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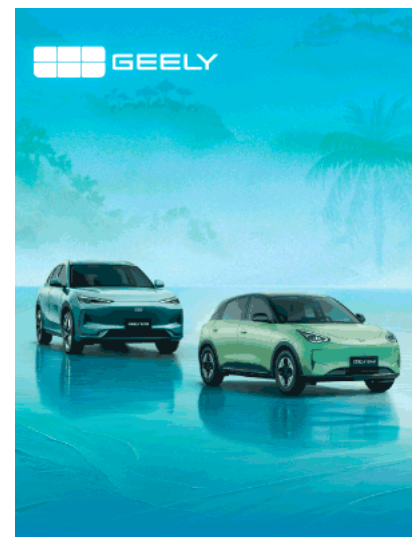
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Arue wins the 20th Golden Turtles



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Tahiti, June 5, 2025 - The Fenua Ma Golden Turtles award ceremony was held this Thursday morning at the Punaauia Hotel School. It was an opportunity to reward the good students of sorting who are committed to environmental protection over the long term. It was Arue who won the gold medal in the "common" queen category. A title she has held for 17 years.

They follow one another, but they are not alike. While the concept has remained the same for 20 years – the Golden Turtles award ceremonies reward the good students of the previous year's selective sorting in six categories – the event focuses each year on new participants and new initiatives. *"The objective is to highlight all your work,"* summed up Benoît Layrle, the director of Fenua Ma, for the attention of the participants.

He recalled that the date of the ceremony had not been chosen at random. Indeed, it took place on June 5, the date of World Environment Day. This day, launched by the United Nations in 1972 on the occasion of the opening of the United Nations Conference in Stockholm, puts a different specific issue in a different city each year. This year, South Korea has been chosen with the following theme: combating pollution caused by plastic. Man, wherever he is on the planet, *"is actively responsible"*, the director recalled by way of introduction. This is why every gesture, every initiative, whether it is carried out by schools, associations, municipalities or companies, is important.

For information, professional waste has risen again in 2024. A total of 10,285 tonnes of non-toxic or hazardous industrial waste were discarded, compared to 9,635 tonnes in the previous year. Adding bulky waste (11,600 tonnes), the CET saw 59,000 tonnes of deposits pass through in 2024, i.e. 1.5% more than in 2023.

Municipal waste, on the other hand, has decreased in quantity (32,000 tonnes or -1.6% for grey bins). *"This decrease is not a matter of awareness but of the effects of the crisis. It is linked to*

the decrease in income and therefore in purchasing power," said Benoît Layrle. Awareness-raising efforts must continue.

Arue, the undisputed winner

Sorting in Polynesia started 25 years ago, the Golden Turtles were launched 20 years ago. The municipality of Arue has placed 17 times on the first step of the podium. The tāvana Teura Iriti welcomed this new award, thanking all the agents and citizens. However, the municipality does not intend to rest on its laurels. And it is doing well *"because there could be surprises in 2026"*, announced Benoît Layrle, *"Teva i Uta is shaking up the rankings at the beginning of the year"*.

In the category of schools, there is no shortage of remarkable initiatives: raising awareness on waste sorting and management, participation in the European Week for Waste Reduction but also the creation of a solidarity room for the collection of donations of clothes and various items for resale at a low price to students and zero plastic waste refreshment bar (Dia high schooldème), or eco-artist competition (Samuel-Raapoto high school). They were the ones that made it possible to distinguish the three winners. They were also a source of inspiration.

Vaitua Tokoragi, director of the House of Culture, came to receive the Silver Turtle of public events with part of her team for the organization of the Heiva i Tahiti 2024. *"It is the biggest cultural event in Polynesia, it must be exemplary,"* he commented, adding that it is always possible to do more. He took good note of the school initiatives, some of which could be set up as early as next week on the occasion of the Heiva i Tahiti 2025.

"You don't change mentalities overnight"

Fenua Ma, with the Golden Turtles, insists on the regularity and sustainability of the actions. The Louis-Malardé Institute, winner in the business category, was rewarded for this. The union specializing in sorting in Polynesia also highlights the actions that are spreading. Rimatara, for example, the Golden Turtle of the Remote Islands for the 2nd year in a row, does not only act on his island.

The tāvana Artigas Hatitio has worked to revitalize sorting throughout the Austral archipelago, facilitating exchanges between the tāvana and the Tuhaa Pae ship. Thus, each island now benefits from two free annual returns of 20-foot containers to Tahiti to transport sorted waste. Another island in the Australs could, thanks to this, climb onto the podium in 2026 in view of the figures for the beginning of 2025. But it doesn't matter, *"it's not the place that counts,"* commented Artigas Hatitio. *"You don't change mentalities overnight and what matters is the continuity of awareness-raising efforts."*

Like him, other winners insisted on the regularity and sustainability of the efforts and actions beyond the ceremony and the awards. The Brando, Golden Turtle in the hotel category for ten years, continues to improve. Others have passed the baton. The Paris 2024 Olympic Games Organising Committee also won the Golden Turtle in its category (public event) for the surfing events. Some participants, aware of their awareness, have now joined the organizing committee of the 2027 Pacific Games, taking with them their concern for the environment.

With the Golden Turtles, it's not the municipalities, nor the companies and schools that win, it's the planet. And, despite the constraints of collection and transport, as well as cost, *"it is not because we live on small, remote and scattered islands that we neglect the cleanliness of our environment,"* concluded Mathilda Tauhiro, third deputy mayor of Fakarava.

Palmarès

Communes de Fenua Ma

- Arue : or

The list of schools closed on
Tuesday, September 29
28/09/2026

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- Punaauia : argent
 - Paea : bronze
- Communes éloignées
- Rimatara : or
 - Fakaraga : argent
 - Arutua : bronze
- Scolaires
- Lycée polyvalent de Taiarapu-Nui : or
 - Lycée Diadème Te Tara o Maiao : argent
 - Lycée Samuel-Raapoto : bronze
- Manifestations publiques
- Cojo Paris 2024 – épreuves surf : or

- Heiva i Tahiti 2024 : argent
- Triathlon Gauguin 2024 : bronze

Hôtels

- The Brando Tetiaroa : or
- InterContinental Tahiti Resort & Spa Faa'a : argent
- Mataia Polynesia Bora Bora : bronze

Entreprises

- Institut Louis-Malardé

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