

S.O.S.!

Save our seas

Fishing, pollution, hunting and climate change are all harming the world's oceans and the incredible creatures that call it home. The seas belong to all of us, so read on to see how you can make a difference...

OCEAN ATTACK!

FISHING

Next time you tuck into a fish dinner, think about where the fish on your plate came from. Most of the world's fish isn't caught by locals in little boats, but by huge ships with vast nets that drag along the bottom of the sea, catching everything in their path. Sometimes up to 80% of what's caught isn't the type of fish they want – so this 'waste' is tossed back into the sea, wounded or dead.

Fishing with long lines (hooked lines that stretch for kilometres) is also bad news for marine life and seabirds, as the hooks don't just catch fish, but turtles, sharks and albatrosses, too.

...as huge ships use ever bigger nets to empty the seas

Local fishermen are seeing fish disappear...



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Spread the word about how some fishing methods are destroying our oceans and its creatures. Eating less fish and seafood will help, but if your parents do buy fish, ask them to try smaller species from British waters, and check how they've been caught. Together, we can help our fishy friends!

The sad face of over fishing



Time out for tuna?

Can you imagine eating an endangered rhino? "No way!" you say. But shockingly, people all over the world are eating a critically endangered fish – the southern bluefin tuna. Four million tons of this fish is eaten every year, and if this continues, the beautiful bluefin will go extinct. So try to be a tuna chum and tell everyone you know not to eat it!



Bluefin is used in Japanese cooking

This huge fish is being hunted to extinction

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CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is bad news for Earth, its animals, us – and the oceans, too. Changing sea temperatures can harm the fragile marine environment, while many species are struggling to survive in warmer waters. One of the greenhouse gases contributing to climate change, carbon dioxide (CO₂), dissolves in water, which is making the world's seas more acidic, and whole ecosystems are under threat.

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You can help by saving energy, which will help to reduce the amount of carbon emissions the world produces. Encourage your family to cycle rather than drive. Don't leave electrical gadgets on standby, and have showers instead of baths. Small changes can make a BIG difference!

Coral reefs, which provide food and shelter for countless sea creatures, are being destroyed

Bring the colour back to coral reefs – fight climate change!

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POLLUTION

That old plastic bag floating in the ocean may look like rubbish to you, but to a turtle, it could be a tasty jellyfish. Gulp! Now the turtle is in trouble, as its 'tasty tea' becomes lodged in the poor animal's gut. And it's not just plastic bags causing problems – old fishing hooks, sweet wrappers and drink cans are dangerous for marine life and seabirds, too.

Harmful pesticides from farming, chemicals from factories, oil from boats and sewage can also find their way into our seas – and our sea creatures...

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Recycling your family's waste, like plastic bags and bottles, will help reduce the amount of rubbish in our seas, which is harming marine creatures – and us! Ask your family to switch to cleaning products that are kinder to the environment, too. Let's stop the planet's seas becoming a rubbish dump!

You wouldn't want to swim in polluted water...

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HUNTING

Some of our most amazing marine animals are being hunted to near extinction. But because it's happening far out at sea, it can be difficult to stop. Although whale hunting was banned in 1986, 30,000 whales have been killed since then by Japan, Norway and Iceland. And these countries, along with Greenland, want the ban lifted, which could mean disaster for these gentle giants.

Sharks are in trouble, too – scientists believe that we've lost 90% of our sharks in the last 50 years. Not only do they get caught up in fishing nets, but they're also hunted for their fins, used in Asian cooking to make shark fin soup. We need to act now before our big ocean buddies swim off forever...

Did you know...? Less than 1% of our seas are protected areas. Email the government at marinereservesnow.org.uk to let them know we need more safe areas for sea life!

Did you know...? A report has shown that if fishing continues at the rate it is now, we could run out of seafood by 2048. It's time to fight for our fish, gang! Go to endoftheline.com to find out more.

So many sharks are killed just to make soup

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Help save our whales and sharks by joining up to an organisation that helps marine wildlife, like the Whale And Dolphin Conservation Society, the Marine Conservation Society, the Shark Trust or Greenpeace. Why not arrange a sponsored event at school to help support their work – and have fun at the same time?!

Some countries still hunt whales, even though it's banned!

It's The Wildlife Trusts' National Marine Week 1-16 August. Check out wildlifetrusts.org to find out about seaside adventures happening near you!

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