

# RPC Position Statement: Plastic Litter & Marine Litter

## Background

Litter on both the land and in marine environments is a global issue. Litter is defined as waste in the wrong place, such as paths, roadways, or the countryside. Marine litter comprises waste released into oceans, seas, lakes, or other waterways whether this act be deliberate or accidental. Litter is a result of the combination of undesirable human behaviour and inadequate waste management practices.

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation report estimates that 32% of plastics escape collection systems globally\*. Key ways in which to influence and reduce littering include a focus on improved waste management and changes in human behaviour. The harmful effects of litter have multiple environmental, economic and social consequences.

\*The New Plastics Economy, Re-thinking the future of Plastics, Ellen MacArthur Foundation.

## RPC's Position

Plastic is too valuable a material to be discarded. Littering both on land and in the marine environment is not acceptable. Through its design stage RPC aims to increase the ease of which its products can be reused and recycled to minimise the likelihood of them being littered by a consumer.

RPC will support initiatives that focus on a reduction in the impact of litter as a consequence of consumer behaviour, and work with charities and industry platforms to change attitudes towards litter.

RPC will also work to ensure that on site waste management is sufficient in ensuring plastic, in the form of pellets, is not littered. An example of this is the campaign entitled 'Operation Clean Sweep' of which RPC is a signatory. This initiative aims to reduce pellet loss to the environment from plastic conversion operations.

