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Volunteering in addressing the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

My name is Kulkina Ekaterina and I am the 2nd year student of Moscow State Linguistic University, the Faculty of Translation and Interpretation. I am learning Korean language and as far as I can remember I have never hesitated in choosing my major in studies. I have lived for three years in North Korea and for total of eight years in South Korea due to my father's diplomatic work. Since my early years I had a great opportunity to admire Korea's diverse and vibrant culture. That developed a great affection of mine for Korea and Korean people.

One of the topics to be discussed during the 10th Korea-Russia Youth Dialogue relates to my personal outlook a lot. The environmental pollution and the ocean pollution in general has have always worried me.

The Earth is inhabited by over 8 million of species and over 200 000 of them live in oceans covering 70% of our planet. The mankind historically having settled on the land never stopped trying to conquer the water resources. However even nowadays oceans are explored only by 2-7%. The absence of practical knowledge did not stop humanity from using the resources and not taking responsibility for that. As a result, we are now being paid off with the catastrophic sea and ocean pollution which questions the existence of the upcoming generations.

It is essential for each and every individual to understand that we are deeply intertwined with the ocean. Changes in its chemical processes, temperature and life of its inhabitants have a great impact on the climate. Also lives of many people depend on producing sea animal products in terms of food as well as occupation. Some countries, including South Korea, partly depend on their ocean-related economy sectors such as fishing and shipbuilding. However, recently oceans that mean so much for us are close to the edge of extinction because of the global plastic pollution. Nowadays it seems like there is no place on Earth to escape from it. Even in the very remoted parts of our planet plastic can be found.

It was originally made durable so almost every plastic piece ever produced is still on our planet in one form or another. Only a small fraction of all the plastic is being recycled. The rest ends up in our environment.

Plastic waste has no boundaries so it travels all around Earth bringing damage to the ocean and sufferings to its inhabitants. At the end of the 20th century a term «Great Pacific Garbage Patch» occurred in the Mass Media. Those Patches are said to appear like a smog of plastic particles covering a vast water area. They are extremely destructive and toxic. The prevailing material called high-density polyethylene is commonly used to produce shampoo and soap bottles, plastic toothbrushes, water containers. It means that all of the familiar goods which we purchase almost daily and consider essential for our existence are actually killing us through destroying the

environment that we live in. According to the scientists' predictions by 2050 there will be as much plastic as there is fish in the ocean.

But it is still not too late to turn the disaster backwards with the help of global interaction. With the development of modern science and technologies alternative materials can be created and mass-used instead of the poisonous plastic. However, first of all, we need to find ways to reuse and recycle the plastic that we have already produced. Nowadays there are lots of campaigns and activists' organizations which recycle the abandoned plastic and turn it into something useful and long-lasting. There are even special museums all around the globe that exhibit pieces of art made out of plastic waste.

Doubtlessly, making a change starts from a single individual as it has always been just about making reasonable personal decisions. For example, one can use paper or fabric bags when shopping and transporting goods. Not only that may help to decrease bad impact on the environment, but also save money for a more rational use. Saying this, volunteering and youth interactions seem one of the best ways to educate modern generation and open new perspectives in solving the paramount issue of the present. That is why I wish so much to become a part of the process.