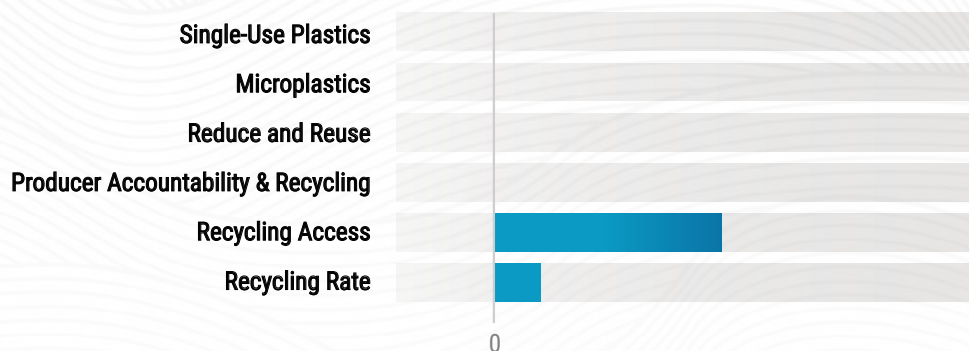


United States OF PLASTICS

Alabama

SOUTH ATLANTIC-GULF

Alabama, known for its rich history and cultural heritage, is integrally connected to the ocean through its southern shoreline. The seafood industry, particularly oysters and shrimping, is vital to local economies, with towns like Bayou La Batre historically dependent on this trade. Tourism also thrives along Alabama's Gulf Coast, attracting visitors to its white-sand beaches, historic sites and diverse recreational activities, thereby supporting numerous businesses and employment opportunities. The Mobile-Tensaw River Delta is one of the most biodiverse areas in North America and serves as a nursery for a variety of marine life. Despite its deep reliance on a healthy ocean, the state has yet to pass legislation that would address plastic pollution, which poses a serious threat to its communities and wildlife.



FINAL SCORE



Needs Improvement



Single-Use Plastics

The state has not passed any laws restricting the single-use plastics reviewed in our study.



Reduce and Reuse

The state has not enacted any laws relating to plastic reduction or reuse.



Microplastics

The state has not passed any laws to address microplastic pollution.



Producer Accountability and Recycling

The state does not have extended producer responsibility (EPR) or deposit return programs for packaging or beverage containers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- There are many opportunities to take action in the state. Policies that reduce our reliance on single-use plastics can have a near-term impact on preventing plastic pollution and raise awareness of the issue for future action.
- Given the increasing detection of microplastics in seafood¹ and the importance of fisheries to the state's economy, Alabama should consider policies to address microplastic pollution such as requiring filters for new washing machines to reduce microfiber pollution.
- The state has both a low recycling access rate and a low recycling rate and readily recyclable items like beverage containers are among the most commonly collected items by ICC volunteers. Policies like comprehensive EPR with a deposit return system could increase the amount of material that is recycled and kept out of the environment without increasing costs for local governments.

Top 10 Items Collected by ICC Volunteers

- 1 Cigarette Butts
- 2 Beverage Bottles (Plastic)
- 3 Beverage Cans
- 4 Food Wrappers (Candy, chips, etc.)
- 5 Cigar Tips
- 6 Bottle Caps (Plastic)
- 7 Beverage Bottles (Glass)
- 8 Straws, Stirrers
- 9 Grocery Bags (Plastic)
- 10 Construction Materials

¹ Smith, M., et al. (2018). *Current Environmental Health Reports*.