



Photo: A.Carran/SPREP



Mr Jesús Laviña

## Introduction

It is my very great pleasure to introduce the seventh issue of PacWaste News.

Since its inception in 2013, PacWaste has achieved some outstanding results, notably in defining baselines and best practices for the Pacific context, creating new Pacific-to-Pacific opportunities, raising regional awareness of issues related to hazardous waste and strengthening institutional and human capacity building across the project's 15 participating countries.

PacWaste's impact and reach has been enhanced by close and cooperative partnerships and strong regional collaboration. Of special importance has been the strengthened relationship between the European Union and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), and our close collaboration with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

These important outcomes and partnerships have indisputably contributed to the wider vision of the project. I can say with confidence that PacWaste, which officially concludes on 31 December this year, has helped to make the Pacific safer and cleaner for all. This is consistent with the results of the final evaluation of the project, conducted in 2017, which concluded that the project has been a worthwhile and highly relevant project with positive and beneficial results.

Despite these encouraging outcomes, the Pacific region continues to face unique challenges in the area of sustainable waste management. The European Union is committed to working in partnership with Pacific island countries to meet these challenges and I am very pleased to advise that resources have been allocated through the 11th European Development Fund for an expanded Pacific regional waste management project, known as PacWaste Plus, which is expected to commence in 2018.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our project partners and stakeholders for the hard work, commitment, cooperation and collaboration that has resulted in very positive outcomes for the natural environment and the wellbeing of communities of the Pacific region.

Mr Jesús Laviña  
Head of Section for Natural Resources and Infrastructure  
European Union Delegation for the Pacific.

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## LATEST NEWS



Mr John Townend (PIFS), Mr Jesús Laviña (EU), Ms Ileana Miritescu (EU), Mr Kosi Latu (SPREP), Mr Stewart Williams (SPREP) and Mr Junji Ishizuka (JICA) at the fifth PacWaste Steering Committee Meeting in Apia, Samoa. Photo: A.Carvan/SPREP

## Milestone meeting for a milestone project

Representatives from 12 Pacific island countries gathered in Apia, Samoa from 11-12 May, 2017 for the [fifth and final PacWaste steering committee meeting](#). Speaking at the opening of the meeting, Ulu Bismarck Crawley, CEO of Samoa's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE), acknowledged the significance of the occasion:

“This is a milestone meeting for a milestone project. From 2013 to the present, PacWaste has helped to improve the regional and national management of asbestos, healthcare waste and E-waste as well as providing a model for integrated solid waste management.”

The purpose of the final Steering Committee Meeting was to discuss the project's progress to date and run through the remaining activities for completion prior to the project's finish on 31 December, 2017.

Country delegates at the meeting also undertook a prioritisation exercise to identify priority actions and waste streams for the new PacWaste Plus project, funded through the 11th European Development Fund (EDF11), which is expected to commence in 2018.



Tonga spoke on behalf of all Pacific island Parties to the Rotterdam Convention to support the listing of chrysotile asbestos on the Annex III hazardous substances watchlist. Photo: A.Carvan/SPREP

## Pacific islands speak in one voice on asbestos

In Geneva in May, Pacific island parties to the Rotterdam Convention joined together to speak in [one voice on the issue of asbestos](#).

Ms Lupe Matoto, representing Tonga, addressed the plenary on behalf of Cook Islands, Samoa, Republic of the Marshall Islands and Tonga which, collectively, are the Pacific island Parties to the Rotterdam Convention. The intervention was also supported by Kiribati which was present at the Convention but is not a Party.

In their statement, Pacific island nations highlighted the low levels of awareness of the dangers posed by asbestos in the Pacific region, and urged Convention delegates to include chrysotile asbestos on the Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention, which would mean it cannot be imported without prior informed consent:

“Pacific island Parties to the Rotterdam Convention want to know and need to know when materials containing chrysotile asbestos are coming into our islands so that we can take appropriate measures to protect our communities.”



Before and after, the landfill rehabilitation project also resulted in the clearing of disposed waste along the roadsides. Photos: © Faafetai Sagapolutele

## Bouffa Landfill: Impacts of a Tropical Cyclone and its aftermath

In collaboration with Port Vila Municipal Council, PacWaste has successfully completed a targeted rehabilitation of the Bouffa landfill in Vanuatu. The work was undertaken as part of the project's release of contingency funds for post disaster waste management assistance.

The Bouffa facility had deteriorated following Tropical Cyclone Pam due to the significant volumes of disaster waste that had been generated and brought to the site for final disposal.

The rehabilitation measures saw 400 cubic metres of disaster-construction waste reused for the construction of a new access road. The project also diverted 500 cubic metres of incoming earth material to cover the disposed waste and assist in the prevention of landfill fires.

Also through this activity, damaged gas ventilation facilities were repaired, staff were trained on daily operational tasks and a safe disposal area was created for asbestos containing materials scheduled for removal through the PacWaste project.



Director of the Cook Islands National Environment Service, Mr Joseph Brider (right) with Mr Vavia Tangatataia (Manager – Advisory and Compliance Division) at the office of the NES in Rarotonga. Photo: A.Carvan/SPREP.

## Postcard from Cook Islands

A PacWaste supported initiative in Cook Islands is a shining example of how – with the right combination of political, public and private sector engagement – proper E-waste management is not only possible, it can also be financially sustainable.

In many islands across the Pacific, communities have few options for safely disposing of broken or disused electronic equipment.

A PacWaste funded joint initiative between the Cook Islands National Environment Service (NES) and the privately operated recycling company, Recycle Cook Islands Ltd (RCI) which is the recycling entity of Cook Islands General Transport Ltd (CIGT) has been working to develop a business case for the sustainable management of E-waste through conversion to valuable E-scrap.

Importantly, the initiative was not just designed to collect and export E-waste, but to build on existing experience within Cook Islands to develop a financially sustainable mode for E-waste collection and disposal.

In June 2016 the scheme was launched by way of a free household E-waste collection across Rarotonga. After collection, and in preparation for export, PacWaste delivered specialised training with staff from CIGT in how to safely strip and dismantle the E-waste into its component parts – for example, circuit boards, keyboards, metal cases and screens.

Director of the Cook Islands National Environment Service, Mr Joseph Brider, explains that the pilot scheme has proven very beneficial in delivering knowledge and experience to the project partners:

“PacWaste has been instrumental in bringing different parties together to establish a model for E-waste to be collected from households and to put a cost on its disposal. Being able to see and experience a sustainable, working model for E-waste management has prompted a great deal of momentum, particularly for the idea of introducing an Advance Recycling Fee so that the cost of disposing of E-waste and bulky items is embedded into the price at the point of purchase.”



Business Development Executive, Ms Jessie Sword, believes that recycling on small islands can be sustainable but that it can and must be continual with the appropriate framework in place. Photo: A.Carvan/SPREP



Over the space of four months 4,469 E-waste items were collected in Rarotonga through the E-waste scheme and sent to the premises of CIGT for dismantling and export. Photo: © Alice Leney

USEFUL LINKS



### PacWaste launches asbestos safety fact sheet

A region-wide survey conducted by PacWaste in 2016 found that 60% of Pacific islanders aged under 30 years admit to having little or no knowledge about asbestos and its associated health risks.

To help address this, PacWaste has released a new asbestos awareness fact sheet that provides valuable information about how to stay safe around asbestos. The fact sheet also has images of items that are likely to contain asbestos and discusses where such items can sometimes be found.

To download the fact sheet, [visit the resources page on the PacWaste website](#).

### Tackling the myths of waste management in Majuro

An innovative new public education campaign for Republic of the Marshall Islands looks at some of the common myths associated with waste management and tackles them head on.

The recently launched set of Myths vs. Facts explores some of the commonly reported barriers to the uptake of the lokwe Bag, a pre-paid garbage bag – made especially for Majuro.

The promotion of the lokwe Bag scheme in Majuro is being run in partnership between PacWaste and Women United Together Marshall Islands (WUTMI). This successful partnership has demonstrated the vital role that women play in encouraging the uptake of sustainable waste management practices at the community level.



lokwe Bag Myth #2:  
Wheelie bins are better

### Coming up in September

- ❑ PacWaste healthcare waste management training: *September 2017* (Solomon Islands, Federated States of Micronesia)
- ❑ PacWaste asbestos remediation works: *September 2017* (Nauru)
- ❑ 28th SPREP Meeting of Officials: *19–21 September 2017* (Apia, Samoa)
- ❑ PacWaste SPREP Meeting side event: *21 September 2017* (Apia, Samoa)

[www.sprep.org/pacwaste](http://www.sprep.org/pacwaste)

**PacWaste News**

ISSN: 2413-5534

Published by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

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**Our vision:** *The Pacific environment – sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.*

