



SPREP



# Take steps to a cleaner Pacific!

## 10 steps for schools

Here are ten activities that you can use in your classroom to teach waste minimisation. These activities can be used in science, arts, music, English classes. Most of the following activities can be used with any age.

### 1. What type of rubbish?

Organise a rubbish collection from in and around the school yard. Take appropriate safety precautions. Have the children separate the rubbish into groups as they see fit. Record the categories on a large sheet of paper. Which types of rubbish will decay or rot when left in the soil? What can you do with the other non-biodegradable rubbish?

### 2. Reusing products

Ask children to look around their houses to see how products are reused. Tins as pot plants, tyres as a seat or a swing, jars being used for storage. Ask them to make a list of five items that were reused in some way. Ask the children to present their findings, make a list, and send home with the children to give to their parents.

### 3. Recycling

In some countries glass, paper, metal, oil and even plastics can be returned to the manufacturer for recycling. Find out if there are such opportunities in your country. If possible, organise a field trip to one of these businesses.

### 4. Reducing

Ask children to keep a record of family activities for a week and to keep track of the waste created through these activities. In groups, get them to analyse their records and identify the waste that could be avoided. Discuss the different ways in which they might help to reduce waste (some ideas include making better shopping choices, such as purchasing reusable containers and refusing items like plastic bags).

### 5. Traditional products: Woven coconut leaf food baskets

Teach the students to weave coconut leaf food baskets. Traditional products don't produce rubbish in the same way that imported goods or other items do. Explain the concept of 'organic' or 'biodegradable' to teach students about the different types of waste we produce, and how some of that waste can be returned to the garden.

Have the students make a list of other things that may have a natural alternative (eg: mats vs plastic tiles, natural plates vs plastic plates, thatch vs tin roof). Have them think of the positives and negatives of each of the things on the list. Positives and negatives may be about cost, convenience, image etc.

Factsheet

2005 Pacific Year of Action  
Against waste



The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) is an intergovernmental organisation that works to protect and improve the Pacific islands' environment, and promote sustainable development and cooperation.

SPREP is based in Apia, Samoa.

#### **6. Life in the past, life in the future**

Have the students interview community elders or have some come to the school to talk about the changes they have seen in their communities from the past until now. What was their home like when they were children? Was there less or more waste? What products were in the stores - plastic bottles, aluminium cans, noodle packets? After the students have compared the past with the present, have them imagine what their homes might look like in the future, with more products coming into the Pacific islands. What will happen to all the waste? Where will it go?

#### **7. Write to the Editor/local radio station**

Encourage students to write to the local newspaper editor or radio station expressing their views about the importance of good waste management in the community.

#### **8. Plastic bag problem**

Have the students guess how many plastic bags are used in a day on your island or village, in a week, a month, a year. After they have set some predictions, have them do some research. Assign students to talk to all the storekeepers in the community. Ask them if they would participate in your survey. Ask if they would record the number of plastic bags they use in one day. What about after a week? Have the students calculate to find out how many bags are used in a month or a year.

#### **9. Waste posters**

Have students make posters for the community about waste issues in their community and their solutions. Some of the ideas for the posters can come from the other activities. Display the posters in stores, local businesses, or during school celebrations.

#### **10. Write a waste rap**

Have the students compose a rap song about the importance of caring for the environment through waste reduction. Have the students rap their songs on for the other students. Invite the local radio station or TV to feature the rap songs.

### **2005 Pacific Year of Action Against Waste**

The 2005 Pacific Year of Action Against Waste is a SPREP initiative that aims to strengthen, promote and initiate activities to reduce levels of solid waste.

SPREP is working with Pacific Islands to support their national campaigns that focus on changing attitudes and behaviours towards solid waste at the community level, whilst strengthening capacity at the national level.

On a regional level, SPREP is working with countries to finalise a Regional Solid Waste Management Strategy, and strengthen the links between community, governments, and industry bodies to implement this strategy.

A key component of the Year of Action is SPREP's International Waters Project, that is working with 14 Pacific Island countries to find practical ways to strengthen environmental management in three key areas: *coastal fisheries, waste reduction, and freshwater protection.*

#### **Contact:**

Tamara Logan, Education and Social Communications Officer  
SPREP, PO Box 240, Apia, Samoa  
T +685 21929, F +685 20231, E [tamaral@sprep.org](mailto:tamaral@sprep.org), [www.sprep.org](http://www.sprep.org)