

BISHCMC PRECIOUS PLASTICS

Aims of the project

With plastic pollution being one of the prominent environmental issues that the world is facing today, we aim to both reduce plastic consumption and make the most out of plastic items consumed in our local community by collecting and repurposing them into various plastic items.

More specifically, we are working towards repurposing plastic waste produced by the school and the local community, and as such reduce the number of plastic waste produced. Additionally, the team has worked on making reusable products through plastic waste, as mentioned above. We are also working towards raising awareness of the negative impacts that plastic can have on the environment and encourage actions to be done in order for the community to feel more responsible for their plastic usage and hence start to replace plastic items with reusable alternatives.

Highlights from our experience

Over the course of the initiating, planning and executing this project, our team has been able to compile many memorable experiences that contribute to the dynamic of the team. We have collaborated with PLASTIC People Vietnam, who have helped us in obtaining machines, and have also informed the group members on the various machines and processes needed to accomplish our aim. With their knowledge on the project through previous experience, they have helped us with the technical aspects. This talk has been one of the most eye opening and informative experiences as it allowed us to develop a deeper understanding about the process, from simpler tasks such as plastic categorising by colours to more intricate details of how certain machines work and where they all fit in as a whole.

We also initiated collecting plastic at many locations around the school area which in itself helps to raise awareness for students on campus but also is a source of plastic for our team to start our project. Finally, our team comprises a wide range of students which helps to get in a variety of perspectives across the tasks we were involved from the start. There were certainly arguments, however, going this far, our team has been able to resolve disagreements and used different ideas to better ourselves.

Progress

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, many events of our project have been postponed or cancelled, and we have been unable to advance very much compared to when we submitted our Project Plan. However, by staying connected online during such times, we were able to work on the machines, and are currently in the process of ordering the extruder and the heat press.



Funds and donations

We would need quite a large amount of money to run this project, as in order to repurpose plastic waste, we need numerous machines to process them. As such, we have previously participated in the Cancham Competition, in which we submitted our environmental initiative, Precious Plastics, and have earned some funding for the project, which has allowed us to purchase the plastic shredder.

However, this has not been enough to support the purchasing of other machines needed, and so we have sent out proposals to the school administrative team and a school club, and have secured financial aid from them. Additionally, the school's Parent Teacher Group funded some money for the team. With this funding, we now have enough money to purchase other required machines, and have worked on sourcing the machines in order to expand our project.

Outcomes and impacts

We have raised awareness of issues pertaining to plastic waste among the school community, and we managed to implement ways of bringing down the plastic waste created by the school community, such as the 2020 Plastic Pledge that was introduced, as well as selling alternatives to plastic at school fairs. This made sure that Precious Plastics has made a positive, forward-thinking effect on the school community as a whole. We did this to make sure that we could have the biggest effect on the plastic waste around the community, at the right time. Also, with the collaboration with the school's Ecocoin team, we have created the basis of a sustainable system within the school and local community, in which reusable items would be used more frequently.

Knowledge and skills gained

We developed collaboration and communication skills, as the team was composed of students of various year groups, and we needed to work collaboratively in order to progress with the project. Another major skill we all developed were leadership skills, in which we stood in front of students to present activities and explain the project, as well as encouraging the involvement of the student population. Besides such skills, we were also able to develop organisational skills, time management, and perseverance.

When undergoing local clean ups, we realised that the community consumed many plastic cups and straws, due to the region being highly concentrated with cafes. We tried targeting this during fundraising events by selling reusable tumblers and straws.

Sustainable Development Goals addressed

GOAL 11: We have been able to create the basis of a sustainable system where more reusable items would be used.

GOAL 12: Reusable items provide a sustainable alternative to single-use items, and also a resolution to the excess consumption of plastic.

GOAL 13: Such project would positively impact the climate by reducing the potential usage of a prominent pollutant

GOAL 14 & GOAL 15: Plastic pollution is a prominent issue both on land and in seas.

GOAL 17: We have collaborated with various groups and individuals during the project.