

Australia takes the next step in the fight against ocean plastic pollution

October 23 2014, by Ally Catterick



Following on from the successful launch of the UK Good Scrub Guide, Fauna & Flora International (FFI) has now released an Australia specific version of the Guide, freely available for download.

Designed to help consumers make better decisions when buying [beauty products](#) including facial exfoliators and scrubs, the Good Scrub Guide highlights products that do not contain the harmful microbeads that are causing huge damage to our oceans and marine life.

Microbeads are tiny plastic beads, less than 1 mm wide, and are found in hundreds of popular beauty products – including exfoliants, shampoos

and even toothpastes – available on the shelves of Australian retailers. After using a product containing microbeads, the insidious plastic beads are washed down the drain, causing untold damage to our oceans – and to the marine life trying to thrive below the surface.

"Once dispersed into the ocean, everything from plankton to whales is ingesting these plastics," said Tanya Cox, Marine Plastics Officer with FFI. "In the water, they attract persistent environmental toxins, such as DDT, which work their way up the food chain until they are ultimately consumed by humans. All of a sudden, this not only becomes a pressing environmental issue but one that could directly affect humans."

The Good Scrub Guide is a result of FFI and Australian partner Surfrider Foundation collaborating with cosmetic and beauty care producers to identify these pollutants and eliminate them from product ranges.

"In addition to the Good Scrub Guide, we are also are developing an Australian version of the Beat the Micro Bead app, which is already having great impact in the UK and Europe; this app enables consumers to scan a product's barcode to find out whether or not it contains microplastics," said Angela Hawdon, FFI's Australian Programme Manager. "Initially, the app will contain information about a wide range of Australian face scrubs but will ultimately contain information about a much wider range of products."



The launch of the Good Scrub Guide in Australia will enable consumers to save face and oceans.

Following an Australian visit by FFI President HRH Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands earlier this year to announce the bid to rid our waters of microplastics, the New South Wales (NSW) government has now called for a national ban on the sale and production of products containing microplastics.

NSW Environment Minister, the Hon. Rob Stokes MP, who met with Princess Laurentien in May, has announced that the government will convene an industry working group intended to eliminate the damaging plastic pollutants by 2016.



These tiny microbeads are too small to be filtered out during sewerage treatment so end up in our oceans. Credit: Roger Ingle/FFI

Provided by Fauna & Flora International

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