www.plasticovershoot.earth

PLASTIC OVERSHOOT DAY

This is the day when the generation of plastic waste exceeds the capacity of waste management, leading to environmental pollution.

2026 report summary

ea for impact

PLASTIC

OVERSHOOT DAY

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Authors: Julien Boucher (Corresponding author: julien.boucher@e-a.earth)
Fernanda Nunes
Sarah Perreard

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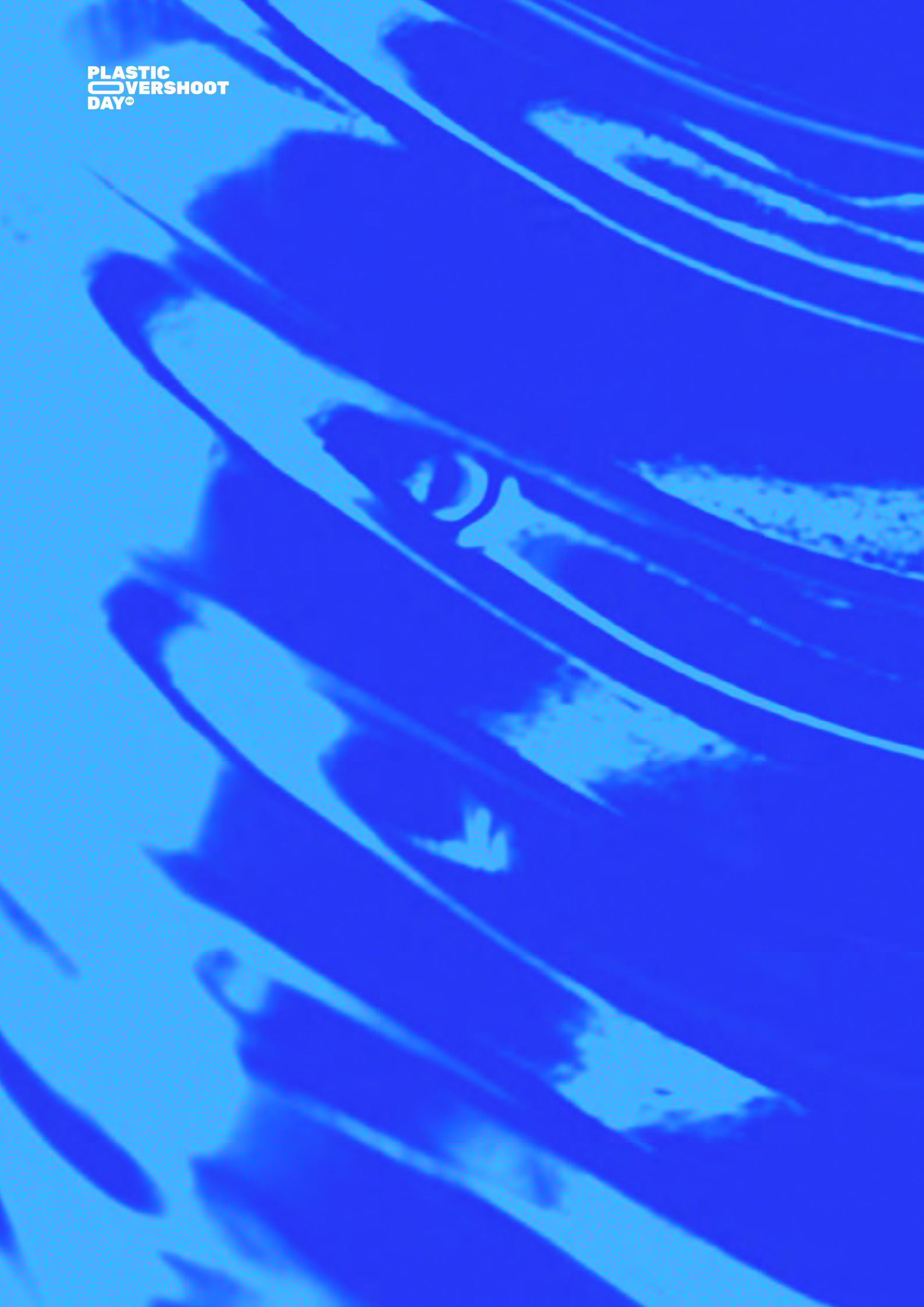
PLASTIC
OVERSHOOT
DAY

Behind the project

EA For Impact is a Swiss non-profit association that develops science-based methodologies and open-access research to close sustainability knowledge gaps and support decision-makers.

Funded by EA Earth Action SA and by philanthropic contributions, it works with NGOs, policymakers, and technical experts through initiatives including Plastic Overshoot Day, the Plastic Footprint Network, Swiss Plastic Action, and Swiss Climate Action. Plastic Overshoot Day builds on the data model developed for the Packaging Data Hub. For this report, that model has been extended to non-packaging plastic waste, including textiles and other household waste, at both country and polymer level.

The Packaging Data Hub is co-led by Systemiq and EA. It provides harmonised, expert-validated data on plastic packaging materials, formats, and end-of-life outcomes across more than 74 countries, combining an open-access tool for public use with a more granular data platform for industry, government, and civil society.

The Hub is guided by a technical advisory board and developed in alignment with a group of strategic partners, including the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, the Consumer Goods Forum, WWF, the Global Plastic Action Partnership, WRAP, and CDP. Philanthropic support comes from EIT Food and the Röchling Foundation. Each dataset is scored for reliability and validated country by country with local experts, giving companies, regulators, and investors a shared, verifiable reference point for packaging performance in place of the fragmented data currently available across markets.
More information, including access to the data explorer, is available at **www.packagingdata.earth**.

As with all EA For Impact initiatives, Plastic Overshoot Day is committed to transparency, raising awareness about plastic pollution, and driving sustainable solutions to address a pressing global challenge.

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contact@plasticovershoot.earth

PLASTIC OVERSHOOT DAY

What is Plastic Overshoot Day?

Plastic… is… everywhere

Plastic is present in nearly every part of daily life, and its effects are documented with increasing precision, in the environment and in the human body. Recent research has found microplastics in blood, lungs, and placental tissue, and identified health risks linked to plastic additives and chemical exposure. The consequences of plastic production, consumption, and disposal for climate, biodiversity, and human health are increasingly well characterized.

Plastic Overshoot Day addresses one specific dimension of this problem: waste mismanagement. Plastic pollution is a multi-dimensional issue; this report isolates a measurable question: how much plastic waste is generated each year, and whether existing waste management systems can handle it.

Each year, plastic waste generation reaches a point beyond the world's capacity to manage it. That point is Plastic Overshoot Day. In 2026, it falls on **September 6th**.

The analysis does not rank waste management methods as good or bad. It follows the **United Nations National Guidance for Plastic Pollution Hotspotting**, which classifies waste as well managed or mismanaged. In this framework:

- **Well-managed waste** includes incineration, sanitary landfills, and recycling, as they are systems designed to prevent environmental leakage.
- **Mismanaged waste** includes dumpsites, unsanitary landfills, other types of improper disposal, littered or uncollected waste, which all pose a high risk of plastic leakage into nature.

The classification does not imply that well-managed systems are without impact.

Incineration raises air pollution and carbon emission concerns; landfills carry long-term environmental risks. Within this report, these internationally recognized definitions serve a single purpose: to measure how much plastic waste is contained within controlled systems and how much is released into the environment.

Plastic Overshoot Day tracks the gap between plastic waste generation and the capacity to manage it. It does not argue for or against specific waste management approaches; it quantifies the scale of that gap.

Closing this gap requires coordinated action across three levers: reducing plastic waste at the source, expanding waste management infrastructure, and building circular systems that prevent plastic from entering the waste stream as pollution in the first place.

Foreword

Six years after the landmark publication "Breaking the Plastic Wave" warned that, without systemic intervention, plastic pollution would triple by 2040, the trajectory it described has not changed course. The report outlined science-based solutions capable of reducing plastic pollution by over 80% using existing technologies and policy interventions. Yet plastic production continues to rise, waste management systems remain overwhelmed, and plastic pollution continues to reach oceans, soils, and human bodies.

Plastic Overshoot Day, falling on September 6th, 2026, marks the point at which global plastic waste generation surpasses the world's capacity to manage it properly. From that day forward, every additional unit of plastic waste accumulates in dumpsites, is littered, or leaks into the environment, adding to a burden that affects ecosystems, human health, and the global economy.

This report measures that burden through a specific lens: the volume of plastic waste generated each year and the share of it that escapes controlled management. That lens does not capture the full picture. The same plastic reaches the human body in forms that are harder to quantify but increasingly well documented. Research presented at the August 2025 negotiating session in Geneva linked residential proximity to petrochemical facilities with up to a 30% higher risk of leukaemia, and associated exposure to a single chemical used in plastics with an estimated 350,000 premature deaths a year from cardiovascular disease, at an estimated global cost of hundreds of billions to several trillion dollars. Microplastics have been identified in human blood, lungs, and placental tissue. These effects are not separate from the waste mismanagement problem quantified in this report; they are its less visible counterpart.

Plastic pollution is also a symptom of a broader pattern: the same unchecked production and consumption driving resource depletion and climate change. Reducing plastic pollution therefore requires more than better waste management; it requires rethinking how much plastic is produced and consumed in the first place.

The 2026 data tell a story of progress and its limits. Global plastic waste generation has grown from 202 million tonnes in 2021 to nearly 227 million tonnes in 2026, while the share of that waste left mismanaged has edged down from 34.3% to 31.6% over the same period, under a consistent methodology across years. On paper, the world is getting marginally better at managing what it produces. In absolute terms, it is not: because production and consumption keep growing faster than management capacity improves, the tonnage of plastic waste mismanaged each year has continued to rise, from about 69 million tonnes in 2021 to nearly 72 million tonnes in 2026. The lesson is a hard one. Waste management capacity cannot expand fast enough to offset ever-rising generation, and the crisis cannot be solved by treatment capacity alone. Plastic waste generation itself has to come down.

The Global Plastics Treaty negotiations illustrate the same gap between urgency and pace, and a similar divide runs through the underlying positions. INC-5.2, held in Geneva in August 2025, closed without an agreed treaty text: a High Ambition Coalition of more than 100 countries pushed for binding measures across the plastic lifecycle, including limits on production and chemicals of concern, while a smaller group of petrochemical and plastic-producing states favoured a voluntary agreement focused on waste management and recycling. INC-5.3, a one-day procedural session convened in Geneva in February 2026, elected Ambassador Julio Cordano of Chile as the new chair following his predecessor's resignation; no substantive negotiations took place. Substantive discussion resumed at a Heads of Delegation meeting in Nairobi at the start of July 2026, the first such exchange in ten months, with a further round held in Bangkok in September 2026 ahead of the next formal negotiating session, INC-5.4, scheduled for March 2027.

The distance between the two positions has led some observers to ask whether the process will eventually produce a more ambitious treaty among a smaller group of willing states, rather than a weaker one agreed by consensus among all. Both paths involve a trade-off between the strength of the eventual commitments and the number of countries bound by them, and both would shape how far a treaty can move the trajectory measured in this report. Every month without an agreement is a month in which that trajectory continues unchanged. Governments, businesses, and individuals all have a role to play. Transparency and accountability need to become standard practice, from corporate reporting on plastic footprints to policy commitments that align production with real waste management capacities. Another decade of half-measures is not an option the data support.

This report is a measurement, and it is also intended as a call to action. Plastic Overshoot Day is not fixed in advance; it moves later or earlier each year depending on choices made today. Progress made now would push it further into the calendar and, over time, could remove it altogether.

The path forward involves four measures: reducing plastic at the source, strengthening waste management, building a circular economy, and holding polluters accountable. Together, they would address the plastic crisis and support a more sustainable, climate-resilient future.

Now is the time for decisive action.
The tools, the knowledge, and the momentum exist.
What remains is the *will to act*.

PLASTIC OVERSHOOT DAY

Glossary

Collection rate
Ratio between the plastic waste collected and generated. Waste Collected includes: Waste export, Recycling, Properly disposed and Improperly disposed.

Export
Export of any plastic by the country, in any form, be it primary polymer, plastic product, or plastic embedded in a product. It does not include export of plastic waste.

Import
Import of any plastic into the country, in any form, be it primary polymer, plastic product, or plastic embedded in a product. It does not include import of plastic waste.

Improperly disposed
Waste fraction that is disposed in a waste management system where leakage is expected to occur, such as a dumpsite or an unsanitary landfill. A dumpsite is a particular area where large quantities of waste are deliberately disposed in an uncontrolled manner and can be the result of both the formal and informal sectors. A landfill is considered as unsanitary when waste management quality standards are not met, thus creating the potential for leakage.

Mismanaged
The sum of uncollected and improperly managed waste.

Mismanaged Waste Index (MWI)
The sum of uncollected and improperly managed waste, divided by the waste generated.

Leakage
Plastic that is released into rivers, lakes and oceans.

Production
Polymer production either from primary virgin source or secondary source (recycled plastic from previous year). It does not include the manufacturing of final products in the country, as this would lead to double counting.

Properly disposed
Waste fraction that is disposed in a waste management system where no leakage is expected to occur, such as an incineration facility or a sanitary landfill.

Incineration
“Proper” incineration is technology that destroys waste through burning while respecting technical requirements and operating conditions to avoid environmental pollution.

Sanitary landfill
Particular area where large quantities of waste are deliberately disposed in a controlled manner (e.g. waste being covered on a daily basis, as well as the bottom of the landfill designed in a way to prevent waste from leaching out).

Domestic recycling
Recycling of waste collected in the country. This does not include recycling of imported waste or waste collected for recycling in the country that is exported abroad.

Uncollected (excl. littering)
Waste fraction that is not collected, either by the formal or the informal sector. It excludes littering.

Littering
The act of dropping rubbish on the ground in public areas.

Waste export
Plastic waste collected in the country and exported abroad. It does not include the reexport of imported waste.

Waste generated
Country domestic plastic waste generation computed as: Production + Import – Export – Added stock.

Waste import
Import of plastic waste from other countries.

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01. Introductory note

This report provides a full assessment of the contribution to plastic pollution worldwide through the lense of the Plastic Overshoot Days since 2021, with a focus on this year's date. It is based on the baseline year 2026 from municipal solid waste (packaging, textile, and household), with a global plastic production of 227 Mt, that is distributed across different country archetypes: The Moderate Polluters, The Overloaders, The Low-Waste-Producing Polluters, The Toxic Producers, The Transactors, and The Self Sustainers.

The intention of this research is not to criticise the countries waste management, but to increase the level of knowledge and awareness of the issue, so as to pave the way towards a better plastic management system.

This report therefore fills a key knowledge gap and provides a new and important insight to enable us to better prioritise research and actions around macro- and micro-plastic leakage, and plastic pollution in general.

Systemic solutions should be developed and implemented by the concerned countries.

DISCLAIMER:
The Plastic Overshoot Day is estimated and published every year. Revisions to calculations and scope may occur from one publication to the other, leading to adjusted overshoot dates compared to previous communications. Readers are advised to always refer to the latest publication. The information and data in this report regarding Plastic Overshoot Day, including estimates on additives leakage and microplastic leakage, are provided for informational purposes only. Plastic Overshoot Day is an estimate and not an exact date. Reasonable efforts have been made to ensure accuracy; however, it is important to note that science knowledge on synthetic textile is less advanced than for packaging and the estimates for additives and microplastics may be less detailed. These estimates are approximations and should not replace comprehensive studies. This report does not constitute legal or professional advice and should not be relied upon as such. The authors, publishers, and distributors of this report are not liable for errors or consequences arising from its use. Please note that the field of plastic waste management is constantly evolving, and new research may impact the understanding of the issues discussed. Readers are encouraged to stay informed about the latest developments. By accessing and using this report, you agree to the above disclaimer and accept that the authors, publishers, and distributors are not responsible for any claims or losses resulting from its use.

PLASTIC OVERSHOOT DAY

02. Summary

Plastic Overshoot Day marks the point when the amount of plastic waste generated from single use packaging, household and textile sectors exceeds the world's capacity to manage it, resulting in environmental pollution. In 2026, the global Plastic Overshoot Day is projected to occur on **September 6th**. Each country has its own Plastic Overshoot Day, which is determined by the amount of plastic waste generated and the country's capacity to manage it.

The Plastic Overshoot Day alone does not provide the whole picture of this complex issue. Hence, to facilitate targeted and effective solutions, six country archetypes have been established, enabling the profiling of countries based on determining factors such as local per capita plastic consumption, the import and export volumes of waste, and the country's waste treatment capabilities. These archetypes enable recommendations tailored to each country's unique circumstances.

These recommendations aim to empower countries to improve their Overshoot Day and mitigate plastic pollution. They include strategies such as reducing plastic consumption and usage, promoting circular economy models such as repair and reuse initiatives, implementing robust waste management policies like extended producer responsibilities (EPR), enhancing local waste management infrastructure, and ceasing the import of plastic waste from other countries.

By adopting measures relevant to their situation, countries can make significant progress in combatting plastic pollution.

Every country has its own Plastic Overshoot Day, corresponding to the day at which a country's waste management capacity is fully exhausted. Beyond this day, all waste generated by the country becomes mismanaged, ultimately finding its way into the natural environment.

Who contributes to the Plastic Overshoot Day?

In 2026, there are 116 days of plastic overshoot, meaning that the plastic waste produced during these days will not be well managed. Each country contributes to a portion of this plastic overshoot, according to the total amount of plastic waste they mismanage.

1

In the first 249 days of 2026, plastic waste is well-managed, meaning it is collected and then either recycled, incinerated, or deposited in a sanitary landfill.

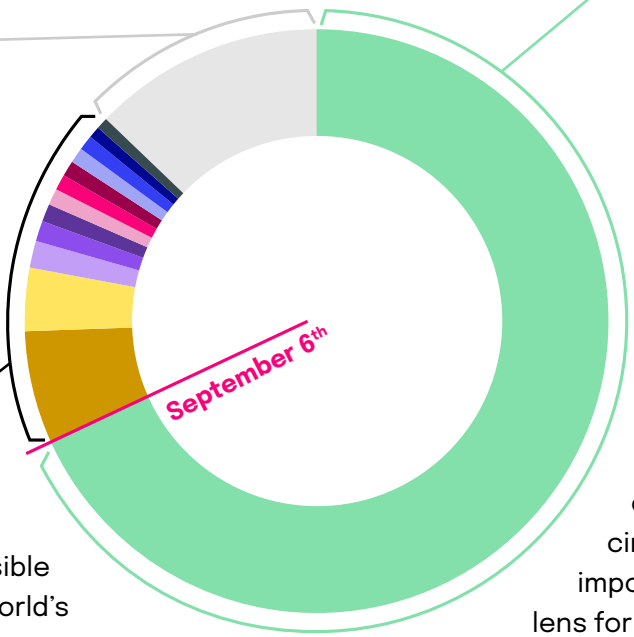
Incineration and sanitary landfills also have limitations. While this analysis focuses on mismanagement, circularity remains an important complementary lens for understanding a country's overall situation.

3

The remaining 205 countries account for around 40% of the total mismanaged waste, or about 47 days.

2

12 countries are responsible for close to 60% of the world's mismanaged plastic waste, or around 69 days of overshoot for 2026: China, India, Russian Federation, Brazil, Mexico, Vietnam, Indonesia, Pakistan, Egypt, United States, Nigeria and Turkey.



249 Days of Proper Plastic Waste Management in 2026

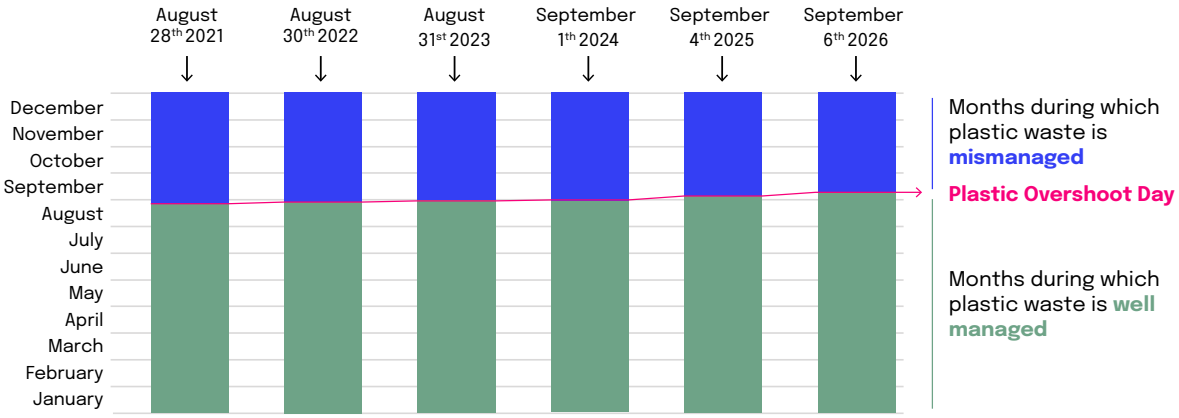
Allocation of 2026 Global Overshoot Days:

- China (22.7 days)
- India (12.8 days)
- Russian Fed. (5.4 days)
- Brazil (4.1 days)
- Mexico (3.6 days)
- Vietnam (3.3 days)
- Indonesia (3.2 days)
- Pakistan (3.1 days)
- Egypt (3.1 days)
- USA (3 days)
- Nigeria (2.4 days)
- Turkey (2.3 days)
- Other countries (46.8 days)

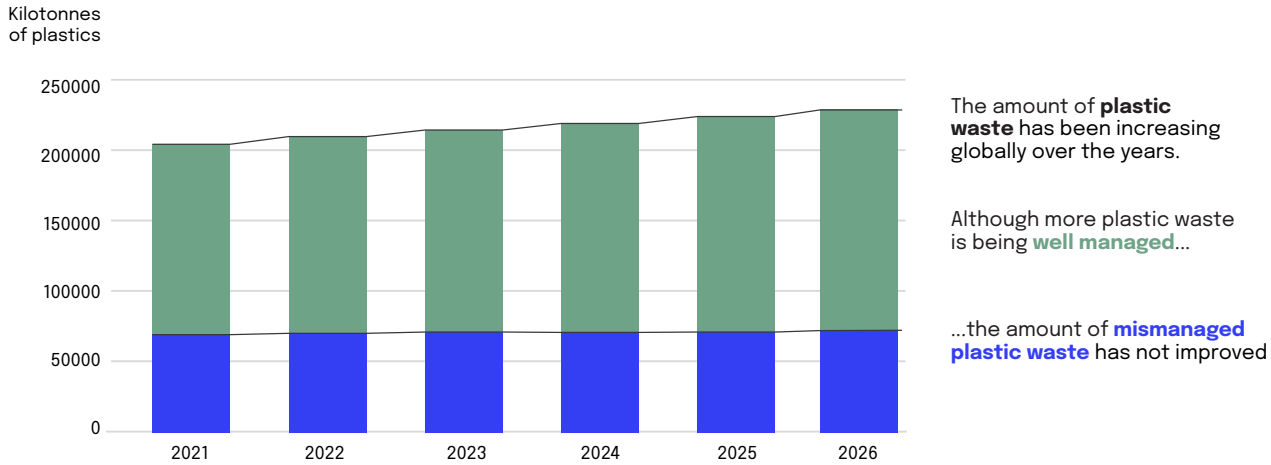
Is it getting better or worse?

Plastic Overshoot Day mirrors how well the world manages its plastic waste: the later in the year it falls, the smaller the share of plastic waste that ends up mismanaged. At the country level, this can reflect lower plastic consumption, a stronger waste management system, or both.

Since 2021, POD has been pushed a little closer to December every year by a few days, indicating a slight improvement in global waste management.



However, there has been a consistent rise in global plastic waste generation, from 202 million tons in 2021 to 227 million tons in 2026. Therefore, despite an improvement in plastic waste management practices, the overall quantity of mismanaged plastic waste continues to grow, from around 69 million tons in 2021 to close to 72 million tons in 2026.

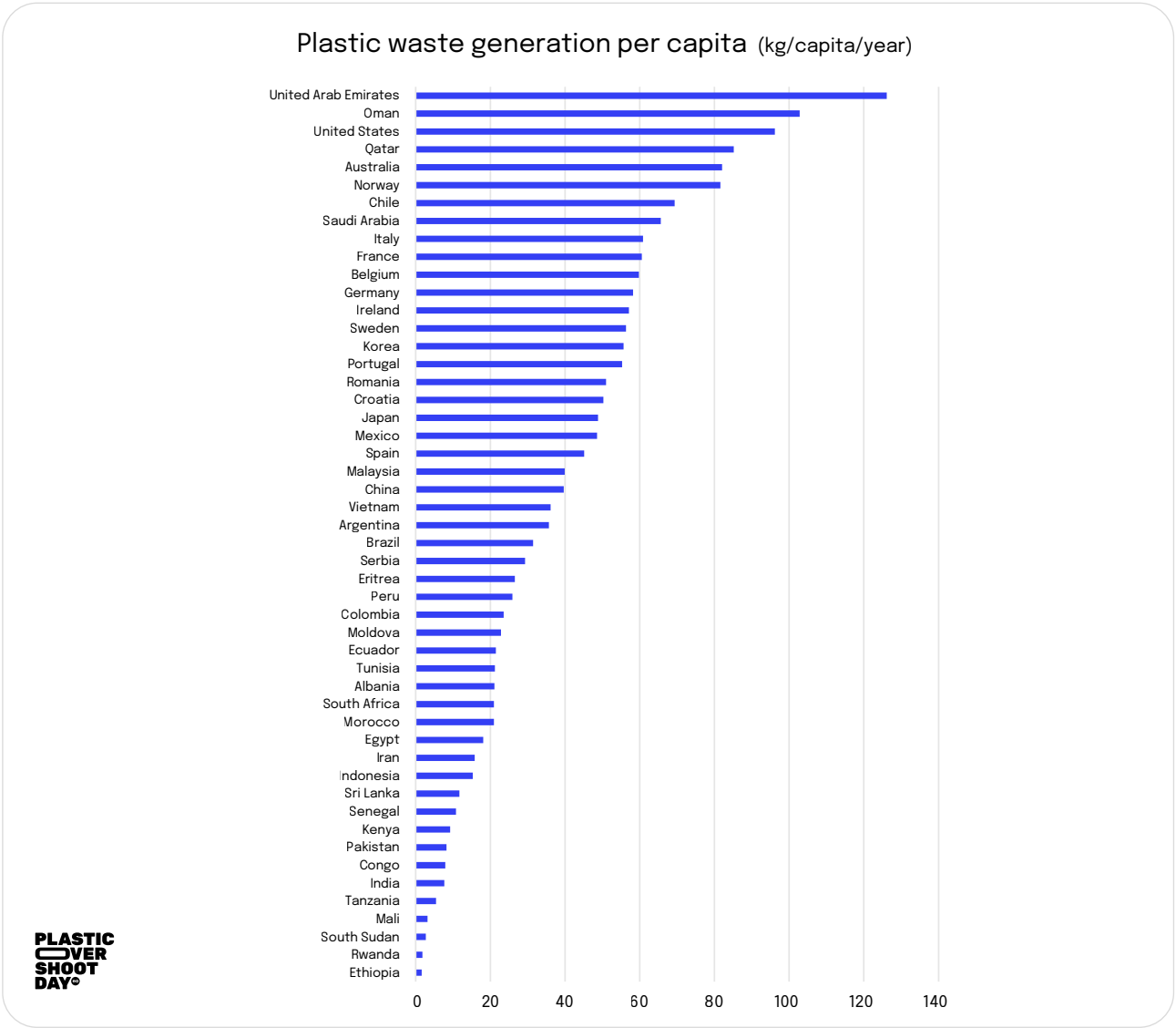


03. Executive summary

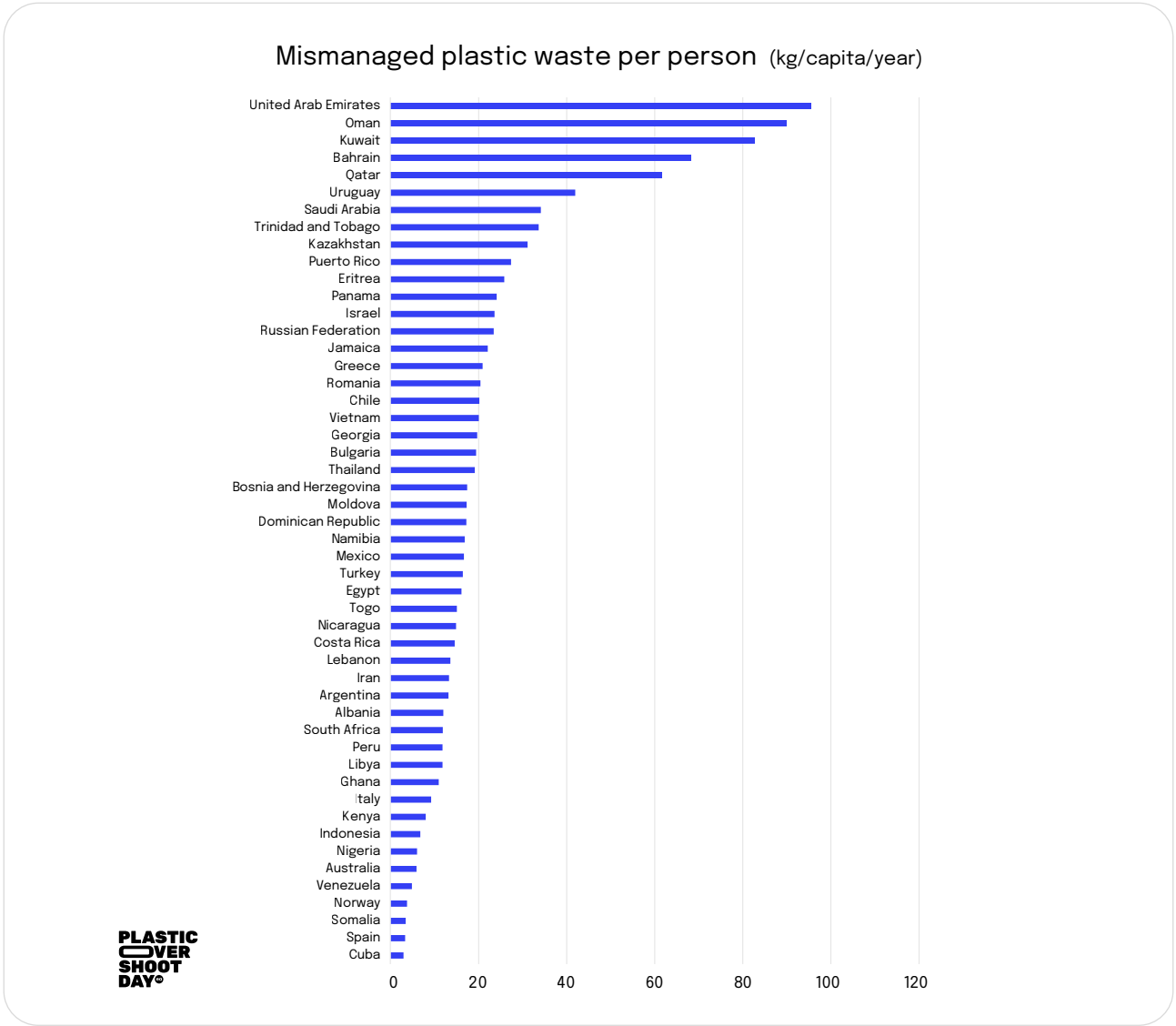
A little (or big) story of plastic pollution...

Global plastic pollution is an aggregated contribution of each country. It depends on how much plastic waste is generated from consumption by each country and how much of this waste is mismanaged and may eventually leak in the environment.

The global average plastic waste generated by person and per year is 27.4 kg (across packaging, textile, and household waste), with a total worldwide generation of 227 million tons per year. Diving into regional differences, plastic waste generation varies among countries and individuals, with some producing more plastic waste per capita than others.

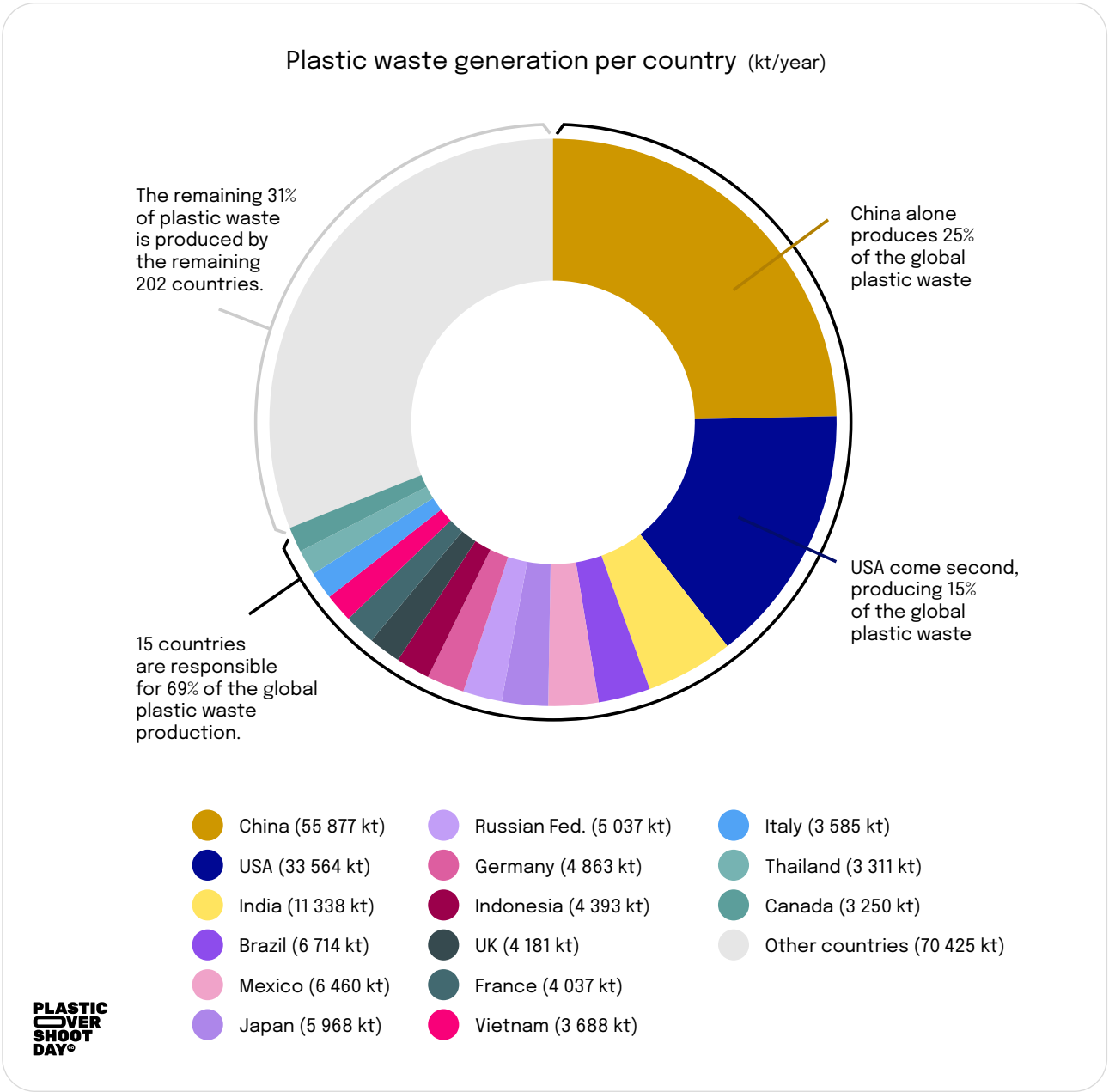


Countries have varying capacities to effectively manage the plastic waste they generate, with some having more advanced waste management systems than others.



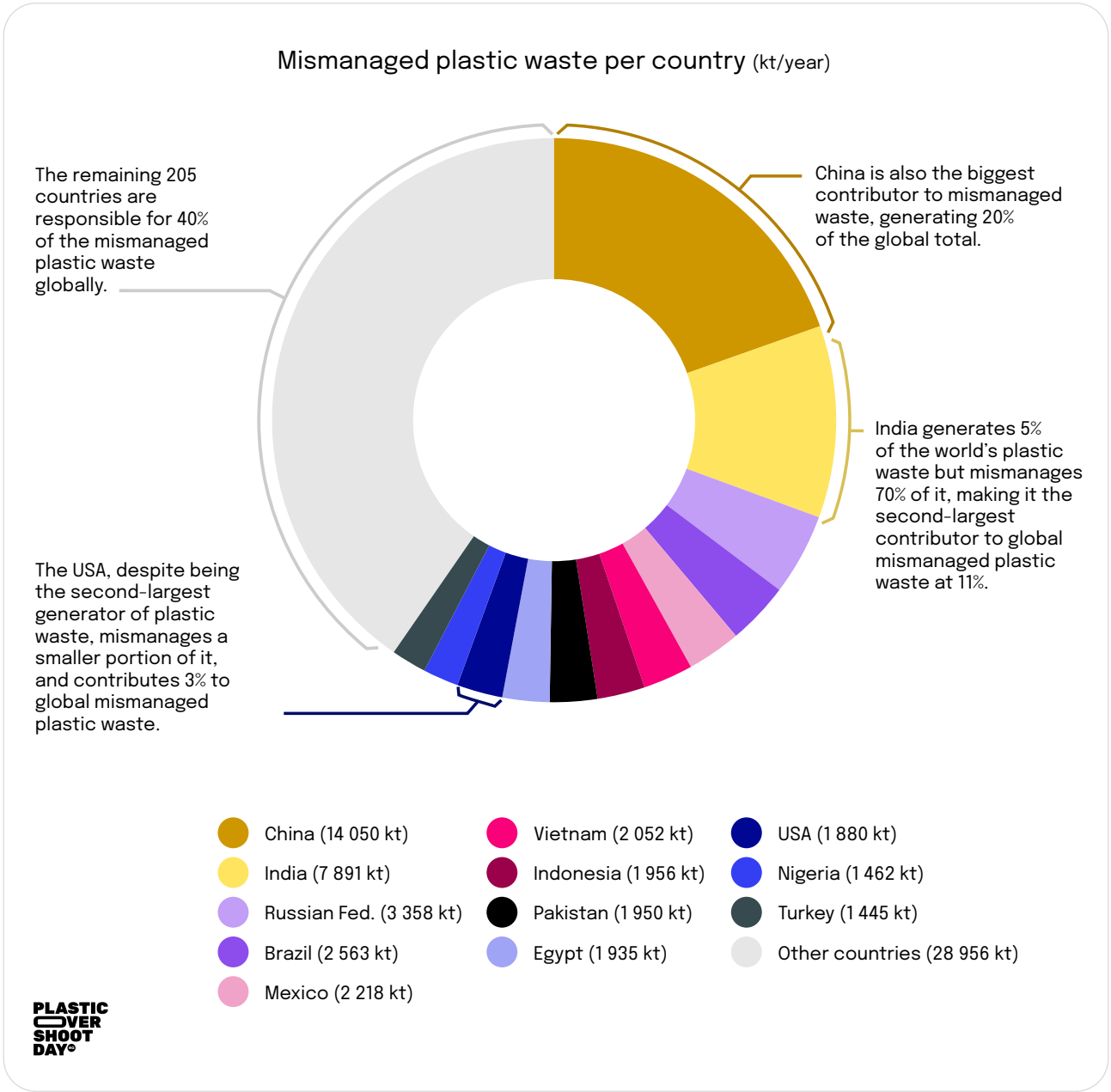
Despite lower level of waste generation per capita, a country's total waste production can be quite high due to its large territory and large population. An example is China, where each person is expected to generate around 39.6 kg/capita, which is considered medium, but is the top plastic waste producer at the national level, with an expected 55.9 million tons generated in 2026.

Nevertheless, plastic waste generation is a global issue, with an expected total waste generation of 227 million tons worldwide.

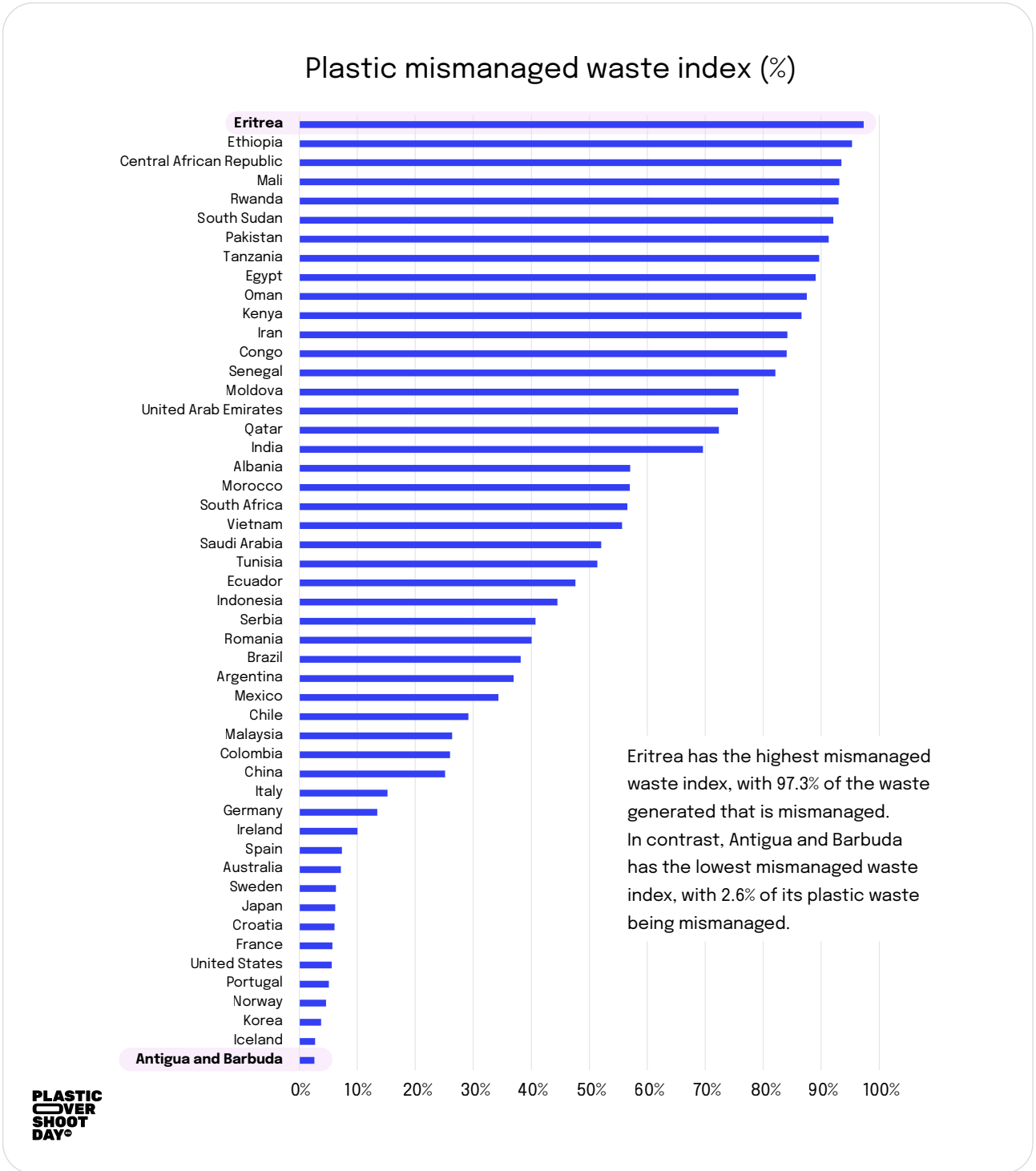


12 countries are responsible for close to 60% of the world's mismanaged plastic waste: China, India, Russia, Brazil, Mexico, Vietnam, Indonesia, Pakistan, Egypt, United States, Nigeria and Turkey.

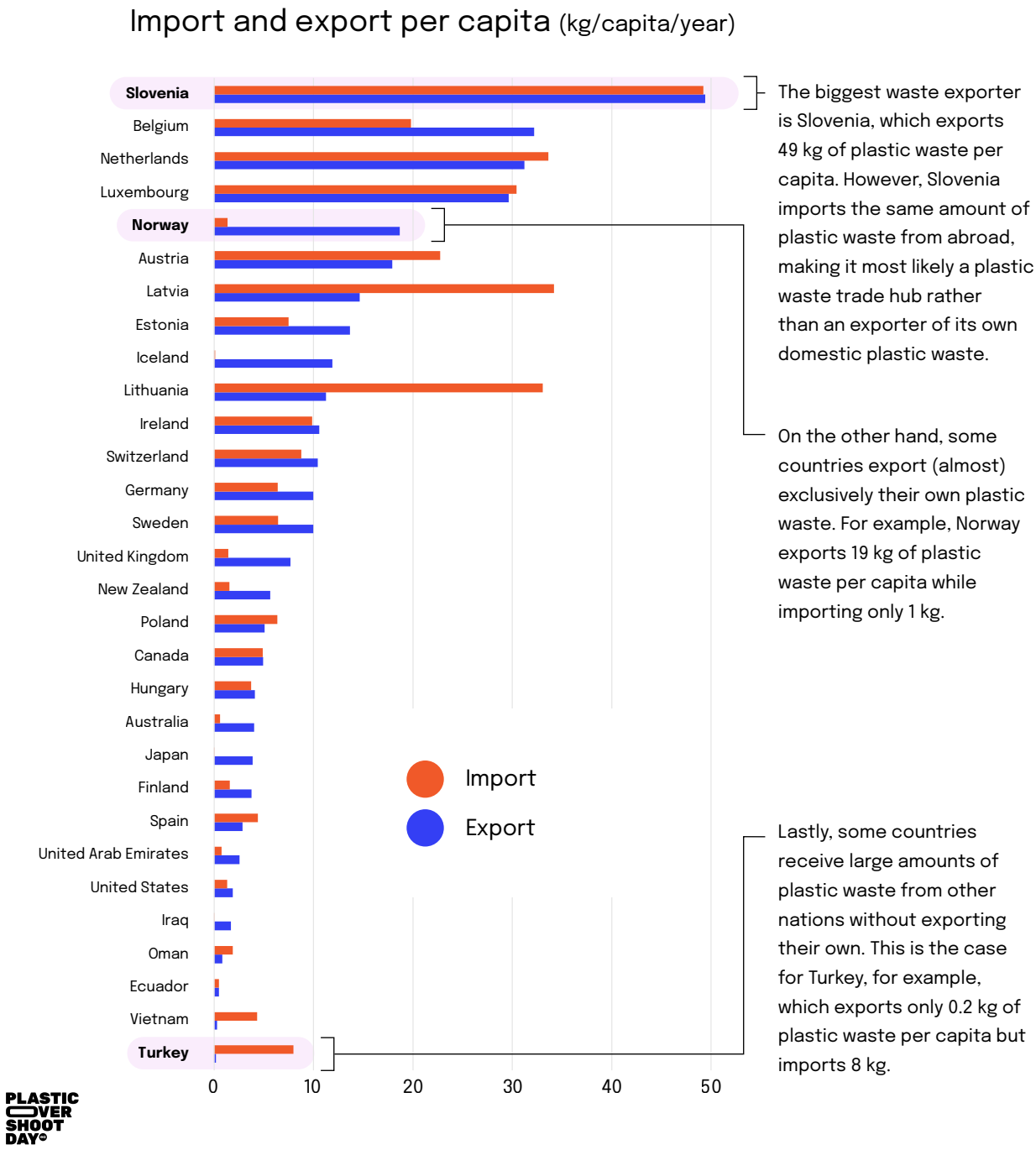
In total, around 72 million tons of plastic is expected to be mismanaged globally this year and end up in the environment.



The imbalance between the volumes of plastic that are produced and used, and the world's ability to manage those volumes when they become waste, is the root cause of plastic pollution. The mismatch of waste management capacity versus plastic consumption is called the MWI, the mismanaged waste index. **Globally in 2026, a staggering 31.6% of plastic waste will be mismanaged at the end of its life, with the risk of this waste ending up in oceans.**



Countries trade plastic waste with one another. **Pollution is created when plastic waste is exported in countries that have very low waste management capacities.**

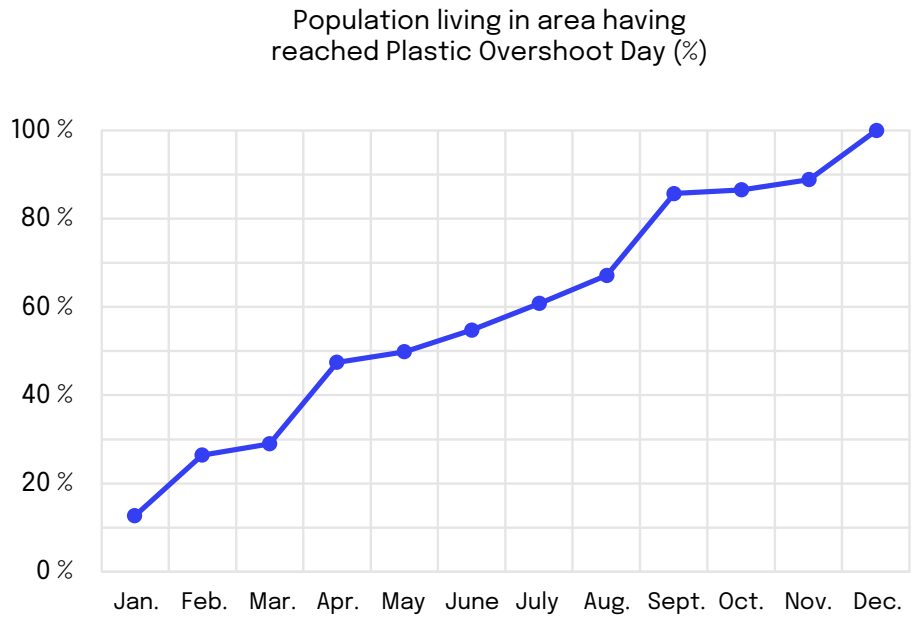


Plastic Overshoot Day marks the point when the amount of plastic waste generated exceeds the world's capacity to manage it, resulting in environmental pollution. In 2026, the global Plastic Overshoot Day is projected to occur on **September 6th**.

Overshoot Day by Country

The date when a country's waste management capacity has been reached.

By the end of May 2026, close to half of the world's population (49.8%) will already be living in areas where plastic waste has exceeded the capacity to manage it, indicating a pressing need for action to address the plastic waste crisis.



04. Detailed results

Country archetypes

Plastic Overshoot Day aims to offer insights into interventions that countries can use to reduce overall plastic waste and, in particular, to mitigate mismanaged plastic waste, therefore prolonging the country's overshoot date.

Each country has unique realities related to plastic pollution – including plastic usage levels, waste management infrastructure, and relevant policies – Plastic Overshoot Day looked to establish categories so that countries could be profiled and relevant and meaningful solutions could be presented and explored.

6 Country Archetypes have been defined, which represent countries based on:
- The amount of plastic waste the population produces and uses
- How much plastic is mismanaged when it becomes waste
- How much plastic waste the country exports
- How much plastic waste the country imports

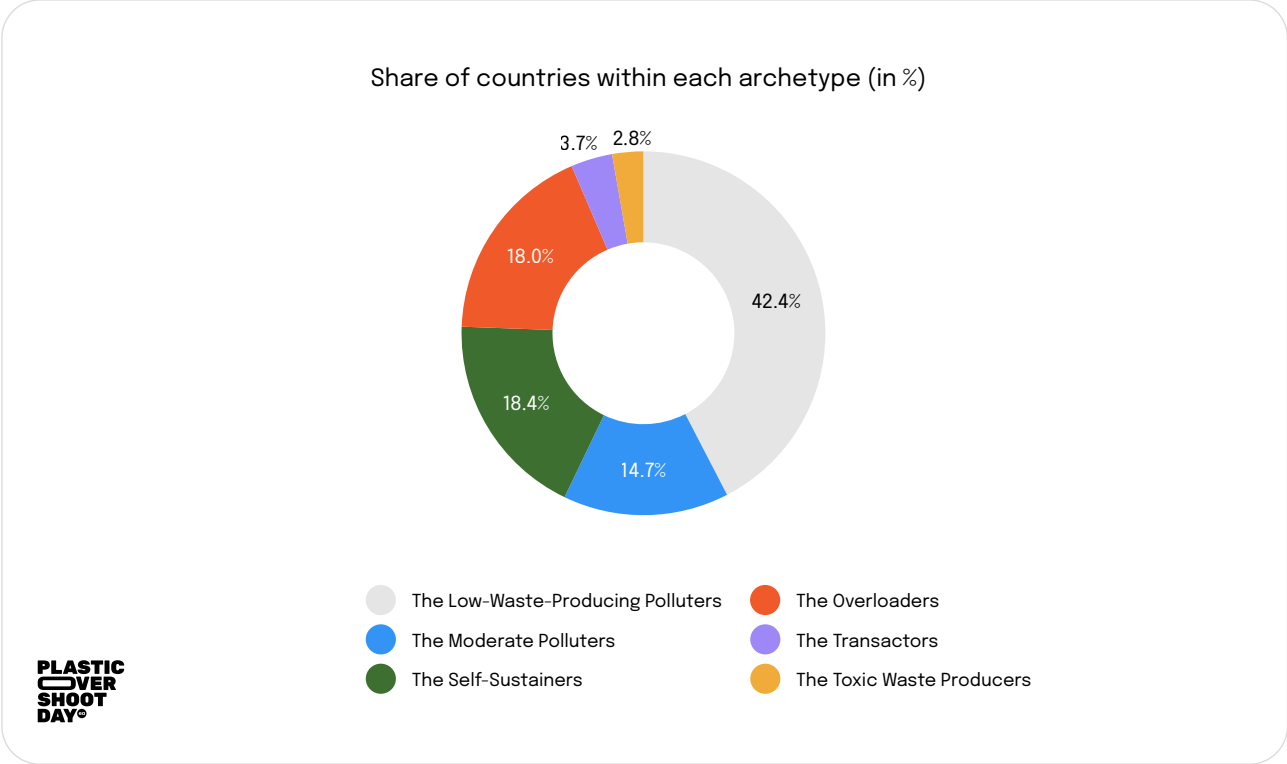
Summary table

Country archetypes	Waste generation level	Waste mismanagement level	Import Volumes	Export Volumes
The Moderate Polluters	Medium	High	Medium	Medium
The Overloaders	High	Low	High	High
The Low-Waste-Producing Polluters	Low	Very high	Low	Medium
The Toxic Waste Producers	Very high	Very high	Low	Medium
The Transactors	High	Low	Very high	Very high
The Self-Sustainers	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium

The below table summarizes the thresholds for each of the criteria.

	Waste generation level (kg/cap/year)	Waste mismanagement level	Import (% of waste generation)	Export (% of waste generation)
Very high	> 100	> 60%	> 10%	> 10%
High	50-100	30-60%	3-10%	3-10%
Medium	15-50	10-30%	1-3%	1-3%
Low	< 15	< 10%	< 1%	< 1%

The next graph shows the share of the different archetypes for the year 2026.



Country archetype examples

This section provides an overview of each archetype, along with an illustrative example of a country associated with it.

Country archetype	Country example
The Moderate Polluters	Indonesia
The Overloaders	Switzerland
The Low-Waste-Producing Polluters	Egypt
The Toxic Waste Producers	United Arab Emirates
The Transactors	Belgium
The Self-Sustainers	Costa Rica

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Country archetype

The Moderate polluters

Factor	Ranking	Average	Range
Waste Generation Level	Medium	26 kg/capita/year	Low to high
Waste Mismanagement Level	High	55%	Medium to high
Import Volumes	Medium	1.5%	Low to very high
Export Volumes	Medium	2.3%	Low to very high

Description
On average, the Moderate Polluters tend to have a medium plastic waste generation levels. Half of them export some of their waste. These countries do not effectively manage their waste and negative environmental impacts result both domestically and in the countries receiving the waste.

Countries
Albania, American Samoa, Belize, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cayman Islands, Ecuador, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guyana, Indonesia, Jordan, Kiribati, Lebanon, Libya, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Morocco, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, San Marino, South Africa, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Venezuela, Vietnam

RECOMMENDATION 1
Develop local waste management infrastructure. Further developing their domestic waste management infrastructure would allow the Moderate Polluters to treat more of their waste locally, thus reducing the burden placed on other countries.

RECOMMENDATION 2
Reduce plastic consumption. Reducing its consumption of plastic would have direct impacts over their waste mismanagement levels that would drop proportionally.

RECOMMENDATION 3
Invest in waste management policies including Extended Producer Responsibility, which would fund the development of the waste management infrastructure that is currently lacking.

Example

Indonesia

Overshoot Day, or the date when the amount of plastic waste outweighs this country's ability to manage it, with environmental pollution occurring as a result, is:

21 July 2026

Plastic Overshoot Day is determined by a country's Mismanaged Waste Index*, which in this case is...

44.52%

In 2026, the world will experience **116 days** of plastic overshoot. This country will contribute to this overshoot by

3 days 4 hours 55 minutes

The Mismanaged Waste Index, or MWI, is
High

The expected mismanaged waste in 2026 will be
1 955 570 tons of plastic

The country's annual per capita plastic waste production is
15 kg per capita per year

which is considered
Medium

The total plastic waste produced in this country is
4 393 018 tons of plastic

The amount of plastic waste EXPORTED by the country is
46 407 tons of plastic

which represents
1.1% of its total waste

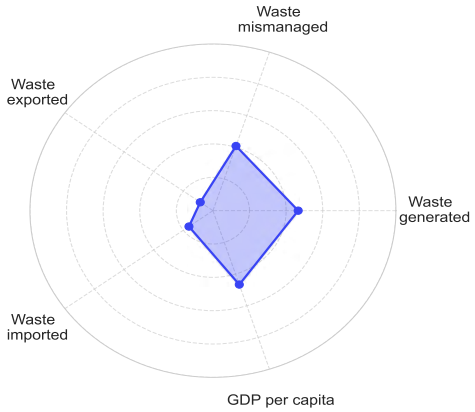
This relative export is considered
Medium

The amount of plastic waste IMPORTED by the country is
174 032 tons of plastic

which represents
4.1% of its total waste

This relative import is considered
High

*The Mismanaged Waste Index is the share of plastic waste generated by a country that is mismanaged



As per the Plastic Overshoot Day archetypes, this country is classified as one of:

The Moderate Polluters

On average, the Moderate Polluters tend to have a medium plastic waste generation level. Half of them export some of their waste. These countries do not effectively manage their waste and negative environmental impacts result both domestically and in the countries receiving the waste.

Recommendations for driving necessary changes to mitigate plastic pollution and postpone the Overshoot Day in this country:

Develop local waste management infrastructure.
Reduce plastic production and use.
Invest in waste management policies like EPR.

Plastic pollution is caused not only by the improper disposal of plastic products but also by the release of primary microplastics from sources such as tire abrasion, shedding of textile fibers, pellets production and paint. It is expected that in 2026 this country will be responsible for releasing into the environment an average of

78 625 tons of microplastics in waterways.

In addition, plastic production and processing involve the use of additives, which can have harmful impacts on ecosystems and human health if they leak into the environment due to waste mismanagement. It is anticipated that in 2026, plastic waste mismanagement in this country will result in the release into waterways of

8 429 tons of chemical additives pollution.

Country archetype

The Overloaders

Factor	Ranking	Average	Range
Waste Generation Level	High	78 kg/capita/year	Medium to very high
Waste Mismanagement Level	Low	8.7%	Low to high
Import Volumes	High	4.7%	Low to very high
Export Volumes	High	8.6%	Low to very high

Description
The Overloaders are high plastic waste generators, who export a significant amount of their waste. Their waste is well managed. Unlike the similarly high-consuming Transactors, the Overloaders import less waste than they export. This imbalance therefore overloads the waste management systems of other countries, likely creating mismanagement issues in countries where Overloaders send their plastic waste.

Countries
Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Barbados, Bermuda, Canada, Channel Islands, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Faeroe Islands, Finland, France, Germany, Gibraltar, Greenland, Hong Kong SAR, China, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Isle of Man, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malta, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Singapore, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, United Kingdom, United States, Virgin Islands (U.S.)

RECOMMENDATION 1

Reduce plastic production and use. The primary way to mitigate plastic pollution is to mitigate the amount of plastic used by the population. As a high consumption country, reducing plastic consumption is critical for the Overloaders.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Become circular. Plastic waste typically exists in a linear system of “take, make, dispose”. Plastic manufacturing and management must transition to more circular systems to address the plastic pollution crisis. Effective solutions must include a move away from the linear status quo to circular business models based on reuse and repair.

Example

Switzerland

Overshoot Day, or the date when the amount of plastic waste outweighs this country's ability to manage it, with environmental pollution occurring as a result, is:

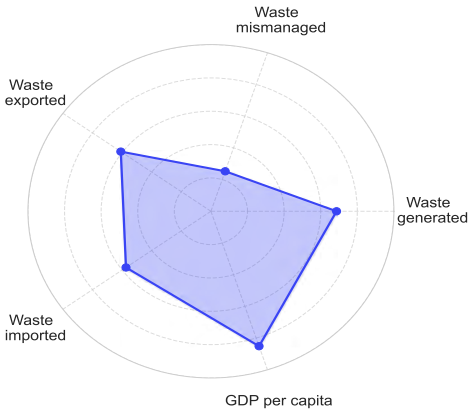
12 December 2026

Plastic Overshoot Day is determined by a country's Mismanaged Waste Index*, which in this case is...

4.96%

In 2026, the world will experience **116 days** of plastic overshoot. This country will contribute to this overshoot by

1 hours 58 minutes



The Mismanaged Waste Index, or MWI, is
Low

The expected mismanaged waste in 2026 will be
25 097 tons of plastic

The country's annual per capita plastic waste production is
56 kg per capita per year

which is considered
High

The total plastic waste produced in this country is
506 326 tons of plastic

The amount of plastic waste EXPORTED by the country is
90 759 tons of plastic

which represents
18.5% of its total waste

This relative export is considered
Very high

The amount of plastic waste IMPORTED by the country is
76 442 tons of plastic

which represents
15.6% of its total waste

This relative import is considered
Very high

*The Mismanaged Waste Index is the share of plastic waste generated by a country that is mismanaged

As per the Plastic Overshoot Day archetypes, this country is classified as one of:

The Overloaders

The Overloaders are high plastic waste generators, who export a significant amount of their waste. Their waste is well managed. Unlike the similarly high-consuming Transactors, the Overloaders import less waste than they export. This imbalance therefore overloads the waste management systems of other countries, likely creating mismanagement issues in countries where Overloaders send their plastic waste.

Recommendations for driving necessary changes to mitigate plastic pollution and postpone the Overshoot Day in this country:

Reduce plastic consumption.
Become circular.

Plastic pollution is caused not only by the improper disposal of plastic products but also by the release of primary microplastics from sources such as tire abrasion, shedding of textile fibers, pellets production and paint. It is expected that in 2026 this country will be responsible for releasing into the environment an average of

6 896 tons of microplastics in waterways.

In addition, plastic production and processing involve the use of additives, which can have harmful impacts on ecosystems and human health if they leak into the environment due to waste mismanagement. It is anticipated that in 2026, plastic waste mismanagement in this country will result in the release into waterways of

108 tons of chemical additives pollution.

PLASTIC OVERSHOOT DAY

Country archetype

The Low-Waste-Producing Polluters

Factor	Ranking	Average	Range
Waste generation level	Low	14 kg/capita/year	Low to medium
Waste Mismanagement Level	Very high	85%	Very high
Import Volumes	Low	1%	Low to very high
Export Volumes	Medium	1.6%	Low to very high

Description

Despite their low waste production levels, the Low-Waste-Producing Polluters contribute to plastic pollution levels due to their poor waste management practices. Depending on the size of the population, some countries can be large contributors to the global pollution.

Countries

Afghanistan, Angola, Armenia, Aruba, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Congo Dem. Rep, Cuba, Curacao, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, India, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kosovo, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Lesotho, Liberia, Macao SAR, China, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Micronesia, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, São Tomé and Príncipe, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Uganda, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, West Bank and Gaza, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

RECOMMENDATION 1

Develop local waste management infrastructure. Further developing their domestic waste management infrastructure would allow the Low-Waste-Producing Polluters to treat more of their waste locally, thus reducing the burden placed on other countries.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Invest in waste management policies including Extended Producer Responsibility, which would fund the development of the waste management infrastructure that is currently lacking.

Example

Egypt

Overshoot Day, or the date when the amount of plastic waste outweighs this country's ability to manage it, with environmental pollution occurring as a result, is:

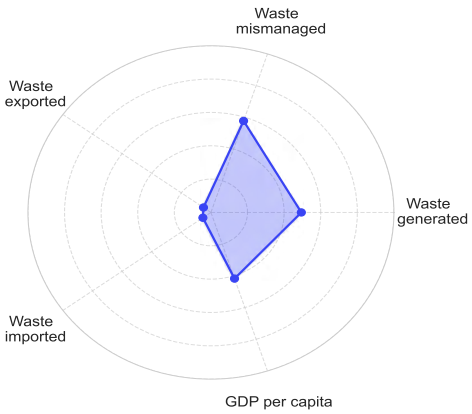
09 February 2026

Plastic Overshoot Day is determined by a country's Mismanaged Waste Index*, which in this case is...

89.02%

In 2026, the world will experience **116 days** of plastic overshoot. This country will contribute to this overshoot by

3 days 3 hours 8 minutes



The Mismanaged Waste Index, or MWI, is
Very high

The expected mismanaged waste in 2026 will be
1 935 435 tons of plastic

The country's annual per capita plastic waste production is
18 kg per capita per year

which is considered
Medium

The total plastic waste produced in this country is
2 174 057 tons of plastic

The amount of plastic waste EXPORTED by the country is
193 tons of plastic

which represents
0.0% of its total waste

This relative export is considered
Low

The amount of plastic waste IMPORTED by the country is
2 130 tons of plastic

which represents
0.1% of its total waste

This relative import is considered
Low

*The Mismanaged Waste Index is the share of plastic waste generated by a country that is mismanaged

As per the Plastic Overshoot Day archetypes, this country is classified as one of:

The Low-Waste-Producing Polluters

Despite their low waste production levels, the Low-Waste-Producing Polluters contribute to plastic pollution levels due to their poor waste management practices. Depending on the size of the population, some countries can be large contributors to the global pollution.

Recommendations for driving necessary changes to mitigate plastic pollution and postpone the Overshoot Day in this country:

Develop local waste management infrastructure.

Invest in waste management policies like EPR.

Plastic pollution is caused not only by the improper disposal of plastic products but also by the release of primary microplastics from sources such as tire abrasion, shedding of textile fibers, pellets production and paint. It is expected that in 2026 this country will be responsible for releasing into the environment an average of

16 194 tons of microplastics in waterways.

In addition, plastic production and processing involve the use of additives, which can have harmful impacts on ecosystems and human health if they leak into the environment due to waste mismanagement. It is anticipated that in 2026, plastic waste mismanagement in this country will result in the release into waterways of

8 342 tons of chemical additives pollution.

Country archetype

The Toxic Waste Producers

Factor	Ranking	Average	Range
Waste generation level	Very high	106 kg/capita/year	High to very high
Waste Mismanagement Level	Very high	78%	Very high
Import Volumes	Low	0.4%	Low to medium
Export Volumes	Medium	1.1%	Low to medium

Description
The Toxic Producers are high plastic waste generators, with waste that is mismanaged at high levels. Some of these countries export their waste to places that do not have proper waste management infrastructure. Plastic pollution in many countries is impacted by waste that was mismanaged after being received from Toxic Producers.

Countries
Bahrain, Kuwait, Northern Mariana Islands, Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates

RECOMMENDATION 1
Reduce plastic production and use. The primary way to mitigate plastic pollution is to mitigate the amount of plastic used by the population. As a high consumption country, reducing plastic consumption is critical for the Toxic Waste Producers.

RECOMMENDATION 2
Develop local waste management infrastructure. Further developing their domestic waste management infrastructure would allow the Toxic Waste Producers to treat more of their waste locally, thus reducing the burden placed on other countries.

RECOMMENDATION 3
Become circular. Plastic waste typically exists in a linear system of “take, make, dispose”. Plastic manufacturing and management must transition to more circular systems to address the plastic pollution crisis. Effective solutions must include a move away from the linear status quo to circular business models based on reuse and repair.

Example

United Arab Emirates

Overshoot Day, or the date when the amount of plastic waste outweighs this country's ability to manage it, with environmental pollution occurring as a result, is:

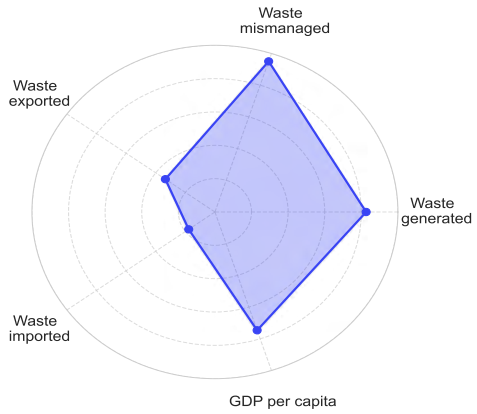
29 March 2026

Plastic Overshoot Day is determined by a country's Mismanaged Waste Index*, which in this case is...

75.66%

In 2026, the world will experience **116 days** of plastic overshoot. This country will contribute to this overshoot by

1 days 19 hours 53 minutes



The Mismanaged Waste Index, or MWI, is
Very high

The expected mismanaged waste in 2026 will be
1 104 468 tons of plastic

The country's annual per capita plastic waste production is
126 kg per capita per year

which is considered
Very high

The total plastic waste produced in this country is
1 459 843 tons of plastic

The amount of plastic waste EXPORTED by the country is
24 076 tons of plastic

which represents
1.9% of its total waste

This relative export is considered
Medium

The amount of plastic waste IMPORTED by the country is
7 237 tons of plastic

which represents
0.6% of its total waste

This relative import is considered
Low

*The Mismanaged Waste Index is the share of plastic waste generated by a country that is mismanaged

As per the Plastic Overshoot Day archetypes, this country is classified as one of:

The Toxic Waste Producers

The Toxic Waste Producers are high plastic waste generators, with waste that is mismanaged at high levels. Some of these countries export their waste to places that do not have proper waste management infrastructure. Plastic pollution in many countries is impacted by waste that was mismanaged after being received from Toxic Waste Producers.

Recommendations for driving necessary changes to mitigate plastic pollution and postpone the Overshoot Day in this country:

Reduce plastic production and use.
Develop local waste management infrastructure.
Become circular.

Plastic pollution is caused not only by the improper disposal of plastic products but also by the release of primary microplastics from sources such as tire abrasion, shedding of textile fibers, pellets production and paint. It is expected that in 2026 this country will be responsible for releasing into the environment an average of

13 347 tons of microplastics in waterways.

In addition, plastic production and processing involve the use of additives, which can have harmful impacts on ecosystems and human health if they leak into the environment due to waste mismanagement. It is anticipated that in 2026, plastic waste mismanagement in this country will result in the release into waterways of

4 761 tons of chemical additives pollution.

PLASTIC OVERSHOOT DAY

Country archetype

The Transactors

Factor	Ranking	Average	Range
Waste generation level	High	79 kg/capita/year	Medium to very high
Waste Mismanagement Level	Medium	11%	Low to medium
Import Volumes	Very high	41%	Very high
Export Volumes	Very high	31%	Very high

Description

The Transactors are countries with high rates of plastic waste production. Their waste tends to be well-managed, although most do not yet have extensive circular systems around plastics. The Transactors are wealthy countries from Europe. They export a lot of their waste but also import a lot of waste from neighboring countries. Through this exchange of waste with their trade partners, they have been able to optimize their waste management practices, resulting in a low volume of waste ending up mismanaged and low risk of plastic leakage into the environment.

Countries

Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Slovenia

RECOMMENDATION 1

Reduce plastic production and use. The primary way to mitigate plastic pollution is to mitigate the amount of plastic used by the population. As a high consumption country, reducing plastic consumption is critical for the Transactors. A secondary benefit of lower consumption levels would be that their existing waste management capacity could assist others who currently lack the infrastructure to properly manage their waste.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Become circular. Plastic waste typically exists in a linear system of “take, make, dispose”. Plastic manufacturing and management must transition to more circular systems to address the plastic pollution crisis. Effective solutions must include a move away from the linear status quo to circular business models based on reuse and repair.

Example

Belgium

Overshoot Day, or the date when the amount of plastic waste outweighs this country's ability to manage it, with environmental pollution occurring as a result, is:

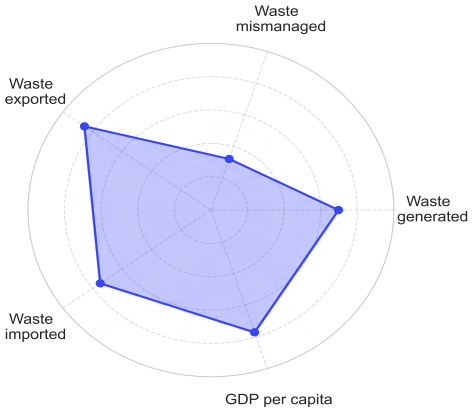
05 December 2026

Plastic Overshoot Day is determined by a country's Mismanaged Waste Index*, which in this case is...

7.10%

In 2026, the world will experience **116 days** of plastic overshoot. This country will contribute to this overshoot by

2 hours 56 minutes



The Mismanaged Waste Index, or MWI, is
Low

The expected mismanaged waste in 2026 will be
49 914 tons of plastic

The country's annual per capita plastic waste production is
60 kg per capita per year

which is considered
High

The total plastic waste produced in this country is
703 418 tons of plastic

The amount of plastic waste EXPORTED by the country is
373 902 tons of plastic

which represents
54.1% of its total waste

This relative export is considered
Very high

The amount of plastic waste IMPORTED by the country is
229 961 tons of plastic

which represents
33.2% of its total waste

This relative import is considered
Very high

*The Mismanaged Waste Index is the share of plastic waste generated by a country that is mismanaged

As per the Plastic Overshoot Day archetypes, this country is classified as one of:

The Transactors

The Transactors are countries with high rates of plastic waste production. Their waste tends to be well-managed, although most do not yet have extensive circular systems around plastics. The Transactors are wealthy countries from Europe. They export a lot of their waste but also import a lot of waste from neighboring countries. Through this exchange of waste with their trade partners they have been able to optimize their waste management practices, resulting in a low volume of waste ending up mismanaged and low risk of plastic leakage into the environment.

Recommendations for driving necessary changes to mitigate plastic pollution and postpone the Overshoot Day in this country:

Reduce plastic production and use.

Become circular.

Plastic pollution is caused not only by the improper disposal of plastic products but also by the release of primary microplastics from sources such as tire abrasion, shedding of textile fibers, pellets production and paint. It is expected that in 2026 this country will be responsible for releasing into the environment an average of

19 599 tons of microplastics in waterways.

In addition, plastic production and processing involve the use of additives, which can have harmful impacts on ecosystems and human health if they leak into the environment due to waste mismanagement. It is anticipated that in 2026, plastic waste mismanagement in this country will result in the release into waterways of

215 tons of chemical additives pollution.

PLASTIC OVERSHOOT DAY

Country archetype

The Self-Sustainers

Factor	Ranking	Average	Range
Waste generation level	Medium	39 kg/capita/year	Low to high
Waste Mismanagement Level	Medium	30%	Low to high
Import Volumes	Medium	3.1%	Low to very high
Export Volumes	Medium	2.4%	Low to very high

Description
The Self-Sustainers are moderate plastic waste generators per capita that can to some extent manage their waste internally, although improvements are needed for some of them.

Countries
Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Bahamas, Belarus, Brazil, British Virgin Islands, Brunei, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, El Salvador, Greece, Grenada, Guam, Israel, Liechtenstein, Macedonia, Malaysia, Mexico, Monaco, Nauru, New Caledonia, Palau, Romania, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, Sint Maarten (Dutch part), St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Martin (French part), St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Thailand, Turkey, Turks and Caicos Islands

RECOMMENDATION 1

Reduce plastic production and use. The primary way to mitigate plastic pollution is to mitigate the amount of plastic used by the population. As a high consumption country, reducing plastic consumption is critical for the Self-Sustainers. A secondary benefit of lower consumption levels would be that their existing waste management capacity could assist others who currently lack the infrastructure to properly manage their waste.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Develop local waste management infrastructure. Further developing their domestic waste management infrastructure would allow the Self-Sustainers to treat more of their waste locally, thus reducing the burden placed on other countries.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Become circular. Plastic waste typically exists in a linear system of “take, make, dispose”. Plastic manufacturing and management must transition to more circular systems to address the plastic pollution crisis. Effective solutions must include a move away from the linear status quo to circular business models based on reuse and repair.

Example

Costa Rica

Overshoot Day, or the date when the amount of plastic waste outweighs this country's ability to manage it, with environmental pollution occurring as a result, is:

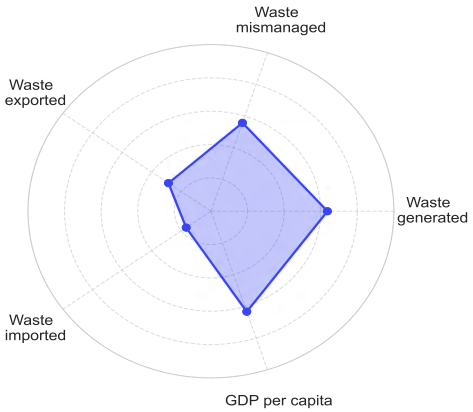
26 August 2026

Plastic Overshoot Day is determined by a country's Mismanaged Waste Index*, which in this case is...

34.72%

In 2026, the world will experience **116 days** of plastic overshoot. This country will contribute to this overshoot by

3 hours 56 minutes



The Mismanaged Waste Index, or MWI, is
High

The expected mismanaged waste in 2026 will be
75 592 tons of plastic

The country's annual per capita plastic waste production is
42 kg per capita per year

which is considered
Medium

The total plastic waste produced in this country is
217 733 tons of plastic

The amount of plastic waste EXPORTED by the country is
9 136 tons of plastic

which represents
4.3% of its total waste

This relative export is considered
High

The amount of plastic waste IMPORTED by the country is
3 369 tons of plastic

which represents
1.6% of its total waste

This relative import is considered
Medium

*The Mismanaged Waste Index is the share of plastic waste generated by a country that is mismanaged

As per the Plastic Overshoot Day archetypes, this country is classified as one of:

The Self-Sustainers

The Self-Sustainers are moderate plastic waste generators per capita that can to some extent manage their waste internally, although improvements are needed for some of them.

Recommendations for driving necessary changes to mitigate plastic pollution and postpone the Overshoot Day in this country:

Reduce plastic production and use.
Develop local waste management infrastructure.
Become circular.

Plastic pollution is caused not only by the improper disposal of plastic products but also by the release of primary microplastics from sources such as tire abrasion, shedding of textile fibers, pellets production and paint. It is expected that in 2026 this country will be responsible for releasing into the environment an average of

1 300 tons of microplastics in waterways.

In addition, plastic production and processing involve the use of additives, which can have harmful impacts on ecosystems and human health if they leak into the environment due to waste mismanagement. It is anticipated that in 2026, plastic waste mismanagement in this country will result in the release into waterways of

326 tons of chemical additives pollution.

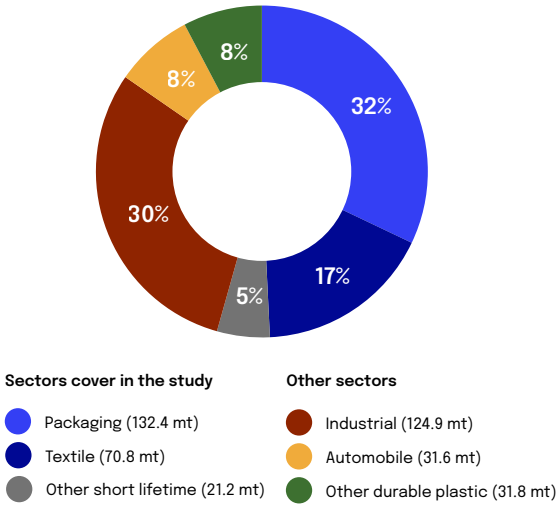
05. Appendix

Scope of the study

The primary objective of this study is to comprehensively quantify plastic pollution on a global scale and determine the global Plastic Overshoot Day, as well as the Overshoot Day for individual countries. The study specifically focuses on plastic waste originating from packaging, textiles and household products. It is important to note that plastics used in other sectors and applications (automotive, agriculture, construction, etc.) are excluded from this analysis. The research methodology involves conducting the analysis at a global level initially and subsequently drilling down to a country-level assessment, providing a detailed understanding of plastic pollution trends and challenges worldwide.

Yearly production of plastic in the world

Plastic Overshoot Day sheds light on a critical aspect of the world's plastic consumption: short-life plastics, encompassing plastic packaging and single-use plastics. These categories account for approximately 37% of the total plastic commercialized annually. Moreover, they pose the higher risk of leakage in the environment. Plastic Overshoot days also include the contribution of synthetic textile to plastic pollution. This category accounts for an additional 17% of the total plastic commercialized annually.



Country overshoot days

Every country has it own Plastic Overshoot Day.
Explore the details for your country:

The full report is available at
www.plasticovershoot.earth

Methodology

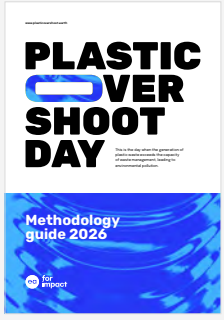
EA's mission is to shed light on the critical issue of plastic pollution. EA achieves this by leveraging scientific research to quantify the magnitude of the problem, and by empowering individuals and organizations to find solutions. To this end, EA places a high value on transparency regarding its methodology for measuring plastic pollution. Clear and comprehensive information on methodology is treated as crucial to building trust with stakeholders.

The methodological guide explains the concept underpinning Plastic Overshoot Day: The Mismanaged Waste Index, and how it is computed.

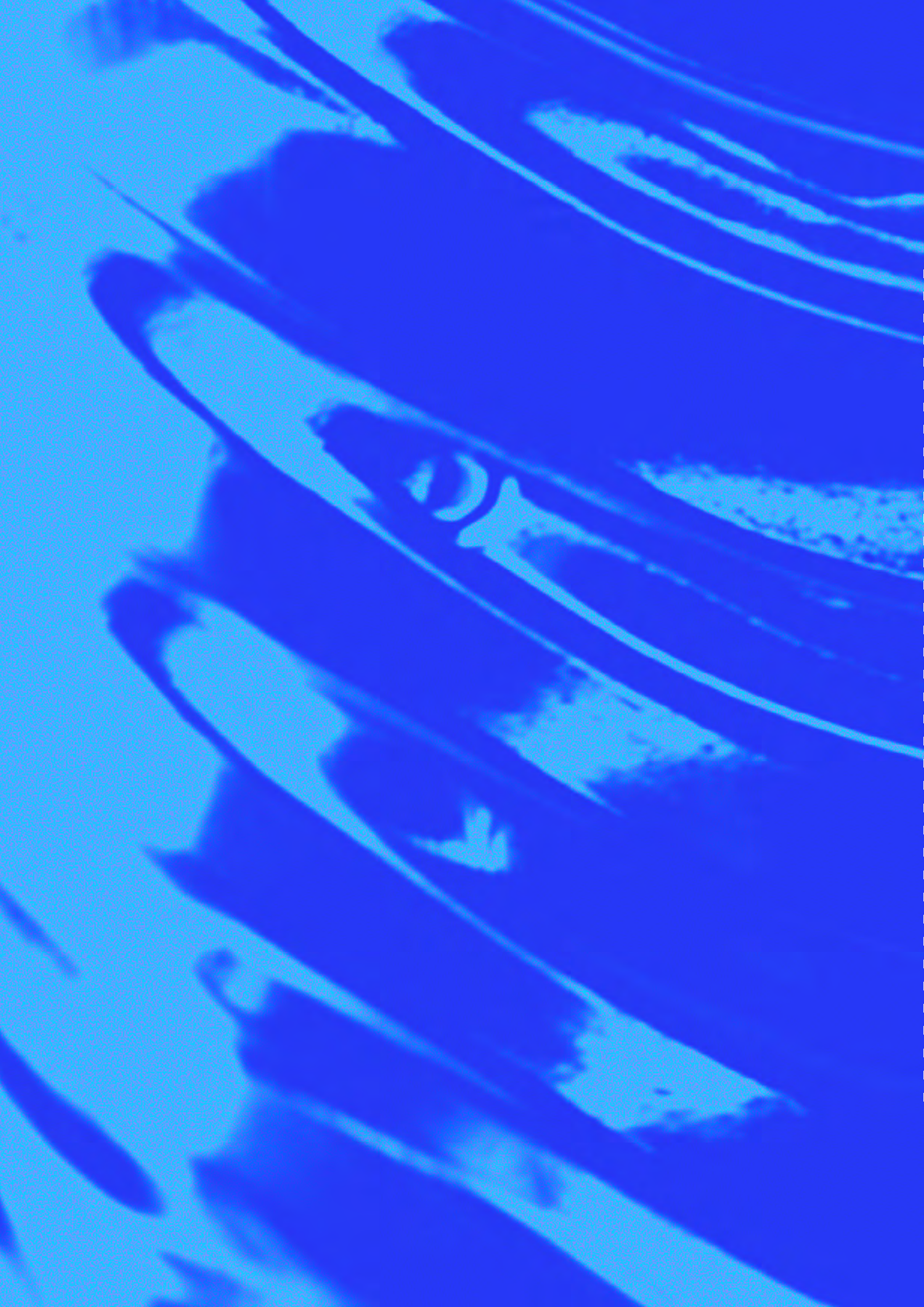
This methodological guide will also draw on concepts used in the narrative of Plastic Overshoot Day, such as the classifications of countries with regard to management of plastic waste.

The Mismanaged Waste Index (MWI) is a metric used to quantify the amount of plastic waste that is not properly managed in a locally and therefore ends up in the environment.

Because many countries export their plastic waste, it is critical to account for the fate of the exported waste.



The full content of the methodology is available at **www.plasticovershoot.earth**



PLASTIC

Plastic… is… everywhere

Plastic is present in nearly every part of daily life, and its effects are documented with increasing precision, in the environment and in the human body. Recent research has found microplastics in blood, lungs, and placental tissue, and identified health risks linked to plastic additives and chemical exposure. The consequences of plastic production, consumption, and disposal for climate, biodiversity, and human health are increasingly well characterized.

Plastic Overshoot Day addresses one specific dimension of this problem: waste mismanagement. Plastic pollution is a multi-dimensional issue; this report isolates a measurable question: how much plastic waste is generated each year, and whether existing waste management systems can handle it.

Each year, plastic waste generation reaches a point beyond the world's capacity to manage it. That point is Plastic Overshoot Day. **In 2026, it falls on September 6th.**

Plastic Overshoot Day tracks the gap between plastic waste generation and the capacity to manage it. It does not argue for or against specific waste management approaches; it quantifies the scale of that gap.

Closing this gap requires coordinated action across three levers: reducing plastic waste at the source, expanding waste management infrastructure, and building circular systems that prevent plastic from entering the waste stream as pollution in the first place.

www.plasticovershoot.earth

ea for impact

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