



*EcoWorld Recycling empowers a women-led plastic circular economy along the Kenyan coast. Photo Credit: EcoWorld*

## KENYA

### COASTAL PLASTIC CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Despite Kenya's significant strides in recent years, such as the ban on plastic bags and single-use plastics, the country continues to grapple with the menace of plastic pollution. This pressing issue is notably pronounced along the coast, posing a grave threat to the environment and the fragile marine ecosystems. Despite persistent efforts, plastic pollution persists as a critical challenge, impacting not only the ocean's health but also the sustenance of coastal communities. Efforts centered on circular economy solutions for plastics have displayed promise, aiming to both extract plastic from the environment and generate employment opportunities. Enterprises embracing a commitment to support vulnerable populations by providing employment opportunities contribute to strengthening the local economy, simultaneously enhancing environmental well-being and livelihoods within coastal communities.

Watamu Marine Association (WMA) and EcoWorld Recycling—Kenya's frontrunners in sustainable waste management—have pioneered a proven model for plastic waste disposal, collection, segregation, and processing. Through this activity, USAID is partnering with WMA to scale their plastic collection supply chains and advance a circular economy waste management model across Kenya's coast. The activity will build up and expand plastics collection and recycling operations in three coastal counties (Kwale, Kilifi, Mombasa); develop partnerships and a client base to boost the value of WMA's plastic; and form a Public Limited Company to expand WMA's business and attract international trade. These activities will divert 1080 metric tons of plastic waste from entering the environment and create both informal and full-time jobs for women and youth.

## OUR WORK

The activity is supporting WMA and EcoWorld Recycling to scale their business model in Kenya's three coastal counties. By growing their human resource and operational capacities—as well as purchasing and upgrading machinery, equipment, and facilities—WMA and EcoWorld will achieve the financial sustainability and capacity necessary to tackle the challenge of mismanaged plastic waste along Kenya's coast. The activity consists of three main components:

- **Expand plastic collection and recycling capacity** by hiring full-time staff to operationalize and manage the material recovery facilities; establishing trade relationships with plastic suppliers and buyers; setting up three satellite plastic collection / transfer / holding stations; recruiting plastic waste collectors; and upgrading the technical know-how and efficiencies of plastic collection, processing, and data reporting.
- **Broaden WMA's client base and expand its product portfolio** by securing formal public-private partnerships; collaborating with global plastic credit providers and buyers in the United States and European Union markets; and establishing partnerships with Extended Producer Responsibility clients in Kenya and internationally.
- **Increase WMA's international trade** by registering a new public limited company; promoting investment in the company and its recycled building materials; strengthening capacity to attract investors; and securing investment from US investors through new environmentally friendly plastic waste solutions.

## OBJECTIVES

- Increase the volume of plastic collected and recycled along Kenya's coast by 1,080 metric tons.
- Create 16 new full-time jobs at the material recovery facilities, and 2,000 new jobs for waste collectors targeting women and youth.
- Create 7 new collection / transfer / holding stations across Kenya's three coastal counties.

## DECREASING OCEAN PLASTIC POLLUTION IN KENYA

In June 2022, USAID Administrator Samantha Power announced the launch of the Save Our Seas Initiative to tackle ocean plastic pollution in 14 key countries and regions. Under this initiative, USAID is supporting the implementation of Kenya's plastic policies, awareness raising, and private sector partnerships. Through its engagement with Watamu Marine Association and EcoWorld Recycling, the Coastal Plastic Circular Economy activity supports Kenya in implementing its National Sustainable Waste Management Act 2022.

### DURATION

November 2023 - April 2025

### ACTIVITY LOCATIONS

Kwale, Kilifi, Mombasa

### IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

DAI and Watamu Marine Association / EcoWorld Recycling

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