

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

1. To provide the Meeting with an overview of progress of implementation 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 and the Regional Waste and Pollution Management Strategy 2027-2050 (Cleaner Pacific 2050) to be finalised in 2027 to guide regional cooperation and collaboration. This working paper provides an overview of the progress of key activities and initiatives to be implemented by SPREP in collaboration with Members for this current biennial.

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. SPREP has achieved 5 of 5 (100%) of the indicators for this RO3.1.
4. Assistance was provided to 4 Members (Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, and Tonga) through the GEF ISLANDS project for the procurement of waste infrastructure such as bailers, shredders, garbage trucks and back hoes, and incinerators to address legacy waste, and to Samoa through the SWAP 2 project for disposal of used oil.
5. SPREP will continue to support the management of hazardous legacy waste (healthcare wastes, e-wastes, used oil, liquid chemicals) in 7 PICs (Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu) under the SWAP 2 and ISLANDS Projects.
6. SPREP will support the removal of PCB and DDT from PNG under the ISLANDS Project.
7. SPREP successfully secured funding support from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH for the CleanSeas project to address marine litter. The project timeline of 3.5 years with a budget of 6 million EUR will be implemented in 4 countries (Fiji, RMI, Samoa and Tonga) through GIZ, SPREP and SPC.

8. SPREP will continue to assist PICTs (FSM, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, RMI, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, and W&F) ISLANDS and SWAP 2. This will include management of used oil in Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu; pilot project for metal, recycling, resource recovery infrastructure in Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and W&F; landfill and associated infrastructure improvements in Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Tuvalu; through the SWAP 2 project.
9. SPREP provided technical assistance to the government of Tuvalu to accede to the Noumea Convention and Protocols, and to Fiji to accede to the Basel and Rotterdam Conventions.
10. SPREP is continuing to support the Cleaner Pacific Round Table (CPRT) and conduct the 5th CPRT with Tuvalu as the CPRT Chair and PNG as host of the 5th CPRT. The 5th CPRT is scheduled to be held from the 15 to 19 February 2027.
11. SPREP supported SPC in the endorsement of the Pacific One Maritime Framework at the 6th Pacific Regional Energy and Transport Ministers Meeting to implement the Pacific Ocean Pollution Prevention Programme (PACPOL) addressing ship sourced marine pollution.
12. SPREP will continue to work with the Forum Fisheries Agencies for the development of partnership working agreements within the fisheries sector, leveraging benchmarking models from the *Pacific Sustainable Tourism Industry Standard 2.0*, to facilitate collaboration between industry associations, government departments, and local communities to fast track circularity standards for high-risk fishing operations.
13. SPREP has signed a partnership agreement with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for the *Circular Pacific via a Regional Recycling Network (CP-RRN)*, to assist in the feasibility study and project development. ADB has secured funding for the pilot phase of the project that will involve 5 PICs and a regional centre established in Fiji. The feasibility study outcomes regional consultation workshop is scheduled for the 16-18 September 2026 in Port Vila Vanuatu to select the 5 pilot countries. The Green Climate Fund RPACA project SPREP component consultation workshop is scheduled to be held prior on the 14-16 September in Port Vila Vanuatu.

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.

14. SPREP has achieved 4 of 5 (80%) of the indicators for this RO3.2.
15. SPREP is progressing the development of the next Cleaner Pacific – Pacific Regional Waste Management and Pollution Control Strategy 2027-2050 (Cleaner Pacific 2050). The next Pacific Marine Litter Action Plan 2027-2050 (PMLAP 2050) will be an Annex Action Plan.
16. SPREP is supporting Members to develop their National Waste Management and Pollution Control Strategies through the ISLANDS Project. SPREP is also supporting Members develop and implement policies and legislation such as Container Deposit Schemes to address PET, Al cans, and glass bottles, E-waste regulations, and POLFUND for oil spill response. SPREP through the Australian funded Pacific Ocean Litter Project (POLP) is assisting Members (Fiji, PNG, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu) with developing legislation to address single-use plastics and Members (Cook Islands, Kiribati, PNG, Tonga and Tuvalu) with developing roadmaps and national action plans to address single-use plastic.

17. SPREP is also developing model legislation for implementation of the Minamata Convention to address Mercury pollution. SPREP will continue to 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).
18. The Renewable Energy Waste Crisis is Here. The first generation of solar and battery systems is reaching end-of-life. The absence of a circular economy solution is a critical market failure. The *Pacific Sustainable Tourism Industry Standard 2.0*, offers a proven blueprint for driving circular economy adoption across tourism sector. By developing similar framework for the energy sector, Members can facilitate structured collaboration between industry associations, government and local communities. SPREP will support the development of a partnership working agreement with the energy sector, leveraging benchmarking models from the *Pacific Sustainable Tourism Industry Standard 2.0*, and similar to the fisheries sector initiative, to facilitate collaboration between industry associations, government departments, and local communities to fast-track circularity standards for high-risk renewable energy systems waste streams.
19. SPREP is progressing the development of the Pacific Regional Outlook on Hazardous Waste and Chemicals and guidance to assist Members with management of new waste streams.
20. SPREP is finalising the Regional Action Plan on Mercury for endorsement through the ISLANDS project.
21. SPREP is finalising the Hazardous Waste Codes of Practice, the overarching and stream-specific Codes of Practice for hazardous waste management (Used Oil, E-waste, POPs, Healthcare Waste, ELVs, Batteries, and Expired Chemicals) with support from colleagues from Australia DCCEEW and New Zealand. These provide the much-needed operational framework for the region.
22. SPREP has operationalized the BCRC Pacific: The formal appointment of Mr. Soseala Tinilau as the new Director of the BCRC Pacific has been agreed upon with the BRS Secretariat as well as the admission of SPREP as an observer to meetings of the bodies to the Rotterdam and the Stockholm Conventions. This solidifies the institutional leadership for implementing the BRS and Waigani Conventions.
23. SPREP provided Member states to adopt the technical guidelines developed by the Basel Rotterdam and Stockholm Convention (BRS) on ESM of hazardous waste such as the handling of asbestos, mercury-free artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) and PCB contaminated used lubricants and oil.
24. SPREP through the funding support from the Government of Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the United Nations supported the Pacific SIDS through Fiji as Chair at a one day third resumed session of the fifth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC-5.3) regarding the international legally binding instrument to address plastic pollution to elect a chair. The committee elected Mr. Julio Cordano (Chile) as the new INC Chair, a critical step to stabilise and resume the treaty negotiations following the resignation of the previous leadership. No substantive treaty negotiations took place during this session. The fourth resumed session of the fifth session of the INC (INC-5.4) is officially scheduled to convene from March 13-24, 2027. To facilitate progress and build consensus ahead of this formal session, the

INC Secretariat has established a series of preparatory meetings. These include an informal Heads of Delegation (HOD) meeting, taking place from June 30 to July 3, 2026, at the UN Office in Nairobi, Kenya, followed by a second informal in-person meeting scheduled for September 27–30, 2026, at the UN Conference Centre in Bangkok, Thailand. These engagements are critical for aligning positions and refining the draft instrument prior to the March negotiations.

25. SPREP will continue to 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.
26. SPREP with support from the Government of Australia DFAT POLP and Government of France SWAP 2 continued to assist countries to develop baseline surveys and monitoring systems for single-use plastic. POLP carried out repeat survey in the Solomon Islands, and a survey in PNG. SWAP 2 carried out 14 repeat surveys in Fiji (3), French Polynesia (3), Samoa (2), Tuvalu (2) and Vanuatu (4).
27. SPREP will assist countries with capacity development for waste and pollution management.
28. SPREP launched the Pacific Women in Circular Economy (PacWiCE) Network in March 2026 in Nadi Fiji. Identification and confirmation of national focal points are underway, with countries undertaking consultations. Focal points will serve as key contacts linking national initiatives with regional priorities and supporting implementation of the network. A draft strategy and action plan has been developed and will be circulated for review and feedback. A consultation meeting is planned to support its finalisation, subject to funding availability.
29. SPREP continues to support members with the implementation of the Noumea Convention Emergencies Protocol and the Oil Spill Preparedness Response Cooperation (OPRC) Convention. SPREP is providing support to Fiji, Nauru and Tuvalu to update their national oil spill contingency plans and also to bridge existing gaps in regional oil spill response.

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.

30. SPREP has achieved 2 of 3 (67%) of the indicators for this RO3.3.
31. SPREP continues to support the establishment or improvement of material recovery infrastructure (facilities, plant and equipment) in 9 PICTs (Cook Islands, Fiji, FSM, RMI, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu) through the ISLANDS and POLP projects. Such infrastructure includes a plastics shredder for the Cook Islands.
32. SPREP continues to 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. Such activities include installation of compost facilities in communities in Fiji.
33. SPREP continues to progress the implementation of a metal recovery facility in Wallis and a waste recovery facility in French Polynesia under the SWAP 2.

34. SPREP will assist in managing and reducing agricultural (e.g. piggery effluent), green and organic waste, effluent discharge.
35. SPREP continues to assist members in improving existing and developing new sustainable waste and pollution control financing systems for resource recovery enterprises.
36. SPREP is assisting with the construction and commissioning of waste management and resource recovery infrastructure through donor funded project support such as through the GEF ISLANDS project for the procurement of waste infrastructure such as bailers, shredders, garbage trucks and back hoes, and incinerators for Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, and Tonga. SPREP is also refurbishing the resource recovery facility in Tuvalu.
37. SPREP has continued to assist members through the Swire Moana Taka Partnership national waste management and recycling associations in a public private partnership to remove and dispose of non-commercial waste that would otherwise not be possible such as plastics, cardboard, and used oil. SPREP is working on assisting 3 PICTs (Cook Islands, Marshall Islands, and Palau) to establish and implement recycling associations.
38. SPREP continues to collaborate with the SPTO to implement the *Pacific Sustainable Tourism Industry Standard 2.0*, a successful and proven blueprint for driving circular economy adoption across tourism sector.
39. SPREP successfully launched the *Guidelines for Greening Events in the Pacific*, a tool to assist in planning an event to reduce the use of single-use plastics.

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.

40. SPREP has achieved 1 of 2 (50%) of the indicators for this RO3.4.
41. SPREP will continue to implement the *Regional Waste Monitoring System* and the regional information portals such as the former Inform system in selected countries.
42. SPREP will convene the 5th Clean Pacific Round Table (CPRT) meeting to finalise the Cleaner Pacific 2050 in February 2050 together with the 2nd C.I.R.C.L.E. EXPO to monitor and assess progress.

Challenges and opportunities

43. Sustainable financing continues to be the programmes biggest challenge. For the last ten years there has seen a tremendous increase in financial support for WMPC with over USD 70 million for waste and pollution management activities. This will reduce by 50% at the end of 2026. Sustainable waste and pollution resourcing for the next ten years will be very important to implement the new Cleaner Pacific 2050. The opportunity to access new funding through the Green Climate Fund RPACA project to address the waste-climate nexus is critical for the region.

44. Ambitious targets need pathway reporting, not binary achieved/not achieved, and to be able to tell stories, not numbers, stories that drive influence. The WMPC programme will continue to tell more and better stories to access financial support from donors and partners.
45. Post-project sustainability requires built-in incentives, not goodwill. Countries consistently stop reporting once a project ends, not because of bad faith, but because there is no incentive, no allocated staff time, and no accountability mechanism. The WMPC programme will continue to measure the Cleaner Pacific Strategy implementation effectiveness through the following MERL guidelines:
 - a. linking future funding to demonstrated reporting;
 - b. using integrated country visits for 15-20 minute “legacy checks”;
 - c. exploring university partnerships for low-cost monitoring; and
 - d. M&E resourcing must be costed from the start, not added as an afterthought.

Recommendation:

46. The Executive Board Meeting is invited to:
 - 1) **Note** and **endorse** progress in the implementation of activities under Regional Goal 3 for the biennial period 2026-2027.
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12 June 2026