

ATANDO CABOS CLEAN TECH COMPANY RECYCLES DISCARDED WASTE OF THE FISHING INDUSTRY IN CHILE

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The Clean Tech Company Atando Cabos

develops collaborative technology solutions in Chile to transform massive amounts of plastic waste into new raw materials and products. The company is an evolution of the Atando Cabos project by the Chilean company Comberplast, which won the 2019 Latin America Verde Award in the Oceans category for its significant achievements. Founded in 2019 and operating independently since 2020, the new circular economy Atando Cabos company was established with

the challenge of reducing the environmental impact generated of aquaculture plastic waste by recovering and recycling tons of marine debris from the southern coast. Using 1 kg of Atando Cabos material prevents the emission of 0.97 kg of CO₂ compared to using virgin resin.

According to [documentation submitted by Atando Cabos to the IDB's Rethink Plastics Competition](#), by December 2019, the company had removed more than 1,800 tons of discarded plastic from the environment or landfills in Patagonia. This generated a positive impact on the environment and contributed to the emergence of a new local industry with active collaboration from many regional actors. In September 2019, the new company [Atando Cabos won the first prize in the Rethink Plastics Competition](#), receiving US\$ 35,000 from among more than 500 Latin America and Caribbean projects. The competition was organized by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Solve initiative (MIT Solve) to raise awareness among consumers, businesses, and governments about reducing single-use plastics.

In its proposal, Atando Cabos reports that as of December 2019, it had recovered over 1,800 tons of waste, transforming it into recycled materials such as polypropylene, high-density polyethylene, polyamide, and expanded polyethylene. These materials are transformed into high-quality, durable plastic items such as pallets, boxes, insulating panels, etc. The company's goal for 2020 was to increase processing capacity to 2,000 tons/year. At the same time, the company had developed a blockchain-based platform to record material, linking the final product to its origins - including people, places, and companies involved in its recovery. The aim is to foster responsible waste management and create value, trust, and reputation among users and consumers.



Atando Cabos has focused on improving recycling methods to obtain high-quality, competitively priced material from discarded ropes, buoys, and nets in Patagonia, mixing different types of plastic with sand, salt, shells, and organic material. The company also aims to manufacture innovative products from these materials, testing and developing them in-house. A second key aspect of the company's innovation is the creation of a collaborative production chain in the region, involving local industries, administrations and services, fishermen, and small businesses, generating economic benefits, preventing plastic waste from polluting the sea and beaches, and preserving the beauty of the territory.

An example of building this new regional production chain is [the agreement between Atando Cabos and the company FreeMet to develop the Boya Container](#), made entirely from buoys recovered from the sea and coast of Patagonia. This idea, promoted by FreeMet, was developed in partnership with Beluxa, creating an example of a Circular Economy project, from collection to production for sustainability, that resulted in a 55% CO2 emissions reduction and the removal of over 10,000 kg of plastic waste from the sea annually, which is reused as a resource to create the new buoy container.

In 2024, the [seafood company PacificBlu and Atando Cabos established an agreement](#) to recycle more than 20 tons of disused fishing nets. These disused nets are transported from PacificBlu's warehouses to Atando Cabos' facilities to be turned into high-quality pellets for the manufacture of a wide variety of items required by other industries, such as harvest boxes, modular flooring for mining and entertainment, trays for agricultural and salmon feed production, among others. An important objective of PacificBlu's environmental strategy is to significantly reduce waste sent to landfills by enhancing material selection and adopting circular economy strategies across the value chain.

In 2025, [Atando Cabos established a Collaboration Agreement with the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Service](#) (Sernapesca) of the Los Lagos region to recycle illegal fishing nets seized by the competent authorities. Based on the agreement, Atando Cabos stores and safeguards the seized nets during the judicial proceedings of the respective case and transforms them into raw materials and products once released by the court order. The agreement is an example of how these fishing nets, which previously ended up in landfills, can be transformed into raw materials for new products under the new circular economy model.

Also in 2025, Atando Cabos finalized a project initiated in 2022 with Aquafil and [SalmonChile, an association that brings together more than 50 companies in the salmon farming sector](#) to collect and recycle used aquaculture nets, promoting the circular economy in the region.

For this project, in April 2024, [an agreement was reached between Atando Cabos and Aquafil Chile](#) to create a new joint venture called ACCA. The company opened a new operating plant in Puerto Montt to collect and recycle ropes and nets used in aquaculture, artisanal and industrial fishing, with an initial processing capacity of 2,500 tons per year. This alliance between Aquafil Chile and Atando Cabos represents



an important contribution to the salmon industry, helping it reduce its carbon footprint and ensure that most of the material used in its processes is recycled. ACCA receives nets from the Los Lagos, Biobío, and Aysén regions and works on the technical preparation of the material used to produce the ECONYL® regenerated nylon. Other waste pipes, ropes, and buoys will be processed at the Atando Cabos plant in Santiago to generate new products.

[ECONYL® is the regenerated nylon brand created by Aquafil.](#)

Econyl is a 100% recycled yarn made from nylon waste. The waste, mostly from fishing nets, is recovered by cleaning the oceans and transformed into a new yarn with exactly the same properties as virgin nylon. The company currently has the capacity to recycle up to 400 tons of nylon 6 nets per month, which it uses as raw material for its Econyl fiber. Designers use ECONYL® to produce a wide range of textile products, including sportswear, swimwear, handbags, eyewear, and carpets. Aquafil's 16 industrial plants produce Econyl in Italy, Germany, Scotland, Slovenia, Croatia, the United States, Thailand, and China. They use 100% waste material, equivalent to 70,000 barrels of crude oil, avoiding further environmental pollution with the production of new nylon. For every 10,000 tons produced, 57,100 tons of CO2 are saved.

Atando Cabos is a company with an economic, social, and environmental impact. The company collects all the plastic wastes that end up on beaches, islands, and fjords, turning them back into raw materials and creating durable recyclable products, such as plastic pallets, plastic boxes, and trash containers, useful for the fishing industries and communities. Its initiatives have created hundreds of jobs in the marine and coastal waste recovery areas, trained artisanal fishers and engaged with trade organizations. It is estimated that the agreement established in the ACCA joint venture will generate an investment of €10 million and will create approximately 30 new jobs in Patagonia. The company is projected to develop a new industry for the region, processing between 4,000 and 5,000 tons annually through the ACCA company, which will lead to a substantial reduction in the use of fossil raw materials, avoiding more than 14,000 barrels of crude oil.

To know more

[Atando Cabos website](#)

[Rethink Plastics BIDMITsSolve](#)

[Document presented to Rethink Plastics](#)

[Article in diariossustentable.com](#)

[Articles in salmonchile.cl](#)

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