Community-led solutions for small sustainable islands
Our Mission

We assist small island (> 150 km²) communities that wish to work towards managing their territories more sustainably.

We aim to curb impacts linked to human activities and development, whilst fostering innovations on islands that benefit the local population and their environment.

Our focus is on sustainable solutions in the fields of water & sanitation, waste, energy, biodiversity, landscape and heritage.

In the spirit of inter-island solidarity, we also promote the sharing of knowledge, know-how, and good practices among our small islands community.

Our Values

- Biodiversity Conservation
- Resilience
- Social Responsibility
Labelling Process

SMILO has developed a method and tools to drive integrated and sustainable territorial management on small islands:

The Sustainable Island Label

This label is an international recognition for an island’s improved management and conservation of natural resources. The labelling process, developed by SMILO, consists of several stages that must be completed in order to earn the label.

1. An Island Committee is formed: representing all stakeholders on the island.
2. The Sustainable Islands declaration is signed: to confirm that the island is joining the NGO SMILO and embraces its values.
3. A Cooperation Agreement is signed: this officially seals the island’s commitment to the certification process.
4. The Island Committee carries out a diagnosis of the territory and draws up a strategic plan: The diagnosis is an inventory. It addresses all topics covered by SMILO and is used to measure the island’s progress. The Strategic Plan lays out the main challenges and objectives. The objectives must be ambitious but realistic, and in line with the strategic principles developed by SMILO.
5. The Island Committee applies for intermediary assessment. The Secretariat forwards the application to the Assessment Committee, which is composed of rapporteurs. A rapporteur visits the applicant territory in order to check that declarations are coherent and that all the necessary forms have been filled out. The Assessment Committee then meets to formulate an opinion, which is passed on to the Board of Directors. The latter is then responsible for awarding – or withholding – mid-term certification, the Label in Progress.
6. Concrete operations are carried out: to help the island reach its priority objectives; they may qualify for financial support (via the Islands Fund) and expert help.
7. The Final Assessment: is made once priority goals have been reached. The label is awarded for a period of 5 years, during which continuous improvement remains ongoing.
8. At the end of the 5-year period, the island can renew its label: by proving that it has updated all of the phases in the certification process.
SMILO’s Island Networks

46 islands
21 countries
34 projects in 2022
130k inhabitants reached
150 members and partners
+1,2M€ invested in the last 4 yrs
Our fields of concrete actions

BIODIVERSITY & ECOSYSTEMS

- Overview and understanding of habitats, biodiversity
- Launch actions to protect biodiversity
- Ensure enforcement and compliance with regulations
- Ensure that local populations and visitors are aware of the importance of the island’s biodiversity
- Deepen knowledge about habitats and marine and terrestrial species
- Ramp up initiatives to protect terrestrial and marine biodiversity
- Encourage business activities that are not detrimental to ecosystems (agriculture, fishing, forestry, etc)
- Support responsible tourism by respecting and involving local communities, promoting biodiversity and outstanding ecosystems
- Carry out ecological restoration and engineering projects
- Prevent the introduction of invasive species; monitor, and carry out control and/or eradication campaigns on terrestrial and marine invasive species

Some examples
- Preserving mangrove ecosystem e.g. planting, nursery
  > Principe, Sao Tome & Principe
- Restoring marine environment with natural artificial reefs
  > Sipopo Bamboung, Senegal
- Restoring coral reefs
  > Raja Ampat, Indonesia
- Enhancing effective MPA management, empowering local fisherfolks
  > Pangatalan, Philippines
- Development of biodiversity conservation strategies
  > Mediterranean Island Collective
ENERGY

Energy diagnosis of the island
Reduce energy consumption at source
Launch actions to improve the energy efficiency
Reduce the systematic use of fossil fuels
Optimise ferry schedules
Support sustainable mobility on the island
Foster and promote bio-climatic architecture and green building.
Grow energy storage capacity and control/monitor consumption

Some examples
Led public lighteninh and solar panels instalation
> Kerkennah, Tunisia
Training women to use improved stoves
> Bassar-Bassoul, Senegal
Producing biogas with organic waste
> Santa Luzia, Cape Verde

LANDSCAPES & HERITAGE

Analytical diagnosis of the island’s visual identity
Launch actions to protect landscapes and tangible cultural heritage
Inform local populations and visitors about the island’s heritage
Ensure that new facilities blend into the landscape
Implement schemes to protect and restore damaged natural spaces and tangible cultural heritage.
Showcase the local landscaping know-how

Some examples
Exchange of good practices and technical workshops
> Brownsea Island, UK & Lastovo, Croatia
Integration of landscape protection measures in territorial planning schemes
> Emerald Sea, Madagascar
Carrying capacity studies and communication campaigns
> Frioul & Lavezzi islands, France
WASTE

Assess, detail and monitor flows of waste generated on the island.
Reduce the consumption and wastage of resources.
Set up infrastructures for collecting, storing and sorting waste.
Inform islanders and visitors about how they can become eco-citizens.
Manage and process as much waste as possible locally.
Facilitate the reuse of materials and products before end-of-life disposal.
Package (compact) and export waste that cannot be processed on the island.
Make sure that day-trippers systematically take their waste back to the mainland with them.

Some examples
Training compost masters and implementation of composting scheme.
Principe, Sao Tome & Principe; Bolama, Guinea-Bissau.
Capitalisation of good practices in tackling plastic pollutions in the Mediterranean.
CapiMed initiative by BeMed (with MedWaves, UNEP).
Sorting waste at the source.
Gorée, Senegal.
Collect and up-cycle plastic fishery waste.
Kerkennah, Tunisia; Hyères islands, France.
Management of trekking paths and fire risk reduction.
Zlarin, Croatia.
Developing local and reusable substitute items to single use plastics.
Hyères and Frioul islands, France; Kerkennah, Tunisia.

WATER & SANITATION

Assess the quantity and the quality of freshwater resources.
Protect the quality of water resources.
Carry out awareness campaigns on water efficiency.
Protect water catchment basins.
If the island gets its freshwater from the mainland, opt for systems that optimise transport and minimise the use of plastics.
Reduce pressure on water resources at source.
Introduce measures to help water trickle down into the aquifers.
Diversify freshwater supply sources.
Satisfy minimum ecological flow requirements in rivers.
Identify the quantity and quality of wastewater.
Reduce pollution in wastewater systems.
Upgrade existing wastewater treatment facilities, sewerage and collection infrastructures.

Some examples
Planted reeds sanitation system design.
Saint-Honorat, France.
Restoring water tanks.
Kerkennah, Tunisia.
Installation and maintenance of desalinisation plants.
Santa Luzia, Cape Verde.
Since 2017, SMILO has supported island community-led projects representing a total of more than 1,2 millions of investments on 24 islands worldwide!

Our main institutional and financial partners

Our main technical partners and partner organisations
JOIN US

Candidate to the Sustainable Island Label, be part of our international network, participate to our trainings, technical workshops, events, and beyond!

SUPPORT US

Become our new financially, technical and/or institutional partner; let’s build projects together and team-up for the 1% for the planet, let’s design together your corporate social responsibility initiatives and more!

Connect with us

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