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Scientists assemble for first annual World Plastics Summit

Scientists from around the world will come together to help tackle the global plastic pollution crisis at the first annual [World Plastic Summit](#) in Monaco next week.

The Summit aims to assemble an international community of researchers, technology developers, multinational companies, and global policy makers to accelerate the science and engineering of plastics recycling, upcycling, and redesign.

The meeting takes place from 24 to 26 March at the Novotel Monte Carlo Hotel, as part of [Monaco Ocean Week 2022](#).

The Summit is being chaired by [Professor John McGeehan](#) from the University of Portsmouth and [Dr. Gregg Beckham](#), CEO of the [BOTTLE Consortium](#), with support from Lady Oxana Girko, Mr Oleg Novachuck and the [Fondation Prince Albert II de Monaco](#).

Professor McGeehan, who is director of the University's [Centre for Enzyme Innovation](#), said: "The plastics pollution crisis is one of the most urgent challenges of our time. While plastic pollution is a global problem, research and innovation in this area is not yet globally connected. While there are pockets of excellence worldwide, and several consortia have emerged in the last few years, much more can be achieved through global connection, data sharing, and collaboration towards this common goal.

"The Principality of Monaco is internationally recognised as a neutral ground for successful diplomacy and cooperation, and with the strong commitment of H.S.H. Prince Albert II to sustainable development programmes globally, this is the perfect location to host this inaugural world summit."

The three-day meeting will cover topics including understanding the scope of the plastics problem and the issues from a carbon, energy, economic and pollution perspective, the use of new chemical and biological catalysis to break down today's plastics and upcycle them, and the use of new and existing building blocks to produce plastics that are recyclable-by-design.

Dr Gregg Beckham said: "Interaction, discussion and teamwork between biologists, chemists, engineers, environmental scientists, material scientists and sustainability analysts will be critical to generate new solutions, realise evidence-based policy, and ultimately stem the flow of plastics into the natural environment and the world's landfills. This will help move us toward the common goal of establishing a more sustainable future for the planet."

Each day, sessions will bring together key experts to share their latest research, ideas, and ambitions, with the objective of accelerating the most impactful science and technologies.

[Steve Fletcher](#), Professor of Ocean Policy and Economy at the University of Portsmouth and an advisor to the UN Environment Programme on plastic, will chair the first session on 'Framing the global plastics problem'. Professor Fletcher, who also leads the University's [Revolution Plastics initiative](#), is supporting the international efforts to develop [a global treaty to end plastic pollution](#), which could oblige all nations to reduce how much plastic they produce and emit to the environment.

He said: “Given the clear need for globally coordinated action to tackle the plastics crisis, this is an important opportunity to move towards a truly circular economy for plastic, in which the value of plastic is maintained from production through to the manufacturing of products, their use, re-use, recycling and disposal.

“This will mean a fundamental shift in how plastics are produced, used and disposed of. The eventual goal will be a move from a linear system, in which plastics are made, used and then thrown away, to a circular system in which plastic becomes a valuable resource which it makes sense to conserve.

“This will challenge current ways of working that maintain individual interests and will require major innovations in material science, product design, green chemistry, waste and recycling management, product labelling and public behaviour.”

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Notes for editors:

The University of Portsmouth is a progressive and dynamic university with an outstanding reputation for innovative teaching and globally significant research and innovation.

It was [rated 'Gold' in the UK government's Teaching Excellence Framework \(TEF\)](#) and was ranked in the top 150 under 50 in the world according to the Times Higher Education rankings.

The University's research and innovation culture is impacting lives today and in the future and addressing local, national and global challenges across science, technology, humanities, business and creative industries. <http://www.port.ac.uk/>

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