



“Sustaining our Pacific Environment in Harmony with our Cultures”

Agenda item 9.3: Overview of Regional Goal 3: Pacific people benefit from improved waste management and pollution control

Purpose:

1. To provide the Meeting with an overview of key priorities to support the implementation and achievement of Regional Goal 3 for the biennial period 2026-2027.

Background:

2. For the period 2026 – 2027, SPREP as the lead agency responsible for regional coordination and delivery of waste management and pollution control action, will utilise the Pacific Regional Waste and Pollution Management Strategy 2016-2025 (Cleaner Pacific 2025) and its implementation plan in its final year and the Regional Waste and Pollution Management Strategy 2027-2036 (Cleaner Pacific 2036) to be finalised in 2026 to guide regional cooperation and collaboration. Furthermore, SPREP will continue to work closely with Members, development partners and other stakeholders to progress evidence-based strategic planning, facilitate technical cooperation and deliver training and capacity building initiatives to improve waste management and pollution control in the region. This working paper provides an overview of the key priorities for SPREP for the next biennium period 2026 – 2027.

Regional Objective 3.1 Minimise the adverse impacts of chemicals and all wastes on human health and the environment via environmentally sound life-cycle management in accordance with agreed regional and international frameworks, including Cleaner Pacific 2025 and the new Cleaner Pacific 2036, and significantly reduce the release to air, water and soil.

3. Continue the implementation of the Cleaner Pacific 2025 and the new Cleaner Pacific 2036: Pacific Regional Waste and Pollution Management Strategy and activities identified at the 2024 Cleaner Pacific Roundtable meeting, specifically management of the following projects:
 - a) Implementation of the UNEP-GEF funded ISLANDS Pacific Child Project (ISLANDS) that will now conclude in 2028.
 - b) Implementation of the Australian Government funded Pacific Ocean Litter Project (POLP).
 - c) Implementation of the AFD funded Sustainable Waste Actions in the Pacific (SWAP) phase 2.
4. Implement high priority actions to address marine litter, guided by the Cleaner Pacific 2036 including assisting PICTs in the negotiations of an international legally binding instrument, the conclusion of the review of the regional framework to address marine litter and plastic pollution. Review the implementation of the WCPFC CMM 2017-04 on marine pollution with FFA Members. Work with SPC to seek endorsement of the Pacific One Maritime Framework that address all maritime issues including ship sourced pollution.

5. Continue to progress the development of a draft Regional Circular Economy Policy Framework with kind financial assistance from Asia Development Bank based on other frameworks used in other Regions/Countries.
6. Assist in the implementation of agreed regional and international frameworks such as the Waigani Convention Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee as well as subsidiary meetings for the Basel Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions.

Regional Objective 3.2 Strengthen national, regional, and international mechanisms for waste management including for chemicals, hazardous wastes, ship and aircraft generated waste, marine plastic litter, and other marine debris.

7. Progress the development of a new Cleaner Pacific 2027-2036 (Cleaner Pacific 2036) including consultations with Members at various regional forums.
8. Progress the implementation of the PacPlan (PacPlan-Plus) that strengthens the secretariats resources to support Member states.
9. Progress the development of the Pacific Regional Outlook on Hazardous Waste and Chemicals and guidance to assist Members with management of new waste streams.
10. Implementation of the Regional Action Plan on Mercury.
11. Development and implementation of the Regional Codes of Practice on Hazardous Wastes that will also address emerging issues such as Li-ion batteries.
12. Assist Member states to adopt the technical guidelines developed by the Basel Rotterdam and Stockholm Convention (BRS) on ESM of hazardous waste.
13. Progress and work with the Nuclear Task Force led by PIFS to carry out an assessment of capacity to coordinate the monitoring of the Pacific marine environment for radioactive contamination in collaboration with expert groups including CROP agencies, and research institutions.
14. Assist countries to develop baselines surveys and monitoring systems for single use plastic, as well as policies and legislation and strategies.
15. Assist countries to utilise template legislative mechanisms, and drafting guidance for legislative mechanisms, developed by projects (e.g., asbestos ban, Asbestos Management Code of Practice, sustainable financing development guidance, importation bans and restrictions for waste products, waste licencing systems, environmental monitoring guidelines, disaster waste management taskforces).
16. Assist countries with capacity development for waste and pollution management.

Regional Objective 3.3 Recover resources from waste and pollutants through composting (nutrient recovery), recycling (material recovery), energy recovery, and other measures in order to minimise waste and contribute to economic and social development.

17. Promote and assist in the implementation of recycling activities such as recyclables and organic waste, end-of-life vehicles, scrap metal and used lead acid batteries, mercury along with other hazardous chemicals and waste to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.

18. Assist in managing and reducing agricultural (e.g. piggery effluent), green and organic waste, effluent discharge.
19. Assist in improving existing and developing new sustainable waste and pollution control financing systems for resource recovery enterprises.
20. Assist with the construction and commissioning of waste management and resource recovery infrastructure through donor funded project support.
21. Assist countries to establish national waste management and recycling associations to provide an avenue for public private partnerships.

Regional Objective 3.4 Improve waste and pollution monitoring of receiving environments to enable informed decision-making on appropriate measures to protect human health and the environment and to reduce associated environmental damage.

22. Implementation of the Regional Waste Monitoring System and the regional information portals such as the former Inform system.
23. Assist SPREP Members to monitor the health of receiving environments for input of information into the Regional Waste Monitoring System to enable informed decision-making measures that protect human health and reduce environmental damage.
24. Convene a 2026 Clean Pacific Roundtable meeting to finalise the Cleaner Pacific 2036 and a C.I.R.C.L.E. EXPO in 2027/2028 to monitor and assess progress.

Challenges and opportunities

25. The region in the last 10 years has seen a tremendous increase in financial support of over seventy (70) million USD for waste and pollution management activities which will reduce by sixty (60) percent at the end of 2026. Sustainable waste and pollution resourcing for the next ten (10) years will be very important to implement the new Cleaner Pacific 2036.
26. The opportunities lies through the new Cleaner Pacific 2036 implementation that will require an integrated approach such as addressing the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and waste and pollution, working with other CROP agencies and industry to develop industry led solutions.

Recommendation:

27. The Meeting is invited to:
 - 1) To **endorse** overview of key priorities to support the implementation and achievement of Regional Goal 3 for the biennial period 2026-2027.