

## **Global Goals**

Project assignment. Life below water.

Plastic is one of the world's biggest problems right now. The oceans are filled up with waste and plastic. Imagine 15 grocery bags filled with plastic trash piled up on every single yard of shoreline in the world. That's how much land-based plastic trash ended up in the world's oceans in just one year. The world generates at least 3.5 million tons of plastic and other solid waste a day, 10 times the amount a century ago, according to World Bank researchers. The U.S. is the king of trash, producing a world-leading 250 million tons a year—roughly 4.4 pounds of trash per person per day.

No one denies that plastic has been an incredible invention for mankind. Without it, industrialization would have not been possible to the degree we see today. However increasingly, we are now increasingly noticing that our lands, riverways and oceans have been choked by waste plastic. Our insatiable dependence on plastic has led us to a man-made environmental crisis which is currently still growing in size. Our oceans and beaches are increasingly awash with waste plastic, while plastic dumping and landfill is at an all-time high.

### **Plastic isn't all bad is it?**

No, plastic isn't all bad. You can use plastic in many things such as computers, phones, cars etc. Industrialization wouldn't been possible to the degree we see today. The problem isn't all plastic it's single use plastic. A plastic bag for instance is used on average for 15 minutes yet could take 100 – 300 years to fragment. Our insatiable dependence on plastic has led us to a man-made environmental crisis which is currently still growing in size. Our oceans and beaches are increasingly awash with waste plastic, while plastic dumping and landfill is at an all-time high.

It can be incredibly useful. Diabetics use it for their disposable syringes; arthritic patients have it for their replaced hips; and construction workers wear it to protect their heads. Without it we wouldn't have computers, mobile phones or cars. Essentially, it is vital. The big problem is single use plastics and the quantities in which they are used. A plastic bag for instance is used on average for 15 minutes yet could take 100 – 300 years to fragment.

### **Plastic in the sea**

Studies on deep sea animals shows that plastic particles are found in their digestive system. To date, studies on the effects of plastic contamination on marine biosphere have focused on species closer to the surface. The new study covers six of the world's deepest seas. In the Mariana Valley east of the Philippines, the deepest area of the world, plastic particles were found in all the animals sampled. Plastic particles are found in animals in all deep waters, from Japan, New Zealand and Peru. The depths range from six to eleven miles. Of the 90 individual animals studied, plastic particles were found in 65 or 72%. After further inspection, most of the plastic bags were clothing materials like nylon. The composition of the materials had changed with respect to new plastics, which is thought to indicate that the plastic sheets are a few years old. They float at first when they are dumped into the sea through a school drain or from rivers. Over time, bacteria accumulate around the particles,

causing them to sink. More than 300 million tons are made of plastic annually. At least five thousand billion plastic parts are already floating in our world.

### **Plastic is in everything**

Humans also eat and drink plastic just without knowing it. Some of the things that contain microplastic is bottled beer, water and honey. The products can contain up to 2660 pieces of plastic per kilo. The plastic comes from the fibers in synthetic clothes which it exhibits when it gets washed. You also eat plastic when you eat seafood. The animal in the sea eats plastic, then we catch the fish and eat them and the plastic. That doesn't mean we have to stop drinking or eating these things or being paranoid about drinking or eating things in general. We just need to slow down on plastic production and usual.

We asked people what they thought the solution was to plastic pollution.

**Question: So, what can we do to stop plastic? and what can big companies do?**

#### **Answers:**

- We can form a group of soldiers that kill plastic.
- stop producing it
- Recycle it
- increase the production of aluminum and glass instead of plastic
- screaming stop on plastic
- Use multi-purpose bags
- protest plastic

Hekla, Íris, Alma, Laura, Nadia