

PROJECT GREEN CHALLENGE DAY 5: CLIMATE JUSTICE (greener)

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Challenge:

Craft call of action in powerful graphic

The issue:

When China first announced on 2017 that they have decided to ban the import of foreign plastic waste, their local environmental activist considered it as a celebration because it means there will be lesser amount of plastic waste and toxic chemical mismanagement happening there. However, as China close their doors, Malaysia happened to be the next country to receive these plastic wastes from US, UK and Japan.

And this led Malaysia to be the next plastic town. To be exact, it's one specific town called Jenjarom – a place where I live – due to its proximity to Port Klang, the largest port and entry point for most of the country's plastic import.

Since then, Jenjarom has seen many development of illegal plastic recycling factories who aimed to gained profit from the incoming plastic wastes. These factories are unlicensed and their waste management is done by secretly burning plastic in open air instead of controlled conditions to cut their cost or to recycling them into pellets

As there were many factories being opened, more and more plastic waste keep on coming, hence making the town filled with thousand tonnes of plastic waste being imported into Malaysia.

Most impacted: The local community.

Most reports and complaints by the community stated that they all faced similar problems which are:

1. Acrid smell getting into their house despite already sealed their window and shut their doors
2. Constant coughing due to the smell of rubber being burned
3. Tighten chest and lungs
4. Breathing problems
5. The smells returned every night like a daily cycle
6. Fever and respiratory problem
7. Couldn't sleep at night to the smell problems
8. Skin rashes and itchy peeling
9. Carcinogens in the pollution may cause cancers

This issue also cause rises to socio-economic impacts such as illegal plants building, violence, corruption, price inflation and abandonment of area in the town.

How close is me with the factories: Less than 10km

There are many factories here in Jenjarom. In fact, the closest factory to me is 9.8km which has been releasing smokes daily. I often had to hold my breath when driving past this area as the smokes released are usually in greyish dark colour, dusty and tighten my chest.

Intervention from local government: Shut down of factories

As of now, 33 factories that were said to be operating illegally have been shut down and most of the part, the fumes are gone. However, despite the cease of these factories, the incoming plastic waste is still here in Malaysia, and in fact, 17 000 tonnes of rubbish are still left in the town.

The local bodies are processing this waste bit by bit, but considering the fact that the town has 30 000 residences, this amount is a very huge number. In fact, if we walk around the street, we can see some mountain of trash in a certain area, and most of the plastics are from large developed nations such as Japan and UK brands – as reported by BBC.

How I would approach the situation: collaboration with NGOs and agreement with other countries

Looking at the fact that these plastics came from other nation, it's wise to have a seat on the table with them and come up with an agreement on **how much** plastic should be allowed to be imported from their country. The amount determined should match Malaysia capacity in processing plastic waste, considering the efficiency of our waste management system and the availability of landfill areas. Also, these discussion should also include **solutions** to be incorporated and **fundings** to process the plastic waste that came from their country.

Locally, we can collaborate with NGOs that to solve this issue in which they can provide us manpower, funding, ideas and time. It is important for all parties and organisation to work together because this is not an individual issue, let alone caused by the local community. It is unfair to make the local communities pay for the illegal behaviour done by the big corporations.

Hence, it is very important for us to all play our role for the sake of humanity.

My graphic:



Instagram post:



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frhn_air Over the past three years, Malaysia has been struggling with tonnes of plastic waste being imported and processed illegally, contributing to many health problems among the local community.

hence today, I urge everyone to finally take action for the sake of our local people! Start taking action today!

@TurningGreenOrg, @DrBronner,
@CaptainPlanetFdn, @Friends_Earth #PGC2022

10 seconds ago