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HUMAN DISGRACE Plastic pollution has spread EVERYWHERE on Earth, experts reveal as they warn it is 'slowly killing the human race'

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TOP

The South China Sea, close to Hong Kong, had the highest levels of pollution, with 349 particles of plastic per cubic metre of seawater

By Aletha Adu

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EXPERTS have warned plastic pollution is "slowly killing the human race" as it has spread to every part of the Earth.

Shocking data revealed [traces of microplastics](#) were found even in remote parts of the Southern Ocean, hundreds of miles away from land.



Victoria Harbour the 'Pearl South China's Sea, filled with plastic bottles

Turn The Tide on Plastic, a vessel currently competing in Volvo's Ocean Race, collected the seawater samples during its 45,000 mile journey across the world.

High [readings of plastic](#) were detected close to largely populated areas, with the Western Mediterranean showing 307 particles per cubic metre of seawater, [Sky News](#) reported.

But the highest reading was found in the South China Sea, close to Hong Kong, where 349 particles per cubic metre of seawater was found.

Dr Luiza Mirpuri, Portugese Mirpuri Foundation's medical adviser, told the broadcaster plastic is slowly "killing the human race."



ALAMY



This vessel, 'Turn the Tide on Plastic', competing in the Volvo Ocean Race, gathered the shocking data



AFP OR LICENSORS



Underwater photographer Caroline Power found the plastic blanket of forks, bottles and rubbish 15 miles off the coast



Marine biologists fear that much of the garbage sinks to the seabed, damaging underwater fauna



Plastic bottles, medicine containers and empty insecticide cans are among the deluge of waste



Young people sit surrounded by rubbish, mainly plastic bags and bottles at Spain's Malagueta beach

She added: "It will be catastrophic, not now but in the third generation because each time we have diseases, new [diseases from new contaminants](#).

"We are having more cancer, more allergic diseases, more infertility. We are less fertile than our grandfathers."

In the depths of the Southern Ocean, seawater samples collected by team showed 26 plastic particles per cubic metre.

The worst rivers for plastic pollution

These are the rivers that the report identifies as the most polluting:

A report conducted by the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research in Germany revealed the following worst offending rivers:

Yangtze - East China Sea, Asia

Nile - Mediterranean Sea, Africa

Ganges - Bay of Bengal, Asia

Indus - Arabian Sea, Asia

Yellow River - Yellow Sea, Asia

Haihe - Yellow Sea, Asia

Pearl River - South China Sea, Asia

Amur - Sea of Okhotsk, Asia

Niger - Gulf of Guinea, Africa

Mekong - South China Sea, Asia ■

But keen to remain cautious, Dr Malcolm, environmental scientist at Southampton University, told the broadcaster the extent of the risk is currently unknown.

Although he said there will be a time when there will be so much ocean plastic, "hazards could be endangering human life".

Photographer Caroline Power captured horrific images of plastic pollution in the once pristine waters of the Caribbean.

Ms Waters, who lives in Roatan Honduras, [snapped detritus clumped together in the waves](#), being deposited on beaches around Omoa, a seaside town.

It included a range of plastic containers, and even hospital waste.