



# EU MISSIONS

RESTORE OUR OCEAN AND WATERS



## BACKGROUND

Easy Harvest, a startup based in Portugal, focuses on the sustainable collection and utilisation of seaweed. Founded by marine biologist Francisco Machado and business strategist Emilia Kotiranta, the company addresses the environmental and economic challenges posed by seaweed blooms along the Algarve coast. Rather than treating it as waste, Easy Harvest developed an innovative vacuum-like harvesting system to collect floating seaweed before it washes ashore. It reduces environmental disruption and repurposes the biomass for use in fertilisers, animal feed, and bio-based materials. The company also provides real-time monitoring data to municipalities and environmental stakeholders.



## MOTIVATION

Easy Harvest was founded on personal and environmental motivations. The co-founders sought to create local job opportunities while addressing the issue of seaweed blooms that negatively impact tourism, fisheries, and coastal ecosystems. They identified a market gap in utilising it as a resource rather than waste and developed a collection method that mitigates environmental damage while creating economic value and contributing to a circular economy.





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## COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

The startup collaborates with the [University of Algarve's Centre of Marine Sciences](#), which supports research and development efforts. It also works closely with local municipalities and governmental bodies to obtain necessary permits and ensure compliance with environmental regulations. Their work has led to the issuance of an experimental fisheries authorisation to explore new techniques for sustainable seaweed collection.



## OUTCOMES

Since launching operations, Easy Harvest has collected three tonnes of seaweed in 2024, validating its approach while laying the foundation for expansion. By preventing seaweed from washing up on beaches, the company helps preserve coastal ecosystems and maintain cleaner shorelines, benefiting tourism and fisheries. While its current scale is modest, Easy Harvest is working to refine its technology and increase capacity.



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