

inspire citizen activists

As a citizen scientist on 5 Gyres' Arctic Expedition, I studied marine plastic pollution in the Northwest Passage. The 12-day expedition—the organization's 17th—took us 1,687 miles from Kangerlussuaq, Greenland to Cambridge Bay, Nunavut. Each day, the crew bundled up and boarded zodiacs to collect micro and nanoplastic particles just below the ocean's surface. We worked alongside polar bears and icebergs, but equally as exciting



was the knowledge that we were contributing missing research to support the global fight against microplastics. Our work will be a part of 5 Gyres' forthcoming **Global Estimate of Marine Plastic Pollution**. And the experience equipped us with powerful knowledge that we brought home to drive change in our own communities."

—Madeleine MacGillivray Wallace,
5 Gyres Ambassador

Photo: Franco Borgogno

teach every kid

If we want a more resilient future, we need to educate and empower young activists. That's why President Obama launched the **Every Kid in a Park** initiative, an effort to get kids outside to connect with nature and become stewards of our public lands. This year, we were so grateful for support from the United States Forest Service and California State University, Chico, which helped us engage with fourth graders from underserved schools. On beaches and in parks, we taught more than 2,000 students about the global problem of plastic pollution. They learned the importance of leaving no trace, that there really is no 'away' when it comes to plastic trash, and how to share this new knowledge with their communities." In total, we reached 3,000 kids last year!"

—Steph Whyte, Programs Manager



translate art into action

When I first saw **Anthropocene**, I was blown away. It's one thing to describe a 20-foot recycled metal sculpture that mimics Leonardo da Vinci's Vitruvian Man—with bicycle-powered lights and tubes of microbead-filled water coursing through his body—but it's another thing entirely to experience it. The sculpture, which was created by our Co-Founder and Research Director Dr. Marcus Eriksen, tells the story of how plastic pollution not only threatens our planet, but also human health. When plastic absorbs toxic chemicals and is ingested by wildlife, those toxins can ultimately end up on our plates. We knew this piece would resonate with other millennials, so last year we worked to get it to Coachella, Lightning in a Bottle, and Burning Man—this year, we'll place it at other festivals so we can use the piece to start a conversation about microplastics, especially their impact on our planet and our bodies. The 'anthropocene' or 'age of humanity' describes how we have left a geologic mark on our planet—sadly, the best fossil that represents the human species today is plastic. We need the next generation to help stop this global epidemic."

—Haley Jain Haggerstone, Development Director



commit to #beadfree

When we worked with State University New York at Fredonia to discover plastic microbeads in the Great Lakes in 2012, we had no idea how quickly this community could move on the issue. We shared the results of our study with other activist organizations, mobilizing a small community into a national coalition. Within two years, more than 20 states had introduced bills to ban the sale of microbeads. These included California's AB 888, the strongest microbeads bill in the country, which we co-wrote with California Assembly Member Richard Bloom and Greenfire Law. In 2015, President Obama signed the **Microbead-Free Waters Act** into law, banning plastic microbeads in the United States as of 2018.



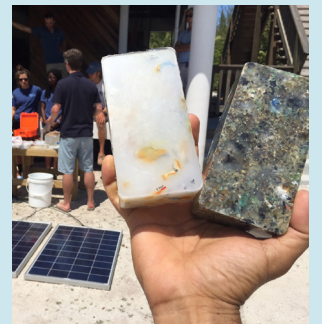
The only problem? At the time, Americans were using an average of eight billion plastic microbeads each day. During that three-year "grace period," we had the potential to release nine trillion plastic microbeads into the environment—in the United States alone. So last year with help from supporters and corporate partners like LUSH, Klean Kanteen, Native Eyewear, U*Konserve and Rainbow Light Nutrition, we created the **#beadfree Action Campaign**. #beadfree helped divert 16 billion microbeads from oceans and lakes and supported legislative action in the United Kingdom, the European Union and Canada, which announced a microbeads ban in November 2016. Go team!"

—Lia Colabello, Community and Partnerships Director

give trash new life

The world is awash with plastic waste, especially on island shores. Plastic pollution in our oceans is the result of the 300 million tons of new plastic produced each year, which makes up 13% of municipal solid waste in the United States alone. We currently recover less than 10% of that plastic, leaving the rest to be burned, buried, or washed out to sea. While we recognize the main solutions to the problem are better corporate responsibility, waste management, policy, and public education, there is still simply too much plastic trash accumulating globally! In collaboration with Swift Engineering, we designed the **Solar Plastic Kiln** to give some of it an alternate life, creating the world's first fully mobile, sustainable, solar-powered plastic kiln for rapid recycled product creation in the form of structural building materials. Last year, as a pilot program, we made bricks in the Bahamas. This year we hope to add boards. Are structures next?"

—Carolynn Box, Environmental Programs Director

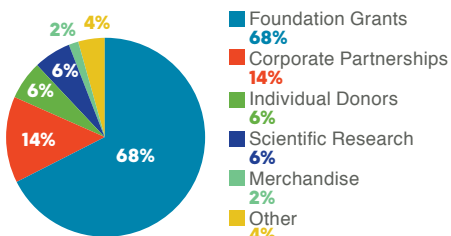


focus on local solutions: california

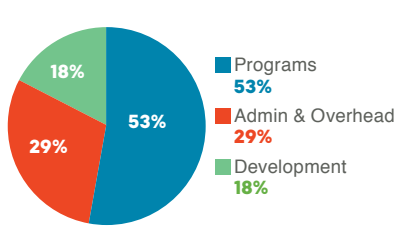
For the past three years, 5 Gyres was part of a large project called **Tracking California's Trash**, supported by the State Water Resources Control Board and the Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association. We monitored four rivers of varying sizes located in the Bay Area and Los Angeles regions during multiple rain events. 58% of the trash we collected was plastic, and 5% of that was Styrofoam. This year, in partnership with the San Francisco Estuary Institute, we'll build on our research by designing and executing the **San Francisco Bay Microplastic Program**, in order to better understand the distribution and pathways of microplastic pollution. Data collected during these projects will help improve the understanding of water quality concerns, and determine the actions that regulators, public agencies, corporate manufacturers, and individuals can take to effectively resolve them.



2016 REVENUE



2016 EXPENSE



Please visit 5Gyres.org to review our 990s.

Last year, we made the budgetary decision to shift from a calendar to fiscal year. The goal is to better align the organization with philanthropic and corporate supporters who follow this system. Although the political uncertainty during an election year did affect our fundraising, I'm confident that moving forward we will be in an even stronger and more strategic position to achieve our goals."

—Elan Glasser, Board Chair

think globally

8 MILLION TONS of plastic escape collection systems annually and end up in our world's oceans. **THAT'S FIVE LARGE TRASH BAGS FOR EVERY FOOT OF COASTLINE IN THE WORLD**



WE SCALE SOLUTIONS THROUGH STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

When we began 5 Gyres, there was little international dialogue about plastic pollution. Today, we are part of many exciting initiatives working to scale solutions through strategic collaboration. We recently signed on to the Break Free From Plastic movement, which brings together more than 500 non-profit organizations from around the world. And we're thrilled to be working closely with the Plastic Pollution Prevention Project on initiatives such as the **Plastics BAN (Better Alternatives Now) List**, published last year in time to support the passing of Proposition 67, which banned plastic bags in California. Created in partnership with Clean Production Action, Surfrider Foundation, and UPSTREAM, this year we will update the Plastics BAN List to assess the global environmental and human health costs of plastics. We're proud to have played a role in elevating the plastics issue to the global stage, and look forward to the next set of wins for the movement—and the planet."

—Dr. Marcus Eriksen, Co-Founder and Research Director



Photo: Franco Borgogno

harness collaborative power

We believe that solutions to plastic pollution must begin upstream, with better corporate accountability for design, and comprehensive policies to eliminate the worst offenders. This year, the U.S. State Department endorsed our vision of solutions-oriented initiatives to engage global partners. In September, I was honored to present at Secretary of State John Kerry's 3rd annual Our Ocean conference, where Leonardo DiCaprio gave the keynote. Soon after, we were awarded a **State Department Grant** to work on reducing the flow of plastic waste to Southeast Asian waters, with a focus on Indonesia and the Philippines. For the next two years, in collaboration with GAIA, Mother Earth Foundation, Lonely Whale Foundation, Story of Stuff, UPSTREAM, and Yayasan Pengembangan Biosains dan Biotechnologi (YPBB), we will employ a two-pronged approach: scaling on-the-ground efforts to implement zero waste strategies, and gathering data on poorly designed products to expand our Plastics BAN List internationally."

—Anna Cummins, Co-Founder and Global Strategy Director

2016 supporters

- 1% For The Planet
- 11th Hour Racing
- 3Greenmoms
- Activation Products
- American Spirits Exchange
- BASMAA
- Baum Foundation
- Benevity Community Impact Fund
- Better Planet Brand (ACURE)
- Borrego Foundation
- California Community Foundation
- Clif Bar Family Foundation
- Conservation Media Group
- craigslist Charitable Fund
- Creag Foundation
- Deckers Outdoor Corporation
- Earth Day Texas
- Elbaz Family Foundation
- Eskayel
- Exploring Circle
- George and Fay Young Foundation
- Helly Hansen
- Johnson Ohana Charitable Foundation
- Keiter Family Foundation
- Klean Kanteen
- Laguna Beach Community Foundation
- LUSH Cosmetics
- Martin Foundation
- Mary G Jameson Foundation
- McDougal Family Foundation
- Native Eyewear
- New York Community Trust
- Rainbow Light Nutritional Systems
- San Francisco Foundation
- Sidney Stern Memorial Trust
- SIMA
- Sustainable Business Council of LA
- Tomberg Family Philanthropies
- U*Konserve
- United States Forest Service

thank you!

We are so grateful for your support as 5 Gyres enters its ninth year—and the first with me at the helm. This community's vast depth of knowledge and tenacious commitment to the fight against plastic pollution inspires all of us each and every day.

Last year, we added to our executive team and passed the gavel to a new Board Chair. We executed programs that reached more scientists, students, stakeholders, and activists.

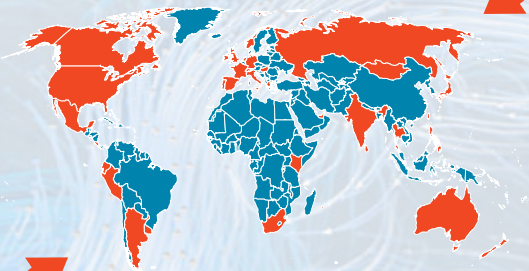
This year, we've set our sights even higher with a new **#foamfree Action Campaign** that aims to do for Styrofoam what we did for microbeads: generate innovative research to inspire a tidal wave of collaboration and drive legislative bans.

We plan to boost our **TrawlShare** program to empower more citizen scientists, connecting them virtually through an interactive map for better data sharing. After building bricks in the Bahamas, our **Solar Plastic Kiln** program is beta testing in Bermuda at the America's Cup. We're translating our core materials into Spanish to reach new audiences, as well as updating our **K-12 Educational Curriculum** to fulfill Next Generation Science Standards, and making it available as a free download to classrooms nationwide. Finally, our growing group of **5 Gyres Ambassadors** continues to share our message around the globe.

As we navigate our small ship in these increasingly rocky waters of environmental activism, we are truly thankful to have you at our backs.

Rachel Lincoln Sarnoff
Executive Director

200+ AMBASSADORS



in 40+ COUNTRIES
inspiring communities to
GO #PLASTICFREE

MORE OCEAN LESS PLASTIC
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PLASTIC
ocean pollution doesn't discriminate

HARMING
it more than 600 species

including **HUMANS**



Photo: Jeremy Carroll