CARIBBEAN **CONNECT**

CIRCULAR ECONOMY NETWORK & COORDINATION

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CARIBBEAN BIODIVERSITY FUND

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Albert Paul

CBF BOARD DIRECTOR
AND ACE FACILITY
COMMITTEE MEMBER

FOREWORD

Welcome to the second edition of Caribbean CONNECT – the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund's virtual publication dedicated to advancing knowledge, collaboration, and action around the circular economy in our region. Caribbean CONNECT was launched in October 2025 with a clear intention: to create a space where ideas, experiences, and lessons on advancing a circular economy in the Caribbean could be shared openly and constructively. Too often, strong initiatives across our region move forward in parallel rather than in concert. This publication was created to help bridge those efforts and strengthen learning across our island and coastal states.

The second issue of Caribbean CONNECT builds on the momentum created by our inaugural publication and reaffirms a simple but powerful idea: meaningful progress toward a circular economy in the Caribbean depends on connection, coordination, and shared learning. Across our diverse island and coastal states, organisations are advancing innovative solutions to persistent challenges – often in parallel, and sometimes in isolation. This publication exists to help bridge those efforts and draw upon lessons learned from circular economy practitioners in other Small Island Developing States.

This second issue highlights diverse examples of circular innovation taking shape across the region. From reducing food waste in the tourism sector and community-led waste campaigns, to circular business models in festivals and national Carnivals, these stories demonstrate how Caribbean entrepreneurs, communities, and partners are transforming environmental challenges into opportunities for livelihoods, resilience, and sustainable growth in our everyday lives.

As a Board, we recognise that achieving sustainability requires not only technical innovation, but also alignment across institutions, sectors, and geographies. Caribbean CONNECT is intended to support that alignment by highlighting initiatives that demonstrate progress and potential for replication and scale.

We encourage readers to view this publication as an invitation to engage in dialogue, explore partnerships, and strengthen coordination across ongoing efforts. By working together and learning from one another, we can accelerate the transition toward a more resource-efficient and resilient Caribbean.

WHAT IS CARIBBEAN CONNECT?

Caribbean CONNECT is a regional knowledge-sharing and coordination mechanism designed to strengthen circular economy efforts across the Caribbean. It brings together governments, businesses, civil society, and communities to share knowledge, align efforts, and unlock opportunities for collaboration.

Standing for Circular ecONomy NEtwork and CoordinaTion, CONNECT creates a structured space where stakeholders can highlight successes, and exchange lessons learned from across the Caribbean and beyond, such as other Small Island Developing States and developing countries.

We also hope to spark new ideas for circular businesses and keep readers in the loop with upcoming events to build capacity in the regional circular economy sphere. Caribbean CONNECT can ensure resources are used efficiently, duplication is reduced, and capacity is strengthened, thus building a stronger, more resilient circular economy movement for the Caribbean.

The Caribbean CONNECT Network in Action

Projects and initiatives advancing the circular economy across the region

Cuba
WCS – Transforming Marine Litter into Livelihoods

Dominican Republic
Grogenics
PROMAR (Phase 1 Country)
GIZ Sargassum Research Project

Barbados
Great Plastic Bake Off / FUSE (B's Recycling)
GIZ Sargassum Research Project

Jamaica
UniCycle Jamaica + Come Mek Wi Dance

OECS
Tackling Plastic Waste: Turf to Surf
RePLAST OECS
ReMLit – Reducing Marine Litter

Trinidad & Tobago
Daz Good Ting (The Cropper Foundation
Carnical, Culture & Circularity (BCRC)
Carnicycle
Close the Loop Caribbean
PROMAR (Phase 2 Country)

CIRCULAR INNOVATION & COMMUNITY ACTION

DAZ GOOD TING

Reframing Waste, Reimagining Value in Trinidad & Tobago

BY ALYSSA BLACK, PROJECT OFFICER,
THE CROPPER FOUNDATION

In Trinidad and Tobago, the phrase “daz good ting” is more than a compliment – it is an affirmation. It signals something worth celebrating, something of value. But what if the things we routinely discard still hold value, too?

That is the question at the heart of Daz Good Ting (DGT), a waste-minimisation campaign launched by The Cropper Foundation in 2023 to reshape how people think about waste and promote circular economy solutions.

A Campaign with Purpose

The Cropper Foundation, a leading non-profit organisation advancing sustainable development across the Caribbean, launched DGT under a wider initiative titled “Catalyzing and Connecting the Circular Economy in Trinidad and Tobago.”

Supported by the Inter-American Development Bank’s Innovation Laboratory (IDB Lab) and implemented with private-sector partners between 2022 and 2024, the project addressed a pressing challenge: recyclable materials filling Trinidad and Tobago’s already limited landfill space.

A central goal was behaviour change. The campaign encouraged consumers to rethink everyday habits and increase the separation of recyclable materials for recovery.

Developed with the creative support of Lonsdale Saatchi & Saatchi and guidance from a National Campaign Advisory Committee of waste management experts, NGOs, and industry leaders, the campaign’s now-recognisable slogan emerged during a design sprint workshop: “Daz Good Ting.” Simple, familiar, and distinctly Caribbean.

From Linear to Circular Thinking

Across much of the Caribbean, waste systems have long followed a linear path: take, make, dispose. DGT challenges this model by promoting the circular economy: keeping materials in use through reuse, repair, repurposing, and recycling.

At its core, the message is straightforward: What we call "waste" might still be a "good ting". Through public outreach, social media engagement, community initiatives, and partnerships, DGT highlights individuals and businesses already demonstrating circular solutions.

Community Action in Macaulay Hermitage

One of the campaign's most powerful impacts emerged in Macaulay Hermitage Village, where residents launched their own recycling initiative. Working with the Cashew Gardens Community Council, a youth-led group, designed and launched a community recycling programme focused on plastic waste. Over six months, they organised awareness campaigns, coordinated collections, and built partnerships.

The initiative evolved into the Macaulay Recycling Programme, eventually becoming fully community-managed. Its handover ceremony included the unveiling of a bench made from recycled plastic lumber, donated by Flying Tree Environmental, and the planting of a Poui tree to symbolise growth and the programme's future.

Lessons from the pilot were later captured in a free downloadable campaign guide, allowing other communities to replicate the model.

Click here to check out the free downloadable campaign guide

Circular City: Showcasing Solutions

In 2024, DGT brought circular economy ideas into the public spotlight through a "Circular City" pavilion at the Trade and Investment Convention (TIC). Over three days, more than 20 organisations and businesses showcased solutions ranging from recycling innovations to waste-reduction initiatives and saw firsthand how materials can be reimagined rather than thrown away. The pavilion helped transform abstract sustainability ideas into tangible solutions.

252,000

people reached during the initial social media campaign launch

20+

organisations and businesses showcased at Circular City

1

youth-led community waste programme established

1

free downloadable campaign guide empowering replication

A Mascot with a Message

To make sustainability more relatable, the campaign introduced a comic strip sharing simple waste-reduction tips aligned with the 5Rs: Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle.

At the centre is an unlikely sustainability ambassador: a black vulture – a corbeau as referred to in Trinidad and Tobago.

Often misunderstood as dirty scavengers, corbeaux are actually essential to ecosystems, helping break down organic waste. In the comic, the character, nicknamed Mr. Klean, and affectionately known by supporters as "Spongecake" uses humour and cheeky commentary to encourage more responsible habits.

The name nods to the Trinidadian saying "corbeau doh eat sponge cake," while highlighting the bird's role in nature's circular system. The corbeau has since become the mascot of the Daz Good Ting campaign, appearing in outreach materials and even as a replica sculpture made from recycled materials at public events.

Daz Good Ting Comic Feature: "Plastic Container Use"

Lessons from the Journey

One key lesson from the campaign has been the value of early stakeholder engagement. By involving organisations across the waste management sector from the outset, the campaign benefited from technical expertise, stronger messaging, and voluntary support throughout implementation. Aligning with other circular economy initiatives also helped amplify impact and avoid working in isolation.

Changing Mindsets, One "Good Ting" at a Time

DGT makes the circular economy feel less like a technical concept and more like a shared cultural value. It reminds us that sustainability is not only about systems, but it is also about perspective. And sometimes, all it takes to spark change is recognising that what we throw away might just be... a good ting.

Looking Ahead

The campaign's newly redesigned website will soon introduce a DGT Community Space – a platform where communities can access educational tools, download campaign resources, and share their own grassroots initiatives.

These local actions will be recognised as DGT stewards, forming a growing network of communities working together to rethink waste across Trinidad and Tobago. The goal is simple: encourage collaboration, strengthen local ownership, and support the long-term transition toward circular systems.

Learn More

info@thecropperfoundation.org

dazgoodting.com

DID YOU KNOW?

A single plastic bottle can take up to 450 years to break down, but it can be recycled in minutes.

The real question is:
Which path do we choose?

FROM WASTE TO PRODUCT

Partnerships that Power the Caribbean's Circular Economy

BY DIANNE VAN ESSEN,
CO-FOUNDER OF GPBO

On a hot morning in St. Thomas, Barbados, a forklift lowers a pallet of wave-shaped pavers onto the concrete floor at B's Recycling. At first glance, they look like modern architectural tiles: durable, textured, designed to let rainwater flow between them. But these are not made from cement: They are made from locally collected plastic waste.

Branded Ekoduro Wave Pavers, the products will soon be stacked at Kooyman's megastore, ready for homeowners and contractors seeking climate-resilient building materials.

It is a quietly radical moment: Plastic waste transformed, livelihoods created, value retained locally instead of shipped overseas. This is the practical face of the circular economy in the Caribbean.

A Vision Born from Conviction

The founders of The Great Plastic Bake Off (GPBO) did not come from the recycling industry. What they did have was a simple but powerful belief: plastic waste does not have to be a problem — it can be a resource.

Driven by this conviction and experimentation, they began testing ways to transform plastic waste into durable materials. Their first pilot in the Netherlands involved significant trial and error, but the results were promising. Even mixed and traditionally "unrecyclable" plastics could be converted into strong, climate-resilient products using compact processing technology.

That breakthrough sparked a new idea. Instead of focusing on large industrial recycling systems, the founders began exploring how smaller, mobile production units could serve regions where traditional recycling infrastructure is difficult to establish.

Small island states quickly emerged as the ideal environment for this model – places heavily affected by plastic pollution yet often lacking viable recycling systems.

Technology That Fits Island Realities

Across small island and coastal states, traditional waste management infrastructure is expensive, complex, and often incomplete. Exporting recyclables is costly. Large-scale industrial facilities are rarely viable for small domestic markets.

That is where GPBO and FUSE Caribbean enter the story. Through mobile, containerised processing units known as FUSE Kitchens, the initiative offers a model designed specifically for island realities.

The system is built around:

- Smaller, mobile factories
- UV-resistant composite materials suitable for tropical climates
- Modular moulds producing boards, pavers, tiles, and furniture
- Processing "recipes" that accept mixed plastics

These are not abstract innovations. They are products already in high demand across the region. By designing for scale-appropriate markets, the model becomes not only technically realistic, but economically viable.

Turning Urgency into Opportunity

The urgency is clear. Across the Caribbean, unmanaged plastic waste pollutes coastlines, threatens marine life, and strains limited landfill space. But instead of viewing plastic as an endpoint, this model reframes it as input.

By transforming waste into durable, locally usable construction materials, communities can:

- Reduce environmental leakage
- Lower landfill pressure
- Create skilled green jobs
- Capture economic value within national borders

Circularity becomes not just an environmental strategy — but an economic one.

A Blueprint Built Through Experience

The concept did not begin in the Caribbean. GPBO launched its first pilot in the Netherlands, generating critical technical and operational lessons. These insights informed the development of the first full-scale Caribbean plant in Curaçao, built in partnership with FUSE. That blueprint now guides implementation in the countries listed below. Each new installation strengthens a growing regional ecosystem for practical, replicable waste-to-product solutions.

Barbados

Curaçao

Dominica
(supported through the ACE Facility & Euroclima)

Suriname

Trinidad & Tobago
(in preparation)

Partnerships as the Engine of Scale

Technology alone does not create transformation, but partnerships do. In Barbados, B's Recycling produces Ekoduro Wave Pavers, which are distributed through Kooyman's retail network. In Suriname, Fernandes Bottling Company hosts a FUSE Kitchen, integrating circular production within its operations.

Collaboration with national waste authorities further strengthens the model, including partnerships with:

- Dominica Solid Waste Management Corporation (DSWMC)
- Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Company Limited (SWMCOL)

These partnerships demonstrate a critical insight: Private-sector engagement accelerates innovation. Public-sector alignment ensures sustainability. Together, they create the conditions for scale.

Local Impact

This success is only possible because GPBO works with strong local partners who understand the realities of their markets.

While GPBO provides the technology and production model, partners like B's Recycling contribute local knowledge of waste streams, established operational practices, supply chain relationships, and insight into customer needs.

For the team at B's, the arrival of the FUSE Kitchen has meant new skills, more reliable work, and participation in a value chain that stays in Barbados rather than being exported overseas. Today, their products reach Kooyman's megastore, where homeowners and contractors can purchase a climate-resilient paver designed specifically for island conditions.

For the workers producing them, each batch represents more than just a product – it represents the transformation of waste into opportunity.

The Human Dimension of Circularity

Behind every pallet of pavers are workers who once handled waste as a disposal problem and now process it as raw material.

Behind every FUSE Kitchen are technicians, operators, and entrepreneurs building new expertise in materials engineering and composite production.

For island economies often dependent on imports, this shift is profound. Plastic waste becomes not only diverted, but redesigned, reprocessed, and revalued.

Skills stay local. Revenue stays local. Opportunity stays local.

"As someone who lays paving stones every day, I was genuinely impressed. These pavers are much easier to install than regular ones because they're lighter, which takes a lot of strain off my back and arms. Despite the lower weight, they feel solid and durable – and you'd never guess they're made from plastic waste."

A short testimonial from a user of the products developed.

A Symbol of Change

As the sun sets over St. Thomas, another batch of Ekoduro pavers is stacked and wrapped for delivery. It is a small scene. But it signals something larger.

"What we are building in the Caribbean is proof that circularity needs the right partnerships, the right scale of technology, and the courage to rethink waste as value. Every FUSE Kitchen we deploy shows what becomes possible when innovation meets local commitment: jobs emerge, skills grow, and materials that once burdened communities become part of building their future. This is not just recycling — it is economic resilience in action."

— GPBO Leadership / Martijn Kampshoff, Director GPBO bv.

In the Caribbean, plastic waste is no longer the end of the story. It is becoming the beginning of a new one – where practical technology, regional partnerships, and entrepreneurial ambition converge to build a circular economy designed for island realities.

Learn More

www.greatplasticbakeoff.com

DID YOU KNOW?

When recyclable plastic is exported, most of the economic value leaves with it. Local processing turns waste into jobs, products, and revenue that stay in Caribbean economies.

WHAT WE WEAR, WHAT WE SHARE

Reducing Textile Waste and Restoring Confidence

BY MARIA GREENLAND,
UNICYCLE JAMAICA PROJECT MANAGER
AND COME MEK WI DANCE FOUNDER

UniCycle JAMAICA

Come Mek Wi Dance

On a summer morning in rural St. Ann, nearly 200 backpacks are handed to students preparing for the new school year. Nearby, two brightly painted “Likkle Libraries”, made from upcycled refrigerators, are unveiled, each filled with 100 age-appropriate books.

For the children receiving them, it is a moment of excitement.

For siblings Rhys and Maria Greenland, it is part of something larger: a growing movement to reduce textile waste in Jamaica while strengthening dignity, creativity, and access to opportunity. Through UniCycle Jamaica and its sister project Come Mek Wi Dance, the Greenlands are proving that reuse is not only an environmental action: it is social transformation.

Turning Textile Waste into Opportunity

Launched in 2018, UniCycle Jamaica began with a simple idea: collect gently used school uniforms and redistribute them to families in need.

School uniforms represent one of the most immediate and practical textile waste streams in Jamaica. Children outgrow them quickly. Many families struggle with the cost of replacement. Perfectly usable garments are often discarded.

By collecting, sorting, and redistributing uniforms and sports gear, UniCycle reduces landfill pressure while easing financial burdens on families.

To date, the initiative has redistributed nearly J$5 million (approx. USD 32,000) worth of uniforms, school supplies, and clothing to over 1,000 families across the island.

What started in a single school has grown into a national effort supported by:

- Ministry of Education, Youth, Skills and Information
- National Education Trust
- Fontana Pharmacy

Annual summer drives now mobilize communities, schools, and private-sector partners to give garments a second life.

From Uniforms to Costumes

In 2022, Maria Greenland expanded the model into the creative arts sector. Come Mek Wi Dance collects gently used dancewear and costumes, redistributing them through the Ministry of Education, Youth, Skills and Information's Theatre Arts Department, the National Education Trust, and the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission.

Since its launch, the initiative has collected nearly 1,000 dance and costume items, valued at close to J$1 million (approx. USD 6,500).

But the impact goes far beyond numbers. As Dionne Somers-Campbell, Education Officer with responsibility for drama and theatre arts, shares: **"There was great excitement to see the costumes. One dance teacher even exclaimed that the head wraps she had taken were already on the children of her dance troupe's heads and they were so excited to wear them on stage to perform."**

A reused costume becomes more than fabric. It becomes confidence. It becomes stage presence. It becomes belonging.

Youth Leadership and National Advocacy

Textile waste reduction is a global challenge. The fashion industry is one of the largest contributors to landfill waste worldwide, driven by overproduction and fast fashion. UniCycle and Come Mek Wi Dance offer a local, practical alternative: reuse with purpose.

Beyond redistribution, the initiatives advocate for a national textile waste reduction system in Jamaica, calling attention to the need for structured collection and reuse channels across the country. Their work has also expanded through new partnerships. A volunteer group organised by Chocolate Dreams now supports regular sorting, enabling redistribution one to two times per month through NGOs, church groups, and schools.

In late 2025, additional fundraising efforts enabled:

- **The distribution of almost 200 backpacks**
- **The installation of two "Likkle Libraries" (upcycled refrigerators transformed into book units)**
- **Partnership with the Di Cawna Library Initiative**

The result is a layered approach: textiles reused, books circulated, creativity encouraged.

Restoring Dignity, Inspiring Learning

For partners working in education, the impact extends far beyond material and support. Latoya Harris-Ghartey, Executive Director of the National Education Trust, reflects on the broader impact: “We are deeply grateful for the heart and commitment behind UNICYCLE Jamaica, Come Mek Wi Dance, and the Di Cawna Library Initiative. Their generosity goes far beyond uniforms and books; they are restoring confidence, inspiring a love of learning, and reminding our children that they are seen, valued, and capable of achieving great things. This partnership is transforming lives in the most meaningful way.” Circularity here is not framed as a technical waste solution. It is framed as care.

Beyond Reuse: Culture, Movement, and the Future

Maria Greenland’s work continues to evolve. Plans include launching a “Come Mek Wi Move” dance-based course and sharing her book, Dance is a Super Special Superpower, during upcoming school visits.

The message is consistent: Sustainability is not only about materials. It is about people. About creativity. About ensuring that **what we wear and what we share** reflects a culture of care rather than disposability.

Impact at a Glance

- **J$5 million (approx. USD 32,000) worth of uniforms redistributed**
- **1,000+ families supported**
- **1,000 dance/costume items collected**
- **National summer drives in partnership with public and private sector**
- **Upcycled “Likkle Libraries” installed in rural schools**

Learn More

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DID YOU KNOW? DID YOU KNOW? DID YOU KNOW? DID YOU KNOW? DID YOU KNOW? DID YOU KNOW?

The global fashion industry generates an estimated 92 million tonnes of textile wastes every year. Extending the life of clothing through reuse reduces landfill pressure, conserves resources, and challenges the culture of fast fashion.

CIRCULAR FESTIVALS SPOTLIGHT

CARNIVAL, CULTURE, & CIRCULARITY

A Circular Future for the "Greatest Show on Earth"

BY HADASSAH BOURNES,
PROJECT EXECUTION OFFICER I,
BCRC-CARIBBEAN

BCRC
CARIBBEAN
Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the Caribbean

In Trinidad and Tobago, Carnival is not just an event; it is identity in motion. Each year, feathers rise against the skyline, beads shimmer in the sunlight, and masqueraders transform the streets into a living work of art. Carnival is creativity, heritage, and economy woven together.

But when the music fades, another reality emerges. Thousands of costumes, crafted from mixed textiles, plastics, foams, and decorative materials, are discarded. What dazzles for two days can linger in landfills for years.

Now, a bold initiative is asking a transformative question:

What if Carnival could be as sustainable as it is spectacular?

A Six-Year Commitment to Change

On July 28, 2025, at the Hilton Trinidad & Conference Centre, the BCRC-Caribbean, in collaboration with the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago officially launched the GEF 11176 – Elimination of Hazardous Chemicals In Supply Chains in Trinidad and Tobago Project. This marked the start of a six-year journey to eliminate hazardous chemicals from the Carnival supply chain by promoting sustainable alternatives and embedding circular economy principles into our cultural celebrations.

The launch welcomed policymakers, industry leaders, and stakeholders across the Carnival fashion ecosystem, including Dr. the Honourable Kennedy Swaratsingh - Minister of Planning, Economic Affairs and Development.

The evening featured a Sustainable Carnival Fashion Show curated by internationally renowned designer Richard Young, showcasing pieces created entirely from eco-friendly materials.

The runway proved a powerful point: sustainability does not diminish creativity... it expands it.

Rethinking the Carnival Supply Chain

Carnival and fashion have always influenced one another. Trends move fluidly between masquerade bands and mainstream design. This initiative builds on that creative energy but shifts the system behind it.

Key components include:

- Development of a Code of Practice for Sustainable Sourcing
- Introduction of a Reverse Supply Chain (RSC) Scheme
- Collection and reuse of more than 10,000 costumes
- Improved material sourcing and reduced transport emissions

Rather than treating environmental responsibility as an afterthought, the project reimagines how costumes are designed, produced, worn, collected, and re-enter circulation.

Impact at a Glance

10,000+ masqueraders participating in the Reverse Sulply Chain Scheme where costumes are to be collected and reused

134,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions are expected to be avoided

50% reduction in the use of contaminated materials by participating designers and band leaders

Code of Practice for sustainable sourcing to be developed and adopted locally and internationally

Global knowledge tools to scale sustainable Carnival practices worldwide

Gender-responsive business models supporting women entrepreneurs in the Carnival fashion industry

Protecting Culture by Protecting the Environment

Carnival is more than a spectacle. It is a livelihood. Designers, wire benders, feather workers, seamstresses, and entrepreneurs, many of them women, sustain an industry that blends tradition and innovation. By embedding circular systems and inclusive business models, the project ensures that sustainability strengthens the cultural economy rather than restricting it.

If Carnival, one of the most vibrant cultural celebrations in the world, can transition toward circularity, it sets a powerful example for festivals globally. Because sustainability is not the opposite of celebration. It is what ensures celebration can continue.

The BCRC-Caribbean wants to hear from you. Please take this brief survey to help understand your thoughts on whether and how sustainability aligns with Carnival Fashion. By sharing your thoughts and experiences, you will be contributing to a more sustainable and innovative future for carnival celebrations.

Click **here** to take our survey!

Learn More

info@bcrc-caribbean.org

bcrc-caribbean.org

MAKING CARNIVAL CIRCULAR

How Carnicycle Is Turning Costume Waste into Opportunity

BY DANII MCLETCHIE,
CEO AND CO-FOUNDER, CARNICYCLE

The idea for Carnicycle began with a simple question: After Carnival, where did the costume go?

In November 2018, co-founder Danii McLetchie found herself reflecting on the fate of thousands of costumes worn for just two days. Market research soon confirmed what intuition suggested: over 40 percent of people discarded some part of their Carnival costume after the season.

From that moment, Carnicycle was born with a mission to make Carnival more sustainable and circular through education, waste management, and innovation.

Founder Spotlight

Danii McLetchie
Engineering Circular Carnival

Danii McLetchie, CEO and Co-Founder of Carnicycle, grew up in Canaan, Tobago, where resourcefulness was simply a way of life. Her earliest lessons in sustainability came from watching her grandmother reuse and repurpose everyday items because resources were limited. “That mindset shaped how I see waste and value,” Danii reflects. “Nothing was thrown away if it could still serve a purpose.”

Today, Danii works as a Senior Sustainability Engineer at Domino Sugar Refinery and has spent the past eight years supporting major manufacturing and technology companies — including Campbell Soup Company, Watts Water Technologies, and Microsoft — in setting sustainability targets and identifying projects that reduce waste, energy use, and greenhouse gas emissions.

While building her professional career, she began developing Carnicycle in parallel, applying the same circular economy thinking to Caribbean Carnival. What started as a question about discarded costumes evolved into a practical system that extends the life of Carnival materials and keeps them circulating in the creative economy.

From Concept to Circular

Carnicycle's journey has evolved in deliberate phases:

2019

- Pilot recycling during the Jamaica Carnival, collecting 28 costume pieces
- Expansion to Barbados Crop Over, Miami Carnival, and Bermuda Carnival

2020

- Partnership with 15+ companies in Trinidad and Tobago, recycling over 250 costumes
- First international sale of reclaimed feathers
- Pandemic pause

2023 - 2025

- Rapid scale-up across Trinidad and Tobago, and Miami
- By 2025, Carnicycle collected over 700 costumes in a single season and generated revenue year-round — proving that circularity can be financially viable.

Beyond Recycling: Innovation in Action

Carnicycle's work goes far beyond collection.

Backpack Rentals

High-quality Carnival backpacks that typically retail for USD 500–800 are offered through rental at approximately USD 100, reducing new production while increasing access. Each backpack is designed to be reused up to five times.

Upcycling Cultural Materials

Music truck banners are transformed into beach tote bags. J'ouvert sneakers are cleaned and restored for resale. Deadstock costumes from masquerade bands are dismantled and repurposed.

Handling these materials requires specialised research and development. Carnival components are delicate, highly decorative, and culturally significant — not traditional recyclables. Yet Carnicycle has built systems to clean, sort, disassemble, and reintroduce them into the creative economy.

Lessons from Building a Circular Carnival

One of the biggest lessons Danii learned while building Carnicycle was that the vision you start with is not always the one the market ultimately needs.

In the early days, Carnicycle developed systems to reintroduce recycled costume materials back into the Carnival economy. Feathers and gems could be resold to designers, frames could be recycled, and structured costume bras — often worn only once — could potentially be donated to women's shelters.

"On paper it made sense," Danii explains. "But over time, we realized the shelters didn't actually want the bras."

The experience was disappointing, but it revealed a critical insight: **solutions must be shaped not only by good intentions, but by what people actually need and are willing to use.**

That lesson directly informed Carnicycle's backpack rental programme, launched in 2023. Through observation and surveys, the team discovered that many masqueraders wore their backpacks only for photos early in the day. After a few hours, they often became heavy and inconvenient.

By responding to this feedback, Carnicycle created a system where masqueraders can rent the backpack for the moments they want it — and return it afterward. Since launching, more than 200 backpacks have been rented for Carnival, beauty pageants, photoshoots, and events.

"The success of that programme came from listening," says Danii. "Circular solutions work best when they respond to real behaviour."

Impact at a Glance

10,000+
costume pieces diverted from landfills (2023-24)

2,400
items recycled in 2024 alone up from 195 items in 2019

202
backpacks rented since 2023 reducing demand for new production

110+
women trained in hands-on circular desgin workshops

148 tons
students educated on circular economy proinciples

40+ tons
ecosystem partners including mas bands, designers, hotels and tourism stakeholders

First permanent year-round collection point established at Spool Garment Factory

Sustainability That Feels Like Carnival

Carnicycle's approach proves something powerful: Sustainability does not have to be sterile or restrictive. It can be colourful. Creative. Community-driven. By involving designers, masqueraders, and cultural entrepreneurs, Carnicycle demonstrates that environmental responsibility and heritage are not competing priorities. They are partners.

Carnival will always be about freedom of expression. Carnicycle simply ensures that freedom does not come at the expense of the environment.

Learn More

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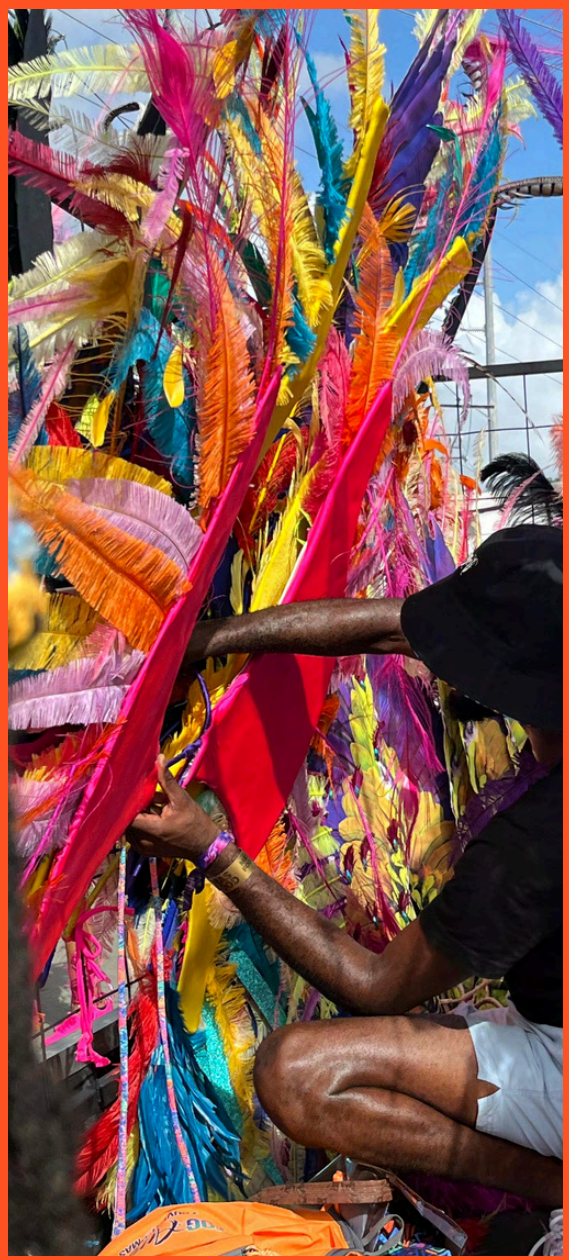

DID YOU KNOW?

Carnival is one of the Caribbean's largest creative industries, supporting designers, artisans, and entrepreneurs across the region. Making Carnival circular protects not only the environment, but the livelihoods and heritage it sustains.

FROM FETE TO FERTILISER

Transforming Festival Waste into Circular Value in Trinidad & Tobago

BY SAYEED ALI – CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, CLOSE THE LOOP CARIBBEAN AND
ERIN KROGH – PROJECT & TECHNICAL OFFICER, CLOSE THE LOOP CARIBBEAN

CLOSE THE LOOP
CARIBBEAN

In Trinidad and Tobago, celebrations are woven into everyday life. From Carnival fetes to community events, festivals bring people together through music, food, and culture. Yet behind the vibrant atmosphere lies a quieter challenge: large volumes of organic waste that often end up in landfills.

When food scraps and compostable materials decompose in landfill conditions, they produce methane — a potent greenhouse gas and a missed opportunity to recover valuable resources.

Recognizing this challenge, the Close the Loop Caribbean initiative set out to rethink how organic waste is managed within the country's growing event economy. What began as a project to reduce landfill waste has evolved into a circular economy model that transforms organic waste into economic value, environmental restoration, and new partnerships across the Caribbean.

From Project to Circular Enterprise

Close the Loop Caribbean Ltd. (CTL Ltd.) emerged from the Close the Loop Caribbean Project, founded and coordinated by IAMovement and Hello Green Products Ltd., organizations committed to reducing waste and advancing circular systems.

With support from partners including the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), IDB Lab, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Ministry of Planning and Development of Trinidad and Tobago, the European Union, and CARIRI, the initiative piloted commercially viable models for diverting organic waste away from landfill.

These early successes demonstrated that waste management could become more than an environmental necessity — it could generate economic and ecological value.

Today, CTL Ltd. operates as a circular economy ecosystem builder, bringing together private sector actors, public agencies, and technical partners to develop and scale waste-to-value business models. By mapping organic waste streams and coordinating collection systems, the company redirects materials into productive uses such as compost production and land restoration.

Carnival as a Circular Opportunity

Large-scale events generate significant waste, but they also present an opportunity to demonstrate circular solutions. Through partnerships with major events such as the St. Mary's College Alumni Foundation's Fete with the Saints, CTL developed a structured Green Event model that captures organic waste while reducing single-use plastics.

Green Event Impact Since 2023

1.3 million+
1.3 million+ single-use plastic and Styrofoam items avoided

15,000 lbs
15,000 lbs of organic waste captured and composted

16,500 lbs
16,500 lbs of glass recycled

1,000 lbs
1,000 lbs of plastic upcycled (mostly decor)

3.15 tonnes of CO2
Estimated 3.15 tonnes of CO2 equivalent emissions avoided through event-based organic waste diverted

175 trees
175 trees planted for local event footprint offset through reforestation programmes, contributing to 5,058 trees planted overall

For patrons, the initiative also raises awareness. "It's such a great initiative," shared one event attendee. "It makes me feel like maybe I should be more aware of the things that we do to help with the planet."

Lessons from Building Green Events

Implementing sustainable event systems required more than simply placing recycling bins at venues. The CTL team quickly learned that successful diversion depends on strong partnerships across the entire event ecosystem — including vendors, janitorial teams, recycling companies, and waste transport providers.

Ensuring that food vendors use certified compostable serving ware is critical to preventing contamination in organic waste streams. Clear sorting systems and staff training also play an important role in maximizing diversion rates.

These lessons reinforced a key principle: sustainable events must be designed intentionally from the start.

From Waste to Regeneration

The organic waste captured through CTL's systems is processed at an industrial-scale composting facility, where it is transformed into nutrient-rich compost used for quarry rehabilitation, soil regeneration, and ecosystem restoration.

During sorting, plastic contaminants are also intercepted and redirected to local recycling and upcycling partners, ensuring that additional materials are recovered.

Total Impacts at a Glance

26,993
tonnes of organic waste diverted from landfill

499
tonnes of methane emissions avoided

12,484
tonnes of CO_2e emissions prevented

1,642
kilograms of plastic recovered and redirected to local upcycling partners

100+
community members trained in organic waste management practices

Expanding the Circular Festival Economy

The initiative continues to evolve. For Carnival 2026, CTL and Carnicycle teamed up to deploy "Bin Detectives" along Carnival band routes, capturing discarded costume materials and supporting circular costume design initiatives.

This collaboration highlights how different circular initiatives can work together to strengthen sustainability within the Caribbean festival ecosystem.

As the project moves toward its 2026 completion, CTL is focused on strengthening partnerships and scaling circular waste diversion models that ensure long-term financial and environmental sustainability through a true social enterprise model.

In a region where festivals are central to culture and tourism, initiatives like Close the Loop Caribbean show that celebration and sustainability can go hand in hand.

Learn More

- info@closetheloopcaribbean.com
- closetheloopcaribbean.com
- @closetheloopcaribbean
- CTL Linktree

FEATURED STORIES

FEEDING THE LOOP

Advancing Circular Solutions in the Caribbean Tourism Sector

BY SOPHIE VARGAS, PROJECT MANAGER, GIZ
AND DEREK E LUK PAT, CO-FOUNDER, FED UP CARIBBEAN AND
FOUNDER, THE CIRCULAR CARIBBEAN COMPANY

german cooperation
DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

FED UP CARIBBEAN

In the Caribbean, food plays a central role in tourism experiences. Hotels and resorts serve thousands of meals each day, showcasing the region's hospitality, culture, and cuisine. Yet behind the buffets and kitchen operations lies a challenge shared by destinations across the world: food waste.

Large volumes of edible food and organic scraps often end up in landfills, where they decompose and release methane – a greenhouse gas far more potent than carbon dioxide in the short term.

For island nations with limited landfill space, high food import dependence, and growing climate vulnerability, reducing food waste is more than an environmental concern. It is an economic and social opportunity.

The project Sustainable Food Waste Management in the Caribbean Tourism Sector[1]sought to address this imbalance by working directly with hotels, policymakers, and waste sector actors to reduce food waste, improve resource efficiency, and strengthen circular economy practices in tourism-dependent economies.

By combining data-driven insights with targeted knowledge exchange through a regional webinar series, the project demonstrated how evidence-based strategies and capacity-building can effectively catalyze the adoption of circular economy practices in the Caribbean tourism sector.

Climate Focus: The Methane Multiplier

Food waste prevention is one of the most immediate climate actions available to small island states. With organic waste comprising up to 60% of municipal solid waste, landfill methane remains a major emissions driver. Preventing food waste avoids emissions before they occur, so no advanced infrastructure is required.

In the Caribbean context, reducing food waste is both mitigation and adaptation – lowering emissions while strengthening economic resilience in tourism-dependent economies.

From Linear Waste to Circular Systems

Historically, waste systems across the Caribbean have followed a linear model: food is produced, transported, consumed, and then discarded. But food waste is increasingly being recognised as a recoverable resource.

Across hotels and resorts, practical measures are already making a difference.

[1] The project "Sustainable Food Waste Management in the Caribbean Tourism Sector" was funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and implemented in collaboration with the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF) and the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA).

Benchmark data from participating hotels reveal both challenge and opportunity:

- Tracking kitchen waste to identify loss points
- Adjusting portion sizes and menu planning
- Repurposing surplus goods in staff meals
- Diverting organic waste to composting or biodigestion

Such actions not only reduce environmental impacts but also generate operational savings and efficiency gains for hotels.

At the same time, regional collaboration is growing through initiatives such as **Fed Up Caribbean**, which connects a food value network, including tourism, of stakeholders, policymakers, and civil society organisations working to reduce food waste and improve food recovery systems across the region.

The project therefore also worked at the strategy formulation level, developing a Benchmark Report, as well as a model for food waste reduction and its Action Plan, engaging public and private sector stakeholders and informing on actionable food waste prevention and reduction measures as well on the integration of circular economy principles in hotel operations.

Policy Snapshot: Where the Region Stands

Caribbean Food Waste Governance Gaps

No regional landfill bans on organic waste	Limited standardized food waste reporting requirements	Weak food donor liability protection frameworks
Fragmented municipal composting infrastructure	Tourism growth outpacing waste system upgrades	

Strengthening these policy levers could unlock large-scale emissions reductions and new circular value chains across the region.

Regional Innovation in Practice

The innovation of Caribbean people in the Hotel, Restaurant, and Catering (HoReCa) sector is second to none. From resorts in Aruba turning banana peels into banana syrup, to hotels in Grenada experimenting with biodigestion, to power on-site bakeries, circular solutions are already emerging across the region.

Country Snapshot
Dominican Republic

One of the region's most advanced examples of circular waste management can be found in the Dominican Republic. The Centro de Valorización de Residuos del Este (CENVAREE), established by the Grupo Puntacana and Puntacana Foundation, operates a regional hub for waste separation, recycling, and organic waste processing serving nearby resorts, the Punta Cana International Airport, and surrounding communities.

The facility currently manages approximately 25 metric tons of waste from landfill each day with a process that includes point of origin separation, manual and mechanical sorting, recycling of diverse waste streams including plastics, and large-scale composting. Organic waste is processed using a combined aerated and mechanical mixing composting system that produces a soil amendment used in landscaping and local agriculture.

Aligned with national legislation on waste management, the initiative demonstrates how public–private partnerships can help operationalise circular economy policies in tourism destinations.

Fun Fact!
CENVAREE's operations will be expanded through the support of the ACE Facility to manage plastic waste generated by tourism facilities in Punta Cana (e.g., the airport, shopping malls, and hotels).

Country Snapshot
Jamaica

In Jamaica, several initiatives have explored the potential of organic waste recovery in tourism.

A 2018 study by the Center for Responsible Travel highlighted both the country's leadership potential and key barriers, including limited liability protection for food donation, inconsistent waste measurement systems, and uneven policy enforcement.

One notable example was the work of CaribShare Biogas, which piloted a system converting hotel food waste into biogas and compost used by nearby farmers.

Although technically successful, the initiative struggled to scale without enabling policies, regulated markets, and sustainable financing mechanisms — highlighting the need for stronger systemic support.

Country Snapshot
Saint Lucia

In Saint Lucia, innovation is largely being driven directly by hotels. Some properties are experimenting with on-site composting, partnerships that convert food scraps into animal feed, and pilot projects linking food waste processing with sargassum management. Through the Saint Lucia Hotel and Tourism Association, a strong network has been established to connect local farmers with chefs at hotels and restaurants, who plan their menus based on the crops that are in season.

The impact is visible in the country's GDP – strengthening the agricultural sector while reducing reliance on food imports. Prevention strategies are also gaining traction, including flexible menus, consistent portion sizes, and structured plans for reusing surplus food. However, many of these initiatives remain self-led, with limited national systems supporting organic waste diversion or coordinated reporting.

Country Snapshot
Grenada

Circular solutions can also emerge through stronger connections between tourism and local food systems. At True Blue Bay Resort in Grenada, a weekly local food market hosted on the resort grounds connects farmers, artisans, and food producers directly with guests and staff. This initiative strengthens local livelihoods while reducing transport emissions and spoilage associated with imported food.

At the same time, the resort operates an on-site biodigester, transforming food waste into methane that is used to power its bakery operations – including cakes and desserts – creating a closed-loop system within the hotel.

By linking tourism demand with local agriculture, the model demonstrates how hotels can function as community hubs for more circular food systems.

A Practical Roadmap for Hotels

Experiences across the region suggest a clear pathway for hotels seeking to reduce food waste.

- **Measure Food Waste:** Understanding where waste occurs is the first step toward prevention.
- **Engage Staff Teams:** Kitchen and service staff are essential partners in identifying solutions.
- **Prevent Waste: Menu design,** portion management, and improved procurement can significantly reduce losses.
- **Manage Surplus and Organic Waste:** Edible surplus can be redistributed, while unavoidable waste can be processed through composting, biodigestion, or animal feed systems.
- **Secure Leadership Commitment:** Management support ensures long-term investment and coordination.
- **Capture Quick Wins:** Simple operational adjustments often deliver immediate environmental and financial benefits.

WSHA, 2024, Decarbonizing Hotel Food Systems, Exhibit 3: Mapping A Typical Hotel Food System and Key Factors

A Regional Opportunity

The Caribbean's tourism sector is interconnected, visible, and influential – making it uniquely positioned to lead the transition toward more sustainable practices. Through the GIZ Sustainable Food Waste Project, hotels across the region have been equipped with a strategic framework and practical tools to initiate and scale food waste reduction efforts. This includes guidance on how to begin measuring waste for the first time, benchmark performance against best practices, train kitchen teams and identify effective prevention and valorization strategies. Ultimately, these actions not only contribute to environmental sustainability but also translate into tangible operational cost savings and improved resource efficiency.

Reducing food waste improves operational margins, protects landfills, cuts emissions, and strengthens food system resilience – in a region where food remains both precious and largely imported.

Circular tourism is no longer a distant ambition. It is being tested, measured, and implemented. In the Caribbean, reducing food waste is not about doing less. It is about stewarding more wisely – together.

"A third of all food grown to feed people is wasted."

Samantha Kenny, Senior Program Officer, Global Food Loss & Waste World Wildlife Fund, and Lead Consultant, Huffnagle Ventures.

Learn More

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@giz_caribbean

We Are Fed Up of Food Waste

Circular Solutions for Caribbean Food Systems

Fed Up Caribbean is on a mission to strengthen Caribbean food security and socioeconomic resilience by reducing and monetising surplus food while valorising organic waste.

Using a systems-thinking, circular economy approach, the initiative works with businesses, institutions, and communities to improve regional economic, environmental, and food system resilience.

Our Solutions

Education & Consultancy: Workshops, corporate presentations, and school engagements that promote food waste prevention and circular food practices.

B2B Projects: Partnerships with manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers to identify supply chain inefficiencies and develop practical circular economy solutions that reduce waste.

Digital Marketplace (Coming Soon): A mobile platform enabling food businesses to list surplus, imperfect, or near-BBD* products at reduced prices, prioritising locally grown and locally manufactured foods.

Organic Waste Dehydration Technology: Commercial-scale systems that process organic waste, including food waste, landscaping waste and even sargassum seaweed, reducing input volume and weight by up to 90% within 24 hours while limiting pests and odours.

Black Soldier Fly Technology: In collaboration with the University of the West Indies, this will be advanced to support local food production through a circular closed-loop system fuelled by organic waste.

Shelf-Life Extension Technology: Innovative food-safe preservation solutions that extend product life while reducing waste and improving profitability.

*BBD = Best Before Date

Learn More

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fedupcaribbean.com

Did You Know?

The region imports 60-80% of its food (more than anywhere else in the world). Yet 59% of people in the Caribbean experience food insecurity, the highest rate in the Western hemisphere

Tourism drives Caribbean economies, contributing about 32% of regional GDP (ranging from 7-90% by country)

Less than 20% of countries have policies that enable food donation from bsinesses such as hotels. As a result, 40-60% of municipal solid waste in the Caribbean is organic material, much of it is food.

Reducing food waste can deliver up to a 7:1 return on investment for hotels. Food waste reduction strengthens food security, climate resilience, and business performance – all at once.

SARGASSUM IN MOTION

From the Shores of the Dominican Republic to a Caribbean-Wide Regenerative Model

BY MICHEL KAINE, FOUNDER AND CEO, AND
JOSÉE DANCAUSE, CO-FOUNDER AND CMO, GROGENICS

Across the Caribbean basin – from island shorelines to the coasts of Central America and the Gulf of Mexico – sargassum has become an annual disruption. Thick mats of seaweed blanket beaches, smother coral reefs, clog fishing grounds, and deter visitors. As the biomass decays, it releases methane, a potent greenhouse gas, and emits toxic fumes that affect nearby communities. The seaweed also accumulates heavy metals during its Atlantic drift, making its direct reuse a safety concern.

For many coastal communities, it is a seasonal crisis. For Grogenics, it is the foundation of a regenerative economy.

Where the Loop Was Proven

With early support from the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund and The Ocean Foundation, Grogenics validated its full regenerative cycle in real-world Caribbean conditions – including pilot implementation in the Dominican Republic.

Working directly with farmers in Punta Cana and Miches, in collaboration with the Tropicalia Foundation, the team tested whether safely treated sargassum could restore degraded soils and strengthen local food systems.
The results were visible and measurable.

TESTIMONIES

Tony de la Rosa, gardener for the late Oscar de la Renta in Punta Cana, describes the transformation: **"The results I am seeing with the organic compost from Grogenics are by far superior to others I have been using. I see incredible results with it. I have never seen flowers so large and vegetables so big. It's been 100% effective! Other compost we have been testing doesn't even give me any results."**

In Miches, farmer Raquel saw immediate change: **"I am thrilled with the results and by the fact that I will be able to put food on my table. First, I felt bad about spreading the compost around my garden, but when I saw the fabulous results of larger and healthier vegetables, I couldn't resist! I am so pleased that I started spreading the word to other women in my community."**

Amaury, also farming in Miches, adds: **"With the quantity and quality of the beans I got from my garden this time around, I could have sold more, but I need to keep some for myself and my family. I am also very impressed by how many flower buds have bloomed on my lime trees, and the quantity of limes that have grown already since I spread the compost!"**

These testimonies mark the shift from emergency cleanup to agricultural regeneration

From Crisis to Circular Infrastructure

Sargassum becomes most damaging when it decomposes. Anaerobic decay releases methane before cleanup begins. At the same time, the biomass contains accumulated heavy metals, particularly arsenic, that pose risks if applied untreated to land.

Rather than focusing on removal alone, Grogenics designed a place-based circular economy model that intervenes early and closes the loop locally. By intercepting sargassum near shore or immediately upon landing, the platform prevents methane emissions, reduces contamination of coastal ecosystems, and lowers downstream cleanup costs. Lightweight electric UTVs and modular carts are used instead of heavy machinery, reducing beach disturbance by removing minimal sand, protecting shorelines, and wildlife often trapped in the biomass. Once collected, the sargassum undergoes a proprietary bioremediation process before being converted into biochar-enriched compost.

"...reducing beach disturbance by removing minimal sand, protecting shorelines and wildlife often trapped in the biomass."

The result is not waste management – but regeneration.

How the Regenerative Loop Works

Early Interception
Sargassum is captured before anaerobic decay begins, preventing methane emissions and environmental contamination.

Low-Impact Collection
Electric UTVs and modular carts reduce beach erosion and wildlife disturbance.

Climate and Economic Impact
Methane emissions are prevented. Beaches remain cleaner. Fisheries recover faster. Value stays within the local economy.

Bioremediation
Heavy metals are neutralized through a patent-pending biological treatment protocol.

Community Value Creation
150+ women-led farms adopt regenerative practices and supply fresh produce to resorts, restaurants, and local markets.

Biochar Integration
Treated biomass is blended with locally sourced green waste and proprietary biochar via pyrolysis.

Soil Restoration
Biochar-enriched compost restores degraded land, improves water retention, and increases yields without synthetic inputs.

From sea to soil to community... the loop closes locally.

Measurable Regional Impact

The regenerative platform, first proven in the Dominican Republic and Saint Kitts and Nevis, has expanded to Mexico and is now scaling across the Caribbean and other tropical coastlines.

By 2030, Grogenics aims to

- **Remove 100,000 tonnes of CO_2 by preventing methane release**
- **Eliminate 500,000 tonnes of landfill waste over five years**
- **Restore 500+ hectares of degraded land**
- **Support 250+ women-led farms**
- **Safeguard coastal biodiversity, including reefs, mangroves, sea turtles, and nesting birds**

In hurricane-prone island economies dependent on tourism and agriculture, the model integrates environmental protection with economic resilience.

KEY LESSON
Why Bioremediation — Not Composting Alone — Is the Breakthrough

One of the most common misconceptions in sargassum reuse is that salinity is the main barrier. In reality, the greater risk lies in heavy metal contamination, particularly arsenic. Scientific studies have documented arsenic concentrations in sargassum reaching 60–90 mg per kilogram or more. If untreated biomass is composted directly, toxins can migrate into soils, crops, and groundwater.

This challenge has limited the scalability of many composting initiatives. Grogenics addressed this risk through applied research and the development of a patent-pending bioremediation protocol. Rather than chemically altering the biomass, controlled biological pathways neutralize heavy metals before composting begins. Each batch is tested to ensure no detectable regulated heavy metals remain in the final product.

This scientific safeguard transforms sargassum management from cleanup to safe regeneration.

Global Recognition, Caribbean Roots

The rigor of the model has earned international recognition, including nomination for the Earthshot Prize, validation through Gold Standard carbon accreditation, and acknowledgement by UNICEF Innovation30 and the World Economic Forum Coastal Tourism Challenge.

Yet its most powerful validation remains local – in thriving farms across Mexico, where 150+ women-led farms are restoring soils, increasing yields, and strengthening local food systems.

A Caribbean-Led Blueprint

Sargassum is transboundary and does not respect borders. But the solution emerging from Caribbean shores demonstrates that crisis can become technology — if science, community engagement, and circular design are aligned.

Designed for tropical, small-island contexts, the regenerative loop offers a scalable blueprint for coastal regions worldwide. Where sargassum once symbolised disruption, it is now becoming the foundation of soil restoration, food security, and climate resilience.

From sea to soil to community, the loop is no longer theoretical – it is already in motion.

Learn More

grogenics.eco

DID YOU KNOW?

Methane is more than 80 times more powerful than carbon dioxide at trapping heat over a 20-year period.

When sargassum decomposes on beaches, it releases methane into the atmosphere – accelerating climate change before cleanup even begins.

Intercepting seaweed early prevents these emissions at the source.

UPCOMING CIRCULAR ECONOMY EVENTS

April 20-22, 2026	**Global Sustainable Islands Summit 2026** Location: Gran Canaria, Spain Modality: In-person gsis.islandinnovation.co
April 30, 2026	**Launch of the Sustainable Small Grants Community-Based Action Program – Closing the Caribbean Plastic Tap Project** Location: Online Event Type: Webinar engage.iucn.org
May 13, 2026	**GLISPA Coordination Call: GEF Assembly** Location: Remote, Online globalislandpartnership.org
June 8-9, 2026	**Ocean Impact Summit** Location: Bali, Indonesia oceanimpactsummit.com
June 11-12, 2026	**Australia & The Pacific Ocean Business Leaders' Summit 2026** Location: Cairns, Australia oceandecadeaustralia.org

June 18-19, 2026	**Our Ocean Conference: Kenya** Location: Mombasa, Kenya ouroceanconference.org
June 24-26, 2026	**Textiles Recycling Expo 2026** Date: June 24-26, 2026 Location: Brussels, Belgium events.amiplastics.com
Sept 14-18, 2026	**Virtual Islands Summit 2026** Location: Online islandinnovation.co
Sept 17-18, 2026	**10th International Cradle-to-Cradle Congress** Location: Berlin, Germany c2c-congress.org
Sept 20-27, 2026	**NYC Climate Week** Location: New York City, USA climateweeknyc.org
Oct 20-30, 2026	**ReShaping the Build Environment through Sustainability and Circularity** Location: Thessaloniki, Greece Event Type: Conference circulareconomy.europa.eu
Nov 9-11, 2026	**ISWA World Congress 2026** Location: London, UK Modality: In-Person iswa2026.org

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Resource Type: Publication

"Women's Roles in Reducing Marine Plastic Litter"

Learn more: **OpenKnowledge.FAO**

Click to learn more

Circular Economy
Resource Type: Report

"Circularity Gap Report: The Value Gap"

Learn more: **CircularityGapReport**

Climate & Clean Air Coalition
Resource Type: Report

"Creating Opportunities for Black Soldier Fly (BSF) Waste Processing: A Policy Guide for Governmental Actors"

Learn more: **Policy Guide**

Climate & Clean Air Coalition
Resource Type: Report

"Creating Opportunities for Black Soldier Fly (BSF) Waste Processing: A Toolkit for Operators"

Learn more: **Toolkit for Operators**

CALL FOR STORIES

Got a circular story to tell?

We want to hear from you.

Caribbean CONNECT is building a space to showcase the bold ideas, everyday heroes, and grassroots efforts across the Caribbean and beyond that are transforming how we think about waste, value, and sustainability. If your work touches on any of these themes, we want to feature it in an upcoming edition:

- Circular economy in action (recycling, upcycling, reuse, repurposing).
- Marine litter solutions and plastic reduction.
- Community-led environmental efforts.
- Awareness campaigns or education initiatives.
- A policy or regulation that supports sustainability.
- Circular business models or green entrepreneurship.
- Creative or cultural expressions of sustainability (art, fashion, music).

How to submit

Email us at acefacility@caribbeanbiodiversityfund.org or submit via this link.

Include a short description, photos or media, and any links, social media, or contact information.

Tip – Stories don't need to be perfectly polished; if it's powerful and real, we'll help shape it. The goal is to share what's working, what's growing, and what's inspiring across the region. Let's build a Caribbean where waste is seen as an opportunity.

Share your story. Inspire the region. CONNECT.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you for making this happen!