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Plastic Change | Newsletter January 2018

plastic change

On safe ground

By the end of November, it was finally official: Plastic Change is on safe ground the next five years with a grant of 10.4 million DKK from the VELLUX and VILLUM foundation.

"With this remarkable grant from the two foundations, Plastic Change will have the strength that makes it possible to continue to engage the public as well as the politicians in order to affect the industry and make them take upon them the responsibility to make sure that the production does not ruin our planet and its resources. A responsibility that comprises design of reusable products in the dawning circular economy," says founder of Plastic Change, Henrik Beha Pedersen.

Plastic Change was founded in 2014, and it was in the first shaping years run by a group of voluntary enthusiasts.

The collaboration with the VELLUX Foundation and the VILLUM Foundation will help make it possible to motivate and engage even more voluntary enthusiasts in the fight against plastic pollution, and they will help start up new projects which will help the organization to reach even further, and with a much more powerful effect.



The Politicians have listened to us

In Plastic Change, we saw it as a victory when the Danish Minister of Food and Environment, Esben Lunde Larsen, on behalf of a united Parliament in the beginning of December sent a letter to the EU-Commission with wishes and worries in connection to the EU's forthcoming plastic strategy.

We are pleased that a united Danish Parliament sends a strong signal to the EU Commission with a wish for the EU to come up with an ambitious plastic strategy for a future without plastic lying around in nature. In Plastic Change, we wish to maintain the Danish politicians steady on this ambitious new setting - even if the EU decides not to follow the Danish recommendations. The EU must not become a "sleeping pillow" in a time where we daily see pictures of both small and large animals with plastic in their stomachs.

The EU has the chance to set themselves first as a global example in creating a future where plastic really is reused and recycled in circular economy, and where these resources are not lost at an incinerator or a landfill. The Danish Parliament wants a prohibition against micro plastic in cosmetics and personal care products - as well as Oxo-plastic, which, as the manufacturers claim, is biodegradable.

Furthermore, the letter recommends a phasing out of the certain chemicals that prevents the plastic from being recycled. Altogether, it is something that Plastic Change has fought for since the very beginning.

Stray plastic strips from the election

Election posters nowadays are hung up with plastic strips. Easy and smart in the moment when needed, but definitely not the best solution once the election is over. The plastic strips are then found lying around in nature and in the streets. Thousands of stray plastic strips made Plastic Change do a small but effective campaign in which the many strips were collected in Copenhagen, and in connection to our Roskilde Inlet campaign (Roskilde Fjord). The collection made headlines in both TV and written media. We hope that politicians and voters will recall Plastic Change and this important issue by the next election.

Expedition Plastic is sailing again

Our ship S/Y Christianshavn has been steady on Hawaii in a year, but on December 3rd, 2017, it once again set sails - this time towards the Marquesas Islands in French Polynesia. On board are both equipment and marine biologists who will be taking tests of the ocean every day - if wind and weather conditions allow it.

On December 17, the team succeeded for the first time since we started doing these tests to do a test in which no micro plastic was found. This was celebrated onboard with a round of liquorice pipes.

The tests are taken with a certain trawl developed by the organization 5Gyres. The contents of the trawl is flushed into a sieve, and not one single piece of plastic was found in the test which was taken half way on the route between Hawaii and French Polynesia. The Expedition landed on the island Nuku Hiva on December 28th.



Plastic agents

On November 22nd, 32 people showed up at our office to hear more about our new programme with Plastic Change Agents.

The intention is to educate agents to help us with campaigns and events - in Denmark to begin with, but hopefully later in other countries as well. In the new year, we will be having more introduction meetings around the country - in the hope that many more will have the courage to become a Plastic Change Agent. The Tuborg Foundation supports the programme.

Potential agents will hear more from us in the new year with regards to education and further involvement.



Photo competition

By the end of October, the photo competition “Plastik Pletskud” came to an end as we found the lucky winners. The competition was part of the project Plastic Free Oceans, which is supported by the VELUX Foundation and the VILLUM Foundation.

A total of 1092 photos were part of the competition - all with a focus on nature with or without plastic, and in the categories “The Ugly”, “The Creative”, “The Beautiful” and “Only for Children”. There were many great photos, so it was not an easy job for the judges to find the four best photos.

The judges were photographer Casper Tybjerg, former Minister of Environment Ida Auken, project manager Lars from Den Blå Planet and finally Henrik Beha Pedersen, founder of Plastic Change.



No to Oxo-degradable plastic

Plastic Change has together with 149 other organizations and corporations signed a petition from the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's initiative "[New Plastics Economy](#)", which recommends a complete ban against oxo-degradable plastic. The problem with oxo-plastic is that it is broken down to tiny pieces of plastics, which contributes to the pollution of micro plastic. Oxo-degradable plastic is not too often used in Denmark, but it is widely produced for export.

A break through in wrapping

According to the World Economic Forum, 32 percent of all plastic wrapping ends up in nature, and only 5 percent is reused. This means that an economic potential of 80-120 billion dollars is lost every year. This is one of the reasons why Plastic Change is collaborating with the Danish corporation 'Naturli' who make their new product "Naturlig Hakket" in containers that consist of minimum 50% recycled plastic. For every product sold, Plastic Change receives 50 cents.

"This is the kind of product which helps maintain that we are moving in the right direction. However, the goal itself is of course that the wrapping is made out of 100 percent reusable and recycled plastic," says Anne Aittomaki from Plastic Change.



UN on its way to a plastic convention

In Plastic Change we are happy to find that the UN at its latest Environment conference in Nairobi decided to further tighten the grip of its former objective to reduce the amount of plastic in the world's oceans by 2022. Now, a task force has been set up with the intent to provide recommendations to what hopefully will become a convention for reduction of plastic in the ocean.

We consider it a very important step in the right direction against plastic pollution, that the UN has chosen to highlight this increasing problem.

Members and newsletter on its way up

We have had some serious problems with our database for members as well as for signing up for our newsletter. Therefore, we have chosen to change the systems, which hopefully will remove the problems we have had so far.

We are very sorry for any inconvenience you might have had in either becoming a member or signing up for our newsletter. If it does not work, then try again - as it should be working perfectly fine by now.

New sponsors

The **BAXIMAR** foundation has donated 50.000 kr. for our Expedition Plastic.

The **GUBRA** has donated 50.00 kr., which will be used for our Expedition Plastic.

Melitek has donated 10.000 kr. for the work against plastic pollution.

LM Project has donated 5.000 kr. for the work against plastic pollution.

