



# Pacific Regional Centre

for the Joint Implementation of the Basel and Waigani Conventions

## Factsheet

# Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

## What is the Pacific Regional Centre (PRC)?

The Pacific Regional Centre for the Joint Implementation of the Basel and Waigani Conventions (PRC) will support the development of national legislation and provide technical guidelines for implementing the Conventions.

Based at SPREP in Samoa, the PRC aims to strengthen the capacity of Pacific Island countries party to the Conventions to promote the environmentally sound management of waste in a coordinated manner through better integration of regional strategies, and relevant conventions.

## What does the PRC do?

The core functions of the PRC are to:

- Provide training and technology transfer
- Gather, assess and disseminate information
- Raise awareness
- Support the development of chemicals and hazardous wastes legislation
- Develop technical guidelines
- Encourage greater participation of NGOs and the business sector

## Promoting interlinkages

The PRC presents the opportunity to create a synergy with other chemical conventions such as the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions.

Combined, the four chemical conventions actively promote information exchange and technical capacity building, as well as providing some financial assistance for Pacific island countries. In this regard, discussions have already begun with the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention on the possibility of PRC hosting a Stockholm centre.

## Integrated waste strategy

The PRC is currently working with the Secretariat of the Basel Convention, the Regional Seas Unit of UNEP, and SPREP to develop a regional integrated waste management strategy.

## Basel Convention

**The Basel Convention is the world's environmental agreement on waste. It covers nearly 160 national governments and aims to protect human health and the environment against the adverse effects from the inappropriate management of waste. The Convention covers toxic, poisonous, explosive, corrosive, flammable, ecotoxic and infectious waste that is being moved from one country to another.**

## Waigani Convention

**First signed in 1999, the Waigani Convention bans the importation into South Pacific Forum countries of hazardous and radioactive wastes (the latter are not part of the Basel Convention) and controls transboundary movement and management of hazardous waste within the Pacific region.**



## Waste initiatives in the Pacific

Rapid economic growth and urbanization, the lack of controls on imported chemicals and the lack of capacity to manage a range of pollution has led to a steady increase in the amount of waste in the Pacific region.

The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) is an intergovernmental organisation that works to protect and improve the Pacific islands' environment, and promote sustainable development and cooperation.

SPREP is based in Apia, Samoa.

Many governments of Pacific Island countries have identified waste as a top priority and are working towards implementing social, economic and regulatory reforms to combat these growing levels. There are currently a range of waste initiatives coordinated by SPREP:

**The 2005 Pacific Year of Action Against Waste** will strengthen, promote and generate activities that aim to reduce levels of solid waste. The Year of Action will strengthen new and existing community initiatives, and showcase regional best practices and lessons learnt to support governments develop national policies and action plans.

On a regional level, SPREP will work with countries to develop a Regional Waste Management Strategy, and create a synergy and spirit of collaboration between community, governments and industry bodies.

### Regional Waste Management Strategy

The Regional Waste Management Strategy sets out a long-term programme for solid waste management in the region.

The finalisation of the Strategy is an integral component of the Year of Action Against Waste.

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*A composting project in Samoa is helping households decrease the amount of organic waste currently sent to landfill.*

### International Waters Project

The International Waters Project (IWP) is working together with pilot communities in 14 Pacific Island countries to find practical ways to strengthen environmental management at the community, national and regional levels.

The IWP is designed to improve the management of coastal resources in three interrelated areas: waste management, freshwater protection, and sustainable coastal fisheries.

Eight of IWP's projects are concerned with waste management.

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