

11th ICRS GREEN BAG

These bags are made from nonwoven polypropylene (NWPP) which is water repellent, non-toxic, non-corrosive, non-allergenic, and 100% recyclable. Each bag has the carrying capacity of 2-3 plastic bags saving a minimum of **150 plastic bags/year from landfills and the ocean**. Using these bags spreads a message of awareness and social responsibility to others while significantly reducing your personal consumption of plastic and paper bags.

Plastic bags pose a tremendous threat to the environment. Lightweight, the bags easily blow away to become litter everywhere, clogging storm drains, eventually washing into streams and the ocean. Floating, the bags resemble jellyfish and can be eaten by turtles. Sinking, the bags can wrap around living coral, quickly suffocating and killing them (U.S. NOAA). A 2001 paper by Japanese researchers reported that tiny plastic pellets, either from breakdown of plastic or raw material waste, act as chemical sponges soaking up a million fold greater concentration of toxic compounds (such as PCB's and DDE (breakdown DDT)) than the surrounding sea water. These pollutants can then travel up the food chain, possibly ending up on our dinner plate.

Bangladesh and Taiwan have banned plastic bags, the European Union requires their recycling, and Ireland has significantly decreased their usage by 90% since initiating a tax on plastic bags (PlasTax).

Plastic bags cannot be comingled with other recyclables. The bags clog the machinery in the recycling plants. They must be returned to the stores that voluntarily recycle them. However, plastic bags are not truly recycled. They are **downcycled** - put into another product that cannot be recycled. In the U.S., composite decking made of recycled wood and collected plastic bags, provides one reuse for 50% of the returned plastic bags.

Photo credits: Turtle with bag - Ron Predergast, Melbourne Zoo; Bird with bag - www.sas.org.uk.; Woman with bags - REUTERS/Rafiqur Rahman

"A sturdy reusable bag needs only be used 11X to have a lower environmental impact than using 11 disposable bags." The Sierra Club



According to the Blue Ocean Society for Marine Conservation, **more than 1 million birds, and 100,000 marine mammals and sea turtles die each year** from eating or getting entangled in plastic.

Worldwide, more than 1 billion single use plastic bags are given out each day, most used for only 30 minutes before their disposal. According to the Wall Street Journal, in the U.S., 100 billion plastic bags are used/year requiring **12 million barrels of oil** to produce. Plastic bags form a major part of landfill waste, creating toxic pollution when incinerated. Never fully disappearing, the plastic breaks down into smaller particles, taking an estimated 1000 years to degrade.

Please use these "green bags" for all your shopping needs, reducing landfill and aquatic waste, and saving energy at all levels.

