

1st Prize

My plan to protect and manage our oceans, seas and marine resources

by Aleksandar Paskalev, aged 11 (Bulgaria)

Dear Mr. UN Secretary General,

I'm AI and I live on a distant asteroid 106XB73. My job is to observe the development of populated planets and by using BOD biosensors to detect water pollution disasters. The database of your Blue planet shows that your hydrosphere is in a great danger so I'm sending you warning coded signals with my plan for protection and management.

Blue Code 01 for overfishing.

The blast fishing and bottom trawling that humans use are destroying the marine life of this planet so stop using these destructive practices and think about more efficient hi tech-based ways to get what you need from the oceans. You still have another option available - the sea farm industry we discovered along your coastlines. Moreover, you can influence the consumption habits of the population by introducing certified sustainability labels for seafood. Therefore, the fishing and farming industries will be encouraged to achieve certification standards for sustainability.

Blue Code 02 for ocean waste and pollutants.

We detected 5 large marine debris, large oil spills and increasing level of shipping pollution that is harmful for the living organisms and sooner or later will destroy the blue ecosystem. It should be a high priority for humans not only to clean up the world ocean and enhance the conservation but also to introduce green shipping practices and to apply international law for control and management.

Blue Code 03 for water and air pollution.

Our sensors detected high level of CO₂ emissions in your atmosphere and 30 per cent of it is absorbed by the hydrosphere. This will prevent the formation of the beautiful coral reefs that we see from space so you need urgent investment and technological solutions to make alternative sources of energy indispensable to your human activities. We registered a number of Dead zones without oxygen, sunlight and marine life so you should plan tax restriction for using chemical fertilizers and investment incentives in organic farming.

Blue Code 04 for changing the humans' lifestyle.

Finally, a good start of your plan to protect and manage the marine resources should be to encourage citizens to comply with good practices in their lifestyle - effective building insulation, rooftop PV solar panels, solar vehicles, proper water and waste solutions. Educating your children to live sustainably is of key importance for the future of your planet and the survival of your species.

2nd Prize

My plan to protect and manage our oceans, seas and marine resources

by Luke Alcindor, aged 10 (Seychelles)

Why do I need to protect the oceans and the seas? Because they need protection! The problems or the dangers are many. CFC's are going up and cracking open the ozone layer, heat due to climate change is melting the ice and causing sea level rise, the hot temperature in the water heats up the coral causing coral bleaching. This also causes corals to be weak and die. They lose their colors, so fish or other animals cannot feed. Heat also causes the marine life to be destroyed.

I have a lot of ideas to protect the oceans and seas. Firstly, I will make a proposal to the president to have a law which will stop companies from importing products with CFC's. Secondly, I will suggest to the Ministry of Environment that there should be security officers on the beach. This will help as it will prevent people from littering the beach and stop water pollution. Furthermore, I suggest that there should be more bins on the beaches and near rivers. This is important because people throw rubbish into the river and all the rubbish gets into the sea. It becomes a problem for the fish or sea turtles. There should be signs on all the beaches that remind people not to litter.

Thirdly, the Ministry of Environment and the Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation must work together to educate the public about protecting the oceans and marine resources. This can be done by doing programs which shows how beautiful the oceans and its content are and also the harm that people cause to the ocean by their everyday activities.

Fourthly, I will suggest that active environment clubs are set up in schools. The clubs can meet on Saturdays to have more time for activities. Students can learn more about the environment, benefit of clean rivers and beaches, to clean their own schools to keep the good habits. Essay, quiz and drawing competition are some activities that can be done.

Lastly, I will suggest to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries that they make sure that rules on fishing are followed seriously in Seychelles. They have to make sure that all fishermen are educated about the rules. Overfishing; fishing young fishes or species that are rare is not good for Seychelles.

The oceans and marine life are depending on us. If we do not do anything our marine resources will be in danger and we will be affected too. This could be a disaster for our economy. I would like my plans to be taken seriously and that people read all the essays in this competition.

3rd Prize

My Ocean and Seas Protection Plan

by Chaeli-Jade Pienaar, aged 11 (UAE)

By 2050 there will be more plastic than fish in the world's oceans. This may seem unrealistic, or dramatic, but it is true. Unfortunately, even though many organisations -such as the United Nations and Our Ocean- are doing so much to help conserve our oceans and seas, countless people are not aware. Most do not know and do not care that a single plastic bottle can take from 450 to 1000 years to decompose, and the majority of those years will be spent in water- seas and oceans.

My plan is a way to raise awareness all over the world, and ensure a huge part of it is included in helping. Even a child, like me, can make a difference. So, here is the plan. Countries across the globe will get together to sign an agreement, in which they compulsorily commit every school and workplace in their respective country to help make a change. This could include a drive every quarter of the year, raising money for recycling plants and ocean clean ups.

Participating countries will have a worldwide known name: UOA (United Oceanic Association), which would be a prestigious group to be a member of. If schools and businesses are involved, it will show how seriously we are taking saving our oceans, seas and marine resources.

If students in schools participate, they are more likely to leave school and continue to help make a difference, even after they complete their education. It would be a great learning opportunity for students to learn about our world and how we humans, as well as animals and plants, rely on the oceans and seas all around us.

Countries would meet every half of the year to track and monitor the progress that is being made. The changes will help communities by providing jobs and workplaces, such as jobs in the recycling plants.

As technology advances, most people would find use in an app. For example, the UOA would create an app which could be used for example (from the public and those involved) on what you can do at home or in large groups and communities to make a change, even if you do not live by the coast, or a large body of water. To conclude, my plan would take place over time, and include effort from people all over the globe. From the eldest to the youngest, nobody's contribution must be underestimated. No one must be afraid to help save our oceans. Everybody can make a difference. Will you?

4th Prize

My plan to protect and manage our oceans, seas and marine resources

by Darwin Cadbury, aged 8 (UK)

A small boy is walking along the beach with a pair of binoculars around his neck.

He watches a tern flying overhead and imagines how they see the sea.....

Recently it has been difficult for the tern to find enough small fish to feed her young. She always sees fishing boats trawling the waters with their nets and her young have gone hungry. Last year she got some fishing tackle around her beak and she couldn't get it off. Really the ocean isn't as clean as it used to be.

The boy then looks to the beach. He watches newly hatched hawksbill turtles emerging from the sand. He is amazed at how small they are and how rough the ocean seems. They seem confused as there is a hotel disco flashing bright lights near the beach and some of them head in the wrong direction. How sad that man's pleasure should ruin this creature's chance of survival. Plastic drinking straws and coke bottles float around the bay and a floating bag traps an adult turtle around its flippers.

Finally the boy decides to take a swim and puts on his snorkel. He is surrounded by a different world of coral. It used to be brightly coloured but now it is grey and dead. The sea temperature has increased and much of the coral has died. Where are the brightly coloured fish? He sees only one or two.

The boy goes back to the beach and writes a list in his diary

- Limit the amount of fishing
- Don't discard tackle or plastic into the sea
- Create more no fishing zones
- More rules to stop boats leaking oil
- Shield the beaches from bright lights.

Reduce the amount of carbon being sent into the air in industry which can cause warmer seas and effect the corals.

Encourage children in schools all over the world to think about protecting their oceans and marine wildlife and show "The Blue Planet" in schools.

The boy closes his book, takes one last look at the sea and then turns around. He sees his friend coming to join him. She smiles holding a bag full of litter she has picked up from the beach. He smiles back and they finish picking up some empty coke cans together to put in the recycling bin. Then they run home leaving only a trail of footprints on the wet sand.

5th Prize

MY PLAN TO PROTECT AND MANAGE OCEANS SEAS AND MARINE RESOURCES

by Hayyan Fatima Bhatti, aged 8 (Pakistan)

Oceans and seas hold 97 per cent of planet's water and represent more than 5 per cent of global GDP. They are considered as lifeblood of Earth because they produce more than half of the oxygen in the atmosphere and absorb the most carbon from it, provide a favorable climate and a reliable supply of fresh water. It is the main reason why mankind has been able to flourish. Not only is this 8 per cent of Earth's population directly dependent on it. As marine resources provide sea food and they are also used to make oil, salt, cosmetic products and medicines. Oceans and seas are also used by humans for recreation, travel and transportation. Unfortunately, 40 per cent of global oceans are 'heavily affected' by human activities. So, it is necessary to protect and manage oceans, seas and marine resources by educating people how to protect it.

If marine resources will not be protected on priority basis, the ocean could become 150 per cent more acidic by 2100. Because land-based sources account for approximately 80 per cent of marine pollution, these changes are impairing the ocean's capacity and increasing acidity.

Therefore, as most of the people are unaware about the importance and care of marine resource so my plan is 1. Awareness regarding protection of marine life should be started at lower level by using handouts, media and arranging seminar and I specially request my school PakTurk International to take initiative for this challenge so ocean literacy should be spread through curriculum, news, journals and social media. 2. Is that to start awareness program in all countries to take initiatives for protection of oceans, seas and marine resources. 2. Sessions at school and college level regarding cleanliness of shores. 3. Involve Government to ban throwing garbage into sea, control the use of plastic products and reduce energy consumption. 4. NGOs may involve Government to take strict action against the factories which are polluting the seas and ensure to keep the shores of seas clean.

In the conclusion, it can be said that all these social, economic, cultural and environmental benefits may be lost if the ocean is not being managed in a sustainable way. Marine pollution is a threat to environment and a serious action is required to be taken to protect it from human activities. But once the people will know the importance of marine resources in human life then its protection will be easier.
