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# Surfing: History, Effects And Environment

## Introduction

Surfing is something that effects millions worldwide it's considered and associated with being one with mother nature meaning it must be eco-friendly to the point of being environmentally pleasing? However, some of the equipment used is quit polluting to the environment and this is something surfers and manufactures are trying to stop because the environment is something they're trying to preserve so they can continue doing what they love. People are trying to find ways of fixing this environmental impact that the surf industry has on the environment.

Throughout my own experiences with surfing and the surf culture, it shows me how much I want to preserve that. It's really important to me that one day even my kids could experiences surfing and, but if we don't keep a control over all this that might not happen.

I've been analysing sources that dives into the most important things that are polluting the surf environment and how to resolve it throughout various outcomes and examples.

## Overview of surfing history

Surfing is as old as time, riding these magnificent waves has existed ever since people stared swimming in the oceans. It's not hard to body surf as it requires you to lay and let the wave take you. Bodysurfing was truly the first form of surfing to humans, and only from there did it really evolve. Standing up on a surfboard was later developed with first accounts being the Polynesians. However, a major part of surfing history and revolutionary at the time was Hawaii. (Wikipedia. 2019)

No one knows exactly who first came up with the sport of surfing, however historians theorize it started over 1000 years ago with the immigration of Polynesian people from Sumatra. In 1778 captain cook was actually one of the first to document the phenomenon as he observed a surfer in Tahiti.

It's no story that Hawaii is known for its surfing culture, surfing has played a major role in the Hawaiian culture. With it separating into two sets of social classes, the royal class and the commoner class. The best where best surfing sports where in the royal with the lesser sports in the common. (SUP, Canoe, Kayak Tours & Maui Surf Lessons. 2019.)

## What impact does surfing and the surfing industry have on the environment and who will it mostly effect?

Surfing is mostly seen as an ecofriendly outdoor activity. A lot of surfers are very much one with nature and appreciate the environment, then get to enjoy their passion in. Surfers share this genuine love for the waves that lots of them do whatever they need to preserve it.

Some of the basic produces that have raised risk towards the environment is surfboard wax.

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Like wise to sunscreen board wax contains certain chemicals that can be harmful to the ocean and even harming to humans. Heaps of the popular main brand waxes contain petrochemical additives that are polluting our oceans. So over time as the surf board is used the petroleum based wax comes off and affects the sea or reefs.

However there are some that are bigger than just wax, the surfboards themselves. For so long surfers have kept the same design when it comes to their boards, but recently they've started making improvements with the environment in mind. Before this the surfboards contained heaps of toxic polyurethanes along with toxic polyester resin. This can't have a major effect on the ocean and was slowly increasingly polluting the oceans. During 2005, Clark foam one of the major surfboard produces at the time was shut down due to Environmental Protection Agency.

Wetsuits are another major impactor on the environment, they are commonly made out of neoprene, otherwise known as Polychloroprene. The material is very good having with t being chemical stability, and flexibility over a wide temp range. These are the reasons it so commonly used with wetsuits and for good reasons. However, it is synthetic, it's on your skin for long periods of time and the body absorbs it and can be toxic for the skin. Along with polluting and harming marine life there are better alternatives then this for the damage its making. (One Green Planet. 2019)

## **What are some possible ways to minimise pollution to the surf environment, while still being able to surf?**

### **Take three**

Take three is a program set up to tackle the rubbish pollution found on our beachers. The concept is pretty simple and just requires you to find three pieces of rubbish that's on the beach and recycle it or throw out. So every time surfer or anyone goes to the beach they take three pieces to clean up as a type of payment for being able to experiences the environment and preserving that. I found out about take three after I went on my year 12 surf camp, where I was enlightened to the matter by the instructors. They taught me about the importance of this and how simple it is to help the environment because after all I was very thankful to experiences the waves and wanted to preserve that. It's critical that take three reaches everyone because with the more awareness comes higher chances of saving our oceans. (One Green Planet. 2019)

## **Surf equipment**

More ecofriendly equipment helps the pollution level tenfold. There are heaps of good brands that have focused on making their products to a certain standard for environmentally pleasing. Some of these brands consist of, Patagonia, prana and vissla, to name a few that are helping to minimise our impact on the world.

Patagonia, is a well-known surf brand and it's no surprise that they are heavily involved in protecting the environed by coming up with new and innovative ways to protect that. They have heaps of new and existing surf wear for men and women that everyone can love, and with then being such a big brand already their ecofriendly clothing really helps the environment because of how many people that buy it. Patagonia's also heavily involved in fundraise and funding certain documentary's that shine a light on the importance of protecting our environment.

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Prana is a California clothing brand that produces men and women clothing, that are made ecofriendly for people who love to adventure, surf, rock-climbing anything to do with the outdoor. They aim to create very stylish clothing for men and women for the outdoors made from recycled materials.

Vissla is a man only clothing wear that thrive to minimise the environmental impact whilst protecting the oceans. They make all sorts from cloths to wetsuits, all made from recycled materials like polyester yarn that usually rots in landfill. They all so support lots of organisations that seek to protect our oceans. (5 Eco-Friendly Surf Brands That Give Back to People and Planet - Eco Warrior Princess. 2019.)

## **Things you might not realise would help the environment?**

- Smoke, you might not know this but cigarette butts are actually non-biodegradable, meaning that the extremely dangerous chemicals found in them will take a long time before its gone. Not to say it's bad for your health.
- Finding more ecofriendly ways to get to the beach, like driving electric or hybrid cars? Or if not make sure your car is in good condition to prevent any bad emissions for the environment. One great alternative is taking a bunch of mates down and using one car instead of multiple.
- Riding a bike or walking whenever you can is a better option in the long run for us.
- The 3 Rs are very important to learn and use in everyday life to stop any further major damage to the environment. Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle, always keep that in mind whenever something could be better used another way.
- Like most ecofriendly surf companies do, use sustainable, or recycled materials for items. (Soapboxie. 2019.)

## **The 3 Rs of waste management**

The three Rs are very important in all aspects of helping the environment, with it you get a really understanding of how to save money and the environment at the same time. It's a basic skill to be learnt usually taught in schools or from common books, about why it's important. So basically when you have something like an old clothing, you can think to yourself can this be reduced, reused, or recycled? So with that piece of clothing you could break it down and make a new thing out of it and that way it's something that has use again instead of getting stuck in landfill and polluting the planet. (Conserve Energy Future. 2019.)

## **My experiences with surfing**

My first experiences of surfing was on year 11 camp where I got a real feel for the activity and became instantly in love. The feeling of riding on a wave isn't something you can match, and that's why it became really important to me the significances of protecting that. T was there where the surf instructors really showed there passion and explain why and how we can protect it, with certain things like take three. Later on when in year 12 got to experiences it again but it was long with three days of surfing, I really got a feel for the life style and tats what it really is out there. I really got a understanding of how many people l'm actually effecting by not doing anything about the pollution on our beachers. Because out the end of the day its taking this thing that people love away from them.

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## Conclusion

In conclusion I've found out a lot about how easy it really is to help the environment and that extra step makes all the difference. From my own experiences of surfing and the ocean it became really clear how much I do want to protect that so futures to come can experience the amazing feeling of surfing a wave. And if we don't get a grip our oceans won't be here much long.

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