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Burkina Faso

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The Pacific Ocean, Tenkodogo, 15 April 2025

Dear Balima,

I am the Pacific Ocean. I am writing this letter to inform you about the pitiful state of my relations with you, the sons and daughters of humanity. I am not writing out of anger, though, but hope.

You know me, the Pacific Ocean, when you play on my shores in the summer and my waves caress your feet and my shells sleep under the warm sand. You know me through my gorgeous golden sands and silent depths. I am the Pacific Ocean, the vast and mysterious cradle of life and the lungs of our planet. I am the throbbing heartbeat of our blue planet. I am the deepest and largest of the world's oceans, with an area covering over 165.2 million square kilometres. I extend from America to the Antarctic, and my waters stretch out as far as Asia, New Guinea and Melanesia. My name invokes peace.

I used to dance joyfully under the sun's rays. The fish that swim in me used to shine in a myriad of colours, my coral reefs were splendid palaces and my waves told stories to the stars. Even today, there is no need for me to prove just how important I am to your life. I give you the air that you breathe. I produce more than half of the world's oxygen.

As Sylvia Earle, a great explorer of the seas, once said: "The ocean is the blue heart of the planet". I regulate the climate, I absorb the heat produced by the planet, and I temper its storms. Without my contribution, planet Earth would be uninhabitable.

You feed off the fish that I breed. I produce the salt you use to season your food, and I nurture the sea mammals that you hunt.

So, were you aware of all that?

I am angry because I am now suffering from the severe pain that you are inflicting on me. Your love for me has disappeared and you have become ungrateful towards me.

You are thoughtlessly destroying the creatures that I nourish. You have transformed part of me into a bin for your waste and you have transformed my belly into a dumping ground. Every day, tonnes of plastic are thrown into my bowels. Things that are alien to me are hurled into my depths: plastic bags, abandoned nets, industrial waste and plastic containers. Between California and Hawaii, you have created a garbage patch three times the size of France, which you have ironically called "the 7th continent".



Products that I cannot digest are being thrown into me and are poisoning me. As a result of climate change, which is brought about by your harmful actions, my waters are being perturbed and becoming hotter, my bowels are being damaged, my colours are fading, my voice is becoming inaudible, my fish are dying strangled, and my birds are swallowing corks that they mistakenly take for prey.

In short, I am being contaminated and my equilibrium is being thrown into disarray.

Why are you treating me in this way when I give you so much? Do you want to survive with me or die without me?

I am not simply a place for your holidays. I am a living being and a world of my own, but a world that needs you.

You humans, you young people with hearts overflowing with goodness and love, please look after me like I look after you! We depend on each other. Was is not that trailblazing environmentalist Rachelle Carson who once said: "Man is part of nature and his war against nature is inevitably a war against himself"?

I would like to share a secret with you: you could make a big difference, and you still have time to save me. Reduce your consumption of plastic by using reusable, biodegradable bags. Support the associations that are working to protect me. Choose sustainable sea products to prevent my inhabitants from disappearing forever. Stop excessive use of the chemicals that are contaminating my waters and decimating my population. Stop contaminating me with the

dead bodies of the people who you refer to as "illegal migrants". Educate and share with others and spread my word to those around you. Dear humans, I am the world's memory and I would also like to be its future. I am not, however, immortal. If I die, you will lose an ally, but if you save me, you will save your own future and that of the whole of humanity. Was it not Victor Hugo who wrote words to the effect that the ocean is more ancient than the mountains and freighted with the memories and dreams of time?

So, please help restore me, which will allow me to recover the peace that I once enjoyed and to accomplish my mission of improving the living conditions of humanity.

Yours tenderly and most salty,
The Pacific Ocean

