

PACWASTE COUNTRY PROFILE

FIJI

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PacWaste is a four year project (2014–2017) funded by the European Union and implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), to improve regional hazardous waste management across the Pacific in the priority areas of healthcare waste, asbestos waste, E-waste and integrated atoll waste management.

A further priority for PacWaste is to foster links between Pacific island countries and encourage information sharing on sustainable waste management through regional collaboration and twinning arrangements.

Fiji is one of 15 countries participating in PacWaste, with activities taking place in the project domains of healthcare waste, E-waste and asbestos.

Healthcare waste

PacWaste is working across 14 Pacific island countries and Timor-Leste to improve the management of healthcare waste. Healthcare waste is hazardous because it has the potential to be infectious or harmful to humans and the environment.

In Fiji, PacWaste conducted a healthcare waste management baseline survey in March 2014, through which information was collected on current waste management processes, from ward-level waste generation through to treatment and disposal. Audits were conducted at Colonial War Memorial Hospital (Central Division), Lautoka Divisional Hospital (Western Division), Labasa Hospital (Northern Division), Nadi Sub-Divisional Hospital (Western Division) and Sigatoka Sub-Divisional Hospital (Western Division).

The survey found that waste management systems and procedures at the five sites were variable. While Fiji's approach to healthcare waste management and infection control is more mature than most in the region, the report noted that the system is showing signs of wear and tear, and in some instances appears to be working only because of the commitment of a very small group of individuals.

PacWaste will conduct specialised training in healthcare waste management across all five hospital sites and purchase a new high temperature incinerator for the Lautoka District Hospital which does not currently have a suitable incinerator to meet its needs.

Asbestos

PacWaste is working across 13 Pacific countries to address the issue of asbestos – a naturally occurring fibrous mineral that was once commonly used in building materials and other consumer items. Asbestos is now banned from most modern products as it has been found to be a major threat to human health.

In Fiji, PacWaste conducted a baseline asbestos survey in July and August of 2014 to determine the prevalence of asbestos, ascertain risks associated with the materials and identify best practice options for cost-effective and sustainable interventions.

The survey found that, apart from a few notable exceptions, there appears to be little asbestos in Fiji. One of these exceptions was the Tamavua Twomey Hospital in Suva, where high risk friable asbestos fibres were identified. Because of the extremely high risk, PacWaste worked immediately to arrange an emergency clean-up at the hospital. In addition to the emergency clean-up, PacWaste has committed to the removal, secure transport and safe disposal of more than 1,800m² of asbestos from five sites across Fiji.

E-waste

The rapidly increasing use of electrical and electronic equipment in the Pacific is resulting in increased volume of E-waste. Dumped E-waste can release harmful contaminants into the environment such as lead, cadmium and dioxins. The good news is that many end of life electronic items contain recoverable and valuable components such as copper, steel and gold.

Regionally, PacWaste is collecting information about current E-waste management and stockpiles across nine Pacific island countries to assist in the improved management of E-waste in the region.

In Fiji, PacWaste will launch an E-waste pilot project through which training will be provided in how to safely extract and export valuable or hazardous materials from old electronic and computer equipment. Shipping and logistical support will also be given to enable the processed E-scrap to be exported internationally.

PacWaste Actions and Impact: Fiji

ACTION	LOCATION	IMPACT
Healthcare waste		
Healthcare waste baseline survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colonial War Memorial Hospital (Central Division) Lautoka Divisional Hospital (Western Division) Labasa Hospital (Northern Division) Nadi Sub-Divisional Hospital (Western Division) Sigatoka Sub-Divisional Hospital (Western Division) 	Baseline data on the current status of healthcare waste management is publically available.
Provision and installation of high temperature healthcare waste incinerators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lautoka Divisional Hospital (Western Division) 	Healthcare facilities have increased capacity for the proper disposal of healthcare waste.
Incinerator operator training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lautoka Divisional Hospital (Western Division) 	Incinerator operators have the necessary skills to operate and maintain equipment.
Healthcare waste management training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colonial War Memorial Hospital (Central Division) Lautoka Divisional Hospital (Western Division) Labasa Hospital (Northern Division) Nadi Sub-Divisional Hospital (Western Division) Sigatoka Sub-Divisional Hospital (Western Division) 	Healthcare facilities can effectively and safely handle their waste from point of creation through to disposal.
Provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), signage and secure storage systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colonial War Memorial Hospital (Central Division) Lautoka Divisional Hospital (Western Division) Labasa Hospital (Northern Division) Nadi Sub-Divisional Hospital (Western Division) Sigatoka Sub-Divisional Hospital (Western Division) 	Healthcare facilities have improved storage facilities for healthcare waste and an integrated system of ensuring that wastes are clearly identified.
Assistance in developing a national healthcare waste strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National 	Healthcare waste management is prioritised at the national level in accordance with best practice.
Asbestos		
Asbestos baseline survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vanua Levu Viti Levu 	Detailed information about the prevalence of asbestos is publically available.
Removal, transport and disposal of more than 1,800m ² of asbestos containing materials across five sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tamavua Twomey Hospital Suva Grammar School Savusavu Hospital Labasa Hospital Labasa College 	High risk asbestos is safely removed, reducing the risk of exposure to the general population.
Asbestos management training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suva Savusavu Labasa 	Asbestos can be effectively and safely removed and disposed of in accordance with international best practice.
Asbestos public awareness campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National 	Residents are aware of asbestos risks and the steps that can be taken to minimise exposure.
Assistance in developing a national asbestos strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National 	Asbestos management is prioritised at the national level in accordance with best practice.
E-waste		
E-waste pilot project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suva Lautoka 	Workers are further trained in how to safely extract and export valuable or hazardous materials from E-waste.
E-waste public awareness campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National 	Residents are aware of their options for safely disposing of E-waste.
Assistance in developing a national E-waste strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National 	E-waste management is prioritised at the national level in accordance with best practice.
Information sharing, regional collaboration and twinning		
Connection to a developing recycler's network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional 	Opportunities are opened up for recycling materials such as scrap steel, plastics, E-waste, and Used Lead Acid Batteries.
Provision of resources, guidance materials and participation in regional workshops and other events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional 	Relevant national personnel have an improved understanding of best practice solutions for solid and hazardous waste management in the Pacific.

For more information

Detailed information about PacWaste activities in Fiji, including baseline survey reports, are available at: www.sprep.org/pacwaste