



# Rover manifesto on governing own behaviours to eliminate single-use plastics and leading the change in south africa

## Introduction:

South Africa, like many other countries around the world, is experiencing a plastic crisis. Single-use plastic waste is becoming increasingly prevalent on our streets, rivers, townships, and rural communities. Plastic bags, straws, polystyrene containers, and wrappers are disposable items that last only a few minutes but remain in our environment for hundreds of years.

Single-use plastics (SUPs) significantly contribute to environmental degradation by harming wildlife, clogging drainage systems, and endangering human health. Despite government efforts to regulate plastic use, such as plastic bag levies and proposed bans on certain single-use plastics, implementation is inconsistent, and public awareness remains low.

SCOUTS South Africa, a youth movement dedicated to environmental stewardship, is taking action. We are raising awareness about the dangers of single-use plastics and leading grassroots action in our communities to achieve long-term change.

## The need for change:

- **Environmental harm:** SUPs pollute ecosystems, especially rivers and oceans. Plastics are the most common litter on South Africa's coastlines and waterways.
- **Health risks:** Microplastics have been found in drinking water, seafood, and salt, raising concerns about long-term health consequences.
- **Economic Costs:** Cleaning up plastic waste strains municipal budgets and impacts tourism and local businesses. Poorer communities with limited waste management infrastructure are disproportionately affected by plastic pollution.

## SCOUTS South Africa Rovers' Plastic Tide Turners Commitment:

We, as Rovers and registered members within the **Scout Movement in South Africa**, guided by the principles of service, leadership, and environmental consciousness, commit to:

### Personal choices

- I choose to be part of the solution, not the pollution.
- I acknowledge that my sustainable actions are aligned to the Scout Principles and Law.
- I will govern my actions, reduce my plastic footprint, and turn the tide on plastic pollution.
- I commit to making small changes that create a ripple of impact.
- I endeavour to lead by example in my daily life and my actions in Scouting.
- I acknowledge that I have the privilege to share our natural environment and the responsibility to safeguard it for generations to come.

### Educate and empower

- I will promote sustainable alternatives and educate on the risks of using SUPs.
- I will aim to educate young leaders and Rovers to be Plastic Tide Turners Champions, advocating for a plastic-free lifestyle.



### Lead by example

- I will participate / organise annual community clean-ups to target plastic pollution hotspots.
- I will endeavour to ensure that Rover gatherings and camps are free from SUPs.
- I will implement SUP-free practices in our Scout Groups, such as reusable mess kits.
- I will promote my commitment and sustainable actions on my personal social media channels to inspire others.
- I will encourage and support circular economy solutions such as recycling and upcycling in my Scout Group and community.

We believe that the power of collective youth action and environmental stewardship can change our society, one community at a time. SCOUTS South Africa's Rovers are stepping up and are prioritising responsibility over convenience, community over consumerism, and sustainability over short-term gain.

We call on our Rovers to sign the Manifesto below and share your commitment with your Crew and online following.

**By adding your name below, you are making a promise to the environment, a commitment to our planet and to future generations. It's your commitment to turning the tide on plastic.**