**Plastic microfibres : An underestimated pollutant**

**Each year:**
- 8 M tons of plastic are discarded into our oceans.
- 1 in 3 marine species get caught in our waste.
- 90 % of caballito ink plastic.

While we pay particular attention to the impact of plastic on our oceans and marine life, it equally affects land biodiversity.

**What is a microplastic?**

Microplastics are plastic particles smaller than 5 mm in size. Often invisible to the naked eye, they are produced by certain industrial sectors and cleaning products, from the degradation and fragmentation of plastic waste, and from synthetic clothing. Given their chemical stability, microplastics can persist for a long time in the environment.

Discharge of microplastics in the oceans, by source (%)

- Textile fibres: 28%
- Synthetic fabrics: 35%
- Urban dust: 24%
- Landfilling: 7%
- Microfibres: 3.7%

**Microfibres, macropollutants**

Due to bioaccumulation (the capacity to accumulate in the food chain), chemicals pass from plankton to larger fish, up the food chain to humans. They are also found in drinking water.

On average, a person ingests 5 g of plastic per week through eating and drinking. The main source of ingested plastic drinking water is estimated to be about 1,769 pieces of plastic per week just through the water they drink.

Solutions exist!

Washing machine filters have been developed in order to reduce the amount of microfibres released into the environment. They trap at least 87% of plastic microfibres.

The GRAME, in collaboration with participating cities and RCCQ, Quebec is offering a grant to purchase a plastic microfibre filter. Citizens will need only pay taxes.

You can do other things to reduce the number of plastic particles generated during clothes washing and reduce your environmental impact:

- Wash clothes red/orange/yellow and white separately.
- Wash in cold water.
- Use cold detergent (e.g. Rukus).
- Buy clothes made of natural fibers.
- Buy second hand clothes.

For more information go to: grame.org/en/microfibres