



**Yellow's Green Corner:** in collaboration with the Earthrose Institute [www.earthrose.org](http://www.earthrose.org)

## Our Oceans in Peril

### Tons of released drugs taint US water

U.S. manufacturers, including major drug makers, have legally released at least 271 million pounds of pharmaceuticals into waterways that often provide drinking water - contamination the federal government has consistently overlooked, according to an Associated Press investigation. Hundreds of active pharmaceutical ingredients are used in a variety of manufacturing, including drug making: For example, lithium is used to make ceramics and treat bipolar disorder; nitroglycerin is a heart drug and also used in explosives; copper shows up in everything from pipes to contraceptives. Federal and industry officials say they don't know the extent to which pharmaceuticals are released by U.S. manufacturers because no one tracks them - as drugs. But a close analysis of 20 years of federal records found that, in fact, the government unintentionally keeps data on a few, allowing a glimpse of the pharmaceuticals coming from factories in Ohio and other states.

### Plastic Trivia

#### Drowning in plastic: The Great Pacific Garbage Patch is twice the size of France

There are now 46,000 pieces of plastic per square kilometer of the world's oceans, killing a million seabirds and 100,000 marine mammals each year. So how do we turn the tide? Nearly all the plastic items in our lives begin as these little manufactured pellets of raw plastic resin, which are known in the industry as "nurdles". More than 100 billion kilograms of them are shipped around the world every year, delivered to processing plants and then

heated up, treated with other chemicals, stretched and molded into our familiar products, containers and packaging. During their loadings and unloadings, however, nurdles have a knack for spilling and escaping. They are light enough to become airborne in a good wind. They float wonderfully and can now be found in every ocean in the world, hence their new nickname: mermaids' tears. You can find nurdles in abundance on almost any seashore in Britain, where litter has increased by 90 per cent in the past 10 years, or on the remotest uninhabited Pacific islands, along with all kinds of other plastic confetti.



#### Do you know where your fish come from?

Oceana, an international marine conservation organization, presented a report drafted that indicates the Chilean national salmon farming industry used 325.6 tons of antibiotics over the past year, and 385.6 tons in 2007.

According to the official report, florfenicol (used in 56.7 per cent of the total, or 184 tons) and flumequine (in 9.9 per cent, or 32.2 tons) were the antimicrobials most used in 2008, among others.



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Two years ago, florfenicol had been used in 37 per cent (143 tons) of the stock; and oxytetracycline in 23.1 per cent (89.3 tons), among other antimicrobials.

Norway, the world's leading salmon producer, used 600 times fewer antibiotics than used by Chile.

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) reveals that the majority of antibiotics that belong to the quinolone family are banned for their negative effects on human health when used in excess.