

Marine waste and Microplastics;

The solution to ocean pollution

Introduction:

Marine waste and microplastics. This problem started slowly but is now a major issue more than ever. After putting out a survey to 30 people 93.7% of them know and are aware of Marine waste and Microplastics, yet only 30.1% of them sometimes or always recycle. Scientist believes that we only have about 11 more years before Earth become too heavily polluted causing countries to become immensely damaged by climate change.

Paragraph 1:

Marine waste and microplastics are tiny bits of plastic from things such as glad wraps, straws, cups, and bottles. They end up in the oceans, lakes, ponds, and



rivers. These little bits add up and heavily pollute those bodies of water. Around 8 million pieces of manufactured plastic make their way into the ocean every day (sec. 2; par 1). 80% of marine debris are pieces of plastic (sec. 1; par 4), which is about 5.25 trillion pieces of plastic in our ocean (sec. 1; par 1). 92% of that are

found on the ocean surface. (sec. 3; par 2) 70% of plastic sinks into our underwater ecosystems, 15% floats and 15% ends up on our beaches. (sec. 3; par 1)

Paragraph 2:

This is a current issue globally that we should be taking action about now. This should be taken seriously because the toxins in plastic are not only harmful to marine life but also to us. (sec. 1; par 6) Plastic is not only toxic but can take centuries to fully decompose. Over 100 thousand marine animals and 1 million sea birds die a year due to ingestion,



suffocation, or entanglement in the debris. (sec, 5; par 2) But the plastic is not just killing the animals, it is also destroying underwater ecosystems. Coral reefs and kelp forests are being littered with plastic. The acid and toxins will also damage shells and coral.

Paragraph 3:

In Aotearoa, we have the Maori word Kaitiakitanga. Kaitiakitanga has the meaning of guardianship or protection. Kaitiakitanga was our promise to protect the earth yet we are harming and polluting the ocean. Having said that, the United Nations have created 17 sustainable development goals (UN SDG) to help fight against different global issues. Marine waste is wrecking 2 of their 17 set goals. One of them is goal number 6, clean water and sanitation. The second goal is number 14, life below water. These goals relate to this topic since they are trying to clean up our water sources and create a safer environment for our marine life.

Paragraph 4:

Although pollution is a serious issue, it does not mean that we cannot correct our mistakes. There are many things that we can do to achieve these goals. Recycling of course is simple and effective, reducing the usage of single-use plastic and investing in multi-use plastic. So use things such as drink bottles

and refill them instead of buying water and throwing out the bottle. Use containers with lids rather than using styrofoam takeaway boxes or plastic wrap to store food. As an alternative to plastic grocery bags, you could use paper or fabric. Use metal cutlery and utensils rather than using plastic.

Summary:

Even though 69.9% of people who answered the survey claim that they do not recycle, they all answered the question; “How are you going to help with marine waste?” All of them stated that they will now start to recycle and reduce the use of single-use plastics. Despite the fact that 30 people are now recycling, 30 out of 7.9 billion people will barely make a difference. That is why after you have read through and taken in everything in this article, I want you to go and tell your friends and family about all of the things that you have learnt. Spreading awareness is not only a simple thing but it is an effective method. Coming together and helping out will not only form a tighter community but it will also help out those two UN SDG goals. It won't be long before our world will be a land full of sewage and toxic unsafe water. We are all running out of time so we need to act fast.

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United Nations. UN SDG 17 goals -

<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

Links to photos

Image 1 - Marine debris

<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/marine-debris/>

Image 2 - Turtle stuck in rubbish

<https://phspendulum.org/3294/news/world/worldwide-ocean-pollution/>