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## **Living in a plastic world: tackling the plastic pollution problem**

Plastic pollution has emerged as one of our most pressing environmental issues with the increasing use of disposable plastics.

As they are non-biodegradable, plastics accumulate in the environment, altering habitats and natural processes. Millions of wildlife are also trapped by plastic waste every year.

When plastics break down, they release toxic compounds that contaminate the environment. They also disintegrate into small pieces of plastic called microplastics. Microplastics are now found all over the globe and are linked to severe health effects such as metabolic disorders and organ damage. Single-Use Plastics

Recycling plastics reduces the amount of plastic waste that would otherwise be discarded and conserves natural resources. However, only about 10 per cent of plastic is currently recycled around the world. The figure is low in part because recycling some types of plastic, such as e-waste and marine plastic litter, is difficult. Chemical reactions that break down plastics into simpler components to be reused are also energy intensive.

From using e-waste plastics to culture cells to developing a greener method that breaks down plastics, researchers at NTU Singapore are solving some of the greatest challenges that stand in the way of recycling plastics. They are also making strides in reducing plastic pollution.

<https://www.polyestertime.com/single-use-plastics/>