

PLASTIC PROBLEMS

Answers

How many estimated tons of plastic enter our oceans every year ?

C. An estimated 8 million tons (between 4.8 and 12.7 million tons) of plastic garbage reached the oceans in 2010. The amount is expected to rise tenfold by 2025 unless better waste management systems are installed in coastal areas where most humans live according to a study published 2015 in the leading journal "Science".

How long does it take a plastic bottle to decompose in the ocean ?

C. It takes an ordinary plastic bottle approximately 450 years to decompose. Coca Cola alone produces 110bn bottles each year, according to Greenpeace. The company confirmed that single-use plastic bottles made up 59% of its global packaging in 2016 compared to 58% in 2015. Only 7% of the collected bottles were turned into new ones.

How many big garbage patches are there currently in our oceans ?

A. There are five big garbage patches - 2 in the Pacific, 2 in the Atlantic and 1 in the Indian Ocean. The currents in the five big ocean gyres concentrate many small pieces of plastic near the surface. Some estimates suggest that 70% of the plastic waste may be on the bottom of the ocean and harm life there.

How many species of marine animals have been recorded to be affected by plastic waste ?

B. Scientific records show that some 600 species of marine animals are affected by plastic waste, however, it is estimated that the real numbers are higher. Plastic waste is consumed by animals and poisons and starves them. It can also block their respiration or hurt them in other ways. Plastic can move up the food web. Fish for human consumption has already been shown to contain plastic fibres.

What is the monetary cost of plastic waste damages to marine eco-systems ?

B. US\$ 13 billion every year, according to the United Nations. Much of this damage is caused by micro-plastics. You can help by making sure to dispose your plastic waste properly, recycle what you can and - even better - reduce your plastic use as best you can. Our oceans need our help. Ask companies to reuse plastic bottles, ask your municipality for effective garbage management and recycling. Inform others about the threat of plastic to the ocean and its creatures.

Find out more at <https://www.mundusmaris.org> or on our social media at Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube.

