

### **Amazon statement regarding Oceana's report (from [Forbes](#) ) published on 12/15/2021**

“Amazon shares Oceana’s ambition to protect the world’s oceans and respects their work but, for a second year, their calculations are seriously flawed. They have overestimated our plastics usage by more than 300%, and use outdated assumptions about the sources of plastic waste entering our oceans. The latest peer-reviewed scientific research finds that the majority of plastic waste that ends up in the ocean comes primarily from takeaway food and drink, and fishing activities. Amazon is making rapid progress in reducing or removing single-use plastics from packaging materials around the world. As a co-founder of The Climate Pledge, Amazon is committed to protecting the planet and achieving net-zero carbon by 2040. We continue to welcome informed, constructive dialogue with NGOs and others on these issues.”

### **Oceana response (shared with Amazon on 12/17/2021)**

Oceana welcomes constructive dialogue with Amazon on the issue of plastic pollution into the world’s waterways and oceans.

Regarding the comment about Oceana’s estimate that Amazon generated up to 599 million pounds of plastic packaging waste in 2020, we ask Amazon – as we have repeatedly done over the last year and a half – to set the record straight by publicly releasing data about its plastic packaging footprint. Until such data is available, Oceana will continue to estimate Amazon’s plastic footprint by using publicly available data.

Oceana’s most recent estimate used e-commerce plastic packaging data by country purchased from Mordor Intelligence, a market research company. We multiplied this per-country data with Amazon’s market share in countries where Amazon has an online presence, to arrive at our estimated per-country figures for plastic use. There was one exception to this approach, in our analysis for India. Since Amazon stated that it had stopped using single-use plastic in its packaging by June 30, 2020, we assumed that the company thus had been able to halve its plastic packaging use in the country.

Amazon has claimed that Oceana’s recent estimate is more than 300% or four times higher than its plastic packaging footprint and made the same claim regarding Oceana’s last estimate of Amazon’s plastic footprint in 2019 (that Oceana’s estimate was four times higher). It appears that Amazon is not disputing Oceana’s estimate that Amazon’s plastic footprint grew by 29% from 2019 to 2020. Further, one-fourth of 599 million pounds is roughly 150 million pounds – still an enormous amount of plastic. We ask Amazon to specify whether this amount represents sales from Amazon.com or sales from its entire marketplace and we again ask for Amazon to back up its claims by publicly sharing data about its past and current plastic footprint.

Regarding Oceana’s estimate that up to 23.5 million pounds of Amazon’s plastic packaging polluted the world’s waterways and oceans in 2020, Oceana used data from a peer-reviewed study published in the journal *Science* from 2020 ([Borrelle et al.](#)) to calculate our estimate. The *Science* study gives estimates for the absolute amounts of plastic from each country that land in rivers, lakes, and oceans for each year until 2030. We assumed that Amazon’s plastic waste is treated the same as other plastic in each country’s waste stream.

In your statement, Amazon refers to a paper from 2021 ([Morales-Caselles et al.](#)) that classifies and quantifies the types of litter across aquatic environments and describes potential routes of

this plastic waste in the water. This study does not provide per-country rates of plastic pollution into the ocean and therefore would not adequately estimate Amazon's plastic packaging footprint on a per-country basis. Additionally, the study found that plastic packaging – along with plastic from takeaway food and drink packaging – is a major component of debris found in the seas as the lead author of the study [recently pointed out](#). Unfortunately, plastic film, which includes bags and air pillows (which Amazon uses), is, according to many scientists, the deadliest type of plastic pollution to marine life (see [Roman et al., 2020](#))

Oceana acknowledges and commends Amazon's efforts to reduce single-use plastics from packaging materials in some of the markets where it operates. Notably, the decision Amazon has made in India and Germany (one of your largest markets) to eliminate the use of plastic packaging is laudable. We encourage you to make a similar global commitment to plastic reduction. And, in executing these efforts, we stress the need for transparency and quantifiable targets. This is necessary so that Amazon can be held accountable for its commitments, and can take credit for the real impacts on reducing plastic pollution that these commitments will have.

Over 740,000 people have signed a petition asking Amazon to provide a plastic-free packaging option at checkout and one-third of the company's shareholders have called for the company to report on and take action to reduce its plastic packaging footprint. Amazon can become allies with its customers and shareholders in the global fight against plastic pollution – and protect the world's oceans - by publicly reporting on its plastic footprint, making quantifiable and time-bound global commitments, and by providing its customers with a plastic-free option at checkout.

We look forward to discussing these issues and learning more about Amazon's plans to publicly disclose and commit to the quantifiable reduction of its plastic packaging footprint.