



Press Pack



1. Overview

In pursuit of innovative and sustainable solutions for marine plastic waste, the Circular Ocean project seeks to inspire enterprises and entrepreneurs to realise the hidden opportunities of discarded fishing nets and ropes in the Northern Periphery & Arctic (NPA) region.

As increasing levels of marine litter is particularly pertinent to the NPA region, the Circular Ocean project will act as a catalyst to motivate and empower remote communities to develop sustainable and green business opportunities that will enhance income generation and retention within local regions.

Through transnational collaboration and eco-innovation Circular Ocean will develop, share and test new sustainable solutions to incentivise the collection and reprocessing of discarded fishing nets and assist the movement towards a more circular economy.

Circular Ocean is led by the Environmental Research Institute, North Highland College UHI (Scotland), and is funded under the ERDF Interreg VB Northern Periphery and Arctic (NPA) Programme. It has partners in Rep. of Ireland (Macroom E), England (The Centre for Sustainable Design®, University for the Creative Arts), Greenland (Arctic Technology Centre), and Norway (Norwegian University of Science and Technology).

For further information on Circular Ocean, contact Dr Neil James, Environmental Research Institute, North Highland College UHI at neil.james@uhi.ac.uk or see www.circularocean.eu

2. Our Partners

Environmental Research Institute, North Highland College UHI

The ERI is part of the North Highland College, an academic partner in the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI). Situated in Thurso in the Northern Highlands of Scotland, the ERI provides a high quality, dynamic environment well equipped with state-of-the-art research facilities and access to some world class natural environments. Our energetic research team aims 'to address contemporary environmental issues and advance understanding in the sustainable use of the earth's natural resources through research excellence and innovative scientific leadership'.



Macrooom E

Macrooom E is a wholly owned subsidiary of Cork County Council, a Local Authority serving a population of 399,216 (2011 Census) in Southern Ireland. Macrooom E is an established centre that develops education, enterprise, environmental and community projects to influence positive change.



One of the major projects developed by Macrooom E is Ireland's national industrial symbiosis programme, SMILE Resource Exchange. Launched in 2010, it operates as a free service that assists businesses in re-using each other's materials, by-products and surplus 'waste' products in order to reduce waste going to landfill and increase the life of resources through reuse. It is funded by the Irish Environmental Protection Agency, Local Enterprise Offices and Local Authorities.

The Centre for Sustainable Design ® (CfSD) at University for the Creative Arts (UCA)

The Centre for Sustainable Design ® (CfSD) was established in 1995 in Farnham, Surrey, UK at what is now the University for the Creative Arts



(UCA) www.ucreative.ac.uk. The Centre has led and participated in numerous high quality research projects and has organised hundreds conferences, workshops and training courses focused on sustainable innovation and product sustainability regionally, nationally and

internationally. CfSD is recognised worldwide for its knowledge and expertise, having worked closely with business, policymaking and research communities for two decades. CfSD has built world-class knowledge and expertise of sustainable innovation and product sustainability. The Centre researches, develops and disseminates understanding of present and future sustainability impacts and solutions related to innovation, products, technologies, services and systems through projects, training, events, networks and information. CfSD works with partners in Europe, North America and Asia to deliver high quality results. The Centre is an internationally recognised centre of excellence. CfSD has two areas of core competence:

- Sustainable Innovation (Understanding the policy and business implications of sustainable innovation; and working with companies to develop sustainable solutions)
- Product Sustainability (Understanding the organisational, management, development and design implications of product sustainability)

ARTEK – Arctic Technology Centre

ARTEK is an education and research centre located at the

Technical University of Denmark in Lyngby, Denmark, and

Sisimiut, Greenland. The centre offers a Bachelors of Engineering in Arctic Technology, which aims at specific challenges and conditions in the Arctic regions where specialized engineering competences and solutions are crucial. The research fields at ARTEK are Construction and Physical Environment, Arctic Environmental Engineering, Building and Energy in the Arctic, and Planning, Sustainability and Infrastructure.

ARCTIC TECHNOLOGY CENTRE



Norwegian University of Science and Technology

Norwegian University of Science and Technology

(abbreviated NTNU) is a public research university

located in the city of Trondheim, Norway. NTNU offers

advanced degrees in engineering, medicine and the

natural sciences, as well as the social sciences, history,

architecture and fine art. There are approximately 20 000 students at NTNU, with 3,300

students graduating every year. NTNU's 51 departments and 100+ laboratories are spread

across seven major campuses in and around the city centre.



Norwegian University of
Science and Technology

3. Our Associate Partners

Associate partners are not part of the formal partnership but they are directly involved and play a vital role in the implementation of the project outcomes.

Nofir

Nofir was founded in Norway in 2008 with the purpose of establishing a nationwide system for collecting discarded equipment including fishing nets.



Marine Scotland

Marine Scotland is a directorate of the Scottish Government and is responsible for the integrated management of Scotland's seas.



Environmental Protection Agency

Ireland's Environmental Protection Agency is at the front line of environmental protection and policing. They ensure that Ireland's environment is protected and monitor changes in environmental trends to detect early warning signs of neglect or deterioration.



Local Enterprise Office South Cork

Local Enterprise Office South Cork is an enterprise support office with Cork County Council. It is one of a network of thirty one Local Enterprise Offices in Ireland and act as 'one stop shops' to deliver enterprise supports in their local regions.



Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority

The Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority (NIFHA) is an executive non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. They are tasked to improve, manage, and maintain the Northern Ireland designated fishery harbours.



Innovation Center Iceland

Innovation Center Iceland is a leading R&D and business support institute in Iceland. Their mission is to increase innovation, productivity and competitiveness of Icelandic



business by doing innovative technology research, diffusing knowledge and giving support to entrepreneurs and start-up companies.

4. Contact Information

General Enquiries

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5. Appendix

News Release

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TURNING THE TIDE ON MARINE LITTER

A new European project has been funded to tackle the increasing problem of marine pollution by encouraging the 'upcycling' and 'repurposing' of plastic litter. The €1.5 million 'Circular Ocean' project is being led by the Environmental Research Institute (ERI) of the North Highland College UHI and aims to turn waste plastic from the sea into a useful resource and support the move to a more circular economy.

Marine litter is a global problem: Approximately 8 million tonnes of plastic litter entering the seas and oceans annually creating an eyesore on beaches and having a dramatic impact on marine wildlife. It is estimated that over 100 000 marine mammals and 1 million seabirds are killed each year as a consequence of becoming consuming or becoming entanglement in discarded plastic. If current trends continue, it is estimated that by 2025 there could be one tonne of plastic for every three tonnes of finfish in our seas. The new project, funded by the EU's Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme, aims to help reduce marine litter by incentivising its removal and enable communities and entrepreneurs across northern Europe to utilise plastic litter as a potential resource.

In remote regions, renowned for their natural beauty and wild environments, monitoring, collecting and recycling marine litter can be difficult due to low population densities and prohibitive road and/or sea transport costs. With partners in Scotland (ERI), Rep. of Ireland (Macroom E), England (The Centre for Sustainable Design), Greenland (Arctic Technology Centre), and Norway (Norwegian University of Science and Technology) the 'Circular Ocean' project aims to overcome such obstacles by creating an online, open- access network allowing anyone to share and access practical and innovative ideas of how to reuse plastic. Already marine litter has been used to make new products including trainers, rucksacks, socks, jackets, skateboards, carpet tiles and sunglasses. It is hoped that eco-innovation using resources otherwise wasted and lost to the economy will encourage the development of local businesses and benefit rural economies.

By providing expert guidance and support on eco-innovation Circular Ocean will encourage enterprise based on the reuse and upcycling of discarded fishing nets and ropes which

currently represents 10% of marine litter. The project will oversee the running of an eco-innovation competition designed to encourage creative ideas of how to reuse discarded fishing nets. Open to all designers, engineers, entrepreneurs, and students with northern Europe and Arctic region, the competition will seek a new and innovative product and/or service solutions related to fishing net reuse.

Project lead Dr Neil James of ERI said “Virtually all plastic ever produced is still with us today, with more entering the seas each year to the detriment of fish, birds, turtles and marine mammals. If we utilise this so-called waste material for a new purpose we reduce the amount of new plastic created, reduce marine pollution, and encourage new green enterprises. Our aim in Circular Ocean is to facilitate this in the northern Europe and Arctic region.”





Northern Periphery and
Arctic Programme
2014-2020



EUROPEAN UNION
Investing in your future
European Regional Development Fund



Inspiring communities to realise the hidden
economic opportunities of discarded fishing nets
and ropes in the Northern Periphery & Arctic region



www.circularocean.eu info@circularocean.eu



The Centre for Sustainable Design

ARCTIC TECHNOLOGY CENTRE



NTNU

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Science and Technology



NIFHA



Nofir

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