

### Drowning in Plastic

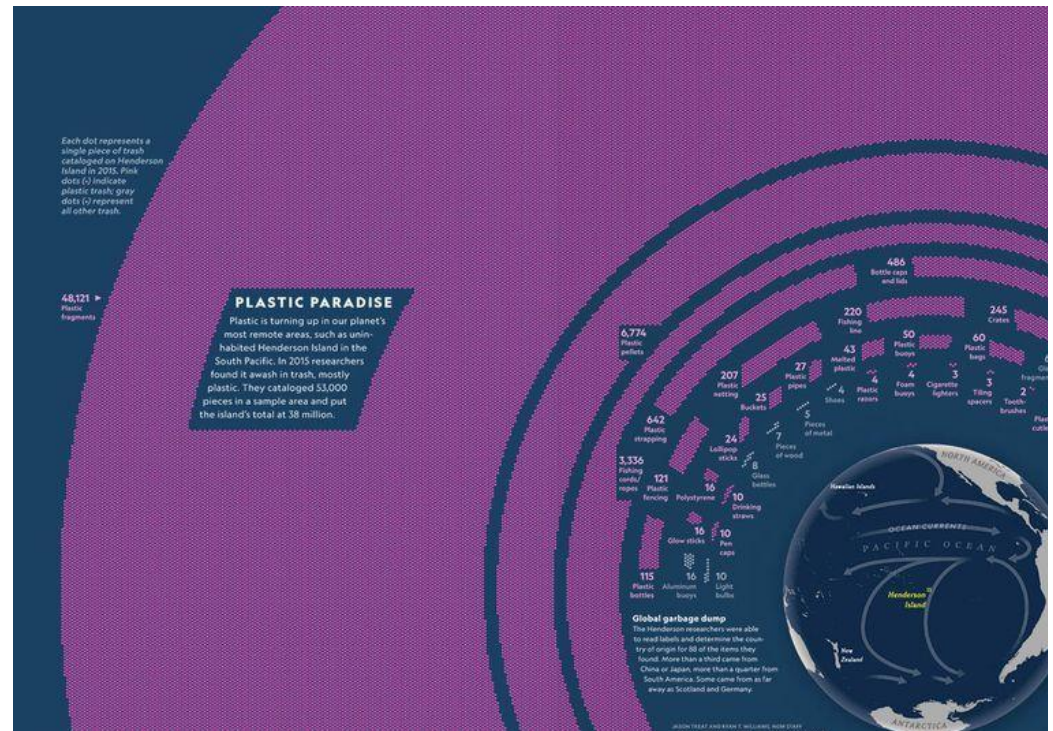
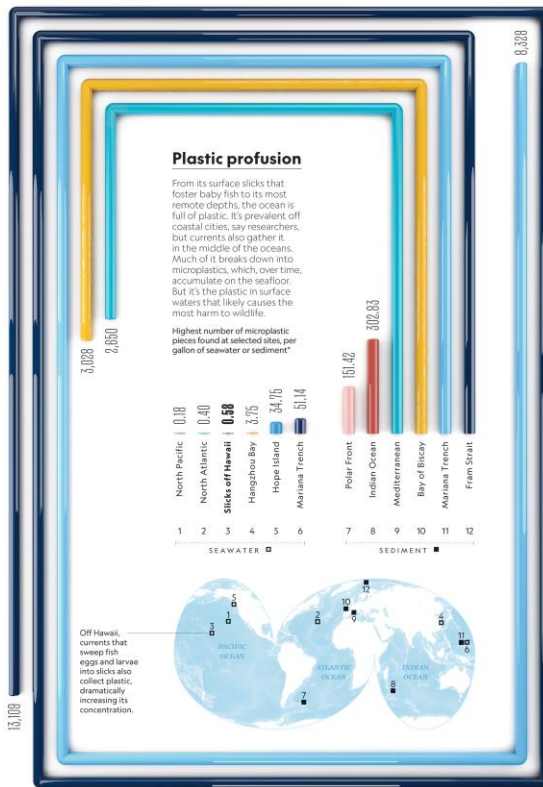
Plastic has been found on land, river (beds) and ocean.

What possible inferences can be made between mismanaged land waste has with plastic in the ocean? Why?

### Microplastics

Plastic in the Arctic: Microplastics drifting in the lower latitudes have accumulated in the Arctic Sea ice. But as the Arctic sea ice melts, the trapped plastics are released back into the water.

Looking at this photo, what kinds of impacts do you envision (beyond the 'naked eye'? Why is it important to realise these impacts?



**Plastic Profusion**

Nature's cradle is turning into a cradle of plastic wastes.

What do you think are possible implications of

- (i) the ratio of microplastics found in seawater to that found in sediments?
- (ii) currents that sweep increasing concentrations of plastics into slicks containing fish eggs and larvae?

**Plastic Paradise**

The plastic 'cast-away' phenomenon is indeed alarming. Using the data from this infographic, discuss the possible reasons and extent of plastic pollution documented on Henderson island.

# THE CHALLENGE OF RECYCLING

Globally, 18 percent of plastic is recycled, up from nearly zero in 1980. Plastic bottles are one of the most widely recycled products. But other items, such as drinking straws, are harder to recycle and often discarded.

Ease of recycling by type\*

- ▲ Easy
- ▲ Manageable
- ▲ Difficult
- ▲ Very difficult



1

**PET**  
Polyethylene terephthalate

Beverage bottles, food jars, clothing and carpet fiber, some shampoo and mouthwash bottles

11%

Percentage of global plastic waste, 2015



2

**HDPE**  
High-density polyethylene

Detergent and bleach bottles, snack boxes, milk jugs, toys, buckets, crates, plant pots, garden furniture, trash bins

14%



3

**PVC**  
Polyvinyl chloride

Credit cards, window and doorframes, gutters, pipes and fittings, wire and cable sheathing, synthetic leather

5%



4

**LDPE**  
Low-density polyethylene

Packaging film, shopping bags, bubble wrap, flexible bottles, wire and cable insulation

20%



5

**PP**  
Polypropylene

Bottle tops, drinking straws, lunch boxes, insulated coolers, fabric and carpet fiber, tarps, diapers

19%



6

**PS**  
Polystyrene

Plastic-foam cups, egg boxes, meat trays, packing peanuts, coat hangers, yogurt containers, insulation, toys

6%



7

**OTHER**

Nylon fabrics, baby bottles, compact disks, medical storage containers, car parts, watercooler bottles

24%

\*Ease of recycling varies by region; North America shown. Not all plastics are recyclable.

ILLUSTRATION BY EARTH SOURCE/ARTS AND CRAFTS MATERIALS COOPERATIVE, BOSTON, MA; PETER WOLANSKI/VEVA, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Are you recycling right? Before you buy anything 'endowed' with plastic (containers etc.) thinking it can easily go into a recycling bin, think again.

RETHINK. The bottomline is, DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

Using the chart here, describe the 'ease' of recycling the different types of plastic.

How does this impact the way you perceive plastic consumption and their life cycle?

## The Challenge of Recycling