

Have you ever heard of the word “micro plastics”?

When I was in the 6th grade, I went on a field trip for four days around Miyako. We went snorkeling during the field trip. The experience made me think about our future and the earth.

That night, I felt something strange in my eyes. I thought it was sand. But the next day, the pain got worse, so I went to the hospital. The doctor said something I didn't understand. He said “there are micro plastics in your eye.” He removed it smoothly and quickly. I had never heard that word before. So, I looked it up. Microplastic is a plastic trash which is smaller than 5 millimeters. The report I read said that “micro plastics are considered to influence marine ecosystems.” It may have a bad influence on our bodies as well.

The doctor was weirdly calm and he was not surprised at all. It was as if he had gotten used to this kind of thing. Then, one question came to my mind. “Have many people had the same experience as me?” I didn't even go into the deep ocean. I was only there for a short time. So, I thought “is marine life affected by plastics?” I investigated.

And I found some terrible pictures. There were pictures of whales that couldn't breathe because they had many plastic bags in their mouths or fish that ate plastic bags until their stomachs were filled. I was very shocked.

Since plastic does not break down naturally, I knew that I had to do something about the situation, as the creatures who had consumed the plastic were suffering to the point of losing their lives.

Against this backdrop, the SDGs have increasingly picked up steam in recent years. However, I feel that only a handful of people truly act out of a desire to save the world. On Miyako Island, where I live, I am proud of our beautiful sea and delicious local seafood. However, if these problems with the ocean continue, we will no longer be able to see this beautiful sea and eat delicious local seafood. Moreover, Miyako Island, with its thriving tourism industry, will decline. Do you eat seafood? Many people all over the world do. I believe that this is a common problem not only in Miyako Island but also in the world. I hope that everyone living on this planet understands this situation and knows that it's up to them to do something.

Even small actions can make a big difference.

Although the power of each individual is small, I believe that if we work together as one, we can do great things. I usually try to think about what I can do for the earth and act accordingly. For example, I try to do what I can do in my day to day life, like “not buying a lot of plastic stuff” or “reusing, reducing and recycling.” It's okay if everyone just takes little actions. Even if it's something small, please think about the earth and take action. Then, we can make a change.

In the future, I want to take part in a job where I can work on global issues. I am now able to think about the global environment and take action because of that experience on the field trip. I believe that experiencing, learning, and thinking about many things will lead to the creation of our future on Earth. Before it's too late. Let's think and act, little by little. For the future of planet earth.

佐渡山 音羽

宮古島市立北中学校

Before It's Too Late