

# the guardian

## Can People Live In Harmony With The Oceans?

In today's issue of the Guardian we will be looking at the immense quantity of people's waste that ends up in our amazing oceans. One of the biggest problems of our world today is the amount of people who don't care for our planet and take all the resources we have here on Earth for granted. What can we do to help save our blue planet before it is too late?

### Why are our oceans so important for the climate and our ecosystems?

Every year, thousands of people around the world rely on our oceans by means of food and payment (work). These oceans are the bases of peoples lives and without them many of the things we have today would be non-existent. Oceans take in approximately 93% of the carbon dioxide we produce and when in the ocean the Co2 can no longer trap heat. Without these them, humans would most likely not be able to take in the amount of Co2 in the air. Oceans also provide homes for the many marine mammals that would otherwise be extinct today. What would happen to all of these creatures if we carry on damaging the planet as we are doing now? As the human population increases, more and more cars are used and more and more fossil fuels are burnt causing more and more Co2 to enter our waters. The 1 billion people that rely on the ocean for their main source of animal protein will no longer have any fish to consume. Neither will the rest of the population, and as so many people rely on fish as a main food source when fish no longer exist there will be demands for more and more other types of meat, meaning



when fish no longer exist there will be demands for more and more other types of meat, meaning that a lot of people will eat a lot less protein and have a lot less healthy lives which could lead to humans dying earlier. Overfishing is a huge problem that we have mainly because advice given by scientists for the right amount of fish to be caught is completely ignored. Did you know that we now catch as many fish in a day that we did in a month a couple of years ago? This is because of the use of massive trawling nets that destroy the bottom of the ocean floor and the coral beds. If everyone continues to not realise and ignore the importance of oceans and the impact they have on our lives it could be too late to save our oceans.

Do you really want to destroy this beautiful underwater world?



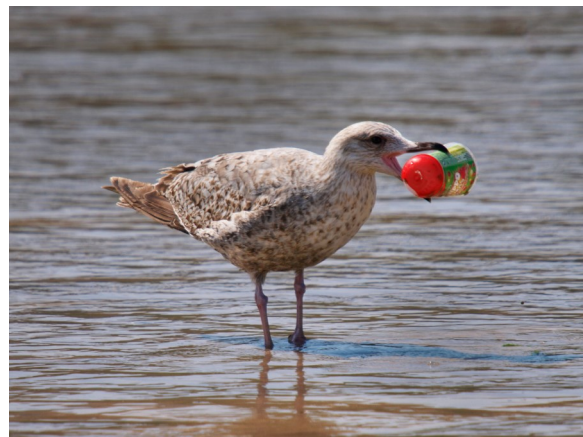
## How are humans harming the oceans ecosystems?

Humans are harming our oceans in many ways. Using cars too much increases the amount of Co2 in the atmosphere and makes heat levels in the ocean rise much more causing the algae in coral to leave. This is called coral bleaching and is being noticed more and more frequently in oceans and seas around the world. Natural threats to corals are mainly the crown-of-thorns starfish which can destroy a whole mile of coral in just one day. When humans go diving they also don't realise the importance of not harming the coral and sometimes break off a section of it. These people obviously don't realise that as soon as they do this they are actually killing that part of the coral. Another huge threat to not to oceans, but its marine life is the huge threat of overfishing that the beautiful creatures face. (to find our more on overfishing read the article on page 1) The amount of human waste that ends up in the ocean per year is extreme. This is because not enough people care about our planet and simply drop their litter wherever they want to without even thinking about where it will end up. There is actually a massive collection of rubbish in the pacific ocean called the Great Pacific Garbage Patch and it is nearly 4 times the size of the state Texas in America. Many birds, fish, turtles and other marine life eat this



Look at the state we are leaving these animals in— would you like that to happen to

rubbish, thinking it is food and a lot of the time when fish is cut open small pieces of plastic can be found trapped inside the animals organs. Do you not think that this should stop? Many Turtles swallow plastic bags thinking they are jellyfish but as they can not consume plastic it gets caught in their internal systems and they eventually die. Birds skim the ocean looking for small fish and when they spot a piece of plastic



they eat it as they think it is a fish. The amount of plastic in their bodies just increases and in the end they just cant take in any more. If you were a marine creature would you want to die just because some careless human couldn't be bothered to put their litter in the bin? Would you like your life to end just because no one cares about what will happen to their planet?

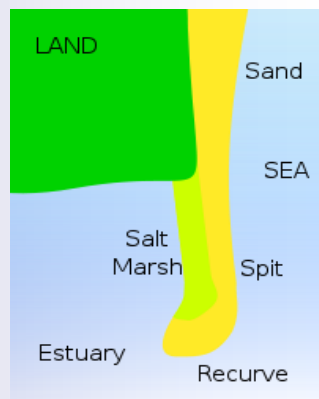
Stop littering, polluting and harming our oceans as this is your last chance, without oceans we can not survive and we only have one chance at keeping our oceans clean and in good condition. Do you want the next generations, your children, grand children, nieces and nephews to suffer because of one thing you did wrong, that one piece of litter you didn't pick up, it all adds up and helps to destroy our world? Do you think this is fair for everyone else:?

# How do oceans affect the lives of people living near them at the coast?

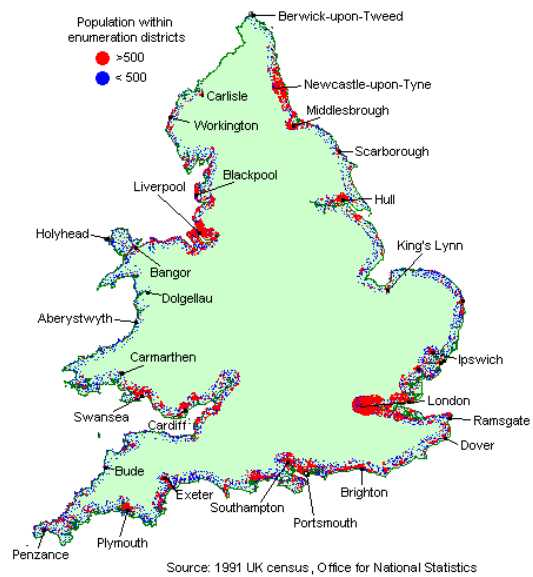
Every year many people suffer from ocean erosion. Whether it's losing a home, a vehicle or a business to the ocean it can make the lives of people living near/on cliffs very difficult. The cliffs on the east of England are made from a clay like substance which is very soft and helps to speed up the erosion process. Several meters of clay can be lost overnight to the ocean and some parts of the sediment that has fallen in the ocean is taken further through longshore drift out into the ocean and is dropped there. This is called dropping sediment. In the end all of this collected sediment can start to form what is called a spit. Coastal erosion is a huge problem but there is not that much that can be done to stop it other than a few different types of coastal defences such as groins and recurved sea walls. This is not only a problem for people living in certain houses too near the edge of a cliff, as the cliff edge will just keep creeping closer and closer and could eventually cause a major road or business to fall into the ocean. Then there would be no means of transport to a town and could effect both social and work lives for people. Erosion is a long process that basically wears away parts of a

cliff but as the material of some cliffs are softer the erosional process increases in speed causing the edge of a cliff to creep closer and closer to an inhabited area. Many members in the local area of this happening

This is how a spit is formed from dropping sediment-a process within erosion.



are complaining about the sea defences saying they look ugly and will stop people coming on holiday to seaside towns but they are desperately needed to help protect more homes. Imagine if you were one of these



people who had just lost everything they had owned and had no one to turn to for help, what would you do? If this keeps happening and no one does anything about it each year we will lose more and more homes and those people will have no where to stay, and no job to continue to earn money to buy a new house-but why should they suffer, they haven't exactly done anything wrong? People don't care about what happens to their planet and the people on it, they only care for themselves.



This is a house falling into the sea due to erosion.



# How can we solve/manage the problems discussed above?

We can solve the problems we are currently facing if every one of us humans are aware and know what is happening to our oceans. Everything helps towards saving our blue planet so doing something small like switching off lights when you walk out of a room or just relying on natural daylight can slowly have a big effect. You could use your car less and walk more to prevent too much Co2 entering our oceans and the atmosphere and help save our coral. Encourage others to do the same and use environmentally friendly materials in your everyday life such as instead of using tinfoil to keep food concealed you could use a reusable plastic container to stop the amount of litter in the Great Pacific Garbage Patch and other areas. Instead of buying tuna (and other fish) in a can that has used trawled fish from trawlers use hand caught tins of fish.

If you want to do something on a larger scale you can attend beach clean-ups and join protests/petitions to help save our oceans. To help save people who have lost their homes you can donate money or ask local councils to spend more money on sea defences. You have the power to save our world along with all the other people who you encourage to help with this problem.

By Suzanna Tischkowitz– ocean scientist

