

A Little Bit of Good News

By Suzy Hopkins

Six groups from around the world have had ideas of how to utilize waste products:

'Sea Chairs' are made up of plastic mostly in the form of bottles that is melted down and poured into three legged stool forms. A group of British fishermen take the time and trouble to try to save the oceans from ruin by utilizing this so-called waste product.

Fish scale patterned skateboards are made in Chile out of discarded plastic fish nets. These nets make up 10 per cent of the world's marine trash. They cause what is called 'ghost fishing' where fish and sea life get caught and die in abandoned floating nets.

German trendy sneakers and Dutch jeans are made from a company founded by Pharelle Williams who is known for the immensely popular "Happiness" song. The items use fiber made from plastic marine litter to create yarn, denim and other textiles.

Vibrantly colored carpeting is made from discarded fishnets on the coasts of the Philippines. The workers not only recycle the nets but clean up the beaches. These beautiful squares and rectangles are used in high-rise buildings.

A British, Australian and American catamaran made entirely of water bottles and other plastic waste, called the Plastiki, actually made an 8,000-mile voyage cutting through the Northern Pacific Gyre to raise awareness of this dismal, disgusting and dangerous collection of over 1.9 million pieces of plastic rotating 1,000 miles off the coast of California.

Meaningful toys and gifts have been made from abandoned 'flip-flops' and other colorful trash from the Kenyan coast. The workers are paid to collect the trash and paid again when they make toys and key chains to sell.

The people who made all this happen had vision. Vision is more than a bright idea. It is a way of taking something negative, everyone can see, and creating a positive outcome. What have *you* done for the Earth today?