



Let's not waste another second!

2005 Pacific Year of Action Against Waste



Info sheet

Pacific Regional Environment Programme

What is the 2005 Pacific Year of Action Against Waste?

The 2005 Pacific Year of Action Against Waste is a SPREP initiative that will *strengthen*, *promote* and *initiate* activities that aim to reduce levels of solid waste.



The Year of Action will *showcase regional best practice* to support governments develop and implement national policies and action plans.

On a regional level, SPREP will work with countries to *finalise a Regional Waste Management Strategy*, and strengthen the links between community, governments, and industry bodies to implement this strategy.

Building on existing initiatives

There is a groundswell of waste management activities occurring throughout the Pacific region. Many governments and communities are implementing social, economic and regulatory reforms to combat growing levels of waste and the associated environmental impacts.

The Pacific Year of Action Against Waste will build on the existing foundation created by innovative and dynamic community projects. It will, where necessary, provide skills, support and expertise to support countries develop and implement national action plans to manage solid waste.

Waste in the Pacific

The generation and disposal of waste has direct and indirect impacts on economic development, health and the environment.

Economic development

Waste materials represent wasted money, in terms of both the original cost of the materials, the costs of disposal, and also the potential value of the material as a reusable resource. Poorly managed wastes can have a detrimental effect on tourism, by detracting from the 'Pacific Paradise' image promoted throughout the region.

Health

There are numerous health aspects associated with waste management activities. Rubbish dumps are a potential source of numerous toxic and harmful materials, and can impact humans by leaching into the water supplies. Fish, shellfish and other marine food sources can also become contaminated through surface run-off or leaching into coastal marine areas.

Environment

Waste minimisation is a critical element of sustainable development. Ineffective waste disposal can result in increased land clearing, and the destruction of ecosystems and habitats. Inadequate sewage and other waste disposal facilities in rural and urban areas have resulted in contamination of all fresh water supplies. Plastic bags, diapers and other plastics, can harm animals if not disposed of properly.



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.

Three-tiered program of support

In acknowledging the various cultural and geographical differences between SPREP's member countries, the Year of Action Against Waste is structured to support the varying needs of countries. The Year of Action aims to put in place a mechanism that can be sustained nationally even after 2005.

The Year of Action is divided into three program elements: community, national and regional.

1. Community

The Pacific Year of Action Against Waste will support existing initiatives, or the development of new initiatives, that focus on changing the attitudes and behaviours connected to waste at a community level. This element will focus on *reducing* the level of waste being generated, and decreasing the amount of waste going to landfill.

2. National

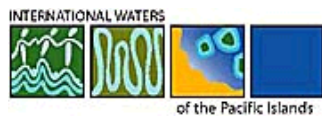
This aspect will highlight regional best practice from successful community based activities to support the development of national plans and policies.

This section will support waste management practitioners and policy/decision makers, by highlighting a range of economic and regulatory mechanisms that could support activities within countries.

3. Regional

The development of a Regional Waste Management Strategy will support the goal of a sustainable Pacific by providing a long-term programme for addressing waste management issues.

This aspect will create a regional synergy through highlighting and fostering, where possible, collaboration between community, government and industry initiatives.



International Waters Project

The Year of Action is modelled on the International Waters Project (IWP), managed by SPREP. IWP is working with 14 Pacific communities to try and understand the root causes of resource management problems, and identify possible low cost solutions that can help countries improve resource management at the national level. Eight of their projects are focussed on waste minimisation.

For more information on IWP visit:

www.sprep.org/iwp

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