

Five of the six biggest soft drink firms use just 7% recycled plastic

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Drinks manufacturers woeful at using recycled plastic



By Becky Johnson, News Correspondent

The first comprehensive survey of the plastic usage policies of the biggest global soft drinks brands has found they use less than 7% recycled plastic in their products.

Greenpeace has surveyed Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, Suntory, Danone, DrPepperSnapple and Nestle.

It found five of the big six companies sell a combined total of 2.16 million tonnes of plastic bottles a year.

Despite producing 100% recyclable bottles, they use a combined average of just 6.6% recycled plastic in their products.



Marine life contaminated by microfibres in clothes

Louise Edge, Oceans Campaigner for Greenpeace, told Sky News: "There's a huge problem with plastic waste in our oceans.

"We know that 12 million tonnes of plastic are ending up in our oceans every year.

"To give you context that's a dumper truck of plastic going into our oceans every minute.

"A huge amount of that is going to be plastic bottles. In terms of the impact the plastic is having, its entangling and choking bigger creatures, like turtles for instance, and sea birds.



Blitz on beach inspired by Ocean Rescue 'hero'

"These drinks companies are responsible for a vast amount of plastic going into our oceans every year.

"They need to set targets for phasing out this single use of throwaway plastic bottles and then they need to look at increasing the amount of recyclable plastic that their use in their own bottles."

The Marine Conservation Society carries out an annual beach clean at coastlines around Britain.



Family of eight take part in plastic-use challenge

The society's Emma Cunningham told Sky News: "The amount of plastic that we're finding is increasing and most of the plastic that we find are single-use items, so things that have just been used once then carelessly discarded; for example, plastic bottles.

"We've had a big rise in the amount of bottles and caps and lids that we've found on our beaches so it's a massive problem that's just not going away."

Gavin Partington from the British Soft Drinks Association said: "There is a serious problem with marine litter. No one doubts that. And it requires a serious solution.



Coca Cola supports deposit return scheme

"I don't think we alone know the solution but certainly we can see some elements of the current system aren't working as effectively as they might in terms of recycling.

"Equally, it's pretty clear that some consumers, too many consumers, are chucking plastic bottles away and they shouldn't be.

"All PET (Polyethylene terephthalate) bottles are 100% recyclable so there's absolutely no excuse for consumers to be doing that.



Pollutants banned in '70s found in Ocean

"We think that possibly the whole set of steps are required by us and others in the supply chain and we would like to work with Greenpeace, other campaign groups, other parts of industry, to deliver that."

Sky News approached all of the six companies named in the Greenpeace report for their response.

PepsiCo said it is "committed to designing 100% of our packaging to be recoverable or recyclable by 2025 while partnering to significant increase packaging recovery and recycling rates".



The company added: "We're also working to enable the safe reuse rather than single use of plastic packaging to promote a circular economy... and promoting recycling by working with our customers, and supporting national and local consumer campaigns."

Coca Cola said: "Marine litter is a global problem affecting the world's oceans and we are working to help address it. For decades we have actively supported recycling programmes, anti-litter campaigns and ocean clean-up, but it is clear more action is needed.

"That's why last year we began a review of our sustainable packaging strategy and recently agreed to support the trial of a well-designed deposit return scheme in Scotland to understand whether it will help to improve recycling rates and reduce litter."



Whale dies with 30 plastic bags in its stomach

Nestle said it "agrees that too much plastic is ending up in oceans and rivers".

The company added: "We are committed to working with governments, NGOs and other companies to improve this situation by helping improve plastic recycling and recovery rates.

"Countries differ in their ability, through municipal and informal processes to collect, sort, reuse, recycle and revalue packaging.

"Having the right infrastructure and legislation in place is important. Consumers also play an important role in helping recycling efforts through disposing of waste plastic properly."



Prince lobbies industry heads over plastic scourge

Danone said it "has a long-standing commitment to protecting the environment".

A statement from the firm added: "As a user of plastic packaging, we aim to co-build a circular economy of packaging: from sourcing sustainable materials to creating multiple lives for plastic.

"Our bottles are 100% recyclable. Our objective is to transform packaging into resource by promoting bottle-to-bottle recycling or, where this isn't possible, ensuring that our packaging can be transformed into other products (e.g. textile, fibre)."

Sky News awaits responses from the other companies named in the report.

:: To get involved in Sky Ocean Rescue, visit the campaign website [here](#). You can also watch our [documentary, A Plastic Tide](#).

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