

*Waste Group*

You are a **Representative of the Plastics Pollution Coalition**

### **Your Background and Biography**

You have loved the ocean all your life. As a native of Hilo, Hawaii, you have been surfing almost since you could walk, and you cannot imagine living more than a few miles from the beach. Along with surf and sun and sand, your other great love is animals, and so marine biology was an obvious career choice. You earned your B.A. from the University of Hawaii and a Ph.D. from the University of California, Santa Barbara, where you studied sea turtles. Now you live, teach, and research in San Diego.

You love your research and sharing the excitement of your work with students. You have one of the best jobs in the world, and you love every minute of it. But you worry about the future of the ocean. Since your childhood you have noticed a significant increase in plastic trash on Hawaii's beaches, and you are concerned about the effect of plastic trash on wildlife. You have seen evidence of your beloved turtles eating and becoming entangled in plastic, and you want to stop that from happening. You feel a strong sense of responsibility both as a scientist and a surfer to address the growing problems that you see.

For the past several years you have been an active member of the Plastic Pollution Coalition (PPC). You admire the dedication of the organization, and the multitiered approach it takes to pollution control. You have made a large number of appearances as a representative of PPC, and you have published several scholarly articles on the problem of plastic pollution. As a scientist you have more authority than some of the other activists you work with, and you use that to your advantage. It annoys you when people do not take activists seriously and deride them as crazy tree huggers. The problems are real, and it's your responsibility to make people understand that. You know you were chosen to represent PPC at this hearing because of your scientific credentials, and you take your job very, very seriously.

The goal of PPC is to reduce global dependence on disposable plastic and to significantly reduce the global plastic footprint, and the coalition works on many levels to achieve these goals. First, it educates about the need to reduce consumption of disposable plastic. PPC pushes producers to take responsibility for the disposal of their products and to voluntarily engage in more sustainable practices. It also supports government regulation limiting use of disposable plastics, which is exactly what you hope will come out of these Environmental Protection Agency hearings.

This hearing is your opportunity to push for the strongest possible regulation in terms of disposable plastic reduction and environmental cleanup. PPC knows that the problems of pollution and marine debris are global in nature, but you would like to see the United States set an example for other countries. This hearing is a huge opportunity for PPC, and you are determined to be heard.

## Your Mission

Your goal at this hearing is to convince the Regulators to include the Waste Group's recommendations in their final regulation. To make this argument effectively, you must

- Complete the assigned readings listed at the bottom of this page;
- Work closely with the other members of your group to develop clear answers to the Regulators' questions;
- Make use of as much specific information as possible to develop strong arguments for your position that plastics are extremely harmful to the environment and that reducing production and consumption is the only effective solution to the problem;
- Read as much as you can about your position and the positions of the other groups; and
- Complete written reflections on your character, interest group, and readings as assigned.

## Your Victory Objectives

- You will receive 10 points if the Regulators select your group's proposal as the final regulation.
- The Regulators will rank the interest groups by how well their goals are represented in the final regulation. You will receive between 1 and 5 points based on how the Waste Group is ranked and how well the regulation reflects your goals.

## Sources

### Waste Group Sources

- Case Study: Trash and Treasure
- "The Sea of Plastics," video,  
[www.ted.com/talks/capt\\_charles\\_moore\\_on\\_the\\_seas\\_of\\_plastic.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/capt_charles_moore_on_the_seas_of_plastic.html)

### Your Individual Sources

- "Companies Pick Up Used Packaging, and Recycling's Cost," by Stephanie Strom, *New York Times*, March 23, 2012
- Select one article from the bibliography on *The Case of Plastics* website recommended for the Waste Group. Read the article and write two paragraphs summarizing the article and how it will be useful to you in the upcoming debate.