

Saving the World: From the Plastic Menace

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Abstract

It is about the impact of plastic on our planet.

Saving the world: From the plastic menace

Plastic was once considered one of humanities greatest discoveries to ever exist. Discovery of plastic lead to the beginning of a new era. In today's world plastic is part of the daily commodities in a person's life and can be seen everywhere. Plastic became famous due to the fact that it is lightweight, durable and extremely versatile hence could used for countless applications.

Plastic was discovered in 1862 by Alexander Parks and was called parkesine. During the time of its invention plastic was very expensive as a result it did not become famous. In 1907 the first synthetic plastic was developed. During the 1920's and 1930's modern plastic was developed. It was from the 1950's onward that plastic became famous and widely used.

Plastic is used for various different purposes like making water bottles, cups, pens and many other daily use items. In the medical industry they are used for making equipment's like syringes, sterile packaging medicine tubes and bags etc. In the transport industry they are used to make vehicles lighter by changing some parts like cup holder or dashboard to plastic making vehicles fuel efficient with more mobility.

While there are many benefits of plastic the ugly truth is plastic is just a temporary convenience. In reality plastic causes harm to planet to the extent it can threaten the very existence of life as we know it. That is why plastic which was once considered one of humanity's greatest creations now it is considered one of humanity's worst invention.

This is because plastic does not decompose like other natural wastes it takes about 20 to 500 years. During this time plastic gets piled up filling our landfills forcing us to make more space to throw them leaving us no choice but to drive out animals from their homes and use those areas and our landfills. More than 381 million tons of plastic every year and it is said to double by 2034.

In the case of animals being driven out is not the only concerning problem. The most concerning issue is that animals consider these wastes as food and consume them. Plastic cannot be digested as a result it lays dormant in the stomach of the animals slowly poisoning and killing them. According to statistics more than 1 million seabirds and 100,000 marine animals die from consuming plastic every year. 100% baby turtles have plastic in their stomach. Millions of land animals die due to plastic consumption.

One of the most dangerous after effect of plastic is micro plastic. Micro plastic is formed as the result of degradation of larger plastic materials that were thrown away. Micro plastic is detrimental to health of the environment and all living beings including humans. The reason for this is because micro plastic is not visible to the naked eye as a result we would not know if it has penetrated into our bloodstreams. Micro plastic exposure can lead to heart attacks, cancer, reproductive problems and many more. It also harms the animals in similar ways.

Micro plastic cannot be avoided at this point due to the fact it is found everywhere in the world. The environment has been polluted with micro plastic since most of the plastic is put in landfills. Micro plastic seeps into the soil decreasing its fertility making it less suitable for plants to grow. It affects the ability of plant to perform photosynthesis. It can be in the water we drink because almost all water bodies have been prey to dumping of plastic this results in water being contaminated by micro plastic in other cases it could be from the plastic bottles that people drink from. Animals consume plastic by accident and the meat we receive is also packaged in plastic as a result even the food we eat is contaminated with micro plastic. From what we have seen plastic brought many revolutionary changes and was thought to be the answer to many problems humans faced, at same time it also began to slowly poisoning our planet, becoming a rising threat. There is still enough time to make a difference and save our planet from this threat. People need to find an alternative to plastic that does not harm the environment. If people remain in the same position and not make any effort, then one day the earth will be laid to waste resulting in catastrophic elimination of life as we know it.

Acknowledgement

I am sincerely grateful that I have been given such a wonderful opportunity to do this research paper. I express my gratitude to Miss Vasantha who guided me to the successfully completion of my project. I am thankful she was there to encourage and motivate me to do this project which remained constant till the completion of this project.

I extend my sincere thanks my principle Ms. Fathima Martin and Ms. Teresa who gave me the opportunity and facilities to do my project.

I thank all my friends and family who supported and motivated me throughout the process of completing my project.

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