

Marine Debris Project Launched in Tuvalu to Boost Sustainable Fishing

October 28, 2025



A significant new initiative, the FAD Buoy Retrieval and Recycling Project, has been launched in Tuvalu to combat marine debris, support sustainable tuna fishing, and create local economic opportunities. The project is a pioneering collaboration between the Stichting Pacifical Foundation and the Tuvalu Fisheries Authority (TFA).

The two organisations have formally signed an agreement to implement the programme, which focuses on the retrieval, refurbishment, and recycling of free-drifting buoys used in industrial tuna fishing.

Reducing Marine Debris and Supporting Research

The initiative aims to address the growing problem of marine plastic pollution by introducing a **reward scheme for recovered buoys**, encouraging local community participation. The project will also launch **local awareness campaigns** and establish partnerships with waste management organisations to ensure responsible recycling.

Crucially, the recovered buoys will also support **regional research** through data collection, conducted in collaboration with the **Pacific Community**. A joint governance committee has been established to oversee progress and ensure transparency and accountability throughout the project.

The initiative will run as a pilot until **December 2026** with funding of up to **AUD \$40,000** provided by the Foundation. Following evaluation, the intention is to expand this programme to other Pacific Island countries.

Willem Huisman, Chair of Stichting Pacifical Foundation, said: “Through this partnership, we hope to demonstrate that small island nations can lead the way in practical, community-based marine sustainability.”

Local Economic and Environmental Benefits

The project is expected to deliver tangible benefits directly to the local population, linking environmental protection with income generation.

Samasoni Finikaso, Managing Director of the TFA, emphasized the local benefits: “This project will not only help clean our shores but also provide valuable income opportunities for families across Tuvalu.”

This collaboration reinforces both organisations’ commitment to the protection of Pacific marine ecosystems and the promotion of sustainable, inclusive fisheries management in the region.