PACIFIC ISLANDS: PLASTIC WASTE

Spotlight on Vanuatu

djs research

wrap

CONTENTS

03 Introduction

04 Methodology

08 Attitudes to plastic

19 Recycling & waste management facilities & services available

31 Behaviours regarding plastic waste

45 Responsibility for plastic waste

53 Conclusions

INTRODUCTION & OBJECTIVES

This report presents the findings from research conducted in Vanuatu and Fiji (separate report for Fiji) during February and March 2021. The findings of this research will support plastic waste and recycling engagement projects in both Fiji and Vanuatu. The project aims to generate new insights about consumers attitudes and behaviours in respect to plastic waste in both island nations.

Key objectives of the research focus on gathering information on:

1. General attitudes to plastic waste including levels of concern, perceived social norms and levels of personal urgency
2. Knowledge of recycling and waste management services currently available
3. Current actions and behaviours that citizens are undertaking regarding plastic waste
4. Willingness and ability for citizens to adopt alternative behaviours

METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY: OVERVIEW

Contextual knowledge was key to this project, and as such qualitative interviews were conducted by local researchers using the most appropriate language for each citizen.

- Citizens were recruited via a database and on-street and screened accordingly before being invited to take part.
- Citizens interviewed were chief shoppers of the household (sole or joint responsibility).
- Fieldwork ran for 7 weeks from 11th February to 26th March 2021.

- ✓ 40 qualitative interviews conducted
- ✓ 4 locations comprising the largest 2 urban areas and 2 towns, on the two largest islands
- ✓ Interviews lasted between 30-50 minutes

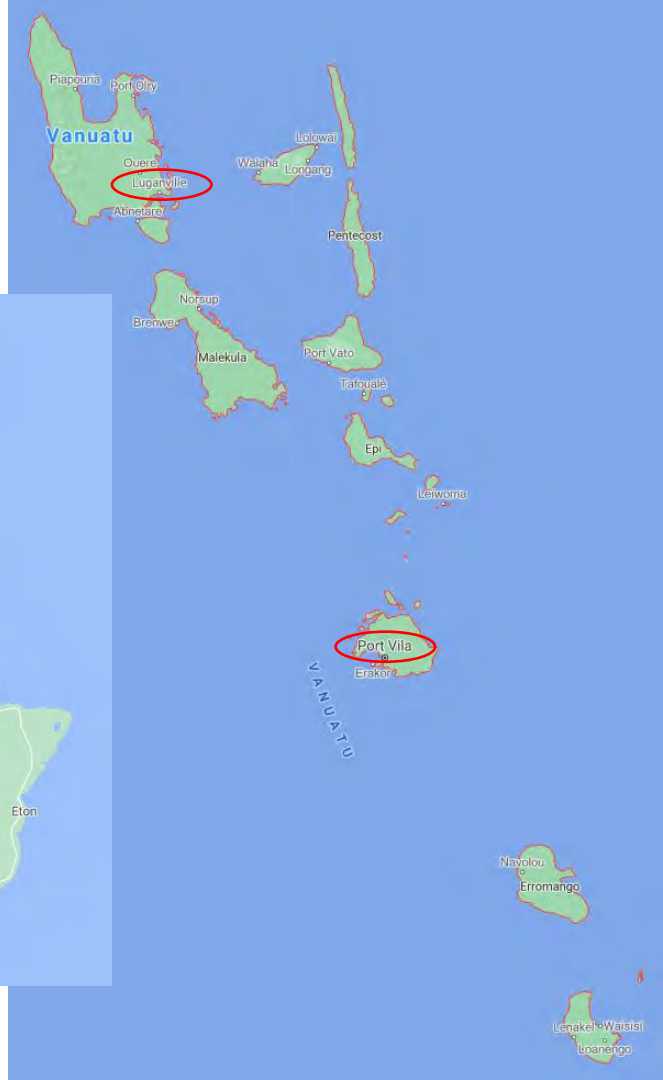
- ✓ Broad mix of citizens were interviewed to ensure findings were representative of Vanuatu's population (in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, working status etc.)

METHODOLOGY: LOCATIONS

Interviews and their apportionment were undertaken in the following locations:

- **Port Vila:**
  Capital and largest city (n=15)
- **Luganville:**
  Second largest city (n=15)
- **Mangaliliu**:
  Township (n=5)
- **Eratap:**
  Township (n=5)

Note: Pilot interviews in townships did not provide as detailed responses as those in the more urban areas - it is for this reason that interviews for this project focused mainly on urban areas and as such views observed are less likely to represent those of individuals residing in more rural parts of the country.



METHODOLOGY: DEMOGRAPHICS

Age range: 18-63 years

Male: 40%
Female: 60%*

Nationality

- Ni-Vanuatu
- Melanesian
- Other

Working status

- Working full time
- Working part time
- Student
- Not working (looking for a job)
- Not working (not looking for a job)
- Retired

Living arrangement

- I live on my own
- My partner and I live together without any children
- I live with my child/children with no partner
- My partner and I live with our child/children
- I live in a shared house / with friends
- I live in student halls of residence with a shared kitchen
- Living at home with parents/other family
- Something else

Religion

- Christian (Presbyterian)
- Christian (Anglican)
- Christian (Catholic)
- Christian (Seventh-Day Adventist)
- Christian (Other)
- No Religion

*A higher skew was given to females due to their dominance in being the chief shoppers of the household (sole or joint responsibility).

ATTITUDES TO PLASTIC WASTE

“Almost every person is concerned about plastic waste here because they have seen it with their own eyes, and it is a topic that many people talk about; especially people my age because we were taught a lot about it at school.”

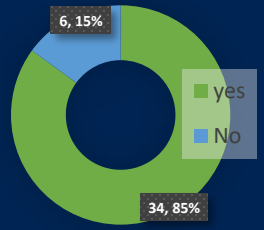
JESSICA, 18, PORT VILA

LEVEL OF CONCERN

A high level of concern towards plastic waste, particularly amongst younger citizens interviewed and those residing in the larger urban areas.

Do you consider plastic packaging to be an issue in Vanuatu?

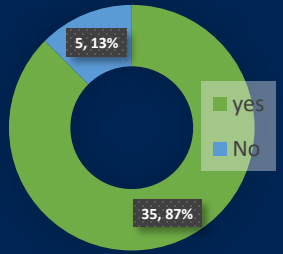
N=34 yes | N=6 no



Citizens in Port Vila are more likely to think it is an issue

Are you concerned about plastic waste in Vanuatu?

N=35 yes | N=5 no



Those aged <40 are most concerned

PLASTIC PACKAGING: AN ISSUE & A CONCERN

The majority of citizens interviewed consider plastic packaging to be an issue in Vanuatu.

- **Younger citizens**: aged 18-29 are most likely; followed by those aged 30-39, then those aged 50+
- More likely to be located in the largest urban area, **Port Vila**.
- There was **minimal difference** between males and females

Reasons given were:

- It's **harmful** to **people and animals** due to being made from chemicals which can cause illnesses like cancer
- It **isn't bio-gradable** or recyclable and **lasts for decades**
- It's **difficult to dispose** of, contributes to climate change and is a visual type of pollution on land and in the ocean

A smaller number of citizens interviewed do not believe plastic packaging is an issue, reasons given were:

- It's a **good form of packaging** (versatile, hygienic, easy and safe to use)
- It's **good for packaging** food & drink
- It's more **durable** than paper/cardboard
- It can be **useful** if not overused

"There is too much of it here in Port Vila and I think in other parts of Vanuatu, and we cannot get rid of it, there are cleanups a few times a year around here but it keeps coming back."

MOSES, 24, PORT VILA

"Too much plastic packaging goes into the ocean, I see it myself almost every day."

SIFA, 50, LUGANVILLE

PLASTIC WASTE: LEVEL OF CONCERN & REASONS

The **majority of citizens interviewed consider plastic waste to be an issue in Vanuatu**. The types of individuals who considered it to be an issue are similar to those who considered plastic packaging to be an issue, namely:

- **Younger citizens**: aged 18-29 are the most likely; followed by those aged 30-39 then those aged 50+
- Citizens located in **the largest city, Port Vila,** compared to smaller cities & towns
- Citizens who have **children living at home** with them

"Almost every person is concerned about plastic waste here because they have seen it with their own eyes and it is a topic that many people talk about., especially people my age because we were taught a lot about it at school."

JESSICA, 18, PORT VILA

Citizens interviewed in Vanuatu are concerned about plastic waste for many reasons:

- It is **harmful to people and animals** due to being made from chemicals, with several referring to plastic being a **carcinogenic**
- **It isn't bio-gradable or recyclable** and lasts for decades, in addition to it causing problems if it is burnt or buried, as the **toxic chemicals it is made from leach into the soil**
- Vanuatu has **no way of processing/disposing/recycling** it
- It **contributes to climate change** and **global warming**, both the process of manufacturing it and as a waste material
- It is also a **visual form of pollution**, commonly seen on the streets, in rivers, mangroves and on beaches

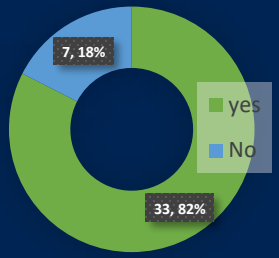
LEVEL OF PLASTIC WASTE

The majority of citizens interviewed have noticed a change in the level of plastic waste on the island in recent years, with the change overwhelmingly being an increase.

Have you noticed any change in the level of plastic waste on the island in recent years?

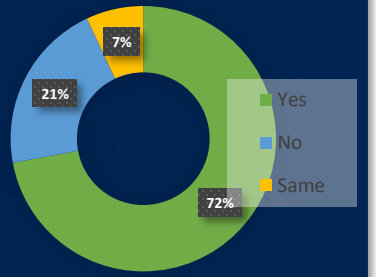
N=33 yes | N=7 no

Citizens in Port Vila, Mangaliliu and Eratap are slightly more concerned.



Has the level of plastic waste increased/decreased?

N=32 increased
N=5 decreased
N=3 same



AMOUNT OF PLASTIC WASTE

The majority of **citizens interviewed in Vanuatu have noticed a change – an increase - in the amount of plastic waste on the islands in recent years**.

- This is more prevalent on the main and most populated towns – Port Vila, Mangaliliu and Eratap - compared to those on the second largest island (Luganville)
- There is minimal differences in the responses of citizens across age, gender and living situation

"Yes, there is more of it, even in small villages you see it now because they buy food or drink that is wrapped in it and they don't have good rubbish removal there and it gets washed or blown all over the place."

LEHU, 20, PORT VILA

"Of course, when I was young I had never seen plastic, but now it is everywhere and in the last 10-15 years it has increased a lot."

QUEENIE, 63, LUGANVILLE

PLASTIC WASTE: REASONS FOR INCREASE

Citizens interviewed believe that the **level of plastic waste has increased for several reasons** relating to both **increased usage and lack of disposal/recycling facilities:**

- **Number of products** that are made from plastic and have plastic packaging **is increasing**
- Most **foreign products** are packaged with it
- The government have **not banned** many types of plastic from being sold
- It's **difficult to properly dispose** of, so it builds up and Vanuatu cannot recycle it like foreign countries can

There is a **corresponding increase in the level of concern amongst citizens interviewed** (the majority are now more concerned). Again, this is more prevalent the main and most populated towns (Port Vila, Mangaliliu and Eratap), as well as amongst the **youngest citizens** (18-29 followed by 30-39 year olds)

"Increased definitely, because more stuff is made from plastic and wrapped in plastic."

KOAMALU, 42, PORT VILA

"Most things that come from other countries use it, so we have deal with the rubbish leftover and more people are buying food and drink that are packaged now, so we get more of it."

JOYCELYN, 37, MANGALILIU

"In this area it has decreased a little because people think the shopping bags we used to get for free have been banned so I don't see those anymore plus there are regular cleanups now."

KAEA, 36, LUGANVILLE

RECYCLING & WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES & SERVICES AVAILABLE

"A far as I know, plastic cannot be recycled in Vanuatu and this is a big problem for the country, we have no way of getting rid of it properly like larger countries can."

KAEA, 36, LUGANVILLE

RECYCLING FACILITIES AVAILABLE

Minimal services are believed to be available in Vanuatu.

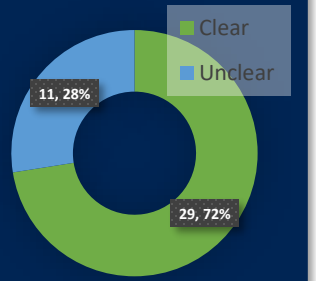
What recycling facilities/services are available to you in your area?

Recycling bins located in central city areas

Glass bottle drop off points in Port Vila and Luganville

How clear is it what can and cannot be recycled on your island?

Y=29 clear | N=11 not clear



RECYCLING FACILITIES/SERVICES: AVAILABILITY

The **majority of citizens interviewed** across all locations, **struggle to name any recycling facilities or services** that are available in their area. A small number of responses included:

- **Glass bottle recycling bins** (Port Vila and Luganville only)
- **Recycling bins in busy places** (Port Vila and Luganville only – believed to be local government installed)
- **Newspaper** (household collections and some drop-off facilities)

The **majority of citizens interviewed**, across all locations **have household collection** of waste:

- Once or twice a week in Port Vila and Luganville, but weekly in Mangaliliu and Eratap
- Local rubbish dumps in Mangaliliu and Eratap
- Port Vila and Luganville have rubbish bins on the footpaths of main streets or outside of eateries and markets areas where food is sold and consumed

"There is a place to put glass bottles near the hospital and there is a place near the Cathedral where glass bottles and newspapers can be put in special big bins and in the main street area there are recycling bins, blue and yellow and black ones."

LEHU, 20, PORT VILA

"Weekly there is rubbish collection in a truck that comes here, it collects it from 3 locations we have here in the town and then it is taken to the dump (landfill)."

JOENA, 57, MANGALILIU

CLARITY ON WHAT CAN/CANNOT BE RECYCLED

Clarity around what can and cannot be recycled on the island is mixed:

- Around three quarters thought it was **clear**
- Around a quarter thought it was **unclear**

Those citizens interviewed who think it's **clear** are predominately:

- Younger adults, aged 18-29, followed by those aged 30-39
- Live in the most populous location, Port Vila

"It is easy to know, glass bottles, newspapers, drink cans and they all have to be clean and not have food scraps of other things in them or on them."

MELE, 29, PORT VILA

"I am not very sure, I have never been taught about it and don't know anything about it, only that drink bottles can be recycled."

VEILLIE, 44, LUGANVILLE

ITEMS THAT CAN/CANNOT BE RECYCLED

Top of mind items which can and cannot be recycled are **quite varied, as is** the confidence attributed to each. **Plastic is the most salient material that cannot be recycled,** but a small number state that plastic bottles can be recycled.

What items can be recycled*

- Paper & cardboard (highest)
- Glass – especially bottles (high)
- Cans – aluminum/tin (medium)
- Steel & Copper (medium)
- Scrap metal – eg cars (low)
- Plastic bottles (low)

What items cannot be recycled*

- Plastic (highest)
- Metals – lead (medium)
- Cloth (medium)
- Cement (low)
- Rubber (low)

**Ranked from highest to lowest as most widely recognised as recyclable / non-recyclable*

WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES/SERVICES: OPINION

Views on the waste management facilities or services available are mixed.

- **Positive**: over half of citizens interviewed are positive about the facilities or services, predominately citizens from Port Vila and Luganville, the two largest urban areas who have a household collection two or three times a week
- **Neutral**: under a fifth of citizens interviewed are neutral about the facilities or services, typically citizens who are aged 50+ and across all locations and regardless of the availability and frequency of household collection
- **Negative**: around a fifth of citizens interviewed are negative about the facilities or services, this being highest in the smaller towns of Mangaliliu and Eratap where collection of household waste is once a week

The main reasons citizens are **positive** are the **frequency of the service**, especially for those who receive twice weekly household collection**, all rubbish is taken away and none left behind** and **extra removal is provided for free after storms and weather events**

The main reasons citizens interviewed are **negative** is because it can be irregular, **often a week late and rubbish builds up**

If the truck does not have **enough space, some rubbish will be left behind** until the next week and **communal dumping areas become messy**, especially from wind and rain which makes the rubbish scatter

Some things are not taken away such as dead animals, fishing nets and charcoal. Also, some private people who are paid to collect household rubbish do not dispose of it properly, several citizens interviewed say it is a problem (they dump it illegally around the city).

"I do not think it is very good, sometimes they do not come for up to a week, they never give a reason, maybe they say because road was too muddy after rain and when this happens it piles up and is not healthy for us."

ISA, 22, MANGALILIU

OPPORTUNITIES TO RECYCLE PLASTIC WASTE

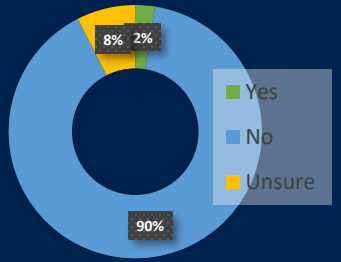
No opportunities known to recycle plastic waste in Vanuatu.

Do you feel that there are enough facilities/services for you to recycle plastic waste on the island?

N=1 yes

N=36 no

N=3 unsure



Why/Why not?

No known plastic recycling in Vanuatu.

A few citizens outside of Port Vila think it could be done in Port Vila but are uncertain

RECYCLE PLASTIC WASTE: ENOUGH FACILITIES/SERVICES

The **majority** of citizens interviewed **do not feel that there are enough facilities or services** to recycle plastic waste on the islands.

The majority of those who don't think there are enough facilities, believe **there are *no* facilities** to recycle plastic in Vanuatu.

Many of those who were unsure, tend to be outside of the main city of Port Vila and *assume* that there could be facilities or services to recycle plastic in Port Vila.

"I don't think any company recycles plastic here."

WAISEA, 35, PORT VILA

"I do not think there is any place in Vanuatu that does that (place or service to recycle plastic), maybe in Port Vila, but I never heard of it."

KEILE, 62, LUGANVILLE

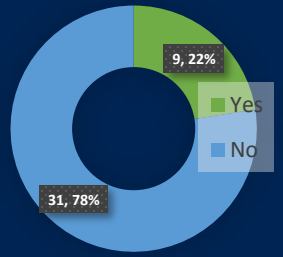
OPPORTUNITIES TO REDUCE PLASTIC WASTE

Too many foreign products are made of and/or packaged in plastic so this makes it difficult.

Single use plastic being banned and more reusing of plastic is occurring.

Do you feel that there are enough facilities/services for you to reduce plastic waste on the island?

N=9 yes | N=31 no



Why/Why not?

Too many foreign products are made of and/or packaged in plastic so this makes it difficult to reduce plastic waste in Vanuatu.

REDUCING PLASTIC WASTE

The **majority** of citizens interviewed **do not feel that there are enough facilities or services** to recycle plastic waste on the islands.

Those who do not think there are enough facilities or services consistently say that too many things are either made from plastic or have plastic packaging and consequently **it is not possible to not buy plastic free alternatives because they are imported from other countries with no locally-made plastic free options available**, also reiterating they are **unaware of any recycling facilities/services available** for plastic.

"The government made it illegal for shops to use some plastic things like shopping bags and cups and containers for food, but the grocery food we buy still has the same amount of plastic packaging, so it is still not easy to reduce it."

MELE, 29, PORT VILA

"My phone is made of plastic and so is this table, so that is the problem, so many things are made from it now that makes it difficult to reduce the amount of plastic we have and eventually the amount of plastic waste we have."

WAITARA, 51, PORT VILA

REDUCING PLASTIC WASTE

A **smaller number** of citizens interviewed **feel that there are enough facilities or services** to recycle plastic waste on the islands:

- **The government banned single use, on-biodegradable plastic in Vanuatu** (in 2018) and this is making a noticeable difference on the amount of single use plastic waste seen, such as shopping bags, drinks and food containers (although overall citizens feel that there is an increase, so this must be driven by other forms of plastic).
- There are **more options available now** to reduce the use of plastic, such as refilling commonly bought food and drinks in refillable containers and many shops are encouraging this now
- Many citizens interviewed are **against plastic now because of education in schools and by the government**, so if people are seen to have a lot of plastic then they get criticized by others

"Now shops don't use plastic bags to wrap up vegetables or to give you to carry things home because the government made that type of plastic illegal in Vanuatu so that has had a big impact on people, and they know to reduce plastic in other parts of their life also."

LEHU, 20, PORT VILA

"We have to reuse plastic and make it a resource, for example, this plastic drum with the handle is for cottonseed oil that we buy, once or twice a month I go to the shop and have it refilled and I think everyone does that now, but a few years ago, each time we bought the oil, we just got the new drum in came in."

HANNAH, 55, LUGANVILLE

BEHAVIOURS REGARDING PLASTIC WASTE

“I have made changes in the last few years, for example when they stopped plastic shopping bags I just started to use a big material bag, so I will adapt to doing new things like everyone else.”

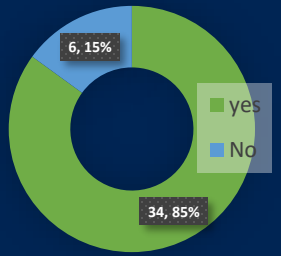
HEIURA, 43, LUGANVILLE

CURRENT BEHAVIOURS

The vast majority of citizens interviewed are taking actions, even if they are small, which are being incorporated into daily life and habits.

Do you currently take any action to reduce, recycle or repurpose your plastic waste?

N=34 yes | N=6 no



Younger citizens are more likely to take action than older citizens.

What do you do?

- Reuse and refill plastic bottles and containers
- Try to avoid buying products made from plastic, or packaged in plastic

TAKING ACTION

The **majority of citizens interviewed** claim to currently take some **sort of action to reduce, recycle or repurpose** their plastic waste.

These citizens tend to be:

- The youngest adults (those aged 18-29 have the highest incidence, followed by those aged 30-39 and 40-49)
- Female
- Living with children

Conversely, those who are not concerned with taking any actions tend to be aged 50+, more likely to be male and are located outside of Port Vila.

ACTIONS COMMONLY UNDERTAKEN

Those who **do currently take action** to reduce, recycle or repurpose their plastic waste, mention some common actions:

- Reuse plastic, such as taking a **plastic container to the market to buy cooking oil and reusing/ refilling plastic bottles for drinking water**
- **Reuse plastic containers** a**nd tubs around the house**, such as storing household items or using as pots to grow seedlings
- Try to **avoid buying products made from plastic**, such as furniture
- **Reuse plastic in the home**, for example for waterproofing roofs by heating it and melting it to fill in gaps in wooden and metal roofing
- Try to **ensure that plastic waste is put into household garbage** collection or landfills, and **not letting it go into the ocean**

Frequency of this type of behavior is varied:

- Almost every time the citizen went shopping where the action involved making a purchase decision about a product and/or it's packaging being plastic, or where a plastic container was going to be used to refill a commodity such as cooking oil or drinking water

"The large plastic items we have are reused, like the big bottles, they are refilled with rainwater all the time, we never throw them away until they start to fall apart."

ROSI, 24, ERATAP

BARRIERS TO REDUCE, RECYCLE OR REPURPOSE PLASTIC WASTE

Citizens interviewed who do not take action to reduce, recycle or repurpose their plastic waste, mention a handful of reasons **why they don't**:

- **Rarely buy anything that is made of plastic** or has plastic packaging
- Often **no alternative available**, where some products are either made of plastic and/or come packaged in plastic
- There are **no known facilities or services available** to take plastic to be recycled

"I don't buy expensive things that are made from it (plastic) or wrapped in it, so I don't have to do any of these things."

DI, 48, ERATAP

"There is nothing I can do except burn it or put it into the rubbish dumping ground where it is collected."

LAELI, 39, MANGALILIU

AWARENESS OF GLASS BOTTLE RETURNS:
TUSKER BEER BREWERY

The **majority of citizens interviewed** claim to be aware of the Tusker Beer Brewery glass bottle return scheme, but only a small number take part in the scheme. These citizens tend to be:

- Male
- The youngest adults (those aged 18-29 have the highest incidence, followed by those aged 30-39 and 40-49)

"Yes, a man comes to collect them about once a week in this area, many people leave them in a pile outside for him, that is easy for me, I think I could take them there myself and get a bit of money but it isn't worth it for me and we are helping him because that's how he feeds himself."

WAISEA, 35, PORT VILA

"Yes, it is written on the bottle and in the advertisement they put up on posters where you buy beer."

Moses, 24, Port Vila

"I know about it because there are a lot of men who go around collecting the bottles and they make money that way by selling them back to the factory."

ESTHER, 41, PORT VILA

SCHEME INTEREST

If the same type of scheme was implemented for plastics, the **vast majority of citizens interviewed** claim they will use it, almost unanimously saying that it would be a great idea.

The smaller number who say they will not use a scheme like this for plastics, typically wouldn't because:

- Do not buy drinks in plastic and even the ability to recycle the plastic bottles would not change their behaviors
- Those who were unsure stated that they would need to know more about it, such as will they have to take the plastic bottles somewhere, or would the plastic bottles be collected from their home?

"We really need something like this to be done here, that would be a wonderful thing to happen."

JESSICA, 18, PORT VILA

"Yes, that would be a good thing to happen, I often thought why do they do it with only Tusker beer bottles, there are many other types of bottles and on some of the plastic ones they say that they can be recycled."

ABRAHAM, 41, ERATAP

DISPOSAL OF SPECIFIC ITEMS

Almost all of plastic items are disposed of with household waste.

Plastic drinks bottles:

Almost all plastic bottles are thrown out in household waste, with a very small percentage put into the few recycling bins in Port Vila.

Food wrappers:

All disposed of into household waste if used at home

Cleaning products:

All disposed of into household waste

DISPOSAL OF SPECIFIC ITEMS: across all towns

Drinks bottles

Of the citizens interviewed almost all plastic bottles are thrown out in household waste, with a very small percentage put into the few recycling bins in Port Vila

Food wrappers

All into household waste if used at home, into public rubbish bins if consumed out of home

Ice cream tubs

Less than 20% said they bought, but most who did buy said they are reused as containers or for purposes in the house

Shampoo bottles, cleaning products

All into household waste

WILLINGNESS TO ADOPT ALTERNATIVE BEHAVIOURS

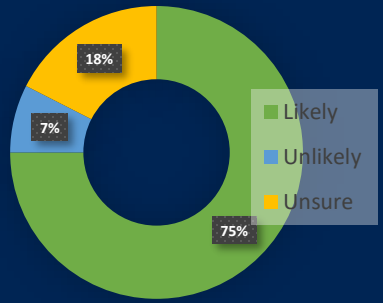
A high willingness to adopt alternative behaviors, impeded by limited ability to do so.

In the future, how likely are you to undertake an alternative behavior such as to reduce, recycle or repurpose plastic waste?

N=30 likely

N=3 unlikely

N=7 unsure



What (if anything) would encourage you to take these actions?

The availability of options, such as the ability to recycle plastic and other materials

More government bans on harmful plastic products

WILLINGNESS TO ADOPT ALTERNATIVE BEHAVIOURS

The **majority** of citizens interviewed are **likely to undertake an alternative behavior in the future** to reduce, recycle or repurpose plastic waste. Those who are likely to **change their behavior** in the future, tend to be:

- Younger (18-29) and middle age (30-59 years)
- Female
- Those located in Port Vila, the most populated area, has the highest incidence of all locations

"I have made changes in the last few years, for example when they stopped plastic shopping bags I just started to use a big material bag, so I will adapt to doing new things like everyone else."

HEIURA, 43, LUGANVILLE

"I will do what I can, like what I do now, but the problem is that I can't do much because lots of those recycling places, we don't have here like in Port Vila."

ISA, 22, MANGALILIU

ENABLERS TO ADOPT ALTERNATIVE BEHAVIOURS

Availability of facilities

- The findings of the interviewees suggested that if there **were more options available**, then citizens would be **encouraged to undertake more actions**, having the availability of recycling is the most commonly cited aspect that would encourage alternative behaviour.

Bans on plastics

- Over **half of citizens interviewed believe that more plastic products and packaging should be banned**, in the same way that single use plastic had been banned. Citizens commonly state that people will find alternatives and learn to live without plastic easily when they are forced to.

"We need to have more things made available to use, the recycling things that you asked me, we don't have any of that here like they do in Port Vila, if we had those things then I could do more and I think most of my neighbours around here would also."

LUIKIA, 32, LUGANVILLE

"To my mind, the thing that is best to encourage me and other people to take action is to ban the harmful things as was done with plastic shopping bags, straws and take-away food trays, this has worked so well and more can be done like the thin film plastic some foods are wrapped in, that should be banned also."

SIMON, 22, PORT VILA

BARRIERS TO ADOPT ALTERNATIVE BEHAVIOURS

Citizens interviewed who are **unlikely to undertake** an alternative behavior such as to reduce, recycle or repurpose plastic waste believe the **barriers are the facilities themselves**.

- The facilities/services such as recycling collection points or deposit refund schemes are not available to them, consistent across all geographic locations, so because of this, they cannot take any actions
- Buying some things that are not made from plastic or have plastic packaging is not an option available to them

"I can't do much, in Eratap there is nothing we can do except throw out all of our rubbish the way we currently do."

ROSI, 24, ERATAP

"Vanuatu is such a small and poor country that we cannot do these things that we spoke about (recycling) all that we can do is what we have been doing, not selling some types of unnecessary plastic anymore to limit how much we have."

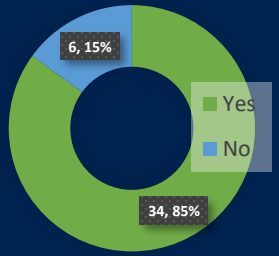
JACK, 29, LUGANVILLE

SOCIAL NORMS

Citizens interviewed would only feel comfortable encouraging immediate family.

Would you feel comfortable to encourage other people you know to reduce their own plastic waste?

N=34 yes | N=6 no



Who would you feel comfortable telling?

Immediate family and to a lesser extent extended family residing in another household

Very close friends and neighbours

ENCOURAGING OTHERS TO REDUCE THEIR PLASTIC WASTE

The **majority of citizens interviewed feel comfortable to encourage other people they know to reduce their own plastic waste**, but they only feel comfortable to encourage:

- **Immediate family** and to a lesser extent, extended family residing in another household
- **Very close friends** and neighbours

"I could tell it to my family and good friends only."

KIELE, 62, LUGANVILLE

"I am comfortable to do this, I already tell it to my family and some neighbours."

ISA, 22, MANGALILIU

RESPONSIBILITY

"Always more could be done, but I think the government is the one to do things and they have been trying hard, there is a lot of information about ways to reduce plastic that they government gives to people and they banned some plastic which has worked."

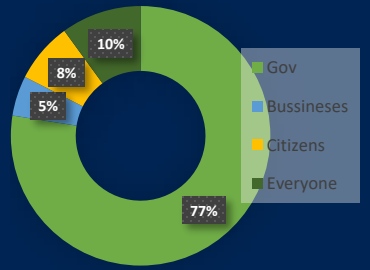
VEILLIE, 44, PORT VILA

RESPONSIBILITY

The overwhelming majority of citizens interviewed believe that responsibility for reducing plastic waste lies with the national government and due to recent success in banning single use plastic, they believe the government should now do more.

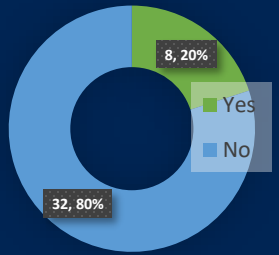
Who do you believe is responsible for reducing plastic waste in Vanuatu?

N=31 government
N=2 businesses
N=3 citizens
N=4 everyone



Do you feel that governments, businesses and citizens are doing enough to tackle plastic waste?

N=8 yes | N=32 no



ACTIONS REQUIRED

Citizens interviewed believe that there are two ways to help **reduce plastic waste** in Vanuatu, these being:

Infrastructure/services/facilities

- The majority of citizens interviewed mention infrastructure/services/facilities and having access to them

Further banning of plastic

- A large number of citizens interviewed state that the banning of single use plastic has been successful as they have noticed a decrease in that type of plastic waste (but not a decrease overall)
- Consequently, the banning of more types of plastic is believed to be a good idea

"We don't have the resources to recycle plastic waste so we have to bury it in the ground and that is not a good solution, we need to recycle it but as I said we cannot because there is no place that does it here."

POE, 43, LUGANVILLE

Vanuatu has plans to ban all single-use plastics. Plastic shopping bags were first, followed by straws, knives, forks, fast food containers… even cling film will be banned soon.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR TAKING ACTION

Over **three quarters believe that the government is responsible** for reducing plastic waste in Vanuatu.

- **Only the government has the authority and ability to make and enforce laws** that can do something about reducing plastic waste and this was proven in recent years with the banning of single use plastic
- A large number of citizens interviewed also state they **would like the government to take more stricter actions**, to ban other types of plastic coming into Vanuatu.
- Comments varied, from **banning plastic** packaging on consumable products sold such as convenience foods like lollies and dried fruits, to banning everything that is made from plastic from coming into Vanuatu; or putting high tariffs on plastics that come into Vanuatu as a deterrent and to raise money to fund anti-plastic initiatives.

"I think the government because they can make laws like they did with the one about shopping bags and food containers (plastic) and it has worked...businesses can't do anything because they are too small and they probably don't want to do anything."

SAMMY, 42, PORT VILA

"The government should make the rules about reducing plastic waste."

JOENA, 57, MANGALILIU

ARE THEY DOING ENOUGH?

The majority of citizens interviewed do not feel that **governments, businesses and citizens are doing enough** to tackle plastic waste.

Citizens interviewed are **most critical of the national government –** they believe that business are too small in Vanuatu to do anything and would not do anything unless they were forced to by the government, such as a law banning the sale and use of single use plastic.

However, in criticizing the government, many of the same citizens do say that the government is generally trying to do the right thing about plastic waste.

"Always more could be done, but I think the government is the one to do things and they have been trying hard, there is a lot of information about ways to reduce plastic that they government gives to people and they banned some plastic which has worked."

VEILLIE, 44, PORT VILA

"If the government made recycling places like in the questions you asked me, then that would help a lot, I am sure people would use them because I hear many people say we need to recycle plastic but we don't have a way to do it."

MARY, 27, LUGANVILLE

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

MAIN FINDINGS

1. The majority of citizens consider plastic packaging to be an issue in Vanuatu and there is a **high level of concern towards plastic waste. Plastic packaging and waste are seeing as an issue** particularly amongst younger citizens and citizens located in urban areas. Nevertheless, there is a small number of citizens who see benefits in the use of plastic packaging.

2. The majority of citizens interviewed have **noticed the level of plastic waste on the island has increased in recent years**, despite the ban on single use plastics. They believe is mainly due to **increased usage and lack of disposal and recycling facilities.**

3. **There are no recycling facilities/services known to be available** in Vanuatu apart from a glass bottle return scheme (Tusker) and recycling bins in some central urban areas which disappoints the vast majority of citizens interviewed. For the majority it is clear what can and cannot be recycled on the island.

MAIN FINDINGS

4. The majority of citizens think **it is not possible to buy plastic free alternatives** because plastic is imported from other countries with no locally-made plastic free options available.

5. **Modest actions and behaviors** are being undertaken by some citizens, mainly youngest adults. Some of this actions have been prompted by the ban on single use plastic. There is a **high willingness to adopt alternative behaviors**, although they believe they cannot do more due largely to **limitations out of their control**, namely insufficient facilities/services. The vast majority of interviewed claim a return scheme for plastic would be a great idea and they would use it. The majority of citizens interviewed feel comfortable to encourage other people they know to reduce their own plastic waste.

6. The **government is viewed as having the main responsibility** for reducing plastic waste. Citizens believe that there are two ways to help reduce plastic waste in Vanuatu, **improve infrastructure and services and further bans on plastic**. The ban imposed on single use plastic has a very high level of awareness and a very high level of approval by citizens.

CONTACT US

WRAP
Second Floor
Blenheim Court
19 George Street
Banbury, OX16 5BH
UK

Telephone:
+44 (0)1295 819900

wrap.org.uk

@WRAP_UK