

# ZERO WASTE PROGRAMS

WHAT IS ZERO WASTE, WHY IT IS IMPORTANT, HOW YOUR ORGANIZATION CAN IMPLEMENT IT

GLOBAL  
CLIMATE  
*Pledge*

**Rotary**



Climate Action  
Team Network

**Rotary**  
Rotary Club of  
Newport Beach



# Table of Contents

[What is Zero Waste?](#)

[Why is Zero Waste Important?](#)

[Debunking the Zero Waste Stigma](#)

[Going from a Linear to Circular Economy](#)

[From the US EPA...](#)

[From the Northeast Recycling Council...](#)

[From the UN Environment Program...](#)

[The 5Rs](#)

[How to Implement Zero Waste?](#)

[Upstream and Downstream Production](#)

[Rotary Clubs in Action](#)

[What Else Can You Do?](#)

[Take the Pledge!](#)

# What is Zero Waste?

- **Zero waste** can be defined in many different ways by different entities:
  - **Solid Waste of North America:** "...all efforts to reduce solid waste to almost nothing by reducing excess consumption and maximizing solid waste recovery through compositng and recycling."
  - **Zero Waste International Alliance:** "...conservation of all resources by means of responsible production , consumption, reuse, and recovery of products, packaging, and materials without burning and with no discharge to land, water, or air that threaten the environment or human health."
  - **US Conference of Mayors 2015:** "beyond recycling and composting at the end of a product's life cycle..."

# Why is Zero Waste Important?

- From the **Toronto Environmental Alliance**:
  - **Who they are:** a non-profit organization campaigning locally in Toronto to find solutions to their urban environmental problems
  - **Why they think zero waste is important:**
    - Reduces climate impact by conserving resources and minimizing pollution
    - Promotes social equity while building community
      - Redistributing goods to those in need
      - Community gardening
    - Protects community by reducing pollution and toxic waste
    - Creates jobs by supporting circular economy



# Why is Zero Waste Important?

- From the [Northeast Recycling Council](#):

- **Who they are:** a multi-state non-profit organization whose programs emphasize source reduction, reusing, recycling, composting, environmentally preferable purchasing (EPP), and decreasing the toxicity of the solid waste stream in northeastern US
- **Why they think zero waste is important:**
  - Zero waste is one of the fastest, easiest climate action strategies that we can implement today to *immediately* reduce GHG emissions
  - *Cost effective* (curbside recycling can reduce more emissions per dollar spent than energy efficiency & renewable energy projects!)
  - Don't need any new technology or rare natural resources – we *already have the technology of recycling and composting*

# Debunking the Zero Waste Stigma

- **Zero waste** is not about an **extreme goal** BUT **transforming** our behaviors and actions!
  - Zero waste is based on the **journey** towards becoming zero!
- "Zero waste" suggests that we shouldn't be producing any waste at all
  - **This is misleading!**
  - *Zero waste* is a way of examining our lifestyle & reducing waste where it's possible!
- **Living zero waste** does NOT have to be perfect
  - Individual perfection will never be achievable in a *linear economy*
  - We need to come together to make a *collective, systemic impact*
  - Zero waste is **affordable** and will help us **save money** in the long run!



# Debunking the Zero Waste Stigma

- Being **zero waste** is NOT about producing *absolutely no waste*
  - Don't hold yourself to ridiculous standards!
- Be more concerned with the **big picture**
- Think about the waste created *upstream* before it reaches your organization
  - There is nothing you can do about that!
- Life is out of your control..
  - ie: Given a gift that has no *zero waste packaging*
- **Don't give up on being zero waste!**
  - Focus on the **bigger picture & advocate for systematic changes!**

# Going from a Linear to Circular Economy

- **Linear economy** = Traditional model where raw materials are collected & transformed into products that consumers use until discarding them as waste
  - Prioritizes *profit over sustainability*
- **Circular economy** = Production that has as little impact as possible on the environment
  - Prioritizes *sustainability over profit*
- In a circular economy, **waste is the new raw material!**
  - ie: Sharing more products that are not often used or stand still
- **Consumer behavior change is needed for a circular economy!**

# From the US EPA...



**Landfills are the  
3rd biggest  
source of human  
related methane  
emissions**

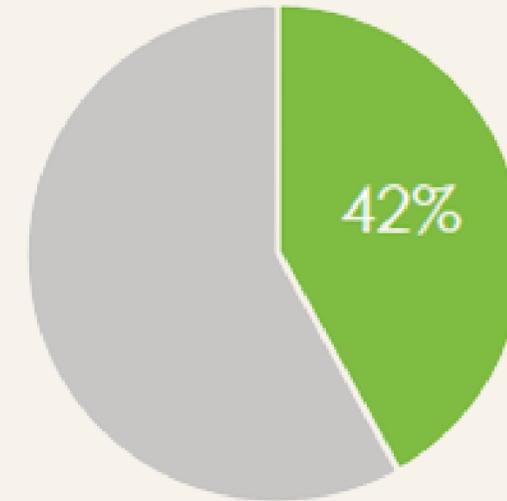


**US municipal  
waste accounts  
for  
approximately  
14% of human  
caused methane  
emissions**

# From the US EPA...



**The Average American produces 4.4lb of trash per day...even if it's biodegradable, it will still emit GHGs, which contribute directly to climate change!**



**42% of all GHG emissions are from production & use of goods (including food, products, packaging)**

# From the Northeast Recycling Council...



**80% of discarded consumer goods in municipal solid waste ends up burned or landfilled because of *poor design, failure to include recyclable materials & lack of end-of-life solutions***



**It takes 1.5 years to regenerate the natural resources we consume in a year**

# From the Northeast Recycling Council...



**Implementing  
zero waste could  
help save  
materials worth  
up to \$700B/year**



**20% of the municipal  
budget is spent on  
waste  
management...with  
less waste, money  
could be diverted to  
other essential  
needs/projects/etc.**

# From the UN Environment Program...



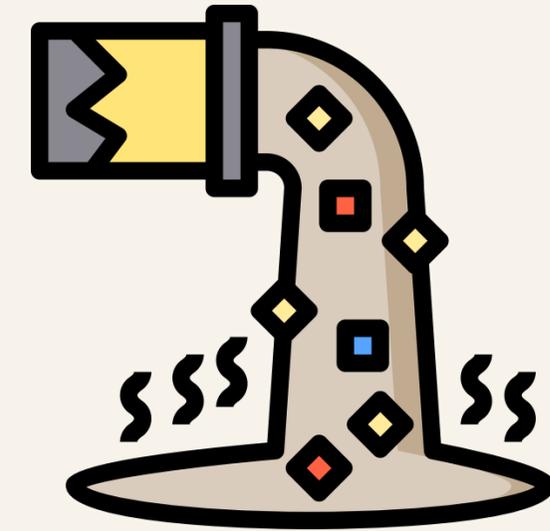
**Around 1/3 of the 2.24B tons of municipal solid waste produced globally in 2020 was not managed in a sustainable manner**

**Plastics account for 12% of global waste, equivalent to the weight of 3.4M adult blue whales**

# From the UN Environment Program...



**The global recycling rate is *under 16%***



**If current trends continue, the amount of waste will reach 3.38B tons per year by 2050**

# How to Implement Zero Waste?: The 5Rs

**Refuse** →

**Reduce** →

**Reuse** →

**Repair** →

**Recycle**

Do this first!

This is your last resort!



# How to Implement Zero Waste?

- **The 5Rs:**

- **Refuse...**what you don't actually need
  - ie: Buying timeless pieces for your closet instead of trendy clothing items
- **Reduce...**what you use
  - ie: Only buying what you need from the grocery store
- **Reuse...**until it no longer works
  - ie: Switch to disposable items for reusable & permanent alternatives
- **Repair...**what we can
  - ie: For an electronic device, such as a laptop, try to fix it before buying a new device
- **Recycle...**only when all options have been exhausted!

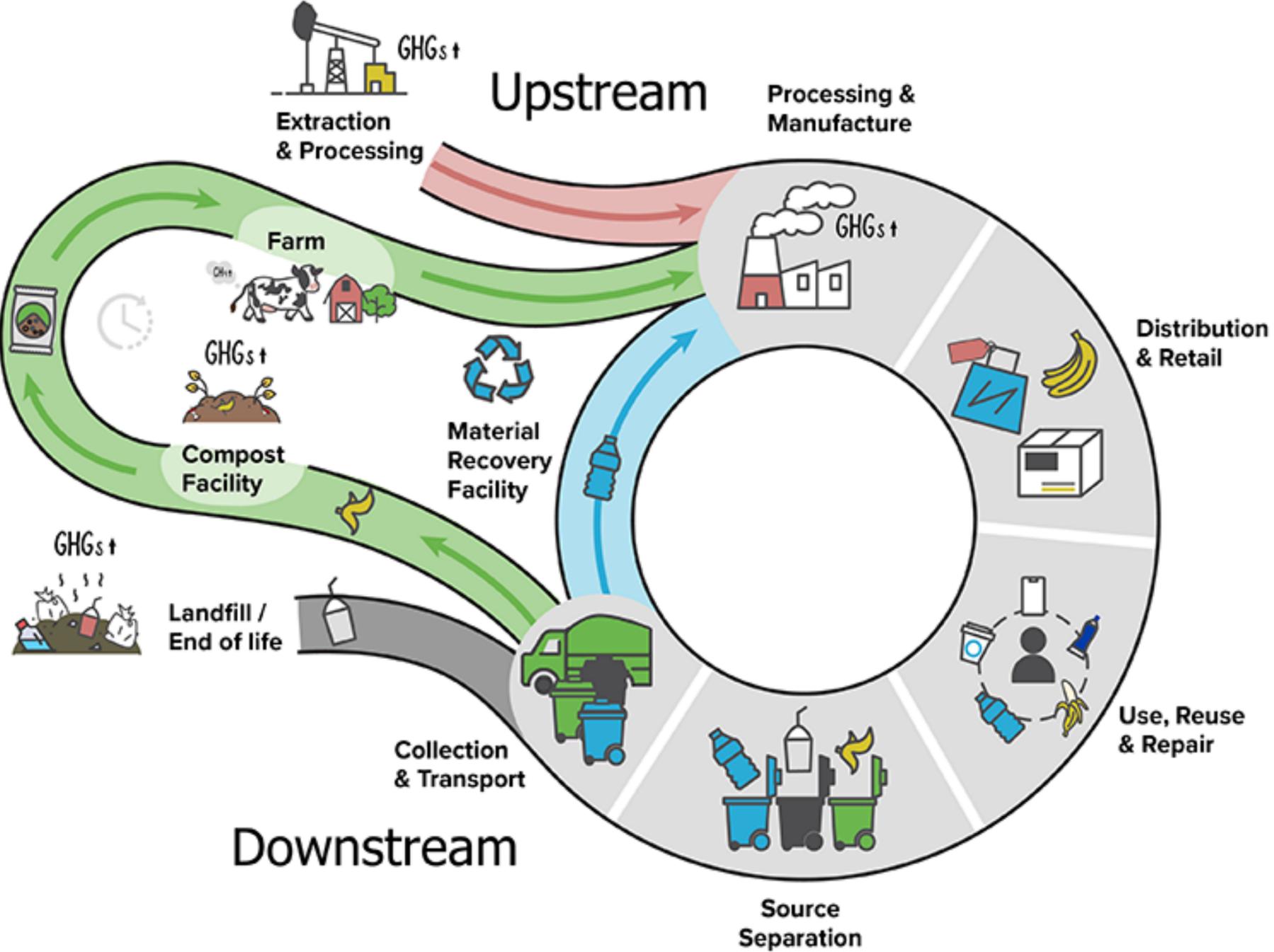


# How to Implement Zero Waste?

- Zero waste should include redesigning our one-way industrial system into a **circular system**
  - ie: Creating products with no packaging (or durable packing that can be reused)
  - ie: Buying goods from bulk bins
- **Upstream and Downstream:**
  - **Upstream** redesign strategies - reduce volume and toxicity of discarded materials & products
  - Improve **downstream** recycling of end-of-life products and materials



# Upstream and Downstream Production



# Rotary Clubs in Action

- The **Rotary Club of Rurka Kalan Eco** has proposed a project for *solid waste management* in the Rurka Kalan Village in Punjab.
  - There is a need for a system that collects and processes waste in a sustainable manner.
  - As of now, there is no system present for the disposal of garbage, with large dumps emitting methane gases.
- This proposed project is designed to be self sufficient in approximately one year.
- Currently, they are looking for a Club partner and are asking for grant money.
- Check out the project [here!](#)



# Rotary Clubs in Action

- In the Rotary year 2021-2022, the **Rotary Club of Perambra** initiated a *waste management project* with the objective of collecting all segregated waste from various houses and shops and store it temporarily in a *material collecting facility*.
  - Waste awareness classes are also proposed to be conducted and cloth bags for storing waste will be distributed to all houses.
- This project has been **Fully Pledged**, and they hope to complete the projects within six months.
- Check out the project [here!](#)



# Rotary Clubs in Action

- In the Rotary Year 2018–2019, the **Rotary Club of Ilha Solteira** proposed a *waste management project* focused on modernizing and expanding the capacity of Ilha Solteira's *recycling cooperative*.
  - The project will help reduce the volume discarded in landfills by 30%, educate Rotarians about waste management and hygiene, and improve the city's income.
- This project was **Approved**.
- Check out the project [here!](#)



# Rotary Clubs in Action

- In the Rotary Year 2021-2022, the **Rotary Club of Ciudad Sandino** collaborated with the **Nicaraguan Agrarian University** for a *waste management project that will help to solve the needs for nutritious food and work.*
  - Tilapia fish tanks will be installed, from which waste water is fed into grow beds where plants, such as celery and mint, can thrive.
  - The roots of these plants clean the waste water that is then pumped back into the fish tank.
  - Training will be provided with expert follow-up with participants for six months.
  - The project is projected to provide 57 families with an aquaponics system.
- The project status is **Paid**.
- Check out the project [here!](#)



# What Else Can You Do?

- **Go paperless!**

- You can download various apps such as e-signature, to do list app, note-taking apps, etc.
- Buy tablets for the office!
  - This does not have to be expensive as there are affordable options such as reMarkable, rocket notebook, homestec, etc.

- **Share supplies!**

- ie: One stapler for everyone (Think of items you only need one of!)

- **Buy "green" products**

- 100% recycled paper, non-toxic cleaners. etc



# Take the Pledge!

Sign the Pledge at  
<https://www.globalclimatepledge.com>

Share the Pledge!

- Encourage your coworkers, family members, loved ones, etc. to move from *awareness to action!*
- Spread the pledge through social media!

GLOBAL CLIMATE Pledge

Individual Pledge QR Code:



Organization Pledge QR Code:



# Rotary Climate Action Team Network

GLOBAL CLIMATE *Pledge*

Use this QR code or go to <https://rcatnow.com> to join RCAT's 3-Step Climate Challenge and learn more about getting involved in the Global Climate Pledge!



# Contact Us!

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<https://usgreenchamber.com>

<https://www.globalclimatepledge.com>



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# Sources

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