

## TASC Talk 20<sup>th</sup> February 2020

### The Big Lie by Mr Demetri Petrou



We live in a world where plastic rules; we cannot do without it. It has become an essential part of modern life. There is nothing wrong with the stuff – except when we come to get rid of it!

Demetri talks about the politics and the lies that shroud the disposal of plastic – a world where profit comes first and the environment comes a very far behind second.

Demetri showed that, unless we change everything we do, the problem of plastic disposal will become impossible to solve.

---

The Earth was born around 4 Billion Years ago and life began, in geological time scales, a short time later. Since then a lot of stuff has happened; simple proteins learned how to make copies of themselves; bugs formed; bugs

became fish; fish evidently crawled onto the land, mutated into dinosaurs and birds, most of which were wiped out during a number of Mass Extinction Events. However some small mammals survived to become monkeys who finally evolved into us. Am I missing anything?

This last bit, if you consider the whole of evolution as a giant 24 hour clock face, the start of the Homo sapiens only appears in the last few seconds or so of all that time. We've been here only an instant in evolutionary terms, and in that time what have we managed to do.

We have gone from discovering how to make fire to how to make atom bombs, computers, lasers, land men on the Moon and many other things including plastics.



Demetri gave us a very impassioned talk about how we, human beings, have been responsible within the last hundred years or so from creating plastics as a useful material to polluting our planet with billions of tons of it. Most plastics as you know do not break

down into something more eco-friendly for a long time. What tends to happen is that they get ripped, squashed and eroded into smaller particles which are then ingested and breathed in by every living creature on this planet including us. The stuff that hasn't as yet shredded tends to cause vast islands of plastic in rivers, streams and also in the middle of the Atlantic. It kills off many aquatic life forms by being ingested, or wrapping itself around their bodies suffocating the life out of them. Land animals and birds are not immune from this either. As mentioned before, we are not immune.

Demetri pointed out that even recycling plastics doesn't really work, as more plastics are being created faster than they are being recycled, also bio-degradable plastics aren't a viable long term solution.

Currently there is some work going on to try and come up with a solution but as yet none has been found. The problem is we just can't live without plastics and we keep churning out more and more each day. Got any good ideas?