

Nam Can Tho University Supports Community in Implementing Solutions to Reduce Environmental Pollution

In addition to its mission in education and training, community assistance is also a priority for Nam Can Tho University and is carried out effectively. Beyond the enthusiastic activities of the Youth Unions from various faculties and departments at the university, the faculty and students of the Environmental and Resource Management program have made significant contributions to supporting the local community in addressing plastic waste issues.

Notably, they collaborated with the “For a Mekong River Without Waste – Pilot Circular Economy at Can Tho Floating Markets” project. This initiative aimed to promote a circular economy, reduce waste from rivers to the sea, and create behavioral changes in waste management among local communities living on the rivers. The project was implemented by the GreenHub Center for Green Development and the Research Center for Resources and Rural Development (RECERD), with the support and participation of the local community, Nam Can Tho University, the People’s Committee of Can Tho City, the Department of Natural Resources and Environment of Can Tho City, and local authorities from Binh Thuy and Cai Rang districts. During the project implementation, Nam Can Tho University students supported local residents in regularly collecting and sorting waste every two weeks. In addition, the lecturers from the Environmental and Resource Management program actively shared experiences and guided locals in practicing solutions to reduce waste and recycle plastic waste into handicraft products. These recycled products could be sold at local tourist spots, promoting the circular economy and generating income for the community.



A few images of Nam Can Tho University’s faculty and students assisting the community in raising environmental awareness and guiding waste sorting and recycling practices

Through measures such as enhancing education and raising community awareness, initial steps to build habits of waste sorting, collection, and effective organic waste management have been implemented with remarkable results. After a year of implementation, from May 2022 to May 2023, through organizing waste sorting, collection, and treatment activities and piloting effective organic waste treatment models, local residents have gradually become accustomed to effective waste reduction and treatment solutions at the household level. Examples include composting organic waste with the Banana Circle model, making bio-cleaning solutions from fruit peels, collecting agricultural products for charity kitchens, and utilizing agricultural by-products for animal husbandry or coconut shells for fuel. To date, more than 30 tons of agricultural products have been delivered to charity kitchens; approximately 13 tons of coconut shells have been collected for fuel, and 150 tons of agricultural by-products have been effectively collected and used for animal husbandry. Moreover, the project has organized a pilot system for collecting and transporting waste from residential boats at Cai Rang Floating Market and Son Islet. In just over six months, 338 tons of low-value waste have been collected and transported to the city's waste treatment facility.

Besides these activities, Nam Can Tho University also emphasizes scientific research and sustainable development. The university consistently provides opportunities for lecturers to attend seminars related to environmental management, pollution reduction, and quality of life improvement. Also noteworthy is that lecturers at the university have contributed plenty of presentations and reports at both international and domestic conferences on addressing environmental pollution issues and orienting toward sustainable development. Some notable conferences include the International Conference “The Fourth Industrial Revolution - Applications for Developing a Sustainable Economy and Adaptation to Climate Change” at Nam Can Tho University in November 2023, the National Scientific Conference “Application of Technology to Develop a Sustainable Tourism Supply Chain” in June 2023 at the University of Economics Ho Chi Minh City - Vinh Long Branch, the International Conference “Leveraging Carbon Markets for Sustainability in Vietnam” at Tra Vinh University, and the City-Level Seminar “Greenhouse Gas Inventory in Enterprises Towards Net Zero Carbon” at the Center for Science and Technology Application in Can Tho.