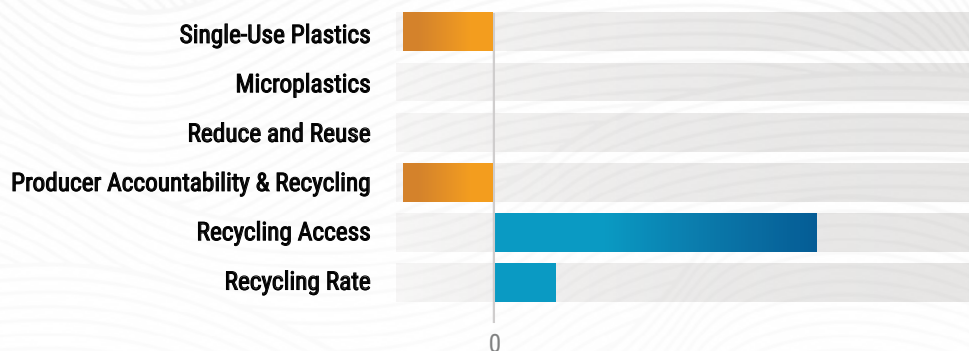


United States OF PLASTICS

Arkansas

MISSOURI-MISSISSIPPI DRAINAGE

Arkansas is a landlocked state that connects to the Gulf through the Mississippi River, which flows through many midwestern states. Flowing along almost the entirety of the eastern border of the state, the Mississippi River also supports the delta of eastern Arkansas, which is part of the nation's largest alluvial plain. The delta supports a wide range of wildlife within its wetlands and lakes and includes the largest lake in the state, Lake Chicot. Arkansas has some of the richest and most productive agricultural land in the nation. While the state has a deep cultural connection and agricultural dependance on the Mississippi River, the state has yet to pass legislation that would address plastic pollution and has enacted laws that could hinder further progress.



FINAL SCORE



Needs Improvement



Single-Use Plastics

The state has a law limiting local governments' ability to regulate single-use plastics and has not passed any laws restricting the single-use plastics covered in our study.¹



Microplastics

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



Reduce and Reuse

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



Producer Accountability and Recycling

The state does not have extended producer responsibility or deposit return programs for packaging or beverage containers. The state has also adopted policies that support harmful chemical recycling.²

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Arkansas has policies in place that are impeding progress towards addressing plastic pollution. The state should:
 - Remove restrictions on local governments and allow them to regulate single-use plastics in their communities.
 - Reverse policies that enable harmful chemical recycling technologies and undermine reduction and effective recycling practices.
- As microplastics have been shown to affect soil health and crop productivity,³ the state should consider policies to address microplastic pollution, such as requiring filters for new washing machines to reduce microfiber pollution.

Top 10 Items Collected by ICC Volunteers

- 1 Cigarette Butts
- 2 Food Wrappers (Candy, chips, etc.)
- 3 Beverage Cans
- 4 Beverage Bottles (Plastic)
- 5 Beverage Bottles (Glass)
- 6 Other Plastic Bags
- 7 Bottle Caps (Plastic)
- 8 Straws, Stirrers
- 9 Fishing Line (1 yard/meter = 1 piece)
- 10 Grocery Bags (Plastic)

¹ HB 1704, 93rd Gen. Assemb. (Ark. 2021).

² HB 1944, 93rd Gen. Assemb. (Ark. 2021). Ocean Conservancy considers chemical recycling technologies harmful if they do not recover plastic and create environmental and societal harm. Learn more about our position on chemical recycling.

³ Hoang, V.-H., et al. (2024). *Science of the Total Environment*.