



CTA-152-Sea Going Green

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How I Sea:

Ally Dragozet, Sea Going Green

[Source: The TerraMar Peoject](#)

Photo: Ally Dragozet/The Yacht Week

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Ally Dragozet is the founder of Sea Going Green – an environmental consulting firm that specializes in sustainable ocean tourism.

As a Marine Biologist, environmental sustainability has always been at the heart of Ally's work and research. Following her studies at the University of Amsterdam and research projects at WWF & Naturalis Research Institute, Ally realized that she wanted to offer something different than other consulting services – to really help create formative change in the tourism industry as a whole.

Having traveled to many parts of the world and seen plastic pollution in what would otherwise be beautiful blue waters or pristine mountains definitely has been a wakeup call for action.

How bad is the impact of tourism on the marine environment right now? What are some of the biggest issues you see and where are they happening most?

The tourism industry is unfortunately a large contributor to marine pollution. In the same breath, this industry has potential to be the biggest catalysts for change if they choose to adapt.

Marine plastic pollution, habitat destruction, overfishing, CO2 emissions, and climate change – these are all consequences of our tourism behavior.

The scale of destruction is far beyond what was previously imagined, especially concerning the state of the world's coral reefs; 75% of the world's coral reefs are projected to die by 2050.

Coastal tourism accounts for 5% of global GDP, hence the importance ensuring that destinations remain beautiful by acting sustainably.

There are many examples of what the negative impacts of the tourism industry can do to an island or city. For example – Boracay island in The Philippines, which had a reputation as a party destination was forced to close following unprecedented pollution washing up.

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This harsh result of unsustainable tourism led to a new approach – which is much more eco-friendly and catered towards adventurers and eco-tourists over party-goers.



Photo: Ally Dragozet/The Yacht Week

Who is more responsible for the impacts that tourism has on the ocean, the tourists, or the hospitality industry?

In my opinion, it's tourists who can create change by choosing eco-friendly venues, refusing a straw at the hotel bar, or influencing venues to reduce their use of plastic.

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The rise of social media has contributed to spreading the interests of the consumers. Environmental activists, bloggers and influencers are making waves to spread the message of sustainability, some of whom have thousands and even millions of followers.

This is not to say that the hospitality industry won't play a part in making a destination sustainable. They can play a huge role in setting the precedent for sustainability through their design, energy and water-efficient practices, choice of products offered, and food options.

If the market for sustainability is there (especially for Millennials and Gen Z), then customers will be drawn in. Once these changes are validated by tourists, more venues will likely follow suit and adapt how they run their businesses and services.

To create a long-lasting change that pivots to sustainable tourism, it will take effort from both sides.

Photo: David Henrichs/Unsplash

What do you think is the biggest threat to the world's oceans?

Unfortunately, there is a lot of pressure on the ocean right now, but I personally think the biggest threat to our oceans is plastic pollution.

Found entangled with marine animals, floating by our shores and making its way onto our plates: plastic is everywhere. It's scary to see how much we all rely on plastic products, especially single-use plastics such as packaging, straws, water bottles and also the biggest contaminator: cigarette butts.

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The previous lack of proper disposal bins coupled with the lack of recycling capabilities has made cigarette butts



the most common litter item on beaches around the world.

Luckily, organizations like The TerraMar Project are tackling this issue by distributing and strategically placing disposal bins and ash trays to help reduce and eliminate this issue.

The best way to reduce the amount of plastic making its way into our oceans and beaches is to simply not use it or have it on board.

Single-use plastic alternatives are on the rise, which is a big step in the right direction, but it is also important to equip beaches and ports with, for example, water fountains so that tourists can easily refill their reusable water bottles.

These kinds of actions will help tourists behave sustainably.

Photo: Ally Dragozet/Yacht Week Beach Cleanup

What's one thing any traveler can personally do to reduce their impact on the marine environment?

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My suggestion to tourists would be to follow the principal of “reduce, reuse, recycle” to help eliminate plastic pollution.

Reduce the use of single-use plastics by not buying them in the first place and refusing such items such as cutlery or straws.

Reuse your sustainable alternatives so that you cut down on waste.

Recycle to keep plastics, glass and paper out of landfills so that they can be made into something to be used again and the cycle continues.

Consumers can start with buying a reusable shopping bag, a sustainable refillable water bottle and reef-safe sunscreen. We also encourage consumers to look out for the latest sustainable trends as new products are on the market every day!

What’s the easiest way for someone who’s passionate about the ocean to get involved further in conservation?



I would try to get involved in local projects where you are based, research the players in your area: the NGO’s, student associations, startups and entrepreneurs focusing on conservation and reach out to them!

Companies are always looking for ambassadors that can donate their time to raise awareness about the need for conservation, build a community and even organize events such as beach clean ups!

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How I Sea is a new effort by The TerraMar Project to dive into the minds of our global ocean community. We highlight opinions on conservation issues such as: marine pollution, overfishing, drilling, climate change, marine protected areas, scientific discoveries, and much more. Stay tuned for more.

Sign up today to become a citizen of our global ocean community and sign up for your very own passport to the world's ocean by visiting us at: www.theterramarproject.org

For additional reading see [The WFCRC Document Gallery](#) for articles about:

- Public Service Announcements (PSA)
- Coral Alert Network (CAN)
- Emergency Reporting Reports (ERR)
- Call to Action (CTA)
- Marine Protected Areas (MPA)
- Marine Life Alert (MLA)
- Seismic and Oil Production Threats
- Natural Science Reports (NSR)
- Oil Spill Alerts (OSA)
- And other miscellaneous documents

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