



— 2022 —

IMPACT REPORT



Dear Friends of 5 Gyres,

Thank you for your continued dedication to 5 Gyres' mission and vision toward a planet free of plastic pollution. As the plastics movement expands in size and the science documenting plastics' harm intensifies, determining 5 Gyres' unique superpower becomes increasingly urgent. One term that has become a guiding light for our team is the "Honest Broker."

While I was musing on the idea of an Honest Broker, whose primary interest is a true and unbiased solution, I heard a story about an industry attempt to hide the truth around asbestos. One line from the report made my hair stand on edge, "industry calls the shots, but the public are the ones to suffer."

The parallels within the plastics space are undeniable. In the last year alone, new studies have documented microplastics in our blood, our lungs, our breast milk, and the far reaches of our planet, while false narratives around the benefits of recycling and cleanup abound.

And we, the public, are again the ones to suffer. Marginalized communities closest to the source of the problem bear the greatest burden, but no living thing on the planet is safe from the perils of plastic.

These harrowing reports are exactly why we're driven to continue leading with science and staying true to the Honest Broker philosophy. We will ask questions that guide our research, properly vet innovation and alternatives like PHA, and examine the full landscape before reaching a conclusion. We will put research in the hands of decision makers, so that real change can be made "upstream" – where the problem begins.

Thank you for helping us bring our science to life. You've supported us every step of the way - for which we are truly grateful.

With gratitude,
Anna Cummins
Co-Founder & Executive Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

KATHLEEN EGAN | Chair
ASHLEY VAN STONE | Treasurer
SUSAN GLADWIN
JOHN LOCHNER
PAMELA MARCUS
CASEY MARSHALL
LACEY REDDIX

5 GYRES STAFF

ANNA CUMMINS
Co-Founder & Executive Director

DR. MARCUS ERIKSEN
Co-Founder & Researcher

DR. LISA ERDLER
Director of Science & Innovation

ALISON WALISZEWSKI
Director of Policy

SARA MAIS
Director of Development

ANDRA JANIEKS
Director of Marketing

MICHAEL DOSHI
Science Communications Lead
& Engagement Officer

GINGER MUKHERJEE
Operations Manager

RACHEL LABBE-BELLAS
Foundation & Corporate
Relations Manager

ELISEO NEVAREZ
Education & Outreach Coordinator

& INNOVATION

SCIENCE

SOLUTIONS BY SECTOR

Science has always been the cornerstone of 5 Gyres' work, informing our solutions, strategies, and focus. Our nearly 15 years of research on ocean and terrestrial plastics leads us to focus on understanding specific sources, or sectors, that generate plastic pollution, rather than putting plastic into one category. The solutions for each of these sectors require specific designs, policy approaches, and innovation. With 17 sectors (and counting!) in mind, we will move our science further upstream and continue studying plastic's impacts within sectors where scientific questions remain.

READ OUR OP-ED ON SECTORS



PHA STUDY

After 18 months, 6 locations, and 22 samples tested, the results are in! We look forward to sharing them with you next year in our Better Alternatives 3.0 report.



PLASTIC AIR

Investigating airborne emissions of microfibers will help answer questions about sources and fate of microfibers, providing data that can be used to develop solutions.



GLOBAL ESTIMATE

In our updated global estimate of marine plastic pollution, we use a dataset with over 10,000 stations sampled over the last 40 years, revealing a rapidly increasing trend.

WHERE IN THE WORLD WAS 5 GYRES IN 2022?



TRAWLING FOR PLASTIC IN ANTARCTICA



FLYING DRONES IN HONDURAS



PRESENTING AT 7IMDC IN KOREA

EDUCATION & COMMUNITY

5 Gyres uses education and community-based science to drive and inform local, scalable reuse models. By engaging key stakeholders in identifying the sources and potential solutions of problematic plastics in their own communities, we can work together to drive more equitable solutions. Far too often, local policies are set without engaging the communities that will be most affected, which can lead to challenges with implementation.

COMMUNITY-BASED INITIATIVES IN 2022

Filmed and produced Season 2 of Trash Academy, including 26 new episodes in English and Spanish. Sector-based videos about textiles, tires, agriculture, and more are available on our YouTube channel!



Participated in the City of STEM program through Los Angeles Unified School District. With 180 students served and 16 live STEM lessons taught, 5 Gyres helped fill the curriculum gap over the past few years of virtual learning.



Launched the Restaurant Assistance Microgrant Program with Esperanza Community Housing to support small restaurants transitioning from single-use plastic to reusable alternatives. Even Mayor Eric Garcetti joined the launch event!

ADVOCACY

Policy is an ever-changing and slow moving process, but we are proud to be on the front lines to ensure that key decisions are rooted in science. We lead real change by participating in coalition networks and advocating for upstream solutions. This year's work led to impressive progress made at the Local, State and Federal levels.

LOCAL

Building off of last year's momentum in passing #SkiptheStuff, the Reusable LA coalition spearheaded two campaigns that had a huge plastic reduction impact in Los Angeles. Los Angeles County passed an ordinance requiring single-use foodware to be compostable or recyclable, bans expanded polystyrene (EPS) products, and requires reusables at eateries, while Los Angeles City passed three ordinances banning EPS products, prohibiting all single-use plastic bags, and requiring zero-waste plans for all LA city facilities and events.



STATE

The Plastic Pollution Reduction & Recycling Act (SB 54) was signed into law, aiming to "turn off the tap" on single-use plastics in California. While 5 Gyres remained neutral on this bill ([learn why here](#)), we played a role in key stakeholder meetings to share scientific research and stay true to our Honest Broker mission.

FEDERAL

We joined advocates from around the country and descended on Capitol Hill to lobby for the #BreakFreeFromPlastic Pollution Act. It was inspiring and energizing to be part of 44 meetings with congressional offices to underscore the urgent need to pass this bill into law and protect people and the planet from plastic pollution. As part of the Plastic Free Parks Working Group, we are also trying to reduce the Department of the Interior's 10-year timeline to phase out single-use plastic in national parks and federal lands.



TRASHBLITZ

TrashBlitz activates communities and engages diverse stakeholders in capturing the plastic waste “footprint” of an area to identify relevant solutions. Individuals or groups can contribute to a robust global dataset or utilize their own data collected to further campaigns, strengthen legislation, and foster environmental stewardship.

PLASTIC-FREE PARKS

In 2022, we piloted a new, nation-wide TrashBlitz project to track plastic pollution trends in national parks. More than 14,000 pieces of trash were cataloged across 44 sites – the majority (81%) being plastic. Results from this project and future, annual iterations of the campaign will be used to support legislation to keep single-use plastic out of our protected spaces.

[Read the full report here.](#)



KEEPING AUSTIN PLASTIC-FREE

After leading a successful TrashBlitz event in 2021, we stayed in Austin to use the cleanup data to work toward upstream solutions. We launched the [Austin Reuse Coalition](#) with local partners to support waste reduction solutions for a clean and healthy community. The first big initiative is surveying Austin restaurants to understand the single-use plastic landscape. Results to come in 2023!

WHAT'S NEXT?

3 YEARS, 6 CITIES, 9 MILLION PEOPLE

In 2023-26, we will expand our TrashBlitz program to six new cities/regions with the potential to reach nine million people. Through a targeted RFP process, 5 Gyres will provide on the ground support and resources to emerging coalitions working to reduce single-use plastic by 20% in their communities.

“

I first learned about 5 Gyres through our son's school project on plastic pollution. I was impressed to see that their work is grounded in science, with an adventurous, ocean based story that matches our values. Our family is deeply concerned about the future of our planet, and excited to align with an organization focused on real, actionable solutions. We're happy to have found 5 Gyres, and look forward to creating a lasting impact together!

”

COURTNEY ROBERTS | Courtney Roberts Foundation

FY 2022: OCTOBER 1, 2021 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2022



DONORS & PARTNERS

- 1% For the Planet
- Aaron Harris
- Altar'd State
- Amanda Runkle
- American Endowment Foundation
- Angora Ridge Foundation
- Argonautica
- Aspect Consumer Partners
- Beth Sweet
- Brand3P
- Caroline Short
- Carstickers
- ChicoBag
- Chris Paine
- Closed Loop Partners / Center for the Circular Economy
- Costa Sunglasses
- Courtney Roberts Foundation
- Crossroads School for Arts & Sciences
- Dental Lace Inc
- Derek Droege
- Doctor Rogers Skin Solutions LLC
- Draper Family Foundation Fund
- Elbaz Family Foundation
- Everything But Water
- Give Back to Nature
- Gnarwhal Coffee Co.
- Grove Collaborative
- Gwydion Fund for Wild Nature
- Hull Family Foundation
- Jacques Weber Foundation, Inc
- Janet Porriello
- John Lochner
- Johnson Ohana Charitable Foundation
- Judy Harrington
- Kablo
- Kathleen Egan
- Kelley Wilkerson
- Kelly Ann Brown Foundation
- Keshner Fd of Cohen-Fruchtman-Krieger Family Inc.
- Klean Kanteen
- Liberty Hill
- Liquid Death
- Lisa Braun-Glazer
- Lisa Rosenfield
- Lucy Claire Curran
- Maison Marcel
- Marisla Foundation
- Marjorie & Richard Rogalski
- Matthew & Sarah Mallett
- Meghan Butler
- Mental Insight Foundation
- Michael Spaulding
- MOEN
- Moller Family Foundation
- MOM's Organic Market
- Mon Coeur
- Natracare
- North Atlantic Challenge
- Orr Orenstein
- Pamela Marcus
- Paul Hansen
- Pixel & Timber
- Planet Home Charitable Foundation
- prAna
- Preserve
- ProGrade Digital
- Renaissance Charitable Fund
- Rendle Family Charitable Foundation
- Ruggles Family Foundation
- Samantha Schumacher
- SIMA Environmental Fund
- Teresa Bowman
- The Dalis Foundation
- The Hopewell Fund
- The Miner Anderson Family Foundation
- Verity Platforms
- West Bay View Foundation
- Wildwoods Foundation
- William Ewing Foundation

\$1,000+ WITHIN FY 2022: OCT. 2021 – SEPT. 2022

REVENUE &

SERVICES EXPENSES



5 GYRES

SCIENCE TO SOLUTIONS

P.O. Box 5699

Santa Monica, CA 90409

info@5gyres.org

WWW.5GYRES.ORG

@5GYRES

