

## THE PLASTIKI EXPEDITION ARRIVES IN SYDNEY COMPLETING ITS HISTORIC 8,000 MILE TRANS PACIFIC VOYAGE FROM SAN FRANCISCO Message in a bottle to beat waste has global impact to create change

**\*\* 11.10am - Monday 26 July 2010 – Sydney time\*\***

After sailing more than 8,000 nautical miles and spending 128 days crossing the Pacific, the world's largest ocean, in a boat made of 12,500 plastic PET bottles, the Plastiki expedition and her crew have safely and successfully reached their planned destination of Sydney to cheers of welcome and support.



Arriving at Sydney Heads at 11.10am local time with a 12knot south south easterly breeze, the Plastiki triumphantly sailed into Sydney Harbour to cheers of welcome and support from a small spectator flotilla.. The historic expedition was completed in four legs : San Francisco – Kiribati - Western Samoa - New Caledonia before reaching the Australian Coast (Mooloolaba) on Monday 19 July and continuing on to Sydney.

"It's an incredible feeling to finally arrive in Sydney. We had great faith in the design and construction of Plastiki and while many people doubted we'd make it, we have proved that a boat made from plastic bottles can stand up to the harsh conditions of the Pacific." expedition leader, David de Rothschild said.

De Rothschild, 31 from the United Kingdom, paid tribute to his fellow adventurers, Jo Royle (Skipper), David Thomson (Co-Skipper), Graham Hill (Founder of Treehugger.com), Olav Heyerdahl, Matthew Grey, Luca Babini (Photographer), Vern Moen (Myoo Media Film maker), Max Jourdan and Singeli Agnew (National Geographic Film makers) for their skill and commitment during the voyage. .../2 over

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“Jo and the rest of the crew did a remarkable job sailing the Plastiki safely across the Pacific and it is due to their collective efforts that we’ve been able to raise global awareness of the issue of plastic waste in the world’s oceans.

If there’s waste, it’s badly designed in the first place, and we need to start taking a serious look at the way we produce and design every product we use in our lives,” De Rothschild said.

The Plastiki was officially welcomed by Sydney’s Deputy Lord Mayor, Phillip Black and the US Ambassador to Australia, Jeffrey Bleich when she docked at the Australian National Maritime Museum, Darling Harbour. Plastik will be on public display for the next month at the ANMM.

Over four months ago on March 20, 2010, under the watchful eye of a global audience, an inspiring yet experimental and innovative one-of-a-kind catamaran set sail under the shadow of San Francisco’s world famous Golden Gate Bridge. Carrying a crew of six intrepid explorers, the Plastiki set out on an epic and demanding mission described by the San Francisco chronicle as the “**adventure of the century**”.

The pursuit of this audacious and unrivalled ocean expedition: to alert the world to the shocking and unnecessary effects of single use plastics on the health of our oceans and its inhabitants. According to Expedition Leader and founder of Adventure Ecology, David de Rothschild, this is a complex, challenging and now hugely catastrophic issue that scientists estimate is causing devastation on an unprecedented scale - every year at least one million seabirds and 100,000 marine mammals and sea turtles die when they become entangled or ingest plastic pollution.

David de Rothschild and the crew of the Plastiki have been on a mission to not only beat waste but to create a global message of hope by spotlighting some of the real world solutions. After braving the full extremes of the Pacific Ocean one of the largest and most challenging oceans in the world, the crew have fulfilled their ambitious quest to effect a “global message in a bottle”, while setting a new precedent within the sailing and adventure community.

David and his team’s sheer determination to raise awareness of plastic pollution has seen the crew tested to the limit. From massive ocean swells and 62 knot winds to the sweltering 100 degree heat and doldrums of the equator; ripped sails, dangerous reefs and the intimidating endless blue horizon; the team has been driven to endure and overcome the challenges by an infectious shared passion to give our oceans a voice. Their unwavering belief in the mission and the philosophy that if we work together and are not afraid to rise up to the challenge and tackle the ‘just that’s the way we’ve done it’ mentality we can ultimately ‘beat waste’ and drive home the solution, has seen them succeed against the odds

The adventure began four years ago for David after reading the United Nations Environment Programme’s (UNEP) report ‘*Ecosystems and Biodiversity in Deep Waters and High Seas*’. He developed a vision to show that ultimately, waste was the result of a combination of inefficient design and a misunderstanding of how to use and more importantly how to dispose of plastic. David decided that by creating a seaworthy ocean going vessel that gains 68% of its buoyancy from 12,500 post consumer 2-litre plastic bottles and an innovative smart new PET super structure made from a uniquely recyclable material called Seretex, he could help effect change. The process of construction proved that waste *is* a valuable resource whilst also capturing the imagination of people around the world to believe that anything is possible if you’re not afraid to break new ground. The journey has generated opportunity for tremendous curiosity, discovery and innovation as well as a platform for discussion, debate and now action. .../3over



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*Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director, UNEP said: "Like millions upon millions of people around the world, we have marvelled at the ingenious, intrepid and inspirational voyage of David de Rothschild and the crew of the Plastiki. The message they have conveyed to politicians and the public is simple—if we collectively carry on using the seas and oceans as a dustbin, human-beings will soon turn the once beautiful and bountiful marine environment from a crucial and economically-important life-support system into a lifeless one. Society needs to turn the tide in 2010 by turning wastes and pollution from a problem into an opportunity for a low carbon, resource efficient global Green Economy so urgently needed for a sustainable 21<sup>st</sup> century."*

Throughout this incredible journey the Plastiki crew—Expedition Leader David de Rothschild, Skipper Jo Royle, Co-Skipper David Thomson, Olav Heyerdahl, Graham Hill, Luca Babini, Matthew Grey, Max Jourdan, Singeli Agnew and Vern Moen— have had a daily routine of living aboard a sustainable ecosystem in the middle of the ocean alongside the visual exposure to plastic waste discarded in the ocean. According to De Rothschild, this experience has served to reaffirm the necessity and urgency to eliminate dumb, single use plastics in our everyday lives and help safeguard the delicate balance of our planet's oceans.

David de Rothschild, Adventure Ecology Founder said: *"While the successful and safe arrival of the Plastiki into Sydney may mark the end of the actual expedition it also marks the start of arguably the most important and critical chapter in the Plastiki's mission to beat waste; a chapter of change! It's change that can dramatically shift our daily habits away from an unnecessary and destructive addiction to single use plastics but even more importantly and urgently a change in attitudes towards understanding, valuing and protecting one of our planet's most precious and important natural systems, our oceans.*

*"To achieve this lessening of humanity's increasingly destructive stranglehold on our natural environments is going to require a radical shift in the current system and the stories that we tell ourselves and each other. No longer is it acceptable to continue just articulating our Planet 1.0 failures, we must now show leadership and vision to support the stories, individuals and initiatives that help us to dream bigger, undertake more compelling adventures and fundamentally inspire, motivate and innovate solutions. Our failure to achieve such an outcome will undoubtedly leave humanity's ability to live on this planet, as we know it, in the balance. The time to give ourselves a chance of survival is truly upon us," David de Rothschild said.*

#### THE PLASTIKI STORY:

- ✓ The Plastiki Expedition was conceived and developed after Adventure Ecology founder; David de Rothschild was inspired by a UNEP report named 'Ecosystems and Biodiversity in Deep Waters and High Seas' in 2006 and Thor Heyerdahl's epic 1947 expedition, *The Kon-Tiki*.
- ✓ A compelling and pioneering expedition was created with the goal to not only inform, but to educate the world that waste is fundamentally inefficient design.
- ✓ Design, research, development, construction and sea trials took place in San Francisco.
- ✓ The Plastiki set sail from San Francisco on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2010.
- ✓ Crewed by six people at any one time –David de Rothschild (Expedition Leader), Jo Royle (Skipper), David Thomson (Co-Skipper), Graham Hill (Founder of Treehugger.com), Matthew Grey (Expedition Co-ordinator), Luca Babini (Photographer), Vern Moen (Myoo Media Film maker), Max Jourdan and Singeli Agnew (National Geographic Film makers).
- ✓ Completed in four legs – San Francisco – Kiribati -Western Samoa -New Caledonia before reaching the Australian Coast.  
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- ✓ Tens of millions of people are now aware of the Plastiki and her message. Since launch over 90 media interviews have been conducted from the vessel, resulting in more than 300 print articles, 200 radio and TV broadcasts, including the Oprah Winfrey Show. There are over 800,000 search terms relating to Plastiki and 52,200 related images on Google.

#### THE VESSEL:

- ✓ The Plastiki's core principles of 'cradle-to-cradle' design and biomimicry were realised by a multifaceted team from the fields of marine science, sustainable design, boat building, architecture and material science.
- ✓ The Plastiki receives 68% of her buoyancy from 12,500 reclaimed plastic soft drink bottles and the super structure is made of a unique recyclable plastic material made from a self-reinforcing PET called Seretex.
- ✓ The mast is a reclaimed aluminium irrigation pipe. The one-of-a-kind sail is hand-made from recycled PET cloth.
- ✓ The secondary bonding is reinforced using a newly developed organic glue made from cashew nuts and sugar cane
- ✓ The Plastiki is 'off-the-grid' relying primarily on renewable energy systems including; solar panels, wind and trailing propeller turbines, bicycle generators, a urine to water recovery and rain water catchment system and a hydroponic rotating cylinder garden.

#### WHY?

- ✓ It is estimated that almost all of the marine pollution in the world is comprised of plastic materials. The average proportion varied between 60% and 80% of total marine pollution.<sup>1</sup>
- ✓ In many regions in the northern and southern Gyres, plastic materials constitute as much as 90 to 95% of the total amount of marine debris.<sup>2</sup>
- ✓ Scientists estimate that every year at least 1 million seabirds and 100,000 marine mammals and sea turtles die when become entangled in plastic pollution or ingest it.<sup>3</sup>
- ✓ According to Project Aware, 15 billion pounds of plastic are produced in the U.S. every year, and only 1 billion pounds are recycled. It is estimated that in excess of 38 billion plastic bottles and 25 million styrene foam cups end up in landfill and although plastic bottles are 100% recyclable, on average only 20% are actually recycled.
- ✓ The Plastiki crew noted that whilst many thousands of miles away from land, humanity's fingerprints were visible throughout. On one day alone a garden tray, two jerry cans, buoys and a large white PVC tray floated by, with the usual plastic bags, bottles, lids and styrene foam containers. Whilst swimming they continually noticed that beneath the surface there are millions and millions of molecular pieces of plastic photo degraded by salt and sunlight, often known as mermaid's tears.
- ✓ During the entire voyage the Plastiki crew have seen no sharks and have only caught a couple of fish, whereas during the Kon-Tiki expedition of 1947 they ate fish everyday and couldn't enter the water for fear of sharks, whilst the Plastiki have seen hardly any.

#### THE PLASTIKI'S PHILOSOPHY:

- ✓ It's about recognizing that waste is fundamentally a design flaw (it does not appear in nature).
- ✓ It's about a better understanding of the materials and their lifecycle's used in our everyday lives and using cyclical 'cradle-to-cradle' philosophies rather than linear thinking when it comes to how we design our world.
- ✓ It's about being curious and open, being prepared to let go of assumptions in order to undertake a new 'Planet 2.0' way of thinking and acting.
- ✓ It's about being collaborative and curious so to engage multiple perspectives, skills, opinions and organizations.



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- ✓ It's about re-integrating back into the web of life by recognizing and reducing our human fingerprints on the natural world.
- ✓ It's about moving on from just articulating the problems to inspiring action of the solutions.
- ✓ It's about encouraging the world to reduce, reuse, recycle, rethink and ultimately refuse single use plastics.
- ✓ It's about acknowledging that the list of solutions available is far greater than the list of problems.
- ✓ It's about delivering a spectacular global "Message in a Bottle".

#### WHAT NEXT?

- ✓ A lasting legacy of the Plastiki will be its capacity to shift public thinking and perception from plastic as the enemy to plastic becoming part of the solution. To solve the plastic pollution and waste issues at large will require a re-think of how we currently use, reuse and ultimately dispose of plastics and waste products.
- ✓ Post arrival the Plastiki crew will take part in a number of talks, keynotes and discussions to explore the solutions to the increasing damage of the natural world resulting from plastic pollution. The vessel itself will be exhibited at the Australian National Maritime Museum as a representation of the available solutions in our repairing and reintegrating with the natural world.
- ✓ Long-term projects include the Plastiki Pod; each pod will be tailor made to help solve ecological issues specific to each of the islands that the Plastiki visited during her voyage across the Pacific. Short term and long term solutions will be addressed with educational resources made available to the local communities.
- ✓ One of Plastiki's goals and lasting legacies will be to see a significant reduction in the amount of manmade waste heading out to landfill and sea. We believe that with a small effort and some smart thinking everyone could reduce their use of single purpose plastic bottles, plastic bags and styrene foam. It's achievable if we work together on making small changes in our lives like the [MyPlastiki pledge](#) or remembering the 5R's: reduce, reuse, recycle, rethink and ultimately refuse plastic waste. To make your pledge for a plastic free ocean and more positive, ecological initiatives please log on to [myplastiki.com](http://myplastiki.com)

**MEDIA INSTRUCTIONS:** From 1 July, 2010, Momentum2 is managing the media for the Plastiki's arrival.

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**INFORMATION:** Photography, b-roll and press information available online at [www.theplastiki.com/press](http://www.theplastiki.com/press) or contact [press@adventureecology.com](mailto:press@adventureecology.com)

#### PLASTIKI PARTNERS:

##### About International Watch Co. Ltd: Official Partner

IWC Schaffhausen has been setting standards in technological development and highly complicated Haute Horlogerie for more than a century. The International Watch Company, founded in 1868, has established a world reputation for itself as a Swiss watch manufactory with a long heritage and a passion for ingenious inventions, innovative solutions and technical refinements. IWC Schaffhausen is committed to taking responsibility toward the environment and has been certified a CO2-neutral enterprise.

IWC has cut 750 tons of annual CO2 emissions in half since 2001, and aims to reduce emissions to 100 tons by 2010. It used environmentally responsible building techniques for new production wings at its headquarters in Schaffhausen, Switzerland, in 2001, significantly reducing CO2 emissions and keeping overall energy consumption constant for five years. [www.iwc.com](http://www.iwc.com). IWC Schaffhausen has supported Adventure Ecology and David de Rothschild as official Partner since 2007. "As a company which holds the environment dear, IWC is very proud of David de Rothschild and of the fact that, with our support, he is using his adventurous voyage to show the consequences of the modern way of life and providing an impetus for innovative suggestions of how to solve the ecological problems of our age," states Georges Kern, CEO of IWC Schaffhausen.

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**About Kiehl's: Supplier**

Kiehl's was founded as an old-world apothecary in New York's East Village neighbourhood. Its unique and extensive background represents a blend of cosmetic, pharmaceutical, herbal, and medicinal knowledge developed and passed on through the generations. The spirit of discovery and the exhilaration of exploration have been espoused by Kiehl's extended family from the company's earliest days. Kiehl's is humbly honoured to support the eco-adventurous Plastiki Expedition team since 2008 and to welcome them into the Kiehl's heritage. In 1988, Kiehl's proudly supported a successful ascent without oxygen of Mt. Everest's East Face. In 2002, the company sponsored the Antarctica Expedition of Mt. Vinson and in 2005, Kiehl's supported the "Greenland First Ascent" expedition, the inaugural climb of peaks rising from the island's ice covered glaciers where a team returned from their journey with first-hand accounts of the effects of global warming. In addition between 2003-2007 Kiehl's supported the annual Kiehl's Badwater Ultra-marathon, a 135-mile non-stop footrace through Death Valley. Kiehl's believes in minimizing environmental impact by utilizing minimal product packaging and 100% PCR materials whenever possible and initiating a world-wide recycling program in freestanding stores. Kiehl's products are available at [www.Kiehls.com](http://www.Kiehls.com), freestanding stores, as well as through select specialty retailers worldwide.

**Adventure Ecology:** Adventure Ecology uses the magic and excitement of unique field missions to educate, entertain and raise awareness of environmental and social issues whilst driving innovative real world solutions. Adventure Ecology's long-term vision is to create a global, youth-based community of change-makers that learn, share, speak and most importantly act to address our global sustainability issues in order to promote a greater respect, connection and responsibility for our Planet, its environment, species and people. Adventure Ecology tells adventurous stories that educate, entertain and promote a new 'smart' thinking for a better 'Planet 2.0'. [www.adventureecology.com](http://www.adventureecology.com)



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