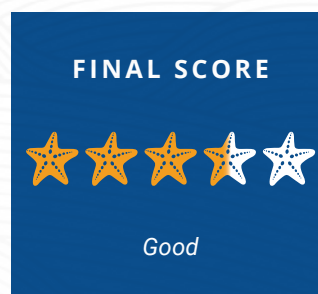
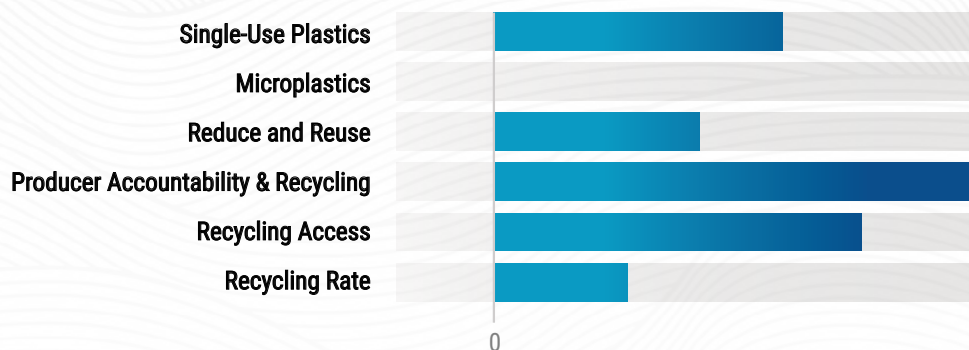


# United States OF PLASTICS

## Maine

NEW ENGLAND

Maine's rugged Atlantic shoreline stretches nearly 3,500 miles and supports iconic industries like lobster fishing, boatbuilding and tourism.<sup>1</sup> The state's economy and coastal communities depend on a healthy marine ecosystem, making ocean conservation critically important. Maine's lobster fishery is the most valuable single-species fishery in the country, accounting for 80% of the country's lobster production.<sup>2</sup> Maine is home to Acadia National Park as well as diverse marine habitats. The state has a history of environmental stewardship, including passing laws to address plastic pollution, but many opportunities remain for continued action, especially around addressing microplastics.



<sup>1</sup> ["Shoreline Mileage of the United States."](#) NOAA Office for Coastal Management. Accessed May 2025.

<sup>2</sup> ["Maine Innovation Economy Advisory Board."](#) The University of Maine. Accessed May 2025.





### Single-Use Plastics

Maine has phased out expanded polystyrene foodware and single-use plastic bags.<sup>3</sup> The state also prohibits smoking on or within 20 feet of a beach, playground or public space in a state park.<sup>4</sup>



### Microplastics

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



### Reduce and Reuse

Maine required targets for plastic reduction and reuse through the state's extended

producer responsibility (EPR) law to be set through the rulemaking process.<sup>5</sup> The state also requires that a minimum amount of funds from unredeemed deposits from the bottle bill program be used to support reuse and refill efforts.<sup>6</sup> Maine has a law that allows for the use of refillable or reusable food packaging.<sup>7</sup>



### Producer Accountability and Recycling

Maine has a long established bottle bill and was the first state to enact EPR for packaging in 2021.<sup>8</sup> Maine also prohibits harmful chemical recycling from being classified as recycling and requires financial assurances for the cleanup of chemical recycling facility sites.<sup>9</sup>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Maine's EPR law has the potential to reduce single-use plastics, improve reuse systems and increase recycling. The state should work to ensure robust and timely implementation of the law to realize its full environmental and economic benefits.
- Given the increasing detection of microplastics in seafood, including lobster,<sup>10</sup> and the importance of fisheries to the state's economy, Maine 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 Rope (1 yard/meter = 1 piece)
- 3 Food Wrappers (Candy, chips, etc.)
- 4 Beverage Bottles (Glass)
- 5 Beverage Bottles (Plastic)
- 6 Bottle Caps (Plastic)
- 7 Beverage Cans
- 8 Fishing Buoys, Pots & Traps
- 9 Grocery Bags (Plastic)
- 10 Other Plastic Bags

3 Me. Rev. Stat. tit. 38, §§ 1571 et. seq. (expanded polystyrene foodware); Me. Rev. Stat. tit. 38, § 1611. (bags).

4 SP 26, 124th. Leg., 1st Reg. Sess. (Me. 2009).

5 Me. Rev. Stat. tit. 38, § 2146.

6 Me. Rev. Stat. tit. 38, § 3108-A.

7 Me. Rev. Stat. tit. 7, § 219-C.

8 Me. Rev. Stat. tit. 38, §§ 3101 et seq. (bottle bill); Me. Rev. Stat., tit. 38, § 2146 (EPR).

9 SP 665, 131st Leg., 2nd Reg. Sess. (Me. 2024). Ocean Conservancy considers chemical recycling technologies to be harmful when they do not recover plastic and create environmental and social harm. Learn more about our [position on chemical recycling](#).

10 Woods, M.N., et al. (2020). *Marine Pollution Bulletin*.