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## DOMESTIC

### Wishing you a very sustainable year 20Plastics | 27 January 2021



**Exhibit 1. Go Plastics: Where is your rubbish going? The display shows the sources of marine plastic pollution and their routes from the mountains towards the ocean**

Welcome to the New Year, the perfect moment for setting new life goals. This year, the Island Conservation Society remains committed to raising public awareness on environmental issues for better implementation of its conservation programmes.

The new health measures with regard to the Covid-19 pandemic limits several physical educational activities such as talks and nature walks and we had to rely on technology to transmit our messages. In 2020, the Island Conservation Society (ICS) made some upgrades to its website: ([www.islandconservationseychelles.com](http://www.islandconservationseychelles.com)). It also made use of additional social media sites such as Instagram and Twitter so as to reach out to more people and encourage

more public engagement on pertinent environmental and conservation issues. This is actually a time to be creative and explore other ways of reaching out to the public in this new normal.

The ICS and Hilton Seychelles Labriz Resort & Spa will kick-start the year with a mini-exhibition on Silhouette island so as to encourage the elimination of plastics in our lives as a new year's resolution.

The idea of a mini arts and crafts exhibition was coined by the ICS team on Silhouette island to showcase various crafts made out of trash collected during weekly beach clean-ups. After sorting the trash, the team identified some materials that can be recycled and produced seven self-explanatory pieces. These will be on display in the hotel's gallery with minimal contact between ICS staff and the hotel guests. Hotel guests and staff will be able to view the exhibition entitled 'The year 20Plastics' at their own leisure, however, adhering to Covid-19 protocols in place on the island.

The initiative enforces continuous effort on the part of the ICS Silhouette team to raise awareness on plastic pollution to all hotel guests. According to one of our conservationists and organiser of the exhibition, Dillys Pouponeau, "The year 20Plastics implies another year that we could all potentially be saturated in plastics, with emphasis on the adverse effects of this non-biodegradable material on the environment as well as the quality of life. This includes the recent discoveries of pieces of plastics called microplastics found in animal flesh that we eat especially fish, the water that we drink and in human faeces. Although there is no concrete evidence that plastics are directly causing illnesses, we do know that chemicals, in general, pose a great threat to our health. These pieces of plastics are releasing chemicals and it is obviously not healthy for us and people should be aware of that. These studies could perhaps bridge the gap to the unknown causes of certain diseases such as cancer."

The ICS team has been working on this project since September last year and mentioned that it was a fun and enriching experience.

Living plastic-free does not seem realistic for some, it requires sacrifice and drastic changes in one's lifestyle. This is however possible for some people who are really concerned about the issue and are actually doing it. The best approach to this situation is for people to gather as much information as possible on simple steps that can be adopted to reduce plastic waste.

"Before purchasing anything, one should ask, what are the chances that they could end up in the ocean and cause harm to wildlife and oneself? By refusing certain plastic items, this could hopefully influence producers to rethink on the production of their product especially the packaging," stated Dillys.

She adds "Everyone should be deeply concerned about the issue and all companies, big or small, should rethink on the packaging of both imported goods as well as local products. Think of how your packaging may influence your customers opting for non-plastic packaging and how this may affect your business. By being the first to change your packaging, there is a great chance that customers shift to you because of the green packaging option you provide."

Planning on saving more money this year, perhaps you should finally invest in items that will not require you to buy new ones on a regular basis. You can buy reusable water instead of buying plastic water bottles every day and this will help save more money. When choosing flip flops chose a brand that will last longer, for example, Havaianas flip flops made with 100% natural rubber or other brands like Birkenstock which uses organic materials. The same goes for anything disposable or single-use items such as razors. You can also choose to buy things in bulk instead of individual packaging. Thinking of quitting smoking? That would be great, a lot fewer cigarette butts and plastic lighters end up in the ocean. And are you still using cosmetics with microbeads? Go natural and opt for glass or aluminium containers. Natural products are softer and less harsh for your skin, smells much nicer and it is the new trend. Products made out of plastics are the most common items washing up on beaches and they must be avoided while helping your budget for the year.

ICS wishes everyone a sustainable year and hopes to see a lot less trash in the ocean this year.

**Contributed by ICS Silhouette Conservation Team**



Exhibit 5: The Carbon flop-print: This display describes how plastics production contribute to the global carbon footprint and climate change

Exhibit 6: A plastic meal: The contamination of our resources. This display presents the results from studies on plastics found in natural resources such as fish tissue, potable water and human faeces

Exhibit 5: The Carbon flop-print: This display describes how plastics production contribute to the global carbon footprint and climate change



Exhibit 4: Plastic the inferior: The display shows the negative effects of plastics on ecosystems and biodiversity



Exhibit 3: To infinity and beyond: An eternity of plastics. This display illustrates the fact that plastics do