

# NATIONAL ACTION PLAN TO END PLASTIC POLLUTION IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA



If Papua-New Guinea does not take action  
**1.7 Million tonnes** of plastic pollution will enter the environment by 2035



## THE PLASTIC POLLUTION CHALLENGE

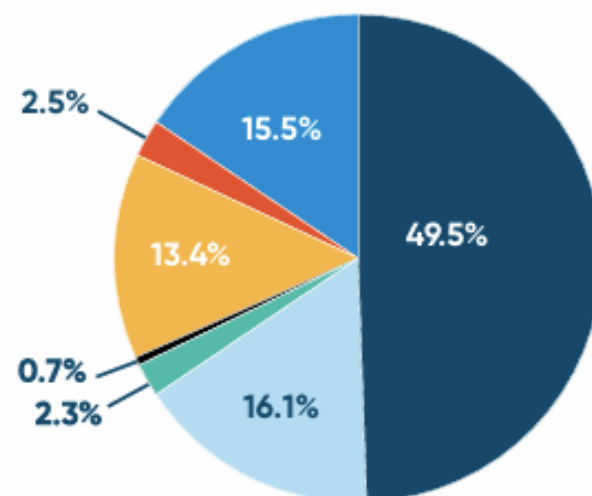
**118,200 tonnes** plastic waste leaked per year



## WHY THIS PLAN MATTERS

- PNG is renowned for its diverse natural landscapes, including highlands, volcanoes, rivers, and mangrove forests. Its tropical rainforest is home to some of the world's richest biodiversity.
- With 11.8 million habitants, it is the most populous country in the Pacific Islands region. With urban areas expanding rapidly, PNG's plastic waste generation will increase.
- While some urban areas have limited solid waste management, it is minimal in rural areas, with waste being burnt, dumped on land, or disposed of into rivers.

- 214,700 tonnes of plastic waste was generated in 2024; projected to increase to 306,600 tonnes by 2035.
- Without action, a cumulative 1.7 million tonnes of plastic waste is expected to leak into the environment in PNG as pollution between 2024 and 2035.
- Packaging materials are the largest component of plastic waste, accounting for nearly half of the total plastic waste generated.



## THE ACTION PLAN

The National Action Plan was developed through a consultative process involving more than 50 stakeholders and analysis with Common Seas' UN-endorsed approach.

The plan can reduce 61% of plastic pollution by 2035 – 46,000 tonnes per year, through 4 core strategies:

### 1. Upstream focus: Closing the tap – 6,000t avoided

- Build on existing plastic bag ban, introducing new prohibitions on problematic items

### 2. Reducing single-use plastic bottles- 8,500t avoided

- Introduction of a nationwide Container Deposit Scheme and increase access to water refill options

### 3. Supporting collection and recycling – 21,300t avoided

- Phased waste segregation and enhanced recycling
- Expand solid waste collection, targeting 95% coverage in urban areas and 25% coverage in rural areas
- Extended Producer Responsibility

### 4. Downstream focus: Preventing leakage – 10,100t avoided

- Strengthen the downstream systems that manage plastic waste after it is generated

**By 2035**  
this could avoid  
**61% pollution**  
delivering major benefits for health, biodiversity, and the blue economy

## LOOKING AHEAD

Successfully tackling pollution requires taking ambitious action combining upstream and downstream measures, paired with formalised governance, institutional capacity and sustainable finance. PNG has many of the same challenges faced by its Pacific Island neighbours, including climate change, environmental degradation, and the need for sustainable resource planning and management. Effective waste prevention and management are crucial for the long-term health of its economy and the wellbeing of its people

This can result in:

- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions, decreased plastic-aggravated flooding, safeguarded vital agricultural land, and resilience of communities facing rising sea levels.
- Improved productivity and resilience of ecosystems, as well as agriculture and fisheries
- Protected public health, women, and vulnerable members of society, including waste pickers.