

# Opinion: Consequences for not treating sick planet

By Scott McKain

When it comes to the health of the planet, I think of myself as a happy pessimist. After all, nobody gets out of here alive. There is no need to get cranky about it. But a recent scientific article in *Nature* magazine really shook me.

It also took me back to my days in the 1970s as a technician at Moss Landing Marine Labs on Monterey Bay.

My job was to take sea water samples around the bay and then analyze them for, among other things, phytoplankton.

These are the single-celled plants that are the basis of the ocean's food chain and the source of half the world's oxygen.

One voyage on the bay was special because our research vessel was to rendezvous with a small aircraft from NASA. Its representatives were working on instruments that could measure phytoplankton from overhead instead of directly from the water samples.

## Read the whole story

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