

A scientist just like me



Pauline de Bigault de Cazanove

Environmental Chemist



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Hi there! I am Pauline de Bigault de Cazanove – An environmental chemist



Where do I work?

I am currently studying the impacts of plastic pollution in the environment at Queen Mary University of London.

What did I like doing when I was at school?

I originally dreamed of becoming an astronaut. Then I wanted to make cosmetics before realising my vocation was to help protect the ocean!

What do I like doing in my spare time?

I am a huge fan of wildlife documentaries! I love exploring new places in London with friends or hiking in nature on my own. I love scuba diving in the ocean and meeting its wonderful creatures.

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What do I do as an environmental chemist?

I work in a laboratory mimicking the effects of heat and the Sun on plastic products. This helps to understand how long it takes for plastic to degrade and the negative consequences of this on living organisms in the environment.



How does what I do make the world a better place?

Plastic is a fantastic material used to make all kind of important things (look around you!). But we produce more than we need so plastic waste is invading our planet. If we understand how plastic in the environment can affect wildlife and human health, we can make people more aware of the impact of using plastics.

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What I like about my job

I am part of an important community of scientists, industrial leaders, and politicians who act tirelessly to make a better world today and for generations to come. We are all working side by side trying to fight plastic pollution in different ways.

Challenges I have faced

When I was studying chemical engineering, I was told that working to protect the environment was not a job that I could get. But I stayed motivated, and determined to create my own career path! Today, ecology has become a major aspect in lots of jobs.



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If you want to be an environmental chemist, you need:

- ✿ **to believe** in a world where wildlife and human progress can coexist in harmony!
- ✿ **to be patient.** Sometimes, you will not get the result you expect, but remember that no result is a result. Do not be afraid of being wrong, you will always learn something!
- ✿ **to enjoy working with others.** Being a team player is key to achieve greater results and share your brilliant discoveries!



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Discussion time

- ✦ Would you like to be an environmental chemist like Pauline de Bigault de Cazanove?

Why? Why not?

- ✦ What skills and interests do you already have that would help you become an environmental chemist?
- ✦ What new skills and knowledge would you need to develop?



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Free supporting resources for environmental chemistry

[Why & How Newsletter](#) (Autumn 2019) – see ‘Microplastics in our seas’

[Eco Science \(Science Club\)](#) – eight activities related to recent research about environment and climate.

[I bet you didn't know...](#) articles use cutting-edge science research as a context for learning. Teacher Guides describing the research and activities and investigations for children can be used as classroom presentations. See:

- Plastics in soil could affect the survival of plants and worms
- Bamboo could be used to make cricket bats
- Floral scents may be changed by air pollutants

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