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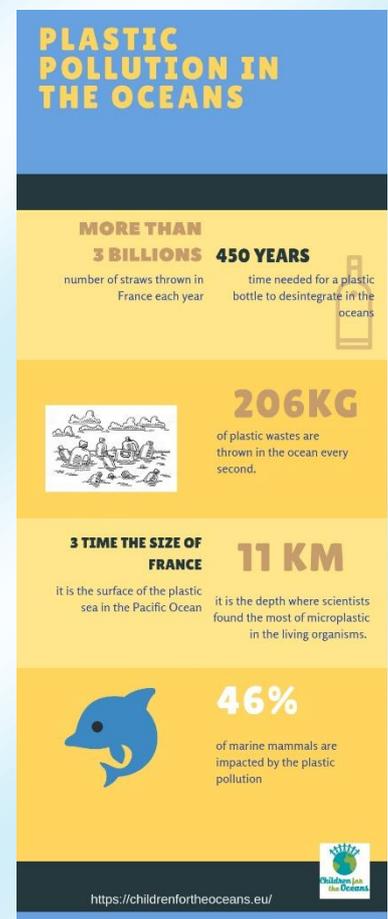
Plastic pollution

Plastic pollution represents the highest source of ocean contamination. In 2015, 320 million tons of plastic have been produced, being added to the 9 billion produced since 1950. This production could increase by more than 40% by 2050 if countries do not restrict it. This contamination has harmful impacts on the oceans, their populations and their ecosystems. On the 19th of March 2019, a whale has been found with the record weights of 40 kg of plastics in its stomach close from the Philippines. Some plastics, especially single used plastics like straws or plastic bags represent more than 50% of the plastics found in the oceans.

In the oceans, plastic can be found at the surface or in depths and thus impact both marine mammals and birds. 75% of those wastes are more than 5cm long but they also exist as microplastic for 8% of them (smaller than 4.75mm). Scientists found traces of microplastic in crustaceans that were more than 11km deep. 72% of the crustaceans they studied contained microparticles of plastics at either 7000m or 11000m. In the end, it is more than 94% of plastic wastes that are found on the seabed and only 1% on the coasts.

Plastic are sometimes gathered in areas called « sea of plastic » at the surface of the ocean. The largest one is located in the Pacific North and contains 80 000 tons of plastic. It is about 4 times the size of France. The Indian ocean would contain about 53.6 tons and the Atlantic North about 51.3. Plastics are gathered in those areas because marine currents create whirlpool attracting wastes.

The number of species threatened by plastic consumption increased by 23% since 2012. 46% of marine mammal species and 26% of sea birds are impacted. 16% of the



marine turtles would have suffered from a estrangement after having eaten plastic. Turtles for example, confuse plastic bags with jellyfish that are a part of their diet.