

# GEF SGP NEWSLETTER

June 2025



Source: <https://www.undp.org/news/undp-and-rare-announce-partnership-address-plastic-pollution>

## From Communities to the Globe: Tackling Plastic Pollution Together

Did you know that villages, towns, and international leaders are all teaming up to fight plastic pollution — one project, policy, and promise at a time?

The Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme Guyana is empowering local communities to lead the charge in protecting the planet. These grassroots efforts are helping reduce plastic waste, preserve biodiversity, and promote sustainable livelihoods — all while keeping our environment clean and resilient.

### SGP's Local Impact: Small Grants, Big Results

- **Community Power:** SGP funds hands-on, community-led projects targeting plastic pollution and other pressing environmental issues.
- **Sustainable Livelihoods:** Many of these initiatives also support local economies by creating eco-friendly jobs and green businesses.

### Global Momentum: A World United Against Plastic

- **UN Plastic Pollution Treaty:** The United Nations Environment Assembly has adopted a resolution to develop a legally binding treaty that tackles plastic pollution at every stage — from production to disposal.
- **Circular Economy:** Global efforts are shifting from “use and toss” to “reuse and recycle,” promoting smarter consumption and better waste systems.
- **Global Collaboration:** Initiatives like the Global Plastic Action Partnership (GPAP) and the UNEP Plastics Initiative are driving policy, innovation, and collective action across sectors and borders.
- **OECD Policy Pathways:** The OECD is mapping out policy scenarios to eliminate plastic pollution by 2040 through comprehensive lifecycle solutions.

### Plastic Pollution: Small Steps, Big Impact!

From local clean-up crews to international policy makers, the world is uniting to tackle plastic pollution — and the momentum is growing fast.

Whether it's a community recycling project or a global treaty in progress, every action counts in the journey toward a cleaner, greener planet.

This World Environment Day (WED) 2025, SGP Guyana is celebrating two powerful stories of transformation, innovation, and hope, told through 2 of our projects—all sparked by something as simple (and as problematic) as plastic waste.

This WED 2025, we celebrate not just projects, but a movement. A movement where young people see the problem and become the solution. Where every plastic bottle is a chance to make a difference. And where schools become the heart of a greener, cleaner, circular Regions 3 and 6 .

### Stay Connected With Us!

Follow our journey and join the conversation:



Source: United Nations Development Programme – GEF Small Grants Programme, UN Environment Assembly, UNEP, OECD, Global Plastic Action Partnership



Handing over plastic receptacles by the GEF SGP Guyana National Coordinator to one of the participating schools under the Grace Temple Assembly of God plastic recycling project. Officially launched May 2023



Natural Conservatives Guyana Inc. project banner

# PLANET IN ACTION: BOLD MOVES FOR A BETTER TOMORROW



Photo Credits: <https://guyanaenergy.gy/post?slug=idb-official-hails-guyanas-bold-leadership-on-mobilizing-global-alliance-for-biodiversity>

## Local Action, Global Impact: SGP Projects in Focus

### Feature 1: Grace Temple Assembly of God – A Plastic–Fantastic Success!

**Project Title:** Promoting a circular economy through the sustainable recycling and upcycling of plastics in New Amsterdam

**Status:** Completed and Celebrated!

**Project Snapshot:** Who knew plastic waste could sparkle? This vibrant project set out to clean up East Berbice – from New Amsterdam to Lower Corentyne – by giving 300 kg of plastic waste a brand–new life! With a focus on sustainability and youth empowerment, the goal was to reduce unsightly litter, build skills, and create income opportunities by recycling and upcycling plastics in a truly circular economy.

**What GTAOG Did:** GTAOG didn't just clean up—they leveled up! A total of 314.25 kg of plastic was collected and shredded, then magically transformed into 535 pairs of earrings and 112 keyrings—stylish, sustainable, and proudly handmade! These creations brought in USD 890, supporting the educational journeys of the youth involved.

**Who Benefited:** A powerful group of 57 change–makers (30 males and 27 females) gained hands–on training in plastic waste management and recycling technology. Seven secondary schools jumped in, and so did the wider New Amsterdam community. Together, we sparked a wave of behavior change—from better waste habits to a new appreciation for sustainability.

### Impact Highlights:

- Increased skills and awareness of plastic recycling and circular economy practices
- Reduced indiscriminate dumping and plastic pollution
- Youth equipped with income–earning opportunities and practical, eco–friendly skills
- Community–wide environmental consciousness and responsibility are on the rise

## Break Free From Plastic: A Planet in Peril, A Future to Protect

In 2025, the World Environment Day theme calls urgent attention to the deadly force of plastic pollution, one of the biggest drivers of the triple planetary crisis:

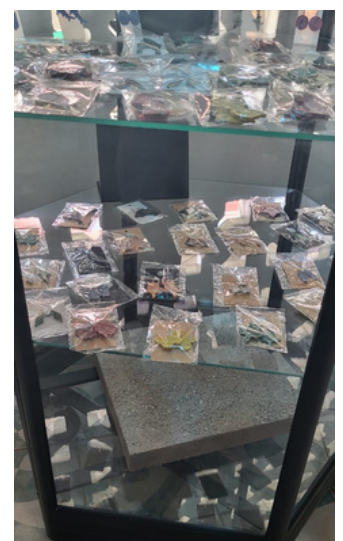
### Climate Change | Nature and Biodiversity Loss | Pollution and Waste

Each year, 11 million tonnes of plastic waste seep into our rivers, lakes, and oceans, choking ecosystems and wildlife. Meanwhile, microplastics silently invade our soils through landfills, sewage, and agricultural use, threatening food chains and human health.

The cost? Between US\$300 billion and US\$600 billion annually in environmental and social damage. But hope is rising. In November 2024, countries gathered in the Republic of Korea for the fifth round of negotiations on a global treaty to end plastic pollution.

This landmark effort continues from August 5–14, 2025, in Geneva, Switzerland, as the world unites to shape a future where plastic no longer poisons our planet.

***It's time to rethink, reduce, and rally for change. Ending plastic pollution starts with us, and it starts now.***



Value added products (keyrings, earrings) made for recycled plastic under the GTAOG project

# PLANET IN ACTION: BOLD MOVES FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

*continued*



Members of the Natural Conservatives Guyana Inc.



## Guyana's Green Push: EPA Leads the Charge Against Plastic Pollution

Guyana is making bold strides toward a cleaner, greener future, and at the forefront of this movement is the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). With the support of the Guyana National Bureau of Standards (GNBS) and other key agencies, the EPA has launched a series of impactful initiatives to reduce plastic waste and protect the environment.

Here's how Guyana is taking action:

### Styrofoam? Not on the Menu!

The EPA took a major step in the fight against plastic pollution by banning Styrofoam containers at fast-food outlets. This policy not only reduces harmful waste but also encourages more eco-friendly packaging alternatives.

### Single-Use Plastics: Phasing Out the Problem

A nationwide ban on single-use plastics was proposed, with a targeted implementation date of 2021. This ongoing effort is part of a broader national commitment to reducing non-biodegradable waste.

### Setting the Standard for Biodegradable Containers

In 2018, the GNBS, in collaboration with the EPA, introduced national standards for biodegradable containers. These standards ensure that imported food packaging is recyclable, biodegradable, and safe for the environment.

### Plastic with a Price: The Environmental Levy

Importers of plastic containers are required to pay an environmental levy to the Guyana Revenue Authority. This fee acts as a deterrent against plastic overuse and encourages businesses to seek more sustainable alternatives.

### EPA's Role in Protecting Our Environment

As the national environmental watchdog, the EPA has the legal authority to regulate activities that impact the environment. Through the Environmental Protection Act (Cap. 20:05), the agency can investigate, enforce compliance, and take necessary action to protect Guyana's natural resources.

Together, these efforts are helping to build a culture of sustainability — one where eco-conscious choices are not just encouraged, but expected.

Let's do our part. Say no to single-use plastics and yes to a cleaner Guyana!

Source of information- articles published by: The Office of the President – Cooperative Republic of Guyana, The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), The Guyana National Bureau of Standards (GNBS)



Alternatives to plastic products: Reusable cloth bags, wooden cutlery, reusable bottles and cups, metal straws

**Feature 2:** Natural Conservatives Guyana Inc. – Region 3's Youth Leading Charge!

**Project Title:** See the Plastic, Be the Change; towards developing attitudes and practices for a circular economy in 7 secondary schools in Region 3

**Status:** Ongoing – and already making waves!

This World Environment Day, we shine a spotlight on a movement that's transforming the way young people in Region 3 see plastic—not as trash, but as a tool for change.

Through the visionary leadership of Natural Conservatives Guyana Inc., the "See the Plastic, Be the Change" project is reaching 7 secondary schools with a powerful mission: to build a generation that rethinks waste, rewrites habits, and reimagines the future.

**The Goal:** To collect and recycle 1,000 kg of plastic bottles, while sparking a mindset shift in schools across Region 3. But this isn't just about cleanup—it's about capacity-building, environmental justice, and giving young people the tools they need to become circular economy champions.

### What's Happening:

- Youth-led recycling initiatives are taking root in schoolyards and classrooms.
- Interactive sessions on solid and plastic waste management are helping students connect their everyday choices to broader environmental impacts.
- Conversations are changing—so are habits. Open burning, littering, and dumping are being replaced with education, action, and accountability.

**Why It Matters:** In Region 3, the harmful effects of plastic pollution have long been a threat to health, beauty, and biodiversity. This project is flipping the script—empowering students to protect their environment with purpose and passion.