TRENDING

Have You ever Wondered where Does the Plastic You Use End Up?

By bestfolkmedicine · 06/12/2019 · 2 min read



Sadly, today, the world produces more than 380 million tones of plastic on a yearly basis that ends up as a pollutant of our environment and our oceans. However, not all of the plastics we throw away ends up in the oceans- a lot of it ends up in landfills too.

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Estimates show that 3 percent of the global plastic waste goes in oceans. A lot of the plastic materials we make have lower density than water and float at the ocean surface.

If we're polluting our oceans with millions of tones of plastic every year, we probably have released tens of millions of tones in the recent decades. So, why do we find at least 100 times fewer plastics in the surface of our waters?

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This discrepancy is also known as the missing plastic problem and it needs to be adequately addressed to be certain where plastic waste could end up and how it would influence our ecosystems, wildlife, and overall health.

The Disastrous Impact of Plastic on Sea Life

With a still immense amount of plastic going into our oceans, marine life is suffering. They ingest plastic and thus, experience internal injuries, are unable to eat properly, and some even starve to death.

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Many animals will also experience health deterioration due to the chemicals from the plastics. A lot of these animals are often seen wrapped or strangled in plastic materials which impede or prevent their movement, further putting their lives at stake.

Consequently, we also end up eating seafood that's been exposed to plastics. According to the Global Ocean Commission, around 3 billion individuals rely on the ocean for 20 percent of protein in their diets.

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Unfortunately, global fisheries are being threatened by overfishing and climate change.

Do You Know where Your Trash Goes?

According to Andrew Spicer, who teaches corporate social responsibility at the University of South Carolina, we don't always know what happens to our garbage.

Even with recycling, there are no global regulations, but an international recycling business that is focused on profit. This is a long and dirty market that gives some companies the chance to take advantage of a rule-less world, claims Spicer.

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A large part of the plastics we get rid of ends up to some village in Asia through a trading network which extends through oceans and continents. It’s a complex and nefarious network in which only some consumers understand their role.

Sources:

ONE GREEN PLANET

OUR WORLD IN DATA

THE GUARDIAN

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