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## **Purse seine industries and Seychelles launch partnership to recycle end-of-life fishing nets**

**On May 19<sup>th</sup> 2022, OPAGAC and ORTHONGEL launched a joint net recycling project with BRIKOLE Ltd, a new local start-up managed by the NGO Sustainability for Seychelles<sup>1</sup>.**

The Seychellean Department of Blue Economy has been collaborating with the tuna industry for some time to promote the recycling of end-of-life fishing nets used by purse seiners operating in Seychelles. As part of the effort, OPAGAC has financed since 2019 an evaluation project in consultation with the local stakeholders to find feasible solutions. The BRIKOLE start-up is the joint achievement of this long run work.

Sustainability for Seychelles highlights that *"all parties involved want to limit the impact of fishing on the environment and so they want to address the issue of end-of-life fishing nets in Seychelles through sustainable business operations"*. In a press statement, BRIKOLE insists that there will be a *"first phase whereby the net repair yard would be cleared [of old nets and tools], followed by a second phase with the construction of a local recycling facility [where] the nets will be processed, maximizing the economic value from previously unwanted material"*, creating new jobs in Seychelles.

Dr Julio Morón, managing director of OPAGAC, believes that *"this is a groundbreaking project to which OPAGAC companies are proud to contribute by donating end-of-life fishing nets for effective recycling, generating added value in Seychelles. The project confirms the commitment of the tuna industry with sustainable practices and with local economic development"*.

ORTHONGEL, representing French and Italian tuna purse seiners, has joined this initiative. Its president Xavier Leduc said that *"this cooperation with an innovative startup involved in the circular and blue economy of Seychelles will not only prevent the waste of old fishing nets but also guarantee that they are recycled"*.

BRIKOLE can rely on the donation of end-of-life nets from a total of 29 vessels: 8 from Spain, 6 from Seychelles, 11 from France, 3 from Mauritius and 1 from Italy. That will help BRIKOLE to start operations soon and progress in the development of the recycling process. The project is still open to other purse seine operators.

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<sup>1</sup> The signature of the Memorandum of Understanding was witnessed by Mr. Nicol Elizabeth, the Seychelles Fishing Authority CEO, Mr. Philippe Micheaud, Counsellor for the Minister of Fishing and Blue Economy and Mr. Lyderich Chetty, representative of Seaward, a local shipping agency.

The project is yet another encouraging example of the purse seine fleet improving the sustainability of its fishing operations, this time through the collaboration with local partners such as Sustainability for Seychelles and the drive of the Seychellean Blue Economy Department.

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