

Bye Bye Plastic Bags

In 2013 two young women decided they were going to do something about the plastic problem on their island of Bali, and Bye Bye Plastic Bags was born. Bali is part of the island nation of Indonesia, which is the world's second biggest polluter when it comes to marine plastic, trailing only China.

The two sisters got the idea for Bye Bye Plastic Bags after a lesson at school about influential world leaders including Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi. "My sister and I went home that day thinking, 'Well, what can we do as kids living on the island of Bali?'" Melati Wijisen says. "You see, we didn't want to wait until we were older to start making a difference. It wasn't even a question, really. It was more like, what can we do, as kids, right now."

They got some friends together, went online to start a petition and got 6,000 signatures in less than a day. Now they spread awareness through school and community workshops, organize massive beach cleanup campaigns, and draw international attention to the issue of plastic pollution. In 2018 Melati spent about 100 nights on the road with speaking engagements to get out the anti-plastic message and to talk about youth empowerment. The sisters have given a TED talk, have spoken at the United Nations, and have presented at the IMF World Bank Forum in Bali. The World Bank CEO called Melati "a girl that is changing the world around her." They've also been named among the world's most influential teenagers by Forbes, Time magazine and CNN.

Bye Bye Plastic Bags has become an international movement, with groups currently in 28 locations around the world, all led by young people. Wilderness Travel strongly supports their efforts to fight plastic pollution, and we encourage those of you traveling on our snorkeling trips to Indonesia to support this program with an optional \$50 per person donation, which will appear on your final invoice.



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