

5 Mar 2025

# Realising Circular Economies for the Pacific region



## Waste Management and Pollution Control

**3 March 2025, Jaipur, India** – Historically, global consumption patterns follow a linear ‘take-make-waste’ model. In the Pacific this means that for items that are imported or manufactured, at the end of their useful life are disposed into overflowing landfills or the environment. This linear model can be costly for national and local governments with the landfill management and disposal costs estimated to be USD \$44,293 per day for the region.

As the High-Level 12th Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum in Asia and the Pacific is underway in Jaipur, India, the Pacific islands are sharing their



challenges and the impacts of having a linear economy, as well as their experiences with the transitional benefits of realising a Circular Economy.

Minister for Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology for Solomon Islands, Honourable Trevor Manemahaga delivered his national statement at the Forum where he highlighted the urgency faced by the Pacific in realising Circular Economies.

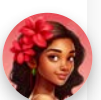
“Solomon Islands recognises the urgency to transition towards a circular economy to safeguard our natural resources, enhance resilience and ensure sustainable livelihoods for our people and the wider Pacific Islands Countries. It is committed to promoting the 3R principles—Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle—to be aligned within our national efforts to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals”.

“As Small Island Development States, we are blessed with a significant portion of the world’s ecosystems. Our people, our culture and way of life depends much on the environment. However, we are at the frontline of the biodiversity loss, climate change and waste and pollution. These global triple crises pose threats to our economy, livelihoods and deprives our future generations of the right to a pristine environment”, he said.

A Circular Economy approach seeks to take the ‘take-make-waste’ model with a circular model, creative a mentality shifts with how we produce, consume and dispose of resources. The model aims to reduce waste by keeping the resources in use for as long as possible. The circularity refers to creating closed loop systems that enable remanufacturing and reusing items, as an alternative to continually extracting non-renewable resources.

The Circular Model is not new to the Pacific, it follows our traditional ways of life where the 3R – reduce, reuse, recycle principles were traditionally practiced through minimal waste generation, efficient use of resources and sustainable living. However, times have evolved and with modernisation, we are living with several more waste streams and this requires the sustainability of a Circular Economy.

Together with the lack of processing facilities and limited resources and land area this presents many challenges for Pacific nations in continuing with the



current linear models and we must transition to Circular Economies for improved waste management and reduced pollution.

The Secretariat of the Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) as the mandated inter-governmental organisation tasked with the protection of the Pacific environment are in Jaipur supporting its member countries throughout the Forum.

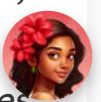
SPREP Solid Waste Management Adviser, Ms Susana Telakau highlights the efforts the Pacific islands have made towards realising Circular Economies as well as challenges and opportunities.

“The Circular Economy concept is not just an environmental responsibility it is a necessity for a sustainable, clean and safe Pacific for the future generation. The Circular Economy model will require a holistic approach and strong collaboration between all sectors from government, private sector and communities to successfully implement in the Pacific.”

“Out of lack of viable alternatives, Pacific people have once again demonstrated their resilience through innovative solutions in waste management. Across the Pacific there are many examples of realising a Circular Economy, from grassroots composting projects, to recycling programmes and policy control. The Pacific continue to show leadership in environmental responsibility through their waste management practices”, Ms Telakau said.

Eight Pacific countries are at the Forum, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Palau, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. An important outcome from the meeting is the development of a new 3R and Circular Economy Declaration 2025-2034 for achieving resource efficient, clean, resilient, sound material cycle and low-carbon societies, and the Pacific have made significant contributions to the discussions leading up to the development of this document.

*The objective of the High-Level 12th Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum in Asia and the Pacific is to chart pathways and opportunities for realizing circular and zero waste societies in the Asia-Pacific region. The Forum further aims to discuss and agree on a new voluntary 3R and Circular Economy Declaration covering the period 2025 to 2034 for achieving resource efficient, clean, resilient, sound material cycle and low-carbon societies in Asia and the Pacific. The new Declaration aims to act as a policy-guiding framework and catalyst for countries*



*to facilitate integration of sustainable consumption and production practices as well as circular economy principles into their overall policy, planning and development, including infrastructure development. The Forum will bring together over 400 participants from Asia and the Pacific, composed of senior government officials, representatives of the United Nations system, scientific institutions, the private sector, development partners, civil society organizations and other stakeholders.*

*For further information please visit <https://uncrd.un.org/content/12th-3r-ce-forum>*

