



Photo: C. Iacovino/SPREP

PACWASTE COUNTRY PROFILE

VANUATU

PacWaste is a four year project (2014–2017) funded by the European Union and implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), to improve regional hazardous waste management across the Pacific in the priority areas of healthcare waste, asbestos waste, E-waste and integrated atoll waste management.

A further priority for PacWaste is to foster links between Pacific island countries and encourage information sharing on sustainable waste management through regional collaboration and twinning arrangements.

Vanuatu is one of 15 countries participating in PacWaste, with activities taking place in the project domains of healthcare waste, E-waste and asbestos.

Healthcare waste

PacWaste is working across 14 Pacific island countries and Timor-Leste to improve the management of healthcare waste. This waste type, also known as hospital, clinical or medical waste, is generated by hospitals and health clinics. Healthcare waste is hazardous because it has the potential to be infectious or harmful to humans and the environment.

In Vanuatu, PacWaste conducted a healthcare waste management baseline survey in March 2014, through which information was collected on current waste management processes, from ward-level waste generation through to treatment and disposal. Audits were conducted at: Port Vila Central Hospital Port (Shefa Province); Northern Districts Hospital (Sanma Province); Lenakel Hospital (Tafea Province); Norsup Hospital (Malampa Province); and Panunagis Health Centre (Shefa Province).

The survey identified the need for improved storage, treatment and disposal solutions for healthcare waste at the locations surveyed. Of special note were issues with segregation, containment, signage and the wood-fired incinerators at three of the locations which cannot reach the temperature required to adequately burn healthcare waste.

To address these needs, PacWaste will conduct specialised training in healthcare waste management and purchase new high temperature incinerators for hospitals in Malampa, Shefa, Tafea, Sanma and Penama Provinces.

Asbestos

PacWaste is working across 13 Pacific countries to address the issue of asbestos – a naturally occurring fibrous mineral that was once commonly used in building materials and other consumer items. Asbestos is now banned from most modern products as it has been found to be a major threat to human health. Asbestos is a serious issue for Pacific island countries that have used asbestos-containing building materials in the past.

In Vanuatu, PacWaste conducted a baseline asbestos survey in July 2014 to determine the prevalence of asbestos, ascertain risks associated with the materials and identify best practice options for cost-effective and sustainable interventions.

The survey confirmed the presence of asbestos fibres, including chrysotile and amosite at several different locations on Efate and Santo islands.

Following the application of an asbestos assessment risk methodology, PacWaste has committed to the removal, secure transport and safe disposal of around 6250m² of asbestos from three different locations. Further to this, Vanuatu will be targeted in a regional public awareness campaign about asbestos risk and the steps that can be taken to minimise exposure.

E-waste

The rapidly increasing use of electrical and electronic equipment in the Pacific is resulting in increased volume of E-waste. Electrical and end of life electronic items contain many recoverable and valuable components such as copper, steel and gold that can be re-used.

Regionally, PacWaste is collecting information about current E-waste management and stockpiles across nine Pacific island countries to assist in the improved management of E-waste in the region. Once recycling networks have been established, PacWaste will conduct a public media campaign to raise awareness about E-waste and promote the return of items to collection points for recycling.

In Vanuatu, PacWaste will launch an E-waste pilot project to enhance the collection that is already conducted by the private sector (Recycle Corp). Through this initiative, further training will be provided in how to safely extract and export valuable or hazardous materials from old electronic and computer equipment. PacWaste will also investigate options for a Used Lead Acid Battery (ULAB) management system and a mobile phone collection system.

PacWaste Actions and Impact: Vanuatu

| ACTION | LOCATIONS | IMPACT |
|---|---|--|
| Healthcare waste | | |
| Healthcare waste baseline survey | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Port Vila Central Hospital Port (Shefa Province) Northern Districts Hospital (Sanma Province) Lenakel Hospital (Tafea Province) Norsup Hospital (Malampa Province) Panunagis Health Centre (Shefa Province) | Baseline data on the current status of healthcare waste management is publically available. |
| Provision and installation of high temperature healthcare waste incinerators | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Port Vila Central Hospital Port (Shefa Province) Northern Districts Hospital (Sanma Province) Lenakel Hospital (Tafea Province) Norsup Hospital (Malampa Province) Lolowai Hospital (Penama Province) | Healthcare facilities have increased capacity for the proper disposal of healthcare waste. |
| Incinerator operator training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Port Vila Central Hospital Port (Shefa Province) Northern Districts Hospital (Sanma Province) Lenakel Hospital (Tafea Province) Norsup Hospital (Malampa Province) Lolowai Hospital (Penama Province) | Incinerator operators have the necessary skills to operate and maintain equipment. |
| Healthcare waste management training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Port Vila Central Hospital Port (Shefa Province) Northern Districts Hospital (Sanma Province) Lenakel Hospital (Tafea Province) Norsup Hospital (Malampa Province) Lolowai Hospital (Penama Province) | Healthcare facilities can effectively and safely handle their waste from point of creation through to disposal. |
| Provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), signage and secure storage systems. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Port Vila Central Hospital Port (Shefa Province) Northern Districts Hospital (Sanma Province) Lenakel Hospital (Tafea Province) Norsup Hospital (Malampa Province) Lolowai Hospital (Penama Province) | Healthcare facilities have improved storage facilities for healthcare waste and an integrated system of ensuring that wastes are clearly identified. |
| Asbestos | | |
| Asbestos baseline survey | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efate (Shefa Province) Espiritu Santo (Sanma Province) | Detailed information about the prevalence of asbestos is publically available. |
| Removal, transport and disposal of 6250m ² of asbestos containing materials across three locations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paonangisu Health Centre, Efate (Shefa Province) Port Vila Central Hospital, Efate (Shefa Province) Malapoa College, Efate (Shefa Province) | High risk asbestos is safely removed, reducing the risk of exposure to the general population. |
| Asbestos management training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efate (Shefa Province) | Asbestos can be effectively and safely removed and disposed of in accordance with international best practice. |
| Asbestos public awareness campaign | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National | Residents of Vanuatu are aware of asbestos risks and the steps that can be taken to minimise exposure. |
| E-waste | | |
| E-waste pilot project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efate (Shefa Province) | Workers are further trained in how to safely extract and export valuable or hazardous materials from E-waste. |
| E-waste public awareness campaign | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efate (Shefa Province) | Residents are aware of their options for safely disposing of E-waste. |
| Information sharing, regional collaboration and twinning | | |
| Connection to a developing recycler's network. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional | Opportunities are opened up for recycling materials such as scrap steel, plastics, E-waste, and Used Lead Acid Batteries. |
| Provision of resources, guidance materials and participation in regional workshops and other events. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional | Relevant national personnel have an improved understanding of best practice solutions for solid and hazardous waste management in the Pacific. |



For more information

Detailed information about PacWaste activities in Vanuatu, including baseline survey reports, are available at: www.sprep.org/pacwaste