



Photo: Steve Dalton

## KEY FACTS

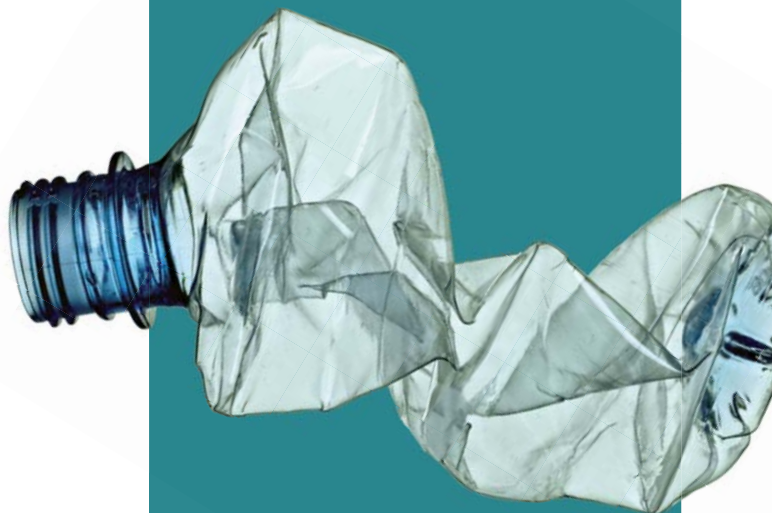
### Up to 75% of rubbish along Australia's coastline is plastic.

Discarded or lost fishing gear is particularly problematic as the use of plastics in the fishing industry becomes more widespread.

### Litter and marine debris have a negative impact on all species

within the marine environment. Detrimental effects include, but are not limited to: poisoning; loss of limbs; lacerations; starvation; drowning; and changes to immune and reproductive systems.

**Every year there is an increase** in the amount of debris that enters marine and estuarine environments.



Estuaries are among the most biologically productive ecosystems in the world and contain a high diversity of life. They are the 'nurseries of the sea', providing nutrient-rich breeding grounds for fish, crustaceans and other aquatic species, many of which have commercial and recreational value. Estuarine habitats are important feeding and nesting areas for birds, and act as safe places for migratory stopovers.

**Threats such as marine debris, erosion, recreational fishing and boating all have an impact on estuarine species and the habitats that they rely upon.**

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

- ▶ **Use rubbish bins** where available, or take rubbish with you.
- ▶ Make a conscious effort to **reduce the waste you create**.
- ▶ **Get involved with local clean-up events**.
- ▶ Collect and **responsibly dispose of any fishing line, gear and bait packaging**.
- ▶ **Collect additional pieces of rubbish** when leaving the beach, waterway or park. Every piece of litter you pick up reduces the litter that ends up in our waterways and environment.

