

Fiji

Status: Fiji is an archipelago of more than 332 islands and 500 islets, of which 110 are permanently inhabited. Land area of 18,333 square kilometres, with a combined coastline of 1,129 km. The two main islands are Vanua Levu and Viti Levu; the capital of Suva is located on the latter.

Population: The population of Fiji was estimated at 865,611 at the end of 2014 (FBS, 2015). Approximately half of Fiji's population lives in the coastal towns and cities of the major islands. The two major islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu account for approximately 87% of the country's population, of which 75% live on Viti Levu's coastline, either in Suva, Nadi, or Lautoka. Fiji's rural population is 398,181, or approximately 46% of the total (Knoema, 2015).

Accessibility: Considered to be the regional hub of the Pacific for travel, location of international agencies and development partners. Main tourist attraction by numbers.

Statistics around Waste (including plastic waste data): An estimated 9% of Fiji's waste stream is made up of plastic. Evidence from a litter survey, conducted in 2007, shows that snack packs, followed by PET bottles and plastic bags, as predominant items (GoF, 2007).

Fiji's islands have a combined coastline of 6,112km, and a recent study (Jenna et al., 2015) indicates a daily plastic waste generation of approximately 168.4t. An estimated 135t are mismanaged on a daily basis, entering the marine environment through the release from uncontained disposal sites or by direct littering.¹ As indicative, an estimated 49,257t of plastic waste became marine debris in the waters around Fiji in 2010. If this is not addressed, the amount is expected to rise to 70,995t by 2025.

	Coastal population	Waste generation rate [kg/person/day]	% Plastic in waste stream	% Inadequately managed waste	Waste generation [kg/day]	Plastic waste generation [kg/day]	Inadequately managed plastic waste [kg/day]	Plastic waste littered [kg/day]	Mismanaged plastic waste [kg/person/day]	Mismanaged plastic waste in 2010 [tonnes]	Mismanaged plastic waste in 2025 [tonnes]	
Fiji	896,145	2.1	9	78	1,881,905	168,430	131,582	3,369	0.151	49,257	70,995	

Source- Pacific Islands Plastic Waste Jambek Report

Waste composition studies, conducted in 2007, found a household waste generation rate of 0.403kg per day. This comprises nearly 60% organic waste, followed by approximately 12% plastic and over 11% paper.

Of the 168.4t of plastic generated each day, approximately 18.6t may derive from PET or high-density polyethylene (HDPE) bottles eligible for recycling under a container deposit scheme (CDS). Based on an average reduction rate of 40% in mismanaged waste with a CDS in place, approximately 5.97t of PET and HDPE plastic could be recycled each day. This could increase to an 80% or above reduction rate, depending on access to recycling collection services and viable markets, among others. Nonetheless, a 40% reduction in mismanaged PET and HDPE would result in approximately 47,077t of plastic becoming marine debris each year.

Fifteen recycling companies operate in Fiji, only one of which appears to operate on the island of Vanua Levu. Progressive initiatives for waste minimisation are being undertaken on the resort island of Malolo Lailai, where the local supermarket charges for single-use plastic bags. It appears that recovered plastic and glass are shipped to the mainland from the island each week.

¹ The outcome of mismanaged plastic is split into three groups: plastic that remains on the surface of the sea as floating debris, plastic that sinks to the ocean floor, and plastic that washes up on the beach. A CDS that recovers 40% of HDPE and PET plastic bottles in the Fiji may achieve the following reductions in marine debris each year: n 327t in floating plastic n 1,526t in sunken plastic n 327t in beach plastic

Legal/Policy framework to address single use plastics

Environmental Management Act 2005 established a waste management and pollution control unit in the DoE to develop management plans for the minimization of solid waste.

Environment Management (Waste Disposal and Recycling) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 control the discharge and disposal of solid, liquid, and hazardous waste. The regulations also prescribe permit conditions for waste transport, disposal, and recycling activities. Support for recycling in the tourist sector is evident from the incorporation of waste minimisation principles in the waste disposal permit system. Tourist entities and hotels also must comply with specific permit conditions.

The *Litter (Amendment) Decree* prohibits littering, as well as its discharge from vehicles or in public places. The amendment decree also calls for the placement and maintenance of litter receptacles.

National Solid Waste Management Strategy 2011-2014 identifies the importance of improving financing mechanisms such as a polluter-pays principle in value addition tax (i.e., nonessential basic items), an environment tax on specific imported goods, a fuel tax and a climate change levy on industrial energy usage.

	Single Use Plastic Policy	Dedicated Single Use Plastic Orders, Acts and Regulations							Economic Instruments to internalise costs					Recycling	National Campaigns targeting SUP	R&D Alternatives
		Plastic bags	Polystyrene plates	Straws	Styrofoam food Containers	Cups plates cutlery	PET	Plastic Ice blocks pouches nappies	Container Deposit Scheme	Levy Plastic Bags	Duty SUP	ARDC	Single Use Diapers			
Fiji																

Economic Instruments:

In 2015, the Fiji passed the *Environment Levy Act 2015* (later renamed to the *Environment and Climate Adaptation Levy Act*), which provides the legislative framework for introducing levies on products. At the time the act was introduced, it did not cover single-use plastics.

The *Environment and Climate Change Adaption Levy on Prescribed Services, Items and Income, 2017*, amends the previous *Environmental Levy Act 2015*. The Amended Act established the Environment and Climate Adaption Fund and introduced a 10c FJD levy on both high and low density plastic bags, effective from August 2017². In 2018 and 2020, the act was amended increasing the levy to 20c and 50c FJD respectively³. The levy only covers plastic bags distributed by businesses with a point of sale system, meaning that many smaller shops are not affected by the levy. On 1 July 2020, Fiji enacted a ban on plastic bags with a thickness of less than 50 microns (s 45A, Environment Management Act). This ban applies to the manufacture, sale, supply or distribution of plastic bags, including those made available to a customer for carrying purchased goods.

Data for 2019 indicates that approximately 2 million FJD is raised per quarter from the plastic bag levy – this is equivalent to approximately 100,000 plastic bags per day⁴. Fiji has implemented a reporting mechanism where businesses report the collected levies through their regular tax reporting system, allowing the government to monitor the effectiveness of the scheme⁵. The usage of plastic bags has reduced by approximately half since the introduction of the levy based on figures shared by the Government of Fiji⁶.

² <http://www.parliament.gov.fj/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Act-36-Environmental-Levy-Budget-Amendment.pdf>

³ <http://www.parliament.gov.fj/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Act-36-Environmental-Levy-Budget-Amendment.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.fiji.gov.fj/getattachment/e71b8d61-ce72-48fc-bca2-eeeff2d8739b/Environment-Climate-Adaptation-Levy.aspx>

⁵ <https://www.sprep.org/news/plastic-bag-levy-reduces-plastic-usage-fiji>

⁶ <https://www.fiji.gov.fj/getattachment/e71b8d61-ce72-48fc-bca2-eeeff2d8739b/Environment-Climate-Adaptation-Levy.aspx>

Environment Management (Waste Disposal and Recycling) (Container Deposit) Regulations 2011 call for the establishment of a nonprofit entity that is responsible for administering the container deposit system. Financial accounting and accountability for system entities will be key responsibilities of the entity. At the time of writing, these regulations have yet to come into force.

Enforcement and compliance: Plastic pollution is widespread and suggests that enforcement and compliance measures are not effective. The key barriers are lack of budgetary support, capacity to enforce, non prosecution of littering offences, cultural attitudes toward waste.

Governance: Suva City Council provides residential solid waste and commercial collection services three and six times a week, respectively. Waste is placed in 60 litre bins and bags on the roadside curb or on raised platforms (i.e., to prevent dog access) for collection. Fiji's remaining 12 councils are responsible for waste collection services in each municipality.

Public Awareness- communities/villagers: Galoa village pilot survey found that 91 % of the rural community members agreed that pollution and litter from plastic solid wastes is a real problem, whereas only 9% of the community members had disagreed. The level of community awareness on the development of the proposed national plastic bag policy was very poor. In the case of the governments' proposed plan to develop a new plastic bag regulation, it was noted that majority of the respondents were not informed about this proposed policy. In terms of their support for the development of plastic bag laws, 97% of the respondents expressed support by revealing that there should be a plastic bag law developed, in order to control plastic bags pollution in Fiji. There were only 3% of the respondents who did not support the idea.⁷

Private Sector -tourism sector: Tourists to Fiji were 754,835 in 2015 (RTRC, November 2016), representing a 9% growth on the previous year and approximately 37% of gross domestic product (GDP) (Colliers, 2014). Fiji is an onshore manufacturer of plastic bottles (PET) and has plastics recycling infrastructure, though there is no information on how effective recycling schemes are⁸.

A joint partnership between Coca Cola-Amatil (Fiji) Ltd. and Fiji Water operates a stewardship programme, whereby 60kg sacks are provided for the collection of plastic bottles and aluminium cans. The returned recyclables are purchased by Coca Cola-Amatil for US\$0.41/kg if the company collects, or US\$0.54/kg if delivered to the factory. The recyclables are exported to New Zealand.

[FIJI® Water](#) has transitioned its iconic and best-selling 500 mL and 330 mL bottles to 100% recycled plastic (rPET)* in the U.S. The move is a substantial step in reducing plastic waste and replaces almost 65% of FIJI Water's bottle volume in the U.S. with recycled material.** The company is committed to continue shifting its entire portfolio of bottle sizes to rPET by 2025.⁹

Consumer Council of Fiji is promoting examples of sustainable business models which entrepreneurs must adopt to do their part in saving our planet such as reusing plastic bottles and making sunglasses out of marine litter.¹⁰

Research and Development into Single Use Plastic alternatives and other initiatives:

Fiji's Government announced their intentions to eliminate duty on alternatives for single-use plastics.¹¹

Development partner initiatives

- ADB funded waste audit in Fiji.

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⁸ <https://www.sprep.org/att/IRC/eCOPIES/countries/fiji/2.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/fiji-water-transitions-iconic-bottle-to-100-recycled-plastic-in-the-us-301605349.html#:~:text=15%2C%202022%20%2FPRNewswire%2F%20%2D%2D,replaces%20almost%2065%25%20of%20FIJI>

¹⁰ <https://consumersfiji.org/feature-articles/reusing-plastic-waste/>

¹¹ <https://fijisun.com.fj/2019/06/10/fiji-budget-2019-a-budget-that-is-securing-our-nation-a-sustainable-future/>

- IUCN Plastic Waste Free Islands (PWFI) Project, IUCN through consultants Environment Law Oceania Consultancy (ELOC) validation workshop (June 2022) on proposed policy recommendations for the reduction of plastic waste leakage from the waste management, tourism and fisheries sectors three top priorities were
 - (1) Legislate for, and implement a Container Deposit Scheme, that will facilitate the establishment of (a) waste transfer station / resource recovery centre(s) for recycling;
 - (2) Improve waste collection and management, especially in rural and remote areas where a large part of the population does not benefit from a public waste collection system; and
 - (3) The development of a *National Plastic Pollution Prevention Plan (N4P)* to be incorporated in the *Ministry of Waterways and Environment's Waste Management and Pollution Control Strategy and Action Plan*, which would include control measures to control (and eventually eliminate) the import of problematic and unnecessary plastics.¹²
- PRIF is currently investigating the feasibility of establishing a regional recycling hub based in Fiji.
- UNDP is supporting Fiji in their planning for the container deposit legislation with advisory services

Media and Communications outlets. Very Good national coverage on media (television and print). 95 Per Cent Fijians Access Mobile Internet 3G, 4G, 4G+¹³

Summary Overview

- Recent IUCN workshop identified plastic priorities to be CDS legislation, improvement of waste management in outer islands and Single Use Plastic National Action Plan. This resonates well with objectives of POLP.
- Largest tourism industry of the Pacific Island Countries. Opportunities to partner SPTO, Consumer Council of Fiji, World Bank on a tourist related activity tapping into Fiji's hotel, cruise, and fast-food sectors.

¹² <https://www.iucn.org/news/oceania/202206/iucn-plastic-waste-free-islands-pwfi-project-shares-proposed-policy-recommendations-improve-management-plastic-waste-fiji-and-reduce-leakages-target-sectors>

¹³ <https://fijisun.com.fj/2021/08/17/95-per-cent-fijians-access-mobile-internet-3g-4g-4g/>