



Ocean Recovery Alliance Hosts Plasticity Forum at Rio+20 Earth Summit, the Bamboo "Wave," and Educational "Junk" Trips

Dear Ocean Supporter,



Eben Bayer - CEO of [Ecovative Design](#)

For the first time at large international environmental event, plastic was the focus of discussion for a day-long event called *Plasticity Rio* as part of the Rio +20 Earth Summit. The event, organized by [Ocean Recovery Alliance](#), [Republic of Everyone](#), and [Applied Brilliance](#), attracted over 130 industry delegates, government leaders, educators, and innovators from more than 15 countries to re-think modern society's relationship with plastic. The discussion provided a pragmatic roadmap to a world with plastics re-imagined - where more informed decisions are made on when the very use of plastics is appropriate, and inappropriate; where those plastics which are used are renewably sourced with smaller environmental footprint, and where plastics after use, are regarded as a valuable resource opportunity, rather than as waste – all this benefiting the environment, and the ocean as a result.

The conference brought together international experts in their respective fields to create a broad, collaborative discussion on the opportunities that exist when plastic packaging and products are considered as a valuable material source rather than as a “waste” stream, how bioplastics are less carbon intensive, how they can be recycled, and how extended producer responsibility can help to capture value, build brand loyalty, and even how innovators can approach funding sources.

“I left the conference feeling that the big idea of for the new generation of plastics is “designing for the environment” and that this was truly taking hold amongst innovators,” said one of the conferences presenters, Steve Davies, director public affairs for NatureWorks. “Designing for the environment means envisioning plastic products that contribute to lower impacts in a myriad of ways from sourcing sustainable materials to inventing new materials, to establishing whole new ways of recapturing the value in these materials.”

Plastics as a Resource, not as Waste

Plasticity at the Rio+20 Earth Summit marks a turning point in the way that we can approach the “plastic resource” opportunity as exactly that, a big

opportunity. "Now is the time to scale-up these technologies, products and processes, to the benefit of brands, companies, and municipalities who understand where the improvements can be made in a new world of resource management thinking," said Doug Woodring of Ocean Recovery Alliance.

Waste as a resource was an underlying theme, with the challenge being at the municipal and infrastructure level to get the raw material to the proper technology operators who can turn trash into cash. With new sorting technologies, like those of MBA Polymers, virtually any type of plastic can be recovered and turned into its own, pure, feedstock stream, creating value for those companies who want to increase the amount of recycled material in their products. Consumers are also demanding these products in larger quantities, knowing that recycled material uses less energy and carbon, while helping to keep waste out of our ecosystem and ocean.

In the run up to the Rio+20 Earth Summit, over 1,000,000 people from around the world voted on the top 10 issues to restore the health of the ocean, and the top result of the vote was plastic pollution. The goal of Plasticity was to bring out some of the best new solutions that are already on the market, or processes that are available for governments, companies and communities, so that these impacts can be reduced, while creating jobs and improved living environments along the way.

"While we all came from different perspectives and ideas, we all agreed that the 'future we want' is NOT the status quo – and that there are much more sustainable ways of dealing with the use and re-use of this valuable material compared with the prevalent one-way use today," said Mike Biddle, President and Founder of [MBA Polymers](#), and winner of the coveted [Gothenburg Award](#).

"The great responsibility of our generation will be to deal with the proliferation of plastic. The path forward is to innovate and become better stewards of all natural resources. Plasticity is helping to provide the

leadership and vision to get us there,” says Jason Foster, Founder of [Replenish](#).

“The Plasticity Forum was an excellent opportunity to learn from the world’s leading experts working to reduce marine plastic pollution at its source. Natural Resources Defense Council ([NRDC](#)) is highlighting these source reduction techniques on a new platform – the Global Goal and Commitment to Stop Plastic Pollution -- at www.stopplasticpollution.org. This valuable convening of experts from government, business, and civil society will support the implementation of the Rio+20 outcomes document, which includes a landmark focus on plastic waste as one of the most harmful forms of pollution entering our oceans from land,” said Frances Beinecke, President of the NRDC.

A number of commitments and programs were announced at the event, including an alliance between the [Plastic Pollution Coalition](#) and the [Plastic Disclosure Project](#) (PDP) to work together with university campuses around the world to reduce their plastic footprints, and channelling the plastic waste that is created into resource-use opportunities. Click [here](#) for more info. The University of California, Berkeley, is the first university to announce their use of the PDP for their campus waste management strategy. The Pacific Vortex Challenge also made its global launch at Plasticity, announcing an ultra-extreme “dream team” relay swimming race from Hawaii to California, through the North Pacific Gyre, to raise awareness of the issue of plastic in the ocean. This will consist of two teams of eight people, and over 16 countries being involved, starting on World Oceans Day, June 8th, 2014. <http://bit.ly/PVChallenge>

Building on the excitement and energy resulting from this forum, [Plasticity](#) will be held in **Hong Kong**, in May/June 2013. More information on the event can be found [here](#), with some of the presentations available on this [link for downloading](#).

The Capturing Gold ideas competition had some great international ideas, with a winner from Uganda, and one from the Philippines, both planning to carry out their winning ideas to reality. You can see the winning concepts at <http://bit.ly/FinalCapture>, and the intro video can be seen at <http://bit.ly/CapturingGold>. We plan to run use this ideas platform again for another product/challenge, thanks to [Tinkby](#) who built it, so stay tuned for more information.

We hope you will continue to follow us on Facebook, Google+, or Twitter, all at "Plasticity Forum," and if you would like to be more involved as a supporting/sponsoring partner for the future, please let us know via email at hello@plasticityforum.com.



Illac Diaz of [One Liter of Light](#)

[The Bamboo Wave](#) - Check out this iPhone cover! The "Wave" is a product offered by [Bamboa](#) to support Ocean Recovery Alliance in order to raise awareness about plastic pollution and alternative materials that can be used

to help protect our ocean. In this case, the material is the amazing bamboo. The cover is made out of 100% sustainable bamboo, and 25% of the proceeds of the "Wave" will go to Ocean Recovery Alliance. Shed that plastic cover and speak the language of the ocean.....and bamboo! Order [yours today](#), with shipment anywhere in the world. Distributors are also welcome.



We are also happy to announce the launch of "[Water Margin - Hong Kong's Link to the Sea](#)" which is a 170 page bi-lingual coffee table book on the Hong Kong ocean. 700 copies of which will go to schools. This will soon be available in locations around Hong Kong, but can also be purchased [here](#). Don't forget that all year-round we offer a unique on-the-water learning experience, which is literally a "junk" trip that allows for a hands-on learning experiences that go far beyond the conventional beach cleanup. These trips of up to 30 people--perfect for a corporate event or class fieldtrip--explore the ocean of Hong Kong and include both visual and physical sampling of the marine debris in the area, direct interaction with experts about the social and environmental impacts of marine debris pollution, and discussion of what everyone can do to help address this important problem. The day on the water can also include a visit to the Soko Islands, with the potential to see pink dolphins, at no extra cost. Please see our [website](#) for more information on this educational service and how to book your day "[On the Water with Ocean Recovery Alliance](#)."



Thank you again for your interest and support for the ocean, and we hope that you can be involved in some of the things that we are doing in the months to come. If you would like to contribute financial support to our cause, please [click here and press "Donate to ORA" to support our efforts.](#)

Sincerely,
Doug Woodring

Co-Founder

[See our TEDx talk in Hong Kong!](#)

[Click here to view a short video on the Plastic Disclosure Project, a project of Ocean Recovery Alliance.](#)

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