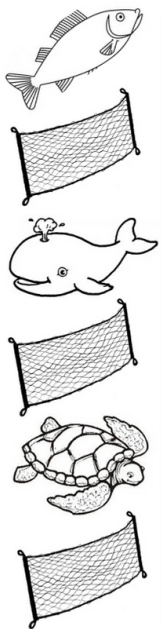


## SPP ECO FACTS

Have you heard of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch?



Researchers are predicting by 2050 there will be **more plastic than fish** (by weight) in the oceans. But what is conventionally unknown is that the biggest macro-plastic polluter in the oceans is fishing gear ('**ghost gear**'): nets, ropes, plastic fishing crates and baskets.

Ghost gear can pose a threat to wildlife for years or decades, ensnaring everything from small fish & crustaceans to endangered turtles, seabirds & even whales.

### What may the solution be?

Legal frameworks to govern international waters (measures to address the problem at the source & create ownership of clean-up); stronger regulation; political action to create ocean sanctuaries that are off-limits to industrial fishing (Greenpeace is calling for an ambitious **Global Ocean Treaty**); cutting fish consumption demands.

Sources: [bit.ly/36aTYCJ](https://bit.ly/36aTYCJ), [bit.ly/36dbCG5](https://bit.ly/36dbCG5), [bit.ly/30E4fX5](https://bit.ly/30E4fX5)

## SPP ECO FACTS



You can now recycle coffee cups at LSE!

LSE is one of three London universities to take part in The Cup Fund. Look out for new orange coffee cup bins on campus - cups deposited in these bins will be taken to one of three specialist paper mills in the UK, where the inner plastic liner can be separated from the outer paper cup, increasing the efficiency of their recycled life.

For every paper cup you dispose of in the Student Union Café's reverse vending machine, you get 10p off your next hot drink from the SU café!

## SPP ECO FACTS

It's 79 yrs until the end of rainforests if current trends continue

Since 2016, an average of 28 million hectares of rainforests have been cut down every year - that's one football field of forest lost every second.

What does this mean? 70% of the world's **plants & animals** live in forests - deforestation can lead to species extinction • approx 20% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions contributing to **global heating** come from clearing tropical forests, as trees absorb CO2 • it can cause **soil erosion & desertification** of land (labelled by UN as the world's most threatening ecosystem change)

What can you do? Use the web browser Ecosia (profits are used to plant trees) • look for products with the Forest Stewardship Council logo • rethink your **consumption** - cut your intake of beef, don't use products containing palm oil, go paperless • **donate** to a relevant charity • **recycle & reuse** products made from trees

Sources: [bit.ly/2OqYTcl](http://bit.ly/2OqYTcl), [bit.ly/2Sop8ll](http://bit.ly/2Sop8ll)

## SPP ECO FACTS

Have you spotted the campaign stickers in toilets around LSE?

Do you ever ***think before you flush?***

Every day thousands of wet wipes, cotton buds, sanitary products, toilet roll tubes, medicines, cigarettes & other unsuitable items are flushed down toilets instead of being put in the bin. This causes huge problems to our marine environment & wastewater systems – sewer overflows in our communities & plastic pollution in rivers, the ocean & on beaches.

***Did you know most wet wipes contain plastic so don't disintegrate?***

What can you do? Think about where the items you're about to flush end up, properly dispose of them & consider whether you can find more eco-friendly alternatives (e.g. reusable wipes)!



In 2016, a 'wet-wipe mountain' was uncovered in Bristol, UK

Sources: [bbc.in/2UV4P1w](http://bbc.in/2UV4P1w); [bit.ly/2tYjbDw](http://bit.ly/2tYjbDw); [bit.ly/37hzSHC](http://bit.ly/37hzSHC)

## SPP ECO FACTS

Half of the world's hospital beds are filled with people suffering from a water-related disease

### What about our water?

70% of the planet is covered in water, but only 3% is fresh and drinkable...and two-thirds of this is unavailable for us to use. While clean freshwater is vital for healthy human life, 1.1 billion people currently lack access to it.

Climate change, pollution, and increased human consumption means that the scarcity of clean water is only increasing - by 2025, two-thirds of the world's population may face water shortages.

What can you do? Take shorter showers • don't run water when brushing your teeth • water the lawn in the morning or evening when cool air causes less evaporation • consider non-toxic cleaning products and eco-friendly pesticides that won't contaminate groundwater • wash full machine loads of clothes

You can find out more and get more tips online: <https://wwwf.to/2lkgcss> and <https://bit.ly/2TBuvOL>

## SPP ECO FACTS

Have you watched the documentary 'The True Cost' (2015)?

### What is the cost of your clothes?

The fashion industry is the **second largest polluter in the world**, after the oil industry -- 90% of factory wastewaters in developing countries (containing substances such as lead, mercury & arsenic) are dumped into rivers without treatment - harming animals & people.

The industry is also a **huge water consumer** -- it can take up to 200t of fresh water per tonne of dyed fabric. Up to 20,000L of water is needed to produce 1kg of cotton. This is in countries where water scarcity is a real problem.

What can you do? Try buying second-hand/thrifted clothes - in stores or on apps such as Depop & Vinted - Buy sustainably sourced clothing/ clothes made with natural fibres - Buy less, better quality clothes

This is just 2 examples of many - find out more here: <http://bit.ly/2v8UVPL>


## SPP ECO FACTS

Earth Hour will take place Saturday 28th March 2020, 8:30 - 9:30PM




### *One Hour For Mother Earth*

Earth Hour is the world's biggest switch off event – a moment millions come together for the sake of the planet. Landmarks, homes, businesses and political leaders across the world switch off their lights for an hour at 8:30PM to celebrate our natural world and to raise awareness to protect it.



Earth Hour was started by WWF and partners in Sydney, 2007. Since then it has been a major force for raising awareness and driving legislation - inspiring millions to take environmental action, influencing climate policy across the world, inspiring the banning of plastic on the Galapagos Islands and protecting forests in Uganda.



What can you do? Turn off your lights! In light of the current Covid-19 pandemic, Earth Hour's organisers advise you have a cosy night in at home - a list of things to do for Earth Hour can be found here: <http://bit.ly/33FCQpj>

Find out more online: <https://www.earthhour.org/take-part>


## SPP ECO FACTS

Rotting food waste turns into methane - a greenhouse gas with 21 x the global warming potential of carbon dioxide.




### *Hungry for environmental change?*

Nearly one-third of the food produced in the world is lost or wasted. As the global food system is responsible for over 30% of all human-caused greenhouse gas emissions, unnecessary food production is an unnecessary burden on our planet - and rotting food produces harmful greenhouse gases.



Agriculture accounts for 70% of the water used worldwide, so food waste also equals water waste. It's estimated that a volume of water around three times the volume of Lake Geneva is used to produce uneaten food - and throwing away 1kg of beef is essentially throwing away 50 thousand litres of water used to produce the meat!



What can you do? Plan meals carefully and only buy what you need. Set up home composting - the average home can divert 150kg of food waste each year from rotting in local waste facilities by adopting home composting!



Find out more online: <https://bit.ly/2vXDImf>

## SPP ECO FACTS

One big bag of rice uses less plastic than five smaller ones

### *Pesky Packaging*

Between 1/4 and 1/3 all domestic waste is packaging: much of this food-related. It's difficult to recycle, and plastic contaminated with food is hard to reuse. Packets are often made up of several different layers laminated together, which makes them impossible to recycle.

#### What can you do?

- Buy non-perishable food in bulk; this cuts down on the amount of packaging used.
- Whenever possible try to source food with minimal packaging.
- Invest in loose leaf tea and an infuser rather than tea bags for your daily cuppa.
- Forgo the plastic cutlery in your takeaway.
- Remember your reusable bags when you go out shopping!
- Reusing always has a greater impact than recycling. Reuse your old containers and jars if possible. Buying a reusable mug or water bottle is better than buying a recycled container: this gets round the transport and energy costs of recycling materials.

Find out more online: <https://www.greenchoices.org/green-living/food-drink/packaging>

## SPP ECO FACTS

According to WWF's Living Planet Index, biodiversity has declined 27% in the last 35 years.


### *Biodiversity is Best*

Biodiversity makes our planet healthy and happy. Earth's vast variety of species keep its ecosystems healthy and thriving - growing the plants we eat, the trees releasing our oxygen, and so on. Over 3 billion people depend on marine and coastal biodiversity to live.

Currently 1 million species are threatened with extinction, and in less than 50 years, we've seen an overall decline of 60% in population sizes of vertebrate species. Both human encroachment on the natural world and climate change is causing a rapid loss of biodiversity, threatening food security, population health and world stability.

What can you do? Consumers can help protect diversity through purchasing eco-friendly products - take some time during your weekly shop to check if your food packaging contains any eco-labels. Reusing, recycling and composting are other easy ways to protect biodiversity.

## SPP ECO FACTS



A UK Parliament report (2018) predicts by 2025, 3.75 billion disposable cups will be used in the UK per year. Currently less than 0.25% of cups are successfully recycled, with the majority going to the landfill (even many of those put in a recycling bin!)

How will investing in a reusable coffee cup make a difference?

- Less non-biodegradable **waste** on the planet
- Changing behaviour to prioritise "**reduce & reuse**" not "recycle & dispose"
- Reducing **carbon** impact, deforestation & water waste from production


... And **discounted coffee** in some shops!

Sources: [bit.ly/2uQZQEm](https://bit.ly/2uQZQEm), [bit.ly/36W06jx](https://bit.ly/36W06jx)

## SPP ECO FACTS

25% of all marine fish depend on coral reefs - and 75% of reefs are sick or threatened

### *Ocean Action*



If you've seen David Attenborough's *Blue Planet*, you'll know the ocean faces numerous man-made threats: from rising temperatures and over-fishing to rising sea levels, damage to coral reefs, and pollution. An estimated 17.6 billion pounds of plastic leaks into the ocean every year—that's equivalent to dumping a rubbish truck full of plastic into the ocean every minute.

Ocean issues often seem overwhelming and beyond our individual actions - that's why we need to vote for public officials that support good environmental policies, and support action groups and petitions that promote big change. However, small individual actions that can make a difference include:

What can you do?

- Avoid single-use plastic, and clean up after leaving the beach.
- Avoid harmful products such as cosmetics with shark squalene or jewellery with coral.
- Eat sustainable seafood - smaller fish or shellfish that are locally sourced from wild fisheries (not farmed) is healthy for both you and the ocean.

Find out more online: <https://oceana.org/living-blue/10-ways-you-can-help-save-oceans>