

This week on Radio Nova it’s the first of our 2 part feature about Oyster Reseeding in Dublin Bay.

**Here are 5 of the biggest threats to our oceans**

Oceans cover 70% of the earth’s surface. For a healthy planet, we need healthy oceans. Here are five of the biggest challenges our oceans face.

**1. Climate change**

Climate change arguably presents the greatest threat to ocean health. It is making oceans hotter, promoting acidification, and making it harder to breathe in them by reducing dissolved oxygen levels. Imagine how poorly a fish in an aquarium would fare if we turned up the heat, dripped in acid, and pulled out the oxygen bubbler. This is slowly but surely what we are doing to our oceans.

**2. Plastic pollution**

More than five trillion pieces of plastic pollution are afloat in the oceans. And the Great Pacific Garbage Patch is growing. For every pound of tuna we are taking out of the ocean, we are putting two pounds of plastic back in. Bold interventions to reduce plastic pollution are urgently needed.

**3. Sustainable seafood**

Almost a third of global fish stocks are overfished. Fish that were once extremely abundant, such as bluefin tuna, are now becoming increasingly endangered. Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing can cost the global economy up to €21 billion annually. Restaurants and seafood markets in many areas routinely serve endangered seafood species that are the underwater equivalent of a rhino or a panda.

**4. Marine protected areas**

We all know that parks and protected areas on land help wildlife such as bears, deer and elephants thrive. The same is true for underwater protected areas. In addition to preserving charismatic and ecologically important marine wildlife, including sharks, dolphins, and corals, protected areas in the ocean can act like a savings account for fisheries. Fish inside such areas grow larger and generate more offspring. These then spill beyond the boundaries of the protected area, and are harvested by fisheries as a return on their investment in the park.

**5. Fisheries subsidies**

Every year, governments spend €32 billion on fisheries subsidies, the majority of which directly accelerate harmful overfishing. Subsidies lead to overcapacity in fishing fleets and allow vessels to fish harder for longer, even when it would not otherwise make economic sense.

**Links for more information:**

[www.greenoceancoffee.ie/dublin-bay-oyster-reseeding-project-phase-1-completed/](http://www.greenoceancoffee.ie/dublin-bay-oyster-reseeding-project-phase-1-completed/)

[www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/benefits-of-oyster-restoration-go-beyond-the-bay](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/benefits-of-oyster-restoration-go-beyond-the-bay)

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