

Aum Amriteswaryai Namah

Dearest Mother,

Humble Pranams at Your Lotus Feet

Please bless these initial efforts to honor your request for Source Reduction so we may prevent human pollution and waste before it happens.





**8,000,000,000**

kilograms per year of

## **PLASTIC IN OCEAN**

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- 91% not recycled
- 100s-1,000s of yrs to biodegrade
- At current rate, plastic pollution will outweigh fish by 2050

## THE 3 STEP PLASTIC CHALLENGE

1. Calculate Your Initial Plastic Footprint
2. Enter Your Footprint in the Form
3. Pledge to Amma to Make a Change



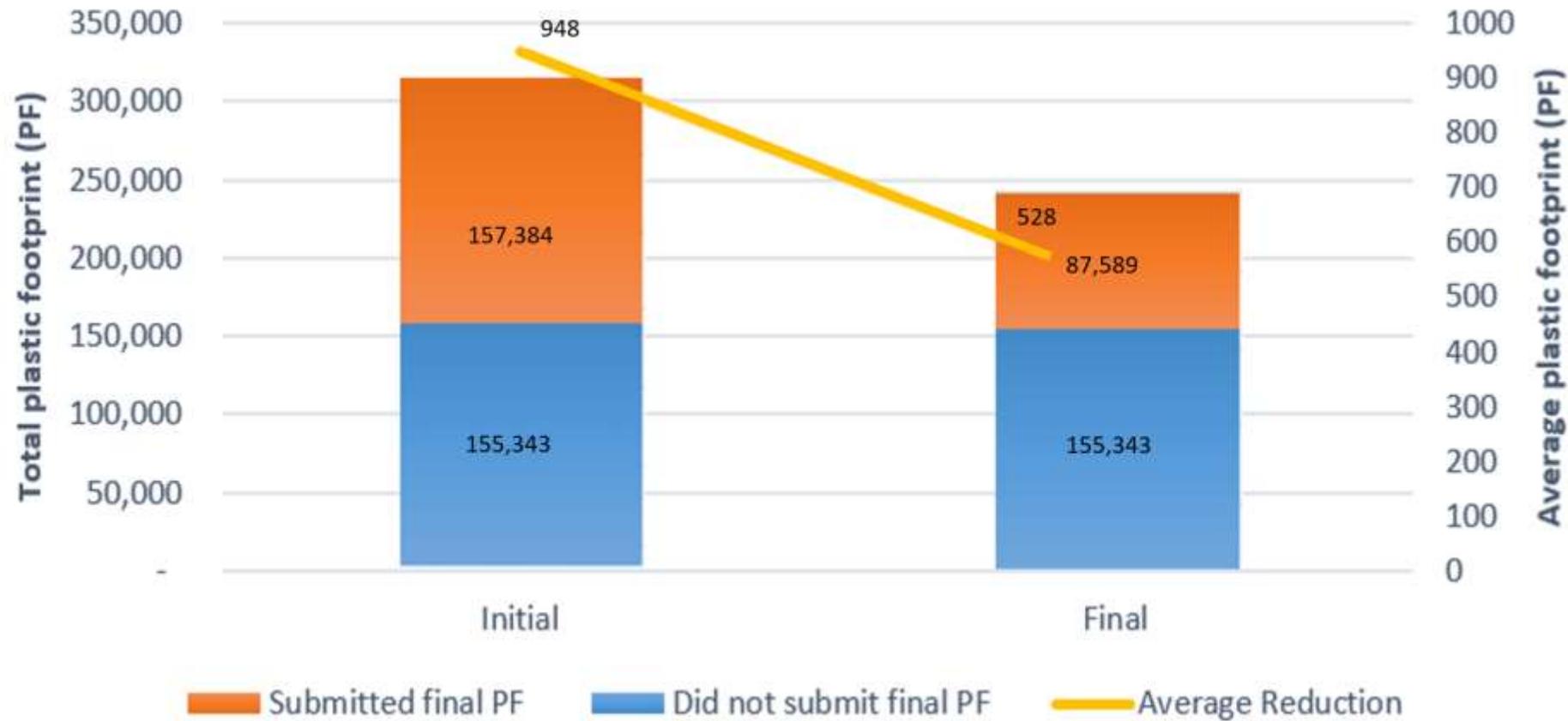
### Plastic Footprint Calculator

Calculate your annual plastic consumption below by entering your best estimate of how many plastic items you use regularly. SKIP any item you do not wish to include in your calculation.

Item	How many?	How often?
Plastic Bottles	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> weekly <input type="radio"/> monthly <input type="radio"/> yearly
Plastic Cups/Cup Lids	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> weekly <input type="radio"/> monthly <input type="radio"/> yearly
Plastic Cutlery	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> weekly <input type="radio"/> monthly <input type="radio"/> yearly
Straws	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> weekly <input type="radio"/> monthly <input type="radio"/> yearly
Plastic Grocery/Shopping Bags	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> weekly <input type="radio"/> monthly <input type="radio"/> yearly
Plastic Resealable Bags	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> weekly <input type="radio"/> monthly <input type="radio"/> yearly
Plastic Cotton Swabs	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> weekly <input type="radio"/> monthly <input type="radio"/> yearly
Food Containers	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> weekly <input type="radio"/> monthly <input type="radio"/> yearly
Plastic Wrap or Packaging	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> weekly <input type="radio"/> monthly <input type="radio"/> yearly
Laundry Detergent	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="radio"/> weekly <input checked="" type="radio"/> monthly <input type="radio"/> yearly
Personal Care Product Containers	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="radio"/> weekly <input checked="" type="radio"/> monthly <input type="radio"/> yearly
Other Items	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="radio"/> weekly <input type="radio"/> monthly <input checked="" type="radio"/> yearly

Calculate

# CHALLENGE RESULTS: NORTH AMERICA



## Challenge Participation:

- 380+ participants
- 160 participants **reduced their average footprint by 45%** (by 6,000 items)
- 320 participants pledged to change their annual plastic consumption

## Tools and Materials created or provided



GreenFriends Plastic Challenge Facebook



Educational Materials



Sustainable Tour products and at Amma shop



GreenFriends Source Reduction Webpages



GreenFriends Calculator



Satsang Presentations & Talks

# Activities of Amma's children across North America to promote Plastic Reduction



Oklahoma Satsang Planning Plastic Bags into Sleeping Mats for the Homeless



D.C. Source Reduction Song

### Amma's Plastic Scavenger Hunt

How many of the following plastic items can you find in your home?

 Toys	 Scissors
 Glue Sticks	 Pens
 Juice Straws	 Shopping Bags
 Calculators	 Plastic Bottles
 Snacks with Plastic Packaging	 Toiletries
 DVD or Game Cases	 Markers

ATLABK Scavenger Hunt

*There are many alternatives to plastic. In the learn about section, click a category to see options.*

[Learn about alternatives](#)

## Facts about Plastic

[Learn More Facts](#)

Richard Heal's Website  
([www.caringforourplanet.com](http://www.caringforourplanet.com))



NE Ashram Replaced disposable chai cups with metal cups



PNW Beach Cleanup

“I pledge to reduce my plastic consumption, [by] not purchasing produce in plastic boxes or bags, not buying more ziplock bags and washing used ones, finishing ALL plastic lotion and shampoo bottles tucked away in bathroom cabinets.” –Wendy , East Central Region

“I pledge to reduce my plastic consumption, by remembering to bring reusable bags, bringing my utensils, and reusing tea lids.” –Rachael, Greater New York Region

“I pledge to reduce my plastic footprint to under 275 a year, by purchasing large bottles of milk, bulk loose lettuce, purchasing in glass bottles if possible.” –Jaya , Mid-South Region

“I pledge to reduce my plastics and use environment friendly products that are recyclable, by [not] buying hot drinks in non-recyclable cups.” –Mahita, Midwest Region

“I pledge to reduce the number of coffee cups that I get to go, by bring[ing] a refillable thermos instead.” –Veda , SoCal Region

“Reduce my use of plastic packaging and bags at the grocery store, by bringing reusable produce and shopping bags and buying less produce in plastic packaging.” –Kim, Northeast Region

“I pledge to focus on improvement, by noticing my plastic use.” –Kanna, Northern California Region

“I pledge to reduce my plastic footprint, by staying conscious of when I am about to buy plastic and ask myself if it is really necessary and if there is another way that I can meet my needs without buying plastic.” Karuna, Northwest Region

“ I pledge to reduce my plastic footprint by 50%, by buy[ing] produce without plastic packaging whenever possible and always using cloth bags instead of plastic bags for grocery shopping.” –Bahuleyan, Southeast Region

“I pledge to reduce the percentage of plastic wrapped foods I buy this year, by avoid[ing] shopping at Trader Joe's. I will shop more at The Co-op.” –Valsala, Southwest Region

# Feedback from Participants

*"We 'improved' our footprint, but feel we failed to maintain the vigilance we intended. We realize how we are creatures of comfort and convenience when tiredness sets in, or we are overly 'busy'. But **what a fantastic challenge - and at the very least - it has increased our awareness of the areas we need to keep working on!**" - Wendy, East Central Region*

*"**Seeing pictures of rivers choking with plastics has changed the way I feel.**" - Premadas, Greater New York Region*

*"**I reduced my consumption, but my awareness of my consumption increased and my estimate of my consumption became more accurate so it appears that my consumption increased.**" - Tom, Midwest Region*

*"**Just acknowledging it helped me bring awareness.**" - Briana, Northern California Region*

*"**I love the plastic footprint calculator. It gives me real time information and challenges me. I don't know if I made an improvement in a large way, but I have made small changes. It's good to do this regularly!**" - Laura, Northwest Region*

*"**When you see the raw numbers and realize any small change to the good will make bigger impacts over time, it is much easier to be motivated. As with any negative behavior, awareness makes all the difference.**" - Tina, Southeast Region*

*" [N]ow, I don't use plastic bags when I shop for vegetables and I **remember to bring in my re-usable bags with me (I forgot the first couple of times) to put things in when I check out. And if I forget them in the car, then I just put them back directly into the cart and load them into bags when I get to my car - but I make it a point to not collect any new plastic bags.**" - Prana, Mid-South Region*

*" Yes, I was able to keep my pledge. It was very helpful having a firm pledge to Amma; it kept me on track even though I was often "inconvenienced". .. **This challenge raised so much awareness in my buying choices. Because of this challenge, I started some Source Reduction initiatives at work also. It feels really good to bring Amma's teachings outside of the "Amma-world". Thank you so much, Amma.**" - Srimayi, Northeast Region*

*"Thank you for this initiative and raising awareness of the plastic issue! **This challenge made me realize how much i was underestimating my plastic use to begin with. It made me much more aware of my purchases of products that use single use plastic and was able to reduce some. Will continue working on it!**" - Joules, SoCal*

*"**The calculator was very useful and motivating to decrease my plastic usage by making me aware of every day items I can reduce usage of. I feel like now I can continue to eliminate more plastic going forward!**" - Yusuf, Southwest Region*

Our Most Beloved Amma,  
We humbly lay this project  
at your Lotus Feet.

Please guide us all so that  
we are purer and purer  
instruments in Your Divine  
Hands.

With Love From Your  
Children

