PSl Student

PSL Summer Assignment

Mr. Soeder/Mrs. Trentanelli

August 22, 2012

**Environment**

Generally, when one speaks of the word environment, it is being used to describe the surrounding conditions of which a plant, person, or animal lives in. In this new day and age the term environment has become a more frequently talked about topic. Whether the discussion is on the diminishing ozone layers, about our human expansion into areas at one time only inhabited by animals, or simply the act of recycling, it has gradually worked its ways into our daily lives. With the need for new and improved ways to drive motorized vehicles and do our daily activities it is quite obvious that things are going to have to change rather rapidly to protect our mother Earth for many more years to come. In a recent study done by the EPA, it was estimated that out of 38.6 billion glass bottles used only 33% were actually recycled. Another shocking number was that of the 71.9 billion plastic bottles used in America only 27% were recycled, these astronomical numbers are just solid proof of the recycling problem that is growing. Since recycling is only a small branch associated with the term “environment” it is no wonder that it has become such an important term to all of us.

**FBI**

Olson, Elizabeth. “Part of Waste Problem Is Now Part of Solution’. The New York Times. April 2012: 1

**SUMMARY**

In the article “Part of Waste Problem Is Now Part of Solution” written by Elizabeth Olson, Olson focuses on the recycling efforts of the vastly expanding company Honest Tea. Unlike most companies that distribute consumables, this company is taking responsibility in acknowledging that it sells a product that overall hurts the environment because a very low percentage is actually recycled. With the companies co-founder Seth Goldman taking initiative and leading the recycling charge he has come up with various ideas that will help the company to reach their goals and expectations of this recycling campaign. As of April 30th a “30-foot tall recycle bin” (1) will be used in Times Square to hopefully collect “more than 45,000 bottles of glass and plastic” (1). But to encourage recycling Honest Tea has developed a kind of “reward system” (1) to motivate people to do the right thing. Not to limit the scope of the project to just New York, Honest Tea has set up a website thegreatrecycle.com so that others around the world can track the progress of their recycling and how they are helping the environment. This recycling movement by a well known company that acknowledges the issue at hand is very important in reversing the negative affects that their product can have on the environment.

**Response**

Olson’s article “Part of Waste Problem Is Now Part of Solution” primarily focuses on the efforts of Honest Tea and their objective to increase the percentage of glass/plastic bottles being recycled. With the EPA’s estimated recycling numbers of both glass and plastic recycling consumables being fewer than 34% it is easy to see why this matter is so important.

It is actions like this that are going to jump start this movement of recycling to get it under control so that as the amount of containers used goes up the number of recycled containers also goes up. Honest Tea is not the first company to do something like this as a few years back Coca Cola “provided 150,000 bins to events and public areas” (1) which is a fantastic start to helping various cities. The support of this recycling movement needs to be expanded more by bringing in even more companies to gain support of the American people so that this can be labeled as an important matter that should not be brushed away. With astounding numbers of “38.6 billion glass and 71.9 billion plastic” (1) containers being used it is obvious that these are not going to suddenly stop being used. Seth Goldman, the co-founder of Honest Tea and the manager behind “The Great Recycle” needs to write letters explaining the goal of his project to other companies such as GE, Nike, Microsoft, Apple, and other large corporations to continue pushing his efforts forward. Commercials and billboards are other great ways to help spread the project along with social media such as Twitter and Facebook.

This is not just something that should be pushed to the side but something that needs to be taken seriously before it gets out of hand, if it is not too late already. With that being said proper action needs to be taken to ensure that action that is going to be taken to improve this recycling disaster will properly help benefit the cause.

**FBI 2**

Walsh, Brian. “Feeding the Planet Without Destroying It”. TIME. May 2012: 1-2

**SUMMARY 2**

In the article written by Brian Walsh, “Feeding the Planet Without Destroying it” Walsh identifies yet another branch of problems that can be classified under the world environment. The problem is “agriculture and land use” (1) and Jon Foley (head of the University of Minnesota's Institute on the Environment) calls it the “inconvenient truth” (1). This “inconvenient truth” (1) gives rise to various other questions that range from meat consumption, should we keep protecting forests and wildlife, and is it the amount of food being grown in America the problem or the distribution of it. The most obvious problem is that as Foley states “we are simply running out of land” (1) and to gain that land we would be tearing down things that would hurt our environment in other ways just to help us grow the right amount of food required *at that time.* Foley believes that the answer may not be just in getting more land for agriculture, but instead to “farm the land we do farm better” (1). To do this areas that seem to be “lagging behind” (2) need to be improved so that the growth rate can continue to rise. Foley’s grand idea of “terraculture” (2) will help achieve his goals because it will be farming, but with the planet in mind. Overall, Foley has many great ideas to help feed the people on the planet along with keeping the planet intact which is one of the greatest issues that is constantly growing.

**Response 2**

Brian Walsh’s article “Feeding the Planet Without Destroying It” has an important insight on the critical problem between agriculture and land use. Jon Foley (head of the University of Minnesota's Institute on the Environment) identifies how crucial feeding billions of people and the effects that it has on the planet are. In Walsh’s article there are also various ideas that need to be implemented and brought to light quickly so the right idea on how to fix this crisis can be chosen.

 With the land space of the planet being used up it is not so much of the land itself that needs to be expanded, but how we farm the land. One of Foley’s main points is that “the land that we do farm needs to be farmed better” (2). This is so important because it would reduce the amount of land needed to be destroyed to aggregate more land. Only land that has already been aggregated would need to have work done to it. Thus, cutting out the issue of harming the environment by having to destroy precious forests and wildlife. But increasing the amount of crop provided by farmland that is “lagging behind” (2) is not as easy as it sounds because to do that it would require special feterilizer that “supercharges” (2) the land. The downside is that this has been known to create more environmental problems and would probably just expand the problem even further. The grand scheme that will help our agriculture/land crisis the most is “terraculture” (2). Taking the best of agriculture all the while keeping the planets safety in mind. This idea needs to be spread because with help and backing from other companies around the world and countries this can be put together to help us preserve the planet that we live on.

 Changes will have to be made around the world to ensure that the crisis between agriculture and land is fixed but by working together and having others understand the problem it can be done. This is only the beginning of a long process but it is something that needs to be taken care of and not be thrown on the side line for years to come. As years go by the problem will only expand making it that much harder to grown the proper food we need for the 7+ billion people that inhabit our planet.