

Reducing Plastic Waste through Zero Waste in Phu Yen Province

2022 - 2025





Members of the "Zero Plastic Waste Shopper" Club at the market with their club uniforms and reusable bags, Ward 7 Market, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2025.

Project Summary

“Reducing Plastic Waste through Zero Waste” aimed to significantly reduce plastic waste in Viet Nam by scaling up and institutionalizing Zero Waste practices and policies in Phu Yen province, ensuring synchronized engagement across schools, businesses, government agencies, and markets. The project was implemented by GreenHub and supported by Pacific Environment, and has laid a strong foundation for a sustainable future in Phu Yen.

The complementary Pacific Environment supported “Reducing plastic waste through Zero Waste school program in Phu Yen province, Viet Nam”, helped the province realize its goal to implement Zero Waste practices and restrict single-use plastics (SUPs) in 100% of schools by 2025.



Left to right: Ward 7 Women's Union members using reusables in their office, students at Hoa Tan Tay Primary School learning about composting, a member of the “Zero Waste Waste Shopper” club at Ward 7 Market, Phu Yen province, 2025.

- ⇒ **Roadmap and Policy Development:** Through Knowledge-Attitudes-Practice surveys and waste audits, the project successfully developed a strategic roadmap to limit single-use plastics in Phu Yen. The creation of a policy framework provided clear guidelines for local governments and businesses to adopt sustainable waste management practices.
- ⇒ **Corporate Engagement:** The project played a pivotal role in launching a Zero Waste corporate movement, fostering collaboration among local businesses. A series of workshops helped businesses align their development plans with sustainability goals, while a business fair raised awareness of and engaged the community, particularly youth, in plastic reduction efforts.
- ⇒ **Scaling Zero Waste Models:** The Zero Waste initiative was successfully scaled across various sectors, including hotels, restaurants, coffee shops, markets, and schools. These efforts helped demonstrate the feasibility of reducing plastic waste at multiple levels, from small businesses to larger establishments.
- ⇒ **Capacity Building:** The project provided essential training for local government officials and community leaders, ensuring long-term impact. A study tour exchanged knowledge between Phu Yen and Hoi An, while specialized courses in Zero Waste management helped strengthen the local network of change-makers.
- ⇒ **Communication and Documentation:** Continuous outreach activities, including a closing workshop, documented the project's success stories and best practices. This ensured that the insights gained could be shared with other regions, encouraging the wider adoption of Zero Waste strategies.

This project built on the foundation established by the project "Building Vietnam's Zero Waste Movement Through Coastal Strongholds", which sought to transform Vietnam's approach to plastic waste, and was implemented by GreenHub from 2018 - 2021 in Phu Yen.

Highlighted figures



Total number of direct beneficiaries:

26,675 people



Total number of indirect beneficiaries:

908,136 people



Total amount of waste diverted:

203,148 kg



Total number of policies consulted:

4 (including plans, guidelines, and regulations)



Beneficiaries include:



government officials



women



youth



teachers



students



vendors



businesses



Project implementation period:

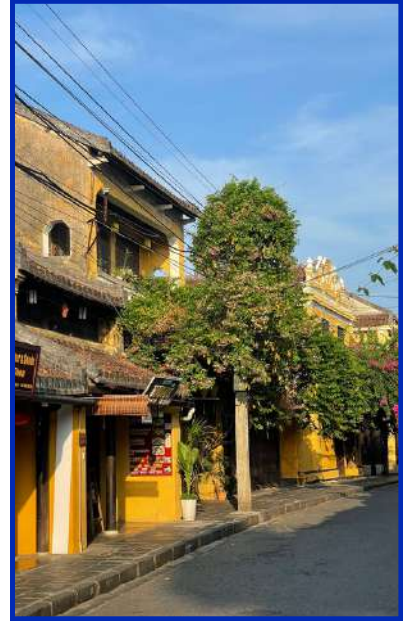
24 months



Number of partner organizations:

86 organizations

Advancing Policy To Reduce Single-Use Plastics in Phu Yen



Images left to right: Tho Vuc landfill, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2025 / Participants at a workshop for local government, organizations and businesses to complete project action plan, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2023 / Students from Phu Yen Vocational College conducting a waste audit, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2023 / Location of a KAP survey in Hoi An, 2024.

Solution

Development of a roadmap and policy to limit single-use plastics at target locations in Phu Yen

Key Activities

- ✧ Waste audit of households, schools, hotels and restaurants in Ward 7, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen to understand areas for waste reduction
- ✧ Knowledge-Awareness-Practice survey in Hoi An to assess local effectiveness of Hoi An's policies to reduce plastic and propose solutions to Phu Yen province
- ✧ Policy review and stakeholder mapping on plastic and domestic solid waste at the local and national level (Hoi An and Phu Yen)
- ✧ Co-development and consultation on the roadmap to reduce single-use plastic in Phu Yen and waste audit results

Context

Building on lessons learned from Hoi An city's success in reducing single-use plastics, this intervention highlighted the urgent need to develop a specific and feasible action plan for Phu Yen province to significantly reduce the use of non-degradable plastic bags and single-use plastic products during the 2024–2030 period. This action also aligned with national policy goals such as the National Action Plan for Ocean Plastic Waste Management to 2030.

Impact

- 🌐 **Strengthened local governance and commitment** in Phu Yen through the official issuance of two key provincial plans, laying the foundation for systematic plastic reduction and waste management.
- 🌐 Established conditions for **widespread behavioral change**, with clear policy direction guiding over 879,000 people, businesses, and institutions to reduce single-use plastics and sort waste at source in Phu Yen province.
- 🌐 Positioned Phu Yen as a **provincial pioneer**, contributing practical policy models that can be replicated across Viet Nam.

Reducing Single-Use Plastics in Phu Yen



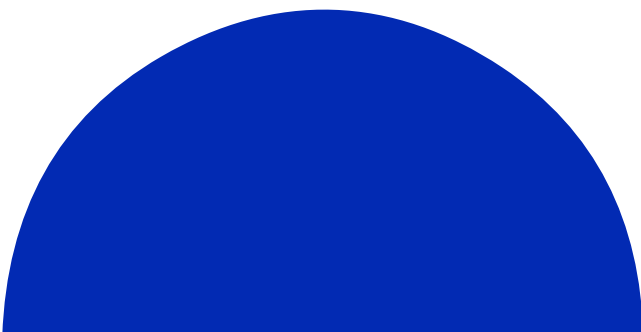
Participants during the roadmap consultation workshop, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2024.

Outputs / Results

- ⇒ The Plan to reduce the use of non-degradable plastic bags and single-use plastic in Phu Yen province in the period of 2024 – 2030 was issued by Phu Yen People's Committee on December 13, 2024
- ⇒ The Plan to implement waste classification at source in Phu Yen province was issued by Phu Yen People's Committee on March 3, 2025

Recommendations

- 🍃 **Establish a monitoring and evaluation mechanism** to assess the effectiveness of the plastic reduction plan.
- 🍃 **Strengthen communication and community education** in a systematic and coordinated manner to sustain long-term behavior change.
- 🍃 **Encourage collaboration** between government agencies, social organizations, and local communities to strengthen the implementation of plastic reduction initiatives.
- 🍃 **Encourage businesses**, particularly those in the tourism and service industries, to participate in plastic reduction strategies.
- 🍃 **Organize exchange sessions** to share experiences between localities in order to replicate plastic reduction and environmental protection models.



Fostering Corporate and Community Partnerships for Single-Use Plastic Reduction



Solution

Mobilize business leaders to reduce single-use plastic and expand the Zero Waste movement, promoting Zero Waste practices through localized models and behavior change communication

Key Activities

- ✧ Corporate connection workshop
- ✧ Establishment and expansion of youth, women and corporate plastic reduction network in Phu Yen
- ✧ Phu Yen Business Fair to say no to single-use plastics connecting schools, youth and the community
- ✧ Green Fair and Community-Based Waste Exchange campaign in Phu Yen

Images left to right: A local business during the Phu Yen Business Fair, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2023. / GreenHub speaking at the workshop, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2024. / Bio-detergent at Chop Chai Cooperative, Phu Hoa district, Phu Yen province, 2025./ Two stalls from the Phu Yen Business Fair, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2023.

Context

This intervention sought to address the gap between policy direction and implementation of single-use plastic reduction in the business sector. Viet Nam has introduced national policies to tackle the growing plastic pollution challenge in the business and service sectors, such as Decision No. 1746/QĐ-TTg on ocean plastic waste management and the Extended Producer Responsibility program. Phu Yen province has also established major policy directions to strengthen environmental protection, informing actions in this intervention.

Impact

- 🌐 **Fostered multi-stakeholder collaboration** among businesses, schools, authorities, and communities, contributing to a cultural shift away from single-use plastics in Phu Yen.
- 🌐 **Mobilized and empowered core actors** through the formation of Zero Waste networks, laying the groundwork for sustained, community-led action.
- 🌐 **Created visible social engagement** and increased public awareness, helping normalize plastic reduction behaviors across diverse population groups.

Fostering Corporate and Community Partnerships for Single-Use Plastic Reduction



Local businesses, Women's Union members during the Phu Yen Business Fair, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2023.

Outputs / Results

- ⇒ **05** community events organized in collaboration with businesses, schools, local authorities, socio-political organizations, and communities, promoting behavior change in reducing single-use plastic among **399** people
- ⇒ **04** Zero Waste community networks were established, including the Zero Waste Youth Network, Zero Waste Accommodation Network, Zero Waste Market Vendor Network, and Zero Waste Shopper Network, with a total of **172** core members
- ⇒ **+323** kg of waste was reduced through collaborative community efforts

Recommendations

- 🌿 **Enhance multi-stakeholder collaboration:** Promote dialogue and cooperation between local authorities, businesses, youth, and communities through workshops and joint initiatives to ensure a coordinated approach and strong impact in reducing single-use plastics.

- 🌿 **Encourage business participation:** Develop policies that encourage businesses to adopt Zero Waste practices, such as recognition programs or incentives for companies that make efforts to reduce single-use plastics.

- 🌿 **Expand Zero Waste networks:** Develop additional Zero Waste networks involving other sectors such as local suppliers, retailers, and tourists, to share resources and enhance participation in waste reduction activities.

- 🌿 **Leverage digital platforms to raise awareness and engagement:** Utilize digital media tools like social media and mobile applications to raise awareness about Zero Waste.

- 🌿 **Establish continuous monitoring and evaluation systems:** Build a system to track progress in waste reduction and behavioral change, with regular assessments to measure effectiveness, and use findings to improve initiatives and inform future policy decisions.

- 🌿 **Support policies for businesses to reduce plastics:** Strengthen policy frameworks that support businesses in reducing single-use plastics, providing clear guidelines, resources, and technical support to help businesses implement environmental protection measures.

Policy in Action: Expansion of Zero Waste Hotels, Restaurants, Offices and Market



Solution

Replicate three Zero Waste models at hotels, restaurants, offices and a market in Phu Yen to pilot the application of the policy to limit single-use plastics

Key Activities

- ✦ Refill system for shower gel, shampoo, hand soap, and drinking water at Hanid Hotel, Xóm Biển Homestay, and Kool House Hotel; applying the practice of providing amenities only upon request; sorting waste and composting organic waste at Hanid Hotel and Xóm Biển Homestay
- ✦ Drinking water refill system, eliminating the provision of single-use plastic straws, and only providing other single-use plastic products upon customer request; and waste sorting at Cafe House, Fig Café & Bistro, and The PY Workshop
- ✦ Reduce use of plastic bags in shopping and selling at Ward 7 Market
- ✦ Providing educational materials and practical guidance on Zero Waste practices at the Zero Waste Learning Hub of Chop Chai Cooperative
- ✦ Drinking water refill system in Phu Yen Provincial Women's Union, Ward 7 and Binh Kien Commune People's Committee.

Images left to right: Battery recycling collection at Xom Bien homestay, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2025. / Shopping with reusable containers at a butcher in Ward 7 market, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2025. / Women's Union members using the refill station at Phu Yen Women's Union, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2025.

Context

In Phu Yen, the growing concern over single-use plastic waste has highlighted the need for businesses and public institutions to adopt more sustainable practices. The introduction of Zero Waste models in hotels, restaurants, offices, and markets aims to demonstrate the viability of such practices, aligning with provincial policies to reduce plastic waste.

Impact

- 🌐 **Enhanced practical implementation** of the provincial action plan to reduce single-use plastics by integrating Zero Waste practices into the operations of businesses and public institutions.
- 🌐 **Measurable reductions** in plastic and organic waste generation at the source, contributing to environmental protection and sustainability goals.
- 🌐 **Raised awareness** among consumers and service providers, encouraging the adoption of sustainable behaviors in hospitality, and retail sectors.
- 🌐 **Strengthened stakeholder confidence** in the viability of Zero Waste practices, creating momentum for broader adoption and scaling of these models across Phu Yen.
- 🌐 **Empowered local actors**, including business owners, market vendors, and government officials, with the knowledge and tools needed to reduce plastic pollution and promote responsible waste management.

Policy in Action: Expansion of Zero Waste Hotels, Restaurants, Offices and Market



Educational signage at The PY Workshop (left) and Fig cafe & bistro (right), Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2025.

Outputs / Results

- ⇒ **09** drinking water refill systems and **03** refill systems for shower gel, shampoo, and hand soap were set up, reducing approximately **167 kg** of plastic waste per month.
- ⇒ **+10,000** plastic bags reduced per month thanks to Zero Waste practices implemented at the market
- ⇒ **+50 kg** plastic bags reduced through Zero Waste practice consulting on the implementation of communication events promoting the reduction of single-use plastics in supermarkets
- ⇒ **+23 kg** of organic waste sorted and diverted from landfill through composting per month
- ⇒ **+3476** local people directly benefited from Zero Waste market, offices, learning hub
- ⇒ **+10,000** local people and tourists directly benefited from Zero Waste cafes, hotels, homestays

Recommendations

- 🌱 **Expand Stakeholder Engagement:** Continue to involve more local businesses, government institutions, and community organizations in adopting Zero Waste models. Creating a network of Zero Waste champions will help foster a culture of sustainability across various sectors.
- 🌱 **Strengthen Monitoring and Reporting:** Regularly track the amount of plastic waste reduced and organic waste composted to demonstrate the tangible impact of these practices. This data could help further refine the approach and provide compelling evidence for scaling the model.
- 🌱 **Incentivize Participation:** Offer incentives for businesses that successfully implement Zero Waste practices, such as certifications or recognition, to encourage more hotels, restaurants, and markets to adopt these models.
- 🌱 **Increase Public Awareness:** Launch awareness campaigns targeting consumers to encourage behavior change, such as refusing single-use plastic and supporting Zero Waste businesses. Publicizing success stories from participating locations can inspire others to adopt similar practices.

Capacity Building to Strengthen a Zero Waste Phu Yen Province



Images left to right: Visits on the study tour for Phu Yen government representatives to Hoi An and Cu Lao Cham Island including a visit to a MRF facility, Bai Huong and Trang Vu Homestay, Hoi An, 2024.

Solution

Capacity building and networking for key stakeholders and government officials in Phu Yen to enhance implementation of Zero Waste models

Key Activities

- ✦ Knowledge exchange study of Phu Yen representatives to Hoi An and Cu Lao Cham island
- ✦ Training on Zero Waste application in waste classification at source for Phu Yen officials
- ✦ Training workshop on applying Material Recovery Facilities (MRF) in Zero Waste communities
- ✦ Capacity building program for local officials and communities to reduce ocean plastic waste through Zero Waste
- ✦ Training on Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) tools for Women's Union officials
- ✦ Capacity building for project staff

Impact

- 🌐 **Strengthened implementation of Zero Waste models** through enhanced technical capacity and shared practical experience among government officials, community leaders, and Women's Union staff.
- 🌐 **Increased local ownership and leadership** in managing solid waste and reducing plastic pollution, driven by empowered local actors who now possess the tools and knowledge to guide community-based action.
- 🌐 **Improved institutional coordination** and cross-sectoral collaboration, laying the foundation for integrated and sustainable Zero Waste initiatives across public, private, and civil society sectors.
- 🌐 **Replication readiness** boosted by knowledge exchanges with successful models in Hoi An and Cu Lao Cham, allowing Phu Yen to adapt and scale practices tailored to its context.
- 🌐 **Sustainable behavior change support** embedded through strengthened monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) skills among stakeholders, ensuring ongoing learning and accountability.

Capacity Building to Strengthen a Zero Waste Phu Yen Province



Participants at a workshop for local government, organizations and businesses to complete project action plan, Phu Yen province, 2023.

Context

The implementation of Zero Waste models in Phu Yen has demonstrated strong potential for scaling up plastic waste reduction initiatives across various sectors, including hotels, restaurants, markets, schools, and government offices. To ensure the sustainability and broader impact of these models however, it is essential to focus on capacity building, network development, and maintaining continuous engagement of government officials, community organizations, and relevant stakeholders.

Outputs / Results

- ⇒ **10** training workshops and exchange visits were conducted, enhancing technical understanding and experience sharing on Zero Waste models and practical waste management approaches
- ⇒ **+545** government officials, community leaders, Women's Union staff, and project personnel improved capacity on Zero Waste implementation, including source separation, MRF, and plastic waste reduction strategies

Recommendations

- 🌀 Continue periodic **capacity building** and refresher training for government officials, Women's Union members, and key stakeholders to maintain momentum and adapt to evolving waste management challenges.
- 🌀 **Institutionalize Zero Waste training** into local government and Women's Union induction programs to ensure sustainability and continuous knowledge transfer across leadership transitions.
- 🌀 Facilitate the creation of a **cross-sectoral Zero Waste task force** or working group at the provincial level to strengthen coordination, monitor progress, and foster collaboration between public, private, and community actors.
- 🌀 **Expand knowledge exchange** opportunities by connecting with other national and regional Zero Waste initiatives to learn from diverse experiences and scale successful practices.
- 🌀 **Integrate digital tools and platforms** into capacity building efforts (e.g., e-learning modules, online MEL dashboards) to enhance accessibility, cost-effectiveness, and ongoing learning.

Communicating Phu Yen Zero Waste's Impact



Images: GreenHub and participants during the closing workshop, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2025.

Solution

Showcase feasibility and effectiveness of localized Zero Waste models, inspiring confidence in stakeholders and highlighting the model's potential for replication and broader adoption.

Key Activities

- ✦ Project closing workshop
- ✦ Project information sheets and communication videos.
- ✦ Publish articles, news, and TV reports about the project

Outputs / Results

- ⇒ **+50** people were reached and shared lessons learned through workshop
- ⇒ **+30** articles reporting on the project's activities
- ⇒ **+19136** people were reached with project information, and knowledge through online communication channels.

Impact

- 🌐 **Commitment** to implementing the 2024-2030 Provincial Action Plan on reducing single-use plastics.
- 🌐 **Strengthened partnerships** forged throughout the project and a sense of ownership among community and policymakers towards Zero Waste practices.
- 🌐 **Increased public awareness** and stakeholder understanding of Zero Waste models through widespread media coverage and online communication.
- 🌐 **Strengthened stakeholder confidence** in localized Zero Waste solutions by showcasing practical results, lessons learned, and success stories.
- 🌐 **Enhanced potential for replication and scale-up of Zero Waste practices** by disseminating credible, inspiring information across various platforms.
- 🌐 Promoted **behavior change** among diverse target groups by communicating the tangible benefits of reducing single-use plastics and managing waste responsibly.

Communicating Phu Yen Zero Waste's Impact

"The initiative has not only raised public awareness on the impacts of plastic waste, but also provided practical support for implementing reduction models, fostering positive changes in consumer behavior and waste management. PE Viet Nam believes that with collective effort, the journey towards a Zero Waste Viet Nam will continue to make strong, meaningful progress."

-Ms. Tran Thi Kim Tuyen

Representative of Pacific Environment (PE) Viet Nam, speaking during the workshop

Context

Phu Yen province has made efforts to implement Zero Waste models and reduce single-use plastics, aligning with national directives such as Decision No. 1316/QĐ-TTg on strengthening plastic waste management and the roadmap to restrict single-use plastic products by 2030. Despite the introduction of pilot models in communities, schools, and markets, the understanding of Zero Waste practices among the public and stakeholders remained limited while cross-sector support for scaling these efforts was fragmented.

There was a critical need to consolidate and communicate the practical outcomes, lessons learned, and success stories of localized Zero Waste initiatives to foster broader societal engagement, build trust among decision-makers, and inspire further adoption. Effective communication of project impacts serves not only to share knowledge and raise awareness but also to build momentum for policy implementation and community-driven action. In this context, strategic communication was essential to bridge the gap between pilot success and systemic change.

Recommendations

-  **Develop a long-term communication strategy** that aligns with the 2024–2030 Provincial Action Plan on reducing single-use plastics, ensuring sustained visibility and public engagement beyond the project's conclusion.
-  **Localize communication content** by tailoring messages to different target groups (e.g. women, youth, market vendors, small businesses, local leaders) using accessible language and culturally relevant storytelling formats to increase relatability and behavior change.
-  **Leverage community champions** and early adopters as spokespersons and case studies in future communication campaigns to build trust and showcase tangible benefits of Zero Waste models in real-life settings.
-  **Establish a digital hub** or online knowledge platform managed by a local authority or civil society partner to consolidate project resources, videos, infographics, and success stories for public access and use in training or replication efforts.
-  **Partner with local media** outlets and influencers to ensure continued coverage of Zero Waste initiatives, amplify community voices, and normalize responsible waste behaviors across diverse platforms.
-  **Monitor communication impact** through analytics and feedback tools (e.g. social media metrics, workshop surveys, public polls) to assess the effectiveness of messaging and adapt strategies as needed.
-  **Engage policymakers** in communication efforts, such as through policy briefs, visual reports, or short documentaries, to strengthen political will and resource mobilization for scale-up.

Zero Waste Schools Driving Change in Phu Yen



Students using a water refill station at Phan Dinh Phung High School, Song Cau district, Phu Yen province, 2024.



Students using composting bin at Primary School Number Two, Son Hoa district, Phu Yen province, 2024.

Solution

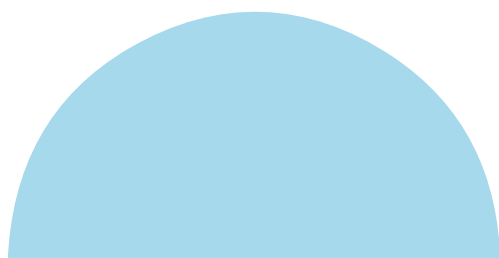
Reducing plastic waste through implementing Zero Waste practices in 100% of schools Phu Yen

Key Activities

- ✧ Implementing a policy with one regulation restricting single-use plastic at schools in Phu Yen province
- ✧ Reducing plastic and solid waste through supporting the implementation of Zero Waste practices in schools
- ✧ Supporting schools to develop and implement action plans /regulations /guidelines to reduce single-use plastics
- ✧ Organizing a provincial movement on practicing Zero Waste in schools

Impact

- 🌐 **Fostered sustainable behavioral change in schools:** The adoption of Zero Waste practices helped instill responsible consumption and waste management habits among students and teachers, building a foundation for future generations to engage in environmental protection.
- 🌐 **Strengthened school ownership in environmental management:** Schools not only implemented practical solutions but also developed, issued, and enforced internal regulations to reduce single-use plastics, demonstrating a shift from external support to internal governance.
- 🌐 **Contributed to the implementation of provincial policy:** The activity played a key role in localizing and advancing Phu Yen’s policy on reducing single-use plastics, particularly in the education sector— a key influence in spreading sustainable practices.
- 🌐 **Improved health and learning conditions:** Cleaner, less polluted school environments positively impacted students’ and teachers’ physical and mental well-being, thereby contributing to better educational outcomes.



Zero Waste Schools Driving Change in Phu Yen



Student conducting a school waste audit, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2024.



School garden waste sorting and composting equipment, Son Hoa district, Phu Yen province, 2025.

Context

Phu Yen province has implemented the Action Plan for the Management of Marine Plastic Litter by 2030, aiming to reduce the impacts of plastic waste and protect the environment. One of its key goals is "By 2025, 100% of schools in the province will adopt Zero Waste practices." The Zero Waste School program has been expanded across nine districts, towns, and cities, involving over 11,000 students and 700 teachers. The solution to reduce plastic waste in schools not only protects the environment but also contributes to the province's sustainable development goals. These actions are an important step for Phu Yen to achieve its plastic waste management goals and implement environmental protection policies.

Outputs / Results

- ⇒ **04** schools were supported with the installation of drinking water refill systems, organic waste sorting, and composting practices
- ⇒ **23** schools received technical assistance to develop, issue, and implement action plans/regulations and guidelines to reduce single-use plastics in schools.
- ⇒ **+199,545 kg** of waste was diverted per school year through the adoption of Zero Waste practices in schools.
- ⇒ Over **22,036** students and teachers enhanced their knowledge about and worked in a healthier environment through Zero Waste practices

Recommendations

- 🌱 **Facilitate teacher training programs:** Implement comprehensive training programs for teachers to help them integrate Zero Waste principles into their curricula. This would enable students to learn not only through activities but also by understanding the theoretical aspects of sustainability.
- 🌱 **Enhance the role of parents and communities:** Involve parents and local communities in Zero Waste initiatives to create a broader impact. Encourage community-based projects or workshops where students and families can collaborate to reduce waste outside school boundaries.
- 🌱 **Support Monitoring and Evaluation:** Establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to track the progress of Zero Waste practices in schools. This will provide insights into what works well and where adjustments are needed.

Zero Plastic Waste Market : Women Leading Change in Tuy Hoa



Ms. To Thi My Thuy speaking at a workshop, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2024



Club members at the market, Ward 7 Market, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2025.

A sea of bright turquoise bags and blue shirts is scattered around Ward 7 Market in Tuy Hoa city. Woven among bright, colorful stacks of fruits and the banging of meat cleavers, the vibrant blue still stands out and carries an important message with it. Each woman wielding a turquoise bag made from up-cycled fishnets is part of a club dedicated to cutting plastic use at the market.

Ms. To Thi My Thuy is the determined leader of the “Zero Plastic Waste Shopper” Club. Chairwoman of the Ward 7 Women’s Union, she’s no stranger to forging strong community connections and harnessed her passion to mobilize Women’s Union members, market vendors and customers to cut single-use plastics out of their shopping routine.

For Ms. Thuy, reducing plastic at the market isn’t only about tackling waste but also about creating a proactive and positive community committed to environmental protection.

“We choose a green lifestyle for our children, for the environment, and for ourselves,” Ms. Thuy shares.

Ms. Tran Thi Binh, a small vendor at the market, echoes Ms. Thuy’s sentiment, *“And all of this is for our future. Women who go to the market should not use plastic bags to protect the environment.”*

Not all market vendors and customers were so enthusiastic when the project began however, with a ‘fear of change and fear of inconvenience’ hindering early adoption of reuses, according to Ms. Thuy. While vendors were worried about losing customers if they refused plastic bags or suggested reuses, customers feared feeling isolated in their refusal of plastic. Recognizing the unique challenges on both sides, Ms. Thuy established both a customer and vendor club, creating a network and support system. Now, vendors and customers proudly buzz around the market with fishnet bags and club uniforms, snapping photos to share in their Zalo group.

Both clubs were established with the support of GreenHub, as part of the “Reducing Plastic Waste through Zero Waste Practice” project.

Working with Ms. Thuy and the Women's Union, we combine awareness raising, community building and practical solutions to promote sustainable alternatives to single-use plastic. Club members now come armed with reusable containers and bags to shop at the market, often frequenting vendors who are part of the vendors club and happy to pack goods in reusable containers.

"I reduce 30 plastic bags a day. I wrap customers' items with banana leaves and newspapers, I don't use plastic bags," says Ms. Le Thi Kim Bong, a small vendor at the market.

In just three months of piloting the model, Ms. Thuy felt a change in the community. At this time, more than 10,000 plastic bags per month were reduced by the efforts of nearly 200 club members, saving costs for vendors and helping create a cleaner market environment.

"When I joined the Club, I felt very happy because I was contributing to protecting the environment and protecting the health of all of us," said club member Ms. Ha Thi Quyet,.



Ms. Le Thi Kim Bong at her market stall, Ward 7 Market, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2025.



Ms. Tran Thi Binh packing meat into a reusable container for a customer, Ward 7 market, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2025.

Planting Hope: How a Passionate Educator is Building a Sustainable Tomorrow in Phu Yen

Each weekday morning, the schoolyard of Hoa Tan Tay Primary School bursts with energy as laughter echoes between classrooms and students rush in clutching small personal reusable water bottles—a small but powerful sign of change.

At the heart of this change is Vice Principal Huynh Thi Kim Lanh. Moving with purpose, she guides groups of students through waste-sorting activities every week. Her warm smile and calm determination have turned environmental lessons into something relatable, practical, and even fun.

Having grown up in a rural village surrounded by nature, Ms. Lanh developed an early and deep respect for the environment. That connection fuels her mission today—not only to teach but to inspire a love for the natural world in her students and help them build lifelong habits to protect the environment, starting with the smallest everyday actions.

For years, Ms. Lanh wondered how to create lessons on reducing plastic waste that would really connect with students and motivate them to adopt sustainable behaviors beyond the classroom. When the school's district, Tay Hoa District, launched a contest “Green School - Green Classroom” in 2022, Ms. Lanh embraced the opportunity to encourage teachers to organize activities urging students to limit single-use plastic bottles, straws and bags.

Despite a strong start however, the school's efforts remained at a grassroots level and failed to generate long-term change due to a lack of funding, specialized solutions, and technical expertise.

"Despite our best efforts, we still lacked the tools and a systematic approach to address the problem at its root," Ms. Lanh shared.



Ms. Lanh and colleagues judging student recycling competition entries, Hoa Tan Tay Primary School, Tay Hoa district, Phu Yen province, 2024.



GreenHub teaching students about waste separation, Hoa Tan Tay Primary School, Tay Hoa district, Phu Yen province, 2025.

After the Phu Yen Department of Education and Training issued the “Zero Waste – Green – Clean – Beautiful – Safe School and Classroom” Plan for the 2023–2025 period, Hoa Tan Tay Primary School was selected as one of three pilot schools for the "Zero Waste School" model, supported by GreenHub in 2024. Seizing this opportunity to fulfill her long-held dream, Ms. Lanh quickly took action.

With in-depth consultation from GreenHub, the school implemented a comprehensive series of practical solutions: issuing regulations to reduce plastic use and classify waste, organizing extracurricular activities, integrating environmental education into lessons through visual teaching aids, establishing a drinking water refill system, and installing compost bins for organic waste. Every change was bolstered by the concrete actions of teachers.

"If we want students to change their mindset, teachers must set an example first," Ms. Lanh affirmed.

"Now, at all meetings and events, the school no longer uses plastic bottles or single-use plastics. Every teacher has their own personal water bottle."

These efforts quickly yielded tangible results. Students have developed the habit of bringing personal water bottles, properly sorting waste, and spreading environmental education to their families. Beyond plastics, hundreds of kilograms of organic waste is now processed directly at the school each month too, significantly reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill or burnt.



Students during a lesson on waste separation, Hoa Tan Tay Primary School, Tay Hoa district, Phu Yen province, 2025.



GreenHub teaching students about waste separation, Hoa Tan Tay Primary School, Tay Hoa district Phu Yen province, 2025.

What makes Ms. Huynh Thi Kim Lanh happiest is not the numbers, but the genuine change in the mindset and actions of each student, colleague, and parent. With her tireless contributions, Ms. Lanh's initiative "Measures to Implement a Zero waste School" was recognized by the District Innovation Council, and she was honored with a Certificate of Merit for the "Clever Mass Mobilization" Model and Example in 2024 by the Party Committee of Hoa Tan Tay Commune.

As Ms. Lanh believes, *"Change does not start with grand slogans, but with quiet actions taken every day."*

Hoa Tan Tay Primary School continues to nurture these habits every day — not as a one-time campaign, but as a way of life. Looking ahead, Ms. Lanh and her colleagues plan to deepen environmental education across all grade levels and engage more parents through community clean-up days and workshops.

For Ms. Lanh, true impact lies not just in what students learn today, but in how they carry those values forward — shaping a future where caring for the environment becomes second nature, both at school and at home.

Xóm Biển Homestay: Championing Zero Waste Tourism

The sparkling ocean stretching along Phu Yen province's coastline is home to Mr. Nguyen Quang Hung. Born and raised immersed in Phu Yen's sparkling beaches, Mr. Hung has a deep love for the sea and carries this in everything he does. He owns Xóm Biển Homestay in Tuy Hoa city and has made it a hub for sustainable tourism.

From the very start of operating Xóm Biển in 2019, Mr. Hung pursued a sustainable approach with the goal of building a tourism model that helped preserve the natural beauty of his homeland and tackle the plastic pollution damaging the local environment. But without the right tools or guidance, turning that vision into reality remained a challenge.

In 2023, when GreenHub launched the "Reducing Plastic Waste through Zero Waste" project with Pacific Environment's support, Xóm Biển Homestay voluntarily registered to pilot the "Zero Waste Accommodation" model.

With technical support from GreenHub, the homestay received step-by-step guidance to set up a suitable waste separation system, train staff on proper sorting methods, and implement on-site composting for organic waste. Sorting bins were installed throughout the property, complete with clear instructions in both Vietnamese and English, making it easy for both staff and guests to participate.

Guest rooms were also reimagined: plastic items were replaced with bamboo toothbrushes, shampoo and body wash were placed in refillable bottles, drinking water was provided through a filtration system instead of plastic bottles, and even toothpaste was offered in tablet form — practical, hygienic, and plastic-free.

"These changes may seem small, but they have had a clear impact. In a short time, Xóm Biển significantly reduced its plastic waste and inspired hundreds of visitors each year to practice greener living." Mr. Hung shared.

The impact has stretched beyond the homestay. Many guests showed genuine interest, asked questions about the model, and some even brought home the habit of sorting waste and using eco-friendly products.



Mr Hung with Xóm Biển Homestay's rooftop compost and garden, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2024.

"After implementing the "Zero Waste Accommodation" model, Xóm Biển Homestay has been able to spread the message of eco-friendly tourism to our guests and has created very positive responses within the community," Mr. Hung added.

These early successes have inspired Mr. Hung to dream bigger: to build a network of Zero Waste accommodation in Tuy Hoa and Phu Yen — forming a distinctive "Zero Waste Tourism" brand for the province.

"I hope it's not just Xóm Biển. I hope many other accommodations will take action too. When we all make changes together, Phu Yen will become more beautiful — not just in its scenery, but in the way people care and act."

From a modest homestay by the sea in Tuy Hoa, Mr. Nguyen Quang Hung's journey is helping shape a future where tourism protects nature and reduces waste in Phu Yen.

Thank you

GreenHub extends our heartfelt appreciation to our esteemed partner and donor Pacific Environment for their invaluable support. The success of Phu Yen Zero Waste would not be possible without you.



We would also like to acknowledge our implementing partners and the Phu Yen community who are the heart of Phu Yen Zero Waste.

Phu Yen Department of Agriculture and Environment

Phu Yen Women's Union

Phu Yen Department of Education and Training

Vietnam Zero Waste Alliance

WWF Vietnam

Chop Chai Cooperative, Dong Din Cooperative

Cu Lao Cham Marine Protected Area Management Board, Tan Hiep

Commune People's Committee, Hoi An City







Phu Yen Business Fair, Tuy Hoa city, Phu Yen province, 2023.



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