

Effects of Marine Pollution

The beauty of our earth is that its ecology is perfect for the growth and development of all forms of biological life. The major component of this ecology is land, air and water bodies of all kinds. Oceans make up the main part of water bodies on the earth and are also home to a large number and wide variety of species or life forms. Over the years and especially in modern times, surplus human activities have adversely affected the marine life. The most important ill effect has been pollution. Incidents of oil spills, industrial waste dumping, garbage disposal and accumulation of various toxic materials as wastes, from many processes has polluted almost all the major aquatic bodies around the globe.



Causes of Marine Pollution

Though, the causes of this serious state of marine bodies are many, there are those that stand out amongst the rest. Oil spills are becoming a major hazard as tankers and cargo ships discharge it either deliberately or accidentally. Poisonous materials like PCBs, mercury, PAHs and dioxins along with other radioactive wastes that are disposed into these bodies

cause enormous marine pollution. In addition to these, the damage occurring due to the large scale and insensitive disposal of human wastes and sewage contents into oceans is unimaginable. Moreover, the dead organic matter that remains in the water causes further pollution that is very dangerous to the existing life forms.



Effects of Marine Pollution

The effects of the marine pollution are as huge and varied as the causes themselves. The oil pollution results in disruptions to the cycle of coral reefs, clogging of the gills of fishes thereby resulting in their death and hampering the process of photosynthesis of marine plants leading to their end. Oil pollution on a large scale also indirectly affects areas that may not have seen the spill. The disposal of toxic wastes has both direct and indirect effect on marine life and equally hazardous consequence on the human race as we are closely linked with aquatic life forms in many ways. Toxins along with garbage deplete the oxygen content of the water thus making it impossible for many life forms including bigger species like whales, dolphins, penguins, shark and seals to survive.

Some of these substances like the normal DDTs and pesticides accumulate in the fatty acids of animals and results in the failure of reproductive system of some of the species especially mammals. Apart from these, activities like farming, forestry and mining if not done with care lead to sediments being deposited in the waters and impacts adversely both plant as well as animal life in the oceans. Plastic debris, discarded fishing nets and other similar items that are there purely because of human negligence act as severe agents of marine pollution and have an effect that cannot be imagined unless witnessed. The large scale death of animals due to plastic consumption like the sea turtles who consume it thinking it to be jellyfish is an example.

