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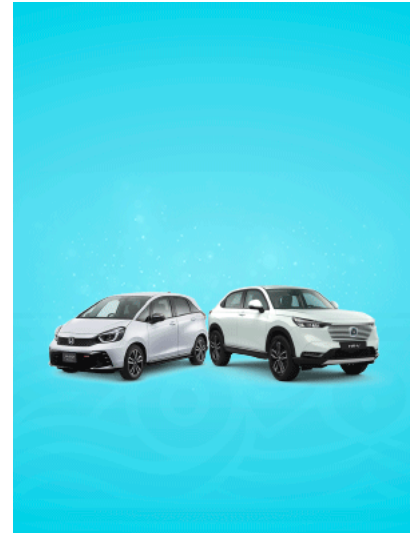
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Waste management: “Faa’a’s method is the best”



Tahiti, March 10, 2025 - The tāvana of Faa'a does not appreciate being told that his town is drowning in garbage since the collection trucks broke down. Bad publicity that is due to the "relentlessness" of the media according to him. Acknowledging "technical problems" and pointing out "incivility", Oscar Temaru puts things into perspective by stating that it is only "a small neighborhood" that is concerned but that the rest of the town is "clean".

He also invites other towns to follow the example of Faa'a's "method" which "has proven itself for 60 years".

"Be a little more fair play !" It is in these terms, but with a smile, that the tāvana of Faa'a welcomed the press this Monday morning in his office at the town hall. The reason: the front page headline of Friday's Tahiti Infos: "Faa'a is drowning in trash" which he would have preferred to see relegated to the background in favor of the story about the fallout from the Centaure nuclear test. For Oscar Temaru, "it's media harassment" because according to him, there is "only a small neighborhood" of Faa'a that is affected by this pile of bulky waste.

"When you arrive from Papeete, the Hilton is clean, Carrefour is clean, you continue Hotua'rea, it's magnificent, you have the Faa'a town hall, the most beautiful in Polynesia, you continue you have the airport it's clean... who takes care of all that? It's Faa'a! Go further and you have the Beachcomber, it's clean!" Pamatai Hills, Cité de l'air, it's clean," defends the mayor of the commune, who formally denies it when we tell him that in Pamatai Hills too, waste is piling up on the side of the road.

It's been several months now. The first explanation is the garbage collection trucks that are accumulating breakdowns and are struggling to be repaired quickly. "Of course, these are technical problems that we know about, it's modernity! Most of the trucks are electronic, with very little mechanics," explains Oscar Temaru. Electronic parts that have to be ordered and that

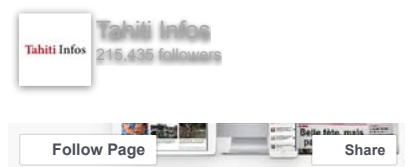
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sometimes – if not often – take several months to arrive. *"We also depend on importers for these parts ,"* he justifies, before also blaming the *"relief"* of the commune which tires these trucks even more. *"The trucks go up with tons of waste, and come back down ... there is very little flat, it wears them out ."*

Aggravated incivility

New, better-adapted trucks have been ordered. But it is difficult to obtain more details regarding their commissioning. *"Wait a little,"* replies the tāvana. *"In a few weeks ,"* adds its director general of services, Gilles Tarahu, who specifies that the obligation to go through calls for tender, even for renting a truck, slows things down even more. Oscar Temaru also wants to make the Polynesians face up to their responsibilities by denouncing *"the incivility of the population ."* Because it must be said that as soon as a small pile of garbage forms on the side of the road, it grows exponentially. And it is not only the citizens of Faa'a who are singled out, but also the inhabitants of other municipalities who take advantage of it to make their sad contribution by coming to get rid of their bulky waste.

When reminded that Faa'a does not sort its waste, Oscar Temaru retorts: *"It's the only municipality where there is no problem,"* citing as an example last week's fire at the CET (Technical Landfill Center) in Paihoro. *"It's been incompetence from the beginning. That's why Faa'a didn't join. Here in Faa'a, there is 80% earth and 20% waste that is compacted. And there are no fires in Faa'a because there is a method and a way of working ."*

The Mumuvai landfill pinned twice by the courts

Since the end of the 1970s, the collected waste has been transported to the Mumuvai *"controlled landfill"* located high up and set in a natural valley belonging to private owners. And Oscar Temaru, who still has the project of building an *" indoor golf course"* just above this landfill, would like to *"share"* this method with other municipalities in Polynesia.

However, the municipality has just been caught twice by the courts regarding this famous Mumuvai landfill installed without authorization. First by the administrative court last June, which demanded that it be brought up to standard. And in July by the administrative court of appeal, which ordered the municipality to pay 11 million francs to the beneficiaries of this land for illegal occupation. In this context, it is difficult to see the municipality of Faa'a as the best example to follow in terms of waste management... Questioned on this point, the mayor of Faa'a dodges the issue, explaining that *"the Faa'a method is the best ,"* and that it has *"proven itself"* for 60 years .

A bill that could be 5 times higher

Finally, money being obviously the sinews of war, the tāvana of Faa'a, supported by his right-hand man, Robert Maker, points out that the inhabitants of his commune only pay 20,000 francs per year for household waste and that it would cost them *"five times more"* if Faa'a were not autonomous in its management. Robert Maker even fears that the general budget of the commune will soon no longer be able to be used to fill the *"hole"* between the revenue generated by this annual contribution from the administrators and the treatment of waste which weighs for *"272 million francs"* .

To conclude, *"the solution is political"* , slams Oscar Temaru who remains true to himself, believing that independence is the lifeline. *"When we see what is happening, we have the impression of dealing with a country where it is the communes with the State, and the other country is French Polynesia. No, it's Mā'ohi Nui, one country ."*

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TAHITI-INFOS is a site published by FENUACOMMUNICATION Sarl with capital of 20,000,000 Fcfp, Manarava building - Shell RDO Faa'a - BP 40160 98 713 Papeete French Polynesia.
(+689) 40 43 49 49 - Publication director: Sarah MOUX - Manager: Albert MOUX
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