



Hempstead barrier reef project | Photo source Pixabay

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RESTAURANTS REPURPOSE SEAFOOD SHELLS TO RE-CREATE BARRIER REEF

 SUSTAINABILITY

A partnership between council officials and local restaurants hopes to restore and protect the surrounding barrier reef by diverting oyster shells from landfill.

Sustainable and eco-friendly ideas and products are extremely popular in the world of innovation. Everyone can contribute in a positive way, such as purchasing a reusable bottle instead of buying single-use plastic water bottles. New environmentally minded creations span across all industries, such as the creation of [sustainable cement](#) in the building sector. Elsewhere, food waste is being repurposed as [an edible coating](#) to keep farm produce fresh. The possibilities are endless when it comes to mindful sustainable action.

Now, the [town of Hempstead](#) in Long Island, America, has developed its own idea for repurposing seafood shells. Locals, environmentalists and area officials are all trying to launch a living barrier reef composed of tens of thousands of discarded clam and oyster shells from nearby seafood restaurants. Hundreds of mesh bags containing the shells will be linked together and submerged in the western bays off the coast of Lido Beach. It is hoped they will restore a nearby barrier island that serves as a natural defence against coastal storm surges. The reefs also attract new sea life to support the region's growing marine economy.

The reefs help filtrate waters polluted by years of excess nitrogen from sewage and wastewater overflow. Excess nitrogen pollution has led to the degradation of the coastal marshland complexes that help protect Long Island's south shore population centres from storms. Once the materials

settle on the sea floor, the reef structure will begin to fill with various species of marine life. Over time, the structure will create a habitat very similar to a natural reef. If successful, the project could transform the waters surrounding Hempstead for future generations to come. How are the environmental actions of your business making an impact?

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