

**Name: Salamot Itunuoluwa Fakoya – 14 years**

**Nationality: NIGERIAN**

**Linksbond College, Ijede, Ikorodu, Lagos, Nigeria.**

## **Danger of Plastics in the Aquatic Food Chain**

**By**

**SALAMOT ITUNUOLUWA FAKOYA**

The aquatic habitat is put at risk due to the polluted environment they are exposed to. Dumping of wastes into water bodies are causing great harm to aquatic animals especially the endangered ones, which I fear, would soon wipe out of existence. They also reduce the oxygen level of the water thereby, affecting both the aquatic plants and animals.

Plastics are the most common wastes that dominate pollution in the ocean. Though they are beneficial to us, however, the disadvantages also pose a major threat to the ocean life, which we rely on greatly. This is a story about the Mackerel.

Food became scarce since aquatic animals were migrating from the Indian Ocean due to the unhealthy environment. But the Mackerel wouldn't give up. After a long search, he spots plankton and quickens its pace to grab its prey not knowing it was a broken piece of plastic. What a perfect kill! He thinks. But it tasted sweeter than normal, he thinks again. The Mackerel put these thoughts aside as he too must migrate after his first kill that day.

The Bluefin tuna, another hungry hunter sensed the mackerel miles away. Oh! Here is the food, he thought. No, he won't hesitate on this one. So he aimed its prey and gobbles it up. Feeling satisfied, he started migrating after two days of starvation not knowing death was at his door.

Another starved predator, the Lemon shark saw the Bluefin tuna after three days of hunting. He who hesitates is lost, so he wolfed it down. Then heavy waves moved him ashore. The shark struggled for breath at this.

The villagers on seeing the Lemon shark at the shore grabbed different weapons and stabbed it to death. Since the Mackerel ate a piece of plastic and it tasted sweeter than normal, he may bring plastic into his food theory only by judging the taste. This “sweet” plastic could have killed the Mackerel in days but he was consumed by a Bluefin tuna which was later eaten by the Lemon shark. The villagers were amused to see the shark at the shore, so they hurried to kill it. Definitely, they made a big feast. It was later learnt that some villagers were rushed to the clinic. Some even died. So, the plastic as a whole once eaten by a prey, affects its predators.

In conclusions, aquatic animals are not the only ones affected in this story. Plastics are a major cause of death in our society because we consume them indirectly. I believe that if wastes are disposed of properly, the oceanic life will be safe and so will we. Health is wealth.