

Mounting evidence tells us that plastic isn't just in our environment – it is also now in our bodies.

Plastic Free Foundation partnered with the Plastic and Human Health team at Minderoo Foundation to advocate for regulatory change, and to share ideas with our participants about how to reduce microplastics and chemical exposure.

Some of these ideas included avoiding cooking or warming food in plastic; not putting plastic in the dishwasher; eating fewer packaged foods; choosing glass, stainless steel or ceramic containers for food and beverages; and opting for toys and clothing made from natural materials. The campaign was met with positive feedback.

**By sharing the latest science on harmful plastic chemicals with the global community we hope governments, businesses and people everywhere will choose a healthier future.**

PROFESSOR SARAH DUNLOP OF THE MINDEROO FOUNDATION'S PLASTIC AND HUMAN HEALTH TEAM

## BRING, BORROW, STAY

Each year an estimated 300 billion single-use coffee cups end up as landfill or litter worldwide.

In 2022, the Plastic Free Foundation launched its 'Choose to Up Cup: Bring, Borrow, Stay' challenge to tackle this global issue. As coffee-lovers, we must find more sustainable ways to enjoy a fresh brew.

Our campaign approach was three-fold:

- We encouraged individuals to opt for reusable cups, through sharing resources and ideas. Glass, stainless steel, or ceramic cups were promoted as the best choices to avoid any plastic chemicals.
- We supported worldwide cafes and corporates in implementing reusable-cup schemes with participating cafes in Australia, the UK, Belgium, Japan and Canada.
- We partnered with WWF-Australia to produce a policy report, "Disposable Coffee Cups: Our Unhealthy Addiction". The review found that policies needed to increase reuse, and decrease consumption of single-use cups.

The campaign received global media coverage and widespread support on social media by cafés, local and city governments, members of parliament, non-profits, reusable cup service providers, and community advocates.



City of Hollywood, USA



Council Member communications assets



Professor Sarah Dunlop, Minderoo Foundation



bRU Coffee Bondi, Australia



# OUR IMPACT IN 2022

## Plastic Free July combines reach with impact to create significant outcomes in reducing global waste.

How do we know this? Our impact is measured through comprehensive research. Our surveys measure behaviour changes amongst participants, and trends of the general population, as well as our reach in global engagement (Global Surveys commissioned from Ipsos in 2018 and 2021).

### Headline results from participants

- An estimated 140 million people took part in Plastic Free July 2022 globally
- Participants from 195 countries signed up
- Over the twelve years of Plastic Free July, participants have accumulated 294 million behaviour changes
- 88% of participants had made at least one lasting change
- Participants reduced their waste and recycling (across the last few years) by 18kg per person per year (4.1% less waste)

**Plastic Free July participants were 49% more likely to avoid disposable coffee cups than non-participants.**

**We congratulate all those involved on your outstanding achievement and remarkable efforts in accelerating action for the Sustainable Development Goals.**

MARINA PONTI, GLOBAL DIRECTOR,  
UN SDG ACTION CAMPAIGN

- Globally, in 2022, participants reduced their household:
  - › non-recoverable (landfill) waste by 1.7 million tonnes
  - › recyclable waste by 0.9 million tonnes
  - › plastic consumption by 0.3 million tonnes
- Participants are ahead of the global trend, being 21% more likely to adopt plastic waste avoidance behaviours
- The global trend is strong: 87% of the population supporting policies and action to reduce plastic waste
- 1,900 pieces of news media coverage globally with 2.3 billion global potential reach
- Consumer sentiment strongly (greater than 85%) supports:
  - › personal action to avoid plastic waste
  - › corporate action to reduce, reuse and recycle plastic packaging
  - › government action to ban single-use plastics
- 165 events registered including plastic free events using reuse schemes, talks, workshops and clean-ups across six continents

“At Ipsos we have a strong focus on sustainability and Plastic Free July is a big inspiration for us. We conduct actions on the ground every year and have committed to eliminating single-use plastic in all our offices by the end of 2023.”

EWA BRANT, GLOBAL CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OFFICER AT IPSOS

**140 Million**  
**Plastic Free July**  
**participants**

choose to  
refuse

**18kgs**  
**of household**  
**waste and recycling**  
**each year**

together avoiding

**2.6 Million**  
**tonnes of waste**



**29% of**  
**global consumers**

(at least 313 million people),  
were aware of Plastic Free July.

**88% of**  
**participants**

made at least one lasting change.



**Well-being**

Participants have strong social connections and a positive sense of well-being.

**87% of**  
**the population**

support policies and action by  
corporates and governments  
to reduce plastic waste.





# COLLECTIVE ACTION IN PRACTICE



## Plastic Free Communities

Volunteer group, Plastic Reduction Denmark Western **Australia**, have participated in Plastic Free July for several years. They focus on providing practical, plastic free solutions such as providing local shoppers with handmade, reusable produce bags made from old netting and curtains. They have now sewn over 8,000 produce bags, diverting fabric from landfill.

In **India**, the NGO team at The Red Padding held their very first on-ground awareness sessions on sustainable menstrual health this July. They engaged with communities about the impact of disposable plastic sanitary items on the environment and on their bodies, while providing free samples of plastic free alternatives.

Kikuchi City Library in **Japan** embraced Plastic Free July as an opportunity to showcase plastic-reduction ideas to its patrons and the broader community, naming July Kikuchi Plastic Free month (きくちプラなし月間). Building on momentum from their first challenge, Kikuchi City Library held a range of hands-on plastic waste reduction workshops, collaboration and education.



## Plastic Free Schools

The NGO Aashman Foundation in **India** is helping Pan-Haryana students find their voice for important issues they care about. During July, students focused on developing their public speaking skills, learning to advance their stage presence ability and confidence in order to raise awareness around plastic pollution.



**Your voice is your power.  
Make childhood your loudest  
phase yet! Let's stand tall in  
the war against plastic.  
It's time to act now.**

THE AASHMAN FOUNDATION



## Plastic Free Businesses

**England** Golf provided their young ambassadors with reusable water bottles and collected info on how many times their bottle was used. They also encourage golfers to choose bamboo tees and reusable or non-plastic food and drink packaging across the 1760 affiliated clubs and England Golf championships.

**Thailand**-based law firm, Kudun and Partners called on all staff and clients to avoid and reduce single-use plastic, encouraging staff to choose reusable food containers, while providing fabric bags and reusable water containers. Approximately 105 plastic bottles were avoided every day during July.

Linda from Sun Sugar Farms in the **USA** is a seasonal supplier of tomatoes and edamame. She developed her own paperboard packaging to replace plastic clamshells. Since the switch, she has avoided 2 MILLION pieces of plastic in the USA, Canada and the Caribbean.

The **Indonesian** small business Siklus Refill delivered refills of everyday cleaning products right to customers' homes and businesses in the capital of Jakarta – all without plastic packaging.



**My dream goal is to promote and increase Ocean Literacy for all, working hard to see less and less plastic in the Ocean.**

VICTORIA HUBER



## Plastic Free Champions

Middle school student Victoria Huber, introduced Plastic Free July to her school in Florida, **USA**, empowering other students to create a cleaner world, free of plastic waste. Victoria used our free online resources to create pamphlets and set a goal to visit 30 places in 30 days to spread the word, increasing awareness of how to make small daily changes that can have a significant impact.

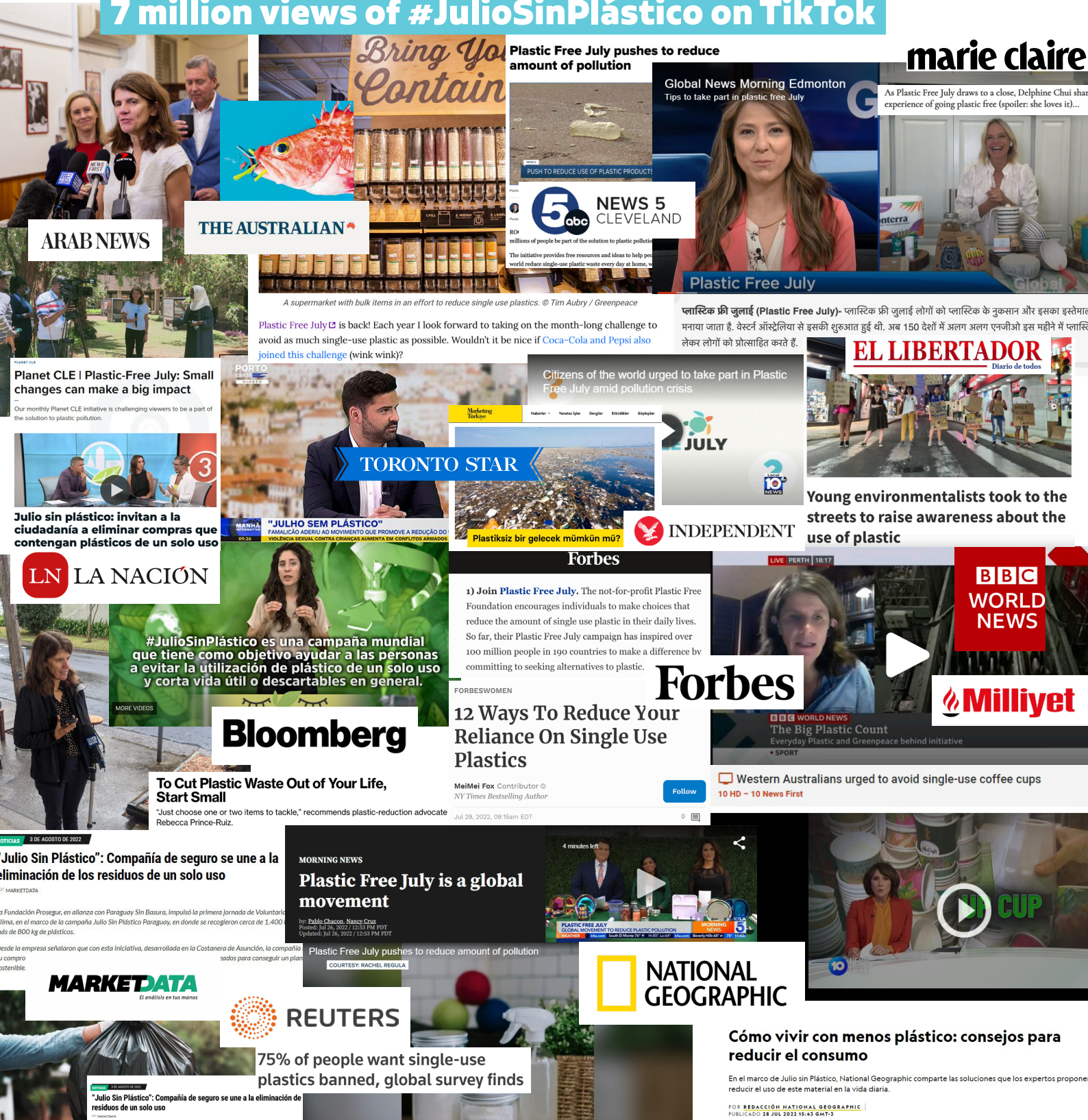
In **Canada**, Kirsty Symmons utilised our online resources and facilitated a community support initiative during July to discuss the importance of reducing single-use plastic. Members exchanged ideas and solutions including a 'make your own mouthwash' activity. Speakers from the District of Invermere conducted an informative seminar providing insight into what the Regional Kootenay communities are doing to reduce waste, while businesses offered discounts to consumers choosing a reusable coffee cup.



PLASTIC  
FREE JULY IN  
THE MEDIA

Worldwide news coverage throughout July featured inspiring actions from our growing community to help end plastic waste. Diverse stories of change were shared across localised and global media networks with an increase in brand awareness in multiple languages including Spanish, Portuguese, Turkish, Arabic, and Hindi.

- 1,900 pieces of news media coverage globally
- 2.3 billion global potential news media reach
- 163 million views of #PlasticFreeJuly
- 7 million views of #JulioSinPlástico on TikTok



OUR  
THANKS

With the help of aligned partners, we can affect the behaviour change required to create a healthier environment. Together, we can lead the world to be free from plastic waste. To discuss partnering, contact us at [partnerships@plasticfreejuly.org](mailto:partnerships@plasticfreejuly.org).

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



PROGRAM PARTNERS



PLASTIC FREE SUPPORTERS



1% FOR THE PLANET



TECHNICAL PARTNERS



SPECIAL THANKS



COUNCIL MEMBERS

ACT

\* ACT joined as part of CRJONT

NT

Wagait Shire Council

NSW

- Cessnock City Council
- Kyogle Council
- Parramatta
- Port Stephens
- Waverley Council
- Canberra Region Joint Organisation
- Eurobodalla
- Goulburn Mulwaree Council
- Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council
- Snowy Monaro Regional Council
- Snowy Valleys Council
- Wingecarribee Shire Council
- Yass Valley Council

Netwaste

- Bathurst
- Dubbo
- Mid-Western
- Narromine
- Orange
- Parkes

NE Waste

- Ballina Shire Council
- Byron Shire Council
- Clarence Valley Council
- Kyogle Council
- Lismore City Council
- Richmond Valley Council
- Tweed Shire Council

NSROC

- Hornsby Shire Council
- Hunters Hill Council
- Ku-Ring-Gai Council
- Lane Cove Council
- Mosman Council
- North Sydney Council
- Willoughby Council
- Ryde

RAMJO

- Albury City Council
- Berrigan Shire Council
- Edward River Council
- Federation Council
- Griffith City Council
- Hay Shire Council
- LeetonShire Council
- Murray River Council

SA

Berri Barmera Council  
East Waste

- Adelaide Hills
- Burnside
- Campbelltown City Council
- City of Mitcham
- City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters
- City of Prospect
- Town of Walkerville

VIC

- Bayside Council
- Frankston City Council
- Goulburn Valley Waste and Resource Recovery Group
- Campaspe Shire Council
- Greater Shepparton City Council
- Mitchell Shire Council
- Moira Shire Council
- Murrindindi Shire Council
- Greater Shepparton City Council
- Strathbogie Shire Council
- Hobsons Bay City Council
- Macedon Ranges Shire Council
- Maroondah City Council
- Mornington Peninsula Shire Council
- North East Waste Resource Recovery Group
- Alpine Shire Council
- Falls Creek Alpine Resort Management Board
- Indigo Shire Council
- Mansfield Shire Council
- Mount Buller and Mount Stirling Alpine Resort Management Board
- Mount Hotham Alpine Resort Management Board
- Towong Shire Council
- Wangaratta Rural City Council
- Wodonga City Council

WA

- Town of Bassendean
- City of Canning
- City of Cockburn
- Mindarie Regional Council
- City of Joondalup
- City of Perth
- Stirling
- Vincent
- City of Wanneroo
- Resource Recovery Group
- Town of East Fremantle
- City of Fremantle
- City of Melville
- City of Rockingham
- WMRC
- Town of Cambridge
- Town of Claremont
- Town of Cottesloe
- Town of Mosman Park
- Shire of Peppermint Grove
- City of Subiaco

QLD

Moreton Bay Regional Council





**Finalist 2022 United Nations Sustainability Developments Goals Award, Mobilize category**



**Winner 2022 Fremantle Business Awards, award for Sustainable Enterprise**



**Winner 2020 Mumbrella Awards, Pro Bono Campaign of the Year**



**Finalist 2020 Mumbrella Awards, Best Government Sponsored Campaign**



**Finalist 2019 Banksia Sustainability Awards, Minister's Award for the Environment**



**Finalist 2019 Banksia Sustainability Awards, NFP & NGO Award**



**Winner 2018 Infinity Award, Avoid Recover Protect – Community Waste Award**



**Winner 2018 Environmental Action Award, United Nations Association of Australia WA Division**



PO Box 168  
South Fremantle WA 6162  
Australia

**M** (+61) 457 456 081  
**E** [admin@plasticfreejuly.org](mailto:admin@plasticfreejuly.org)  
**W** [plasticfreejuly.org](http://plasticfreejuly.org)

We wish to acknowledge the custodians of the land where we live, work and play, the Whadjuk (Perth region) people of the Nyoongar nation, we pay respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. The Plastic Free Foundation acknowledges and pays respect to all First Nations peoples where Plastic Free July takes place as the Traditional Owners and ongoing custodians of the land.