

Precious Oceans Reveal The Sad Reality

On Earth, we produce four billion tons of plastic per year. About 100 tons of waste end up in the sea, not per year but per second! 100 tons is the size of 17 elephants, so imagine throwing 17 plastic elephants per second in the sea! It is huge. It's why at this moment, we often talk about the seventh continent of plastic in the ocean. Many fish swallow plastic, and this can result in health problems, or an inability to eat because of indigestion.

According to *'Futura Sciences'* and *'Sciencepost'*, recently, two whales were found dead on two different beaches in the Philippines and in Sicily with a lot of plastic in their bellies. A lot of fish eats plastic because they believe that plastics are their prey. For example, turtles eat jellyfish, but jellyfish is look like plastic bags. So, turtles eat plastic bags. It's a sad reality. Are you interested in eating plastic fish?

How can plastic end up in the sea? According to the movie *'A Plastic Ocean'*, formerly, people thought that plastic would disappear in the sea. Why? People believed that plastic would be degraded by the sea. But with technological improvements, satellites took a lot of pictures of Earth. We can see there is a new continent of plastic: "a seventh continent." Let's go back to our present. We produce a lot of plastic, in particular, single-use plastics. We don't really have space to dispose of our trash. We often believe that all plastics can be reusable. So, we throw them in yellow recycling bins. But it is not true -- only two of seven main plastics can be reusable.

Why do we use a lot of plastic? Mainly, we use plastic for food packaging (like McDonald's packaging), or plastic bottles. Today, we also often use plastic to produce single-use products. This problem is often related to hygiene issues. We can't reuse single-use products, so we are obliged to throw them in trash. At this moment, straws, plastic cups and Q-tips are the main problems because they are small, so it's easy to leave them on the ground. Therefore, with water of wind, these products can then end up in the sea.

We can think it doesn't matter if plastic is in the sea because we don't see these products every day. But, we forgot that there are animals in the sea! Don't think there will be no consequences to our actions. Marine animals can confuse plastic with prey, so they won't eat well. Plastics stay be blocked in their intestines. In addition, plastic contains toxic and pollutant products, so it's very dangerous for their health. They could die because of this issue.

Furthermore, eating polluted sea life would mean ingesting dangerous chemicals ourselves. We will have problems linked to our health, and do you want to eat plastic fish? Plastic takes a long time to break down, about 5000 years or more. So, plastic will accumulate, therefore, the immense amount of plastic we've produced in the last 100 years still exists to this day. In parallel, plastic isn't a single problem with ocean. There is another problem such as oil spill because there is a few of ships who are flowing. It destroys biodiversity. We won't want to swim in the sea if there is a lot of plastic.

The sea has an important role in the lives of humans. According to *'oceanclimat'*, the ocean absorbs 30% of CO₂ emissions due to human activities. The sea also produces oxygen which allows us to breathe and to live. Oil spills and plastic buildup cause the acidification of oceans. This causes the sea to produce oxygen and absorb less and less CO₂.

Fortunately, more and more people want to reduce waste, by opening zero-waste shops for example. These stores use glass storage boxes to package food, and they can reuse them because they

don't need to throw them in the trash. That way, there will be less and less plastic and waste. But that wouldn't be nearly enough to curb global warming. Recently, the French government banned plastic bags in stores, which is good news. But companies and governments slow down the ecological transition, because according to them, we don't have enough time to change everything by reason of the absence of created technologies such as substitution of plastic for plastic bags or machinery to clean the ocean. They are afraid of increasing unemployment and then decreasing economic productivity.

In my opinion, the government should have banned single-use plastic earlier. Furthermore, the ecologic transition will create new jobs in research and new technologies to figure out how to take care of all the plastic in the sea to improve the quality of bags without using plastic. To help the environment, we should learn not to use single-use products. We should say 'no' to tradespeople if they give us a straw. They will begin to become conscient about ecology, and more and more people will be careful with their waste. Tradespeople will substitute their ecological products. I think that all the countries should follow the good model of Rwanda. According to '*vivredemain*', Rwanda was the first country in the world to prohibit plastic bags in 2004. We always make do a first step to act for the world. Everyone will follow us to fight together such as we learn in a famous story '*Tale of the Hummingbird*' (cf source). Governments will be able to modify laws as we want. In my opinion, all political parties have to have an ecological conscience.

To conclude, I will quote a famous sentence from Albert Einstein: "If the bee disappeared off the face of the Earth, man would only have four years left to live." In my opinion, if the fish disappeared because of plastics on the Earth, humankind would also be threatened by this issue. So, we must react and change our behaviors faster so that it isn't too late to save our Earth because we don't have a second Earth, except if we can live on another planet like Mars. But in my opinion, I disagree with moving to another planet because Earth gave our existence and not another planet. If we lived on Mars, we still would throw away plastics because we don't yet know how recycle all materials. However, we have already polluted the space because we left the rest of the rockets in the space for example. To be continued.

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