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Ocean Plastic Technologies Rolls Out First Recycling Pods in St. Thomas

Ocean Plastic Technologies introduces micro recycling pods to tackle plastic waste on St. Thomas, with plans to extend environmentally friendly technology to St. Croix and St. John

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Ocean Plastic Technologies has announced the creation of a plastics recycling program on St. Thomas.?

The South African company builds on-site micro recycling pods that can be operated by one person shredding, cleaning, drying and granulating all grades of plastic, according to a recently issued release from the company's U.S.-based subsidiary, each pod fits into a 20-foot container for ease of transportation and deployment. These pods will be placed close to waste sources in order to process PET, HDPE, and PP plastics. The goal is to divert plastic waste from the oceans.?

Although St. Thomas is set to be the first island with recycling pods, the program is expected to expand to St. Croix and St. John. As capacity grows, OPT USA says it intends to begin processing additional plastics, as well as begin the production of recyclates, or recycled material.

The initiative has reportedly garnered support from local and international entities, including the Alliance to End Plastic Waste, the University of the Virgin Islands, and the V.I. Waste Management Authority. Opi'a Taino, a non-profit that advocates for the welfare of the islands' indigenous peoples, is also reportedly backing the recycling program.

“Our technology is designed to expand and create recycling in communities and industries across the globe and domestically in the US,” said Michael Vincent, president and CEO at OPT USA. He said it could lead to the creation of jobs in the territory. “OPT USA’s on-site recycling model creates revenue streams through combining a condensed value chain with superior logistics efficiencies,” Mr. Vincent added.

In its eight years of operation in Southern Africa, OPT has reportedly recycled over 2,700 tonnes of plastic waste annually, turning it into toys, outdoor furniture, and agricultural products.