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Special Issue Reprint

Microplastics in Aquatic Environments

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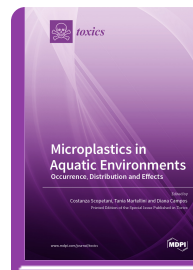
Costanza Scopetani

Tania Martellini

Diana Campos

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The large production and widespread daily consumption of plastic materials which began in the last century, together with the often inadequate collection and recycling systems, have made plastics and, consequently, microplastics (MPs) ubiquitous pollutants. Microplastic pollution as a global concern is confirmed by the research papers collected in this Special Issue; these papers come from 28 Universities and research institutions and are spread across ten countries on three continents. This Special Issue collected and published 11 novel contributions focusing on microplastics in aquatic environments, their occurrence and distribution, and the effects they might have on the environment and biota. As Guest Editors of this Special Issue, we were pleased to receive several papers concerning the interaction between microplastics and biota; despite a large number of peer-reviewed papers published on this research topic, there are still several gaps that need to be filled and there is concrete evidence suggesting that microplastic pollution may constitute a serious hazard to aquatic biota. The results of the contributions collected herein have helped to fill some knowledge gaps about the occurrence, distribution, and effects of microplastics on aquatic ecosystems. The outcomes clearly indicate that microplastic pollution is a serious environmental issue; the scientific community should increase its knowledge and understanding of how it could affect the environment, biota, and humans, and how it could be reduced and prevented.



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