

GreenBays Project: Moving toward model cities for waste management in coastal Northeast Vietnam

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Plastic pollution has become one of the most pressing environmental issues. Along with many countries around the world, Việt Nam is determined to repel plastic waste pollution in general and marine plastic waste in particular. To join hands to reduce plastic waste, Centre for Supporting Green Development (GreenHub) has implemented the Project "Moving toward model cities for waste management in coastal Northeast Vietnam" (GreenBays), funded by United States Agency for International Development (USAID), from March 31st, 2018, to September 30th, 2020, in Hải Phòng City and Hạ Long Bay (Quảng Ninh Province). After nearly 3 years of operation, the Project has achieved many results so far, contributing to promoting management and minimizing plastic waste in Vietnam.

Summary of the achievements of the GreenBays Project, on September 25th, 2020, Centre for Supporting Green Development cooperates with Directorate of Fisheries, Quảng Ninh Department of Agriculture and Rural Development; International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) organized the workshop "Marine plastic waste management towards biodiversity conservation and aquatic species habitat". Through this workshop, GreenHub shared the economic and environmental efficiency of the pilot models that the GreenBays Project has supported to implement.



Ms. Trần Thị Hoa - Director of GreenHub speaking at the Conference

Minimize foam buoys waste in aquaculture

Implementing the model of foam buoys covered with paint material Line X in aquaculture cages, recently, with the consent of the Hạ Long Bay Management Department, The GreenBays Project has piloted a Line X-coated foam float model in aquaculture cages to increase the durability of the buoy and limit the impact on the marine environment in the Bay. The Project has installed 70 Line X-coated foam buoys at the Vạn Chài Cooperative on Hạ Long Bay (this is a US paint that has announced environmental and durability criteria according to USA standards) in 2 phases (January 1 - 2/2019 and May 2020) and will provide another 50 buoys in October 2020. The results after nearly 2 years of testing show that the use of Line-X paint over the foam buoys has helped increase the hardness and durability of the buoys reduce impact due to crash, limit breakage and flaking. The environmental efficiency of floating materials in cage culture is reflected in the criteria of materials that do not pollute the environment, easy to clean and non-toxic to the aquaculture environment (Article 34, Decree No. 26/2019/ND-CP detailing Point b, Clause 1, Article 38 of the Law on Fisheries). Besides, to minimize styrofoam waste into the environment and promote the use of Line X paint, the People's Committee of Quảng Ninh Province has issued Document No. 6419/UBND-MT, dated September 5th, 2019, on strengthening protection environmental protection in aquaculture activities and construction of floating works in the Province. Accordingly, the regulation: "in case of using foam buoys, it is required to coat Line X paint on the surface to increase the durability of foam buoys, resist impact, compression, prolong while using"; Local technical regulations on materials used for buoyancy in brackish and salty aquaculture in Quảng Ninh, issued on August 31st, 2020, regulate the roadmap until 2021, only those materials are eligible in terms of durability, tensile... (Line-X buoys) can be installed as floating buoys in aquaculture activities.

From the results of the Project, to reduce plastic waste, especially styrofoam waste in Việt Nam, in the coming time, SHQ Indochina Joint Stock Company (Distributor and developer of Line-X paint in Việt Nam) has planned to build a factory to manufacture Line-X coated buoys in Quảng Ninh and at the same time make a plan for withdrawing broken buoys, price support for aquaculture households in the area.



(Left photo) Director of the Directorate of Fisheries Mr. Trần Đình Luân and delegates visiting the Painted Buoy Line-X Model

Replication of green practice models

In the fight against Covid-19, masks were an indispensable weapon. However, disposable medical masks have put enormous pressure on the environment. With the aim of minimizing waste as well as making the most of available resources, the GreenBays Project has supported the Hạ Long Women's Union and the Women's Union of Cát Hải District (Hải Phòng City) implement a project to recycle masks, with 1,000 masks made from excess fabric. Along with that, Green Hub's experts guided Yết Kiêu Ward Women's Union to practice the model of producing organic detergent products - ecological enzymes from fruit peels; The Women's Union of Hà Phong Ward composts compost from organic waste; The Women's Union of Hà Trung Ward makes products of lanes, recycled baskets from brick ties...

Implementing the project, awareness of each officer, member and people in each neighborhood has gradually changed and raised. Households automatically sorting garbage at home; scrap can be reused, such as beer cans, scrap, plastic bottles, cardboard, old utensils not used... are individually gathered into each bag, then brought to a gathering point for sale. The proceeds from the sale of scrap materials, the Women's Unions donate to households in difficult circumstances.

Besides, GreenHub has conducted a waste audit for 7 restaurants and hotels in Cát Bà town. The audit results show that, on average, each hotel room generates about 0.32 kg of waste per day, equivalent to 6.2 liters of waste. Of which 27% by volume is non-recyclable plastic. To reduce the amount of plastic waste every day, Sea Pearl is a pioneer hotel change after sharing green practices. In the bar area of the hotel, plastic straws have not been used at all. Single-time plastic items such as foam boxes, single plastic cups are not provided unless requested by the customer... In addition, the Project also supports Thành Vinh Cooperative (Kiến Thụy District, Hải Phòng City) to implement an asynchronous model of the collection - classification of waste at the source. Ms. Đoàn Thị Mơ, Chairman and Director of the Company shared, with the guidance and support of the Project, the Cooperative's staff increased the plastic waste collection and separation, from organic waste including vegetables, fruits and leftovers to make bio-detergent. This is a product that is safe for human health and friendly with the environment.

Next, the communication activities on waste pollution in general and plastic waste in particular were also focused on by GreenHub, designing the following documents: "The summary manual for the production of ecological enzymes "; "Bio-composting technologies for organic solid waste treatment "; "Surveying and monitoring of waste in coastal areas in Việt Nam"; "Waste assessment and branding audit (Practical guide)...

Mô hình ủ compost từ rác hữu cơ của Hội Phụ nữ phường Hà Phong



Sản phẩm làm, giỏ tái chế từ dây buộc gạch của Hội Phụ nữ phường Hà Trung, Hạ Long



Also, at the GreenBays Project, in the closing workshop, GreenHub organized exhibitions and displays green products and publications. This was considered as a "green highlight", not only attracting people to interact directly with the product, attracting viewers with publications that were designed in bright colors and content that is easy to read and understand.

At the end of the seminar, GreenHub organized a field visit to the pilot model of coating buoy Line-X in Vung Vieng Fishing Village where the project was implemented. Delegates discussed the type of material as well as the effects of porous waste on the aquaculture industry and the environment. Two painted Line-X buoys on display included a net-coated buoy and an un-netted one. After directly observing and researching the model shows, the difference between a normal porous float (fragile, and causes a small porous waste to be difficult to clean) and the float covered with Line-X coating without meshing (durable, firm, there is still grip on the buoy) and covered buoys with net wrap (durable, strong and can replace the net when too much is attached to it, the float remains in its current state and is wrapped with a different wrap instead of being discarded float). Finally, all in favor of Line-X coated buoy with an additional protective net, which will be an effective solution to minimize broken and loose debris.



Delegates directly observed the model of buoys painted with Line-X paint at Vung Vieng Fishing Village

It can be said that the practical activities, appropriate models, and effective creation of the GreenBays Project are contributing to a positive change in awareness, "small action, big change" of the community, join hands to protect the environment.

Trần Thị Hoa

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