



PACWASTE COUNTRY PROFILE

KIRIBATI

Photo: C. Iacovino/SPREP

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.

Kiribati 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. Healthcare waste is hazardous because it has the potential to be infectious or harmful to humans and the environment.

In Kiribati, PacWaste conducted a healthcare waste management baseline survey in April 2014, through which information was collected on current waste management processes. Audits were conducted at Kiribati's two largest hospitals: Tungaru Central Hospital on South Tarawa and London Hospital on Kiritimati Island.

The survey identified the need for improved storage, treatment and disposal solutions for healthcare waste across Kiribati. Of special note was the sizeable stockpile of untreated healthcare waste at Tungaru Central Hospital which continues to grow because waste generation is outstripping disposal capacity. At London Hospital, where there was no functioning incinerator at the time of the audit, healthcare waste is burnt at the local landfill.

To address these needs, PacWaste is procuring high temperature incinerators for both Tungaru and London Hospitals and will provide much needed equipment and healthcare waste management training at both locations.

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.

In Kiribati, PacWaste conducted a baseline asbestos survey in August 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 eight separate public locations in Tarawa. Following the application of an asbestos assessment risk methodology, PacWaste identified four sites for priority asbestos removal and disposal.

With 29% of residential structures on Tarawa estimated to contain asbestos, Kiribati will benefit from inclusion in PacWaste's regional public awareness campaign about minimising asbestos exposure.

E-waste

The rapidly increasing use of electrical and electronic equipment in the Pacific is resulting in increased volume of E-waste. Dumped E-waste can release harmful contaminants into the environment such as lead, cadmium and dioxins. The good news is that many end of life electronic items contain recoverable and valuable components such as copper, steel and gold.

In Kiribati, PacWaste will launch an E-waste pilot project through which training will be provided in how to safely extract and export valuable or hazardous materials from old electronic and computer equipment. Shipping and logistical support will also be given to enable the processed E-scrap to be exported internationally.

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.



PacWaste Actions and Impact: Kiribati

ACTION	LOCATIONS	IMPACT
Healthcare waste		
Healthcare waste baseline survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tarawa Kiritimati 	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"> Tungaru Central Hospital (Tarawa) London Hospital (Kiritimati) 	Healthcare facilities have increased capacity for the proper disposal of healthcare waste.
Incinerator operator training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tungaru Central Hospital (Tarawa) London Hospital (Kiritimati) 	Incinerator operators have the necessary skills to operate and maintain equipment.
Healthcare waste management training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tungaru Central Hospital (Tarawa) London Hospital (Kiritimati) 	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"> Tungaru Central Hospital (Tarawa) London Hospital (Kiritimati) 	Healthcare facilities have improved storage facilities for healthcare waste and an integrated system of ensuring that wastes are clearly identified.
Assistance in developing a national healthcare waste strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tarawa 	Healthcare waste management is prioritised at the national level in accordance with best practice.
Asbestos		
Asbestos baseline survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tarawa Banaba 	Detailed information about the prevalence of asbestos is publically available.
Removal, transport and disposal of 280m ² of asbestos containing materials across four locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Fisheries, Bairiki (Tarawa) Ministry of Finance, Bairiki (Tarawa) Bonriki International Airport (Tarawa) Kiribati Community Club, Bairiki (Tarawa) 	High risk asbestos is safely removed, reducing the risk of exposure to the general population.
Asbestos management training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tarawa 	Asbestos can be effectively and safely removed and disposed of in accordance with international best practice.
Asbestos awareness campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tarawa 	Residents and construction workers of Tarawa are aware of asbestos risks and the steps that can be taken to minimise exposure.
Assistance in developing a national asbestos strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tarawa 	Asbestos management is prioritised at the national level in accordance with best practice.
E-waste		
Establishment of E-waste pilot project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tarawa 	Workers are trained and supported with equipment and a processing area to safely process, segregate and store valuable or hazardous materials from E-waste
Shipping and logistical support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tarawa 	Support is provided to enable E-scrap to be exported internationally.
E-waste awareness campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tarawa 	The government, commercial sector and residents of Tarawa are aware of their options for safely disposing of E-waste.
Assistance in developing a national E-waste strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tarawa 	E-waste management is prioritised at the national level in accordance with best practice.
Information sharing, regional collaboration and twinning		
Support provided to the Pilot Project on Healthcare Waste Management at Tungaru Hospital, funded through the GEF-PAS Pacific POPs Release Reduction Project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment of a full-time Healthcare Waste Officer and a part-time Incinerator Officer at Tungaru Central Hospital (Tarawa) 	Kiribati's central hospital has the resources available to implement a cost-effective and self-sustaining healthcare waste management system.
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 Kiribati, including baseline survey reports, are available at: www.sprep.org/pacwaste