

[intro music, nature sounds, fades in and out] Welcome back to The Nature Talk with Lily Halloway! On today's episode we will continue the topic of environmental sustainability specifically looking at ocean plastic. Ew. As the CoronaVirus brings the urgent need for personal protective equipment or PPE, many masks and gloves are contributing to ocean plastic. So, how much plastic is really in our oceans? Well that's not an easy answer. Many researchers have discussed the notion of missing plastic.

[insert audio clip: Lebreton, L., discusses missing plastic]

The answer is unclear. There is a massive amount of plastic piling up on our beaches and floating on the ocean surface. An area located between California and Hawaii is home to the Great Pacific Garbage Patch holding nearly 87,000 tons of trash created by the current patterns. Imagine how much more synthetic materials are scattered across all the oceans.

All of this plastic and synthetic debris have an enormous negative effect on the lives of marine life. Seagulls and sea turtles are dying from consuming plastic, penguins are dying from entanglement, and plankton are dying from floating plastic smothering food sources. Also, beautiful coral reefs are being destroyed beyond salvation.

But this issue is also harmful to us! [dramatic music] This pollution diminishes our quantity of water suitable for life, exposes us to many man-made chemicals linked with disease, and we can unknowingly consume microplastics from food sources like fish. Economically, there are repair and replacement costs for ships damaged by ocean plastic as well as clean up costs for coastal plastic build-up. We are creating economic and health issues by not disposing of our trash properly and buying single use products.

I hear many people say: There are so many environmental activists and organizations pairing with commercial companies to limit single use products so why do we need to advocate? Well, Listen to this!

[insert audio clip: Slat, B. discusses nespresso and national geographic ]

The companies are valuing profit over the earth's health. Disposable items are generally cheaper to produce and require consumers to buy the product repeatedly increasing profitability. Corporate heads of these companies may share a relaxed perspective about environmental sustainability like members of the older generations. Since they won't experience the irreversible effects of environmental damage in their life times. However, as our younger generation begins to take more control, hopefully we can take more drastic measures to help prevent the accumulation of more ocean pollution.

[insert audio clip: TRTWorld. Discusses the younger generations stance]

So what can we do as individuals to help prevent the build up of more plastic in our environment? [hopeful music] One, we can limit our purchases of single use products and opt for a more sustainable option. Throw away that Nespresso pod and paper coffee cup and switch to a reusable coffee filter and use your own mug! Next, you can participate in a beach cleanup if you live near the coast gathering litter before it ends up in the marine ecosystem.

So keep your oceans clean by doing your part and help the innocent marine life as well as yourself! See you next time on The Nature Talk with Lily Halloway. [outro music: nature sounds, fades in and out]