

Innovating for the sustainable management of plastic waste on the Kerkennah Islands in Tunisia



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Plastic waste represents an increasingly significant and difficult problem for the world. To assist the island pilot site of Kerkennah in setting up sustainable waste management, the FFEM is supporting a project based on an innovative technical solution that allows used plastics to be converted into fuel.

CONTEXTE ET OBJECTIFS

According to a study by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, if no action is taken, by 2050 there will be more plastic than fish in our oceans. The Kerkennah archipelago in Tunisia has not escaped this pollution, with over 600 tonnes of waste thrown into the sea every year by its 2,500 or so fishermen.

To respond to this problem, waste management has been identified as a primary challenge by the local Island Committee which was established in 2019 as part of the "sustainable small islands" accreditation (SMILO) roll-out, bringing together public and private resources and the local population.

This project, supported by the FFEM, aims to extend the work already started on the collection, treatment and recycling of used plastic traps through innovative solutions.

DESCRIPTION

The project has four components:

- **Establishing the state of the art for waste management** in order to collect the necessary information to implement sustainable management of plastic waste, through mapping their primary locations.
- **Drafting an exemplary waste management plan** with concrete actions on three pilot sites in the various geographical contexts (agricultural, port, and residential). In parallel, developing alternatives to plastic traps, along with sustainable fishing practices.
- **Implementing a technical solution for converting plastics** that are too contaminated for recycling, into fuel (by pyrolysis) for use by the fishermen.
- **Developing, optimising and disseminating the project results** in order to replicate the programme on other islands facing the same problems.



subvention
Financing Tool(s)

1 000 000 EUR
Amount of the program
Including FFEM funding

500 000 EUR
Amount of FFEM funding

3 years
Duration of funding

Small Islands Organisation (SMILO)
Beneficiaries

ADEME the French Coastal Protection Agency Prince Albert II Foundation Tunisian Ministry of Local Affairs and Environment municipality of Kerkennah
Cofinanceur(s)

Ministry for the Ecological and Inclusive Transition
Institution responsible

IMPACTS

- **Sustainable regional management** of the Kerkennah Islands through local and autonomous governance managed by the island's decision-makers (Island Committee).
- **Reduction in the amount of plastic waste found on land and in the sea** and curbing plastic consumption.
- **Maintaining sustainable fishing activities** through implementing more virtuous and more environmentally-friendly practices.
- **Strengthening the competences** of local authority representatives in plastic waste management and sustainable development.

EXEMPLARY AND INNOVATIVE CHARACTERISTIC

This project, supported by the FFEM, provides a valuable example by integrating a "zero plastic waste" dynamic into an energy transition. It does so while primarily supporting the evolution of fishing industry practices and fostering integrated regional management.

In addition to setting up the Island Committee for governance of the site, which is tasked with encouraging dialogue between those involved with the archipelago on questions of sustainable development, innovative arrangements for supporting the stakeholders will also be offered. These include looking at case scenarios or collaboratively developing a plan for change.

This ambitious venture is further enhanced by the decision to embed pyrolysis, itself a novel process still at the development stage around the world, into the island environment in order to gain experience *in situ*.