

Once she'd be surrounded by fish in the clear azure waters off Indonesia. Instead a diver is suspended in a sea of plastic debris...

Ocean paradise, 2018



Disturbing: A scuba diver engulfed by plastic bags in the ocean

SURROUNDED by plastic debris, this diver sees the threat posed to the oceans by our throw-away culture.

Instead of experiencing the waters' natural wonders, she is confronted by a shoal of plastic bags.

It has been predicted that by 2050 there will be more plastic in the oceans than fish.

And if this picture is anything

By **Colin Fernandez**
Science Correspondent

to go by, that chilling reality may come sooner.

It was taken by Jukka Saarikorpi while filming rays at Manta Point off Indonesia with his scuba-diving fiancée, Aissa Paronen.

He said the area is home to more than 100 manta rays that are suffering because of the waste, which they may eat by accident. The Finnish photogra-

pher wants to make others aware of the importance of recycling – a subject also highlighted by the Mail with its campaign to Turn the Tide on Plastic.

Mr Saarikorpi, 39, said: 'There is a tornado of plastic rubbish and manta rays swimming towards it. Trash is coming with currents into this location, which is the same location mantas use to clean themselves. The manta population in this area is big – there are over 100 mantas.'

Describing the sight as 'sad',

he added: 'I have never seen so much trash in one spot, and also that this spot is actually a manta cleaning station is disturbing. Mantas are plankton-eaters so if they get plastic in their system, it will stay there and cause issues.'

'I wanted to share the images in order to bring awareness of recycling and the need for a proper waste management system in these areas.' More than 80,000 people have viewed his photos on Facebook, while some

have even used them in school projects.

Mr Saarikorpi said: 'As a photographer I am entitled to shoot something that is disturbing and highlight it for other people in order to drive change for the better. There are several good groups and dive centres helping the locals in teaching about recycling and using less plastic.'

'Many people are doing clean-ups and helping already, but this is a global issue and everyone can make a difference.'

By **Victoria Allen**
Science Correspondent

A **DEVICE** that zaps the brain with electricity has raised hope for Alzheimer's patients after improving memory by 15 per cent.

The machine monitors people's brains for signs they are not learning words properly and delivers a short burst of electricity to boost their memory.

Researchers who tested the device on 25 patients with epilepsy say it improved

'Brain zapper' that could boost memory by 15%

their learning performance by up to 15 per cent. Despite being zapped with electrical pulses, those taking part in the study felt nothing. But the treatment changed the activity of brain cells in their left lat-

eral temporal cortex – the part of the brain which processes language.

British experts described the study by Pennsylvania University as 'promising' but said it was currently unlikely to be

used for people with dementia. However, co-author Dr Daniel Rizzuto, director of cognitive neuromodulation at the US university, said: 'Now we know more precisely where to stimulate the brain to enhance memory in patients with memory disorders, as well as when to stimulate to maximise the effect.'

Electrical stimulation of the brain is already given to patients with Parkinson's disease and has been tested as a solution to sleep problems and depression.