



## Using high-tech and local partners to combat plastic garbage in Thailand's rivers

- **The Audi Environmental Foundation supports Aachen-based green start-up everwave's clean-up project for the third time**
- **Since May, a high-tech garbage collection boat has fished up to 28,000 kg of waste from Bangkok's Chao Phraya River**
- **The long-term initiative's goal is to create a sustainable recovery and recycling system in Thailand**

**Bangkok, September 14, 2023 – The Audi Environmental Foundation, together with the Ferry Porsche Foundation, is supporting the green start-up everwave to rid the Chao Phraya River in Bangkok of plastic garbage. Since May, a garbage collection boat from Germany equipped with high-tech equipment has been removing waste from the river - up to five tons daily under ideal conditions. By cooperating with the local non-governmental organization (NGO) TerraCycle Thai Foundation, the project partners aim to establish in the medium term a stable infrastructure for waste processing in the region around the Thai capital of Bangkok.**

This is the third time the Audi Environmental Foundation has joined the green start-up everwave in a clean-up project to combat plastic garbage in rivers together. The aim of the current project is to fish as much plastic as possible from the Chao Phraya in Bangkok. The river, which flows into the Gulf of Thailand 35 kilometers west of the capital, flushes around 385 tons of plastic garbage into the ocean every year. The starting phase of garbage collection project was initially scheduled to run for five months. The project itself is designed to be more long-term than previous collaborations. With this initiative, the project partners want to draw attention to the fact that rivers act as “plastic highways”, meaning that carelessly discarded litter finds its way into the water before being swept out to the open sea.

Since the beginning of May, a CollectiX garbage collection boat from everwave has been sailing on the Chao Phraya and its canals, fishing up to five tons of material out of the water every day. The high-tech boat uses drones, cameras, and AI to detect and collect large piles of trash and transport them to shore for sorting and processing by employees from the local NGO TerraCycle Thai Foundation.

### **High-tech as an effective tool for fighting pollution**

“We believe leveraging high-tech for a cleaner environment is very promising. This approach has already been confirmed through previous collaborations,” says Rüdiger Recknagel, Director of the Audi Environmental Foundation. “With World Cleanup Day taking place on September 16, 2023, it is even more important to us to raise awareness of this successful project. With the help of technical solutions we’re calling Greenovation, we can be faster and more efficient today than we thought possible years ago.



That is why we have also intensified our commitment to everwave. With the current project in Thailand, we are pursuing two goals: We want to remove ´garbage from the water with the help of the high-tech boat and raise awareness of ecological responsibility among the population.”

Under the motto “Cultivating Passion for the Environment”, informing people about how conscious and unconscious actions impact nature is one of the foundation’s three areas of activity – along with Greenovation and responsibility. The Audi Environmental Foundation wants to raise awareness of how every individual can contribute to a sustainable lifestyle through their daily decisions.

“A lot of the plastic in the Chao Phraya comes from open landfills in the region,” says everwave CEO Clemens Feigl. “So, it’s not enough to just fish the garbage from the river. We need to address the root causes. That’s why our cooperation with the TerraCycle Thai Foundation is so important and why we are working with our local partner on a sustainable system for recycling garbage. We are supporting facilities for sorting and recycling. And in the long term, we want to establish collection points and containers too.”

### **A quantum leap for efficiency**

The project partners from Germany prioritize local cooperation to ensure a sustainable impact in the region. Two Thai boatmen have been hired to work on the CollectiX boat, and two more are being trained. For the local NGOs, cooperating with the initiative from Germany means a quantum leap in efficiency. Before the boat was working in the water, members of the TerraCycle Thai Foundation pulled garbage from the river by hand or with fishing nets.

Collaboration is also critical for future steps. “The attention that the boat attracts on the river can be used to interest other strong partners and win them for the project,” says Inga Hilbig, Head of Marketing at everwave. In the long term, future partners could establish sustainable structures for waste avoidance and recycling. “If it goes well, the Chao Phraya could be trash-free in ten to twenty years.”

### **About everwave:**

everwave cleans up the environment: its garbage collection boats prevent waste from entering the oceans. Artificial intelligence assists the clean-up missions to detect and analyze waste. The collected material is then recycled through environmentally friendly processes, and, in addition, the public is made aware of environmental issues. For example, the start-up uses its technologies in Serbia, Romania, and Cambodia to ensure clean waters. To date, everwave has collected more than one million kilogram of waste from rivers.

### **About the Ferry Porsche Foundation:**

Founded in 2018, the Ferry Porsche Foundation supports and initiates charitable projects in social affairs, environment, education and academics, culture, and sports.



Above all, the Foundation wants to support young people through social engagement at the company locations of Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche AG. Its name comes from Ferry Porsche, who founded the sports car manufacturer Porsche in 1948.

---

**Audi Environmental Foundation**

Sabrina Kolb

Phone: +49 152-57715666

Email: [sabrina.kolb@audi.de](mailto:sabrina.kolb@audi.de)

[www.audi-umweltstiftung.de](http://www.audi-umweltstiftung.de)



The Audi Environmental Foundation is an active supporter of research in new technologies and scientific methods for a livable future. Its declared aim is to help protect the environment and to create and promote opportunities for sustainable action. The foundation focuses in particular on the support and development of environmentally compatible technologies, on measures for environmental education, and on the protection of the natural resources for humans, animals, and plants. Established by AUDIAG in 2009 as a fully owned subsidiary, the foundation is a part of the company's social and environmental policy involvement.