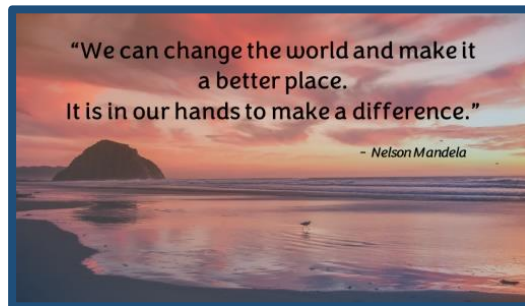


## President Arlene's Letter



### April: Environmental Month

"Earth Day 2024 theme announced as Planet vs. Plastics"



### !!! SHOCKING FACT !!!

Scientists estimate that only approximately 9% of globally generated plastic waste is recycled.

79% of plastics end up in landfills or as litter in the natural environment....and only 12% is safely incinerated.

United Nations Development Programme – November 28<sup>th</sup> 2023; [www. https://stories.undp.org/why-arent-we-recycling-more-plastic](https://stories.undp.org/why-arent-we-recycling-more-plastic) - Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> April 2024

### Plastic Pollution - Facts and How to Prevent It

From our local food shop to our favourite nature spots and even our bodies, plastic is truly everywhere.

But how big is the problem and what can we do to prevent it?

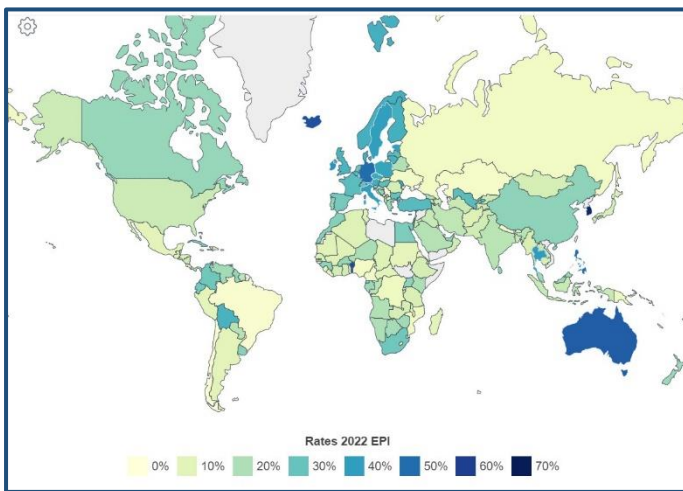
#### 6 shocking plastic pollution facts:

- Over **50%** of plastic only gets **used once** and thrown away
- Over **98%** of single use plastic comes from **fossil fuels**
- Scientists estimate there are about **171 trillion pieces of plastic in the ocean**

- An estimated **300,000 whales, dolphins and porpoises die every year** from discarded plastic fishing gear
- Microplastics were found in the **blood of 80% of people** tested in a recent study
- Plastic production will generate the same number of planet-warming pollutants as **615 coal-fired power stations by 2040** if production continues at the current rate

## Reducing plastic waste

- ✓ Regular Sweep or Vacuum
- ✓ Swap single use plastic for metal or glass
- ✓ Avoid microwaving plastic containers
- ✓ Choose Eco friendly food packaging (whenever possible)
- ✓ Take your own bag to supermarkets etc.
- ✓ Reduce synthetic clothing consumption



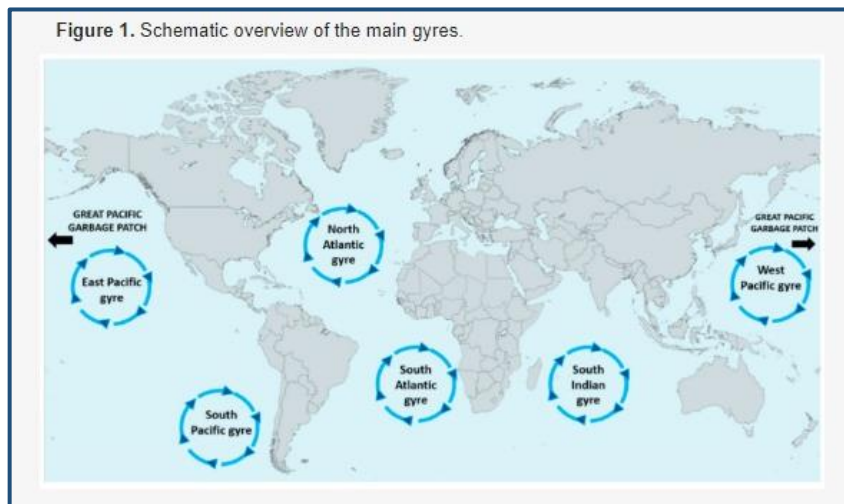
This global map shows the (approx.) recycling rates (%) per country globally in 2022  
[www.worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/recycling-rates-by-country](http://www.worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/recycling-rates-by-country).  
 Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> April 2024

In an article published in November of 2021 – **Garbage Patches and Their Environmental Implications in a Plasticsphere** – the authors describe the current distribution of garbage patches in the world’s oceans and give predictions on future growth and the increasing threat to marine life and the environment. Filho, W.L.; Hunt, J.; Kovaleva, M. - J. Mar. Sci. Eng. 2021, 9, 1289.

<https://doi.org/10.3390/jmse9111289> - Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> April 2024

A schematic indicating the main gyres (ocean currents that circulate the ocean waters around the earth).

Due to these currents, plastic & other waste in the oceans form huge garbage patches – the greatest of which is the Great Pacific Garbage Patch (GPGP) which is approx.. 3 times the size of France.



If all nations don't "come to the party" and try to fix the issues surrounding plastics in our society, the problem will just continue to grow out of proportion, wreaking havoc on all living things on this planet.

The authors in this interesting communication provide us with a very eye-opening view of the environmental implications of this serious problem for our planet (Figure 1 below).

Table 2. Some of the environmental problems posed by garbage patches.

| Problem                      | Potential Impacts   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Entanglement of marine life  | Marine life is caught and trapped in the debris, especially larger species  |
| Ghost fishing                | Fishing through lost nets that are not recovered  |
| Ingestion of debris          | Plastic and other debris mistakenly eaten by bird/fish as food  |
| Transport of foreign species | Ocean currents transport plant/animal species from one area to the other, away from their natural habitat, with the risk of invasive ones |
| Water contamination          | Ocean currents may transport chemicals deriving from the decomposition of debris, which may impact sea fauna/flora                        |

Their predictions outlined in Figure 2 show the frightening growth of the various garbage patches for 2063 if we don't all address these issues now !

Table 3. Estimates of the growth of garbage patches \*.

|                      | 2013  | 2023   | 2063   |
|----------------------|-------|--------|--------|
| North Pacific Ocean  | 964.0 | 1234.0 | 3313.4 |
| North Atlantic Ocean | 564.7 | 722.9  | 1941.0 |
| Indian Ocean         | 591.3 | 756.9  | 2032.4 |
| South Atlantic Ocean | 127.8 | 163.6  | 439.3  |
| South Pacific Ocean  | 210.2 | 269.1  | 722.5  |

\* g × 10<sup>2</sup> tones, annual growth rate of 2.5%. Source: Authors' estimations based on [30].



This is where we can all play a part in reducing the amount of plastics and other waste in our environment.

We can  
 – **each & every one of us** –  
 do our part to  
 REDUCE,  
 RE-USE  
 &  
 RECYCLE

Kind regards  
 Arlene Arnold  
 Club President 2023-2024  
 Rotary E-Club of South Africa One  
 District 9370

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## Continuing in this vein, we have some thoughts from Rotarian & E-Club member Nessa Rana.....

Single-use plastics like plastic bags, straws, utensils, and packaging pose grave threats to our planet. Once discarded, they pollute our landscapes and waterways, harming delicate ecosystems and wildlife. Plastic waste takes centuries to fully break down, leaching toxic chemicals that contaminate soil and water. Even when "recycled", much of it ends up in landfills or incinerators, further contributing to environmental degradation.

*Living consciously is vital.*

Each decision we make, from what we buy to how we dispose of items, has an impact on our environment. By choosing to reduce our use of single-use plastics through reusable alternatives and curbing our plastic use, we can cut down on waste that pollutes our oceans, harms wildlife, and degrades natural ecosystems.

*Let's embrace conscious living to protect the beauty and vitality of our one and only home.*



Action Now: [savesoil.org](https://www.savesoil.org)

#SaveSoil #ConsciousPlanet #SaveSoilFixClimateChange  
#SoilForClimateAction #PlanetvsPlastics #EndPlastics

### A bit of Humour

This made my day 🤪

A little boy goes to his father and asks, "Daddy, how was I born?"

The father answers,

"Well, son, I guess one day you will need to find out anyway! Your mom and I first got together in a chat room on Yahoo. Then I set up a date via e-mail with your mom and we met at a cyber-cafe. We sneaked into a secluded room, and googled each other. There your mother agreed to a download from my hard drive. As soon as I was ready to upload, we discovered that neither one of us had used a firewall, and since it was too late to hit the delete button, nine months later a little Pop-Up appeared that said: 'You've got male!'" 🤪

**One of the E-Clubs most successful projects is now bearing fruit.**

**Read this lovely email from our past-member and E-Club stalwart,  
Monique Labat.....**

**Honorary E-Club Rotarian, Bettie van der Merwe Bonnet**

Dear President Arlene,

How are you keeping?

Earlier today I had the pleasure of a "kuier" - Afrikaans for visit from Honorary E-Club Rotarian, Bettie van der Merwe





Bonnet.



people daily.

Bettie and Israel drove from Velddrif in the FDSA bakkie to collect donations of vegetables from farmers in the Stellenbosch area where Francesco and I live.

From feeding 300 members of the Velddrif Community before COVID, Bettie now feeds 595



I'm sharing these photos with you as the Olive Grove project, which you contributed to in 2017 thanks to PDG Gerald and PP Irene, is doing well, now that Bettie has installed new irrigation pipes. There has been a 1st harvest of Mission and Frontoia olives which has been sold to an olive farmer in Paarl. Next year Bettie hopes there'll be a bigger harvest.

Best wishes to you all from the Winelands,

Monique

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<https://www.facebook.com/stellenboschrotaryclubdistrict9350/>



**Our passion is paying off it seems 😊**

**Now Hon. E-Club Rotarian Betty & her trusty team of helpers can earn much needed income to better the lives of the Veldrif community.**

**Thanks for sharing this President Arlene....and thank you Monique for keeping us posted as the olives grow.....**

This has most certainly been a bumper edition so far  
&  
100% devoted to  
Rotary International's  
6<sup>th</sup> Area of Focus



ENVIRONMENT

**And now follows our final article for this month.....**



## Creating space for peace in an area vulnerable to Gender Based Violence

One hours drive south of Durban is the seaside village of Umkomaas. This part of the coast is very popular with fishermen and divers of all kinds and so it is quite a tourist attraction for those that enjoy all sea adventure and activities.

If one takes a short drive from Umkomaas across the N2 motorway inland, the first little village one goes through is Craigeiburn. In South Africa's heyday, this entire area was populated with many Italian skilled workers and their families, as well as other workers, all employed by the massive SAPPI entity. Nowadays, with our struggling economy and hence the resulting retrenchments over the last 30 years, unemployment has become the name of the game in this sleepy part of KwaZuluNatal.

Children and women are exposed to the greatest risk of violence in these area's due to the off-shoot of the increase in unemployment – alcohol & drug abuse. And these young children and women are most often powerless to "fight back".

In the middle of March 2024, the community was rocked by the sad reality of GBV in their midst – with the rape and murder of one of the little girls that attended DRIFT Primary School. Lusanda Nkomo would have turned 10 years old this year.....

Our Rotary E-Club was told the sad news by our new "recruit", Rotarian Iris Canham, who has been running a reading programme at the school for quite some time now.

Here in South Africa, the 2021 PIRLS reading literacy study (the most recent study done) shows that a staggering 81% of our Grade 4 children – across ALL 11 official languages – are unable to read for meaning. 5 years earlier, in 2016, this figure stood at 78%.

Iris and her Casa Dillon Education volunteers – amongst them our own Treasurer Rotarian Tony Holness - all knew this little girl, who was one of the children in the school that was selected for the reading programme.

Our President and Projects Director – Rotarians Arlene Arnold and Logie Naidoo – presented a proposal to the E-Club Board to make a Peace Garden at the school – part of which was in memory of little Lusanda.

Through creative imagination, sheer physical labour and truly great hearts, our Club members and our friends have been able to convert an unused and unsightly part of the school grounds into a beautiful and tranquil Peace Garden.

The generous donations and sponsorships from friends of our Rotary Club, those of Casa Dillon Education and the local community, have now enabled all the children of Drift Primary School to sit in contemplation and in peace - and for those that were friends of Lusanda, in memory of her – in this very special spiritual spot.

### Have a look at the photo's taken on the 2 days of work at the school so far.....



The BEFORE pictures...





**Our new friend of Rotary, Dirk Lampbrecht, sketched how he imagined the garden should look:**



**And this is how far we got on the first day of “construction” (17<sup>th</sup> April 2024).**

**One can already see how the plan is coming together, with a labyrinth for peaceful contemplation and an angel to watch over the children as they pass through the school gate.....**



**During the lovely hot day.....everyone got “stuck in”.... and many hands made light work.....**

Here is the whole team that got “stuck in”  
– Projects Director Logie Naidoo, Iris Canham, Nessa Rana, Susie vd Merwe and friends of the Rotary E-Club of SA One D9370 – Selvie Gounden, Buhle & Dirk Lamprecht.

To the right of the picture is Rotarian Nessa’s landscaper, Melvyn, without whom we could never have achieved all that we did 😊





ABOVE we have our creative team in Melvyn and Dirk.

Here they are outlining the labyrinth after the team pulled the grass out of the rock-hard, clay and levelled out the ground.

And to the LEFT, Selvie and Nessa are cutting the weed-mat that was placed underneath the stones to prevent the grass from growing through.

**...Watch this space for the exciting finale of this project...**

## BIRTHDAYS IN APRIL & THOSE COMING UP IN MAY 2024



President Arlene....on April Fools Day 😊  
Robert Senkubuge  
Clive Smedmor

1<sup>st</sup> April  
7<sup>th</sup> April  
27<sup>th</sup> April

Linda Zama

1<sup>st</sup> May

### Funny clean jokes



1. I have an inferiority complex, but it's not a very good one.
2. I told my doctor that I broke my arm in two places. He told me to stop going to those places.
3. What vegetable is cool, but not *that* cool? Rad-ish.
4. I was wondering why the basketball kept getting bigger and bigger, and then it hit me.



See you all next month.....



#### SIDE-NOTE:

*Just a quick note of thanks to our super-duper E-Club member – Cathy Dipnall – for all her hard work editing the Drumbeat in the past.*

*A very big THANK YOU Cathy 😊*