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Oceans

(//ecowatch.com/community/lorraine\_chow) Lorraine Chow (//ecowatch.com/community/lorraine\_chow)  
May 31, 2018 07:59AM EST

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#ChaoBolsasPlásticas



Ronett  
31.5.18  
*[Signature]*

img.youtube.com (https://img.youtube.com/vi/Rkv9FibR5ps/maxresdefault.jpg)

**Chile to Become First Country in the Americas to Ban Plastic Bags**

Chile is set to become the first country in the Americas to ban plastic bags (<https://www.ecowatch.com/tag/plastic-bags>) to help protect the environment and especially the ocean (<https://www.ecowatch.com/tag/oceans>).

Congress unanimously approved the measure on Wednesday. The bill was initially designed to outlaw plastic (<https://www.ecowatch.com/chile-plastic-ban-2501794220.html>) bags in Patagonia, but was later extended nationwide.

President Sebastian Piñera celebrated the news.

"We have taken a fundamental step to take better care of Chile and the planet. Today we are more prepared to leave a better planet to our children, grandchildren and the generations to come," he tweeted Wednesday.





**Sebastian Piñera**  
@sebastianpinera

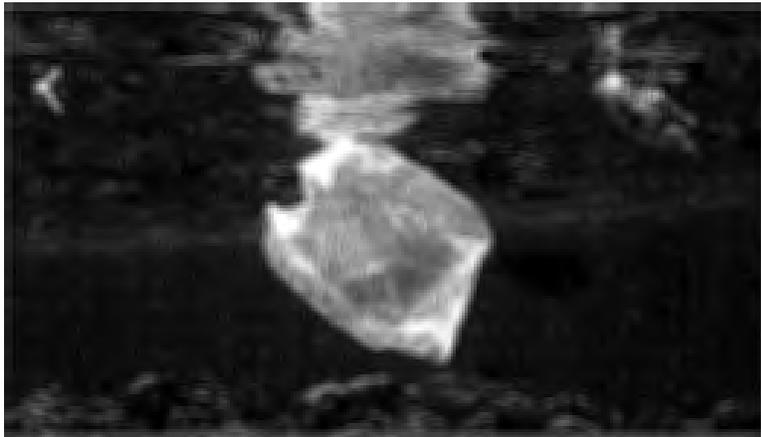
Hoy se aprobó la ley #ChaoBolsasPlásticas. Hemos dado un paso fundamental para un mejor cuidado de Chile y el planeta. Hoy estamos mejor preparados para legarle un mejor país a nuestros hijos, nietos y las generaciones que vendrán.

3:48 PM - May 30, 2018

3,453 1,852 people are talking about this

Erik Solheim, the head of the United Nations Environment Program, also offered congratulations to the South American country. He called the move a "bold step" ahead of World Environment Day this June 5, which has the theme "Beat Plastic Pollution (<https://www.ecowatch.com/beat-plastic-pollution-2573622594.html>)."





**Erik Solheim**  
@ErikSolheim

Bravo! Congratulations to Chile which has approved a nation-wide ban on single-use plastic bags. Bold step to #BeatPlasticPollution ahead of #WorldEnvironmentDay  
chaobolsasplasticas.cl

11:02 PM - May 30, 2018

1,291 623 people are talking about this

The law will apply to all major retailers within a year, while smaller businesses have two years to comply, The Santiago Times (<http://santiagotimes.cl/2018/05/31/chile-set-to-become-first-american-country-to-ban-plastic-bags/>) reported. Before entering into force, all retailers are allowed to provide a maximum of only two plastic bags to consumers for their purchases.

Climate Action (<http://www.climateactionprogramme.org/news/chile-adopts-new-law-to-ban-the-use-of-plastic-bags/>) reported that municipalities will be in charge of implementing the new law, which can carry a fine of up to \$230,000 for offenders.

The bag ban is not as extreme as it may sound. The Environment Ministry's website, [chaobolsasplasticas.cl](http://chaobolsasplasticas.cl) (<http://chaobolsasplasticas.cl/>), shows that Congress members have worked on this initiative for about a decade. The vast majority (about 95 percent) of surveyed Chileans across all age groups approved of the plastic bag ban. There are also 78 communes in the country that already have measures regulating the usage of plastic bags.

In October, former president Michelle Bachelet signed a bill (<https://www.ecowatch.com/chile-plastic-ban-2501794220.html>) that prohibits the sale of single-use plastic bags in coastal villages and towns.

"We will ... become the first country in the Americas to implement a law of this type and we call on other countries to assume this responsibility," Bachelet said of the initiative at the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.





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Chile Bans Plastic Bags in 100+ Coastal Areas  
ow.ly/Vldb30g9FJW @PlasticPollutes @Plastic\_Bag\_Ban  
7:00 PM - Oct 28, 2017

According to the Association of Plastic Manufacturers (Asiplas (<http://www.asipla.cl/>)), Chile uses more than 3.4 billion plastic bags annually, or roughly 200 bags per person per year. About (<https://www.ecowatch.com/chile-plastic-ban-2501794220.html>) 97 percent of those plastic bags end up in landfills or in oceans, where they take centuries to degrade.

Worldwide, an estimated eight million tons (<https://www.ecowatch.com/8-million-metric-tons-of-plastic-dumped-into-worlds-oceans-each-year-1882012563.html>) of plastic trash gets dumped into our oceans each year, literally choking (<https://www.ecowatch.com/whale-choking-on-plastic-seeks-help-from-fishermen-1882083405.html>) marine life, harming ocean ecosystems (<https://www.ecowatch.com/plastic-oceans-facts-images-2436857254.html>) and threatening the larger food chain (<https://www.ecowatch.com/plastic-pollution-fish-2473631208.html>).

This is a landmark piece of legislation for both South and North America. The Santiago Times noted that a number of states (<https://www.ecowatch.com/california-plastic-bag-ban-2143461966.html>) and municipalities in the U.S. and Canada have similar bans but none on the national level yet. But Costa Rica announced in August that it wants to be the first country in the world (<https://www.ecowatch.com/costa-rica-ban-single-use-plastics-2470233949.html>) to ban all single-use plastics by 2021.

Elsewhere around the globe, Rwanda (<https://www.ecowatch.com/the-global-downfall-of-the-plastic-bag-1881906470.html>) and Kenya (<https://www.ecowatch.com/kenya-plastic-bag-ban-2478631203.html>) have enforced complete bans on plastic bags. In 2002, Bangladesh (<https://www.ecowatch.com/plastics-history-ecological-crisis-2560978473.html>) became the world's first country to ban the items.



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Plastics: The History of an Ecological Crisis ow.ly/nNKv30jyDJA  
@wwwfoecouk @GreenpeaceUK  
6:20 AM - Apr 19, 2018

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Natural Resources Defense Council (/community/natural\_resources\_defense\_coun)  
May. 31, 2018 10:22AM EST

Oceans

(<https://www.ecowatch.com/la-kids-plastic-free-ocean-2573944407.html>)

Dedee Verdin / Kids Ocean Day

## LA Kids Make Waves for a Plastic-Free Ocean (<https://www.ecowatch.com/la-kids-plastic-free-ocean-2573944407.html>)

By Taryn Kiekow Heimer

Kids Ocean Day (<http://kidsoceanday.org/>)—a day that inspired nearly 4,500 Los Angeles-area children to clean up nearby beaches—celebrated its 25th Anniversary last Thursday. The day started with a beach cleanup at Dockweiler State Beach, which was followed by a news conference and kick-off program where Emmett Kliger, a fifth grade student from Citizens of the World Charter School Mar Vista, recited a poem he created to commemorate the anniversary of Kids Ocean Day. The event concluded with a giant aerial art WAVE the children created with their bodies, a picture so large it could only be seen from the sky. This year's theme was "Kids Making Waves for a Plastic-Free Ocean," which highlighted the importance of teamwork for keeping our ocean clean for future generations.

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