RECYCLING PLASTIC BOTTLES, GROWING PLANTS AND MAKING REFORESTATION SUCCESSFUL

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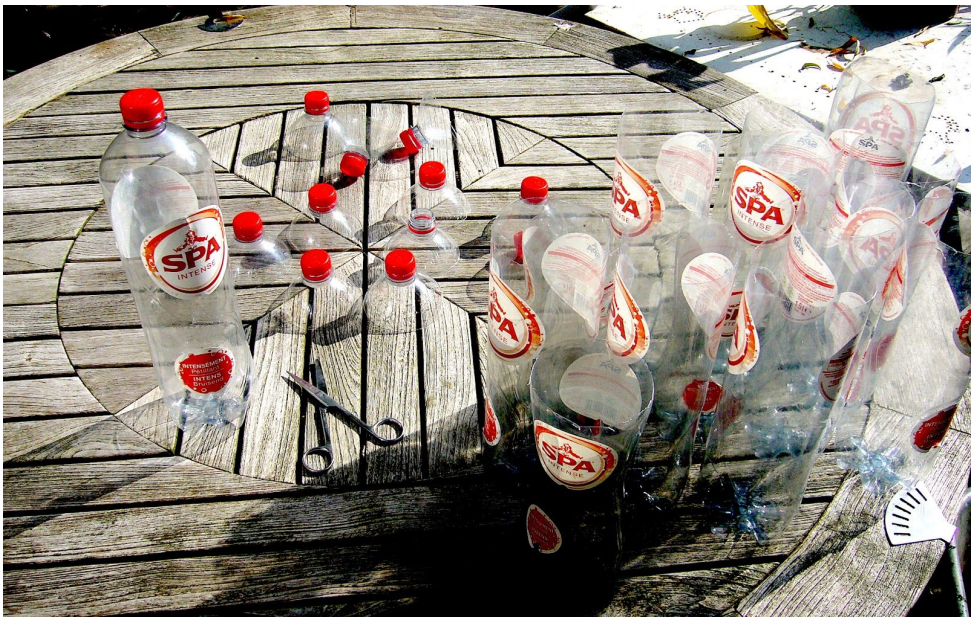
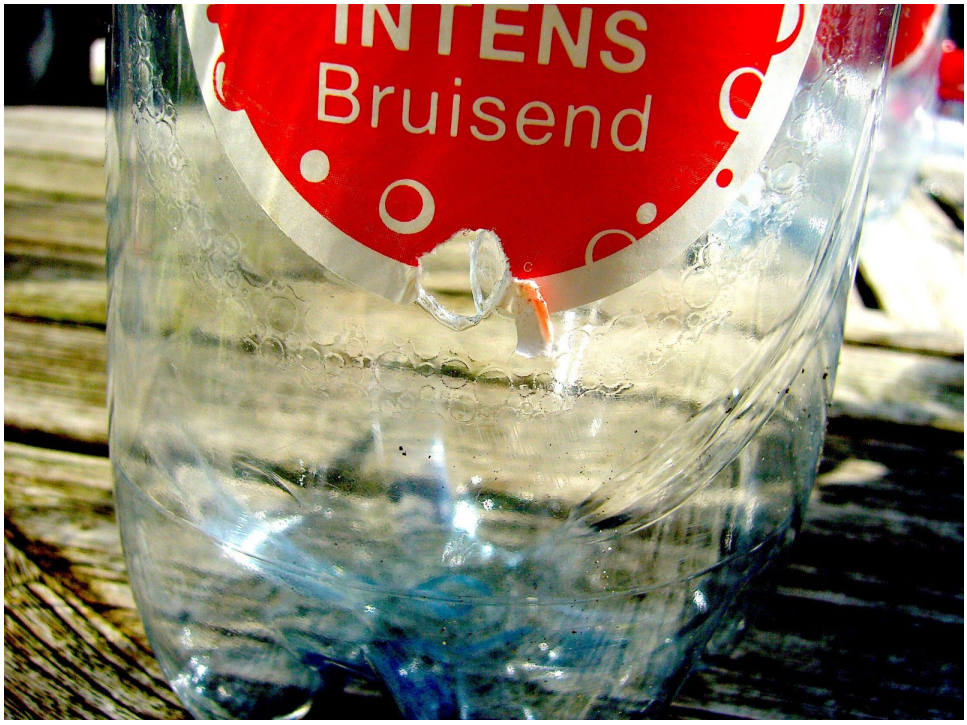
Here is an short description of the recycling of a plastic bottle, preparing it for growing one of the well known house plants, the spider plant (*Chlorophytum*).

Left: A 1,5 liter bottle (Belgian mineral water)
Right: Some bottles of which the top part has been cut off.



To save water we always pierce two opposite drainage holes in the sidewall at 1-2 inches (2-5 cm) above the bottom of the bottle (not in the bottom itself). This way we can stock for a short while a small quantity of irrigation water in the bottle (which would otherwise run out through a hole in the bottom and be lost).



Some small sprouts of *Chlorophytum* rooted in a glass, together with a top shoot of Epipremnum aureum, the money plant or golden pothos.

Rooted Epipremnum (pothos) and Chlorophytum (spider plant)

A small sprout of the spider plant

Planted in different sized bottles

Young sprout developing splendidly in a bottle

One of the two opposite drainage holes in the sidewall

We prepare a pot for transplanting

We cut the bottom part of the bottle …

and set the roots free.

We plant the bottle in the pot

Once the spider plant has developed its roots in the potting soil …

We will pull out the plastic bottle and the spider plant continues its growth.

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This technique can also successfully be applied for reforestation projects. Tree saplings can be grown in bottles, using less water. When planting the bottles (bottomless) with their saplings, the survival rate will be much higher because the rootball will not be disturbed. Once the saplings have developed some roots in the soil, one can easily pull out the plastic bottle and set the complete rootball free to develop in the surrounding soil. Survival rate will be close to 100 %, even in dry areas.