Greetings!

Providing answers to glass waste management through innovation

Poor management of different types of waste such as glass continue to be a global concern, especially in developing countries. This is characterized by inadequate collection systems and disposal in municipal dump sites, resulting in adverse impacts on our environment and human health. Some of these impacts include water and soil contamination as well as air pollution.

While acknowledging the existence of this problem, finding solutions remains foremost in our thoughts. The solution in the first place, is always to avoid waste generation. Where waste cannot be avoided, we are encouraged to minimise their generation. Where it cannot be minimised reuse and recycle. In addition, innovative solutions in waste management are now becoming a trend in sustainable waste management in the form of up-cycling. This week, we will highlight these innovative practices, while focusing on the glass waste.

Ecorated facilities in Kenya are taking the lead in this front. It is therefore important that we highlight some of these innovative ways, so as to draw inspiration from them and improve waste management in our operations.

Construction

Probably, all of us have at least once gone into a supermarket and bought a product packaged in glass. Imagine that you pay for the product including the glass, then pay again to get rid of the glass waste! This is one of the aspects of the “waste problem” coupled with the fact that currently there is inadequate infrastructure to recycle glass waste in Kenya. In spite of these challenges, have
you ever thought that glass waste can be used in construction? In Saruni Samburu, an ecorated property in Kalama Conservancy, glass bottles have been used in construction of walls of their stores. This has not only reduced the cost of construction but also reduced the generation of construction waste since less concrete is used. See illustration below of a picture taken in February 2020 during the ecorating reassessment of the property.

![Illustration of a wall made of glass bottles](image)

**Decor**

Making outdoor decorations is also one of the many attractive and creative ideas of turning glass waste into a resource. This results in reduction of glass waste to be disposed of. Sands at Nomad, a Gold rated property located along the sandy beaches of Diani has taken this art to the next level. As you walk along the demarcated path from the guest rooms area to the restaurant, you will come across very beautiful pieces of decor repurposed from used glass along the lawns; a bold demonstration of the facility’s commitment to sustainability. The picture below illustrates an outdoor decor taken during the ecorating reassessment of the facility in October 2019.
You can also redecorate used glass waste such as jars and bottles to create beautiful flower vases or just bespoke art pieces. These can also serve as unique eco-gifts perfect for all holiday events.

We have one success story at Ecotourism Kenya for creating opportunities for repurposing glass waste. Through our Leadership and Mentorship Programme, a sustainability ambassador by the name Chantal Esperance supported a facility to reuse their glass waste and had an opportunity to display her creativity in sustainable waste management. This was during her period of engagement as a sustainability ambassador at Kifaru House in 2019. She took wine bottles and made magnificent flower vases for the facility. See the picture below of her work.
We can all make a difference by becoming more environmentally conscious and managing our glass waste sustainably. As you think about these innovative practices, we continue to encourage you to stay safe during this period when the world is grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic.