



# BEYOND PLASTICS

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: April 19, 2022

For Information: Judith Enck, President, Beyond Plastics, [JudithEnck@Bennington.edu](mailto:JudithEnck@Bennington.edu) or 518 605 1770

### **Coca-Cola Enlists Bill Nye, the Science Sellout Guy to Mislead the Public About Plastics Recycling; Beyond Plastics Responds with [a Claymation Video of its Own](#) to Set the Record Straight**

In the run up to Earth Day (Friday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>) Coca-Cola released [an animated video featuring Bill Nye the Science Guy](#), attempting to fool the public into believing that Coca-Cola's plastic beverage bottles are a recycling success story when the vast majority of Coke plastic bottles are not recycled.

**Coca-Cola produces 200,000 new plastic bottles a minute and sells 112 billion plastic beverage bottles worldwide every year for a total of roughly 3 million metric tons of plastic packaging.** The majority of Coca-Cola's plastic bottles are not recycled and only 11.5% are made from recycled material. Many of Coca-Cola's plastic bottles end up littered and enter the world's rivers and oceans.

Despite these facts, Bill Nye claims in the video that, "The good people at the Coca-Cola Company are dedicating themselves to addressing our global plastic waste problem."

In response, Beyond Plastics has released [a claymation-style video of its own](#) that aims to set the record straight. "Having Bill Nye provide green cover for Coca-Cola is troubling. The truth is that we cannot recycle our way out of the growing plastic pollution crisis. Instead, we must enact new laws and regulations—which Coca-Cola often opposes—to substantially reduce the production, usage, and disposal of plastics," said Judith Enck, President of Beyond Plastics and a former EPA Regional Administrator.

Beyond Plastics urges the recycling of materials including cardboard, paper, glass, and metals, but points out that plastics recycling has been a failure, achieving an anemic recycling rate in the U.S. of only 9%, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. All plastic is eventually disposed of in a landfill, an incinerator, or littered.

"The production of plastics—which mostly takes place in low-income communities and communities of color—releases large quantities of greenhouse gas emissions and toxic air pollution. The plastics industry has spent millions of dollars trying to mislead the public about

plastics recycling even though it has been an abject failure. Bill Nye has sullied his reputation by participating in Coca-Cola's greenwashing advertising campaign," said Enck.

While putting out misleading videos about the promise of plastics recycling, Coca-Cola continues to oppose what could be the single most effective policy to reduce plastic litter and boost recycling: container deposit laws, better known as Bottle Bills. These laws are highly effective at increasing collection and recycling rates of beverage containers but are currently adopted in just ten states in the U.S., in large part because Coca-Cola and other major beverage companies and industry associations have spent decades blocking this common sense environmental policy.

Coca-Cola's plastic bottles are a major source of litter. The annual brand audits of plastic pollution around the world conducted by the international non-profit group Break Free From Plastic have consistently shown Coca-Cola to be a top source of plastic pollution. In 2021, Coca-Cola topped their list of global plastic polluters again for the fourth year in a row.

According to the December 1, 2021 report from The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine "Reckoning With the U.S. Role In Global Plastic Waste," 8.8 million metric tons of plastic waste enter the world's oceans each year. In 2016, the U.S. generated more plastic waste than any other country. Without immediate action by all levels of government, plastic pollution entering the ocean is predicted to triple by 2040.

Plastic reductions, not weak, voluntary recycling commitments by the world's top plastic polluters, is the only effective long term solution to our plastic pollution problem. Bill Nye, the Science Sellout Guy should know better.

**You can watch Beyond Plastic's animated response to Coca-Cola's greenwashing video at:**  
<https://bit.ly/plastics-recycling-is-a-lie>

###