

When you think of reducing plastic waste, your mind immediately turns to the idea of using less plastic straws or bottles, because this is what we're taught to do.

We're taught that these items effectively cause plastic pollution, and that they're drowning our oceans in it.

However, we are being fed lies. These products account for only a minor volume of the plastics that spill into the Pacific garbage patch each year when compared to the plentiful plastic waste of the fishing industry.

In fact, the piece of fish on your plate causes more damage to our ocean than any plastic product you would find in a store. Fish nets used by huge industries are carelessly chucked into the ocean after use, causing animals such as whales, turtles and sharks to be suffocated by the brutal nets every single day. And we aren't referring to a small number of nets here, fishing nets make up an astonishing 50% of the ineradicable plastic in the ocean. Not only does the industry directly kill sea life, it also does so indirectly through the use of these nets.

Overfishing is a massive problem for coral reefs, with nets destroying entire ecosystems below the surface.

25% of all marine life resides in coral reefs, which are being decimated by the traps set for fish and even blown apart by dynamite from blast fishing. So called "fishing down" is a practice caused by overfishing, where commercial fleets must travel farther down the food chain and deeper into the ocean in order to find practical catches.

63% of global fish inventories are now considered to be overfished, and can you imagine the damage this is doing to fragile ecosystems? Species rely on one another for food and the maintenance of their environment, and we are unnaturally destroying this balance.

The devastating, hard-to-face truth is that the fishing industry poses a fatal threat to our survival, as well as the survival of our oceans.

We need to reduce the consumption of fish, if not to protect our oceans, then for our own survival. For the survival of our families.

We associate the absorption of CO2 emissions with the millions of trees in the Amazon rainforest, the so called 'lungs' of our planet. However, once again we have been fed a lie.

93% of global CO2 emissions are absorbed by algae in the sea. This algae is destroyed when companies utilise trawling methods for fishing – dragging a net across the sea bed.

3.9 billion acres of sea land where algae grows is churned up every single year.

Algae is crucial to our survival. If we are unable to absorb that 93% of global CO2 emissions, global temperatures will increase rapidly, dangerously, fatally, and they won't stop climbing. If this continues, we will cause our own extinction.

I am asking you today to listen and stop eating fish. We are consumers, responsible for feeding and growing the industries we choose to buy from. If enough of us stop, or reduce our fish intake, we can force these industries to adopt more sustainable practices.

You cannot eradicate the waste you have produced from eating fish in the past, but you can eliminate any further destruction in the future.

Do it for your families, your children and the generations yet to come who do not stand a chance unless we make the changes needed now. If you don't make the sacrifice for yourself, won't you do it for the millions who will come after you? This is their Earth too, don't force them to inherit a crisis they have not caused.

Information on overfishing is available online through simple searches, and there is also a very useful documentary entitled "troubled waters" available on YouTube that outlines the main issues of overfishing. I implore you to explore the details of this problem further.

This is just one solution to a very complex problem – but a necessary one in order to prevent catastrophe. Stop eating fish.