# Global Plastic Watch

## Global Plastic Watch (GPW) https://globalplasticwatch.org/

Global Plastic Watch project is an innovative initiative designed to map and track plastic pollution across the globe, primarily focusing on plastic waste hotspots. It uses advanced satellite imagery and artificial intelligence (AI) to detect plastic waste sites, especially those near water bodies and coastal areas, which are significant contributors to ocean plastic pollution.

Key Features of the Global Plastic Watch (GPW) Project:

• Satellite-Based Detection: GPW uses high-resolution satellite imagery from platforms like Planet Labs and European Space Agency (ESA) to monitor and map large areas of land, including remote regions. The images are analyzed using machine learning algorithms to identify potential plastic waste sites. This allows for detecting illegal or unregulated dumpsites that might otherwise go unnoticed.

• AI and Machine Learning Integration: The project leverages AI and machine learning models trained to recognize plastic waste from satellite images. These models are continuously improved as more data is gathered, allowing for better identification of plastic accumulation areas over time.

• Global Coverage: The platform provides global coverage, making it one of the most extensive tools for detecting plastic pollution hotspots across continents. Its focus includes both urban and remote regions, particularly in developing countries, where plastic waste management infrastructure might be lacking.

• Real-Time Monitoring: GPW allows for real-time or near-real-time monitoring of plastic waste sites. This enables rapid response from governments, NGOs, and environmental agencies when new illegal dumpsites are detected or when existing ones grow.

• Publicly Accessible Data: One of the unique aspects of GPW is its commitment to open data. The platform provides free access to its maps and findings, making it easier for policymakers, environmental organizations, and the general public to take action against plastic pollution. The interactive maps allow users to zoom in on specific regions and see identified plastic pollution sites.

• Partnerships and Collaborations: GPW collaborates with a wide range of partners, including government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academic institutions, and private-sector companies. These partnerships help amplify the project’s impact by combining technology with on-the-ground efforts to address the root causes of plastic waste.

• Impact on Policy and Advocacy: The data generated by GPW can inform policy decisions and regulatory efforts to combat plastic pollution. By

providing clear evidence of where plastic waste is accumulating, governments can implement targeted waste management policies, improve recycling infrastructure, and enforce stricter regulations on illegal dumping.
• Focusing on River and Coastal Regions: GPW places particular emphasis on rivers and coastal regions, which are major pathways through which plastic enters the oceans. By identifying plastic waste in these areas, the project can help mitigate the flow of plastic into marine ecosystems, where it causes significant harm to wildlife and human health.
Goals of the Global Plastic Watch Project:
• Reduce Plastic Pollution: By identifying and tracking plastic waste sites globally, the GPW project aims to significantly reduce plastic pollution, particularly in areas that contribute heavily to marine plastic.
• Support Governments and Local Communities: The project provides actionable data to governments, local authorities, and environmental organizations, helping them implement effective waste management practices.
• Raise Awareness: GPW's public platform helps raise awareness about the global plastic waste crisis, inspiring both local and international efforts to address the issue.
How to Access GPW:
The Global Plastic Watch platform can be accessed via its official website, where users can explore the interactive map of plastic waste sites globally. It is designed to be user-friendly, allowing anyone from environmentalists to policymakers to use the data for research and action.
Example Applications:
• Local Action: Local governments can use the data to identify illegal dumping sites and improve waste collection and recycling infrastructure.
• Research: Environmental scientists and researchers can study the extent and trends of plastic pollution across various regions.
• NGO Activism: NGOs focused on environmental protection can use the platform to identify plastic pollution hotspots and advocate for cleanup efforts.

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