

A plethora of plastic pollution!

In my youth every family had a shopping bag they reused. I fully support the return to reusable bags even though it is inconvenient. Plastic packaging is a recent craze, and should be replaced with a sustainable alternative.

The debate ¹ about bags preceding the charge for their use revealed some horrifying facts. "Biodegradable" bags do not degrade at all in the absence if sunlight, wind and rain. If land filled they remain as plastic. Worse, when they do degrade they break into tiny particles ². Every bit of plastic ever used still exists today. Plastics which end up in water enter the food chain, though our food into us ³.

Why in England do people drink so much bottled water? Why is it transported from one country to another? Traditional British draft tap water is excellent in most places ⁴. There is no problem reusing clean glass bottles if you wish to take water with you. The idea that chemicals from plastic bottles causes cancer is a myth according to Cancer Research UK ⁵. However, breastcancer.org suggests that a synthetic hormone called BPA found in plastics could be a problem ⁶.

Plastics float in watercourses and end up in the sea. Java, Indonesia has a huge problem. An extreme case, when the Citarum River reaches Jakarta its surface is impossible to see due to floating plastics ⁷. Once there ocean currents transport them throughout the world. Even Antarctica has plastic waste on its shores. Australia's extensive coastline has a huge problem with plastics pollution. 90% of the debris on Sydney beaches is plastic water bottles, caps and straws ³. I saw plastics that had been washed ashore on a beautiful uninhabited desert island in the Maldives.

Toothpastes, body scrubs and bathroom cleaners contain tiny plastic abrasive particles called microbeads ². Washed down our sinks, too small to be retained by sewage plants they are consumed by aquatic and marine creatures. Microbeads also absorb toxins from seawater and are impossible to clear up.

Anyone who does a litter pick on the village approaches will tell you of the huge collections of plastics and other packaging thrown out of car windows and blown there from other places. Enough!

More information and sources on www.kirkoswald.org

Appendix

Only one source is quoted to support each argument, each it reputable and will give leads to other sources.

1 <http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-7241>

2 <http://www.parliament.uk/topics/Pollution.htm>

3 <http://www.marineconservation.org.au/pages/plastic-pollution.html>

4 <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/etc/news-water.php>

5 <http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/causes-of-cancer/cancer-controversies/plastic-bottles-and-cling-film>

6 <http://www.nhs.uk/news/2010/03March/Pages/BPA-plastic-health-warnings.aspx>

7 <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/earth/environment/10761077/Citarum-the-most-polluted-river-in-the-world.html>

7 <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/earth/environment/10761077/Citarum-the-most-polluted-river-in-the-world.html>

8 <http://www.cancer.org/aboutus/howwehelpyou/rumors-myths-and-truths>

More information related to plastics pollution

<http://www.biogeosciences.net/12/1249/2015/bg-12-1249-2015.html>

Solar-powered vacuum could suck up 24,000 tons of ocean plastic every year (Eco Watch)

<http://ecowatch.com/2016/02/19/seavax-vacuum-ocean-plastic/>

By 2050, there will be more plastic than fish in the world's oceans, study says (Washington Post)

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2016/01/20/by-2050-there-will-be-more-plastic-than-fish-in-the-worlds-oceans-study-says/>

SeaVax - Robotic Vacuum Ship

http://www.bluebird-electric.net/oceanography/Ocean_Plastic_International_Rescue/SeaVax_Ocean_Clean_Up_Robot_Drone_Ship_Sea_Vacuum.htm

Plastic oceans: What do we know? (BBC)

<http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-34414710>

Full scale of plastic in the world's oceans revealed for first time (The Guardian)

<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2014/dec/10/full-scale-plastic-worlds-oceans-revealed-first-time-pollution>