



This initiative is supported by PacWastePlus-a 85-month project funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) to sustainably and cost effectively improve regional management of waste and pollution.

Cook Islands

RECYCLABLES PROJECT

Implementing Sustainable Financing for Waste Management

(Advance Recovery and Disposal Fee)



Cook Islands Project Summary

THE ISSUE

Items are imported into the Cook Islands in growing numbers, but there are currently limited viable options for their end-of-life management and or export.

Most items imported are disposed of at landfills or stockpiled on vacant land.

THE SOLUTION

The Cook Islands focused their PacWastePlus investment to support the implementation of a Sustainable Financing system (the Advance Recovery and Disposal Fee) to enable long-term, self-financing collection and recovery of recyclable items from all communities across the Cook Islands.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1. **Legislative environment** for the long-term operation of the Advanced Recovery & Disposal Fee
2. **System in operation** collecting recyclables from Rarotonga and the Pa Enua
3. **Communities** effectively participating in the Advanced Recovery and Disposal Fee

Data & Education

- Waste Audit
- Regional Data Collection Monitoring and Reporting Framework
- Data Collection for Sustainable Financing
- Waste Profiling
- Education and Awareness Support
- Waste Management Decision Tool
- Research Documents approved by the Research Advisory Group
- Organics management guidance documents

Legislative Environment

- Legislative & Regulatory Stocktake and National Option Paper
- Pacific Standards on Organic management
- Legislative Support for Sustainable Financing
- Feasibility Study for Sustainable Financing

On-Ground Activities

- Update to Customs Database
- Recycle collection facilities (depots, equipment, and signage) for all communities
- Plastic shredder at Recycling Facility
- Development of mobile application
- Education and awareness - outreach, TV, social media, and logo development

Capacity Building

- Capacity Needs Analysis
- Sustainable Financing study tour to Australia
- Build Capacity: Asbestos Management, Behaviour Change Programme Development, E-Waste Management, Education and Awareness Training, Organic Management, Schools Education Curriculum, Sustainable Financing, Inform Portal, Waste Auditing



Developed consolidated whole-of-government approach to waste management, integrating user needs -including those of communities and service providers - with legislative frameworks, financing strategies, and Extended Producer Responsibility principles.

By incentivising improved waste management practices and empowering Pa Enua Governments, it enables the delivery of quality recycling services to communities that have previously lacked such infrastructure.



By providing equipment and training, the capacity of government staff was strengthened to collect, process, and add value to waste commodities, facilitating access to recycling markets and reducing reliance on landfilling. Strategic partnerships with the private s.ector further enhance service delivery, ensuring sustainable, locally driven solutions that improve environmental outcomes and community well-being.

Our Sustainable Financing Scheme, implemented with PacWaste Plus support, is not a one-off – it will provide a long-term change to current waste management – especially in our pa enua – replacing reliance on landfills and dumps with a financially viable way to collect, process, and export our recyclable items.

Claytoncy Taurarii, Director Waste Management, ICI

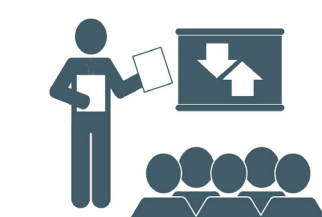
2 new waste and pollutant management legal instruments drafted or adopted:

- **Solid and Hazardous Waste Act** (adopted)
- **Advanced Recovery and Disposal Fee Regulation** (drafted)



11 new and **2** enhanced recycling facilities collecting/ processing recyclables established

12 government positions expanded to operate the Advanced Recovery and Disposal Fee scheme



23 training courses delivered increasing capacity to safely manage asbestos, e-waste, hazardous waste and

hazmat, organics, schools curriculum, education and awareness, data management, waste auditing, depot operation, and equipment operation and maintenance

31,300m³ recyclable materials estimated to be collected per year from outer islands*

*Cook Islands Economic Modelling

About PACWastePlus

The Pacific – European Union (EU) Waste Management Programme, PacWastePlus, is a 85-month programme funded by the EU and implemented by SPREP to sustainably and cost-effectively improve regional management of waste and pollution.