



THE BIRTH OF MOVING WATER ALLIANCE

By Erryl Ho

With over 8 million plastic pieces polluting our waters daily, plastic pollution is on the rise – now more than ever before thanks to pandemic hygiene measures that now sees everything wrapped in plastic globally.

The Planet Calls foundation recently launched the “Moving Water Alliance” initiative to tackle plastic pollution by offering support to river and beach cleanups from around the world.

I recently caught up with the co-founder of The Planet Calls, Amour Setter who is the brainchild behind Moving Water Alliance – to find out why Moving Water Alliance might be the key to decreasing water pollution.



HOW DID THE MOVING WATER ALLIANCE START?

I realised that education alone was never going to solve our plastic pollution problem and that we really have to mobilise communities to get more involved. So I set about forming an alliance that could offer support and community to leaders who were already organising river and beach cleanups.

I'm honestly so tired of what I call "activism lip-service" – people preaching about how important it is to make changes to the way we treat our planet but not following through with action.

Talk is cheap.

I believe the more people that take action and actually get in there and do the "dirty work", the better chance we have of fixing our plastic pollution problem. We have so many people ranting on social media about the state the planet is in, but if you ask them what they have actually physically done to make a real difference, they have no answer.

*I believe it's time to put **Eco over Ego** and **Planet over Profit**.*

Moving Water Alliance is a good start and a great way to mobilise communities to start taking action. I want to encourage a global zero waste movement and I believe that this alliance will help to achieve that.

WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE MOVING WATER ALLIANCE?

I handle operations and marketing with a dedicated team of volunteers who assist with the day-to-day operations of the alliance. We've also just established an oversight committee comprising dedicated members of the alliance who will help us shape and mould the alliance.

WHICH COUNTRIES ARE CURRENTLY INVOLVED WITH THE ALLIANCE?

We have members from several countries including Kenya, Ethiopia, Germany, South Africa and the USA.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS THAT ORGANISATIONS CAN GAIN FROM THE ALLIANCE?

I believe that our members will benefit greatly from the community and the support that we offer. Running a beach or river cleanup operation is a difficult, lonely and thankless task. Being able to talk to other like-minded people that are doing the same is both comforting and inspiring.

In time, we will spearhead Zero Waste Centres in the communities of our members that aim to encourage people to adopt a zero-waste lifestyle. This will entail free educational workshops, up-cycling courses that will teach people how to reuse household items instead of sending them to landfills – and also show them how to work with local city councils and municipalities to ensure communities are aware of correct recycling methods.

In time, we will also be able to access funding that will help us set up Zero Waste Centres.



WHY IS ZERO WASTE CRUCIAL FOR TACKLING OUR PLASTIC PROBLEM?

Something we keep saying at Moving Water Alliance is Recycling is Not the Solution! A Zero Waste lifestyle encompasses reusing and up-cycling everything you buy and avoiding plastic as far as possible. And making sure you keep things in circulation, so for example, repairing stuff instead of sending it to the landfill, buying vintage or second-hand clothing instead of supporting fast fashion and having a compost bin to recycle your leftovers. You don't have to go all-out to begin with, that is very hard anyway. But you can slowly move over to a more efficient way of dealing with waste and eventually you become better at it and more conscious of your buying habits.

IS IT POSSIBLE TO JOIN THE ALLIANCE IF I DON'T HAVE AN ORGANISATION?

Anyone who runs a beach or river cleanup project or has plans to do so can join the alliance, and membership is totally free.

For people who are interested in getting involved, click [here](#). If you have any further questions or suggestions, please don't hesitate to email us at info@movingwateralliance.org

SUSTAINABILITY TRENDS OF 2021

By Erryl Ho

AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN 2020, PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD REALISED THE IMPORTANCE OF ECO-SUSTAINABILITY. PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE, AND WE CAN ONLY SUSTAIN THIS BY PROTECTING OUR GLOBAL HOME — PLANET EARTH.

WITHOUT PLANET EARTH, WHERE ELSE ARE WE GOING TO LIVE?

WITH 2021 COMING TO A CLOSE, HERE ARE THE TOP SUSTAINABILITY TRENDS WE HAVE NOTICED THAT WILL HELP TO MAKE OUR WORLD A BETTER PLACE.

THE RISE OF SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS

The Gen Z generation (1996-2016) raised awareness for a lot of topics that were barely spoken about previously. They began speaking on topics like racism, mental health, climate change – feeling a responsibility to make a real change on these ongoing issues.

Eco-sustainability has been a hot topic in recent years, especially with the popularity of vegan or plant-based diets to stop meat and dairy consumption. Not only is it a healthier alternative, but using less meat and dairy products reduces land and water use for farming animals.

With meat product sales going down by 18% during the pandemic, we can only imagine how much farther it will go down with the rise of plant-based eaters.

Who would imagine that switching to a plant-based diet would help reduce pollution, save animals and feel happier overall?

THE WORKING FROM HOME LIFESTYLE

The pandemic forced employees to adapt to the “work from home” lifestyle, with some doubts in mind in terms of productivity. Unexpectedly, the forced implementation was more effective than ever.

Not only did employees enjoy working at home more, but less transportation was used for commuting – hence less coal, oil and gas consumption. With workers eating at home, fewer plastics were also used during lunch hours.

Working at home might be a growing trend even when the pandemic is over. With less consumption of natural resources, this is another big step to saving our planet.

RENEWABLE ENERGY GETTING CHEAPER THAN EVER

With countries realising the importance of sustainability, they also recognised the need to adopt renewable energy. In the last ten years, wind and solar plants became 70% and 89% cheaper – exceeding coal and gas consumption in the next 5 years with cost reduction.

Coal plants are difficult to maintain the older they get, hence higher maintenance and operation costs. Their only choices are to raise their energy's prices or shut down as a whole.

So why is renewable energy getting cheaper?

Renewable energy is 100% free with less operating expenses when compared to coal and fossil fuel plants.

With more countries using renewable energy, prices go down due to increased capacity. This makes renewable energy affordable for developing countries, creating access to this technology globally.

In order to achieve sustainability, we can only get there by helping each other – and that's exactly what these countries are doing with renewable energy.

CLEAN AIR WILL BE A HIGHER PRIORITY

Pictures of clear blue skies blew up on social media during the start of the pandemic, the result of less air pollution from the lack of operating factories. Now countries are more aware of the devastating consequences of air pollution – and are putting a stop to it.

Having clean air is essential to our human health, especially from viruses like Covid-19. With over 190 countries involved with the [Paris Agreement](#) – an international treaty on climate change – we hope to see a greener revolution in the coming decades.

Companies are setting goals for achieving net-zero emissions and climate positivity. Actions include the planting of trees, regenerative agriculture investments, and more.

With these four sustainability trends becoming norms in future years, we can only hope to see a real greener change – for future generations to come.

