REDUCE GUIDELINES

2026

REDUCING SINGLE USE PLASTICS IN ZANZIBAR'S TOURISM INDUSTRY

CHUMBE ISLAND CORAL PARK

COMMISSION FOR TOURISM ZANZIBAR

Blue Impact NETWORK

ProsperBlue healthy ocean, prosperous people

german cooperation DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

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FOREWORD

ZANZIBAR COMMISSION FOR TOURISM

Tourism is one of Zanzibar's greatest strengths, creating employment, supporting livelihoods, and showcasing the natural and cultural heritage that make our islands unique. Protecting these assets is not only an environmental responsibility but a strategic investment in the long-term competitiveness and resilience of our tourism industry.

Through the **Greener Zanzibar** campaign, the **Zanzibar Declaration on Sustainable Tourism**, and the **Mandatory Waste Management Program**, the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar has set a clear vision for a tourism sector that balances economic growth with environmental stewardship. Sustainable waste management, including the reduction of single-use plastics, is one of the key priorities identified through this shared commitment.

These **REDUCE Guidelines** are one of the practical tools developed under the Greener Zanzibar campaign to help tourism businesses turn ambition into action. They provide realistic, evidence-based solutions to reduce unnecessary plastics, improve procurement practices, engage suppliers, and adopt more circular approaches to operations, demonstrating that sustainability and high-quality hospitality go hand in hand.

As Executive Secretary of the Zanzibar Commission for Tourism, I firmly believe that sustainable tourism is built through **action, partnership, and innovation**. The Commission is committed to leading this transition by providing practical guidance, fostering collaboration across the tourism value chain, and supporting licensed tourism businesses in implementing solutions that strengthen both their operations and our destination. The future competitiveness of Zanzibar depends on our ability to protect the natural assets that make our islands exceptional while embracing innovative approaches that enhance the visitor experience.

I invite every tourism stakeholder to embrace these guidelines and join us in leading this transformation. Together, we can build a tourism sector that is cleaner, more resilient, and more competitive—ensuring that Zanzibar remains a world-class island destination where communities thrive, nature flourishes, and visitors leave inspired.

Arif Abbas Manji

Executive Secretary
Zanzibar Commission for Tourism

FOREWORD

CHUMBE ISLAND CORAL PARK

Zanzibar's extraordinary natural environment is the foundation upon which the tourism industry is built. Its coral reefs, forests, beaches and rich cultural heritage attract visitors from around the world, while also sustaining the livelihoods and wellbeing of local communities. Protecting these assets is therefore not simply an environmental responsibility—it is essential to the long-term success and resilience of the tourism sector.

For more than thirty years, Chumbe Island Coral Park has demonstrated that world-class tourism and environmental stewardship can go hand in hand. Our experience has shown that reducing waste, rethinking procurement, and embracing circular approaches not only lessens environmental impacts but also strengthens operational efficiency, enhancing guest satisfaction, and creating a more authentic and distinctive visitor experience.

The REDUCE Guidelines build upon this practical experience and combine it with research, stakeholder engagement, and lessons from tourism operators across Zanzibar. Rather than prescribing one-size-fits-all solutions, these Guidelines provide realistic, evidence-based guidance that can be adapted by tourism businesses of every size and type. They show that meaningful reductions in single-use plastics are both achievable and commercially sensible.

No single organisation can solve the challenge of plastic pollution alone. Success will depend on collaboration between government, tourism operators, suppliers, communities, and visitors. Every establishment that chooses to eliminate unnecessary plastics, improve purchasing practices, and invest in reusable systems contributes to a cleaner environment, a stronger tourism brand, and a more resilient future for Zanzibar.

I encourage all tourism stakeholders to embrace these guidelines and become part of a growing movement that is redefining hospitality in Zanzibar—one that delivers exceptional guest experiences while safeguarding the remarkable natural heritage upon which our shared future depends.

Eleanor Carter

Co-Director
Chumbe Island Coral Park

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01 HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The REDUCE Guidelines have been developed by Blue Impact Network Ltd., a sustainable tourism hub in Zanzibar, in partnership with Chumbe Island Coral Park and the Zanzibar Commission for Tourism, with support of the EU and the German Government under the StawiBluu program implemented by GIZ.

Waste management is consistently identified as one of the greatest challenges facing tourism in Zanzibar due to limited waste management infrastructure and an almost non-existent plastic recycling capacity. These guidelines therefore focus on addressing the issue at its source by identifying realistic and practical ways to reduce and avoid single-use plastic waste generation in tourism operations.

This guide is a strategic road map designed to transition tourism accommodations from a linear 'take-make-waste' model to a more circular and modern guest experience. It integrates a REDUCE Framework with actionable strategies derived from global sustainable tourism standards as well as regional assessments specific to Zanzibar.

The guidelines are based on the latest research, case studies from pioneering tourism establishments in Zanzibar, supplier consultations, and primary data insights into the current challenges faced by the sector. The examples and recommendations are inspired by global best practices taking into account the operational realities and context of Zanzibar. Together, they are intended to support a collective transition towards a cleaner, high-quality tourism experience in Zanzibar that reduces pressure on the environment and public health. **The guidelines are intended for all tourism stakeholders seeking to tackle plastic waste and are specifically designed to suit tourism establishments of all sizes. They include examples and recommendations tailored to different operational realities and capacities.**

The guidelines directly support the Greener Zanzibar campaign, the Mandatory Waste Management Program, as well as the Zanzibar Declaration on Sustainable Tourism. Launched in 2023 and endorsed by His Excellency President Mwinyi, the Zanzibar Declaration identified sustainable waste management as one of five priority areas through a multi-stakeholder process. Together, these initiatives set a clear direction for a tourism sector that balances economic growth with environmental stewardship. Signatories to the Declaration commit to reducing plastic waste by eliminating unnecessary single-use plastics, promoting plastic-free alternatives such as refillable glass bottles, strengthening recycling initiatives across the tourism sector, and working towards the elimination of problematic plastic packaging and items. They are also encouraged to join the Global Tourism Plastics Initiative led by UN Environment Programme and the World Tourism Organisation, in collaboration with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation (Blue Impact Network and Chumbe Island Coral Park are both signatories) and work towards eliminating problematic plastic packaging and items. **Scan the QR code below to become a signatory today!**

DID YOU KNOW?

Zanzibar's Ban on Plastic Carry Bags[1], under the Environmental Management Act No.3 of 2015, makes it illegal to manufacture, import, store, sell, transport, supply, possess, litter, burn, or use plastic carry bags for any purpose. Providing a strong legal foundation for future initiatives that promote sustainable alternatives and strengthen waste reduction efforts.

Global Tourism Plastics Initiative

Zanzibar Sustainable Tourism Declaration launch in 2023 ▲

1 https://bit.ly/4eFJeRZ

02 THE CASE FOR CHANGE

Zanzibar's hospitality sector is at the heart of both the archipelago's economic success and one of its most urgent environmental challenges. Tourism creates jobs, brings foreign exchange, and attracts investment. At the same time, it significantly increases solid waste generation and plastic litter (UNWTO, 2020). For an island destination whose appeal depends on clean beaches, healthy marine ecosystems, and high-quality visitor experience, plastic pollution is not just a waste issue—it is a direct business risk.

Globally, plastic pollution has reached critical levels. More than 400 million tonnes of plastic are produced each year (UNEP, 2023), yet only a small amount is effectively recycled (OECD, 2022). Much of the rest ends up in landfills, is burned, or enters into the environment. Research shows that plastics make up the majority of marine and shoreline litter, especially in tourism-desination areas (UNEP, 2021).

For Zanzibar, these global challenges are intensified by local realities. Hotels, resorts, restaurants, and visitor services contribute to high consumption of bottled water, individually packaged products, takeaway containers, disposable amenities, and plastic packaging. There is also a less visible concern: in Zanzibar's hot climate, plastic packaging—particularly single-use Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) water bottles—can degrade when exposed to heat and sunlight during storage and transport. Research suggests that such degradation may release micro plastics and chemical additives into drinking water. For hospitality operators, this raises questions not only about environmental impact, but also about product quality, guest trust, and brand reputation.

Recycling in Zanzibar is limited by the structural constraints of a small island economy. Local recycling facilities are few, transporting waste elsewhere for processing is expensive, and waste volumes are often too small to support advanced recycling technologies at a financially sustainable scale. The limitations of waste collection systems are increasingly recognized as a systemic management challenge. **Recycling, while important, cannot solve plastic pollution on its own**. In practice, many plastics are not truly recycled into the same product but down-cycled into lower-value materials that eventually become waste. **Put simply, recycling delays disposal— it does not eliminate the problem.**

DID YOU KNOW?

ON AVERAGE, ONLY 4% OF SOLID WASTE (INCL. PLASTICS) IS RECYCLED IN AFRICA

(ELLEN MACARTHUR FOUNDATION, 2021)

This means that the most effective solution is to reduce plastic use at the source.

For hospitality businesses, reducing plastic starts with understanding which plastics to avoid and which materials are better suited for safer reuse systems. Some plastics, such as Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC), Polystyrene (PS) (e.g., Styrofoam) and mixed plastics containing potentially harmful additives, present clear environmental and health concerns and should be phased out. Others, such as High-Density Polyethylene (HDPE) and Polypropylene (PP), are more durable and better suited for refill, reuse, and operational systems. This knowledge helps businesses make smarter purchasing decisions and shift toward safer alternatives.

PET exposure to heat and sunlight presents a serious health risk ▲

KNOWING YOUR PLASTICS

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR HOSPITALITY OPERATIONS

Reducing plastic starts with understanding what materials are being used in daily operations. Not all plastics are the same. Some are relatively stable and suitable for reuse systems, while others carry greater environmental and health risks and should be avoided where possible. For hotels and accommodation providers, knowing the difference helps improve purchasing decisions, strengthen guest safety, and support more sustainable operations.

"JUST AS YOU BREAK UP FROM A TOXIC RELATIONSHIP, LET'S BREAK UP FROM OUR TOXIC RELATIONSHIPS WITH PLASTICS. IT IS TIME TO LET SINGLE-USE PLASTICS REMAIN SINGLE!"

[JOSEPH NGUTHIRU, UN YOUTH CHAMPION OF THE EARTH]

PET (Type 1) – Commonly used for bottled water and soft drinks. PET is lightweight and convenient but designed mainly for single use. In hot climates, prolonged sun and heat exposure can degrade PET, meaning micro-plastics seep into bottled water, soft drinks and other beverages. Hotels should reduce dependence on single-use PET and invest in refillable water systems wherever feasible.

HDPE (Type 2) – Used for cleaning product containers, storage bottles, refill canisters, and packaging. It is durable, relatively stable, and well suited for repeated use. This is one of the more practical plastics for hospitality reuse systems and bulk refill operations. It can also be recycled in Zanzibar[2].

PVC (Type 3) – Found in cling film, flexible packaging, and some synthetic materials. PVC often contains hazardous additives and poses environnemental concerns throughout its lifecycle. Where alternatives exist, businesses should phase out PVC-based products.

LDPE (Type 4) – Used in plastic bags, wrapping films, liners, and soft packaging. Because Low-Density Polyethylene (LDPE) is lightweight, it easily escapes into the environment and is difficult to recover effectively. Reusable bags, washable covers, and alternative packaging systems are better long-term options.

2 Chako Zanzibar – https://chakozanzibar.com/

PLASTIC TYPES & HOSPITALITY BEST PRACTICE

1 PET
POLYETHYLENE TEREPHTHALATE

FOUND IN: Water and drink bottles
BEST PRACTICE: Phase out. Replace with refillable water systems.

2 HDPE
HIGH-DENSITY POLYETHYLENE

FOUND IN: Cleaning product containers, refill or storage canisters
BEST PRACTICE: Well-suited for repeat use and locally recyclable.

3 PVC
POLYVINYL CHLORIDE

FOUND IN: Cling film, flexible packaging, some synthetic materials
BEST PRACTICE: Avoid and phase out.

4 LDPE
LOW-DENSITY POLYETHYLENE

FOUND IN: Plastic bags, wrapping films, liners, and soft packaging
BEST PRACTICE: Phase out. Replace with reusable alternatives.

5 PP
POLYPROPYLENE

FOUND IN: Food storage containers, bottle caps, dispensers
BEST PRACTICE: Use with care. Ensure proper recovery system.

6 PS
POLYSTYRENE

FOUND IN: Takeaway boxes, cups, trays, and packaging
BEST PRACTICE: Phase out. Replace with reusable alternatives.

7 OTHER
OTHER PLASTICS

FOUND IN: Mixed and speciality plastics
BEST PRACTICE: Unless clearly certified safe, avoid and phase out.

PP (Type 5) – Used for reusable food containers, bottle caps, dispensers, and storage systems. It is durable and suitable for refill and reuse models, but when burned it can release harmful emissions. PP is a high-value recyclable, but only if proper recovery infrastructure exists (currently unavailable in Zanzibar).

PS (Type 6) – Commonly known as Styrofoam, used in takeaway boxes, cups, trays, and packaging. It breaks easily into small fragments, persists in the environment, and is difficult to collect. It should be prioritised for complete replacement with reusable or safer alternatives.

OTHER (Type 7) – Includes mixed and specialty plastics, some of which may contain chemicals such as Bisphenol A (BPA), linked to hormone disruption and other health concerns. Unless clearly certified safe, these plastics should be avoided in guest-facing hospitality operations.

A SIMPLE RULE CAN GUIDE PURCHASING DECISIONS:

REDUCE WHAT IS UNNECESSARY → REPLACE HARMFUL PLASTICS → REUSE DURABLE MATERIALS → REDESIGN SYSTEMS TO AVOID SINGLE-USE DEPENDENCE

For Zanzibar's hospitality sector, understanding plastic composition is not merely a technical issue, it is a practical step toward smarter procurement, safer operations, and more sustainable waste reduction strategies.

Despite the challenges, Zanzibar remains at a critical inflection point. Because large-scale plastic dependency is relatively recent, the archipelago has an opportunity to avoid long-term system lock-in experienced in many other tourism destinations. This creates a strategic opening for the hospitality sector to transition toward low-plastic, circular operating models before infrastructure and consumption patterns become irreversible.

The most effective response is therefore not improved disposal, but prevention at source through redesign of hotel systems, procurement practices, and guest service models to reduce dependence on single-use plastics.

WHY REDUCE? BUSINESS CASE FOR TOURISM ESTABLISHMENTS

Reducing plastic is not only good environmental practice, it also makes strong business sense. Consumer expectations are changing rapidly. **Today's travelers, especially younger and environmentally conscious guests, prefer accommodation providers that demonstrate genuine sustainability.** They notice refill stations, reusable containers, bulk dispensers, low-waste amenities, and thoughtful procurement choices. Increasingly, these are seen as indicators of quality, care, and modern hospitality.

Guest communication Reef and Beach Hotel Jambiani ▲

CUSTOMER REVIEW

"Sustainability is visible all around this place."

★★★★★

CUSTOMER REVIEW

"There are no plastic bottles, instead filtered water in glass bottles."

★★★★★

▲ *Genuine guest reviews from Blue Oyster Hotel*[3,4]

▲ *Guest communication Matemwe Attitude Hotel*

Reducing plastic also lowers operating costs over time. Businesses spend significant amounts each year purchasing disposable bottles, single-use amenities, takeaway packaging, plastic liners, and wrapped products. By switching to smarter procurement and refillable systems, reusable containers, and bulk purchasing establishments can reduce repeated purchasing costs while cutting waste management expenses.

There is also a strong market advantage in acting early. Sustainability standards are becoming stricter worldwide, and regulations on single-use plastics are expanding. Businesses that adapt now will be better prepared for future compliance requirements, while also strengthening their eligibility for green certification schemes, sustainable tourism partnerships, and environmental funding opportunities.

Most importantly, **Zanzibar's hospitality sector has collective market power**. Hotels and accommodation providers are major buyers. When businesses demand reusable packaging, refill systems, bulk delivery options, and low-plastic alternatives, suppliers respond. What begins as individual action can quickly become an industry standard**. In this way, each tourism business can make a meaningful difference by acting as a pioneer; using its influence to educate guests, suppliers, and the wider industry while helping to shift norms across the sector.** As more establishments adopt plastic-smart systems, sustainable practice becomes easier, cheaper, and more normal across the sector. This is how change becomes the new norm.

KEY MESSAGE FOR THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR

Plastic in tourism is no longer only a waste management issue. It is simultaneously:

- a guest health and safety issue
- an operational procurement issue
- a destination branding issue, and
- a long-term sustainability and resilience risk.

Importantly, for Zanzibar's hospitality industry, reducing plastic is not about sacrificing guest experience. It is about improving operations, protecting the destination, strengthening brand value, and building a tourism model that can thrive for the long term. The question is no longer whether the sector should reduce plastic, but how quickly it can lead the transition.

3 https://bit.ly/3S7DmcE
4 https://bit.ly/4uFFwyT

UNDERSTANDING PLASTICS IN TOURISM ESTABLISHMENTS IN ZANZIBAR

To ensure that the REDUCE Guidelines respond to the realities of Zanzibar's hospitality sector, a survey was conducted among tourism establishments across the islands, complemented by case-study visits and a stakeholder round table discussion involving suppliers, hotel operators, and sector partners. The purpose was to understand where plastics are most commonly used, identify operational barriers to plastic reduction, and explore practical alternatives that can be adopted across the tourism value chain. This evidence-based approach provides a clear picture of current plastic dependency in the sector and helps identify priority areas for action.

The survey findings show that plastic use in Zanzibar's tourism establishments is deeply embedded in day-to-day operations. However, plastic consumption is not evenly distributed across hotel functions. Instead, it is concentrated in a few high-use operational areas, meaning targeted interventions can produce meaningful reductions without disrupting service quality.

▲ *Supplier roundtable discussion*

WHERE PLASTICS ARE MOST COMMONLY USED

FOOD AND BEVERAGE OPERATIONS

Food and beverage operations emerged as one of the largest sources of single-use plastic consumption. Survey results show that the most commonly procured plastic items in this department include:

- Soft drink and beverage bottles (60%)
- Cling film and food wrapping materials (51.8%)
- Plastic bottled water (48.6%)

These items are heavily used because of convenience, food safety requirements, storage practices, and guest expectations around packaged beverages. However, they also represent some of the most visible and avoidable forms of plastic waste generated by the sector. The high dependence on bottled beverages alone suggests a major opportunity for refill systems, glass alternatives, in-house filtration, and improved beverage dispensing models.

▲ ▶ *Food and beverage practices that create single-use plastic waste in Zanzibar include cling film and bottled water*

GUEST AMENITIES AND HOUSEKEEPING

Plastic use is also significant in guest services and housekeeping operations. The main items identified include:

- Bin liners (35%)
- Laundry packaging such as plastic wrapping (25%)
- Single-use toiletry bottles (25%)

Although individually small, these items are purchased in large volumes and create a steady stream of waste. Many are used once and immediately discarded. This category presents practical opportunities for reduction through refillable toiletry dispensers, reusable laundry bags, improved linen handling systems, and procurement of lower-plastic alternatives.

◀ *Using refillable toiletry bottles can reduce plastic waste by over 20% in guest amenities and hosuekeeping departments.*

▼ *Switching to bulk supplies and refill models are one of the best ways to reduce plastic waste from operations.*

OPERATIONS AND SUPPLY CHAIN

The survey identified operational procurement and supplier packaging as major but often overlooked sources of plastic consumption. Key items include:

- Cleaning product containers (74.2%)
- Plastic packaging from suppliers (58.1%)

This finding is particularly important because much of this plastic never reaches guests, yet forms a substantial part of the hotel waste stream. Packaging used in deliveries, wrapped supplies, and single-use chemical containers creates hidden plastic dependency within hotel operations. These results point to the importance of engaging suppliers in bulk delivery systems, refill models, reusable crates, and packaging take-back arrangements.

PRIORITY PLASTIC ITEMS FOR REDUCTION

Based on the survey findings and round table consultations, three priority plastic categories were identified for immediate action under the REDUCE Guidelines:

- Plastic bottles (water and soft drinks)
- Plastic packaging (supplier packaging and food packaging)
- Single-use takeaway items, including straws, cutlery, bags, and sachets.

These three categories were prioritised because they combine high usage, high visibility, and strong potential for practical replacement. They are also items that guests increasingly associate with unnecessary waste, making them important from both an operational and branding perspective.

WHAT THE SECTOR IS ALREADY DOING

Encouragingly, the survey and stakeholder consultations show that many tourism businesses have already started taking action. Across establishments, four broad approaches are emerging:

- Avoid – eliminating unnecessary plastic items altogether
- Reduce – lowering plastic procurement volumes through smarter purchasing
- Reuse / Refill – shifting to refillable containers and repeat-use systems
- Substitute – replacing plastic with lower-impact alternatives where suitable.

Many tourism businesses are already shifting to waste reduction approaches ▶

TOURISM BUSINESSES ARE READY.

WITH THE RIGHT TOOLS, KNOWLEDGE, AND COLLABORATION, THE SECTOR CAN TRANSFORM ISOLATED INITIATIVES INTO COLLECTIVE IMPACT, TURNING SUSTAINABILITY FROM ASPIRATION INTO MEASURABLE PROGRESS.

TURNING INTENTIONS INTO ACTION

Change is already underway across the tourism sector, but progress remains uneven. Many businesses are motivated to reduce plastic use, yet supply-side barriers and operational challenges often slow momentum. Encouragingly, there is a clear willingness to act: establishments are demonstrating good intentions and taking first steps toward more sustainable practices.

The real challenge lies not in commitment, but in clarity. Operators frequently ask:

- Which plastic items should be tackled first?
- What alternatives are practical and effective?
- How can operational systems be redesigned without disruption?
- How can suppliers be engaged to cut unnecessary packaging?

Without clear answers, good intentions risk stalling. This is why practical, evidence-based guidance is essential. It bridges the gap between ambition and implementation, helping businesses move from scattered efforts to confident, informed action.

The survey findings presented here provide that foundation. They highlight where plastics are most entrenched, identify the strongest opportunities for reduction, and reveal the types of support businesses need to accelerate change.

◀ *Operational systems can be redesigned to work smarter and reduce waste without disruption*

KEY CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY OPERATORS AND SUPPLIERS

The supplier round table highlighted several common barriers to reducing plastic use:

- Limited availability of alternatives, particularly glass packaging, refill systems, and reliable reusable options
- Inconsistent supply of sustainable alternatives, making procurement planning difficult
- Higher upfront costs associated with switching systems
- Need for clearer government direction, including standards, incentives, and enforcement
- Low awareness and behaviour change challenges among businesses, suppliers, staff, and guests.

These findings show that reducing plastic is not simply a matter of replacing one product with another. It requires changes in procurement systems, supplier relationships, operational practices, and consumer expectations.

▲ *Reducing plastic use will require change in procurement and supplier systems*

▲ *Single-use plastic water bottles in plastic packaging are a priority to reduce*

▲ *Reusable water bottles at a hotel in Zanxibar (top) and biodegradable alternatives for food and beverage service (bottom).*

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR ZANZIBAR'S HOSPITALITY SECTOR

The survey results reveal an important message: plastic dependency in tourism is concentrated, predictable, and manageable. This means that targeted interventions can generate a substantial impact. By focusing on a relatively small number of high-volume plastic items, hotels can significantly reduce waste, improve operational efficiency, and strengthen their sustainability credentials.

More importantly, the findings confirm that the transition away from single-use plastics cannot be carried by individual hotels alone. It requires coordinated action across the tourism value chain including suppliers, regulators, hospitality operators, and consumers.

The opportunity is clear: reduce unnecessary plastics where possible, redesign systems for reuse where practical, and work collectively to make sustainable alternatives accessible and affordable. This is where meaningful sector-wide transformation begins.

Reducing plastic use in Zanzibar's tourism sector requires moving from isolated initiatives to system-wide transformation.

This means:

- ***Rethinking procurement systems***
- ***Strengthening local supply chains for alternatives***
- ***Supporting circular business models***
- ***Embedding sustainability standards in hotel operations***
- ***Creating an enabling policy environment***
- ***Encouraging collective responsibility across the tourism value chain***

03 THE REDUCE FRAMEWORK

The REDUCE framework is our strategic roadmap for transforming hospitality operations from a 'throwaway' culture to a circular, sustainable model. It prioritizes waste prevention at the source rather than focusing solely on downstream management.

Eliminate: The most impactful step—asking, "Do we really need this item?" If not, it is removed entirely.

Reduce: If an item is necessary, we minimize its use through bulk formats, opt-in policies, or smarter delivery.

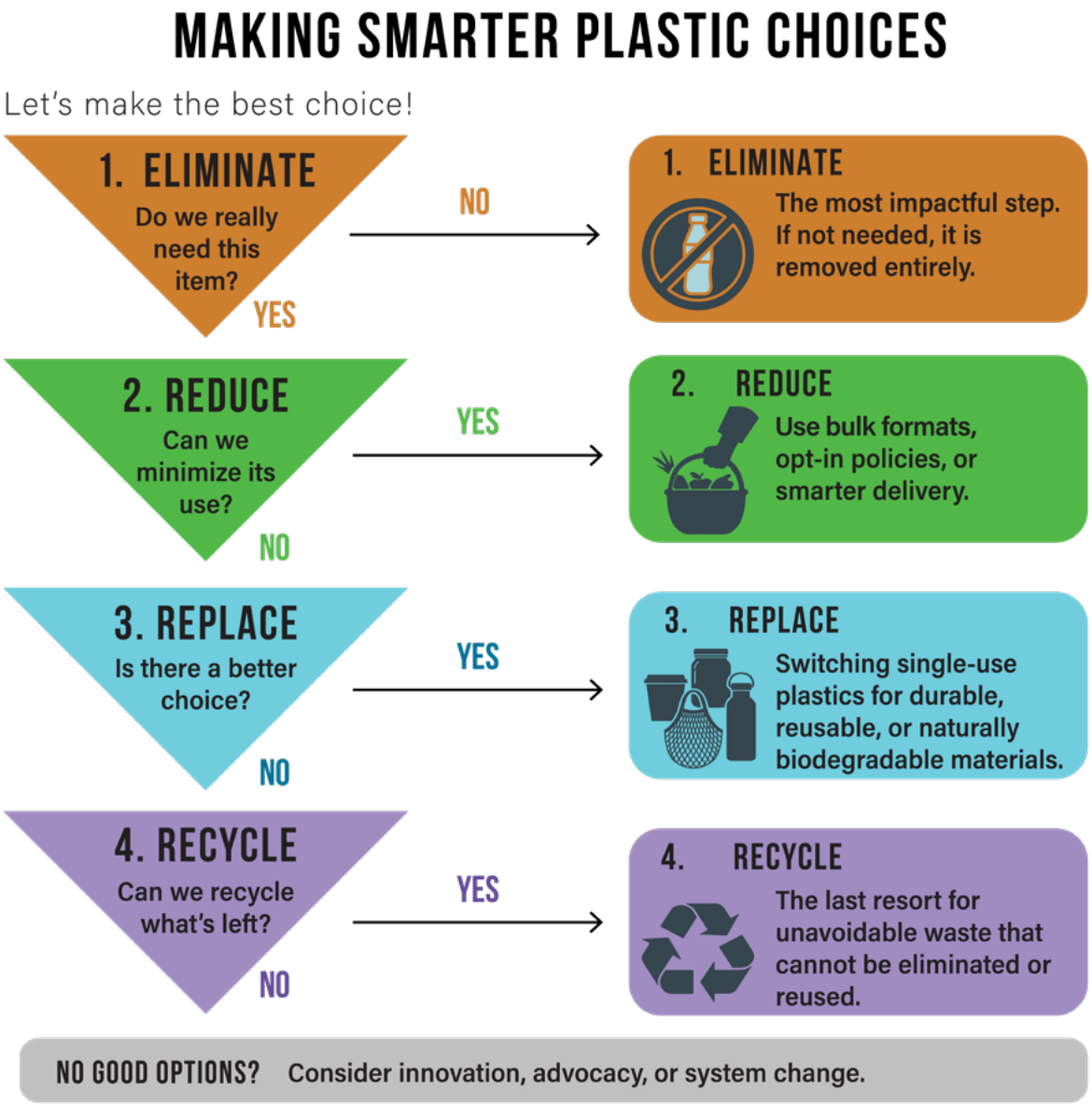
Replace: Switching single-use plastics for durable, reusable, or naturally biodegradable materials.

Recycle: The last resort for unavoidable waste that cannot be eliminated or reused[5].

METHODOLOGY

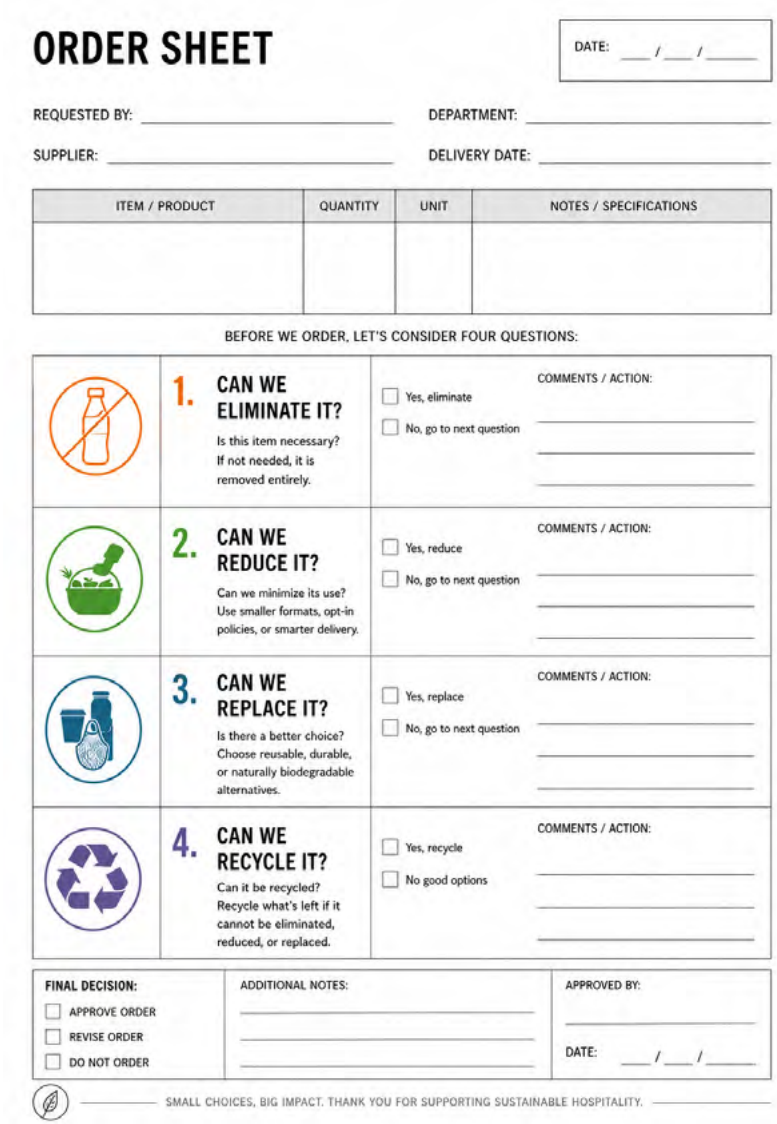
In the development of this framework, the steps ensured it is appropriately grounded in reality.

- **Case Study Research:** undertaken to analyze global and regional best practices to identify 'honest alternatives.'
- **Supplier Roundtable:** conducted to engage with local vendors to discuss bulk delivery, take-back schemes, and the reduction of secondary packaging.
- **Industry Validations:** acquired to align the framework with relevant national regulations and international standards.



5 Refer to the Recyclers Information Sheet—Blue Impact Network at: https://blueimpactnetwork.co.tz/resources/

SMART PROCUREMENT IN PRACTICE



ORDER SHEET

DATE: ___ / ___ / ____

REQUESTED BY: _____ DEPARTMENT: _____

SUPPLIER: _____ DELIVERY DATE: _____

ITEM / PRODUCT	QUANTITY	UNIT	NOTES / SPECIFICATIONS

BEFORE WE ORDER, LET'S CONSIDER FOUR QUESTIONS:

	1. CAN WE ELIMINATE IT? Is this item necessary? If not needed, it is removed entirely.	☐ Yes, eliminate ☐ No, go to next question	COMMENTS / ACTION:
	2. CAN WE REDUCE IT? Can we minimize its use? Use smaller formats, opt-in policies, or smarter delivery.	☐ Yes, reduce ☐ No, go to next question	COMMENTS / ACTION:
	3. CAN WE REPLACE IT? Is there a better choice? Choose reusable, durable, or naturally biodegradable alternatives.	☐ Yes, replace ☐ No, go to next question	COMMENTS / ACTION:
	4. CAN WE RECYCLE IT? Can it be recycled? Recycle what's left if it cannot be eliminated, reduced, or replaced.	☐ Yes, recycle ☐ No good options	COMMENTS / ACTION:

FINAL DECISION:	ADDITIONAL NOTES:	APPROVED BY:
☐ APPROVE ORDER ☐ REVISE ORDER ☐ DO NOT ORDER		DATE: ___ / ___ / ____

SMALL CHOICES, BIG IMPACT. THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE HOSPITALITY.

Reorganise systems and communiate with suppliers for sustainable procurement ▲

BEFORE YOU BUY

Every purchase order is a waste management decision. Before placing an order, procurement teams should use a Decision Matrix:

» Is it essential? If no, **Eliminate**.

» Can it be **Reduced**? If yes, Switch to reusables and durables (e.g., glass, ceramic, or metal).

» Is a plastic-free alternative available? If yes, **Replace** with naturally biodegradable materials.

» If plastic is unavoidable ensure it is highly **Recyclable** (PET/HDPE) and has recycled content.

CHOICE 1 ELIMINATE

Look for ways to eliminate waste from operations. Eliminating waste improves operational efficiency and strengthens sustainability credentials.

CHOICE 2 REDUCE

Change purchasing habits. Shift to high-volume, bulk purchasing for dry goods and cleaning agents to minimize individual packaging waste.

CHOICE 3 REPLACE

Based on local availability in Zanzibar and global reusable solution frameworks[6], the following priorities guide the transition from single-use plastics to sustainable, circular alternatives.

6 See the Global Plastics Tourism Initiative's *Introduction of Reusable Solutions, Factsheets, Decision Trees and Case Studies*. Accessible at: https://bit.ly/4vtfD5l

CASE STUDY 01

FAHARI OFF THE GRID – CIRCULAR HOSPITALITY IN ZANZIBAR

Fahari Off the Grid is the **second restaurant in Africa, first in East Africa, to achieve a three-star certification — the highest category — under the Food Made Good Standard of the Sustainable Restaurant Association.** The certification recognizes leadership across three pillars: Sourcing, Society, and Environment, with a strong focus on reducing waste and promoting circular practices.

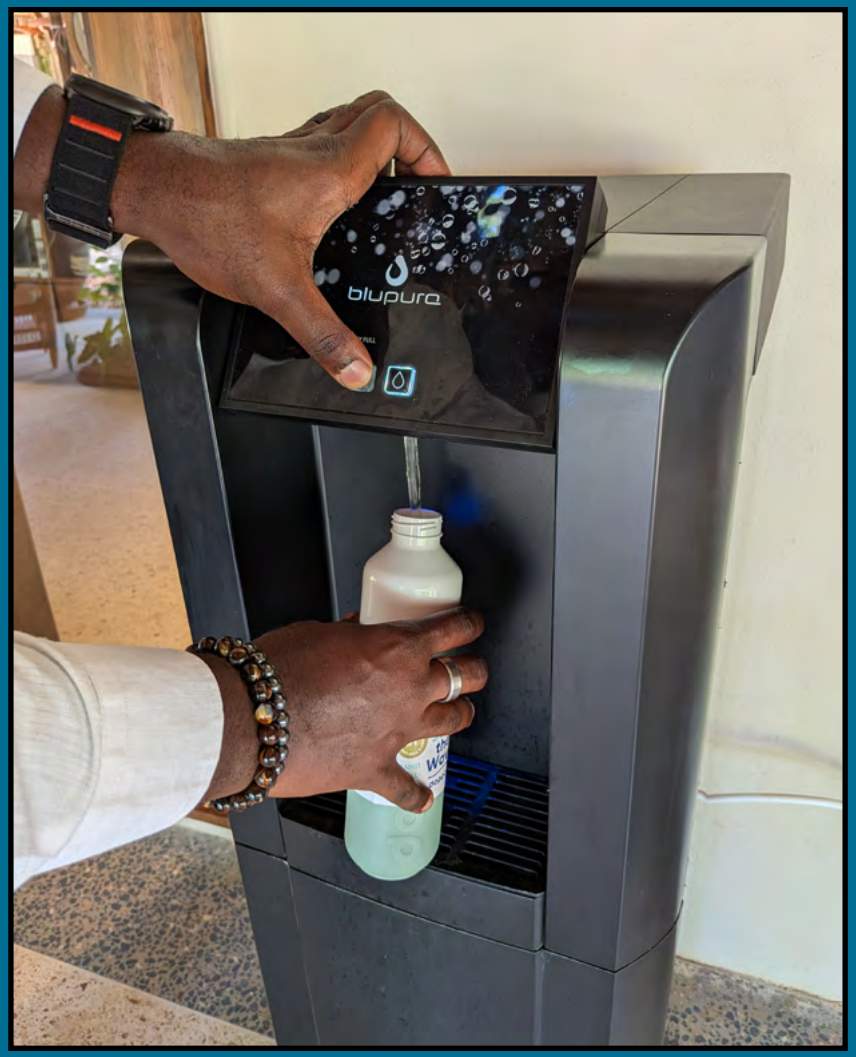
Under the environmental criteria, restaurants are encouraged to avoid waste wherever possible, replace single-use products with reusable systems, work with suppliers to reduce unnecessary packaging, and ensure that remaining materials are recyclable or compostable. Fahari Off the Grid has integrated these principles into its daily operations through practical and locally adapted solutions. Its main focus is to take responsibility for everything it brings into its operations. This reality influences every decision at Fahari Off the Grid.

The restaurant, which seats up to 35 people and has a team of 7 staff, has reduced plastic bottled drinks to a minimum. It sources water locally from KiziWater (occasionally supply is low due to power cuts or poor water supply) through a bottle-return scheme. The menu promotes fresh drinks made from local ingredients, water is served in reusable glass bottles, reducing reliance on disposable packaging while supporting local supply chains. Nonreturnable glass is donated to local up cyclers. The restaurant also prioritizes reclaimed and second-hand materials for its equipment as part of its operational model and collaborates with community initiatives such as Clean Kizimkazi and uses eco-cleaning products in refillable containers. Cooking oil is purchased in plastic bottles but once empty they are used for transporting the dirty/used oil.

A key recommendation for Fahari Off the Grid as part of its certification was to further communicate these sustainability efforts to guests through menu notes, chalkboard messages, and social media storytelling. By highlighting its circular practices and local partnerships more visibly, the restaurant can strengthen customer awareness and position itself as a leading example of regenerative and plastic-conscious hospitality in Zanzibar.

CASE STUDY 02

MATEMWE ATTITUDE HOTEL ZANZIBAR REDUCING PLASTIC WASTE IN HOSPITALITY THROUGH REUSABLE WATER BOTTLE SCHEME



The Matemwe Attitude, a hotel with 74 villas in Matemwe, has integrated plastic reduction and sustainable operations into its hospitality model as part of the group's broader sustainability commitments across its nine hotels in Mauritius (Matemwe Attitude being the first outside of Mauritius).

The hotel has **eliminated most single-use plastics from its operations and replaced disposable water bottles with reusable Dopper bottles** (first Cradle to Cradle Certified Gold bottle collection in the world) provided on consignment to all guests throughout their stay (can be purchased upon check-out). Tap water is treated and tested regularly by the Government's chemist laboratory, as well as SGS, a Swiss company with a branch in Tanzania, who frequently and randomly sample the water as part of an ongoing contract with Attitude. This allows the hotel to safely provide free drinking water on-site at multiple refill stations and thereby reducing reliance on bottled water. The information is shared with all tour operators and guests prior to their arrival and upon check-in. Aluminium cans and glass bottles are used instead of plastic soda bottles wherever possible, although some products remain challenging due to limited local alternatives, e.g. Coke Zero.

Plastic reduction efforts are also embedded in the hotel's procurement and supplier policies. **Suppliers are required to sign a code of conduct encouraging environmentally responsible practices, while the hotel prioritizes reusable containers, bulk purchasing, and locally sourced products to reduce packaging waste.** Waste is carefully separated into dedicated recycling and recovery streams, including plastics, glass, metals, compostable food waste, and used oil.

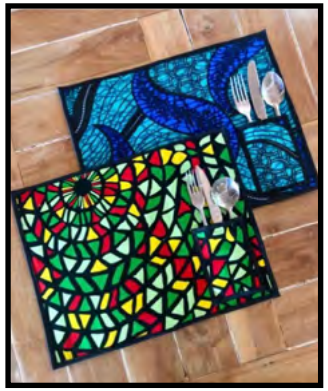
The hotel promotes responsible tourism through guest education in its Marine Discovery Center and through partnerships with organizations such as One Ocean, helping raise awareness about marine conservation and the impacts of plastic pollution on coastal ecosystems.

MATERIAL SUBSTITUTION

- **Bio-based Alternatives:** Replace petrochemical materials with certified compostable or bio-based alternatives when reusable options are not yet feasible.
- **Refillable Dispensers:** Eliminate 'miniature' plastic bottles from guest toiletries and replace with refillable and attractive dispensers.
- **Plastic-free hydration:** Moving away from single-use plastic bottles is no longer just an 'eco-friendly' choice; it is a critical health upgrade for your guests.

CHOICE 4 RECYCLE

A range of hospitality waste items can be recycled in Zanzibar and there is a growing range of upcycled and recycled products available locally that collaborate with and cater directly to tourism businesses to support a circular economy, e.g., Chako or Zanzibar Recycle TZ309. More details and contacts can be found in the "Recyclers in Zanzibar" overview on Blue Impact Network's website.



SCAN FOR A CONTACT LIST OF SUSTAINABLE SUPPLIERS TO SUPPORT SMARTER PROCUREMENT CHOICES & ELIMINATE PLASTIC WASTE.

THE CASE AGAINST BOTTLED WATER

- Bottled water contains an average of 240,000 plastic particles per liter, 90% of which are nanoplastics small enough to enter human cells and bypass the blood-brain barrier.
- Research indicates that the primary source of contamination is often the abrasion from plastic caps and the industrial bottling process itself.
- PET bottles can release industrial lubricants and polyamides into the water, a process accelerated by high-temperature coastal environments like Zanzibar.
- Single-use bottles contribute significantly to ocean degradation, directly threatening the marine biodiversity and coral reefs that define the Zanzibar guest experience.

THE TRANSITION TO PLASTIC-FREE HYDRATION IN ZANZIBAR

FILTRATION EXAMPLES AVAILABLE IN ZANZIBAR

As offered by Davis & Shirtliff Zanzibar. For the full range of filtration systems available, please refer to their website[7].

Small hotels (under 25 rooms)

Type	Capacity	Elements filtered
WG Water Purifier	12,000 L / day	Silt, suspended solids, bacteria
Dayliff Smart Reverse Osmosis (RO) Purifier	1,800 L / day	Calcium, salt, sand, silt, odour, bacteria, taste

Medium hotels (25–99 rooms)

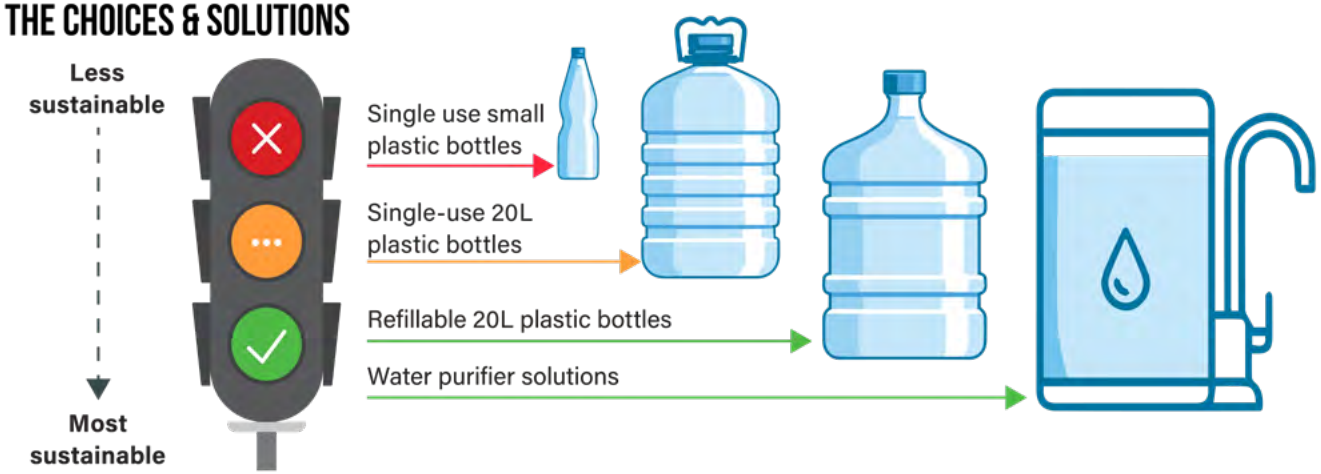
UV Water Purifiers	350–4,000 L / hr	Calcium, salt, odour, bacteria, suspended solids
Ultrafiltration Water Treatment Module	2,000 L / hr	Microorganisms, silt, dust, viruses

Large hotels (100+ rooms)

RO Plant	100,000 L / hr	Salt, calcium, odour, bacteria, suspended solids
Mobile Water Treatment Plant	2,000 L / hr	Salt, calcium, silt, odour, bacteria

7 https://www.davisandshirtliff.com/products-and-solutions

THE CHOICES & SOLUTIONS



While Zanzibar's municipal tap water is not currently suitable for direct consumption, modern in-house filtration offers a safer, cleaner, and more premium alternative that aligns with global circular economy standards.

UNDERSTANDING FILTER CAPACITY & PLASTIC REDUCTION

The relatively small Dayliff Smart RO Purifier has a capacity of 1,800 L / day, which is equivalent to:

3,600 500 ml bottles per day, or 1,314,000 per year.

1,200 1.5 L bottles per day, or 438,000 per year.

COMPANY BENEFITS OF FILTRATION

- Can provide long-term return on investment
- Eliminates bottle purchases and transport costs
- Saves on storage requirements
- Unique sustinability selling point

IMPLEMENTATION & LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

NO MATTER WHICH SOLUTIONS APPLY TO YOUR BUSINESS:

To successfully transition away from plastics, you should prioritize durable, reusable infrastructure and partner with local technical experts.

SUPPLIER INSIGHT: RETURNABLE GLASS BOTTLES IN ZANZIBAR

Coca-Cola Kwanza currently supplies soft drinks in Returnable Glass Bottles (RGBs), which, according to the company, account for approximately 15% of its sales volume in Zanzibar. The company has indicated an ambition to increase this share to between 30% and 40% in the future. During stakeholder consultations, Coca-Cola noted that the current fiscal and regulatory environment presents challenges to expanding the market share of returnable glass packaging. The company further stated that it has the operational capacity to meet increased demand from the tourism sector should market conditions become more favourable.

UPGRADE INFRASTRUCTURE

- Setup refill stations to encourage guest participation in the plastic-free transition.
- Install applicable water filtration system to ensure water is free from both microplastics and microbial hazards.
- Replicate community-centered initiatives, such as those in Kizimkazi, as part of a broader commitment to reducing single-use plastics and promoting more sustainable water distribution systems. Kizi Water, a local bottled water supplier in Zanzibar, can serve as a potential partner for bulk water provision within the hospitality sector, particularly for establishments in South Zanzibar.

Refill stations and refillable water bottles are a genuine solution ▲ ▶

FALSE SOLUTIONS TO AVOID

'Greenwashing' can lead hotels and accommodations to adopt alternatives that are just as harmful as plastic. Some false solutions to be aware of:

- **Oxo-degradable Plastics:** These do not compost; they simply fragment into harmful microplastics.
- **Bioplastics (PLA):** Often marketed as 'compostable,' but they require industrial composting plants (not available in Zanzibar) to break down. In landfill, they behave like standard plastic.
- **Green Disposables:** Replacing a plastic fork with a wooden fork still generates waste. Reusables are always the 'honest alternative.'
- **Paper/Cardboard with Plastic Linings:** Many coffee cups and food containers have a thin plastic film that makes them impossible to recycle.

CASE STUDY 03

ATTITUDE HOTELS

PLASTIC-FREE MINI BARS

As part of its commitment to reducing single-use plastics, Attitude Hotels introduced a plastic-free mini bar concept across its properties in Mauritius, as well as at its property in Zanzibar. Instead of stocking guest rooms with individually packaged snacks and beverages, guests can select from a range of locally produced treats and fill reusable glass jars themselves from the hotel shop, or request pre-filled jars for their room.

The selection includes products such as cookies, cassava chips, banana chips, dried fruits, sweet baobab and other locally sourced snacks. By eliminating individual packaging and promoting reusable containers, the initiative significantly reduces plastic waste while supporting local producers and creating a more authentic guest experience.

The concept demonstrates how tourism businesses can transform a traditionally waste-intensive service into an opportunity to promote local products, reduce packaging waste and strengthen connections with local suppliers. By allowing guests to choose only the products they want, the system also helps reduce unnecessary food waste.

KEY LESSONS FOR ZANZIBAR

- Replace individually packaged mini bar items with bulk dispensers and reusable jars (e.g. from Chako).
- Prioritise locally produced snacks and products, possibly in partnership with vendors from your local community.
- Allow guests to choose only the items they want, reducing both packaging waste and food waste.
- Use the mini bar experience to showcase local products and strengthen links with local suppliers.
- Replicate successful initiatives across multiple properties to increase impact and support local value chains.

CASE STUDY 04

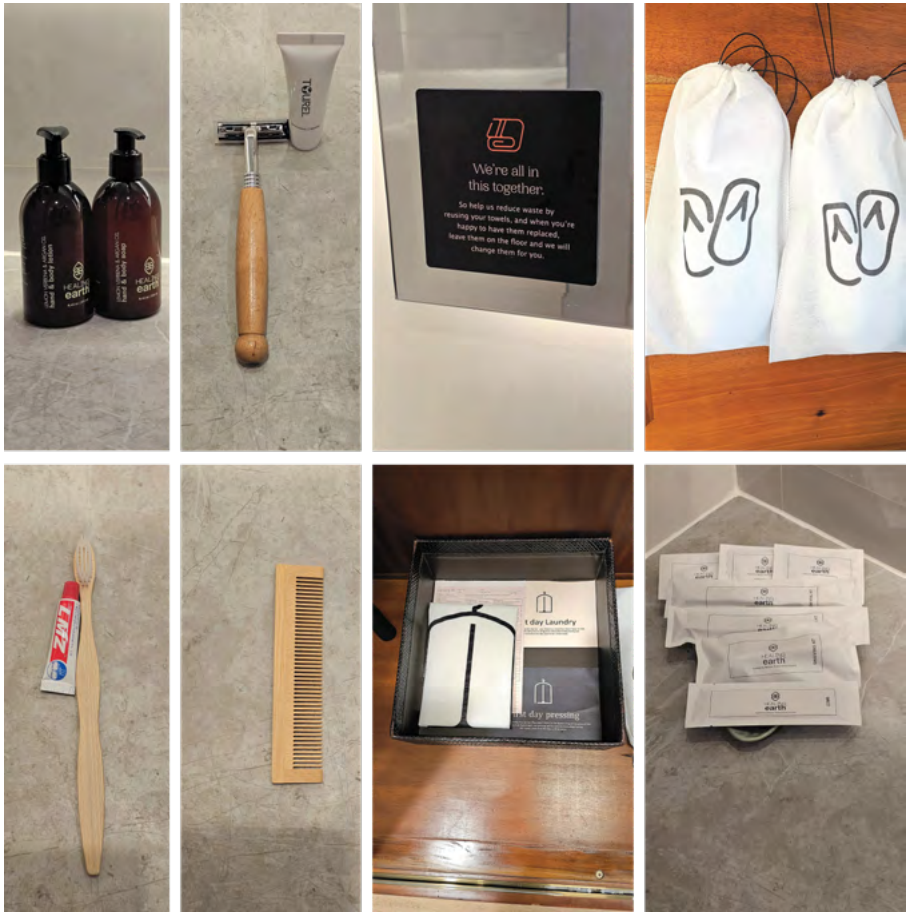
THE MORA ZANZIBAR ELIMINATING SINGLE-USE PLASTICS IN LUXURY HOSPITALITY

The Mora Zanzibar, part of the TUI Group, demonstrates how large-scale luxury hospitality can significantly reduce plastic waste while maintaining high guest standards and comfort. The 250-room resort is Travelife certified and has eliminated single-use plastics across its operations as part of its broader sustainability commitments.

The hotel has replaced many disposable guest amenities with reusable or natural alternatives. Bathrooms are equipped with refillable shampoo and shower gel dispensers instead of small toiletry bottles, while wooden toothbrushes, wooden combs, wooden shavers, reusable laundry bags, reusable slippers, and electronic wooden key cards further reduce plastic consumption within guest rooms. Plastic wristbands for guests are also not used as part of the hotel's plastic reduction strategy.

A major achievement has been the elimination of plastic drinking water bottles since the hotel's pre-opening phase. The Mora operates its own on-site water bottling plant, allowing filtered drinking water to be distributed in reusable glass bottles throughout the property. According to the hotel, without this system and the use of reusable glass bottles, daily water consumption would generate approximately 244 kg of plastic waste per day from plastic bottles alone. Plastic beverage bottles are also increasingly being phased out in favor of glass alternatives, and plastic straws have been replaced with biodegradable options.

Beyond guest amenities, the hotel integrates waste reduction measures across operations. Plastic bags in shops and boutiques have been replaced with paper bags, all trash bags used on-site are 100% biodegradable, and



recycling containers are installed in guest areas with updated signage to encourage proper waste separation. Digital solutions through the hotel app further reduce paper consumption by allowing digital invoices, restaurant bookings, housekeeping requests, minibar refill requests, activity schedules, and guest check-ins.

The Mora also promotes environmental awareness through beach clean-up activities involving staff and guests while prioritizing biodegradable and recycled products throughout its operations. Through these combined efforts, the hotel provides a practical example of how tourism businesses in Zanzibar can move toward circular hospitality models and substantially reduce single-use plastic waste.

04 HOSPITALITY AREA ACTION CARDS

Priority REDUCE action areas for key hospitality departments:

CARD 1: GUEST AMENITIES & HOUSEKEEPING

Goal: Cut down single use plastics in guest rooms and housekeeping.

- Replace all individual plastic toiletry bottles with high-quality, refillable wall-mounted dispensers.
- Remove plastic bin liners; instead, wash bins daily, use compostable or fabric liners that can be laundered.
- Place a small 'Why we do this' card (made of recycled wood or card-stock) explaining the lack of plastic amenities as an eco-luxury choice.
- Ensure any evening treats or slippers are delivered in plastic-free, reusable packaging.

CARD 2: FOOD & BEVERAGE (F&B)

Goal: Eliminate 'Front-of-House' single-use plastics.

- Serve only filtered water in glass carafes or reusable bottles; remove all PET plastic bottles from F&B operations.
- Replace all plastic sachets (ketchup, sugar, salt) with bulk dispensers or porcelain ramekins.
- Remove plastic straws and stirrers from the bar; provide bamboo or metal alternatives only upon request.
- Use signage to discourage guests from using disposable items and prioritize reusable cutlery and cloth napkins.

CARD 3: EVENTS & MEETINGS

Goal: Position plastic-free events as the new norm in Zanzibar.

Events often generate large volumes of waste in a very short time frame. The following strategies focus on eliminating 'convenience' plastics through bulk service and reusable systems.

- Provide large water dispensers, pitchers, and glass tumblers instead of individual plastic bottles.
- Use reusable plates, cutlery, and cloth napkins for all coffee breaks and lunch sessions.
- Serve snacks, mints, and biscuits on platters to eliminate individually wrapped items.
- Replace PVC banners with digital displays, reusable chalkboards, or fabric banners.
- Use paper-based lanyards, avoid plastic pouches, and collect badge holders for reuse.
- Set up a central station for notepads and wooden or refillable pens instead of placing them at every seat.

CARD 4: OPERATIONS & SUPPLY CHAIN

Goal: Restructure the 'Invisible' waste stream.

- Inspect all incoming deliveries; reject any items wrapped in excessive plastic or Styrofoam.
- Transition from plastic wrap to silicone lids, beeswax wraps, or stainless steel containers for food storage. While cling film remains useful for strict sanitary sealing, especially for raw items, beeswax wraps are a strong alternative for everyday foods like cheese, produce, and baked goods. They are breathable and chemical-free but require proper care and thorough cleaning.
- Order dry goods (rice, flour, spices) in bulk sacks to reduce the surface area of plastic packaging.
- Tag any plastic-heavy delivery with a 'Supplier Feedback Form' to demand better packaging in the next cycle.
- Update your 'Preferred Vendor' list to prioritize those who offer 'take-back' schemes for their packaging.
- No new product can be ordered unless it is audited for plastic content and approved by the REDUCE Champion.
- Conduct a monthly review of stock to ensure no 'legacy' plastics (like old plastic straws) are accidentally put back into service.

05 WORKING WITH SUPPLIERS

CHOOSING SUPPLIERS

Consider suppliers who produce locally to minimize transport packaging and emissions and who offer bulk supplies without unnecessary packaging. This includes suppliers who operate:

» **Take-back Schemes:** Collecting and reusing their delivery packaging.

» **Bulk Delivery:** Offering catering-size containers of products (e.g., 5L or 25L) instead of small containers or individual sachets.

» **Transparency:** Being open and transparent about the material composition of their products.

SUPPLIER CODE OF CONDUCT

Work with your suppliers to develop an agreed code of conduct clarifying your commitment to and expectations of suppliers' sustainable procurement practices. This can include, for example:

» Commitment to eliminating secondary and tertiary plastic packaging, such as shrink wrap and plastic ties, for all deliveries.

» Utilization of certified compostable, bio-based, or reusable delivery containers where possible.

» Demonstrable consideration of waste throughout their own supply chains, ensuring that raw materials are harvested without compromising local ecosystems.

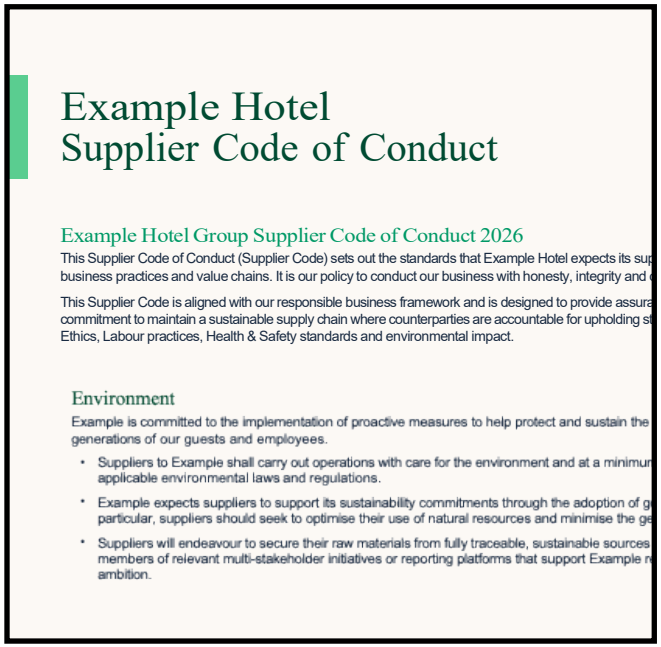
CONTRACTS & ORDERS

Sustainable procurement is reinforced through legal language:

» **Packaging Clause:** Strictly prohibit the use of Styrofoam (expanded polystyrene) and unnecessary secondary plastic wrap in deliveries.

» **Substitution Policy**: Suppliers and vendors must not substitute ordered eco-friendly items with plastic alternatives without prior written approval.

» **Reporting:** Require suppliers and vendors to provide data on the total weight of packaging supplied to assist in waste tracking.



Example Hotel
Supplier Code of Conduct

Example Hotel Group Supplier Code of Conduct 2026

This Supplier Code of Conduct (Supplier Code) sets out the standards that Example Hotel expects its sup
business practices and value chains. It is our policy to conduct our business with honesty, integrity and

This Supplier Code is aligned with our responsible business framework and is designed to provide assura
commitment to maintain a sustainable supply chain where counterparties are accountable for upholding s
Ethics, Labour practices, Health & Safety standards and environmental impact.

Environment

Example is committed to the implementation of proactive measures to help protect and sustain the
generations of our guests and employees.

- Suppliers to Example shall carry out operations with care for the environment and at a minimu
applicable environmental laws and regulations.
- Example expects suppliers to support its sustainability commitments through the adoption of g
particular, suppliers should seek to optimise their use of natural resources and minimise the ge
- Suppliers will endeavour to secure their raw materials from fully traceable, sustainable sources
members of relevant multi-stakeholder initiatives or reporting platforms that support Example
ambition.

BUILDING SUPPLIER PARTNERSHIPS

» Prioritize suppliers with recognized environmental certifications where available, or demonstrable sustainable practices such as reduced packaging and refill systems, especially within the local context.

» Work with local suppliers to deliver products such as water and milk in bulk instead of single-use packaging. For example:

- Collaborate with partners like Ikraam Bottlers, Bakhresa Food Products, and Coca-Cola Kwanza to move toward reusable glass or bulk dispensing models.
- Utilize Kizi Water or Zanaqua[8] for bulk water distribution using refillable formats.

8 https://www.instagram.com/p/DXdh5gNiKDY/?img_index=3

SMART PROCUREMENT QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE FOR SUCCESS

A. SMALL TOURISM BUSINESSES

(Guesthouses, small hotels, restaurants, cafés, dive centres and tour operators)

Small tourism businesses may have limited purchasing power, but they often have strong relationships with local suppliers. Regular conversations can help reduce unnecessary packaging and identify practical local solutions.

CHECKLIST

- ☐ Ask fresh produce suppliers to deliver products in reusable crates, baskets or sacks instead of plastic bags.
- ☐ Request water suppliers to offer refillable containers or larger bottle formats where available.
- ☐ Purchase cleaning products in bulk containers and ask suppliers about refill options.
- ☐ Encourage food and beverage suppliers to minimise unnecessary packaging and collect reusable crates after delivery.
- ☐ Support local suppliers and artisans offering reusable or plastic-free alternatives.
- ☐ Avoid accepting Styrofoam packaging.
- ☐ Discuss packaging reduction with at least three key suppliers each year.

QUICK SUCCESS INDICATORS

- ✓ Cleaning products purchased in bulk.
- ✓ Staff drinking water provided through refill systems.
- ✓ Fresh produce received mainly in reusable containers.
- ✓ No Styrofoam entering the business.

B. MEDIUM AND LARGE TOURISM BUSINESSES

(Hotels, resorts and hotel groups)

Larger tourism businesses can influence supply chains by integrating sustainability considerations into procurement decisions and working collaboratively with suppliers to reduce waste at source.

CHECKLIST

- ☐ Identify the suppliers that generate the highest volumes of packaging waste and prioritise engagement with them.
- ☐ Ask suppliers how packaging can be eliminated, reduced, or replaced with reusable delivery systems.
- ☐ Promote bulk purchasing and refill systems for cleaning products, guest amenities and food supplies.
- ☐ Require suppliers to avoid Styrofoam and minimise secondary packaging.
- ☐ Encourage suppliers to implement take-back schemes for crates, containers and packaging materials.
- ☐ Include packaging reduction and waste minimisation considerations in procurement decisions.
- ☐ Hold annual discussions with key suppliers on opportunities to reduce plastic waste.
- ☐ Work with waste management and recycling partners to ensure procured materials can be recovered locally where possible.

QUICK SUCCESS INDICATORS

- ✓ No Styrofoam accepted from suppliers.
- ✓ Bulk purchasing programme implemented.
- ✓ Reuse or return system established with at least one major supplier.
- ✓ Supplier sustainability criteria included in procurement decisions.
- ✓ Annual supplier engagement meeting conducted.

ZANZIBAR SUPPLIER PLEDGE

We encourage our suppliers to:

- ☐ Eliminate Styrofoam packaging.
- ☐ Minimise unnecessary plastic packaging.
- ☐ Explore reusable delivery systems.
- ☐ Offer bulk purchasing and refill options where feasible.
- ☐ Support take-back and return schemes.
- ☐ Work collaboratively to reduce plastic waste entering Zanzibar's environment.

QUICK TIPS

SUPPLIER-FOCUSED ACTIONS

- ✓ Pick a 'REDUCE Champion' to check and approve the plastic content of all new products before they are bought.
- ✓ Give priority to suppliers who take back their packaging or offer bulk delivery.
- ✓ Use a feedback form to tell suppliers you want less plastic and no Styrofoam in your next delivery.
- ✓ Add a rule to contracts that stops suppliers from replacing eco-friendly items with plastic versions without permission.
- ✓ Buy dry goods and cleaning supplies in large bulk containers to cut down on small plastic wrappers. (Shared with in-house operations)
- ✓ Work with local vendors to deliver milk and water in reusable crates that can be returned and cleaned.

IN-HOUSE HOTEL PRACTICES

- ✓ Ask "Do we really need this?" before any order is placed to eliminate waste at the source.
- ✓ Check your storage every month to make sure old plastic items like straws are not being used by mistake.
- ✓ Stop buying plastic water bottles and switch to a professional glass bottling and filtration system.
- ✓ Swap out plastic cling film for reusable silicone lids or local beeswax wraps.
- ✓ Replace single-use sauce and sugar sachets with refillable dispensers or small bowls.
- ✓ Keep a simple digital list of all plastic coming into the building to see what can be removed next.

CASE STUDY 05

CLEANECO ZANZIBAR ADVANCING CIRCULAR CLEANING SOLUTIONS IN ZANZIBAR'S TOURISM SECTOR

CleanEco Zanzibar supports hotels and tourism businesses in reducing single-use plastic waste through environmentally responsible cleaning solutions and circular refill systems tailored specifically for the hospitality industry. By replacing individually packaged cleaning products with concentrated refill solutions, the company helps significantly reduce plastic packaging consumption while also minimizing chemical pollution, operational waste, and unnecessary transport emissions.

One concentrated container of CleanEco bathroom cleaning solution can replace approximately 100 small plastic bottles of conventional diluted cleaning products such as Aro bleach. This substantially reduces the number of plastic containers entering Zanzibar's waste stream while lowering storage requirements, transport impacts, and product handling inefficiencies within hotel operations.

Unlike conventional cleaning products, which are largely composed of water, CleanEco imports highly concentrated formulations from South Africa and dilutes them locally at the point of use. This approach supports a more resource-efficient supply chain by reducing the environmental footprint associated with transporting large volumes of ready-to-use cleaning liquids.

To strengthen circularity and reduce disposable packaging, CleanEco Zanzibar operates a container return and reuse system in which empty containers are collected, redeemed, and reused rather than discarded after a single use. This model helps hospitality businesses transition from linear consumption patterns toward more sustainable material management practices.

In addition to reducing plastic waste, CleanEco products are designed to be **safer for cleaning staff and less harmful to Zanzibar's sensitive marine and coastal ecosystems by minimizing the release of harmful chemicals into the environment.**

The company's solutions therefore contribute not only to waste reduction, but also to healthier workplaces and improved environmental protection.

CleanEco Zanzibar provides tailored solutions for hospitality businesses of different sizes. Larger hotels can install professional dispensing systems that automatically mix precise product-to-water ratios, helping reduce product waste, improve operational efficiency, and ensure consistent cleaning performance. Smaller establishments can utilize practical manual refill systems adapted to their operational needs. Staff training and technical support are also provided to ensure products are used safely, effectively, and sustainably across all operations.

CASE STUDY 06

CHUMBE ISLAND ADVANCING PLASTIC-FREE TOURISM THROUGH TARGETED ACTION PLANNING

Chumbe Island Coral Park has become a leading example of plastic-free tourism in the Western Indian Ocean through its long-standing commitment to eliminating single-use plastics from its operations and promoting sustainable operations. As an **early signatory of the Global Tourism Plastics Initiative led by the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Tourism Organization in collaboration with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, the island demonstrates how tourism businesses can address plastic pollution through practical and measurable action**.

Chumbe Island **eliminated single-use plastics from the early onset of the project** and embedded sustainable waste management practices throughout its tourism model. Its strategy focuses on eliminating unnecessary plastic items, replacing disposable products with reusable alternatives, and increasing the use of recyclable or compostable materials. The operation also actively engages suppliers, guests, local communities, and tourism stakeholders across Zanzibar to encourage wider adoption of sustainable practices.

Building on a 2021 plastic audit, Chumbe Island developed a targeted action plan to further reduce plastic consumption. Measures include reducing cling film use in the kitchen by 50%, minimizing plastic waste from single-serve condiments such as tomato paste by exploring homemade alternatives, replacing packaged chips and sweets with homemade options to cut associated waste by 50%, purchasing yoghurts in bulk, and sourcing cleaning and detergent products in larger refill containers to reduce packaging waste.

Through these actions, Chumbe Island shows how tourism businesses can combine operational improvements, supply chain engagement, and awareness-raising to create a scalable model for plastic-free tourism while contributing to a more sustainable destination overall.

06 TRACKING PROGRESS

Consistent monitoring ensures that reduction initiatives remain effective.

MONITORING MADE SIMPLE

- Maintain a digital ledger of all plastic-based items entering the facility to identify 'high-impact' supplies for elimination.
- Conduct monthly 'waste walks' and quarterly audits to measure the density and volume of plastic waste generated by various departments.
- Establish Key Performance Indicators (see the Smart Procurement Quick Reference Guide for Success in section 05) for measuring sustainable procurement sucess[9]. Consider measures such as a Plastic Reduction Ratio[10] and the percentage of supplies that are eco-friendly certified.
- Join the Global Tourism Plastics Initiative. As signatory you can measure your plastics consumption via a relatively easy methodology[11].

LEARNING & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- Regularly review monitoring data to ensure continuous improvement.

9 https://bit.ly/4eCzzfh
10 https://bit.ly/4w0vLeH
11 https://bit.ly/4fh28kk

SIMPLIFIED GTPI SUP CHECKLIST FOR ACCOMMODATIONS
CATEGORIES I II
2026

Name of Accommodation:

Global Tourism Plastics Initiative

GTPI CATEGORY	SINGLE USE PRODUCTS	Front Office	Excursions / Transfers	Children's Club	Food & Drink Guest Facing	Food & Drink Staff Dining	Guest Room	Guest Room Bathroom	Gym/Spa	Hygiene Related / Cleaning	MICE	Public Areas	Retail Outlets	Supply Chain Related
1	Garbage bags													
1	Mini toiletry bottles													
1	Packaging around dry room amenities													
1	Stirrers										x			
1	Straws													
1	Takeaway containers													
1	Takeaway cups													
1	Takeaway cup lids													
1	Takeaway cutlery													
1	Toothbrushes													
1	Water bottles (below 750ml)													
2	Bags and packaging for chips and sweets													
2	Cling film													
2	Disposable plastic plates													
2	Laundry bags (for collection)													
2	Plastic beverage bottles (below 750ml)													
2	Sachets for single-serve condiments													
2	Takeaway bags													
2	Takeaway condiment containers													
2	Toothpaste													
2	Toothbrushes													

▲ *Global Tourism Plastics Initiative Monitoring Tool.*[12]

- Implement systems for staff and guests to report on the efficacy of plastic-free alternatives and identify areas for optimization. The Global Tourism Plastics Initiative provides simple, ready-to-use tools with instructions on how to measure and track changes in single-use plastics and waste.

12 Tools can be downloaded at: https://l1nq.com/n1cxs3r

07 COMMUNICATION & CULTURE

STAFF ENGAGEMENT

- Sustainability thrives when every stakeholder understands the 'why' behind the shift toward circular business models.
- Engaging staff transforms them from employees into ambassadors for a plastic-free Zanzibar.
- Ensure sustainability goals are understood and shared by every department, from front-of-house to back-of-house operations.
- Provide regular training sessions that explain the environmental impact of single-use plastics and the mechanics of reusable systems.
- Introduce 'REDUCE Champions' within departments and implement reward systems that recognize teams and individuals who achieve plastic reduction milestones or identify innovative 'reduce' opportunities. Celebrate their achievements widely to encourage motivation and shared learning across the establishment
- Use clear, visible signage to explain why single-use items have been replaced, explicitly linking these choices to the protection of local Zanzibar ecosystems and marine life.
- Train staff to recognize and avoid 'false solutions' like bioplastics, ensuring they can accurately communicate the benefits of the 'Refill' model to guests.

GUEST COMMUNICATION

Communicate how plastic pollution contributes to ocean degradation, which directly threatens Zanzibar's coral reefs and marine biodiversity, the very assets guests come to enjoy.

Chumbe Island Coral Park integrates marine conservation into the guest experience by actively educating visitors about coral reef protection, ocean biodiversity, and the environmental impact of waste helping guests connect their choices to the health of Zanzibar's marine ecosystem. ▶

When guests actively avoid single-use plastics, it sends a clear signal to the hospitality industry and global suppliers that sustainability is a competitive necessity rather than an optional luxury.

Use signage to explain why the hotel has moved away from 'false solutions' like bio plastics (PLA) in favor of durable reusable that don't rely on unavailable industrial recycling /composting infrastructure.

As part of its Tread Lightly programme, Lux Marijani places a small sustainability action pillow on each guest bed which highlights easy environmental actions for each stay. ▶

CLOSING MESSAGE

Every purchase is a choice. Every guest interaction is an opportunity. Every partnership is a chance to inspire change.

Tourism businesses have the power to shape the future of Zanzibar far beyond their own operations. As one of the island's largest purchasers and most visible industries, the sector can influence supplier practices, encourage innovation, guide visitors towards plastic-free holidays, and demonstrate that exceptional hospitality goes hand in hand with environmental responsibility.

By choosing refill over disposable, local over unnecessary packaging, and collaboration over convenience, every tourism business contributes to a cleaner, healthier, and more authentic destination—one that benefits not only visitors but also local communities and the natural environment on which our prosperity depends.

Zanzibar is in a unique position. Single-use plastics are a relatively recent addition to everyday life, and not long-ago woven baskets, reusable containers, and pakacha bags were simply the way things were done. Rather than reinventing sustainability, we have an opportunity to **build on this rich tradition of resourcefulness and combine it with new ideas and innovation** to create a modern tourism experience that is both high quality and low waste.

These guidelines are not the destination—they are the starting point. The transition towards a circular tourism sector will require curiosity, innovation, and perseverance. We will need to test new ideas, learn from challenges, celebrate successes, and inspire one another to keep moving forward. There will not always be perfect solutions, but every unnecessary plastic avoided, every supplier engaged, and every guest inspired brings us one step closer to the future we want to create.

Together, we have the opportunity to redefine what quality hospitality looks like: cleaner beaches, healthier oceans, stronger local partnerships, and unforgettable visitor experiences rooted in the beauty and authenticity of Zanzibar.

Together, we can make plastic-smart hospitality the new standard—creating a destination where communities thrive, nature flourishes, and visitors leave not only with unforgettable memories, but inspired by a Zanzibar that has embraced the best of its traditions to shape a more sustainable future.

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