

Jeremy Darroch – Our Oceans Conference, Malta

Thursday 5 October 2017

Good afternoon everyone.

It's a pleasure to be here in Malta and to hear the inspiring stories of environmental action, hope and transformation we are hearing today from across the world. It's clear the duty to act for our oceans is well understood, but has never been so urgent.

For us, at Sky, the belief that what we do goes beyond the confines of our business is at the heart of who we are.

We strive to be a responsible business and we believe we can affect real change.

We believe all of us have a responsibility to future generations to care about the future of our planet. We know our customers care about the environment too.

At Sky, we're at the heart of millions of lives, trusted to be in almost 23 million homes across Europe. This has given us a platform to

take positive action on the issues our customers care about and importantly, to drive real change.

That's why 10 years ago we became the world's first carbon neutral media company and have remained so ever since.

Eight years ago we established Sky Rainforest Rescue, raising over 9 million pounds, together with our customers, and helping to save one billion trees in the Amazon Rainforest.

And today we want to support change directed at one of the biggest man-made environmental disasters facing our planet – plastics in the ocean.

In January of this year we launched Sky Ocean Rescue, to raise awareness about ocean health and to encourage the public to remove single-use plastic from their lives.

As a media company, with a reach of over 100 million people, we have been able to shine a light on the issue and reach millions of viewers and customers through documentaries and news reports.

We have partnered with major TV sporting events - Moto GP in Italy and cricket in the UK - to get the message out to our customers.

And we created a 10 metre whale, made from the same amount of plastic that enters the ocean every second, and took it on tour around the UK. Our customers named it Plasticus, a name that encapsulates the epic scale of the problem – you can see it outside the Auberge de Castille here in Malta.

Let's take a quick look at the scale of the problem we are talking about, and you will see why we're so passionate.

VIDEO – 1m 15s

Shocking isn't it?

So, nine months into our campaign - we realise that we need to do more. We need to move from awareness raising to action.

Today plastic is flowing into our oceans at an unprecedented rate.

If you walked into a bathroom overflowing with water, what would you do?

You wouldn't start mopping up the water... you would turn off the tap.

We need to turn off the plastic tap, right now.

We want to bring our voice, together with yours, as we take our campaign on ocean health to the next level.

So today at Sky, we are committing to three things.

Firstly, we're going to transform our own business.

We've already begun work on this. Our 31,000 employees no longer use plastic bottles.

We've replaced them with reusable water bottles. And we've made plastic straws, cups and cutlery a thing of the past – all replaced with corn starch products or paper alternatives.

It's the everyday things, but together they add up. We've calculated that we've already reduced our plastic bottle use by around three hundred thousand bottles.

We have adopted a 'Life Cycle Approach' to the sustainability of our products – from design to end of life.

And we've adapted the design of our products so that broken products can be easily refurbished, rather than discarded - and we recycle all our old set top boxes.

What we are announcing today goes further.

We are now committing to eliminating all single-use plastics from our own operations, products and supply chains by 2020.

Single-use plastic free by 2020.

Starting from today, the packaging for all our new products will be single-use plastic free.

And by the end of this year all our new products themselves will be free of single-use plastic.

We can't do this alone so we will also be asking our business partners and supply chain to transform their business and operations. From our previous experience we believe they will be strong supporters and want to get involved too.

Secondly, we want to encourage innovation to develop solutions to the problem. We will launch an innovation fund anchored by our

own commitment of 25 million pounds over five years, to invest in and encourage new ideas. We will use our experience in harnessing capital, innovation and entrepreneurship to help solve the wider problem of plastic use.

The fund will look for businesses and start-ups that are developing ideas and technology to eradicate single-use plastics from supply chains and to stop plastic from ending up in the ocean.

We will invite others to invest in this cause, because we believe, that by finding and funding the best ideas from across the world, we will help to solve this problem.

And our third commitment today is to continue to use the power of our voice to reach a wide audience and to influence others to take action.

That means more of the challenging content and programming of the kind you have seen today.

And as part of this we will partner with WWF to adopt Marine Protected Areas around the coastlines of our major European territories - the UK and Ireland, Germany and Italy.

And we will encourage our customers to join us in protecting and enhancing these coastal areas.

Importantly, we also want to urge you, the world's policy makers and environmental experts, to take direct and definitive action that will keep plastics from polluting our oceans.

So to recap. Three things Sky is committing to today.

One, to eradicate single-use plastics from our own business operations by 2020.

Two, to establish a new innovation fund, anchored by our own funding, that will help find solutions to this terrible problem.

And three, to use our voice to inspire and encourage others to make a difference, through our programming and by adopting MPAs around our own territories.

Ten years after our commitment to become carbon neutral we are now committing to becoming ocean positive.

We all know that time is running out. We all have a duty and a responsibility to take action today.

We hope you will join us.

Thanks for listening.

Words: 1,092 // 8 mins