

Here's how you can have an eco resolution!

By Pavitra Sriprakash | Published: 03rd January 2017 04:00 AM |

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 The writing is pretty much on the wall — Earth is just not happy with you and I. Weather patterns are changing and the climate is downright erratic. There are things happening which bring normal life to a screeching halt and Chennai has experienced havoc of dangerous proportions twice last year. Let us make some changes this year that are good for the environment. Each small changes can make a huge impact and even a minor lifestyle alteration by a mere 10% of the population would cause a revolution, and a huge difference to the health and the well-being of this fragile planet we love.

We could begin by saying no to plastic bags in stores. We succumb most times when asked — “Do you need a bag?” Shopping with reusable bags everywhere is a simple way to reduce ocean and land pollution. That will reduce use of oil-based PVC and polyethylene bags, which would thankfully keep crude in the ground and greenhouse gases off the sky. Switching to reusable bags will directly contribute to reducing sea turtles from accidentally ingesting plastic litter in oceans, and that would keep them off the endangered species list.

Eat well, go organic and be vegetarian if possible. Organic food costs more, but this is money well spent because they are wholesome and without the negative health effects of GMOs, toxic pesticides, or contaminated water. Besides, food grown this way protects and enhances the ecosystem. Locally grown food has the bonus effect of supporting local economies, enhancing food safety and nurturing livelihoods. The highly industrialised ways in which most livestock are raised is inhumane, unhealthy and unsustainable. The case for vegetarianism is indeed very strong!

Always drink filtered water, instead of buying a plastic bottle, choose to carry your reusable water bottle! The statistics on plastic water bottles produced worldwide are staggering. One million cars can be fuelled with the oil used to produce water bottles in the US alone! Buying bottled water can be stopped with a trip to the local store to purchase a reusable water bottle. Carrying drinking water inculcates the habit of treating a reusable water bottle like keys or wallet. It goes to work, school, and everywhere as a personal accessory.

Detox your home! Everything from dermatitis to headaches to cancer has been associated with the chemical products used to clean furniture, bathrooms and clothes — including air fresheners. Traditional cleaning agents assail the skin and lungs with carcinogens; it assaults the immune system, and exposes you to unnecessary physical stress. Cleaning agents are also typically made from petroleum, and ultimately waste the earth's soil, water and environment for generations. In contrast, green cleaning products are typically made with common kitchen ingredients like water, white vinegar and baking soda.

Pick one or all of the above to follow in 2017 — everyone one counts...Happy New Year!

The writer is an architect, urban designer, dancer and chief designer at Shilpa Architects