



SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

## Twentieth SPREP Meeting

Apia, Samoa

17 – 20 November 2009



## Agenda Item 9.2.2 : Review of the Regional Solid Waste Management Strategy

### Purpose of Paper

1. To present to the Meeting, the draft Strategy for Solid Waste Management in Pacific Island Countries and Territories covering the period 2010-2015, and to seek the Meeting's approval of the draft Strategy.

### Background

2. Poor waste management is a major threat to sustainable development in PICTs, since the lack of proper management has negative and serious consequences for a number of developmental areas such as health care, environmental quality, water resources, tourism, trade, and food security to name a few. The threat arising from poor solid waste management is made worse due to:

- increases in waste generation caused by economic and population growth
- limited availability of suitable land on small islands and atolls for landfills—exacerbated by customary land tenures, and reluctance or outright refusal of people to allow landfills in their communities.
- remoteness of many PICTs resulting in high costs for consumables for waste management (e.g. spare parts, fuel, monitoring supplies) that must be imported
- small and sometimes sparse populations which limit any potential economies of scale
- limited institutional, and human resources capacity, and the fact that solid waste financing has not kept pace with growth in waste quantities

3. Waste Management is likely to continue to be a priority for the region for some time to come, particularly in light of new and emerging challenges, specifically:

- *Climate change impacts on waste management:* Impacts such as sea level rise, will affect coastal, and low-lying landfills and dumpsites, with increased pollution of coastal waters. Also, more intense and frequent storms, cyclones, and floods will disturb sunken World War II wrecks leading to marine pollution, and also generate disaster waste which will increase pressure on already stressed waste management systems.

- *Trade Liberalization*: the emergence of a Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER Plus) could have waste management implications, specifically: (1) the removal of import tariffs could lead to price reductions, surge in imported disposable products, and an accompanying increase in waste generation; (2) restrictions on applying environmental tariffs could limit the opportunities for recovering waste management costs (e.g., through advanced disposal fees), as well as opportunities for influencing consumer behaviour by applying tax disincentives on products which become waste items that are especially difficult to deal with.

4. There are also emerging opportunities for solid waste management, which the region is poised to exploit for mutual benefit, specifically:

- *Climate change financing*: Due to the global attention and financing of climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives, there should be several opportunities for funding solid waste management improvements, provided that clear and direct linkages between climate change and solid waste management can be established for the region.
- *Regional mechanisms*: The Pacific Islands Regional Recycling Initiative Committee (PIRRIC) and the Micronesian Center for Sustainable Future (MCSF) are sub-regional mechanisms which can assist in promoting improvements to solid waste management throughout the region, in addition to improving regional networking.
- *Regional Projects*: The European Commission funded project for capacity enhancement for the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) in African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) States, will result in the strengthening of SPREP to assist PICs in implementing their obligations under regional and international MEAs. Since there are several MEAs addressing waste issues, this project represents an opportunity to further improve solid waste management in the region.

5. To address the many solid waste management challenges facing PICTs, the development of the first Pacific Regional Solid Waste Management Strategy, 2005-2015 (RS2005) was coordinated by SPREP in collaboration with the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) in Japan, and endorsed by SPREP members on 15 September 2005. Since that time, RS2005 has been the regional guiding document for waste management in the Pacific Islands Region.

6. In spite of the challenges facing the region, various initiatives have been successfully implemented since RS2005 to improve the management of solid waste. These success stories demonstrate the progress that can be achieved with persistence, hard work, and partnerships, and they include:

- The transformation of a dumpsite in Kosrae Island, FSM into a semi-aerobic (Fukuoka-type) landfill
- The development and stepwise implementation of national solid waste management strategies in Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, and Solomon Islands.
- The establishment of partnerships in Guam, FSM and Marshall Islands for the recycling of aluminum cans under the “I-recycle” campaign.
- The removal of legacy scrap metal in Cook Islands under a tripartite arrangement involving the New Zealand and Cook Islands Governments and a private sector company.

7. RS2005 calls for a mid-term review of the strategy to be conducted in 2010. However, in view of Japan's renewed commitment to solid waste management in the region for 2010-2015, which was announced at PALM5 in 2009, it was determined to be more strategic to conduct the mid-term review in 2009.

8. The process for the review of RS2005 involved a series of four sub-regional consultation workshops held for stakeholders in Micronesia, Atoll Countries, Polynesia, and Melanesia. The outcomes of this consultation were captured in a revised draft Strategy, which was circulated to PICTs and stakeholders for comments. The comments were then considered by a final consultation workshop held in August 2009 comprising of the Chairs of each sub-regional workshop, in order to produce the second draft. This second draft was again circulated to PICTs and stakeholders for comments before being finalized.

9. The key priority areas for solid waste management identified for the region in the revised Strategy for Solid Waste Management in Pacific Island Countries and Territories, 2010-2015 are:

- Economic and financial issues
- Integrated waste management
- Legislation
- Awareness, communication, and education
- Capacity building
- Waste collection
- Environmental monitoring
- Policy, planning and performance
- Solid waste industry
- Medical waste

### **Recommendation**

10. The meeting is invited to:

- **review** and **endorse** the draft Strategy for Solid Waste Management in Pacific Islands Countries and Territories, 2010-2015; and
- **commit** itself and all members to fully support and participate in implementing the strategy.