The Story of Polluted Waters: Mucilage in the Marmara Sea

Sea pollution is a significant issue nowadays. It occurs when water doesn't have the capacity to absorb or release pollutants by aquatic ecosystems. Inflow of chemicals, solid waste, industrial and agricultural effluents and oil spills are the main reasons for this global issue. It affects the living organisms in the sea, people's health and the economic structure of the country.

(photo by Yaren Karya Salman)

You can see how polluted the İzmit coast is. There are many plastic bottles, bags and other trash thrown by people. As long as people continue to treat the environment like that, the ecosystem of the ocean will be damaged more and more. "This is a planetary crisis... we are ruining the ecosystem of the ocean," UN oceans chief Lisa Svensson told the BBC.

(photo by Yaren Karya Salman)

This plastic bottle may have been in the sea for 30 years. They're disappearing in 400 years in nature but people still continue to use and throw their plastics to the environment. Each day, 8 million tons of plastic end up in the oceans. A large part of the ocean is covered in plastic. So it's normal that sea animals see it as food and try to eat it. Their health is in danger. 324 plastic pieces were found in a dead bird's stomach in A Plastic Ocean documentary and that covers ¾ of her stomach, which is a very high rate.

(photo by Yaren Karya Salman)

In 2021, the Marmara Sea showed the effect of this pollution. It produced a secretion, which is called mucilage, and it had spread to all the Marmara Sea. The effects of mucilage are widespread, affecting fishing industries, smothering sea life, and spreading bacteria and viruses. It prevented animals and plants from getting oxygen and reproduction. We couldn't eat fish or swim in the sea this year. Scientists said if people take all the precautions, the sea can fix itself in 5 or 6 years if we are lucky but if it will go on like this then our sea will die soon.

It is not too late for changing the ecosystem of the oceans:

1-There should be treatment plants for the chemical wastes in every factory and ship.

2- We can disseminate plastic, glass, and battery bins in all the cities and increase recycling of solid wastes.

3-Stores can use cardboard bags and cafes can use glass and cardboard cups instead of plastic.

4-Oil spills can be prevented.

References:

Bashir, Ishrat, et al. “Concerns and Threats of Contamination on Aquatic Ecosystems.” *Bioremediation and Biotechnology*, 27 Jan. 2020, pp. 1–26, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles /PMC7121614/, 10.1007/978-3-030-35691-0_1.

“Seven Charts That Explain the Plastic Pollution Problem.” *BBC News*, 10 Dec. 2017, www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-42264788.

Vaibhav Chakraborty. “Marine Pollution: Causes, Types, Effects & Prevention | My India.” *Mapsofindia.com*, 2018, www.mapsofindia.com/my-india/society/marine-pollution-causes-types-effects-prevention

---. “100+ Ocean Pollution Statistics & Facts (2019).” *Condor Ferries*, 2019, www.condorferries.co.uk/marine-ocean-pollution-statistics-facts .