

Preventing Plastic Pollution

Green Century successfully presses companies to reduce plastic waste to protect ocean wildlife and our health.

Problem

- Every 45 seconds, the equivalent of one garbage truck of plastic is dumped into the ocean.
- About 100,000 marine mammals die every year after being entangled in or eating plastic waste.
- Humans face increased risk of cancer, developmental issues, and endocrine disorders from the toxins and microplastics that leach into our water and food.



Photo Credit: Richard Carey, Adobe Stock

All too often, wildlife mistake plastics as food, imperiling fish, turtles and other wild creatures. See back side for more examples.

Green Century's Solution

Green Century works to reduce, reuse and recycle plastic, urging companies to:

- Reduce their use of single-use plastics
- Expand reusable and plastic-free packaging
- Only label plastic as recyclable if it is feasibly recycled in practice

Key Successes

Green Century has prioritized reducing plastic pollution, securing five new commitments alone in 2025.

Disney - Agreed to disclose its plastic footprint for Walt Disney World Resort and the Disneyland Resort, and to set a plastic reduction goal as a result of a 2024 Green Century shareholder resolution. In 2025, the company reported on its plastic footprint and detailed initiatives to cut single-use plastic packaging, such as switching to non-plastic alternatives and reusable packaging options like reusable cups, plates and utensils.



Photo Credit: Alan Stoddard, Flickr

Coca-Cola - Following a Green Century shareholder proposal in 2025, Coca-Cola agreed to disclose its investments and successes in reusable bottle initiatives. It also committed to quantitatively disclose the share of beverages it sells in reusable containers. This enables investors and others to better track the efficacy of the company's efforts to reduce plastic.



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Costco - After a shareholder proposal and subsequent negotiations with Green Century in 2023, Costco agreed to disclose the plastic footprint of its Kirkland Signature brand and develop a five-year plan to cut plastic. In 2024, Costco unveiled its plan that details its steps to reduce plastic packaging by using lighter materials that require less plastic, increasing recycled content in its packaging, and transitioning to packaging that is more easily recyclable.

Mattel - Green Century reached an agreement in which the toy company agreed to disclose a plastic reduction goal in 2022 to cut plastic packaging by 25% over ten years. In the first three years, the company reported it had achieved an 11.6% reduction in plastic, putting it on track to meaningfully cut single-use plastic packaging.



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Sealed Air - The packaging company that sells BUBBLE WRAP® and air pillows, and packaging company, **Amcors**, agreed to improve the sustainability of their packaging to ensure their recycling labels do not mislead consumers. Both commitments came after Green Century agreed to withdraw related shareholder proposals.



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Hasbro - The giant toymaker of G.I. Joe, Transformers and other action figures, was persuaded by Green Century to disclose all its packaging use in 2024-a critical first step in addressing plastic pollution.

Starbucks - Reached an agreement with Green Century to ensure it provides accurate information about the recyclability of the company's plastic cups and shares details about its transition to reusable cups by early 2026.

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