

Safeguarding our Blue Pacific: Applying EIA Principles to the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Waste

Key Outcomes from the SPREP Subregional
Workshop

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Jaipur Declaration

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'Environment' in the Pacific Context

In the Pacific, "environment" is **all-encompassing** – not just the biophysical environment but the physical, natural, social and cultural aspects.

Definition of 'Environment' in National legislations:

Kiribati Environment Act:

includes all natural and social and cultural systems and their constituent parts, and the interactions of their constituent parts, including people, communities and economic, aesthetic, culture and social factors

Samoa PUMA Act:

"includes all social, economic, physical, cultural, amenity and ecological dimensions..."

PNG Environment Act:

"Includes ecosystems, people and communities, and social, economic, aesthetic and cultural conditions."





A Shared Pacific Challenge: The Hazardous Waste Reality

The Scenario:

An old public building contains Asbestos Containing Material (ACM).

The Challenge:

- How do we manage its removal safely?
- How do we ensure its safe transboundary movement for offshore disposal?
- How do we assess and mitigate the environmental risks?
- How do we satisfy receiving country requirements?

Our Approach: A Cross-Sectoral Dialogue



Who was in the room ?

15 officials from 7 Pacific nations:

- Cook Islands
- Kiribati
- Papua New Guinea
- Solomon Islands
- Fiji
- Marshall Islands
- Samoa

Why these countries?

- Large Ocean States
- Serve as regional waste hubs
- Key transit points

A Deliberate Mix of Stakeholders from :



Environmental Agencies



Maritime Authorities



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EIA for Projects

- Focus on fixed location
- Single jurisdiction
- One-time assessment
- Detailed technical report
- Infrastructure centered



EIA Principles for a Process

- Moving across locations
- Multiple jurisdictions
- Continuous assessment
- Principles-based approach
- Process centered

Reframing EIA: From a Project to a Process

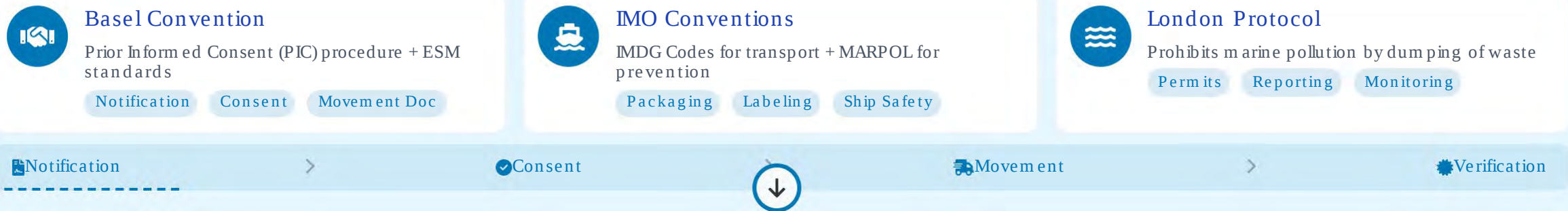
The Challenge: How do you apply EIA, traditionally used for infrastructure, to a process like TBM?

Two Key Points to Emphasize:

- TBM starts at the source, not the port. It covers the entire lifecycle from removal and packaging to national transport and final disposal.
- It's about EIA Principles, not a full EIA report. We are applying the core concepts of:
 - Risk Assessment
 - Stakeholder Engagement
 - Mitigation and management
 - Monitoring & Enforcement

Governing Transboundary Waste Movement

Global Governance Framework



Pacific Regional Implementation



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Our Framework: The Three Pillars of Risk Assessment



1. IDENTIFICATION

- **What is the waste?** Correct classification (UN Hazard Codes).
- **What are the risks?** Fire, toxicity, contamination.
- **Who are the stakeholders?** Communities, transporters, regulators.



2. SEGREGATION

- **How is it contained?** Using correct UN-certified packaging.
- **How is it separated?** Keeping incompatible wastes apart.
- **How is it labeled?** Clear marking and placarding for safe handling.



3. SAFEGUARDING

- **How is the journey secured?** Insurance, emergency response plans.
- **How is compliance ensured?** Clear permitting conditions, monitoring.
- **What are the "traps"?** Managing biosecurity risks to avoid rejection.



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The Three Pillars in Action: An E-Waste Example

 IDENTIFICATION	 SEGREGATION	 SAFEGUARDING
 Risk: Lithium-ion batteries pose a high fire risk.	 Action: Require all batteries to be removed and packaged separately in non-conductive bags.	 Condition: Permit requires proof of insurance covering fire risk and a detailed emergency response plan.
 Risk: CRT monitors contain toxic lead.	 Action: Require heavy CRT monitors to be packed at the bottom of containers, braced to prevent crushing.	 Condition: The destination facility must be a government-certified e-waste recycler, not a land fill. Proof of certification is required.



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Insights from the workshop

Thematic Area	Key Strengths	Key Gaps & Challenges	Key Opportunities
 Coordination	- Existing focal points for MEAs - Some inter-agency committees exist	- Agencies work in "silos" - Lack of formal data sharing protocols	- Establish formal, multi-agency EIA Task Forces - Use MOUs to mandate data sharing
 Legal Frameworks	- Regional Conventions (Waigani, Noumea) in place - National Environment Acts provide provisions that support EIA and provide the basis for action	- Outdated national laws not aligned with MEAs - Lack of specific regulations for EIA in TBM	- Review and update national legislation - Develop specific Regional Guidelines for
 Capacity	- Strong regional support from SPREP - Willingness of officials to collaborate	- Critical lack of specialized staff and funding - High staff turnover leads to loss of knowledge	- Create a Regional Roster of Experts - Deliver targeted, in-country technical training

3 Key Outcomes from the SPREP Workshop

1

National Coordination is the Foundation

Main obstacle: Lack of coordination between national agencies.

Case study: Countries highlighted cases of illegal shipment due to disconnect between environmental and maritime authorities.

Universal challenge: Common across all 7 participating countries.

3

Clear Mandate for Action

Workshop produced actionable, country-driven recommendations:
Modernize outdated national laws to align with Waigani & Basel Conventions
Develop national guidelines for EIA of TBM proposals
Establish a regional roster of EIA/TBM experts for peer support

2

Fit-for-Purpose Risk Assessment

Need: Practical, streamlined EIA framework for hazardous waste movement. Workshop developed a three-pillar approach: **IDENTIFY, SEGREGATE, SAFEGUARD.**

Example: E-waste scenario identified battery fire risks and improper packaging—highlighting need for clear, enforceable export conditions.

Jaipur link: Directly addresses requirements for Jaipur 3R and e-waste management.

Workshop Outputs



The need for specific technical Guidelines



Establishing Expert Networks to support waste exporters



Strengthening regional co-ordination mechanisms



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Conclusion: Enabling Circular Economy Through Safer Waste Management

- **Environmental Safeguards Enable Circular Economy** — EIA principles create the safety framework necessary for materials to flow in a circular economy by managing hazardous components.
- **Jaipur Connection:** Supports Declaration's focus on "environmentally sound waste management" as circular economy foundation.
- **Transparency Builds Trust** — Our Three Pillars approach ensures that when materials must cross borders, they do so with proper safeguards, opening pathways for regional circular economy cooperation.
- **Jaipur Connection:** Addresses the Declaration's call for "regional cooperation and knowledge sharing" in waste management.
- **Complementary, Not Competing** — Environmental assessment and circular economy work together: one ensures safety, the other drives innovation in material reuse.



Thank you for listening



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