

Photo: A.Carnvan/SPREP

HEALTHCARE
WASTE

E-WASTE

ASBESTOS

ATOLL WASTE
MANAGEMENT

Introduction

It is my great pleasure to introduce the fifth edition of PacWaste News.

The past three months have been a very busy and productive time for the PacWaste project. In July we held the successful Fourth Annual Steering Committee Meeting in Vanuatu. This event provided the valuable opportunity to meet face-to-face with PacWaste country representatives and discuss the project's performance to date, and its plans for the future.

For those of us in attendance, the meeting reinforced the key strengths of the PacWaste project, namely – partnership, a robust approach, improving human capacity, regional collaboration, coordination with other waste management initiatives, sustainable results and strong communications and visibility.

The Steering Committee Meeting was immediately followed by the inaugural Clean Pacific Roundtable in Suva. The European Union was very pleased to have been able to join with the Japan International Cooperation Agency to support this gathering of national representatives, donors, partners and other key stakeholders involved in waste management and pollution control in Pacific island countries and territories. It is our belief that the Clean Pacific Roundtable will become a pivotal mechanism for improving and innovating waste prevention and management in the Pacific region.

Thank you for your interest in the PacWaste project and for your ongoing support. As always, we welcome your comments and feedback.

Ileana Miritescu
Development Cooperation Coordinator, Infrastructure and Natural Resources
European Union Delegation for the Pacific

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LATEST NEWS



The lokwe Bag slogan was developed through a series of stakeholder engagement workshops held in Majuro.

Introducing the lokwe Bag – a rubbish bag with a difference

In Republic of the Marshall Islands, PacWaste has [unveiled the design for a striking new garbage bag](#), made specifically for household waste collection in Majuro. Money from the sale of the bags will help pay for the cost of waste collection for the whole of the atoll.

The lokwe Bag slogan, developed through a series of stakeholder engagement workshops held in Majuro, translates as 'a cleaner environment is better/healthier'. PacWaste will be working closely with government, communities and organisations in Majuro to launch the lokwe Bag in November. Supporting activities will promote waste reduction, segregation and recycling.

Residents of Majuro can stay up-to-date with plans for the lokwe Bag launch by following [@iokwebag](#) on Twitter or liking the lokwe Bag Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/iokwebag

Milestone PacWaste meeting sets the stage for Clean Pacific Roundtable

Innovative new approaches to the management of green waste, and the necessity for a coordinated approach to disaster waste were hot topics of conversation at the [Fourth Annual Steering Committee Meeting of the PacWaste project](#).

The three-day meeting – held in Espiritu Santo, Vanuatu – attracted delegates from 13 of the 15 countries participating in the PacWaste project. Joining country delegates at the meeting were representatives from the European Union, SPREP and the Government of Vanuatu.

The meeting was an important pre-cursor to the historic [Clean Pacific Roundtable](#) which took place in Suva, Fiji the following week, and was run in partnership between SPREP, the European Union and the Japan International Cooperation Agency.



Ms Ileana Miricescu (EU), Mr Stewart Williams (SPREP) and Mr Jesús Laviña (EU) with The Hon. Ham Lini Vanuaroroa at the opening of the PacWaste Steering Committee Meeting in Vanuatu. Photo: A.Carvan/SPREP.

Pacific hospitals continue to benefit from healthcare waste management initiatives

Staff from 15 Pacific island hospitals have now completed specialised training in healthcare waste management through the PacWaste project. Most recently, training was conducted at the Tupua Tamasese Meaole and Malietoa Tanumafili II hospitals in Samoa as well as Vaiola and Prince Ngu hospitals in Tonga. Training will continue over the coming months, with the 27 remaining hospitals expected to be visited before the end of the year.

High temperature, dual-chamber incinerators, have now been installed at six locations including Tugaru Hospital (Kiribati), Vila Centra Hospital (Vanuatu), Vaiola Hospital (Tonga), Princess Margaret Hospital (Tuvalu), Lautoka Hospital (Fiji) and Honiara Hospital (Solomon Islands).

For further information about the healthcare waste management component of the PacWaste project please contact Elizabeth Vanderburg on elizabethv@sprep.org



Participants at one of the healthcare waste training workshops in Vanuatu. Photo: E.Vanderburg/SPREP



The fire destroyed the old hospital building within minutes. Photo: Jagie Lilo Lyon/Facebook



The site of the old Gizo Hospital has now been cleared and confirmed as asbestos-free. Photo: Brad Wallace

Postcard from Gizo, Solomon Islands

After fire ripped through the Old Gizo Hospital Building in Solomon Islands, clean-up efforts were immediately complicated by the discovery of asbestos materials in the debris. Some of these potentially harmful materials may have originated from newly installed asbestos cladding which continues to be imported and sold in Solomon Islands and elsewhere in the Pacific.

When local inspectors identified suspected asbestos materials at the site in the aftermath of the July 22 fire, the Government of Solomon Islands accepted an offer of assistance from PacWaste to deploy a team of qualified asbestos experts to the site.

Dr Melchior Matakai, Permanent Secretary for the Solomon Islands Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology, explains the first priority was to ensure the safety of clean-up personnel and the general public:

“We know for a fact that new building materials containing asbestos are being sold at retail outlets in Solomon Islands. Often these materials are not even labelled as containing asbestos, so people purchase and use them without knowing the potential health risk that they pose.”

The PacWaste asbestos experts undertook air monitoring, sampling and worked with local contractors to safely remove asbestos-contaminated debris and thoroughly clean the site. Other national stakeholders involved in the coordination of the response included the Western Province Provincial Government and Disaster Committee, the Ministry of Health and Medical Services and the Ministry of Infrastructure Development.

Mr John O’Grady from Contract Environmental led the PacWaste asbestos clean-up work in Gizo. Mr O’Grady believes that the incident highlights the need for controls on the import and re-use of asbestos products in the region:

“Pacific countries urgently need a ban on asbestos products. The current situation is that asbestos materials can be lawfully imported and used in Pacific island countries and territories. Under such circumstances, the region can expect to see a proliferation of asbestos containing materials and, potentially, of asbestos related illnesses.”

PacWaste Project Manager, Mr Stewart Williams, explains that the project is arranging for removal, transport and safe disposal of almost 40,000 square metres of asbestos across 11 different Pacific island countries.

“PacWaste is working to reduce old stockpiles of asbestos across the Pacific and make sure it is disposed of safely. Unfortunately, we now know that asbestos in the Pacific is no longer a legacy issue. If regulations aren’t implemented to prevent this flood of new asbestos from coming into the region then we can reasonably expect the problem to compound.”

The topic of a Pacific-wide ban on the import of asbestos products will be discussed at the upcoming Twenty-seventh SPREP Meeting of Officials to be held in Niue from 19–22 September, 2016.



Asbestos removal works in progress at the site of the old Gizo Hospital. Photos: Brad Wallace and Don Hemmer.

USEFUL LINKS



PacWaste in Kiribati highlights some of the innovative approaches to atoll waste management being undertaken in Tarawa.

New PacWaste doco captures regional collaboration in action

Late last year, representatives from PacWaste gathered in Tarawa to learn how Kiribati is seeking to improve the health of its environment and people through sustainable waste management initiatives. This regional event was captured on film by the late, celebrated documentary film maker John Anderson and his colleagues from the Nei Tabera Ni Kai (NTNK) video unit.

Over the course of five days, John and his team followed the PacWaste delegation from the southernmost tip of Tarawa right through to Abatao – the islet that separates North Tarawa from South Tarawa.

The resulting film, [PacWaste in Kiribati](#), captures the responses of the PacWaste delegation – representing 13 Pacific island countries – to some of the innovative sustainable waste management initiatives taking place in Kiribati.



In memoriam: John Anderson

The PacWaste team was saddened to learn of the passing of film maker John Anderson in Tarawa on 19 August, 2016. John was known to the PacWaste project, and many of our country representatives, through his enthusiastic participation at the Third Annual PacWaste Steering Committee in Kiribati which he filmed in preparation for producing the PacWaste in Kiribati documentary. We pass on our deepest condolences to John's wife Linda, their extended family, and the vast network of individuals who knew him as a friend, colleague and comrade. Vale John.

John Anderson and Linda Uan at the 2008 Pacific Climate Change Film Festival in Suva, Fiji. Photo: SPREP Archive.

Coming up

- ❑ Twenty-seventh SPREP Meeting of Officials: 19-22 September, 2016, Niue
- ❑ Launch of ULAB collection and export (Republic of Marshall Islands): October, 2016
- ❑ Commencement of E-Waste collection and reprocessing (Kiribati, Tonga and Cook Islands): October, 2016
- ❑ Healthcare waste management training (Port Moresby General Hospital): October, 2016
- ❑ Commencement of Asbestos remediation works (Vanuatu, Tonga and Cook Islands): November, 2016
- ❑ Launch of Iokwe Bag (Republic of Marshall Islands): November, 2016
- ❑ Healthcare waste management training (Yap Memorial Hospital, Chuuk State Hospital, Pohnpei State Hospital, Kosrae State Hospital): Late 2016

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

PacWaste
PACIFIC HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT



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