

Solid Waste Management Country Profile

Solomon Islands

BACKGROUND

As of 2019, the Solomon Islands had a population of 680,806¹ and approximately 104,000 lived in urban areas (the population of Honiara City was approximately 82,000). The land area is 28,900 km²² and consists of six major islands, such as Guadalcanal Island, and 900 small islets. The majority ethnic group is Melanesians, who account for 94% of the population, while others account for 6%. The GNI per capita is USD 2,050³, and agriculture and fisheries are the main industries. There are 10 provinces in total, one of which is the capital Honiara City, which is the main subject of this document.

INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS

No waste management law has been enacted in the Solomon Islands, and the Environmental Act of 1998 is the basic law relating to waste. Based on the Environmental Act of 1998, the Environment and Conservation Division was established within the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM). This division supervises the formulation of laws and policies related to waste management, as well as actual waste management operations, throughout the Solomon Islands. Furthermore, based on the Environmental Health Act of 1990, the Environmental Health Service Division of the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS) is responsible for providing professional advice regarding the formulation and implementation of environmental health policies, including waste management, and an environmental health supervisor is assigned to each province.

The National Waste Management and Pollution Control Strategy (2017-2026), which has officially been approved, identifies issues based on current waste management, the legal system and the progress of the previous strategy covering 2009 to 2014. It includes an action plan with nine policies (environmental, social, economic, and institutional) based on these issues.

On the other hand, the provision of waste management services to citizens is carried out by each municipality. In Honiara City, waste management is in accordance with the Honiara City Act of 1999 and the Honiara City Council (Litter) Bill of 2009 (“the Litter Ordinance”). In other provinces, it is based on the Provincial Government Act of 1997.

The Solid Waste Management Plan (2018-2027), which has officially been approved in Honiara City, indicates nine action plans, along with their order of priority. A new division has been established within Honiara City Council to specialize in the top-priority task of waste management, and this division started providing waste management services in 2020, taking over from the Environmental Health Service Division and the Works Division.

TECHNICAL ASPECTS

Waste Generation and Composition⁴

The amount of waste generated in Honiara City has increased annually along with urbanization and economic growth, and 80 tons per day were generated in 2017.

General waste generated by households was 33 tons per day, accounting for 41% of the total. Waste generated by shops and offices was 40 tons per day, accounting for almost half of total waste generated.

Waste generated in Honiara City (2017)

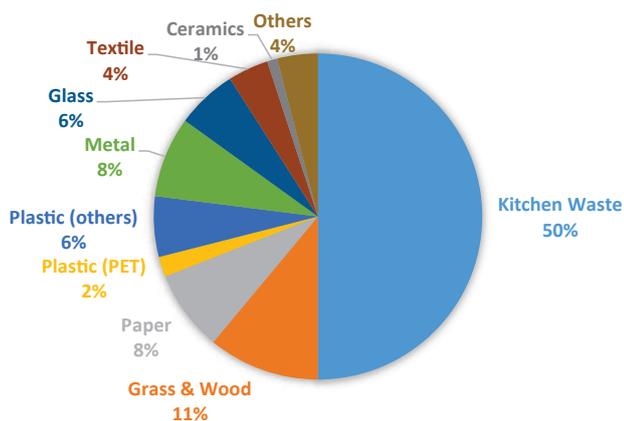
Category	Waste Generated	
Household Waste	33 tons/day	41%
Business Waste	40 tons/day	50%
Market Waste	7 tons/day	9%
Total	80 tons/day	100%

Source: Solid Waste Management Plan (2018-2027)

According to a waste audit survey conducted in 2015, the amount of kitchen waste was the highest, accounting for 50% in total. Next, grass/leaves/wood accounted for 11%, and paper/cardboards and metals accounted for 8% each.



Waste Composition in Honiara City (2015)



Source: Solid Waste Management Plan (2018-2027)

Waste Collection

Household waste is collected using drums, plastic trash cans with casters, garbage bags, or skip bins. Honiara City collects waste in 10 areas centered on built-up areas. Honiara City owns four compactors, two dump trucks, and two container trucks that are operational, and collects waste from Zones 1 to 6. Waste from Zones 7 to 10 is collected by private companies that have contracts with Honiara City, and all provide collection services once a week. There are 13 skip bins deployed in Honiara City and these are regularly transported to the landfill by the city council. The amount of household waste collected daily in Honiara City was 23 tons in 2017.

Business waste is collected by companies contracted with Honiara City or with private collectors in return for payment of a collection fee.



Waste collection in Honiara City (2019)

Waste Disposal

Ranadi Landfill is the final waste disposal site in Honiara City. The landfill is located along the coast about 6 km east of the center of Honiara City and has an area of 4 ha.

Ranadi Landfill began operating in the 1970s and is still operated directly by Honiara City today. Though it was an open dump⁵ before 2015, the site was rehabilitated with the assistance of Japan (by installing a leachate collection pipe and landfill gas pipe, and constructing a leachate regulating pond, etc.), starting anew as a semi-aerobic sanitary landfill in 2015.

Ranadi Landfill accepts not only general waste, but also human waste sludge, bulky waste, electric and electronic equipment waste (e-waste), medical waste, and hazardous waste. General waste and bulky waste are dumped in the planned landfill area. Human waste sludge and medical waste are dumped in individual designated areas, and hazardous waste is also temporarily placed in a separately determined place. In total, 69 tons of waste per day were disposed of at the Ranadi Landfill in 2017. However, the years remaining for waste disposal at Ranadi Landfill are limited, and it is therefore necessary to establish a new sanitary landfill site soon.



Ranadi Landfill site (2019)

Recycling

The main recyclables collected in Honiara City are aluminum cans. There are only a few recyclers that handle recyclables (aluminum cans, etc.), buying them from residents and waste pickers for SBD 3 per kilogram. Since there are no private companies that manufacture using recycled products, the collected recyclables are exported overseas.

On the other hand, some beer bottles are collected and reused by a major beverage manufacturer, and the Kastom Garden Association (an NGO) is composting organic waste on a small scale.

In order to promote recycling activities in the Solomon



Islands, a recycling association was established in October 2019, consisting of recycling companies, major beverage manufacturers, and local NGOs.



Recycling in Honiara City (2019)

FINANCIAL ASPECTS

In the Solomon Islands, the costs of waste management services are covered by part of the property tax, but the collection rate of this tax is only about 25%.

Honiara City does not collect waste collection/disposal fees from households, but it commenced collection of tipping fees at the landfill in 2020. Although there are revenues from the sale of waste collection drums and individual collection contracts with markets and businesses, waste management-related tax revenue is limited. Therefore, most of the waste management expenditure is covered by a grant from the Solomon Islands Government. In 2017, waste management expenditure in Honiara City was about SBD 2.5 million, which was approximately 9% of the city's total expenditure.

SITUATION IN LOCAL AREAS

In areas outside Honiara City, organizational and institutional capacity for waste management is not well-established, and cleaning is not part of the publicly administered services.

In such areas, waste collection services are rarely provided to residents, being limited to certain urban areas and markets. Therefore, waste generated by many households is disposed of by the households themselves. Though each local government is responsible for providing collection services, such services are outsourced to self-employed or

private-sector contractors, depending on the number of collection vehicles owned and the availability of human resources such as collection crews. Because collection station system is often used rather than door-to-door collection, collection points for waste collection are established.



Waste Generated in Gizo Town (2019)

Most of the waste generated in areas outside Honiara City is disposed of by households themselves, and provinces with landfills are limited. The landfills that do exist in the provinces are open dumps that lack sufficient facilities. In addition, the necessary heavy machinery is limited, so proper landfill management cannot be undertaken.

In terms of recycling, though aluminum cans are collected at the resident level in some mainly urban areas, establishing a system for transporting to Honiara City or exporting overseas is a major issue. There is evidence of some recycling activities by NGOs, but financial and technical considerations would make it difficult to establish these as continuous activities.

Even in the provinces, since there is no tax revenue related to waste management, subsidies from the Solomon Islands Government are allocated for operation, management, and personnel costs.

CONCLUSIONS

Even though waste management in Honiara City is better than in other areas, various measures are being promoted for further improvement, including establishing the Waste Management and Control Division based on the Solid Waste Management Plan (2018-2027). The following are issues or recommendations related to national waste management not limited to Honiara City.



1) Establish a nationwide waste management system

The National Waste Management and Pollution Control Strategy (2017-2026) formulated by MECDM indicates a specific action plan. It is necessary to strengthen the system, procure funds, and secure and train human resources so that MECDM can carry out this action plan. It is particularly important to establish a nationwide system for waste management based around MECDM.

2) Adequate waste management by the Waste Management and Control Division

Adequate waste management is expected from the newly established Waste Management and Control Division as the organization that is responsible for integrated waste management in Honiara City.

The division started work related to waste management in January 2020, and is carrying out day-to-day waste collection work, landfill management, and public awareness activities targeting residents. In addition, it needs to implement the action plan shown in the Solid Waste Management Plan (2018-2027) to improve the waste collection rate, expand the collection area, establish a new landfill, manage landfills appropriately, and secure stable financial resources.

3) Develop a new landfill

Since the remaining capacity for receiving waste at Ranadi Landfill is very small and the end of waste disposal at the site is imminent, the construction of a new landfill is an urgent task.

Land acquisition is not easy in the Solomon Islands, but when developing a new final disposal site, it will be necessary to secure sufficient land because the amount of waste generated is increasing and plans call for collection areas to be expanded.

In addition, given that the development and adequate management of provincial landfills are an issue, the landfill in Honiara City needs to serve as a model for the provinces in terms of landfill development, operation, and maintenance.

4) Secure a budget for waste management

The financial resources necessary for waste management are covered by subsidies from the Solomon Islands Government. Since waste management has become a major issue not only in Honiara City but also in other areas, a new system for securing financial resources needs to be established to implement continuous and stable waste management.

5) Introduce a Container Deposit Scheme

A deposit scheme for beverage containers can be a meaningful system to promote recycling and the prohibition of littering. Therefore, with the support of J-PRISM, a pre-feasibility study on a potential container deposit scheme was conducted in 2019. As a result of the study, some problems were raised regarding the scheme's introduction. Although a scheme has not been introduced at the moment, MECDM is continuously considering this option due to the importance of promoting recycling including plastics.

^{*1} Census 2017 of Population & Housing

^{*2} Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

^{*3} World Bank, 2019

^{*4} Solid Waste Management Plan (2018-2027), Honiara City Council

^{*5} Waste brought to these disposal sites is simply discarded through dumping in the open, causing piles of waste.

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