

SKY

Our Plastic Waste Problem

2285 AB

When we want this problem to end – it will. But the People have to want it!

- 1 The amount of plastic waste my own household of two generates - in every two-week waste collection cycle – is just staggering! What a family of four or more must generate will be even more so. But what happens to it?

And therein lies a major question. It's a question which a growing number of us are beginning to ask. Some of us have been asking for some time now – and all credit to them. But it is only now – after an amount of digging – that the answers are clear. The thing is – the answers do not make for good reading!

- 2 This is the headline today for an article posted by SKY:
[Revealed: 'Jaw-dropping' amount of plastic that's thrown away by British households every year.](#)

The article centres on an exercise to measure the amount of plastic waste generated by households in the UK. It was called **The Big Plastic Count**.

A snapshot of the numbers generated by the exercise being:
100,000 homes kept track of their plastic waste for ONE week
250,000 people were involved

66 pieces of plastic waste – averaged – **per household per week**

The exercise was conducted in **May 2020**

Scaling up these numbers for the whole country:

100 billion pieces of plastic every year – from domestic households

The exercise found:

The most common items were fruit and veg packaging

The next most common items were snack bags and wrappers

46% of the plastics would be incinerated

25% would be dumped in landfill

12% would get recycled into other useable products

17% would get shipped abroad - for what is described as *processing*

The above numbers are naturally horrendous enough!

But what about the following numbers – reported by [Ocean Literacy](#).

Plastic Pollution: Key Facts

Plastic waste makes up 80% of all marine pollution

8 to 10 million metric tons of plastic ends up in the ocean each year

By 2050, plastic will likely outweigh all fish in the sea

More plastic produced in last ten years than in the previous century

The EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) says this:
Basically 100% of all plastics human beings have ever created still exist
Plastic generally takes between 500-1000 years to degrade
Even then, it becomes microplastics, without fully degrading
Currently, there's about 50-75 trillion pieces of plastic in the ocean
This plastic either, floats around ending up forming garbage patches
OR - breaks down into microplastic particles

Microplastics are tiny particles of plastic that can be - and are - eaten by marine animals and end up in their bodies and tissues, entering the food chain - **at all levels** - leading to disastrous consequences for the health of our planet and all its inhabitants.

And the point is – too few people care about this enough!

Some years ago, I noticed a sign at a Household Recycling Centre.
It read something like this:

Be mindful of where you throw things – as there is NO AWAY!
How true that point is – and we have to realise it.
We've been throwing away things in the ocean – or someone has...

NOTE: A brief word about SKY's headline: [Revealed: 'Jaw-dropping' amount of plastic that's thrown away by British households every year.](#)

I'm beginning to see this type of headline – pointing the finger at the wrong party - all the time. This headline suggests that the problem is the British households – because they throw away plastic. What are we supposed to do with plastic – eat it? Isn't the *real* problem that manufacturers package so much in plastic and have not been encouraged to find/invent an alternative?

3 **But how does all this plastic come to be in the ocean?**

That is a good question!
One article: [What's Wrong With The News?](#) - says that it just flows there!
Hmm - does it now?
Well, let's list just two ideas.

Firstly, having seen this plastic washed up on the beaches of the world, I cannot accept that it originates from waste dumped into rivers. Some of it will be, I'm sure, and that I can accept. But the volumes are huge, massive, and it is more than likely it gets there in the dead of night when the world is not watching.

1. The shipping industry

Ships are known to be the source of pollution
Ships empty their waste oils in open water – against maritime codes
If ships do this, they'll certainly deal with plastics in the same way
That includes, all shipping from the fishers, the bulkers, the oilers, right through to the cruisers.

2. Dumping by the *bottom feeder* countries

A number of countries take other country's waste for *processing*
The thing is – some are believed to be simply dumping that waste
The UK sends an estimated 17% of its plastic waste to other countries
Some are said to be these *bottom feeders*
These countries are poor and pay exceptionally low wages
There is every incentive for these countries to dump at sea
But do they?
My personal guess is – yes – they do!

4 So, where is the real problem?

Another good question!
Again, let's look a few ideas.

Firstly, Ocean Literacy also say this:
Plastics produced from fossil fuels are just over a century old, but they revolutionized our life completely. It has allowed the invention of many life-saving devices and the implementation of new technologies that changed the course of history.

However, the great advantages plastic has offered, has led to a throwaway trend that made us discover plastic's dark side, and that is:
the threat it poses to our environment and life.

What we have failed to do as a society is address the disadvantages that have accompanied the advantages of plastics. In fact, we have failed as a society in another way too.

We have failed to appoint the persons who were tasked with the role to deal with these disadvantages – among a string of unrelated others.
Those persons are grouped in what we have come to term **government**.

Given the current structure of government – and here I refer to all governments around the world - the persons in government and voted into position by us voters - are exactly the wrong persons for the task.

They have proved themselves to be incapable, if not incompetent, to deal with the problem. In fact, they have proved themselves to be disinterested in the problem generally.

For these persons - in so-called government - their first objective in life is to be re-elected. To get re-elected they have found that they do not have to do too much – and certainly not a completely satisfactory job. They simply have to sound better than their opponent in the polls. It is a situation which reminds me of this story.

*Two friends on a walking safari needed to escape a stalking lion.
The object was not to outrun the lion – but simply to outrun your mate!*

So, the role of the politician in this plastics case, is simplified as this:

1. Hide the problem from the public eye
2. That which is NOT hidden try to deal with as easily as possible
3. Don't worry about expense too much – since it's NOT our money!
4. Tell the voters what you are planning to do – as plans sound great
5. Don't worry about the future – because that is NOT about today
6. Today, we're only concerned with what's in the papers – right?!

Simplified, it is – but extremely accurate, nonetheless.

- 5 What politicians the world over don't have – at least few have it in evidence – is a moral conviction to do the right thing and to do it always. I wouldn't though blame them, as you might expect I would. The reason is this:

We are all to blame! We – referring to the collective we and being the voters – have put the fox in charge of the hen house. In other words, we have put the wrong people – with the wrong makeup and infrastructure – in place to deal with these issues of waste plastics everywhere.

The people who society should have put in place to deal with the issue is...

US. No, not the USA, but US voters.

This is a time like no other when the People need to take a long hard look at our world and step up to take charge.

And that is nothing like as mad as leaving these politicians in charge to look after the henhouse. They have never done that properly and they never will. They are the wrong people – with the wrong makeup – working within an infrastructure which does not facilitate the end result we are all looking for – and, just as important, need!

- 5 I am going to hold on suggesting how this change in our country's administrative practices can come about – and hold on the positive effects that such a change can deliver. The thoughts and ideas are almost endless.

Instead, I invite YOU – the reader – to think about the concept of the People taking over these roles for getting things done – properly – as they should be. But perhaps I could give you a start.

To get things done – in principle TWO things are required.

1. A determination of what needs doing
Politicians are not needed to take responsibility
2. Persons appointed to carry out those determinations
Politicians are not needed to take responsibility

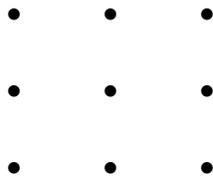
And there I will leave it for now.

I love thinking exercises – and the concept of **Out Of The Box Thinking**.

Speaking of which – try this exercise:

The clue is - You need to think outside the box.

6 The task is to connect all 9 dots – with just 4 straight connected lines.



It can be done – just like effecting a change to a new way of doing things!
Credit: Keith Leaver

CONNECT'S Maxim and Oath

Connect is only interested in finding and sharing the TRUTH.
In search of that TRUTH, we only pose questions – we have no answers.

By: David Charles

Source: CONNECT: [Magazine](#)

- 2 [LINK](#) Jaw-dropping' amount of plastic thrown away by households yearly
- 2 [LINK](#) Ocean Literacy – The data and statistics
- 3 [LINK](#) CONNECT-M3: What's Wrong With The News?
- 6 [LINK](#) Nine dot challenge: This is the proof - it Can Be Done!

FURTHER READING

- [LINK](#) Green Peace: Why is there so much plastic in the ocean?
- [LINK](#) WWF: PLASTIC IN THE OCEAN
- [LINK](#) Oceanic Society: 7 Solutions To Ocean Plastic Pollution
- [LINK](#) CONNECT-M3: is It State-Sponsored Ecocide?

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