

2018 International Essay Contest for Young People

[Children's Category –3<sup>rd</sup> Prize]

## **A letter travelling through time**

(Original)

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Dear reader,

It might be strange when you see the date on this letter. My intention is not to scare you. I just want to give you an important message. I am writing you from 2025. My planet is in danger and I need your help. You probably ask yourself what you have to do with that. Nothing special, you are just the one who created a problem for me. Before solving a problem, you have to understand it first. I will tell you what kind of problems I am facing.

The fantastic blue universe called The Ocean is in danger. Your generation throws a lot of plastic into the ocean. Plastic presents the biggest risk for marine life. They eat plastic and die thinking it is food or they get trapped in plastic packaging. The scientists of your time said that by 2015 there could be 155 tones of plastic in the ocean. They were wrong. There is double more. You are the one who needs to find a way to stop this. Solution is in your hands. You are the consumer. You can start using reusable bags for shopping. Also, you could stop buying bottled water. Plastic bottles are among top five polluters. So, it is better to use reusable water canteens instead.

I have one more suggestion for you. Famous people, including musicians, artists, actors and fashion designers can change people's mindset. They could help people to accept creative and inventive new products. Ocean plastic can be turned into wearable fashion. Some activewear companies can make some products from recovered ocean plastics. Why wouldn't other companies follow this example? It could help to clean oceans faster and to take plastic from shorelines worldwide.

It is well known that oceans absorb 30 percents of carbon dioxide that humans produce. You are soon going to feel that impact. It is necessary to recognize that danger, to understand potential consequences and to raise awareness. People should look into

alternatives to driving. They should walk instead. They also could use bicycles, go by public transport or share car with their friends.

You probably think there is plenty of fish in the oceans but not that much as some people think. Illegal fishing leads to overfishing. The millions of people depend on the ocean for food. We are not talking about expensive restaurants. We are talking about poor people whose lives depend on catching fish. Their ways of taking fish out of the ocean is not a big problem. Fishing industries are. They use technology and equipment that catch too much fish. They also catch little fish and they don't give them opportunity to reproduce. Your generations caught more fish than it can be replaced through natural production. The result didn't only affect the balance of life in the oceans, but also coastal communities who depend on fish for their way of life. You should put more pressure on governments to monitor and be hard to companies that break the law and do overfishing.

Jacques Yves Cousteau, the famous oceanographer said: "The sea is the universal sewer!" You should do all to change this. Think about what you do every day and what kind of impact those actions have on ocean and its marine life. Be aware that if the oceans die, we die too. Do not lean on others and think that they will solve this problem. There are many organisations fighting to protect ocean and marine life. Definitely you should be part of such organisation, but be aware that they can not solve all problems. Start from yourself, change your mindset and inspire other people to do the same. That's the only way to make better future for yourself.

Your friend from the future, Neda