EUROPEAN UNION

SPREP
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

PacWastePlus
PACIFIC WASTE MANAGEMENT

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.**

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KIRIBATI

Waste Data Profile

June 2025

Kiribati and PacWastePlus

Kiribati is one of fifteen countries to participate in the SPREP implemented and European Union's Delegation to the Pacific funded PacWastePlus Programme. The PacWaste Plus Programme aimed to improve waste management activities across the islands and strengthen the capacity of governments, industries, and communities to manage waste and protect human health and the environment.

About Kiribati

Kiribati is a low-lying nation, comprised of 32 atolls and one raised coral island, where the atolls have an average height of two metres above sea level exposing the nation to impacts of sea level rise and other consequences of climate change. According to the 2020 National Census, Kiribati has a population of 119,000 people with just over half of the population residing in the capital, South Tarawa.

Government, Policies, Strategies, and Responsibilities

Kiribati has policies and strategies in place for solid waste management including the Environment Amendment Act 2007 and the Kiribati Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy 2020-2030. Kiribati has also committed to various multilateral environmental agreements (MEA) including the Basel, Minamata, Stockholm, and Waigani Conventions.

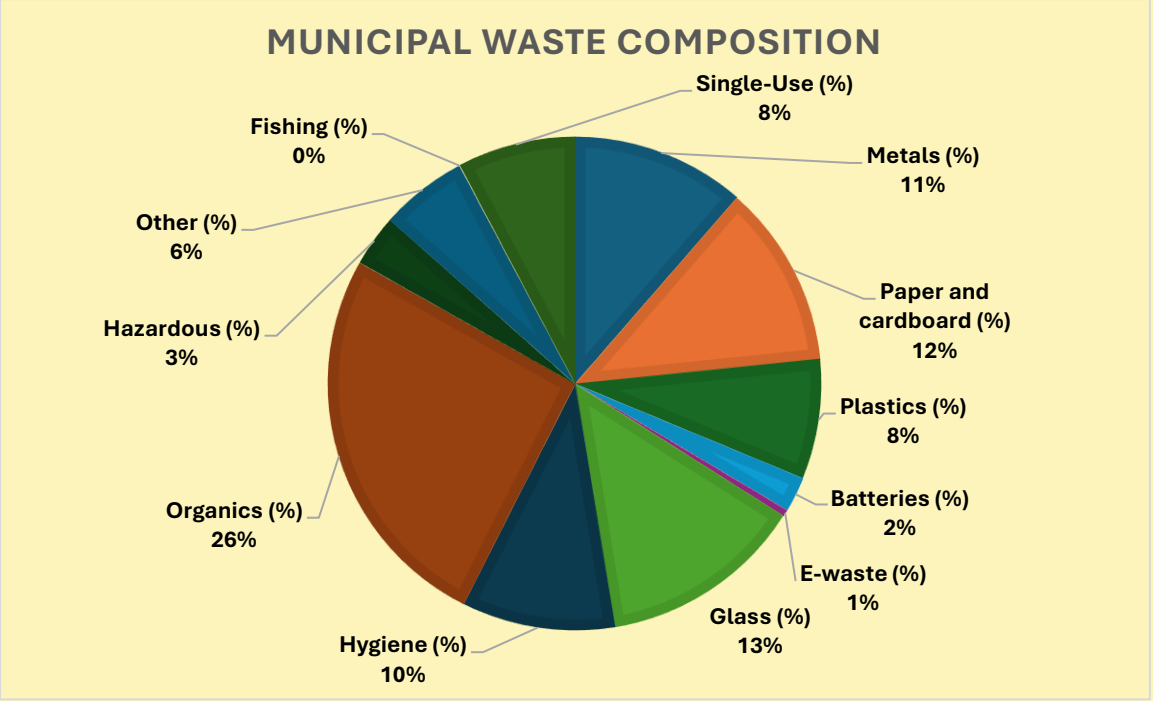
The Government of Kiribati is responsible for waste management policy and planning through the Ministry of Environment, Land, and Agricultural Development (MELAD) and waste infrastructure and public education through the Bureau of Public Works. Local and municipal councils are responsible for the delivery of household and commercial waste collections which are contracted to private operators, council owned waste facilities, and waste related projects.

Waste Practices

Teinainano Urban and Betio Town Councils manage household and commercial waste collections from user-pays bags and the operation of three landfills. There are three landfills in operation are located in Bikenibieu, Nanikaai, and Betio villages, and Nanikaai and Betio landfills are close to full capcity. Nanikaai and Betio sites also accept organic waste for shredding, and the Betio site has a recovery centre that processes container deposit scheme (CDS) items, electronic waste, and white goods. An upgraded materials recovery facility (MRF) has opened on the Betio landfill site that will extend the recovery activities at this site.

Core KPIs	Result
1. Count / capacity of modern waste facilities	**1 facility, unknown capacity**
2. Count / capacity of unregulated waste facilities	**6 facilities, capacity of 8,655 tonnes/annum**
3. National recovery rate (%)	**3%**
4. Per capita waste generation rate (kg/capita/year)	**112**
5. Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) composition (%)	Error! Reference source not found. **Next Page**
6. Household waste capture rate (%)	**53%**
7. Household collection service coverage (%)	**40%**
8. Fulfilment of MEA reporting requirements (%)	**45%**

Supplementary KPIs	Result
1. Cost of disposal to landfill ($/tsonne/annum)	**4.80 USD**
2. Weight of waste disposed (tonnes per annum)	**8752**
3. Weight of waste recovered (tonnes per annum)	**96**
4. Volume and type of stockpiled hazardous waste (m3)	**No data**
5. Marine plastic pollution potential (tonnes per annum)	**359**
6. Awareness and support of waste management services (%)	**60%**
7. Proportion of strategic waste management initiatives implemented (%)	**69%**
8. Commercial waste capture rate (%)	**100%**
9. Commercial collection service coverage (%)	**100%**
10. Total weight of disaster waste disposed (tonnes per annum)	**0**



National Waste Analysis Snapshot

About the Data

The data used to inform the KPIs include the Kirbati 2020 National Census, the APWC 2020/21 waste audits and surveys, and Eunomia 2025 Waste Facility Register surveys. The APWC audits undertaken include a compositional waste audit and qualitative surveys of 53 commercial samples and 201 household samples in Tarawa, Abaiana, and Maiana.

The Waste Facility survey undertaken by Eunomia was completed by facilities in Bikenibieu, Nanikaai, Betio, and Tabwakea.

Data Collection Challenges

- No data was reported for Tabwakea Dumpsite as it is not regulated. Given a new site is being investigated that will be regulated and controlled it is expected that data will improve.
- The previous report identified dumpsites in Abaiang and Maiana however information was not provided on these sites by in-country personnel.
- Tonnage processed, capacity, and cost of operations often required estimates.
- Hazardous waste data is believed to exist but has not been provided to the project team

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Highlights

- The CDS hosts the main drop-off point in Tarawa at the Betio site as well as four other locations for to increase accessibility and landfill diversion.
- A MRF has recently been built at the Betio site that will host the Kaoki Maange CDS and increase the amount of recovery done at this site, including recovery of end-of-life vehicles and their parts.
- There is work being done to investigate a site to replace the unregulated, uncontrolled dumpsite at Tabwakea.
- Household collection services are only offered on South Tarawa, Kirimati, and Betio islet. None of the islands with access to collections have full coverage. The audit did not capture each household's disposal method, nor the weight of waste captured by management services, so census data was used and extrapolated across household audit results.
- Household waste audit data was converted from a per household basis to a per capita basis, then grouped and averaged based on geographic position (i.e. rural or urban), and extrapolated using census data of the national population.

Emerging Issues

The land space in Kiribati is small and low-lying and landfills are located on tidal lagoon sand flats. This means that landfilled waste is vulnerable to being polluted during king tides and other weather and disaster events.

Of the three landfills, only the Bikenibieu Landfill has a remaining lifespan, this is estimated to be 5 years or 2.5 years if the other landfills close.

Increasing the deposit return for PET bottles would increase the amount of PET recovered, although it is understood that recycling markets for this material are weak.

Waste Management Practices and KPI Narrative

Waste Facilities and Waste Handled Each Year	In Kiribati there is 1 modern facilities and 6 unregulated facilities with a shared annual processing capacity of 8655 tonnes. On average, 9100 tonnes of waste is disposed of, and 236 tonnes of waste is recovered each year. The average cost per tonne of waste sent to landfill is 4.80 USD. Of the 3 landfills, 2 are at or over capacity, where the remaining will reach capacity in 2.5-5 years.	**Hazardous Waste Stockpiles**	Hazardous waste data was not supplied.
Household per Capita Waste Generation	As identified in the 2023 report, the per capita waste generation rate is 112 kilograms per person per year.	**Disaster Waste**	There have been no disaster events in Kiribati in the last 12 months.
Household Waste Statistics	This KPI comes in 9th place (where number 1 is the lowest per capita waste generation rate) when considering the other 12 participating countries in PacWaste Plus programme that provided data to this project.	**Marine Waste**	Although Kiribati is vulnerable to king tides given it is a low-lying atoll nation, they have not experienced disaster events in recent years.
Commercial Waste Statistics	The awareness and support of waste management services is 60%. The top three waste categories identified in household municipal waste are organics, glass, and paper and cardboard. The household waste capture rate is 53%, and the household collection service has a coverage of 40%.	**Strategic Initiatives and MEA Reporting**	Kiribati committed to 3 Multilateral Environmental Agreements that have reporting requirements including the Basel, Minamata, and Stockholm Conventions. Kiribati has fulfilled 45% of the requirements to the three MEAs listed. Kiribati had 16 waste management initiatives planned and have implemented 11, the proportion of strategic waste management initiatives implemented is 69%.