

OCEAN SOLE CONTEXT

Ocean Sole is a non-profit organization, whose mission is to clean polluted beaches and provide careers to Artisans in high-impact communities. This NGO turns discarded flip-flops found along the beaches and waterways in Kenya into artwork and functional products, which raises visual awareness of the pollution problem at hand.

Inspired by the toys children were making out of the flip-flop debris, Julie Church, the Ocean Sole Founder, encouraged their mothers to collect, wash, and cut the discarded flip-flops into colourful products to sell at local Kenyan Markets as another means of income for their families.

People are at the core of this organization. They support men, women, youth (18 to 35), fisherman and other entrepreneurs that are all part of their social ecosystem. Whether picking up flip-flops that they pay for or using waste for up-cycled products such as mattresses, community engagement has been strong and is at the core of the business. Ocean Sole provides meals, healthcare, fair wages, and career advancement and educational opportunities, not only for their employees, but their families as well.

By making these sculptures, Ocean Sole is creating employment for a country that has over 40% unemployment rate but it is also sending a message about how we can help the planet, our oceans and people, through creating beautiful art that portray an important message about the state of the oceans.

THE IMPLEMENTATION

The process of turning flip flops into art is completed through several steps:

- 1) Collecting.** The flip flops are collected from the beaches and waterways. These flip flops are sold to Ocean Sole per kg which support communities, individuals and their families.
- 2) Cleaning.** When they arrive at the workshop the flip flops are cleaned and polished by a team of women.

- 3) **Blocking.** Then, the glueing and blocking of flip flops begin to make a block for sculpting.
- 4) **Carving.** Once the block is made, the carving and sanding processes start.
- 5) **Finishing touches.** Then the final touches are added (ear, tails, eyes, etc. as well as the Ocean Sole logo).
- 6) **Quality checking.** When ready, the art is quality checked, tagged and ready for packing and shipping to the customers.

Ocean Sole is selling the artwork and products through an [online commerce](#) as well as physical sales through wholesales partners.

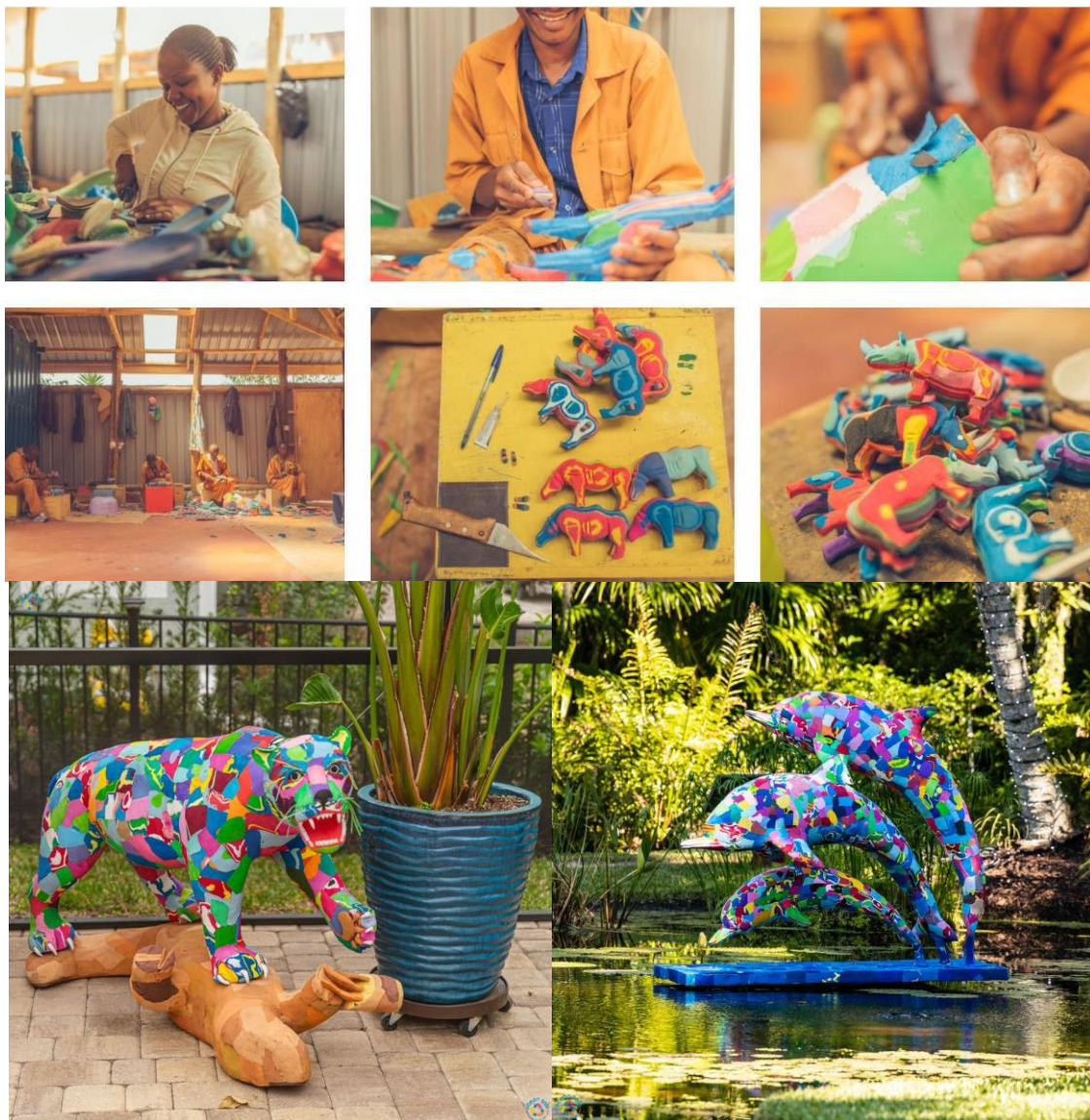
IMPACT CREATED

Ocean Sole positively impacts over a 1,000 Kenyans through the collection of flip-flops and direct employment. They provide steady income to nearly 100 low-income Kenyans in the company. Their aim is to recycle a million flip flops per year, recycle over one tonne of styrofoam per month, and save over five hundred trees a year - by using flip flops instead of wood. They contribute over 10-15% of their revenue to beach cleanups, vocational and educational programmes as well as conservation efforts.

Ocean Sole uses the benefits to pay bonuses to employees, invest in a welfare programme that allows a zero return in funds to all employees to help facilitate payments for educating their children, buying land and other means.

MORE INFORMATION

- Website: <https://oceansole.com/>
- Pictures:



❑ Videos:

https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/0630/9163/8507/files/Ocean_Sole_Not_An_Ashtray_Cropped.mp4?v=1647042002

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vuHsShsMDT8>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBL_lvTntbA

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S-7Jsym6lRY>

❑ Social Media

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/OceanSole1>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/OceanSole>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/OceanSoleKenya>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/oceansole/>

Pinterest: <https://www.pinterest.es/oceansole/>