



Circularity and Plastics Waste in Pacific Island Countries

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Quick overview on status & needs: Breaking the Plastic Vicious Circle



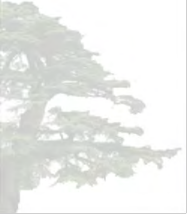
- *Plastic, everywhere, home, office, stores, streets. Widely used, versatile, cheap, convenient. But at a price, impacting people and planet health.*
- *Policies & measures by governments and industry, far too limited*
- *Upstream and downstream solutions needed together*
- *Systemic and multistakeholder issue. Needs tailored education and innovation, with PPP;*
- *Need for:*
 - *applicable economic instruments to support SWM*
 - *tax incentives for businesses with less waste generated*
 - *educational material to inform residents, fisher folk, tourists*
 - *licensing requirements to include WM & source separation in all sectors*
 - *Pacific regional hub for receiving recyclable material from all PICs*



INC-GAP: progress but still away from a treaty

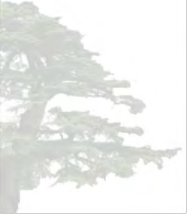


- *The global understanding of the problem has expanded tremendously leading to the UNEA resolution in 2022.*
- *The Global Agreement on Plastic/GAP, or treaty, is to take a comprehensive, full life-cycle approach, from design & production to disposal & waste mngt.*
- *Since then, the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee/INC process, has sharpened focus on life cycle of plastic, plastic's footprint, from production to disposal, on human health and the environment.*
- *But balance between upstream measures/production and downstream measures/use remains highly debated and could impact seriously the outcomes of the negotiations.*
- *Still, to be elaborated means of implementation, local/national or global, and voluntary versus binding targets.*
- *But as for most MEAs, gap between political declarations, coherent policies and effective implementation .*



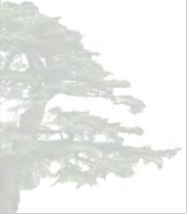
Magnitude of the issue

- *Marine environment exceeds land mass in PICs, increasing vulnerability to plastic pollution, complicated by geo. isolation, natural disasters, lifestyles.*
- *Plastic doesn't vanish. It accumulates, more with new consumption habits, imported products and tourism.*
- *Lots of hope into recycling, whereas the game changer is radical reduction of plastic production and use. Solve the problem at the root*
- *No single silver bullet for plastic pollution; complex issue, needs multifaceted approach*
- *Implementing CE and SCP entail reducing plastic production and use, efficiently managing waste, promoting innovative alternatives.*
- *Behaviour change essential, raising public awareness, value indigenous knowledge.*



Pathways for solutions

- *It's not easy, but with systemic change and collaboration across industries and governments, progress is possible*
- *Concerted efforts at the local, national, and regional levels are essential to address the complex challenges of waste and plastic management in PICs, fostering innovation, collaboration and sustainable practices*
- *Urgent need for local-national solutions and alternative products, by inducing, enabling and supporting eco-innovations for new value chains for sorting, reusing, and recycling plastic.*
- *Incentive mechanism for the private and tourism sectors to move from linearity to circularity, including in the informal sector.*
- *The current discussions of the INC are not really addressing the full lifecycle of legacy microplastics, overlooking the continued production of secondary microplastics when left accumulated in the environment.*



Jaipur Declaration: Global concern, Pacific context,

- *Recognised global concern, serious env. Impacts: ref on-going GAP*
- *Phase out, scale down hazardous chemicals from plastic production*
- *Support plastic-product manufacturers in increasing recyclability and identifying alternatives*
- *Promote product innovation and redesign by building the capacity of manufacturers in the (re)design of eco-friendly products*
- *Implement prevention and reduction programmes targeting single-use plastics, Styrofoam containers; invest in Education-awareness*
- *Measure-monitor plastic waste in municipal and marine environments*
- *Achieve resource efficiency and circularity by optimizing use of SUP*
- *Need Government legislation-regulations & multi stakeholder engagement along value chain to limit availability-use of SUP products*



Circular Economy for Plastics management?



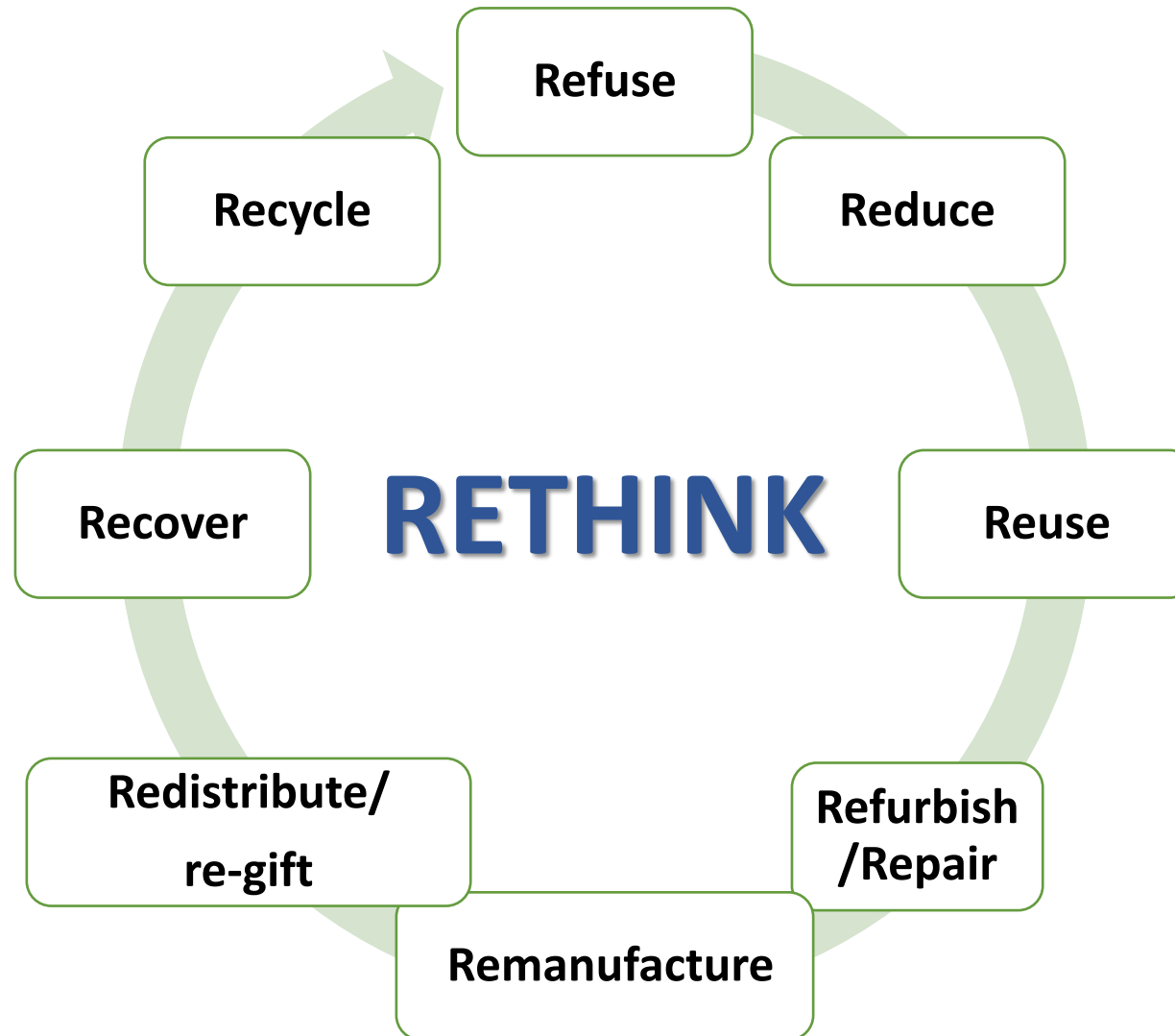
- **Mindset, design method, business strategy** or even a life philosophy; core principles applied to plastics production & use:
 1. Using **less resources**
 2. Using **stuff for longer**
 3. Using everything **repeatedly**
 4. Regenerating (by having a positive effect)

9 **R** strategies, to design our products, use, dispose, etc. :

**Refuse -> reduce -> rethink -> reuse -> repair -> remanufacture
-> refurbish -> recycle -> recover;**

One R does not exclude the other.

Business model innovation through 'R'





Rethink & Innovate for change



- ✓ *SCP, including 3R and CE, a **movement** empowered by innovation, responsibility and efficiency*
- ✓ *Essential to Induce, support, enable **INNOVATION***
- ✓ *To succeed in plastics prevention & management, should induce, provide tech assistance to SMEs and Start-ups, mainly in the agrifood, tourism and distribution sectors*
- ✓ *Consider including necessary time and resources for a **TRANSITION** period*



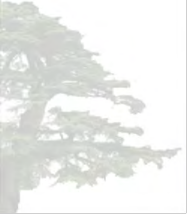
Plastics & Behavior Change: Beware of quick decisions ...

- Excessive Focus on Marine Litter and SUP
 - The visible part of the ICEBERG
 - Misleading Media and PR Wave
- Get better informed on needs and actions
 - Not all plastics bad, alternatives do exist
 - Rethink, prevent, minimise, manage, ...



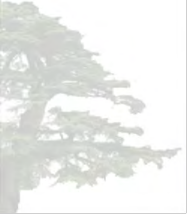
Plastics, CE & SCP

- ***Recycling v/s reducing produced plastics***
- ***On-line shopping, packaging, multiplier effects***
- ***Growing middle class, increasing tourism, exponential demand***
- ***NO Govt standardization and application, in food and tourism sectors among others***
- ***NO serious industrial efforts***
- ***NO real general mindset change***
- ***Without these three “NO”, no serious LT structural change can happen***



Plastics, CE & SCP

- *Solutions, plenty*
- *No conditions and incentive for scale up*
- *Wise & responsible high-level decisions, very few, not just in the Pacific*
- *Mostly Driven by Public Relations, announce impact*
- *Rarely value chain considered, mainly end of pipe*
- *Opportunity through the ongoing Sustainable Tourism Enhancement in the Pacific (STEP), by the EU SWITCH-Asia, with its set of Sustainability Standards and their translation in sustainable tourism national pathways*



- *THE BAD*
- *THE UGLY*
- *THE GOOD*

- *THE Problem ???*
- *Plastics ? Or Us, the producers, consumers and users*
- *Distinguish, not all plastics bad*
- *Banning is NOT the solution*
- *Need Education, info, responsible production/behavior*
- *Society in Developing Countries, not ready, as plastics deeply rooted in daily life, cheap, useful*

SWITCHing to CE and SCP

Enable ...

- ✓ *Change will not occur by force*
- ✓ *Mindset shift with informed rational*
- ✓ *Need for **Collective Change***
- ✓ *Deep **"structural" change**, not shallow, cosmetic*

Impact





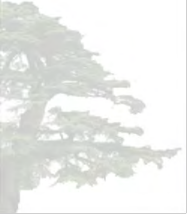
Finally need for:

- ***Relevant legislation***
- ***Adequate incentives and market instruments
& even more important***
- ***Info, Communication & Enabling Capacity***

OR

***STICKS & CARROTS,
TAMBOURINES & DRUMS!!!***





Group Exercise (60 mins)

- 1. How can PICs reduce plastic consumption and waste at the community, business, and government levels?***
- 2. What role do policies, incentives, or local initiatives play in reducing single-use plastics?***
- 3. How can circular economy models be adapted to the small, island-based economies of the PICs?***
- 4. What are the challenges and opportunities for creating local circular supply chains or business models for plastics?***
- 5. What role does government, private sector, and community play in creating circular supply chains or models for plastics?***