

Why I disagree with Scientist Sylvia Earle on Preserving the Ocean as our Top Priority

Abstract: In this paper I will be arguing why I believe Dr. Earle's point of view on preserving the Ocean as our top priority is completely absurd through reason and statistical facts. I believe her claims can be refuted when you look at the overwhelming statistics that state otherwise or look to the Deontological argument, of treating the Ocean as our top priority. I will also be pointing out what I believe to be better alternatives than Ocean preservation.

One argument I have against the author is her highly unlikely statistical arguments. She claims that we killed over 90% of large fish in the entire ocean. For me, that makes no sense considering between 95% to 97% of the Ocean is unexplored. I am also taking to account that there has already been 33,000+ species of fish already discovered as of January 2015. The probability that 90% of large fish live in 4% of Ocean space and have been all killed is fairly low when you look into these two facts.

Another thing I would like to point out is her bycatch statistics. She claims that for every 1 point of fish you are dining on perhaps 10, maybe even 100 pounds of fish have been thrown away. This in itself is a grossly huge over exaggeration. The world average is 5.7:1 which is less than 6 pounds of every 1 pound of fish. This is much less than 100 pounds, and less than 10 pounds. She also fails to take into account that when unintentionally caught fish goes back into the ocean, larger fish may eat them and it continues to derive the fish population.

A better thing she can advocate for is finding better catching techniques or more useful ways in exploring the ocean like funding HydroPower Plants, and Ocean Water Turbine Research. Instead, she is left advocating for preserving a small percentage of the ocean to not allow catching, enforcing taxes for accidental oil spills, and population control. She believes preserving the 95% unexplored Ocean that we have is more important than any other aspect in the world, and to me that makes no sense.

Can we actually say that preserving a small percentage of fish is more important than ending Coptic Genocide? Can we actually say we should invest more money into Ocean preservation rather than funding Anti-Gravity Propulsion Research to colonize other planets? Can we actually say to depopulate the human race in order to preserve it? Can we actually say that veteran's suicide rates are less important than fish getting killed? She said overall, that preserving the Ocean should be our biggest concern right now. This is what won her the TED Prize, and this is a point I couldn't disagree with more. She is treating humans as means, and not as an end. Her argument goes against ethics and deontology itself, and therefore is unreasonable.

The whole moral consensus is that we can't put the ocean over our needs as humans. We can't put facts out there unless they are scientifically proven and unexaggerated. Her idea of putting preserving the Ocean as our biggest priority and stating ideas such as the human race can become extinct in the next upcoming centuries, is in my opinion a bit of an overstatement of what doesn't seem to be a reality. It would be a much better use of her time if she advocated for Alternative Energy research as well as prior research I talked about earlier. These reasons, among the many others I stated, are why I don't support the author's point of view.

Sources:

1. Earle, S. (2009, February 1). Sylvia Earle: TED Profile. Retrieved September 2, 2015.
2. How much of the ocean have we explored? (n.d.). Retrieved September 2, 2015.
3. Discards and bycatch in Shrimp trawl fisheries. (n.d.). Retrieved September 2, 2015.
4. About American Antigravity. (n.d.). Retrieved September 2, 2015.