



Samoa

International Waters Project

Samoa's International Waters Project is working with the communities of Lepa and Apolima Island to try and find cost-effective ways to improve the management of freshwater in Samoa's rural communities.

Lepa is a rural village located on the southern coasts of Upolu. Its watershed areas are used for agricultural activities to meet daily subsistence needs and their water intake is under the supervision of the Samoa Water Authority.

Apolima Island is located between the islands of Upolu and Savaii. The small community living in this dormant volcanic crater is responsible for the management of its own freshwater resources.

What is the problem?

The quality of water sources is deteriorating for many villages in Samoa. According to a report on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) some 60% of villagers in Samoa indicated that their water had to be boiled. Unsafe drinking water and lead to illnesses such as typhoid and gastroenteritis.

The catchments in Lepa and Apolima are coming under increasing pressure from animals and agricultural activities. This problem is compounded by the fact that there is poor community understanding of the health problems caused by untreated water supplies and the need for responsible water management.

What are the project's objectives?

The main objectives of the project are to:

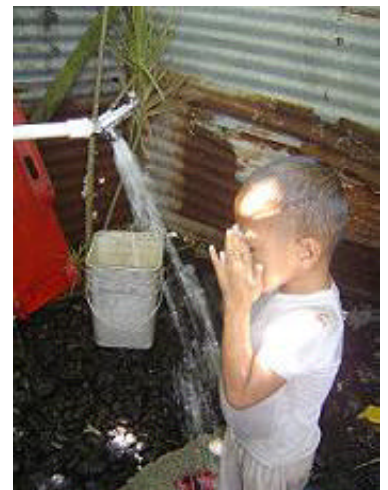
- Develop and implement a freshwater management plan for the pilot communities to help minimize the impacts of harmful activities in their catchment areas
- To work in partnership with relevant stakeholders to develop a Freshwater Management Plan for rural communities in Samoa.

Background

The IWP is funded by the Global Environment Facility and co-managed by Samoa's Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment (MNRE) and the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).

Throughout the region the IWP is working with pilot communities in 14 Pacific Island countries to strengthen management of **coastal fisheries, waste, and freshwater**. Only two IWP projects, in the Cook Islands and Samoa, are looking directly at how Pacific Island communities can protect the quality of fresh water, particularly in areas where there is currently no water treatment.

In Samoa there is no single agency with responsibility for the water sector. MNRE is responsible for water resource and watershed management and the Samoa Water Authority is responsible for providing water services.



A Lepa boy washes his face with water from the tap.

Strengthening the Management of Freshwater in Samoa's Rural Communities

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In 2002 the IWP established a National Task Force consisting of major stakeholders from the Government, community and non-government organizations to help implement the goals of the project. The two major stakeholders in the IWP include the Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment and Samoa Water Authority.

If Samoa's National Water Resources Policy is implemented it will lead to greater public involvement in the protection of watershed areas from the adverse impacts of human activities.

Where to next?

The Samoa IWP and Samoa Water Authority are monitoring the water quality for Lepa and Apolima Island. The IWP will continue to work together with landowners to develop freshwater management plans for these two communities. It is hoped that the lessons learnt from these activities will lead to the reservation of all water catchment areas in Samoa by the end of 2006.



The IWP will continue to raise awareness about the project and water catchment management through various media such as quarterly newsletter, brochures, news articles in newspapers and websites, community meetings, materials/activities for youth organization and schools, and presentations whenever possible.

Water...A young Lepa girl pictured at the "siga".

What is the International Waters Project?

The International Waters Project is working with pilot communities in 14 Pacific Island countries to find practical ways to strengthen environmental management in three key areas: coastal fisheries, waste reduction, and freshwater protection.

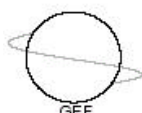
IWP is working with these pilot communities to try and understand the root causes of resource management problems and to identify possible low cost solutions that can help countries improve resource management at the local and national levels.

The IWP is funded through the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and co-managed by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Project (SPREP) and the United Nations Development Project (UNDP). This seven-year, \$US8.5 million, project is scheduled for completion in December 2006.

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