



Sea otters and other critically endangered wildlife, including Hector's dolphins and Hawaiian monk seals, are under threat from pathogens hiking a ride on micro-plastics. (Photo credit: iStock).

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New study shows microplastics can carry land-based pathogens to the oceans, threatening the health of humans and wildlife

Stockholm, Sweden, June 5, 2022 -- Swedish environmental entrepreneur Bengt Rittri says there is an urgent need to protect and restore our planet as a new study from the University of California, Davis, reveals that microplastics can carry land-based pathogens to the oceans, posing a threat

to the health of humans and wildlife alike.

With the world celebrating [World Environment Day](#) today under the theme #OnlyOneEarth, Mr. Rittri noted how the study by a team of UC Davis university researchers had indicated that, by hitchhiking on microplastics, pathogens can disperse throughout the ocean, reaching places a land parasite wouldn't be found usually.

The study, published in the [Scientific Reports](#) journal, is the first to connect microplastics in the ocean with land-based pathogens.

"The study provides even more evidence of the threats posed by tiny microplastic particles smaller than 5 millimeters, which are literally everywhere, in the air we breathe, the food we eat, and the water we drink," said Mr Rittri , the founder and CEO of Bluewater, a world leading innovator of water purification solutions designed to end the need for single-use plastic bottles.

He noted how a [study](#) by OrbMedia had found microplastics in bottled drinking water after testing more than 250 bottles from 11 brands

The research team at UC Davis discovered that microplastics can make it easier for disease-causing pathogens such as *Toxoplasma gondii*, *Cryptosporidium*(Crypto), and *Giardia* to concentrate in plastic- contaminated areas of the ocean.

T. gondii is a parasite found only in cat feces, which has infected many ocean species with the disease toxoplasmosis, connected to the deaths of sea otters and other critically endangered wildlife, including Hector's dolphins and Hawaiian monk seals. In people, toxoplasmosis can cause lifelong illnesses, as well as developmental and reproductive disorders.

Notes for editors

Founded in 1908, UC Davis is a tier-one research university. Discoveries made by its students and faculty continue to improve people's lives in California and around the world. The study was funded by the Ocean Protection Council and California Sea Grant program, with student financial support provided by the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine Students Training in Advanced

Research, or STAR, program.

World Environment Day is an annual event celebrated on June 5 to encourage environmental action and protection. First held in 1974, over the years, World Environment Day has grown into a broad, global platform for public outreach that is widely celebrated by participants in over 100 countries. The theme for 2022 is #OnlyOneEarth.

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About Blue

Headquartered in Stockholm, Sweden, Blue is an investment company that serves as a catalyst for innovations that can solve some of the major challenges facing our planet and all living on it. Blue's mission is to find, engage with, invest in and support entrepreneurs, innovators and businesses driven by the desire to deliver tangible, sustainable solutions that can benefit human wellbeing and planetary health. www.blueab.se

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