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SDG2030 Paper

The SDG2030 goal that resonates with me most is the life underwater goal because I SCUBA dive. I understand what its like to see life underwater and understand what the defining reasoning behind protecting it is; its extremely bountiful and wonderful to see. From experience, I can say that there is so much more diversity in 30m³ of water than there is of the same amount of space on land. While diversity is not the only important idea from the ocean, it is something that every person should experience in order to understand why the ocean and reefs are worth protecting.

In the last few decades, we have seen a dramatic decrease in coral reefs in all oceans around the world, with a large amount of damage being done to both the reefs in the Gulf of Mexico and Oceania. I witnessed my mother-in-law Kristie pull a plastic sprite bottle that was lodged in a coral reef in Roatan, Honduras during my diving trip in July of 2019, and at that moment something truly clicked about how important it is to manage waste responsibly; specifically, plastic waste. I did a research project during my spring 2020 semester on the mismanagement of plastic waste in the world and the number one country for ocean plastic pollution was China and number two was India, followed by many south American countries.

If I had the resources necessary, I would want to work on ways to remove plastics from the ocean and recycle it, possibly turning the plastic waste into building blocks to create a strong material used for building houses and solve an issue with affordable housing. There are plenty of different viable options to eliminate plastics in the ocean, as well as start better waste management programs to prevent plastics entering the ocean in the first place.

Egger, M., Sulu-Gambari, F. & Lebreton, L. First evidence of plastic fallout from the North Pacific

Garbage Patch. *Sci Rep* **10**, 7495 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-020-64465-8>

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-020-64465-8>

This article goes over how plastic has finally started to affect ocean life in the pacific.