



# KEEP OUR SAND AND SEA PLASTIC FREE FOR HOTELS

Tips for reducing single-use plastics during COVID-19

## WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES

### 2019

European Parliament approves a new law banning single-use plastic items such as plates, cutlery, straws and cotton bud sticks...

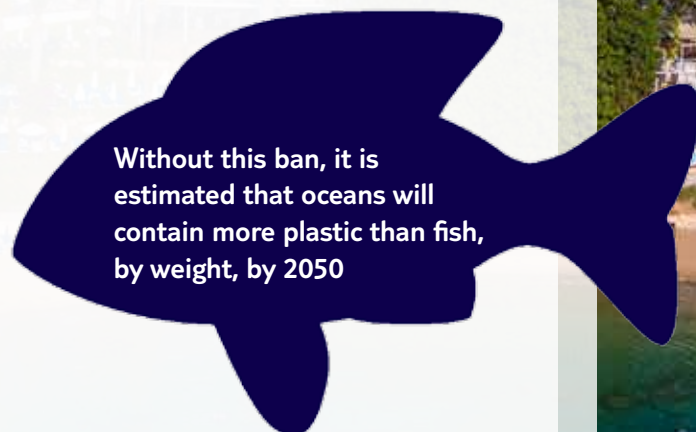
- 90% collection target for plastic bottles by 2029
- Plastic bottles must contain at least 25% of recycled content by 2025

### 2020

Tourism is one of the hardest hit economic sectors by the pandemic. International tourist arrivals decline 58-78%. As an industry, we need to...

- Make our premises and services safe for customers
- Reassure customers that we can still provide a high-quality experience... without it costing the earth

## SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PLASTIC POLLUTION?



In partnership with





## IS PLASTIC THE ONLY WAY?

The Global Tourism Plastics Initiative (GTPI), established in Jan 2020 to provide a platform for the tourism sector in its fight against plastic pollution, has found there has been a dramatic increase in the use of single-use plastic items and packaging as a way of demonstrating to each customer that they are getting a "clean/safe pristine" experience.

Gloves... face masks... plastic packaging...

They put a strain on local waste management systems as well as threatening the natural environment that tourism relies upon.

**Do they really make us safer?**

| Material        | Covid-19 viable for |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| Plastic         | 72 hours            |
| Cardboard       | 24 hours            |
| Stainless steel | 48 hours            |
| Still air       | 3 hours             |
| Copper          | 4 hours             |

Source: New England Medical Journal, April 2020

**The virus lives three times longer on plastic than it does on cardboard.**



## DON'T DITCH YOUR GREEN POLICIES... STEP THEM UP

55% of people globally are 'more concerned' about the environment as a result of COVID-19 (survey: Fmcg, Gurus).

"Coronavirus will actually increase public concerns over the environment. The pandemic has brought our attention back to the important things in life- how we protect our health, our families and our world. We need to keep up the momentum on drastically reducing how much single-use plastic we use so we can protect our environment and wildlife- our birds, seas and rivers, valued even more highly since lockdown"

- Nina Schrank, Greenpeace Plastics Campaigner





# WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Bringing together information produced by Travelife, The Global Tourism Plastic Initiative, Travel Without Plastic and Common Seas as well as other reputable sources, here is an approach you can take to make tourism safe without it costing the earth...



## REDUCE TOUCH POINTS

According to the WHO, indirect contact with an infected person through touch points (i.e. by touching a surface or object that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching own mouth, nose or eyes) is a route of transmission of COVID-19.

Any product or surface, whether it is single-use or reusable can become contaminated with germs.

- **Isolate touch points for 72 hours where possible.** Wait 72 hours before allowing guests to enter clean hotel rooms (if this is not possible, be sure to disinfect touch points). Isolate towels for 72 hours before being washed, and isolate non-perishable deliveries for 72 hours before being touched by staff.

- **Reduce the number of items in guest rooms and common areas that people touch** – instead use refillable containers and dispensers.
- **More disposable packaging...** means more materials for people to touch. Think twice before wrapping things in more plastic.
- **Train staff** in a robust cleaning regime and tell customers what you are doing.



### REFILL AND REUSE

Single-use plastics and packaging are not in themselves a safer option against transmission. Coronavirus exists for longer on plastic than any other material, and you cannot be sure what single-use plastics have touched on the production line.



### NO TO PLASTIC GLOVES

Disposable gloves only protect the hands of the person wearing them. Wearing disposable gloves can give a false sense of security and may result in staff not washing hands as frequently as required. Frequent handwashing is a greater protective barrier to infection than wearing disposable gloves.



### FABRIC MASKS ARE FINE

Reusable fabric masks are just as good - and better for our sand and seas. WHO advises governments to encourage use of fabric masks for source control of COVID-19. Employees whose work involves close contact with others, eg in restaurants and bars, should wear fabric masks according to local guidance.



**“Single-use plastic is not inherently safer than reusables, and causes additional public health concerns once it is discarded.”**

- This is what 119 scientists from 18 countries said, in a recent statement.  
<https://www.ecowatch.com>



## WHY AVOID SINGLE-USE PLASTIC?

- 80% of rubbish collected on Cyprus beaches is plastic waste, and the pandemic is likely to make this worse.
- 100,000 marine mammals and turtles and 1 million sea birds are killed by marine plastic pollution annually.
- Plastic never fully biodegrades.



## SO REMEMBER...

### Procedure over plastic

Even if you cover everything in plastic packaging or choose throwaway items to prevent transmission, customer safety will still depend primarily upon robust cleaning and sanitization procedures (see [Travelwithoutplastic.com](https://www.travelwithoutplastic.com)).

### Communicate your policy to guests

Explain the benefits of avoiding single-use plastics, in terms of safety and protecting the environment. Common perception is that single-use plastics are safer; let them know why this is not true!

**Reassure customers that proper cleaning procedures make a difference, not plastic.**

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## SIGN UP TO THE PROJECT

Join a network of likeminded hotels and tourism businesses determined to make Cyprus plastic-free and protect our beautiful coastlines.

Keep Our Sand and Sea Plastic Free is a TUI Care Foundation initiative in partnership with the Travel Foundation and Cyprus Sustainable Tourism Initiative (CSTI).



Sign up here: [sandseaplasticfree.org](https://sandseaplasticfree.org)