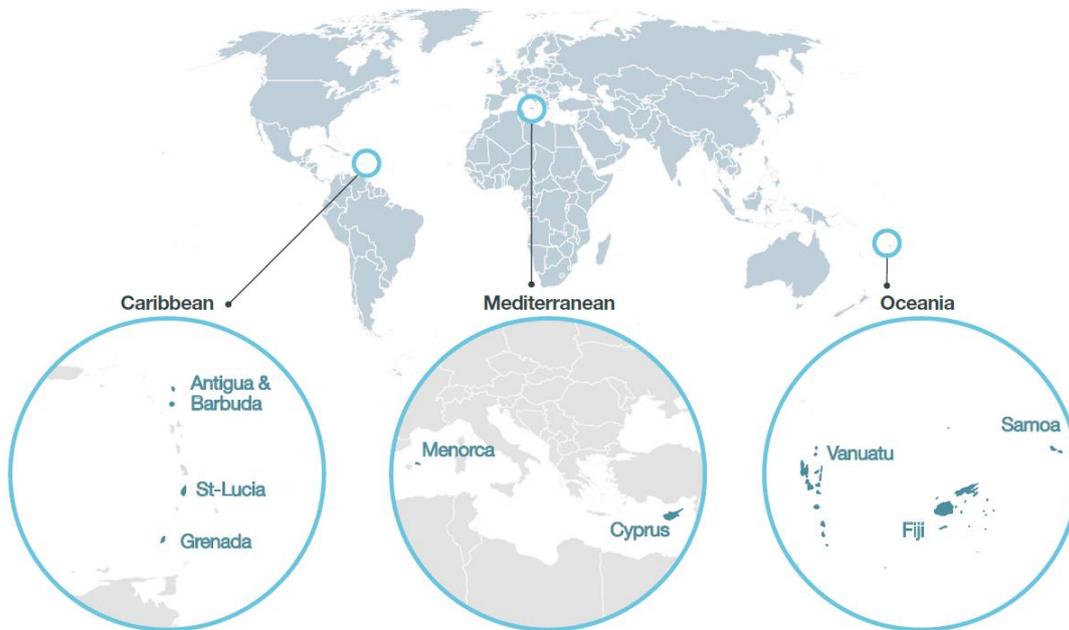


Plastic Waste-Free Islands



Map showing where the *Plastic Waste-Free Islands* project is working in

The Plastic Pollution Crisis

Plastic is cheap, lightweight, strong and malleable, which makes it a very useful material for a wide variety of applications.

Up to 12 million tons of plastic debris enter the ocean every year. This has adverse impacts on the health of ocean ecosystems, the integrity of food supplies and people's livelihoods.¹

Plastic pollution is caused by many factors, such as unsustainable consumption patterns, non-existent or unenforced waste management legislation, inefficient waste management systems and a lack of coordination between different sectors.

Plastic pollution is a design, production, consumption and disposal challenge that must be tackled across plastic's entire lifecycle.

Most efforts to minimise and mitigate the impacts of plastic pollution are focused on the mainland, particularly rivers and coastal areas. To date, not much attention has been paid to islands.

Islands' Vulnerability to Plastic Pollution

- Many islands, particularly Small Island Developing States (SIDS), tend to have vulnerable economies that depend largely on tourism and fisheries.
- Islands have to deal with plastic debris they generate themselves, as well as debris that washes ashore from other places.
- Inter-island waste management is particularly challenging for islands that are isolated or inaccessible.



A Caribbean beach filled with garbage © marako85/Shutterstock

¹ Boucher, J. and Friot D. (2017). Primary Microplastics in the Oceans: A Global Evaluation of Sources. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. 43pp.

Plastic Waste-Free Islands

In 2019, with support from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) and The Didier and Martine Primat Foundation, IUCN launched the *Plastic Waste-Free Islands* (PWFI) initiative, as part of its global *Close the Plastic Tap* Programme. PWFI is a three-year initiative working in three regions: The Caribbean, the Mediterranean and Oceania.

The initiative's overarching goal is to drive the circular economy agenda forward and to reduce plastic waste generation and leakage from islands.

Objectives

The project aims to:

Provide national partners with data and analysis to reduce the amount of plastic waste leaking into the environment.

Enhance adoption of plastic leakage reduction measures by tourism, fisheries and waste management sectors.

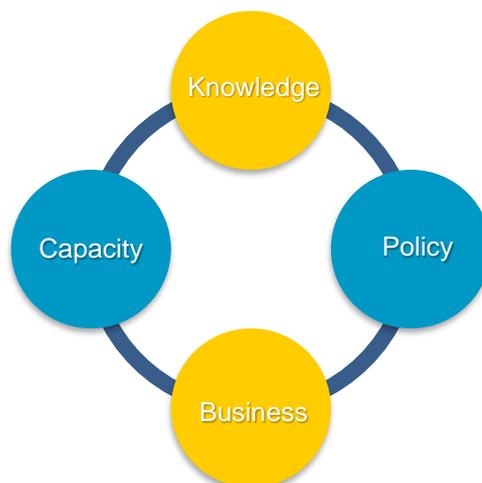
Co-generate sector-specific action plans for alternative value chains that strengthen coordination and cooperation amongst different stakeholders along the plastic value chain.

Develop a blueprint for islands in collaboration with regional bodies. The blueprint will lay down IUCN's recommended approach to reduce plastic leakage on islands based on the strategy adopted for PWFI and lessons learned.



Pillars

To achieve its objectives, PWFI works through four interconnected pillars:



Knowledge: IUCN works with countries to co-generate credible data and analysis to understand their current plastic leakage status, set targets, implement actions, and track progress towards targets over time.

Capacity: IUCN is facilitating collaboration amongst key public and private stakeholders to share best practices to enhance plastic waste management measures.

Policy: IUCN is supporting policy and legislative analysis and reform, to minimise plastic leakage. IUCN is specifically working on identifying plastic leakage reduction options through the development of scenario models.

Business: IUCN is working with the private sector, with a focus on the tourism, fisheries and waste management sectors, to enhance their plastic waste management measures and develop alternative value chains.

For more information, please visit, follow or contact us at:



<https://www.iucn.org/theme/marine-and-polar/our-work/close-plastic-tap-programme>



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