



December 12, 2011

Honorable Members
Energy & Environment Committee
Los Angeles City Council
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Date: 12-13-11

Submitted in EE Committee

Council File No: 11-1531

Item No. 4

Deputy: Maria L. Espinoza

RE: CFMS-11-1531 Single-Use Carryout Bags/ City Policy

Dear Honorable Members of the Energy & Environment Committee:

On behalf of Los Angeles' business community and the hundreds of thousands of employees our industries employ, we respectfully request vetting the proposed policy among stakeholders before its adoption.

We believe a stakeholder input process will best serve all of the city's constituencies. Stakeholder dialogue will improve the proposed policy, as multiple viewpoints can more fully consider the issue. Furthermore, in our experience, stakeholder working groups build consensus for policy solutions, making them easier to implement and enforce.

In closing we stand united in support of the creation of a stakeholder working group assigned to recommending a comprehensive policy to address the issue of paper and plastic bags within the city of Los Angeles. As part of the working group we would encourage representatives of environmental organizations and city departments and offices to participate as well.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Catherine Browne
General Manager
Crown Poly, Inc.

Jonathan Kurrle
Vice President of Government
Affairs and Public Policy Society of
the Plastics Industry

Stuart Waldman
President
Valley Industry and Commerce
Association



Date: 12-13-11

Submitted in EE Committee

Council File No: (1-1531)

Item No. 4

Deputy: Maria L. Espinoza

BBC NEWS**SCIENCE & ENVIRONMENT**

20 June 2011 Last updated at 08:24 ET

World's oceans in 'shocking' decline

[COMMENTS \(237\)](#)**By Richard Black**

Environment correspondent, BBC News

The oceans are in a worse state than previously suspected, according to an expert panel of scientists.

In a new report, they warn that ocean life is "at high risk of entering a phase of extinction of marine species unprecedented in human history".

They conclude that issues such as over-fishing, pollution and climate change are acting together in ways that have not previously been recognised.

The impacts, they say, are already affecting humanity.

The panel was convened by the [International Programme on the State of the Ocean \(IPSO\)](#), and brought together experts from different disciplines, including coral reef ecologists, toxicologists, and fisheries scientists.

Its report will be formally released later this week.

"The findings are shocking," said Alex Rogers, IPSO's scientific director and professor of conservation biology at Oxford University.

"As we considered the cumulative effect of what humankind does to the oceans, the implications became far worse than we had individually realised.

"We've sat in one forum and spoken to each other about what we're seeing, and we've ended up with a picture showing that almost right across the board we're seeing changes that are happening faster than we'd thought, or in ways that we didn't expect to see for hundreds of years."

These "accelerated" changes include melting of the Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets, sea level rise, and release of methane trapped in the sea bed.

Fast changes

"The rate of change is vastly exceeding what we were expecting even a couple of years ago," said Ove Hoegh-Guldberg, a coral specialist from the University of Queensland in Australia.

"So if you look at almost everything, whether it's fisheries in temperate zones or coral reefs or Arctic sea ice, all of this is undergoing changes, but at a much faster rate than we had thought."

But more worrying than this, the team noted, are the ways in which different issues act synergistically to increase threats to marine life.

Some pollutants, for example, stick to the surfaces of tiny plastic particles that are now found in the ocean bed.

This increases the amounts of these pollutants that are consumed by bottom-feeding fish.

Plastic particles also assist the transport of algae from place to place, increasing the occurrence of toxic algal blooms - which are also caused by the influx of nutrient-rich pollution from agricultural land.

In a wider sense, ocean acidification, warming, local pollution and overfishing are acting together to increase the threat to coral reefs - so much so that three-quarters of the world's

reefs are at risk of severe decline.

Carbon deposits

Life on Earth has gone through five "mass extinction events" caused by events such as asteroid impacts; and it is often said that humanity's combined impact is causing a sixth such event.

The IPSO report concludes that it is too early to say definitively.

But the trends are such that it is likely to happen, they say - and far faster than any of the previous five.

"What we're seeing at the moment is unprecedented in the fossil record - the environmental changes are much more rapid," Professor Rogers told BBC News.

"We've still got most of the world's biodiversity, but the actual rate of extinction is much higher [than in past events] - and what we face is certainly a globally significant extinction event."

The report also notes that previous mass extinction events have been associated with trends being observed now - disturbances of the carbon cycle, and acidification and hypoxia (depletion of oxygen) of seawater.

Levels of CO₂ being absorbed by the oceans are already far greater than during the great extinction of marine species 55 million years ago (during the Paleocene-Eocene Thermal Maximum), it concludes.

Blue planet

The report's conclusions will be presented at UN headquarters in New York this week, when government delegates begin discussions on reforming governance of the oceans.

IPSO's immediate recommendations include:

stopping exploitative fishing now, with special emphasis on the high seas where currently there is little effective regulation

mapping and then reducing the input of pollutants including plastics, agricultural fertilisers and human waste making sharp reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

Carbon dioxide levels are now so high, it says, that ways of pulling the gas out of the atmosphere need to be researched urgently - but not using techniques, such as iron fertilisation, that lead to more CO₂ entering the oceans.

"We have to bring down CO2 emissions to zero within about 20 years," Professor Hoegh-Guldberg told BBC News.

"If we don't do that, we're going to see steady acidification of the seas, heat events that are wiping out things like kelp forests and coral reefs, and we'll see a very different ocean."

Another of the report's authors, Dan Laffoley, marine chair of the World Commission on Protected Areas and an adviser to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), admitted the challenges were vast.

"But unlike previous generations, we know what now needs to happen," he said.

"The time to protect the blue heart of our planet is now."

Your comments (237)

Comments

This entry is now closed for comments

Editors' Picks **All Comments (237)**

211. runthemjobs

21ST JUNE 2011 - 7:31

+2

I'm with David Attenborough on this subject, yes we may well be a destructive influence in nature, but what will be destroyed is humanity not the planet. If we do continue to destroy our ecosystems it is human beings that will eventually go extinct. the planet and and its eco systems will all recover given enough time. Life arose from very humble beginnings and survived much worse devastations.

190. hikertom

21ST JUNE 2011 - 6:41

+6

Every time you take a breath your life depends on the combined metabolic activity of millions of species of plants and animals. It is obvious that humans are altering the biosphere with no understanding of the consequences. The oceans are being depleted of life, rainforests are disappearing along with countless species they support. Many people respond by pretending it isn't happening.

186. knail

21ST JUNE 2011 - 6:32

0

Has anyone been to the ocean lately? Thirty years ago Cousteau was horrified about what was happening. Crustaceans are becoming unable to



315 W. Ninth St.
Suite 1002
Los Angeles
California
90015

info@lanlt.org

ph 213-572-0188
fax 213-572-0192

December 2, 2011

Council Member Jan Perry
Ninth District Neighborhood City Hall
4301 S. Central Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90011

Date: 12-13-11
Submitted in EE Committee
Council File No. 11-1531
Item No. 4
Deputy: Maria L. Espinoza

Board of Directors

Clive Hoffman
Clive Hoffman Associates
chairperson

Misty Sanford
Munger, Tolles and Olson
vice chairperson

Robert Reid
Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation
secretary

Gerard McCallum
Wilson Meany Sullivan
treasurer

Kelli Bernard
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power

Susan Cline
City of Santa Monica

Glen Dake
GDML Landscape Architects

Norma Edith Garcia
Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation

Lauren Gabor Goldstein

Richard Mayer, Troller Mayer Associates

Kevin Napoli
LENA Group

Bruce Saito
Los Angeles Conservation Corps

Stephanie Sherwood

Jill Black Zalban
Black Equities

Executive Director
Alina Bokde

SUPPORT: Ban of Single Use Bag Issuance by Retail Establishments in Los Angeles

Dear Council Member Perry,

The Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust (LANLT), leading the way to healthier, safer and stronger communities by creating green and recreational spaces in underserved neighborhoods, respectfully urges you to support Council Member Koretz's proposed ordinance restricting the distribution of single-use bags in Los Angeles.

We all know how much of a blight plastic and paper bags are in District 9. *What most people don't realize that they currently pay twice for these supposedly free plastic and paper bags.*

The first cost they pay is embedded by stores in the cost of groceries. According to the L.A. County Board of Supervisors Staff Report from August 2007, "An Overview of Carryout Bags in Los Angeles County," this cost, on average, is \$18 per year to use plastic bags and \$30 per year to use paper bags. Reusable bags, by comparison, are available at a one-time cost, for less than \$1 each. Even six to ten bags, for larger families, will still cost far less than \$18. We do not believe small stores nor low-income or elderly people will be adversely affected by the proposed measure.

The second cost people pay for single-use bags is included in their taxes to help clean up bag blight from our neighborhoods and storm drains. For instance, Californians use an estimated 12 billion plastic bags per year. According to CalRecycle, only three percent of these bags are actually recycled. The rest end up in landfills or as litter. Los Angeles, along with other municipalities statewide, spends more than \$25 million each year to clean up plastic single-use bags from public places, storm drains, and from our waste stream. Local taxpayer dollars are also spent to comply with Stormwater Permit requirements and other standards in communities with "trash-impaired" waterways as defined under the federal Clean Water Act.

Growing Healthier Communities through Urban Parks & Gardens



We at LANLT believe those clean up dollars could be much better spent on economic and neighborhood development, creating jobs and opportunities among our underrepresented constituencies. We therefore support Council Member Koretz's proposed ordinance to phase out the use of both types of single-use grocery bags and to encourage the use of reusable bags.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alina Bokde".

Alina Bokde, Executive Director
Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust
315 West 9th Street, Suite 1002
Los Angeles, CA 90015