

Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant's Radioactive Wastewater. 'Japan is sending its radioactive waste on a trip around the world'

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Katti Jisuk Seo, a young Korean-German woman who recently moved to Australia, was enjoying her first-ever scuba dive on the Great Barrier Reef when she was shocked to hear that the Japanese government had begun dumping radioactive waste water into the Pacific Ocean.

"I come from Berlin, a city without an ocean," she said in a speech to a September 16 rally in Sydney to protest Japan's dumping. "I grew up with a certain longing for the ocean though, inspired by my mum's childhood in Busan, Korea, where she would see the ocean every day. Now, I just recently moved to Australia, a country that connects me with the ocean in so many ways.

"I was still mesmerised by the colourful fish and coral in the Pacific when the news crashed in that on August 24, the Japanese government started dumping radioactive contaminated wastewater from the wrecked Fukushima nuclear power plant into the Pacific Ocean.

"The horror of the news felt even more tangible as my mind was still full of the vivid images of the underwater world."

Japan plans to release 1.3 million tons of radioactive contaminated wastewater into the ocean over the next decades — enough to fill more than 500 Olympic-sized swimming pools, Seo explained.

"Japan is sending its radioactive waste on a trip around the world. From the Pacific it will reach beaches and seas globally, entering fish, marine plants, other sea creatures and

mammals throughout the marine food chain. Via evaporation, through rainfall, it will find its way back onto the lands across our planet.

“The Japanese government insists the radioactive contaminated wastewater is ‘safe’, basing this claim on a recent safety review by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). But this report clearly shows that the IAEA bears no responsibility for any fallout from Japan’s actions.

“Plus, Japan only handed over samples from three tanks for this review, three tanks of more than 1000 tanks!

“In the whole review you cannot find a single clear statement that the proposed release of the Fukushima wastewater into the ocean ‘is safe’.

“On the other side of the globe, in Berlin, my mum and our community have also been protesting against Japan’s radioactive wastewater dumping. They’ve staged demonstrations in front of the Brandenburg Gate and the Japanese Embassy.

“It feels empowering to know that we are globally connected. This weekend, protesters are uniting in 14 cities across the globe, spanning Asia, Europe, and the US. Together, we stand and march with them, and we won’t stop until Japan stops contaminating the ocean.”

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Featured image: Katti Jisuk Seo at a rally in Sydney’s Town Hall square, on September 16. Photo: Moses Hahn

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