THE PLASTIC ON YOUR PLATE

WHEN AND HOW WE BECAME CONSUMERS OF PLASTIC

by Silvio Greco

NOT ONLY DO WE TRANSFER IT TO THE ENVIRONMENT, WE EAT IT, WE DRINK IT, WE BREATHE IT. PLASTIC FINDS ITS WAY INTO HUMAN TISSUE AND INTO BLOOD. THE PROBLEM IS TOO CLOSE FOR US TO IGNORE IT ANY LONGER.

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At the 2017 G7 Technology and Science Meeting in Tsukuba, the international community identified three priorities for global research in the following decade: the health of the oceans, the spread of diseases, and big data. In order to confront the problem of ocean health, the G7's Council of Research Ministers indicated waste in the sea as a priority issue, partly due to its greater visibility. Given that plastic accounts for 80% of this waste, it isn't challenging to identify the principal foe in this struggle. We can thus say with good reason that the global fight against plastic will be crucial in our defense of natural ecosystems in the next decade. But battles cannot be won without a thorough knowledge of one's enemy, nor correct solutions found without solid scientific foundations.

This book provides an essential and original contribution in this direction. It explains the history of plastic, its composition, and then takes on the problems linked to its disposal. Plastic's impact is even more relevant in marine environments where it constitutes the preeminent form of waste - from the poles to the tropics, the ocean surface to the deepest abysses. This book shows, with clarity and the support of ample data and numerous examples, how plastics quickly become a cocktail of contaminants that make their way into marine organisms and eventually end up on our tables in food and, unfortunately, even in tap water.

The author's experience and his profound knowledge of marine life and its resources, fishing, and cooking, allows him to present a unique focus in the panorama of popular scientific literature, and to formulate concrete and convincing proposals.

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