

Endangered marine life essay

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Subject: Endangered marine life and saving our oceans

My passion is the ocean. I love sea animals and I am worried about all sea life. Our oceans hold finite resources which humans are consuming and destroying. I want to speak up for our oceans that are slowly dying. For us here, it seems so far away but it will affect all of us if the oceans die. The oceans give us every second breath and regulate the climate.(Oceana) I have had lots of amazing experiences with marine animals and I am scared about the problems they have. The problems are so huge that the whole world must help stop these from getting worse.

Pollution

We have been burning fossil fuels which is increasing the levels of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere. Everyone knows that this makes global warming and is melting the Arctic and Antarctic ice. What I did not know was that lots of carbon dioxide is going into the ocean and changes the chemicals, making the water acidic. It's bad for all the shellfish because the acid is making them so soft so that their enemies can crunch them easily or they die from exposure. Over the last 230 years the oceans have become 30 percent more acidic (One More Generation) which is really horrible! it is destroying ecosystems.

Also the warming of the oceans has cause so much bleaching of the coral that nearly the whole reef in some areas is affected. 50% Of The Great Barrier Reef is now dead or dying and 93% is bleached. (ifl science)

Noise and light pollution is another problem that disturbs animals from breeding and feeding. Whales sonar is disturbed by noise from mining and shipping. Adult and hatchlings sea turtles get confused by the lights of the coastal cities and oil rigs (Oceana) because they think it's the light of the moon which makes them go off course. Also the problems of litter and chemicals ,oil spills and gas leaks.

Poisoning the water and the wildlife. In some countries rivers don't get treated and all the rubbish from cities, streets goes to the ocean. The plastic then floats in the currents around the world and gathers in great patches and then washers up beaches. Every year over 8,000,000 tonnes of plastic goes into the oceans.(the ocean cleanup) That is terrifying!! it is the same as over 2 ½ million Audi Q7s cars dumped in the ocean. It's killing animals directly and it could kill us too. The tiny chemicals released by plastics when they are eaten are being absorbed into the food chain and we will soon be eating them. (the ocean cleanup) They can cause cancer and other diseases.

On my field trip to Sardinia, I visited the International Marine Center (IMC) I spoke to scientists researching oceanography, rising temperature and sea water levels, the currents and waves. Also marine biologists about fish movement, low oxygen levels and acidity effects on shellfish. What they told me matched to my research from the Internet. Most of the facts they told me were bad news for the ocean. They try to solve the problems with more education and research. At the center the director, Angelo Perilli, told me that in washing machines when polyester is washed tiny bits of this material come off and cannot be filtered out because they are too small to be caught. They get washed out to the ocean. The plankton are eating these and the small fish eat the plankton, then bigger fish than us. We will be absorbing theses chemicals.

Fishing

Another problem is how we consume the ocean. We are destroying the ocean by taking more out than we need and not fishing for the future. I feel that the way we take from the ocean is wrong and we need to take a little amount, some animals are becoming extinct because of us. I was very shocked to find out the number of sharks killed every year, it is estimated that 100 to 200 million are killed for their fins alone. (Shark Friends) Shark fins cost up to US\$650 per kilogram. A single whale shark fin can cost US\$20,000, the whale shark is protected but this does not stop some people. (Shark Fin Trade) They catch the sharks, cut off the fins then through the live shark back in the ocean to let them die. It is like cutting of your arms and legs and leaving you to bleed to death.

The selling of sea animals, some endangered, for tourists and traditional medicine is very wrong. It is estimated that over 1 million seahorses are used in the curios trade and over 150 million are used in traditional medicine trade, this is just not sustainable and could be extinct in the wild in the next 20 to 30 years. (The Seahorse Trust)

People should not buy any of these, as tourist for souvenir or as medicine. There has to be limits and controls to save these animals.

When I found out about 'monster boats' I was scared. The monster boats are huge industrial fishing boats which I think are horrible. They destroy much of what they catch,the ecosystem and environments. Greenpeace has called the monster boats because of this and the bycatch they have.

Many of these boats are repeat offenders and keep breaking fishing laws. Their nets are so huge, as long as 2 Eiffel Towers, 600m and 100m to 200m wide. (Greenpeace) They scoop up everything including animals they don't want, this is bycatch and is thrown back dead to the ocean. Only 10% of fish caught in the world are eaten.

Ninety percent of the fish stocks are fully fished or overfished. (Seafood Watch) There was a world meeting in 2014 with 48 countries about fishing and it was decided to allow a 20% annual increase over three years in quotas of bluefin tuna caught in the Mediterranean and East Atlantic. (The Guardian) This is just ridiculous because bluefin tuna are a critically endangered animal like the panda. Would you care more if it was a panda? People should be more aware of what is happening in the world and look at what fishing method is used and what type of fish we eat. We have to think about the animals, they deserve our protection, we have to stop eating endangered fish and choose common fish. We need to change our minds about our food we choose.

How can we help? I asked what could we do to stop the damage to our oceans? There are many small ways that could help if everyone would actually do them.

- Buy sustainable fish and know which fish is not ok to buy. You can get the app called Seafood Watch.
- Produce less carbon, to help the whole world. Drive your car less, walk instead of drive, turn off the lights, be aware of what you use.
- Take care of the beaches by cleaning it up.
- Speak up to officials if you see endangered animals on menus or in shops.
- Take action with the organisations that help the oceans. You can become a member, donate, buy their books, dvds, toys, give them as gifts or sign their online petitions about new laws to protect animals.
- Use social media to educate other people about the oceans and fishing.
- Use less plastic, use reusable bottles, containers and bags.

Conclusion

Our oceans are being robbed and habitats are being destroyed at an incredible rate. The main reason is of course, like every major disaster, war or environment problem on this earth is **money**. Money is a villain, we have to stop being so greedy. For some fishermen it is really hard to earn for their family, they try to catch everything they can and can not buy turtle safe hooks and nets. The real problem is the big monster boats. They want to make too much money and they are not caring about the environment.

There are people that want to have a beautiful ocean for the next generations. They are trying to save the marine life and the ocean by making people aware and taking action. I visited Laguna Di Nora Aquarium and Turtle Rescue Center, in Sardinia, I helped them with the turtles. One had a hook in its throat which they had to operate it out. The other they thought had swallowed plastic, but the xrayed him and he was fine. I helped remove parasites and soon he will be ready to go free. The marine biologists I worked with are trying to educate the locals and tourists. At the centers restaurant they get the fish right from the local fishermans boat. They only take sustainable fish and it must be the right size.

After researching my project I am worried about everything that's happening to the ocean but I'm glad there are people who are trying to help. I am one of those people. I cleaned 3 beaches with my mum and dad, we collected 8 big rubbish bags and a whole heap of big plastic boxes and buckets. I will make a website about cleaning your local beach or any beach or river where you are. The oceans need you!

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