

Riley Payung

Prof. Kerin Hilker-Balkissoon

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Article Critique: "Sea Change: Japan Leads on marine plastic Litter"

In the wake of ocean plastic pollution, Japan has been a country that has seen fully the effects of plastics pollution in the ocean, as mentioned in my previous article review. From that review, Japan had a substantially higher amount of microplastics in their food chain since a large portion of their diet is seaborne. This article, from the East Asia Forum Quarterly, goes in depth on the reason why Japan did not join the Osaka Blue Ocean Vision, chartered by the United Nations at the G20 Summit in June 2019, according to the article (Iwasaki, 2019). However, even though Japan did not join the summit, they are still leading in ocean cleanup, hence the title of this magazine article.

According to this article, "Japan also developed five new recycling laws focused on packaging, home applications, food waste, construction waste and automobiles" (Iwasaki, 2019). Given how Japan was slated in the last article, and the positioning of their country, it comes as no surprise that they would attempt to prevent their country's citizens from polluting the waterways even more. Asia is the top river plastic polluter in the world; however, Japan only plays a very small part in this. It is possible that the average Japanese citizen could see plastics from the shoreline that have come from other countries such as China, Vietnam and India, leaving them to clean up the mess while their fellow Asian countries pollute the waterways and ocean ever-so-rapidly.

The article also presents the idea that Japan is involving some of their resources to aid developing countries and emerging economies in the reduction of plastic waste and management of

waste. According to the article, a large point of the Japanese presidency and election was mismanagement of plastic waste, which should be true for all economies at this time, but unfortunately is not.

I plan to use this article as a way to show that even though there is a large amount of pollution and articles on pollution, there are still articles that show countries like Japan making efforts to prevent the pollution of waterways and oceans. Japan has been taking large steps in spite of their neighboring countries causing most of the havoc in the regional oceans such as the Pacific and the Indian oceans. Japan seems to have it under control, so why can't the rest of the world.

Kojima, M., & Iwasaki, F. (2019, Jul). Sea change: Japan leads on marine plastic litter. *East Asia Forum Quarterly*, 11, 24-25. Retrieved June 22, 2020, from

<https://search-proquest.com.mutex.gmu.edu/docview/2312745772?accountid=14541>