



Contact:

hello@lonelywhale.org

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LONELY WHALE AND 5 GYRES INSTITUTE PARTNER TO EXPAND K-12 SCIENCE CURRICULUM

*'Catch the Wave' Offers Plastic Pollution Education, Supported by Costa
#KickPlastic*

Los Angeles, CA (February 2018) – Today, incubator [Lonely Whale](#) and nonprofit [5 Gyres Institute](#) are announcing [Catch the Wave](#), a pilot K-12 science curriculum launched as a national joint initiative to help teachers connect conservation efforts with science. *Catch the Wave* aims to educate and empower the next generation of environmental leaders about the plastic pollution crisis.

Catch the Wave was inspired by startling statistics around the state of marine litter caused by plastic pollution. An estimated 300 million metric tonnes of new plastic are produced annually – a number that is expected to rise and reach 400 million tonnes a year by 2025. Less than 10% of plastic is recycled, leaving an estimated 8 to 12 million tonnes of plastic entering the ocean each year. If the current rate continues, the ocean could contain 1 tonne of plastic for every 3 tonnes of fish by 2025 and more plastic than fish by weight by 2050.

With these statistics as the startling backdrop, both Lonely Whale and 5 Gyres Institute stepped up to engage youth to solve the problem via K-12 curriculums. Lonely Whale, in partnership with [Elements Society](#) created a plastics pollution reduction campaign and curriculum for K-12 students, which was piloted in three Canadian provinces and launched via a globally accessible digital platform under the same name. Meanwhile, 5 Gyres Institute, which co-discovered plastic microbeads in 2012 and campaigned for a successful federal ban that was signed by President Obama in 2015, partnered with [Costa Sunglasses'](#) 'Kick Plastic' campaign to update their field-tested K-12 curriculum to the United States' new Next Generation Science Standards. Now, the Lonely Whale and the 5 Gyres Institute are joining forces to expand *Catch the Wave* into a national initiative.

“We envisioned *Catch the Wave* not only as a campaign-based curriculum, but also as a global platform that would reach millions of students, but we knew that we couldn't do it alone,” said Dune Ives, Executive Director, Lonely Whale. “Our partnership with the expert team of the 5 Gyres Institute expands our *Catch The Wave* platform to do just that, now offering 5 Gyres' science-based, NexGen-aligned, and field-tested curriculum to students and educators across the United States.”

“While industry and governments must take a strong lead on source plastic reduction, we also firmly believe that the students of today have the power to create significant waves of

change that have lasting impact,” said Rachel Lincoln Sarnoff, Executive Director, 5 Gyres. “We are thrilled to partner with Lonely Whale to bring 5 Gyres’ educational curriculum to Lonely Whale’s *Catch the Wave* platform.”

“Costa launched our Kick Plastic campaign because we are deeply concerned about the impact of plastic waste on our oceans and waterways,” said Holly Rush, CEO, Costa Sunglasses. “We believe that through greater awareness and education, current generations and those to come can and will be empowered to make a difference - and protect what we love. That’s why we partnered with the 5 Gyres Institute to develop their K-12 curriculum and why we are excited to see Lonely Whale and 5 Gyres come together to offer *Catch the Wave* to US-based K-12 schools.”

“We must usher in a new era of compassion through forward thinking environmental programs,” offered Adrian Grenier, Lonely Whale Co-Founder and UN Environment Goodwill Ambassador. “The more we can invite our students to connect to nature and also empower them to make a difference within their own environment, their schools and their communities, the more these students will become long-term advocates for a healthy marine ecosystem.”

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About Catch the Wave

Catch the Wave is a nationwide education curriculum program and platform that engages K-12 students to design and implement school-wide projects that reduce single-use plastics. First piloted in Vancouver and Calgary by Lonely Whale and Elements Society, the *Catch The Wave* platform has since grown to include the science-based Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) curriculum developed by 5 Gyres Institute. For more information, visit CatchTheWave.blue.

About 5 Gyres Institute

Since 2010, the 5 Gyres Institute has researched plastic in all five main subtropical gyres; in 2014, the organization published the first global estimate of surface pollution, finding 5.25 trillion particles weighing in at 270,000 tons of “plastic smog” worldwide. The 5 Gyres study on microbead pollution in the Great Lakes inspired a two-year collaborative campaign that culminated in the 2015 law which made these plastics illegal nationwide. In 2018 the organization will embark on its 19th Expedition, to research microplastic pollution and zero-waste solutions in Indonesia. 5 Gyres is a science-to-solutions focused non-profit dedicated to a planet free of plastic pollution. More information is at www.5gyres.org.

About Lonely Whale

Lonely Whale is an incubator for courageous ideas that drive impactful market-based change on behalf of our ocean. Founded in December 2015 by Adrian Grenier and Lucy Sumner, Lonely Whale is inspired by the power of community to create the change needed to ensure a healthy planet. Lonely Whale is working towards a new era of radical collaboration, together facilitating the creation of innovative ideas that push the boundary on current trends in technology, media and advocacy that positively impact the health of our ocean. To learn more and support, visit www.lonelywhale.org or follow @LonelyWhale.