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## PLASTIC POLLUTION'S AFFECT ON CORAL REEFS

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# PLASTIC POLLUTION'S AFFECT ON CORAL REEFS

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## Abstract

Plastic pollution has been an increasing problem in the world. This is getting worse every year and it is having an impact in our world specifically in our oceans. A big thing in the ocean is coral reefs, coral reefs end up dying by diseases and debris caused from plastic pollution. Coral reefs are important in the lives of humans and fish so if we do nothing about it many will suffer the consequences. With coral reefs gone many fish suffer from change and do not adapt quick enough and later end up dying. Plastic pollution stays on top of shallow ocean water where coral reefs are normally located and tend to heat up the water which causes coral bleaching (Sigler, 2014) when coral “bleaches” it turns white and because very weak and diseases get into the reefs and could possibly kill it (Begter, 2014).



Magazine, S. (2007, September 23). *Deep trouble*. Smithsonian.com. Retrieved December 6, 2021, from <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/deep-trouble-170421592/>



NOAA, U. S. A. (2019). *Coral Reef Ecosystems*. Coral reef ecosystems | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Retrieved December 6, 2021, from <https://www.noaa.gov/education/resource-collections/marine-life/coral-reef-ecosystems>

## Key points

- Plastic pollution washes onto or on top of the coral reefs blocking the sun and causing the water to absorb the heat. This causes the water to heat and results in coral bleaching
- Coral bleaching is caused by high temperature. When coral bleaches it turns white and becomes weak allowing diseases to easily access the coral and kills it.
- People who lived around coral reefs benefit from it because of the amount of income they get from tourist that go to the reefs.

## Conclusion

After further research on different scholarly articles the research done in a few of them was showing the increase in diseases over time in many different areas with and without plastic pollution around the world where coral reefs are located, other articles focused more on the economic side of things and showed how much coral reefs actually help and produce things that are needed around the world.

## Further Research

Further research could explore the types of coral reef diseases that are caused by plastic pollution, because according to the research, I found was that these diseases are actually different from the types of diseases that are not caused by plastic pollution. Additional research is needed on (i) how to minimize and clean plastic from our reefs (ii) how to keep the reefs healthier, and (iii) if there is a way to prevent these diseases from ever spreading in the coral reefs.

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