


Tonga's National Program of Action (NPA) for the Protection of Marine Environment from Land-based Activities



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Background

- 2002 – 2007: Tonga participated in the International Waters Project (IWP)
- National priority environmental concern – degradation of marine and freshwater quality due to poor management of solid and liquid waste
- Pilot community – Nukuhetulu village, 350 people, 30 minutes drive to the south of Nuku'alofa (capital)

Community Outcomes

- Behaviour change - sorting rubbish, composting, and recycling and increase practising of organic farming methods
- Reduction in roaming pigs – village rules
- Trial of compost toilet was a success - yet to be replicated due to cultural and financial issues.



National Outcomes

- Water Resource Bill 2005 – MLSNRE to seek endorsement of Cabinet
- Solid Waste Strategy 2007 – MLSNRE to seek endorsement of Cabinet

Other Supporting Studies

- Economic analysis of poor management of waste in Tonga - TOP\$5.6 million (Dr. Padma Lal).
- Water Quality study identified sources and level of pollution present on ground water and lagoon.

Process for Developing of Tonga's NPA

- 2006 – UNEP/SPREP selected Tonga IWP, one of 4 pilot projects in the Pacific to develop the NPA
- 2007 - A multi-sectoral Team was formed, tasked with reviewing of national issues and existing literature.
- Stakeholders and community consultation
- Information compiled and a draft report was presented again to stakeholders for final input
- Submitted to Cabinet and UNEP



NPA's Goal



- To protect Tonga's fragile coastal marine environment from land-based pollution



Action Strategy



- Improve disposal of wastewater
- Improve environmental awareness and education
- Strengthen national capability for marine conservation
- Investigate appropriate technology/techniques to mitigate impacts on coastal/marine areas
- Ensure environmental friendly farmland practices
- Manage land-based chemical pollutants



Challenges



- Dependence on external financial resources for the implementation
- Lack of appropriate capacity – public sector reform resulted in merging of departments and at the same time shrinking in staff



Opportunities



- Crosscutting with GEF/SLM and IWRM
- TCDT ongoing community awareness



Malo 'Aupito

