

## China plans to reduce single-use plastics

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China has unveiled ambitious plans to drastically reduce single-use plastics by 2025. China's National Development and Reform Commission is fast-tracking a number of measures designed to slash the production and use of plastics over the next five years. It announced that by the end of 2020, non-

biodegradable plastic bags will be banned in supermarkets and shopping malls in major cities. The ban will also apply to food delivery services, which use vast amounts of the plastics. Single-use plastic straws and cutlery used by food takeaway services will be banned nationwide by the end of this year. China will encourage the use of alternative materials such as non-plastic products and biodegradable shopping bags.

Single-use plastics are one of the world's biggest sources of plastic pollution. They have become a ubiquitous part of daily life and a part of our throwaway culture. The Chinese authorities set a goal of reducing the "intensity of consumption" in order to reverse our reliance on single-use plastics. Previous regulations to curb plastic use, in 2008, led to an estimated cut in plastic bag production of 67 billion bags. The United Nations said it is urgent that all countries adopt policies similar to those China is introducing. It said: "We are already unable to cope with the amount of plastic waste we generate, unless we rethink the way we manufacture, use and manage plastics."

Sources: scmp.com / xinhuanet.com / motherjones.com

## Writing

All countries should ban all plastics. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

ambitious / measures / production / plastics / supermarkets / nationwide / bags / pollution / daily life / culture / consumption / urgent / policies / waste / manage

## True / False

- a) China will outlaw all single-use plastics by the year 2025. T / F
- b) China will measure things to slash single-use plastics. T / F
- c) Non-biodegradable plastic bags will be banned in cities by 2025. T / F
- d) Plastic cutlery used by takeaways will be banned by the end of 2020. T / F
- e) The article said single-use plastics are a ubiquitous part of our life. T / F
- f) China cut plastic bag production by 67 billion in 2008. T / F
- g) The UN said more countries should follow China's lead. T / F
- h) The UN said we can cope with the amount of plastic waste. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                       |                |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| 1. <b>unveiled</b>    | a. dependence  |
| 2. <b>drastically</b> | b. enormous    |
| 3. <b>slash</b>       | c. manage      |
| 4. <b>vast</b>        | d. seriously   |
| 5. <b>alternative</b> | e. pressing    |
| 6. <b>ubiquitous</b>  | f. control     |
| 7. <b>reliance</b>    | g. replacement |
| 8. <b>curb</b>        | h. revealed    |
| 9. <b>urgent</b>      | i. omnipresent |
| 10. <b>cope</b>       | j. cut         |

## Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) Can we live without plastic?
- c) How much of a throwaway culture do we live in?
- d) Why do we consume so much stuff these days?
- e) What will happen if we do not cut down on plastic?
- f) How can we re-use a plastic bottle, straw and cutlery?
- g) Would it be easy for you to rethink your use of plastic?
- h) What questions would you like to ask a plastic manufacturer?

## Phrase Match

- |                                           |                                |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. ambitious plans to drastically         | a. amounts of the plastics     |
| 2. fast-tracking a number                 | b. alternative materials       |
| 3. food delivery services, which use vast | c. those China is introducing  |
| 4. Single-use plastic straws              | d. of measures                 |
| 5. China will encourage the use of        | e. on single-use plastics      |
| 6. They have become a ubiquitous          | f. the amount of plastic waste |
| 7. part of our throwaway                  | g. reduce single-use plastics  |
| 8. reverse our reliance                   | h. culture                     |
| 9. adopt policies similar to              | i. part of daily life          |
| 10. We are already unable to cope with    | j. and cutlery                 |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of plastic?
- How many of the things you have are made of plastic?
- What do you think of China's plans?
- How can you reduce the amount of plastic you use?
- Should all supermarkets ban plastic bags?
- How bad are plastic straws and cutlery?
- What happens to all the plastic we throw away?
- What harm does plastic trash do to the environment?

## Spelling

- China has unveiled siiamobtu plans
- diclatrysa reduce single-use plastics
- fast-tracking a number of euasrmse
- earbdoldaebgi plastic bags
- plastic straws and ltuycer
- the use of tiaantvelre materials
- the world's biggest coserus of plastic
- a itisbuuuoq part of daily life
- the netyitnis of consumption
- our ecilnrae on single-use plastics
- iuslgotraen to curb plastic use
- rethink the way we menutacufar

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. d	3. j	4. b	5. g
6. i	7. a	8. f	9. e	10. c

## Role Play

### Role A – Micro-plastics in Food Chain

You think Micro-plastics in the food chain is the biggest problem with plastics. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their problems aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the most manageable of these (and why): plastics in whales' stomachs, ocean garbage patches or littered streets.

### Role B – Plastics in whales' stomachs

You think plastics in whales' stomachs is the biggest problem with plastics. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their problems aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the most manageable of these (and why): micro-plastics in the food chain, ocean garbage patches or littered streets.

### Role C – Ocean garbage patches

You think ocean garbage patches is the biggest problem with plastics. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their problems aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the most manageable of these (and why): plastics in whales' stomachs, micro-plastics in the food chain or littered streets.

### Role D – Littered streets

You think littered streets is the biggest problem with plastics. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their problems aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the most manageable of these (and why): plastics in whales' stomachs, ocean garbage patches or micro-plastics in the food chain.

## Speaking – Pollution

Rank these with your partner. Put the worst effects of plastic pollution at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                     |                                |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Release of toxins | • Microplastics in food chain  |
| • Use of oil        | • Plastics in whales' stomachs |
| • Dirty rivers      | • Ocean garbage patches        |
| • Littered streets  | • Groundwater pollution        |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	F	d	T	e	T	f	T	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.