



## Newsletter January – March

### **ONGOING PROJECTS**

#### *Global Recycling Day*

In 2018, the Bureau of International Recycling and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization declared 18 March as the [Global Recycling Day](#) to highlight the importance that recycling plays in preserving primary resources and securing the needs of the future. It is intended to urge world leaders to promote recycling and invite societies to reimagine waste as an asset. For the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the Global Recycling Day, [Waste Free Oceans](#), in collaboration with some of its partners, organized two clean-up operations: in Brussels, Belgium, and in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, to bring attention to the waste management challenges in these two countries.

## Tanzania

Our clean-up in Dar es Salaam was organized in partnership with [NAK Limited](#), [The Recycler](#), [BlueCourses](#), and [Rotary Club Dar es Salaam](#). Dar es Salaam, Tanzania's biggest city, has a major waste problem. It has been ranked as one of the dirtiest cities in the world by Forbes and NYX Partnership Consulting. The city produces an estimated 3,000 tons of waste per day, of which only 40% actually ends up in the designated landfills. The rest is either burned or illegally dumped.

In the morning of March 18, over 90 volunteers gathered at Mbezi beach, equipped with waste pickers and waste bags, to restore the beach to a maximum of its natural beauty. For over two hours, they gathered dozens of waste bags, composed of mainly plastic bottles, pallets, cigarette butts, etc. Pamela Mutabazi, CEO of NAK Limited, whose team participated in the clean-up, specified: "We have witnessed here how the Mbezi River contributes to environmental pollution at Mbezi beach, that's why we decided to have this sustainable cleaning campaign that we believe will solve pollution challenges and we have involved the people of this area".

Local fishermen also made use of the WFO [waste-catching trawl](#) to pick-up floating waste in the ocean. This simple technology enables local communities to participate in the restoration of natural environments and eliminate the waste found on their shorelines.

This waste was then transported by [The Recycler](#) to one of their facilities for processing. The Recycler offers professional waste management and recycling solutions for waste streams in Tanzania. They are specialized in separating all kinds of recyclable waste in order to process and trade to domestic and international markets. The company has also set up recycling collection points throughout the city and is researching large-scale bio-gas, waste to energy, insect-derived protein and informal collection networks.

Our action in Tanzania is also a continuation of the [WFO Africa Roadshow](#), which consists in a series of clean-ups and educational programs in Africa to raise awareness of the impact of plastic pollution and the necessity to develop processing facilities for waste.



Club of  
Dar es Salaam  
Oysterbay







## Brussels

On Saturday, the **Waste Free Oceans'** team and Cohabs' volunteers organized a clean-up along the Digue du Canal in Anderlecht, Brussels. This industrial area is being repurposed to develop new living spaces, but is currently being used as an illegal dump site for all kinds of waste. In a few hours, we managed to fill in 36 bags of general and plastic waste, which were later recuperated by Bruxelles-Propreté, the waste management services of the municipality of Brussels.

In the spirit of developing sustainable hubs in urban areas, Cohabs and **WFO** finished the day with a visit of the BIGH Biological Farm. The aquaponic farm sits on the roof of the food market in Anderlecht and grows biological herbs, fruits, vegetables, and salmon trout. BIGH itself employs green practices such as using water from the fish tanks to irrigate the crops as it contains essential nutrients for their development. These plantations are then pollinated by bumblebee hives. The farm thus forms an excellent prototype of urban agriculture since the food they grow is sold to restaurants and markets throughout the city, forming the perfect model for a circular economy.

It is with the help of organizations such as Cohabs that **WFO** is able to actively raise awareness of the impact of plastic waste and develop projects to clean up beaches, rivers, oceans and canals. Follow our activities and do not hesitate to contact us if you are interested in participating in such events **with Waste Free Oceans!**







## *Innovation Forum4Plastics*

Since June 2022, **Waste Free Oceans** is involved in a European Horizon project named SURPASS, which aims to lead by example the transition towards more Safe, Sustainable and Recyclable by-Design (SSRbD) Polymeric Materials. On March 15, the **WFO** team presented the SURPASS project during the Innovation Forum4Plastics which regroups a variety of projects working on innovative tools to increase the sustainability of products on the European market.

The aim of SURPASS project is to equip European SMEs with a digital guiding tool that will impart knowledge and provide SSRbD Assessment and Guidance to support them in their development of new polymers. For the Forum, we dove into our packaging case study which is looking at the development of multi-nanolayered films to replace multi-layered films currently in use.

*"These instances are a great enabler to connect with likeminded projects and to gain insights into the technical aspects related to sustainability and innovation. Instances such as these are essential to implement and build on the green deal's foundations"* says our Project Manager Victor Préaux.

The SURPASS members are meeting in June in San Sebastian to assess the first year of the project and develop strategies for the second year.





## **Waste Free Oceans welcomes the tighter waste shipment rules presented by the European Parliament**

On 17 January 2023, Members of the European Parliament approved stricter procedures and control measures for waste shipment. The legislation seeks to better protect the environment and human health while also taking advantage of the opportunities provided to promote the drive towards circularity. The adopted text explicitly supports banning shipments of all wastes destined for disposal within the EU, except if authorized in limited and well-justified cases. EU exports of hazardous waste to non-OECD countries would also be prohibited.

The revised legislation comes at a time when waste exchanged around the world keeps growing. Eurostat reports that the EU alone is responsible for 32,7 million tonnes of waste exported in 2020 to non-EU countries, accumulating a value of €13 billion. **Waste Free Oceans** therefore welcomes the European Parliament's decision and urges its members to further promote opportunities to deploy recycled solutions.

Alexandre Dangis, President of **WFO** welcomes the Waste Shipment Regulation. "**Waste Free Oceans** has always advocated to keep these valuable resources in Europe. It provides extensive opportunities to develop the products of tomorrow. The European Parliament's decision comes at a time where the EU's green agenda needs to be put into practice. This decision is a crucial step to improve waste management and increase investments in recycling and repurposing products in the EU."

**WFO** insists it is important to hold these measures accountable to the EU's environmental laws and regulation. Its implementation must be complemented by facilitating intra-European trade and considering the various recycling capabilities and infrastructures in Europe. Now is the time to take the opportunities presented by the legislation and develop new recycling facilities to reach the recyclability and recycled content targets.

## A Historic agreement to protect the high seas.

On March 5, after nearly 20 years of negotiations, UN Members agreed on the first international treaty to protect the high Seas. This is crucial for enforcing the 30x30 pledge which seeks to bring 30% of the world's land and sea under protection by 2030 and which was made by countries during the UN Biodiversity Conference in December.

The high seas are the area which fall beyond countries' exclusive economic zones (over 200 nautical miles from the coastline). They comprise over 60% of the world's oceans and have long drawn less attention. Yet, only 1% of these waters are currently protected while they provide vital lifelines for the planet. According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) nearly 10% of species in these areas are at risk of extinction. Often threatened by climate change, pollution and overfishing, the high seas now have a better perspective for a sustainable approach.

One of the main sticking points concerned the economic interests, with developing countries calling for a greater share in the participation of the blue economy, notably regarding access to marine genetic resources used in the medical industries. Countries have agreed to share the discoveries made by the deep sea and the European Union pledged €40 million to poorer countries to facilitate the ratification of the treaty.

It is now time to work on the implementation of the treaty and ensure it becomes a resounding success for the international community! **Waste Free Oceans** remains committed to reduce the amount of ocean and ocean-bound waste and promote the uptake of recycled materials! Get in touch to see how we can work together!

## WFO joins the Business Coalition for a Global Plastics Treaty

We are proud to announce that **Waste Free Oceans** has officially become a member of the Business Coalition for a Global Plastics Treaty. The coalition, convened by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation and WWF, brings together businesses, NGOs and financial institutions committed to supporting the development of a legally binding UN treaty to end plastic pollution.



The vision is to contribute to a circular economy in which plastic never becomes waste or pollution, and the value of products and materials is retained in the economy. We believe this treaty has the potential to stimulate, coordinate, and align national policies and actions towards a common global strategic direction. The treaty must serve as the key policy mechanism to accelerate progress in three critical areas:

- 1) The reduction of plastic use and production through a circular economy approach
- 2) The increased circulation of all necessary plastics
- 3) The prevention and remediation of hard-to-abate micro- and macro- plastic leakage into the environment.





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