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Responsibility

AKVA group to construct world's first aquaculture pen in recycled materials

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By Responsible Seafood Advocate

Collaborative initiative to upcycle plastic from discarded aquaculture pens

In partnership with Plasto and Oceanize, [the AKVA group \(https://www.akvagroup.com/home\)](https://www.akvagroup.com/home), is set to build the world's first aquaculture pen composed of recycled materials. While the Norway-based company has used recycled plastic on the pen walkways in the past, this initiative will make it possible to construct an entire pen based on recycled plastic from discarded pens.

"Pens today are not a big litter problem, but there is a great potential for using the plastic in new pens," said Trude Olafsen, project manager at AKVA. "In this project, we will achieve short, national value chains as the project participants are all established in Norway."

Due to requirements for material quality that are regulated by a technical standard (NS 9415, 2009), mainly virgin plastic is used in load-bearing structures in the pens. According to the AKVA group, the project will challenge this standard not by changing the requirements, but by proving that recycled plastic from a discarded aquaculture facility has the qualities to meet the requirements.

Helgeland Plast, a subsidiary of AKVA group, produces the pens in Mo i Rana, Norway. Oceanize collects pens along the entire coast and has its granulation factory in Rørvik, and Plasto produces parts for the pens in Åndalsnes. Additionally, the AKVA group plans to "spread knowledge to other fish



A pen from AKVA group, which is working towards constructing the world's first aquaculture pen in recycled materials. Photo: AKVA group

farming nations where they sell plastic pens." Overall, the partnership shows promise for putting an "efficient and national value chain" in place.



(<http://info.globalseafood.org/goal-2022-save-the-date>).

"The project is a major circular economic milestone," said Trude Vareide-Giskås, project manager at Oceanize (<https://oceanize.co.jp/>). "Now we get the opportunity to show the qualities of our plastic granulate. At the same time, complete solutions like these are central in a sustainability perspective."

Up to 12,000 metric tons of plastic waste is generated annually from the aquaculture industry and the plastic resources are reused or collected and recycled, the company stated. The project received funding from the Norwegian Retailer's Environment Fund, Handelens Miljøfond

(<https://handelensmiljofond.no/>), which supports initiatives to increase the use of recycled plastic resources. The organization chose to support the project for the establishment of circular value chains within pen production in Norway.

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