

The Problem with Plastic Pollution

The History of Plastic

It is common knowledge that humans are the downfall of all things to do with wildlife. But it may be less obvious just by how much damage we have done to our home.

10,000 years ago the world was thriving; everywhere you looked trees were intertwining with one another, fields were as green as grass could possibly be, and ponds had the most perfect reflection. The wildlife would parade around all day with not a single man-made creation to end their enjoyment. It was paradise. And then along came us, humans were the brutal villains in the beautiful story of the Earth. We invented a creation that we thought would make the world a better place and in doing so it did the complete opposite. In 1907 marketeer Leo Baekeland invented plastic. Everyone was in awe at such an amazing creation, thinking that this would solve all their problems. And, at that point in time, it did. This conception was making our lives a thousand times easier without costing more than a couple of pennies. But this happiness was cut abruptly short when scientists began to doubt if this item was completely sustainable. It turns out that this thing would be the main contributor to ending the world...kind of.



Who is This Affecting?

This issue affects almost the whole world and severely affects these countries:

India (126.5 million kg).

China (70.7 million kg).

Indonesia (53.3 million kg).

Brazil (38 million kg).

Thailand (22.8 million kg).

Mexico (3.5 million kg).

Egypt 2.5 million kg).

United States (2.4 million kg)

However the true victims are the animals/ species that get harmed through the effect of plastic pollution. Many beautiful creatures are kicked out of their homes because of our selfish need for paper and other materials. Large items of plastic can capture and entangle

marine mammals/ fish and stop them from escaping, usually leading to starvation, injury and predator vulnerability.

The Troubled Turtles: Between 5–13 million metric tons of plastic waste ends up in the ocean *annually*, this is equal to dumping a garbage truck full of plastic into the sea every minute. There are two ways that turtles can be injured from plastic. Ingestion and



entanglement. Ingestion is when sea turtles mistaken their natural food for plastic. For example they could think that a plastic bag is a jellyfish or that a plastic straw on the seafloor is crustaceans Entanglement is sea turtles being entangled in plastic waste. This can lead to many life-threatening injuries including hindering their capacity to swim, to feed, to reach the surface to breathe, or in many severe cases they can end up dying from drowning/ suffocation. It has been proven by scientists that 1,000 sea turtles die from plastic waste every year. This means that more than one turtle dies every nine hours. This needs to stop.

What Can We Do?

We need to change the world, and we need to act fast. The different ways we can do this is so easy and effortless that it is *disgusting* how the majority of us don't even try to make a difference.

To solve this, painful, issue we can do many things, including:

Reducing cling film usage,

There are plenty of easy, amazing substitutions for cling film; cover your food with an upside down plate, use a tub, reusable bowl/plate covers, or you could get creative and even use bees wax wrap.

Take a reusable coffee cup,

Taking a reusable coffee cup is such an easy way to be one step closer to a more sustainable world. Yes, it may get slightly soggy at the bottom but if you think of the grand scheme, this will really make a difference to the thousands of plastic cups that get thrown out every single day.

Get delivered milk,

Every morning you could wake up and see a fresh glass bottle of milk on your front door step. Not only is this nostalgic and pretty cool but it will also have huge benefits to the plastic problem. These bottles get collected and reused for many mornings to come.



Last but certainly not least-Bring reusable water bottles,

In the UK we use over 35 million plastic bottles every day. Carrying a reusable bottle is a great way to cut your plastic use and save money too. It is also extremely handy to fill up since many restaurants, cafes and bars are happy to fill your bottles up for you too.

I know these acts may seem small and pointless but I promise you that it is the little things that can make a huge difference to truly make a positive impact on our environment. The fate of the future is up to us.

[Sea Turtles WW](#)

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