

EU Parliament to phase out plastic water bottles

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The European Parliament is phasing out plastic bottles to help combat the eight million tonnes of plastic waste polluting the world's oceans annually

The European Parliament has told its lawmakers and staff to set an example for EU citizens by no longer drinking water from plastic bottles

by next year.

The European Parliament bureau headed by Antonio Tajani and 14 vice presidents adopted a measure late Monday to phase out the [plastic bottles](#) and build a network of drinking fountains.

"Happy to announce that the EP bureau has decided to get rid of all [plastic](#) bottles and minimise single use plastic altogether at the [parliament](#) from July 2019," tweeted Heidi Hautala, an EP vice president, on Tuesday.

"Phase out already under way! EP will lead by example!," added Hautala, a Finnish ecologist.

The move comes amid broader European Union and international efforts to stop eight million tonnes of plastic waste polluting the world's oceans annually.

One million bottles were consumed last year during events and meetings in the EP which gathers in the French city of Strasbourg and also in Brussels.

The European Commission, the 28-nation EU's executive arm, last month proposed a bloc-wide ban on single-use plastics such as straws, cutlery and cotton buds.

The commission hopes the measure will be endorsed by the European Parliament and the member states before its mandate ends in 2019, though it will unlikely enter into force before 2022.

The commission also proposed that member countries collect 90 percent of single-use plastic drinks bottles by 2025, through deposit refund schemes.

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