

# THE CENTRE SCIENTIFIQUE DE MONACO, BOSTON COLLEGE AND MINDEROO FOUNDATION ANNOUNCE THE LAUNCH OF A NEW GLOBAL STUDY ON HUMAN HEALTH AND PLASTIC POLLUTION

*The announcement was made during Monaco Ocean Week 2022.* On March 22-23, 2022, the Centre Scientifique de Monaco, Boston College and Minderoo Foundation, with the support of the Fondation Prince Albert II de Monaco, announced the launch of a new, year-long study that will comprehensively examine the impacts of plastic pollution on human health.

The study will also make recommendations for changes in chemical and plastic policy to better protect human and ocean health. To launch the study, the Centre Scientifique de Monaco is convening a two-day planning workshop during Monaco Ocean Week 2022. This workshop will bring together a small, select group of internationally recognised experts in public health, toxicology, medicine, planetary health, exposure science and marine science who will review current knowledge of the effects of plastic pollution on human health, identify gaps in knowledge, target areas in urgent need of further investigation.

Plastic is the signature material of our age. Global plastic production has risen from 1.7 million tonnes per year in 1950 to more than 400 million tonnes today and continues to increase exponentially. An estimated 8 billion tonnes of plastic waste now pollute the planet. Plastic poses risks to human health at every stage of its production and use cycle – from extraction of the oil and gas that is its main constituent, to manufacture, refining, consumption, and finally to

disposal into the environment as unwanted waste. These risks are only beginning to be defined and need urgently to be explored. The ocean has been badly damaged by plastic. An estimated 10-12 million tons of plastic waste enters the ocean every year, and by 2025, the total amount of marine plastic waste will approach 150 million tons.

Until now, information on plastic pollution and its health hazards has been sparse, slow in coming, and scattered across multiple scientific disciplines. Most medical doctors and public health professionals have paid little heed to the issue.

The goal of this study is to educate health professionals, policy makers and the public about plastic's dangers and to catalyse policy changes that will curb the runaway increase in plastic production, protect the planet, preserve the ocean and everyone's health.