



United Kingdom
243 Knightsbridge,
London, SW7 1DN
T +44 207 5817100
E london@averda.com

Recycling – A Priority For Mediterranean Countries

In an attempt to encourage the young minds of the future to be environmentally responsible and also venture into a new and growing industry represented by environmental services and sustainability, the European Union (EU) funded multilateral cross-border cooperation Program 'Mediterranean Sea Basin' launched, in 2013, the Green MED Initiative (GMI) for 6 countries of the Mediterranean area.

Having as main objective the development of an integrated and environmentally sound waste management system by means of innovative technologies and sustainable waste treatment and recycling techniques, supported by robust awareness campaigns and communication programs, GMI was successfully launched in Egypt, France, Italy, Spain, Tunisia and Lebanon, Averda, the global waste management services provider, being a key partner in this Mediterranean initiative.

The project was launched in 3 Spanish (Catalan) universities in April 2015, followed by 5 Sardinian schools in October 2015, 24 Lebanese schools and universities in December 2015 and 36 Tunisian schools in February 2016. The last phase of GMI's deployment will shortly be launched in Egypt. The results of the Programme have been remarkable in terms of their outreach and impact across the students' and pupils' population involved in the beneficiary countries. For instance:

- In Spain, 35,894 bottles have been recycled, with the participants entering a draw at the end of every month when 3 prize-winners are announced
- Students in Italy have helped recycle 24,632 bottles
- In Tunisia, 22,506 bottles have been recycled by Tunisian students since the Programme has been launched and
- In Lebanon an incredible number of bottles - 464,784 - has been recycled so far.

When returning their empty containers (cans and plastic bottles), the students and pupils can receive instant rewards based on the regional 'Rewards & Challenges' programme specific to each of the countries involved in the Program. This approach represents a straightforward incentive mechanism that motivates students and pupils to be more environmentally engaged and responsible.

The Reverse Vending Machines made available to the GMI – EU funded Program by Averda issue the students with a points-ticket, reflecting the number of empty containers inserted. Following a short online registration process, the students can create an online individual account where they can collect points, redeem them and compete with fellow students from other Mediterranean countries.



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Averda, under the auspices of Green MED Initiative, has deployed 110 Reverse Vending Machines (RVMs) in 62 schools and 6 universities of 4 Mediterranean countries: Italy, Spain, Lebanon and Tunisia. Apart from Averda, the GMI Program partners also include:

- The Regional Association of the Municipalities of Sardinia (ANCI)
- The Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Marseille Province (CCIMP)
- The Confederation of Egyptian European Business Associations (CEEBA)
- The Special Agency of the Cagliari Chamber of Commerce (CSPI)
- The Association of Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce & Industry (ASCAME)
- The Association of Enterprises for Environmental Conservation (AEEC)
- Barcelona Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Navigation (CCB)
- The Foundation for Development Innovation and Technology (FUNDITEC)
- The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Tunis (CCIT)
- The Chamber of Commerce of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture of Beirut and Mount Lebanon

Ms Philippa Charlton, Averda's Marketing Director, said: 'Recycling and reusing are more important today than ever before and there can be no limits to our encouragement of young people to be and become environmentally aware, responsible and accountable – they are the adults of tomorrow, those with a clear mandate and duty of care for our oceans, our seas and our climate.'

About Averda:

Averda is the largest environmental solutions provider in the Middle East and Africa region, specializing in integrated resources management. Headquartered in Dubai for its GCC markets, and in London for its other international markets, Averda is at the forefront of innovation, providing sustainable solutions and more than 35 years of experience in the effective management of waste for both private and public sector clients across pedestrian, residential, commercial and industrial areas.

Averda's extensive portfolio of services range from street cleaning to waste collection, treatment, disposal and recycling. The company's capabilities also include the development of solutions for water, wastewater and solid waste for public, residential, commercial, and industrial sectors, all within a sustainable framework that respects the natural environment. Averda also designs and implements full-scale solutions to recover valuable and recyclable resources like paper, metals and water.

Serving in excess of 9 million people every day, Averda currently operates in full compliance with international standards for quality control throughout Angola, Congo, Gabon, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Republic of Ireland, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and United Arab Emirates.