Bluewater

Bluewater launches range of eco-friendly stainless steel bottles to help halt the need for single use plastic bottles that are spurring microplastic pollution of the planet

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Spread of microplastics in oceans spotlighted by NASA

The appalling spread of microplastics in our oceans have been spotlighted by NASA from space.

NASA wrote how scientists from the University of Michigan developed an innovative way to use NASA satellite data to track the movement of tiny pieces of plastic in the ocean.

The US space agency noted how microplastics form when plastic trash in the ocean breaks down from the sun's rays and the motion of ocean waves. These small flecks of plastic harm marine organisms and ecosystems and can be carried thousands of miles away from the source by ocean currents, making it difficult to track and remove them.

According to NASA, the current main source of information about the location of microplastics comes from fishing trawlers that use nets to catch plankton – and, unintentionally, microplastics.

The new technique relies on data from NASA's Cyclone Global Navigation Satellite System (CYGNSS), a constellation of eight small satellites that measures wind speeds above Earth's oceans and provides information about the strength of hurricanes. CYGNSS also uses radar to measure ocean roughness, which is affected by several factors including wind speed and debris floating in the water.

Working backward, the team looked for places where the ocean was smoother than expected given the wind speed, which they thought could indicate the presence of microplastics. Then they compared those areas to observations and model predictions of where microplastics congregate in the ocean. The scientists found that microplastics tended to be present in smoother waters, demonstrating that CYGNSS data can be used as a tool to track ocean microplastic from space.

The results were published online on June 9, 2021 in IEEE Transactions of Geoscience and Remote Sensing. The work was done by Chris Ruf, professor at the University of Michigan and principal investigator for CYGNSS, and undergraduate student Madeline C. Evans.

As the prestigious magazine Scientific American noted already back in 2018, 'tiny bits of plastic have seeped into soil, fish and air, posing a threat to animal and human health.'

The magazine also said that: "Ingested microplastic particles can physically damage organs and leach hazardous chemicals—from the hormone-disrupting bisphenol A (BPA) to pesticides—that can compromise immune function and stymie growth and reproduction."

"Microplastic pollution is something that Bluewater has been warning against for several years now as we innovate water purifier solutions to remove chemical and other contamination threats from the water we drink from our taps as well as end the need for single use plastic bottles, the majority of which end up being dumped in our oceans or landfill," says Bluewater spokesperson Dave Noble.
bluewatergroup.com

Founded 2013 in Stockholm, Sweden, Bluewater has set its sights on being the world's most planet-friendly water purification and beverage company by innovating and marketing disruptive hydration solutions for home, work, and play. Bluewater products are available globally to consumers, hotel and catering operations, event and venue organizations, and educational institutions. www.bluewatergroup.com[IG1]

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