

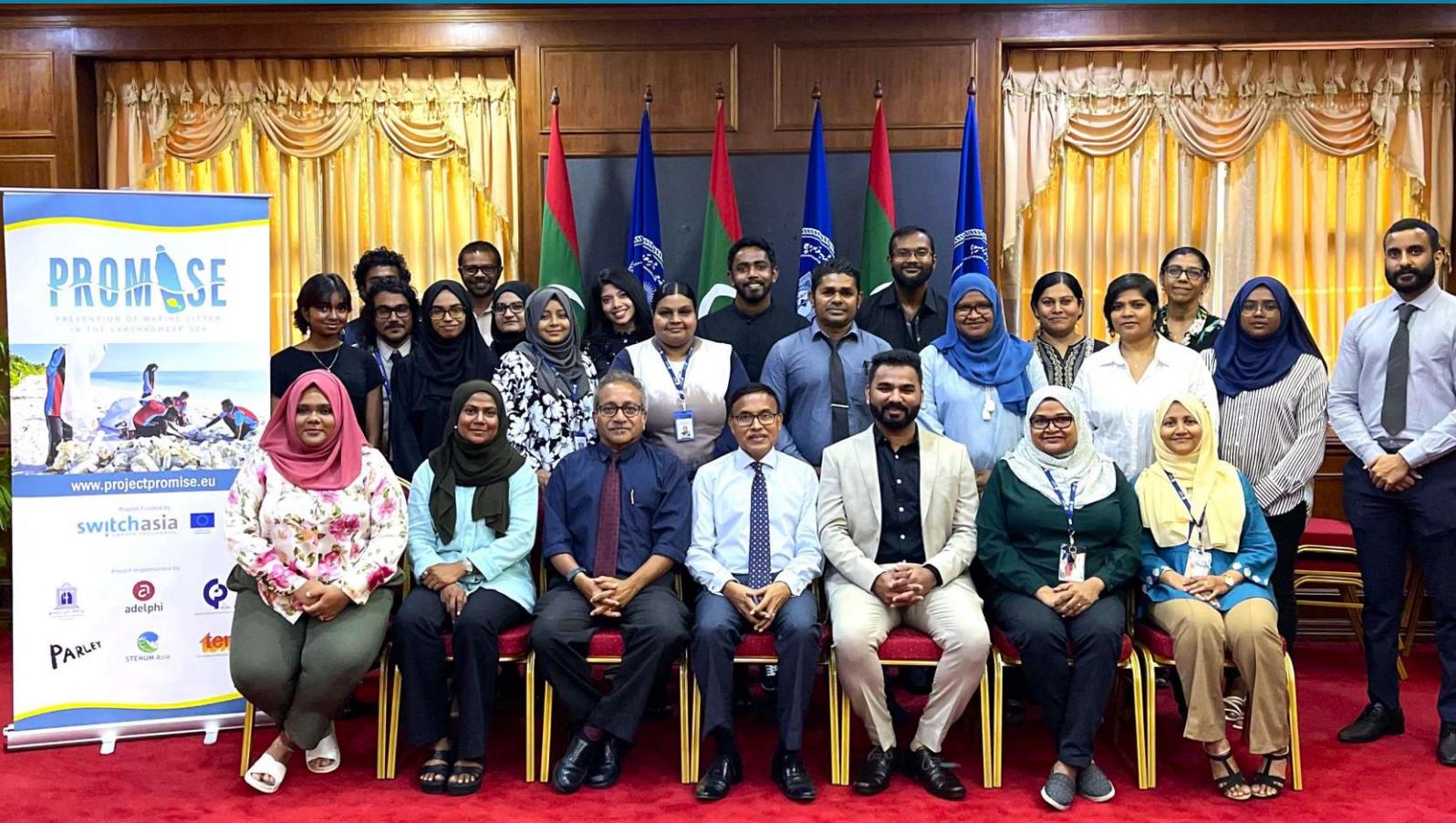


Maldives

(Output Paper)

Policy Solution Prototypes for Marine Litter Prevention in Maldives

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November 2023

Project Implemented by:



Imprint

Suggested citation: PROMISE (2023): Policy Solution Prototypes for Marine Litter Prevention in Maldives.

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The project team expresses its gratitude to all the participants of the roundtables for a very valuable and highly appreciated contribution.

Photo credits: Project PROMISE

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Project Contribution to SDGs:



Disclaimer: This paper has been produced with the financial support of the European Union in the framework of the project 'Prevention of Marine Litter in the Lakshadweep Sea (PROMISE)'. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

List of Abbreviations:

- MoECCT- Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology
- MOT- Ministry of Tourism
- MNU- Maldives National University
- MOE- Ministry of Education
- MOH- Ministry of Health
- HPA- Health Protection Agency

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Introduction

[Prevention of Marine Litter in the Lakshadweep Sea \(PROMISE\)](#) is a 4-year project (2020-2024) supported by the European Union (EU) under the SWITCH Asia Programme.

In recent years, the project partner countries, Maldives, Sri Lanka and India have undergone substantial growth in tourism clusters located along their shorelines of the Lakshadweep Sea. This led to economic well-being of the local population. However, due to high consumption rates of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) and single-use plastic packaging, tourism industries have also been identified as major contributors to marine litter. In many touristic regions of the global south, this is aggravated by the absence of effective policy frameworks, a lack of consumer awareness and insufficient capacities of local authorities to handle the increasing solid waste (PROMISE, 2022).

The PROMISE project responds to this by preventing leakage of wastes from land-based sources into the Lakshadweep Sea in line with a Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) approach. To achieve the desired impact, the activities target tourism clusters located along **the Lakshadweep shorelines in the Maldives, Sri Lanka and India.**

As part the project PROMISE, a series of policy roundtables were organised with an aim to prototype policy solution mechanisms for challenges in prevention of marine litter. Three policy roundtables were organised, each focusing on Defining challenges (1st), Solution prototyping (2nd), and Public showcasing of policy mechanisms (3rd). Every roundtable will feed-in inputs to the next one to prototype potential policy solutions that can help national policy makers in furthering marine litter prevention policies.

This policy roundtables aim to bring together policy makers, governmental bodies, institutions, development organisations, associations, NGOs and social enterprises working in waste management and marine litter prevention projects to discuss and elaborate on major challenges through co-creation

methodology with series of policy mechanism design tools.

The first policy roundtable (Defining Challenges) was conducted in Maldives on 22.03.2022, where the participants discussed the current challenges and gaps in policies for Maldives to prevent marine litter.

Building on this, in the second policy roundtable (Solution Prototyping), was conducted on 06.06.2022 where participants focused on policy benchmarking (best cases) and the potential adaptation to the Maldivian context. They further designed and developed policy prototype solutions mechanisms for the challenges that were identified in the first policy roundtable.

The groups came up with four main policy solutions:

- Online information & matchmaking platform for waste policies and services
- Restructuring of Single-Use Plastic phase out committee with formation of nodal agency
- Refining the policy formulation and implementation process including needs assessment & monitoring and evaluation systems
- Nationwide waste management campaign as 'Mindful Citizens' for awareness on waste and it's implementations to our ocean

The third and the final policy roundtable will be a public showcasing of policy prototypes developed by the participants.

The prototypes detailed in this document were developed collaboratively by the participants. This document serves as the Output Paper summarizing the prototypes co-created by each of the four groups during the Policy Roundtables, incorporating inputs and feedback received during the public showcasing. The subsequent section provides a comprehensive delineation of the solutions/ prototypes for each group, along with the visualization of the mechanisms created for these solutions. The overarching aim of this paper is to influence national policymakers in the effective drafting and implementation of marine litter policies.

Group 1: Kuni Hallu-Information Hub

Focus:	Knowledge and information dissemination
Ecosystem Impact:	Access to information, Waste reduction, Attitude and behavioral change
Challenge:	Lack of information

Background

The management of solid waste is a pressing environmental issue with Maldives generating about 365,000 tons of solid waste annually. Recent estimates indicate that solid waste is generated at a rate of 1.8 kg per person per day in Malé, 0.8 kg per person per day on the other inhabited islands, and 3.5 kg per person per day in resort islands¹.

Awareness raising amongst stakeholders including citizens, consumers, tourists, SME's and state employees is key instrument in tackling waste management issues. Information mobilizes the community, enhances voluntary compliance and community engagement within the system. Lack of awareness surrounding waste pollution problems and sustainable methods of waste management leads to increase in waste generation. Even though there are several public and private efforts for awareness raising and information dissemination, there is often a gap in successful implementation and the initiatives are short lived.

The Strategic Action Plan (SAP) of the Government of Maldives (a central policy framework and planning document that guides the overall development direction of the Maldives from 2019-2024), highlights that the

government's strategy to deal with waste management centers on recognizing waste as a valuable resource and includes four main policies. The fourth policy drives to "Instill environmental values in the society and promote environmentally friendly lifestyle". The policy targets that by 2023, at least 65% of students recognize the importance of reducing, reusing, and recycling waste products².

Another major effort to reduce waste by the Government of Maldives is the "Single Use Plastic Phase-out Plan 2020-2023" (SUP phase-out plan). By using strategic awareness and educational campaigns, the SUP phase-out plan aims to reduce the consumption of single-use plastics, and nudge consumers to shift away from SUP's, and use sustainable alternatives. Activities under policy 6 of the action plan, seeks to make the public aware about the long-term and short-term impact of single-use plastic on the environment as well as human health. The main objective of the policy is to help the public, government and business entities to understand the potential positive impact of a collective effort to make a conscious choice of using sustainable alternatives instead of single-use plastics³.

The key challenges to be addressed include:

- Lack of proper understanding of why waste should be managed sustainably.
- Lack of awareness on servicing and maintenance of alternatives.
- Lack of networking among NGO's and other stakeholders.
- Lack of long-term sustainable programs and Engagement of stakeholders
- Lack of access to reliable information on waste management

¹ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2017/06/23/maldives-improve-solid-waste-management>

² <https://presidency.gov.mv/SAP/>

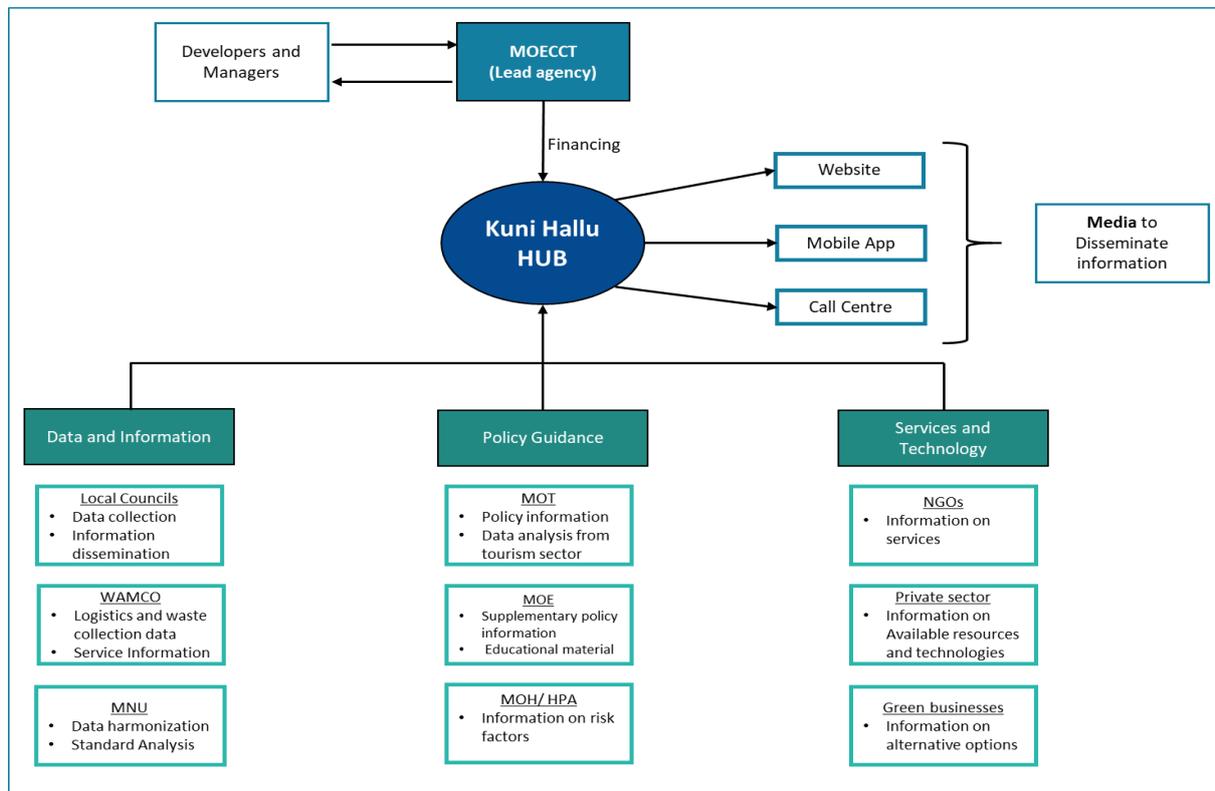
³ <https://www.environment.gov.mv/v2/en/download/11572>

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Solution overview

including a website, mobile app and a physical call center.



The purpose of the Kuni Hallu information Hub is to create a common platform where all information related to waste reduction and management such as policy guidelines, best practices, sustainable alternatives etc. is easily available. The platform is designed such that it is easily accessible by public, private and government sectors alike. The Hub will present information in varying formats to target multiple stakeholders.

The information available on the platform aims to include, baseline information related to marine litter prevention, current research and relevant findings from the field, information on policy guidelines, demonstration of best practices, statistics and fun facts, short videos that can be shared on social media platforms and so on.

The lead agency in charge of development, financing and coordination of the Hub would be the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology (MoECCT). To start off with, Kuni Hallu will be designed on three platforms

The Hub intends to engage multiple stakeholders for information dissemination and coordination. This ensures a wide range of material and would also encourage networking and building synergies amongst stakeholders.

Local councils and Waste Management Cooperation Limited (WAMCO) would be involved in collecting data on waste generation and composition, waste collection data and providing service information. Academic institutions such as Maldives National University (MNU) will be involved in data harmonization and data analysis to get interpretable results.

Information and guidance on waste management and waste prevention policies can be provided by government ministries. For example, the Ministry of Tourism can provide current policy material and implementation strategies, along with relevant information and data for stakeholders. Whereas, the Ministry of Health and Health Protection Agency can disseminate information regarding the adverse health and environmental impacts of plastic waste. The Ministry of education can prepare educational material on policy information that

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is presented in a simple and easy-to-understand manner tailored to different audiences and age groups.

Furthermore, the private sector will be engaged in providing information on various resources and technologies available to combat waste. While NGO's can offer information on waste management services and facilities that are available, green start-ups and ecofriendly businesses can provide alternate and sustainable products and solutions.

Overall, the Kuni Hallu Information Hub will be an information platform engaging multiple stakeholders to help better waste management efforts in the Maldives.

Objective

The primary objectives of the Kuni Hallu Information Hub are:

- Enhancing access to information on waste management
- Networking and building synergies between stakeholders
- Providing a one-step solution

Key features

- One-stop-shop for waste management information and solutions
- Multiple stakeholder engagement
- Accessible through various platforms including website, mobile app and physical center
- Scaling potential of platforms

Impact Potential

- Heightened awareness and access to information
- Waste reduction and better management of waste
- Attitude and behaviour change due to change in perceptions
- Good data available for research purpose

- Provides opportunities for waste to wealth
- Reduction in waste leakage/ pollution

Foreseen Challenges

In the third and final policy roundtable, the participants further discussed the policy prototype and identified the following foreseen challenges:

- Availability of data
- Data ownership and Data censorship
- Financing the HUB activities and building the needed Capacity
- Managing and monitoring data and publications

Further Recommendations

Additionally, the participants also discussed policy refinements and mapped out success strategies in the third meeting.

The first step would be to establish a committee which identifies the operating body and oversees daily activities. This also includes dedicated environmental officers and staff from local councils who oversee the implementation and, monitoring and review process. The operating body can be independent or outsourced and can be given online as well as in-person training to establish knowledge.

The next step would be to secure the finances for implementation and establish a sustainable finance mechanism. This includes applying for funding and identifying additional projects which can manage or deliver the Kuni Hallu activities.

Lastly, awareness raising and marketing activities are important to ensure success of the Kuni Hallu. Apart from the general public, schools and educational institutions are key targets to disseminate the information. Awareness activities can include media campaigns, social media engagement and beach clean-ups which encourage public participation in marine litter prevention.

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Group 2: Plastic phase-out committee

Focus:	Policy coordination, improved communication system, monitoring and evaluation
Ecosystem Impact:	Increased transparency in data and information, reduced plastic waste, evidence-based decision making
Challenge:	Lack of communication and coordination, lack of consistent stakeholder engagement

Background

Maldives being a popular tourist destination, generates up to 25,000 tons of plastic waste every year. And, due to poor management practices, as much as one third of it ends up in the costal ecosystem⁴. One of the key elements of the waste management regulation is to develop guidelines on waste management and disposal and advocate enforcing these guidelines through inter-sectoral collaboration.

There is lack of coordination between the government and other stakeholder groups in the waste management system. Since several stakeholders have overlapping responsibilities, there needs to be a defined communication process which ensures that all players contribute equally and efficiently to the waste management process. With no proper coordination, several activities may be duplicated while other important activities get

delayed due to lack of initiative or lack of finances.

The single-use plastic (SUP) phase-out plan is an effort from the Government of Maldives to phase-out SUP by 2023. Furthermore, it is in line with the Strategic Action Plan (SAP 2019-2023) as well as the SDG's 14 and 15.

The SUP phase-out plan aims to phase-out plastic by implementing six policy goals which includes: ban of import, production and sale of specific SUP products; market-based economic instruments which discourage the consumptions of SUP's; Improving national waste data and setting national collection and reduction targets for key SUP's; Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR); provision of sustainable alternatives; and education and awareness⁵.

The three policy instruments that the plan relies on for successful implementation are command and control instruments such as regulation and prohibition, economic instruments such as tariffs and incentives, and informative instruments such as awareness and education.

However, in such an implementation approach, there is lack of representation of various stakeholders. There is a gap in communication and information sharing which helps to create continuous feedback loop that can further improve and develop the policy strategies.

The challenges to be addressed include:

- Lack of standardization of waste management protocols
- Shortcomings in policy implementation
- Lack of strong monitoring mechanism which holds accountability
- Consistent stakeholder engagement

⁴ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2022/07/22/maldives-is-turning-waste-to-wealth-energizing-youth-to-safeguard-its-future>

⁵ <https://www.environment.gov.mv/v2/en/download/11572>

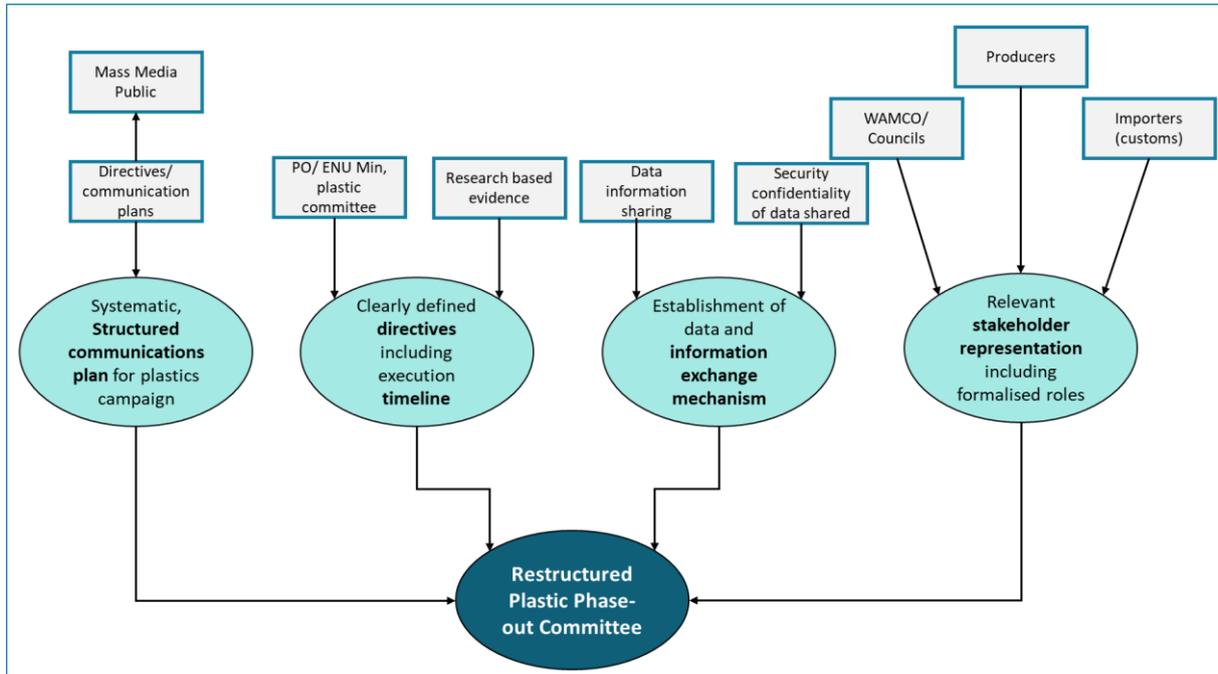
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Solution Overview

The first step in re-establishing a plastic phase-out committee would be to review the existing policy mechanism and implementation strategy and identify the gaps. This would include identifying different stakeholders that are

The committee will develop a structured communication plan which is to be used for the plastics campaign. This includes multi-media communication methods, frequently scheduled stakeholder interactions and information exchange. The resulting outcomes and relevant knowledge from stakeholders will be shared with the public using mass media platforms.



currently not well represented in the policy process. The new phase-out committee would then aim to provide clear directives of an implementation and monitoring mechanism such that systematic communication is improved between relevant stakeholders. The committee will further consider the feedback to routinely improve the implementation strategy.

The Plastic Phase-out Committee is built on four main objective pillars:

- Structured communication plan for plastics campaign
- Clear Directives including execution timeline
- Establishment of data and information exchange mechanism
- Relevant stakeholder representation in policy process

Another important role of the Plastics Phase-out Committee is to define directives for policy implementation including a well-planned execution timeline. The President’s Office and along with the MoECCT will be involved in developing the directives using academic knowledge and research-based evidence. The committee will then further ensure that there is no lag in activities.

Additionally, a data and information exchange mechanism will be established between government, industries, and institutions. The committee will play a key role in monitoring the shared data and ensuring confidentiality of the data. The shared information and data will be further analysed to improve the implementation process.

The committee will also include a variety of stakeholders with formalised roles. For example, the Waste Management Corporation (WAMCO) will be involved in collecting data on

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waste generation and composition, waste collection data and providing service information. The plastic packaging sectors will be consulted in regulating the industry procedures to phase-out plastic usage. And importers will be engaged in forming customs regulations and directives.

Objective

- Improving the implementation of SUP phase out plan
- Develop a systematic and structured communication plan
- Establish clear directives with an execution timeline
- Establishment of data information sharing, exchange mechanism
- Involvement of relevant stakeholders

Key Features

- Better Representation of stakeholders
- Clearly defined execution timeline
- Improved and structured communication methods
- Increased transparency
- Improved data protection

Impact Potential

- Greater, more diverse ownership of the challenge
- Increase in vested interests of the solutions
- More transparency in shared information
- Clearly defined directions of policy shared among all stakeholders
- Evidence-based decision-making process
- Better waste management
- Reduction of plastic waste
- New economic opportunities

Foreseen Challenges

The participants further discussed the policy prototype and identified the following foreseen challenges:

- Structure of SUP phase out committee
- Lack of political willingness and active involvement
- Mobilisation of resources
- Improperly defined roles and responsibilities
- Lack of proper precedent

Further Recommendations

The policy refinements and success strategies discussed in the third policy roundtable are as follows:

In establishing the SUP phase-out committee, firstly representation of both public and private sectors in the committee development needs to be ensured including NGOs and local councils. Then, it is important to the clearly define the roles and responsibilities and TOR of the committee. The committee can also present meeting reports and quarterly reports to ensure transparency in the implementation process.

Political willingness is also key to ensure smooth activity and necessary resource mobilisation. The state can also involve in building technical capacity and in drafting a policy paper which includes all stakeholders. And lastly, creating awareness on the policy and targeting early childhood education linking impact on economy and livelihood will ensure successful implementation.

Group 3: Vashajehey- Circular Solutions

Focus:	Sustainable waste management infrastructure in each island community
Ecosystem Impact:	Less pollutants and healthier ecosystem, improved quality of life, diversified income generation
Challenge:	Lack of proper waste management infrastructure

Background

To preserve Maldives' pristine beaches, sustainable solid waste management should be prioritized. Most of the 860 metric tons of waste generated daily in the Maldives is collected and openly dumped on Thilafushi island. With no control measures, the waste is burned out in the open, since landfills are not possible in a nation that is 99% water. A large amount of this waste is plastic and generates toxic smoke causing a public health hazard for over half a million people. The microplastics released from the waste also enters marine life, contaminating food sources and damaging its coral reefs and blue economy. This manner of waste disposal also threatens tourism and fisheries, which rely heavily on the country's pristine environment and are cornerstones of Maldives' economy⁶.

There is lack of adequate infrastructure to manage various kinds of waste on the islands, especially given the limited availability of land and the dispersion of islands over a large geographic area. At present, there are only limited waste collection services, treatment and disposal systems available throughout the islands. A lot of the available technology lacks innovation and is not small-island friendly. New

technology exists, but it requires technical knowledge and expert operation.

Within the islands and atolls, there is insufficient funding for waste management infrastructure, equipment, and practices. There is no logistical support and economic transportation means to sustain the waste management infrastructure. The waste management infrastructure also needs to consider the growing population size and increasing purchasing capacity which leads to more waste generation. There is no need analysis of the waste stream before infrastructure is implemented.

The government has prioritized this issue and aims to shift from a 'use and dispose' economy to a more circular economy so that the Maldives natural environment along with its tourism economy is protected. The Strategic Action Plan 2019–2023, laid out strategies for effective solid waste management. This included setting up regional waste management facilities armed with waste-to-energy (WTE) technology.

The Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology (MoECCT) is responsible for planning and implementing waste management projects including "Greater Male Environmental Improvement and waste Management Project", which is a five-year project from 2018-2023. The Project is a multi-donor funded project which aims to establish a sustainable solid waste management system for the Greater Male' capital region and its inhabited outer islands. The main output of the project is to establish a Regional Waste Management Facility (RWMF) with waste-to energy treatment plant in Thilafushi⁷.

The challenges to be addressed include: Lack of coordination between relevant authorities, Willing Leadership, Funding and resources, Logistics, Geography and Lack of space.

⁶ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2022/07/22/maldives-is-turning-waste-to-wealth-energizing-youth-to-safeguard-its-future>

⁷ <https://www.environment.gov.mv/v2/en/project/8039>

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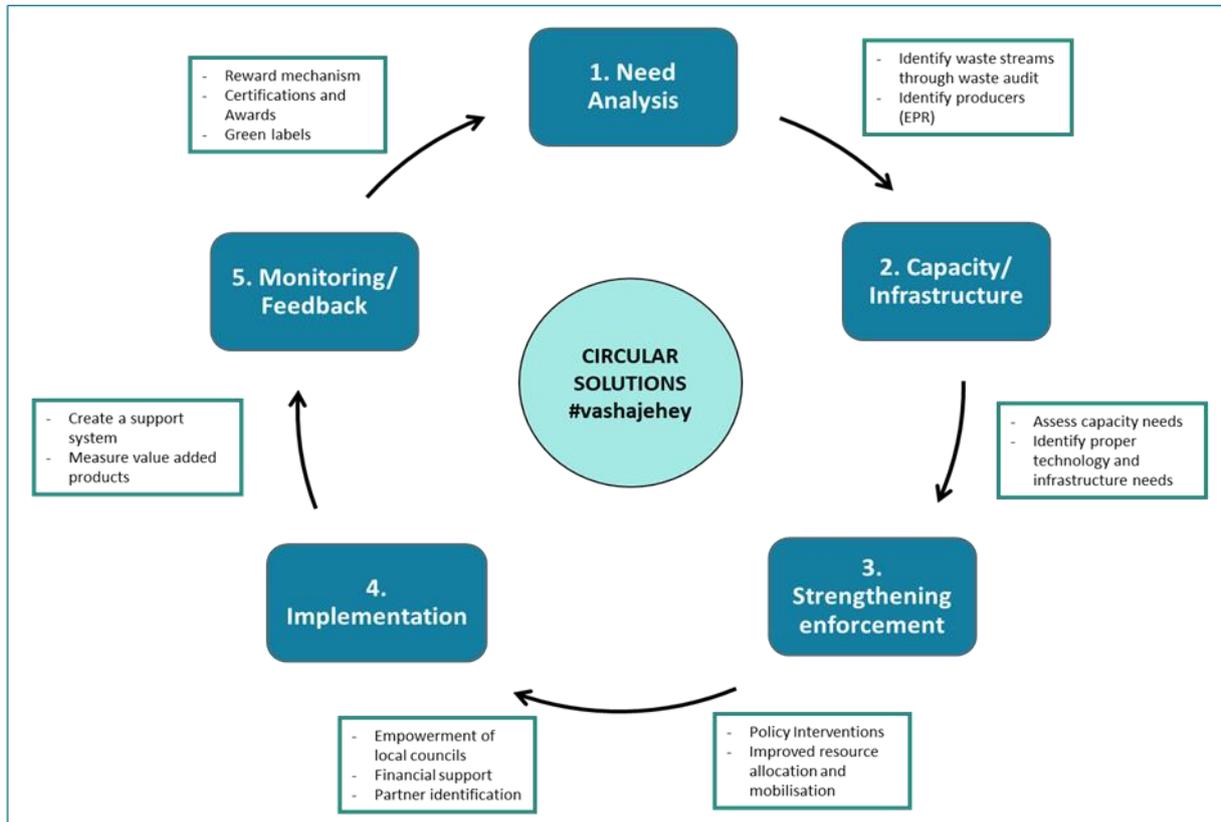


Solution Overview

Circular Solutions is a comprehensive, fully functioning, sustainable waste management infrastructure that is to be set up at island level so that it is accessible to all communities.

machineries and technologies needed can be identified.

Next, government authorities such as the President's office and councils will help strengthen the enforcement of mechanism. The right policy intervention from the MoECCT is vital at this stage to improve resource allocation



It includes a five-step process of:

1. Need Analysis
2. Capacity and Infrastructure
3. Strengthening Enforcement
4. Implementation
5. Monitoring and Feedback

Firstly, technical experts from WAMCO and private consultancies will conduct a gap analysis to identify gaps in the current waste management infrastructure. This would also comprise of a study identifying waste streams through a waste audit and characterizing a list of producers to help implement Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) policies.

The second step is developing a suitable infrastructure based on the results of the need analysis. This involves conducting a market analysis and assessing the capacity needs for infrastructure. Based on this, proper

and mobilize funds for setting up the required infrastructure. For implementation process, relevant ministries, WAMCO and NGO's will be involved. This includes creating a support system for agencies and promoting value added sustainable products such as biodegradable plastics.

The final part of the mechanism is proper monitoring and feedback of the process. At this stage, feedback from all stakeholders such as NGO's, public members, private industries and so on will be considered. A reward mechanism such as providing green labels, certifications and awards will also be set up to incentivize best practices in waste management.

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Objective

- Fully functioning sustainable waste management infrastructure in each island/ community
- Continuous improvement of infrastructure through feedback loop
- Mobilizing resources to improve waste management at island level
- Reduce un-sustainable and hazardous waste disposal methods

Key Features

- Comprehensive need analysis and waste streaming prior to waste management infrastructure establishment
- The waste management infrastructure planned will be island specific
- Incentives given to industry and private sector to manage waste
- Policy intervention to improve coordination between sectors

Impact Potential

- Environmental:
 - Reduced number of pollutants released to into the environment leading to healthier ecosystems
- Social:
 - Improved quality of life (better health)
 - Happier people
- Economic:
 - Diversified income generation
 - Waste to resources, new products to the market (compost, etc.)

Foreseen Challenges

The participants further discussed the policy prototype and identified the following foreseen challenges:

- Logistics and planning needed for proper execution
- Lack of awareness amongst people
- Mobilising the necessary funding and resources
- Lack of space and infrastructure

Further Recommendations

The policy refinements and success strategies discussed in the third policy roundtable are as follows:

To implement circular solutions, the process needs to start at Government level. Firstly, a waste management council needs to be established by the state. Then, the council should also be acknowledged and recognized at regional and National level and, allocated a specific budget for activities.

After conducting a thorough need analysis, training and development of the technical staff can be facilitated by the council. They can also arrange monthly meeting for stakeholders to get feedback and make improvements. Awareness programs can be conducted at national and island level to increase citizen participation. And, in islands which have space, the community can also be given the responsibility of food waste processing to save on transportation and ease logistics.

Group 4: The Mindful Citizen

Focus:	Consistent and continuous messaging from an early age, holistic behavioral change
Ecosystem Impact:	Mindful citizens, less waste generation, cleaner environment, sustainable economy
Challenge:	Lack of awareness on policies

Background

Awareness raising amongst stakeholders including citizens, consumers, tourists, SMEs, and state employees is key instrument in tackling waste management. Even though there are several public and private efforts for awareness raising, there is often a gap in successful implementation and the initiatives are short lived. Long-term efforts are not prioritized and financed when it comes to awareness efforts.

Awareness mobilizes the community, enhances voluntary compliance and community engagement within the system. The National Solid Waste Management Policy (2015) has 11 primary policies, the last of which is: (11) “the community participation in and awareness about good waste management practices will be maximized”.

The government’s strategy to deal with waste management in the country centers on recognizing waste as a valuable resource which has four main policies. The fourth policy is to “Instill environmental values in the society and promote environmentally friendly lifestyle”. The first target of policy 4 is that by 2023, at least 65% of students recognize the importance of reduce, reuse, and recycle waste. The strategy

for implementation is as follows: develop and conduct a nation-wide awareness program that engages and informs the government institutions, businesses, and the general public on proper waste management practices, for which the lead implementation agency will be the Ministry of Environment⁸.

There seems to be apathy and lack of political will to communicate the significance and urgency of waste management. When it comes to government policies, there is often lack of sustainable monitoring mechanism which ensures effective implementation. And there is also lack of coordination between NGO’s, institutions and other national and international stakeholders while planning activities and releasing awareness-raising material.

The main role of awareness raising efforts is the behavioral change of consumers to move towards zero-waste lifestyle. It is more important to avoid waste generation rather than generating waste and managing it. For this, it is important to have knowledge about sustainable alternatives, servicing and maintenance options, and long-lasting products in the market. Schools and institutions should be the primary focal point of waste-management education since, it is most important to develop sustainable habits from a young age.

The Challenges to be addressed include:

- Targeting lifestyle and behavior change in societies
- Continuity and sustainability of awareness message
- No proper curriculum designed for young children and students
- Lack of awareness on sustainable alternatives
- No proper incentives for green businesses

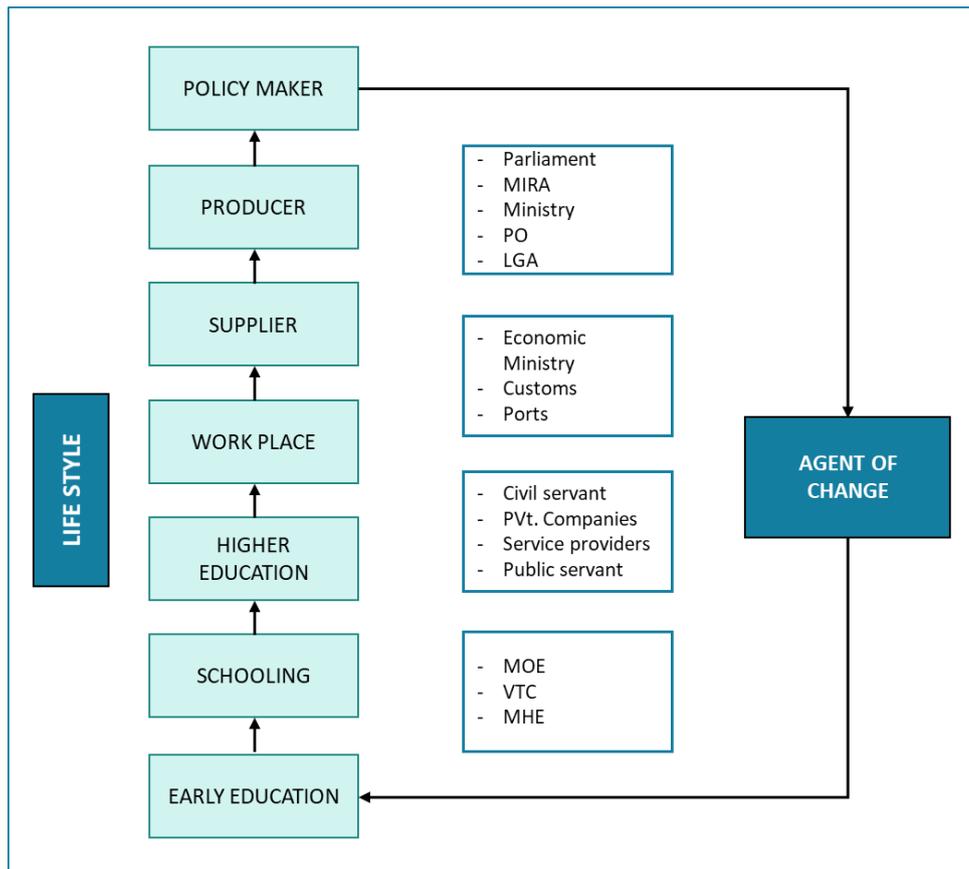
⁸ <https://www.mvlaw.gov.mv/pdf/gavaid/minHousing/28.pdf>

Solution Overview

The primary objective of “The Mindful Citizen” policy mechanism is to create a holistic approach towards environmental awareness and sustainable lifestyles. It is a long-term solution which targets awareness raising in the overall population from a young age.

Additionally, community engagement is created by organizing local cultural events, flea markets, food festivals etc., to carry the message. Workplace engagement can be organized through informative seminars and workshops on zero-waste lifestyle. Private companies can also encourage their employees to use reusable and sustainable items by giving small incentives.

The Ministry of Tourism can specifically design



Information and education play a vital role in realizing the policy outcomes. The Ministry of education will oversee the curriculum design from primary to high school education. This would include essential knowledge about environment and the importance of waste management. The younger age groups can engage in the topic through creative and interactive mediums such as art competitions, poetry recitals, street plays and so on.

These efforts are further continued for adults and general public through mass media awareness campaigns. The core messages that are shared is lifestyle change and shift towards sustainable products.

a long-term campaign for SMEs, hotel, and resort owners to share best practices of waste management methods. These efforts will also extend to tourists who visit the island by providing information and guidelines for waste management in Maldives.

Another important sector to target is the industry itself. This includes producers, suppliers, and importers. The Economic Ministry along with the Customs authority would plan and implement an EPR Policy to regulate plastic usage.

Objective

- Holistic approach to environmental awareness
- Strengthening monitoring and policy implementation

Key Features

- Holistic approach
- Early childhood education
- Consistent and continuous messaging
- Long-term policy solution
- Targeting behavioral and lifestyle change

Impact Potential

- Mindful citizens
- Less waste generated
- Cleaner environment
- Eco friendly business

Foreseen Challenges

The participants further discussed the policy prototype and identified the following foreseen challenges:

- Training the schools and educational institutions (teachers/ principles)
- Government policies which tend to change quickly
- Lack of consistency continuity in long-term implementation

- Barriers and challenges in bringing sustainable alternatives into the market
- Reaching students in higher education
- Issues with mindset of parents and unwillingness to bring change

Further Recommendations

Since the 'Mindful Citizen' is a long-term policy change and targets overall education and awareness raising, it is important to first influence educators and policy makers. Practical education sessions and workshops can be made mandatory for ministers to establish political solutions. Moreover, existing regulations on waste management and marine litter prevention can be linked to educational and awareness programs.

There can be several approaches to establish long-term awareness such as, organising environment friendly expos where sustainable alternatives are promoted or, to encourage and activate existing environmental and social student clubs. MOE can lead inclusive and consistent educational programs while WDC leads community based environmental programmes and supports immediate implementation. Establishing a self-financing mechanism through fundraising, sustainable businesses and fees is also key in ensuring long-term implementation of the policy.

Recommendations

- **Perform Comprehensive Situation Assessment:** Initiate regular monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of existing policies, regulations, and projects related to marine litter to ensure effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.
- **Conduct Community Stakeholder Consultations:** Engage in consultations with community stakeholders to gain insights into the current situation and challenges faced at the local level. This participatory approach ensures inclusivity and local buy-in for future initiatives.
- **Promote Private Sector Engagement in PET Waste Management:** Encourage active participation of the private sector in the management of PET waste. Conduct multi-stakeholder discussions to implement Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes and other initiatives that hold businesses accountable for their waste.
- **Collect Disaggregated Import Data:** Establish a system to collect disaggregated import data on non-degradable products and packaging. This data will help quantify the extent of waste generated and identify key areas for intervention.
- **Develop Sustainable Waste Collection Model:** Create a sustainable and practical model for waste collection from all atolls. This model should be designed to efficiently gather waste while considering the unique geographic and logistical challenges of the Maldives.
- **Integrate Decentralized Waste Management:** Implement a decentralized waste management system at the national level. This approach ensures that each atoll has the capacity to manage its waste effectively, tailored to its specific needs.
- **Increase Funding for Prevention Initiatives in Tourism:** Allocate increased funding and financial incentives for marine litter prevention initiatives within the tourism industry. Target green finance opportunities specifically for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) operating in tourism.
- **Conduct Regular Awareness Programs:** Organize regular awareness programs for island communities and local councils. These programs should educate on the importance of waste management, provide practical tips, and foster a culture of responsibility towards the environment.
- **Establish Nodal Governmental Body for Coordination:** Formulate a dedicated governmental body or institution tasked with managing and implementing an efficient waste management system. This body should ensure effective coordination among various stakeholders for streamlined efforts.
- **Promote Entrepreneurship in Waste Management:** Encourage entrepreneurship programs and projects focused on both downstream (waste collection, recycling) and upstream (waste reduction, eco-friendly alternatives) aspects of waste management. This fosters innovation and sustainable practices within the sector.

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These recommendations, when implemented cohesively, aim to address the marine litter challenge in the Maldives comprehensively. By engaging stakeholders, enhancing data collection, promoting private sector involvement, and fostering a culture of responsible waste management, the Maldives can move towards a cleaner and more sustainable marine environment.

Project Implemented by:



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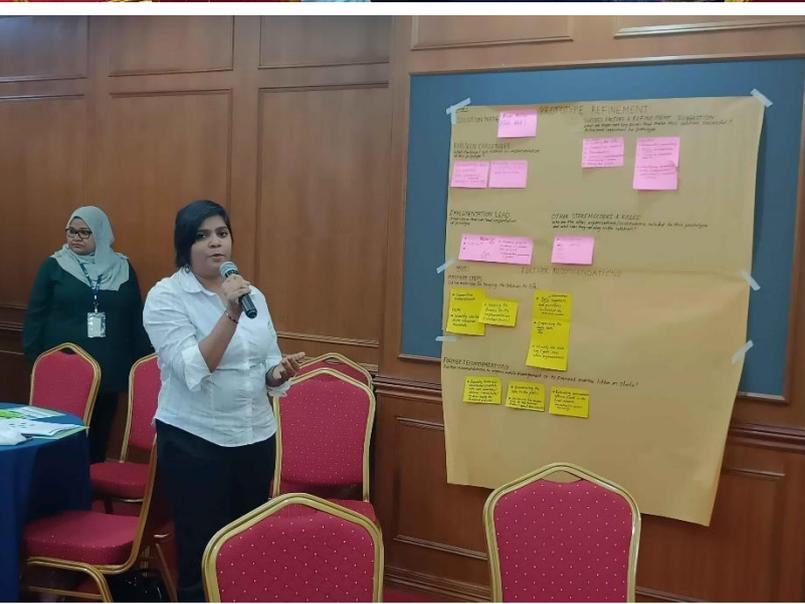
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