



PRESS RELEASE

1 May 2019

Public donations to prevent plastic pollution to be doubled by UK government

Waste management charity WasteAid has today (1 May) launched its Widening the Net appeal, with all donations from the British public received by 31 July being matched by the UK government, up to £2 million.

WasteAid is raising funds to develop recycling training centres in some of the poorest parts of the world. By teaching people how to turn waste into useful products like floor tiles, the British charity is creating green jobs and preventing plastic waste from polluting the environment.

The Widening the Net programme will initially be used to train marginalised people in Douala, Cameroon, where there is no formal rubbish collection service. Plastic waste litters the ground and coastline, with tonnes of material reaching the sea every day.

WasteAid's plastics specialist Pierre Kamsouloum from Cameroon said: "This programme will build on my own personal experience of turning plastic bags into paving tiles. Recycling plastic has helped me out of poverty, and I am very happy to share these skills to help other young people."

Plastic pollution is a major problem for most low-income countries, where very little waste is managed. UK-based charity WasteAid trains disadvantaged women, young people and people with disabilities to transform the problem of waste into an economic opportunity.

Zoë Lenkiewicz, Head of Programmes and Engagement at WasteAid said: "The Widening the Net programme will train people around the world to create green jobs from plastic recycling. By capturing ocean-bound plastic and turning it into useful products, people will be empowered to support themselves in the long-term. Trainees will create green jobs, keep the environment healthy and prevent marine plastic pollution."

All donations WasteAid receives between 1 May and 31 July will help train people around the world to stop plastic pollution, and will be doubled by the UK government, up to £2 million.

Former International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said: "Plastic pollution is one of the biggest threats to our oceans and the UN estimates there will be more plastic in the sea than fish by 2050 unless we act now.

"The UK is a global leader in tackling plastic pollution, but there's still more to do. By backing WasteAid's UK Aid Match appeal, we're supporting communities across Cameroon to recycle, while creating jobs and prosperity.

"The UK government will double every pound donated by the public to this appeal, which means their generosity will go twice as far."

Launching the campaign with funding partner waste management company Biffa, WasteAid is constructing an ecobrick beach hut made from plastic waste on Hove beach to draw attention to the issue.

Michael Topham, Biffa Chief Executive Officer said: "If you think litter is a problem here, imagine what it's like in the countries that have no rubbish collection at all."

"People have to resort to burning or dumping their rubbish, with much of it ending up in the sea. We're pleased to be supporting WasteAid's Widening the Net appeal, which will get to the route of the problem by offering people a clean alternative and creating green jobs in the process."

Supporters are organising a variety of fundraising activities throughout the aid match period, with the Walk for WasteAid taking place on Saturday 6 July in Manchester.

All public donations received by 31 July to the Widening the Net appeal will be doubled by the UK government, empowering people in the poorest parts of the world to turn ocean-bound plastic into useful products.

Through the support of the British public, WasteAid can give people in the world's poorest places life-long skills so they can put plastic waste to good use and help keep our oceans healthy. The training will share recycling knowledge to enable people to live independently and with dignity, and contribute to a more sustainable future for everyone.

ENDS

- WasteAid is a UK registered charity set up by waste management professionals to tackle the global waste crisis. 2 billion people do not have their waste collected and 3 billion do not have a decent disposal site, and as a consequence waste ends up in rivers and ultimately the oceans.
- WasteAid works with communities in low-income countries to address the root causes of climate change and marine plastic pollution.
- WasteAid shares waste management knowledge and skills with communities in low-income countries; trains people to become self-employed recycling entrepreneurs; and influences decision-makers and the donor community to increase spending on waste management from the current 0.3% to 3% of international development aid.
- UK Aid Match runs from 1 May to 31 July, during which time all donations from the British public will be doubled by UK government. The funds will be used to set up a plastic recycling training centre in Douala, Cameroon. Any further money raised will be used to implement similar projects in other parts of the world.
- A launch event was held on Hove promenade on 1 May, with a beach hut made from ecobricks, 100 school children and ocean-themed circus performers.

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