

# SWAP

Sustainable Waste Actions in the Pacific

## Committing to Sustainable Waste Actions in the Pacific

Pacific island countries and territories offer rich ecosystems that are threatened by population and urbanisation growth and changing consumption patterns leading to increased waste generation.

Healthy Pacific ecosystems are essential for economic development of Pacific island countries and territories and their communities, however due to their social, economic and ecological features, these Pacific islands face their own challenges.

The SWAP Project, funded by the Agence française de développement (AFD) and implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP) aims to support sustainable waste management in the Pacific region, especially:

Local communities and authorities in the development of national waste management policies and actions (collection, sorting, recovery, proper disposal);

Improve the delivery of waste services through development of waste management infrastructures and implementing pilot projects; and

Strengthen the technical, financial and governance capacities of authorities and practitioners.

As part of the first phase of the project, which was successfully completed in December 2024, SWAP supported the governments of Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu in developing their respective National Used Oil Management Plan.

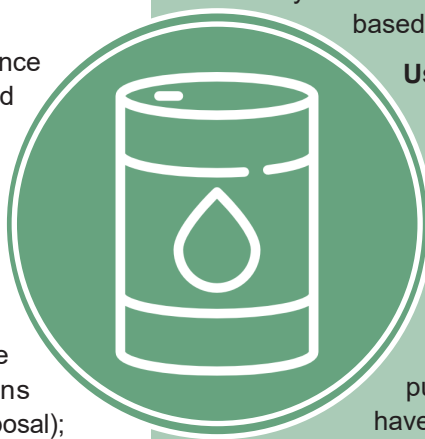
**For more information on the SWAP please visit: <https://swap.sprep.org/>.**

## What is Used Oil?

Motor oils are used in internal combustion engines or associated mechanical parts. Their main function is lubrication of moving parts, but they also clean, inhibit corrosion and cool the engine by transferring heat. Motor oils are derived from petroleum-based and non-petroleum synthesised chemical compounds. Similarly, hydraulic fluids are low compressibility oils that transfer powering hydraulic machinery. Common hydraulic fluids are also based on mineral oils.

**Used Oil includes any semi-solid or liquid product consisting totally or partially of mineral oil or synthesised hydrocarbons (synthetic oils), oily residues from tanks, oil water mixtures, and emulsions.** These may be produced from industrial and non-industrial sources where they have been used for lubrication, hydraulic movement, heat transfer, electrical insulation or other purposes, and whose original characteristics have changed during use, thereby rendering them unsuitable for further use for the purpose for which they were originally intended.

**A significant proportion (40-60%) of lubricating oils (and hydraulic fluids) become a “used” waste product after a period of use.**



### It is estimated that:

between  
**200,000-350,000**  
litres of used oil is generated  
annually in Samoa

around **600,000** litres  
of used oil is generated  
annually in Solomon Islands

between  
**330,380 – 380,000**  
litres of used oil are being  
generated annually in Tonga

between  
**280,000 – 380,000**  
litres of used oil are being  
generated annually in  
Vanuatu



## Why Used Oil is a problem?

Improper disposal of these used oils can have major negative impacts on natural resources. Large volumes of used oil can potentially enter aquatic ecosystems in water run-off and ground percolation from urbanised areas. Once in the environment, oil hydrocarbons and associated metals may persist for years, with considerable harm to birds and animals. There are also major community health

considerations around the fate of used oil due to its toxicity. Used oils typically contain a range of compounds that may have adverse impacts when released into the environment. Used oil has been poorly managed in the Pacific in the past and is one of the priority environmental management issues for the region.

## About the National Used Oil Management Plans

The National Used Oil Management Plans describe and direct the appropriate management frameworks to improve national management of used oil and promote shared used

oil management responsibility by all national stakeholders. The Used Oil Management Plans have 6 goals:



These documents are available on the **SPREP Virtual Library**, on the page dedicated to the **SWAP Project**: <https://library.sprep.org/>.