

# IMPACT REPORT

FREE   
THE SEA



# 2024

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[Our Website](#)

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# FOREWORD

In our daily lives, we have all developed and adapted to cultural routines that keep us constantly busy. We obsess over small details and chase after low-priority tasks, leaving ourselves unable to make time to zoom out and see the bigger picture.

Ever since the first astronauts set foot in space, our planet has been depicted as a blue marble, a spontaneous expression of awe when the human eye first captured a greater truth.

The ocean is by far the most dominant ecosystem on our planet, not only in size and volume but also in its protective nature as the caretaker of all life on Earth. Producing two-thirds of the oxygen all creatures breathe, regulating our climate and weather, and storing carbon and toxic emissions to slow down climate change, the ocean safeguards us from our endless shortsightedness. It is both the origin of all life and its most predominant (if not only) caretaker.

And we couldn't be further from the truth when we collectively call our home "planet Earth," when in reality, it is an **aquatic** planet.

At Free The Sea, we first and foremost push ourselves to take responsibility, acknowledging that we are all representatives of the human community, no matter how "good" we aspire to be in our daily lives as individuals. We are here to take action and to call for action, fully aware of our humble reach as a small organization.

We look back on a record year of impact through Free The Sea in 2024 and, at the same time, recognize that it is still no more than a drop in the ocean. We ask ourselves: how many drops make a flood? A powerful stream that encourages and gathers positive droplet-impacts around the globe, united in the purpose of protecting the most important and most vulnerable life-supporting system our planet provides.

Only through collaboration, encouragement, and coordination will we be able to meet the greatest challenge of our time.

This report is dedicated to all who are already part of our movement and, even more importantly, to those who will join us in the future.

**Christoph Dörn**  
Founder of Free The Sea



A narrow alleyway between wooden buildings in Batam, Indonesia, filled with plastic waste. The alleyway is cluttered with a large amount of discarded plastic bottles, bags, and other debris. The buildings are made of weathered wood and have a corrugated metal roof. A green window frame is visible on the left building. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting an overcast day or a shaded area.

**OUR STARTING POINT:  
BATAM, INDONESIA**

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Batam, a rapidly growing industrial hub as close as 14 km from Singapore, is the largest city in the Indonesian Riau Archipelago.

With over 1.2 million residents, its rapid development has brought economic growth but also environmental challenges, particularly in waste management.

Limited landfill space and inadequate collection systems lead to plastic pollution leaking to the environment and eventually the ocean, threatening marine ecosystems and local livelihoods.

Batam is where Free The Sea began, and today, we are creating an expanding movement that shapes the future of sustainable waste management on a global scale.



# THE FUNDAMENTALS

**WE ARE ON A MISSION TO  
PREVENT PLASTIC FROM  
ENTERING THE OCEAN.**

And anyone has the power to support us.

Free The Sea unites people in a shared mission to protect the ocean's health and biodiversity.



## Here is how we do it



# THE FUNDAMENTALS

OUR HOLISTIC APPROACH

## PREVENTING OCEAN PLASTIC

We build plastic waste management infrastructure in vulnerable coastal areas, eliminating plastic waste leakage into the ocean.



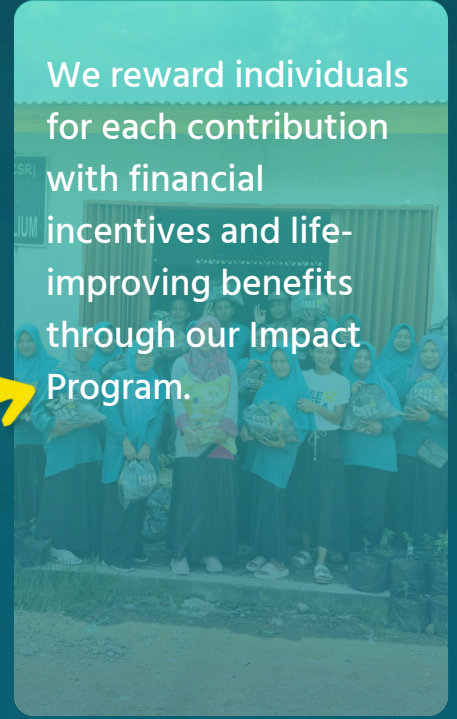
## TRANSFORMING WASTE

The collected plastic is then recycled and upcycled into valuable new materials at our facility, giving waste a second life.



## EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

We reward individuals for each contribution with financial incentives and life-improving benefits through our Impact Program.



# 2024 IN NUMBERS

**198,056** kg of plastic waste were prevented from entering the ocean,

of which **81%** was recycled, contributing directly to the circular economy\*

**33** Collection Points and **228** Active Members driving collection efforts

**40** Collection Partners and **41** drop boxes were active across the island

**+1,000** lives positively impacted\*\*

**3,449** participating volunteers during **6** clean ups

\*The remaining plastic is diverted to landfill due to limited local market demand and its non-recyclable composition.

While landfilling is not ideal, it is considered controlled disposal and still a much better alternative than unmanaged plastic waste that would otherwise pollute the ocean.

\*\*This number is calculated based on the majority of households in Indonesia. Source: [Statista](#)

## Let's break this down

# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

FTS COLLECTION ECOSYSTEM

In alignment with SDGs:



During 2024, we prevented  
198,056 kg of plastic waste from  
reaching the ocean.

That's roughly the weight of 2,476 Komodo  
dragons, Indonesia's legendary national  
animal!

And we did it with the  
support of every  
member of our  
Collection Ecosystem...



# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

## FTS COLLECTION ECOSYSTEM



**Preventing plastic pollution starts at the source, especially in coastal regions where waste management systems are limited or absent.**

**In 2024, 33 Collection Points played a vital role in expanding the reach of our our Collection Ecosystem.**

Managed by a dedicated network of Bank Sampah (Waste Banks), these drop-off locations serve as a point for individuals to dispose of their plastic waste responsibly, in exchange for incentives that support their livelihoods.

Beyond collection, they are also central to the pre-sorting process, ensuring that plastic waste is properly segregated and ready for recycling at our facility.



Map of Collection Points by the end of 2024

# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

## FTS COLLECTION ECOSYSTEM

In alignment with SDGs:



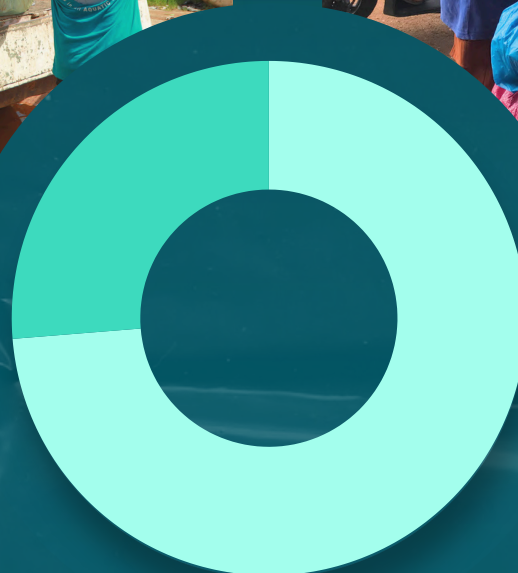
**By the end of 2024, our Collection Ecosystem counted 468 registered members, with 228 actively contributing by regularly disposing of their plastic waste at our Collection Points.**

While Collection Points are essential infrastructure for stopping plastic at the source, it's the active engagement of individuals that truly drives change.

Every contribution helps create a culture of environmental responsibility, one where community behavior is aligned with deep respect for nature and the ocean.



Male members  
26.3%



Female members  
73.7%

# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

## FTS COLLECTION ECOSYSTEM

In alignment with SDGs:



**Our network of Collection Partners continued to grow in 2024, with 40 active partners supporting our operations and 41 drop-off boxes placed across the island.**

**Notably, 25 new partners joined us this year alone, further amplifying our mission to keep plastic out of the ocean.**

From local businesses, hotels and restaurants to schools and universities, every local organization is encouraged to step up and become part of the solution.

Each partner is offered at least one drop-off box, providing the individuals in their area with an accessible way to dispose of plastic waste.

By engaging these organizations, we extend the reach of our Collection Ecosystem and help promote better waste practices among their employees and customers, and the wider public.



Map of Collection Partners by the end of 2024

# SOCIAL IMPACT

## FTS IMPACT PROGRAM

In alignment with SDGs:



**Over 1,000 individuals have benefited from our Impact Program.**

Our Impact Program is designed to support and reward every individual of Batam who actively contributes to our mission.

An improved quality of life creates pathways to greater opportunities and fosters the sustainable evolution of communities.

**In 2024, the program included the following social benefits:**

**2,171** grocery vouchers provided. These are distributed based on the amount of plastic waste collected.

**1,581** care packages provided during festive seasons such as Eid al-Fitr, Christmas and New Years.

**1,023** individual health checks conducted.



# EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

In alignment with SDGs:

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



4 QUALITY EDUCATION



**At Free The Sea, education is a powerful catalyst for change.**

We seize every opportunity to participate in educational events or host them ourselves, hoping to inspire others to protect the ocean and help them understand its vital role in our planet's health.

What's more, we provide scholarships at schools and orphanages as part of our Impact Program.

**During 2024, we granted 58 scholarships to students from 32 different schools.**



# EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

## FTS CLEAN UPS

In alignment with SDGs:



**3,449 individuals participated in 6 different clean up events**

We organize and take part in clean-ups to raise awareness about the extent of plastic pollution on the island, allowing participants to witness the issue firsthand and reflect on the big scale of the consequences of poor waste management.

**FEBRUARY:** Indonesia Waste Awareness Day



**APRIL:** Earth Day



**JUNE:** World Ocean Day



**AUGUST:** Independence Day



**SEPTEMBER:** World Clean Up Day



**DECEMBER:** End of year celebration



# ADVANCES IN TRANSPARENCY AND TRACEABILITY



Successfully completed FTS Impact Code training among our Collection Points



Passed Ocean Bound Plastic's (OBP) external audit with ZERO findings.

Starting from 2025, we are now Ocean Bound Plastic (OBP) certified, covering the following standards:

- OBP Collection Organization
- OBP Recycling Organization



By the end of the year, we enhanced our traceability capabilities by integrating blockchain-powered technology from Empower.eco, enabling us to register and certify every step of the plastic waste journey within our Collection Ecosystem.



# CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED



## Logistical barriers in waste collection

One of the key challenges we faced this year was reaching certain areas of the island with our waste collection trucks. Narrow roads and difficult terrain limited our ability to cover all communities effectively.

To address this, we expanded our transport and logistics fleet by introducing three-wheel motorbikes, allowing us to access harder-to-reach locations and improve waste collection coverage.



## Addressing non-recyclable plastic waste

Until now, our collection of non-recyclable plastics has been very limited, only carried out during cleanups. And naturally, any mismanaged plastic waste has the potential to enter the ocean, no matter what its type is.

In response, we designed a pilot project aimed at collecting all types of plastic, regardless of recyclability.

This initiative is still in the testing phase, but it represents an expansion in our business scope starting from 2025 onwards, and a step toward comprehensive waste management solutions.

# SPECIAL THANKS

None of this would have been possible without the dedication and collaboration of each individual who has contributed to what is now a shared mission.

From collection partners, collection point members, communities to individuals and beyond, everyone has the power to protect the very foundation of life on Earth: the ocean.

It is this mutual commitment that fuels real change. Together, we're not just keeping plastic out of the ocean, we're creating a future where marine life flourishes, communities thrive, and sustainability is second nature.

# Thank you for being part of this journey!

## COMPANIES:



## HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS:



## SCHOOLS AND ORGANIZATIONS:



# HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Want to learn more?

The ocean can't wait any longer.

Action is required now.

Join our movement to free the sea and let's connect today:



[info@freethesea.com](mailto:info@freethesea.com)



[free.the.sea](https://www.instagram.com/free.the.sea)



[www.freethesea.com](http://www.freethesea.com)



[Free The Sea](https://www.linkedin.com/company/free-the-sea)



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