

ECOSOC, SOMALIA

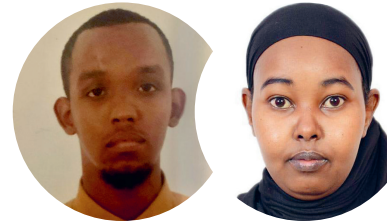
Building the World

ECOSOC is a social enterprise based in Mogadishu, Somalia, spearheaded by a team of young environmentalists who have a background in Medicine and Environmental Conservation. In order to clean up the cities from plastic waste, they have introduced an innovative, chemical-free, and energy-conserving plastic extrusion technology called “Waxy ii” to recycle and to transform post-consumer plastic waste, packaging materials, and agricultural waste into durable and environmentally friendly roof tiles, interlocking bricks, paving stones and deck beams. This reduces the need for building material manufactured from wood, helping to preserve the environment and forests, prevent deforestation, and thus mitigating climate change.

women groups to facilitate the collection and delivery of plastics to the sorting sites. The beauty of the recycled products: They are durable, cost-effective, aesthetic, insect resistant, and easy to work with. The young bright minds of this social enterprise have an ambitious three-year strategic plan: 1. Recycle over 2.5 million kg of plastic and save an estimated 250 acres of forest. 2. Prevent 2,500 tons of carbon dioxide gas emissions. 3. Create 300 direct jobs.

BRONZE AWARD WINNER

Mohamed Hassan Mahamad, Dr. Mohamed Abdirashid Farah, Shamsu Hussein, ECOSOC, Somalia



The passionate team collects waste from households, businesses, and municipal markets and takes it to decentralized sorting sites where it gets sorted into more than 40 fractions. It is then composted from organic waste into high-quality compost. Other waste materials as paper, glass, and metal are also recycled. The cities are divided into different zones, where ECOSOC engages youth and





Coffee Talk with Mohamed Hassan

Who are you and what do you do? My name is Mohamed Hassan. I am the founder of ECOSOC Somalia. Plastics are often portrayed as a culprit of environmental degradation, but it doesn't have to be that way. ECOSOC is a social enterprise that addresses the challenges of urban waste management including plastic pollution, chronic youth unemployment, deforestation, and climate change. We collect waste plastic and manufacture eco-friendly roof tiles, interlocking bricks, and deck beams from it. We employ a reliably working technology, local labor, and resources to produce innovative products and help solve pressing socio-economic and environmental challenges.

What motivated you to get into sustainability? This was a gradual process. I have lived both in the coastal towns of Mogadishu and Kismayu. I have seen what plastic pollution has done to the marine ecosystem. I have left active employment to pursue this mission. The mission of cleaning Somalia's coastline and making a living out of it for others.

How did you come up with your project idea? I started reading documents and consulting like-minded people on how to clean up the waste. I wanted to come up with a social project that cleans the environment as well as creates employment.

What is a possible future for ECOSOC? My plan is to expand this project into other coastal towns. Somalia has the longest coastline in Africa but all locations have the same problem of plastic waste. It would be a joy to see our concept implemented in all the coastal towns of Somalia.

What do you see as the biggest obstacles on your way? Insecurity and lack of financial funds. Instability in Somalia has made it difficult for environmental activists to work in peace. Remnants of explosives are also left behind in waste and hence can cause explosions and deaths during collection. Due to the volatile nature of the region, it is also difficult to get financial funding.

What do you think will be the solution to the plastic pollution problem on a large scale? Creating alternatives for plastics. Plastics should be avoided at all costs. Man has prospered long before the advent of plastics. Big Multinationals that deal with plastics must be put to task to account for their plastic generation. Social enterprises that are engaged in plastic collection and recycling must be helped financially and technically to enable them to run effectively.

