

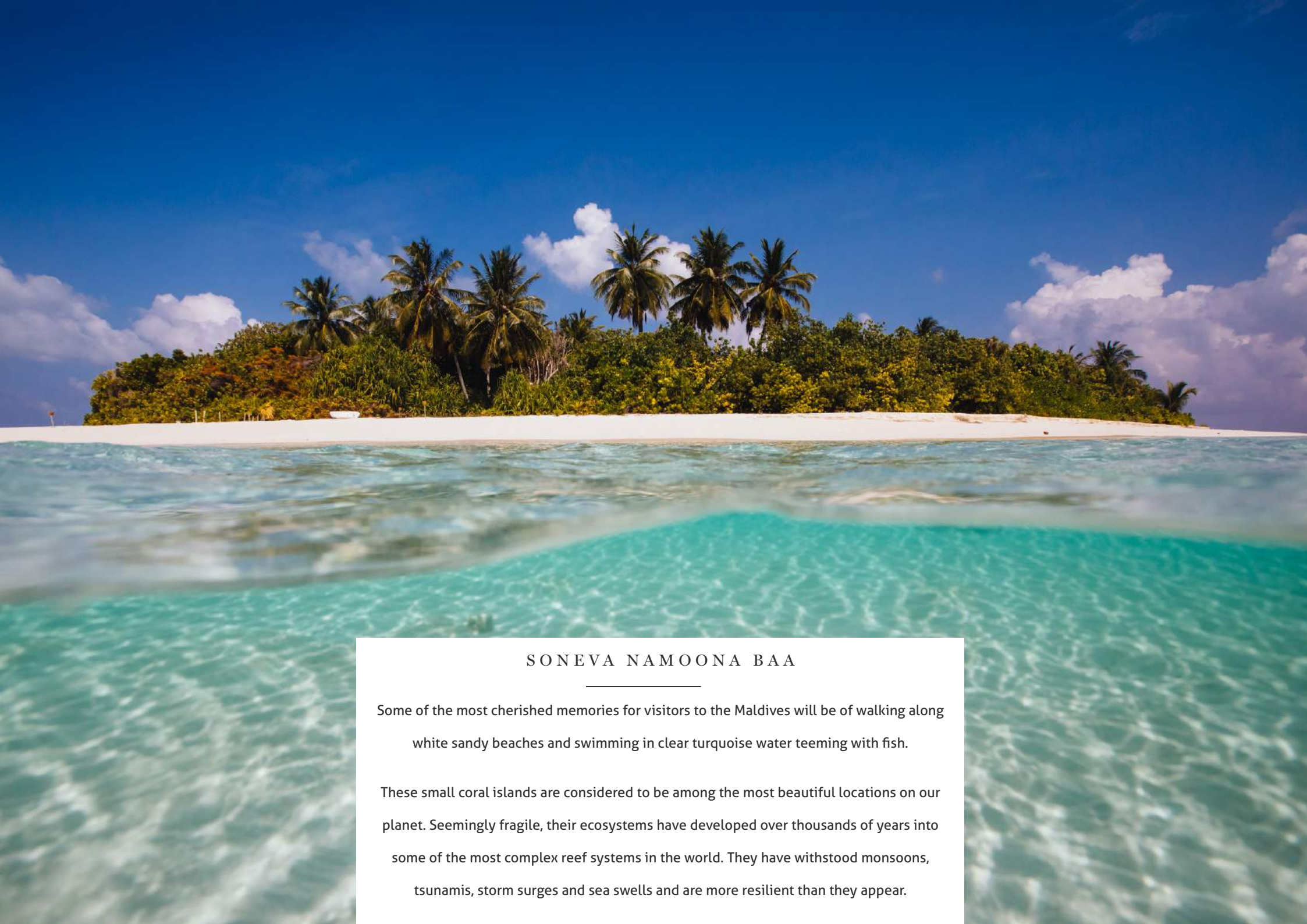


Soneva



NAMOONA BAA

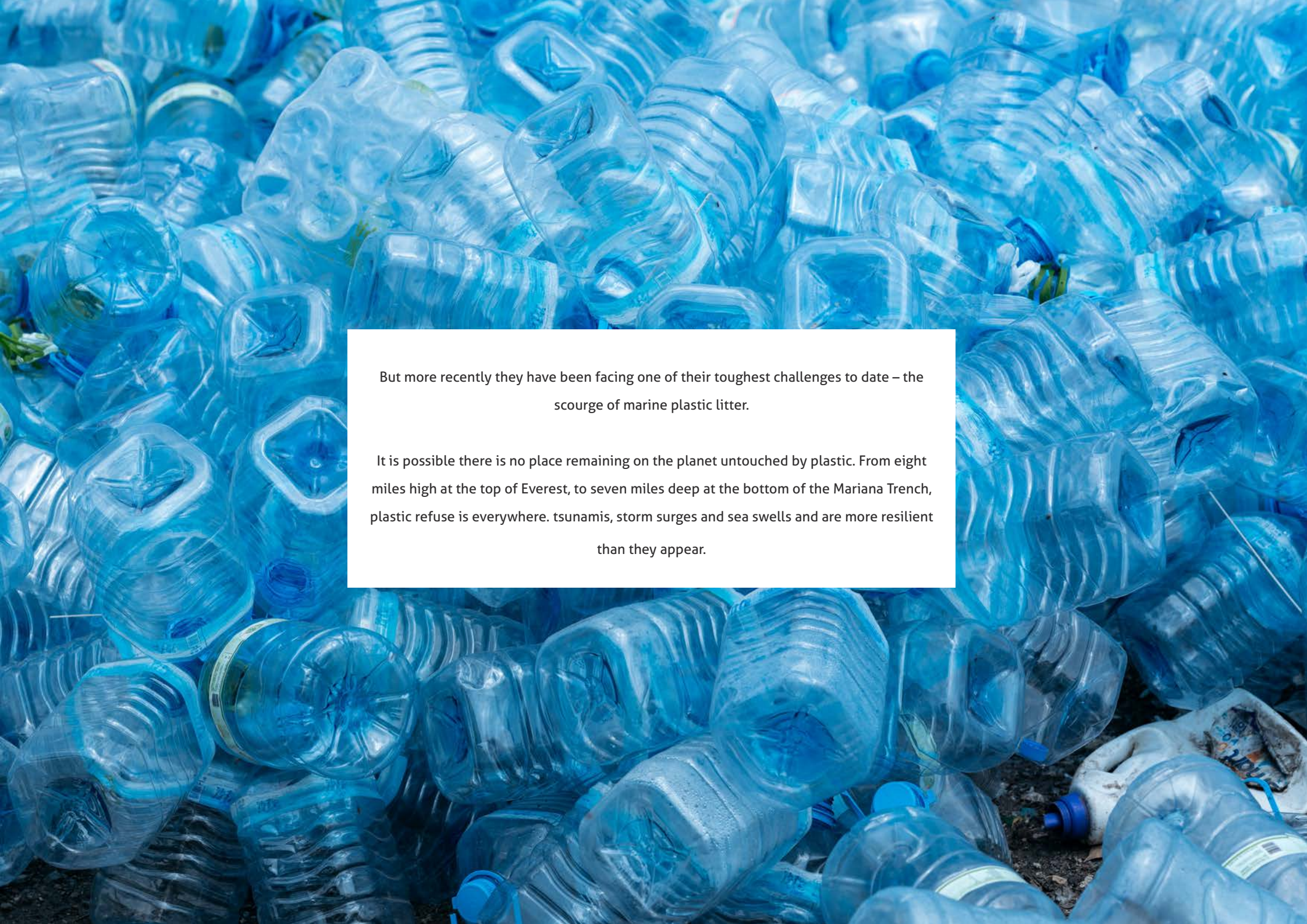
FREEING THE MALDIVES FROM SINGLE-USE PLASTIC



SONEVA NAMOONA BAA


Some of the most cherished memories for visitors to the Maldives will be of walking along white sandy beaches and swimming in clear turquoise water teeming with fish.

These small coral islands are considered to be among the most beautiful locations on our planet. Seemingly fragile, their ecosystems have developed over thousands of years into some of the most complex reef systems in the world. They have withstood monsoons, tsunamis, storm surges and sea swells and are more resilient than they appear.




But more recently they have been facing one of their toughest challenges to date – the scourge of marine plastic litter.

It is possible there is no place remaining on the planet untouched by plastic. From eight miles high at the top of Everest, to seven miles deep at the bottom of the Mariana Trench, plastic refuse is everywhere. tsunamis, storm surges and sea swells and are more resilient than they appear.

An aerial photograph of a tropical beach. The left side of the image shows the turquoise ocean with white foam from breaking waves washing onto a narrow strip of white sand. To the right of the sand, a dense line of lush green palm trees grows. The text is overlaid in the center, spanning across the sand and the palm trees.

THE BEACHES AND SEAS OF THE
MALDIVES ARE PARTICULARLY
ICONIC WHEN TELLING THE STORY
OF A PROBLEM THAT RECOGNISES
NO PHYSICAL LIMITS. THE MALDIVES
IS A NATION THAT RELIES ON THE
HEALTH OF THE SEAS FOR ITS
ECONOMIC AND PHYSICAL SURVIVAL.

An aerial photograph of a lush tropical forest. A wooden boardwalk or bridge runs vertically through the upper left portion of the image. In the lower right, there is a garden area with several raised beds containing various plants. The forest is dense with green foliage, including many palm trees and banana plants. The lighting suggests a bright, sunny day.

Soneva Namoonaa Baa is a unique partnership - ratified with a signed charter - launched by luxury eco resort Soneva Fushi and international NGO Common Seas in collaboration with the Government of the Maldives and three local islands – Maalhos, Dharavandhoo and Kihaadhoo.

By demonstrating that a radical reimagining of waste can prevent plastic leaking into the ocean, the partnership demonstrates a waste-to-wealth approach that can benefit the whole country as well as other small island states.





Captured through the lens of celebrated photographer Matt Porteous, we meet the individuals who are using their expertise, creativity and ingenuity to eliminate single use plastic from the Maldives, to challenge the concept of waste, and to nurture a new generation of ocean stewards.



THROUGH THESE INDIVIDUALS, WE LEARN ABOUT
THE UNIQUE AND LITTLE-KNOWN CULTURE OF THE
MALDIVES AND GAIN A FIRST HAND VIEW OF ISLAND
LIFE BEYOND THE RESORTS.





STEP ONE: REDUCE




REDUCE

FROM SINGLE USE PLASTIC
WATER BOTTLES TO
DESALINATED WATER IN
REUSABLE GLASS BOTTLES.

FROM DISPOSABLE NAPPIES
TO A REUSABLE NAPPY
LAUNDRY SERVICE.

COLLABORATION BETWEEN
RESORTS, GUESTHOUSES
AND ISLAND COUNCILS TO
ENCOURAGE GOVERNMENT
TO INTRODUCE A NATIONAL
BAN ON PARTICULAR
SINGLE-USE PLASTIC
PRODUCTS.

A large, white, woven sack is filled with numerous discarded plastic water bottles. The bottles are of various sizes and are mostly clear or light blue, with some having blue labels. The sack is open at the top, and the bottles are spilling out. The background shows a blue surface with a pattern of small blue stars and some brown debris. The text "STEP TWO: RECYCLE" is overlaid on the image in a white box with black text.

STEP TWO: RECYCLE



RECYCLE

FROM WASTE MANAGEMENT
CENTRES TO ECO-CENTROS
- A WASTE-TO-WEALTH
PHILOSOPHY.

PARLEY - TURNING WASTE
PLASTIC INTO SPORTSWEAR.

AN END TO OPEN BURNING
ON LOCAL ISLANDS.

An aerial photograph of a group of surfers in clear, turquoise ocean water. The surfers are scattered across the frame, with some standing on their boards and others in the water. The water's surface is covered in intricate, swirling patterns of light and dark green, creating a textured, almost abstract background. A white rectangular box is centered horizontally across the middle of the image, containing the text "STEP THREE: INSPIRE" in a black, serif, all-caps font.

STEP THREE: INSPIRE

A tropical beach scene with palm trees and a couple walking. The background shows a clear blue sky, lush green palm trees, and a couple walking on a white sandy beach towards the turquoise ocean. The text is overlaid on a white rectangular box in the center.

INSPIRE

NURTURING OCEAN
STEWARDS - TEACH KIDS TO
SWIM, SNORKEL AND SURF.

ZERO WASTE CHALLENGE -
COMPETITIONS FOR LOCAL
SCHOOL KIDS.

NAMOONA SCHOOLS -
CERTIFIED ECO SCHOOLS.

A man with glasses, wearing a white short-sleeved button-down shirt and white shorts, stands in a lush forest. He is smiling and pointing his right index finger towards the camera. His left hand is on his hip. He is surrounded by large, thick tree trunks and dense green foliage. The lighting is soft and natural, filtering through the trees.

SONU SHIVDASANI

CHAIRMAN AND CEO, SONEVA

"If we work together, we are sure we can create the right environment for the Maldives to be the world's most progressive country on single use plastic. If we project forwards just a few years, we can see that all islands will have thriving waste-to-wealth centres; there will be no plastic bags; no plastic straws; islands will have their own water bottling plants; no guesthouses or resorts will serve water in single use bottles."

KHADY HAMID

SONEVA NAMOONA CO-FOUNDER, SONEVA

"Namoona refers to something that is exemplary, ideal, an exception. It is a fitting name for the initiative because in many ways this project is an exception to a typical CSR project. Starting from the kinds of partnerships involved (private sector, government, international donors, and the local community); the ways of working (the needs of the communities are at the centre of this work); emphasis on local ownership and empowerment; and the ambition behind the project is anything but typical."



AZHOORA AHMED

SURF MANAGER, SONEVA

"I still remember my first wave that I stood up for...I felt like I was flying, I felt like I had a superpower. The thrill, the speed that it takes you, the fact that you can control your body along with the wave, it's just magical. Everybody needs to have that feeling."





RAIA MUSTAHAF

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER, SONEVA

"Awareness of plastic waste is definitely heightened now in the Maldives. A lot of the younger generation are involved in that as well. There are a lot of surfers and divers involved with activities to do with the sea. It's not just about education, it's also about just being aware of your surroundings."



GORDON JACKSON

WASTE-TO-WEALTH MANAGER

"One of the things we're able to do at Eco Centro on Soneva Fushi is to try new ideas. We're constantly trying new ways of turning waste into something useful and in a sense we're like a little incubator."

A man with a beard and mustache, wearing a grey t-shirt and dark pants, stands on a sandy beach. He is holding a clear plastic bottle with both hands. The background features a blue ocean, a white sandy beach, and several trees with green leaves. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

ABDULLA SHUJAU

ISLAND COUNCIL PRESIDENT

MAALHOS

"The beauty of these small islands is a gift from nature and we have to maintain this. This land on this tiny island is not just for us. There may be many, many generations will come after us so we have to be responsible to deliver this as it is created by God."

JO ROYLE

FOUNDER, COMMON SEAS

"Dealing with the current volume of single use plastic waste is expensive for communities to manage, off-putting for tourists, and harmful to fish stocks. The items most commonly found on Maldivian beaches are plastic bottles, disposable nappies, cigarette butts, straws and plastic bags, so we already know where start."



A portrait of Ali MaaJidh, a middle-aged man with grey hair and a beard, wearing sunglasses on his head and a grey t-shirt with 'SDC' on it. He is standing in front of a building with a blue door and some outdoor equipment.

ALI MAAJIDH

ISLAND COUNCIL PRESIDENT,
DHARAVANDHOO

"This will be a great legacy to have from my term on the council. If Maalhos, Kihaadhoo and Dharavandhoo can show some good outcomes, the government will engage with this."

AMINATH SHAUNA

SECRETARY, POLICY
PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

"If there is political will there is so much we can do in the Maldives. Doing the impossible is the art of being in government!"



SABRA NOORDEEN

SECRETARY, FOREIGN RELATIONS,
PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

"My husband and I used to talk about the very real possibility that our children may not see the same reefs we did. We liked to travel a lot, go trekking, go swimming. Those things we have taken for granted, possibly our kids won't see."





THANK YOU.

PHOTOGRAPHY: MATT PORTEOUS @THESTUDIO_M