

WE ALREADY RECYCLE, AND NOW WHAT?

Posted on 27/07/2020 by Naider



YA RECICLAMOS, ¿Y AHORA QUÉ?

El reciclaje no es suficiente para una economía circular. Se ha convertido en un método para calmar conciencias, pero la responsabilidad no puede recaer únicamente en la ciudadanía y en la vida final del producto

naider

[There are images that speak for themselves](#). Every day it is sold all over the world **the equivalent to a stack of plastic bottles half the size of the Eiffel Tower**: drinks, yoghurts, cutlery, sauces, fruit trays, shampoo bottles... Plastic does not leave everyday parcels untouched, and the The problem is that even recycling doesn't seem like a solution.

In a world of finite resources crying out for better management, [Europe generates more than 2,500 million tons of waste per year](#). [How shows Greenpeace](#), almost 80% of waste ends up in landfills or the environment, and every year between 5 and 13 million of them end up in the oceans. tons of plastic (80% of marine litter). In fact, [only 25% of what we consume is recovered](#).

Recycling is an essential process within what is known as [circular economy](#): a efficient system in the use of resources and low carbon emission. **Without However, less emphasis is placed on the need to reduce production and consumption of plastics than in the benefits of recycling.** TO what is this about?

The background of the question is one: **it is easier to invest and advocate for recycling at a political and social level than for the reduction of plastic consumption and production.**

Asking the population to recycle is easier than asking them to stop consume plastic products, or that the production system is transformed industrial into one that is not based on [composites hydrocarbon complexes](#). In the first case, the plastic is so integrated into our day to day that it will take time to change the consumption habits of the population. Therefore, asking the population to reduce your consumption is a measure of "bad press". In the second case, it will be difficult to find substitutes for plastic that are just as economical, manageable, easy to transport and efficient than this.

The result: we base our efforts, and we focus almost all our attention, in the simplest solution that allows us to continue with our current way of life, recycling. But only with recycling established environmental objectives will be achieved.

As with the other social and environmental challenges we face, we face (climate change, inequality, loss of biodiversity, poverty, loss of natural resources, ...), plastic is a problem with a deep social roots. Perhaps the question is not so much whether the transformation towards a more sustainable society supposes a decrease in our quality of life, but in **questioning what we understand by quality of life.**

The problem of overconsumption (of plastic) does not originate in materialism per se. It is a matter of **confusion of priorities.** bad decisions purchase originate from deeply held erroneous beliefs that are then expressed in The material. **Materialism is neutral**, it is not something "bad" or "good" is simply a concept created to refer to the property of objects. **The problem lies in the lack of a system of values and responsible beliefs, the absence of which leads to overconsumption. have the correct and orderly convictions supposes expressing them through a use sustainable and responsible products.**

It is true that we need the commitment of companies and governments to develop better management systems to extend the life of plastics and ensure that their first use does not mean the end of their life cycle. But it is no less true that, without a change in the social paradigm regarding our consumption priorities, any economic or industrial solution will be less effective than one in which we really believe and which we have integrated into our system of values.

Julen González Redín
PhD in Sustainable Development and Environment
NAIDER

There are no comments yet.