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COS 300

Script Outline – Podcast Assignment

Good Morning, Afternoon, or Evening, depending on where you are listening to this podcast from, my name is Riley Payung and I am a Computational and Data Sciences Student at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia, United States of America. For one of my classes I am required to complete a podcast assignment in which I discuss my specifically chosen SDG2030 goal of Underwater Life. The SDG, for those of you who may not know is a set of goals set out by United Nations on many subtopic issues to be completed by a specific timeframe, in this case, 2030. I chose Underwater Life simply because I love to SCUBA dive, and there are plenty of subtopics that can be discussed on the issue. I will be focusing on the ingestion of microplastics and the pollution of plastics in our oceans and waterways.

Segue.

It should come as no surprise to any modern human being that there is a large discrepancy in the amount of plastic that we recycle and the amount that we produce. Since its invention, over 8.3 billion metric tons of plastic have been produced, and of that, only about ten percent is currently in use; the rest is either recycled into new plastics, incinerated causing further pollution, or thrown away, where it ends up in either a landfill or waterways. The average lifespan of a single piece of plastic is less than five years. One can imagine that after those short five years, that piece of plastic could end up in the ocean.

Segue.

It has been found that marine life has been ingesting ocean-bound plastic on a global scale, and no, I am not talking about the sea turtle with a plastic straw stuck in its mouth, I am talking about microplastics. Microplastics are little, sometimes microscopic, pieces of plastic that are ingested by animals and can sometimes lead to health-related problems. While you may be quick to assume, “Oh, I’m a human, I don’t ingest microplastics,” you should think again, because they’re all around us. Humans ingest microplastics daily, some more than others. In a study done by Cox, Covernton, and others, seafood contains approx. 1.48 microplastic per gram. Meaning that filet you just ate at a restaurant, or at home in this case because of COVID19, probably contained microplastics. Albeit, there is probably not very many, but for someone who consumes mainly seafood as their diet, this number is greatly increased. Japanese diets contain mostly seafood, so it is not surprising that they are disproportionately affected by microplastic. With the diet they eat, they consume up to approx. 154 microplastics daily, just from seafood. This ingestion could have lasting effects on their health, and it should put into perspective the dangers of plastic pollution in the ocean.

Segue.

Thanks for listening, I hope you enjoyed learning some about Underwater Life, my SDG2030 goal. If you would like to know more about this topic, you can visit my portfolio and read the full length paper and view the infographic at rpayung.weebly.com. If you would like to help end plastic pollution, there are plenty of organizations that you can donate to in a list on my SDG2030 page on my website. Again, thank you all very much for listening, and I hope you and your families are well during these troubling times.