

# SPREP-Tok

Your monthly news highlights from the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

## MESSAGE FROM MR SEFANAIA NAWADRA, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF SPREP

Malo e lelei!

May was an exciting and busy month for us all as we worked as one crew on our journey to Pacific resiliency, one highlight being that SPREP signed three partnerships this month which showcases the value of SPREP as a partner of choice. As the world faces the triple planetary crises of the impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution - the International Biodiversity Day on 22nd May was a timely reminder that we must do more to protect our biodiversity. We can all make a difference! On that note we congratulate the Cook Islands as the Takitumu Conservation Area became the first in our Pacific Islands region to be officially recognised as an Other Effective area-based Conservation Measure. A special event was shared on the Cook Islands National Environment Service Facebook Page to commemorate this. We look forward to more milestone activities across our Pacific Islands to protect our biodiversity.

From us all at SPREP, we wish you a great month ahead.

Sefa



## FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SMALL ISLANDS DEVELOPING STATES OPENS IN ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

“We are gathered here not merely to reiterate our challenges but to demand and enact solutions,” stressed H.E Gaston Alphonso Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda as he opened the Fourth International Conference on Small Islands Developing States (SIDS4) today.

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## PALAU REVIVES WAR ON WEEDS FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION

Building the natural resilience of Palau is at the root of a War on Weeds programme in the island nation. Five species of high priority weeds will be the target, namely Praxelis (Praxelis clematidea), African tulip (Spathodea campanulata), water hyacinth (Eichhornia crassipes), chain of love (Antogonon leptopus) and the giant reed (Arundo donax).

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**Our vision** - A resilient Pacific environment sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures

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## 4TH PACIFIC OCEAN PACIFIC CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE A CATALYST FOR ACTION, SOLOMON ISLANDS TO HOST IN 2026

The 4th Pacific Ocean Pacific Climate Change Conference closed with a renewed commitment from delegates to step up local, regional and global action to counter climate change, to ensure future custodians of our lands and oceans are endowed with a healthy planet that allows them to thrive and prosper.

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## A NEW TURTLE AWARENESS COMIC IN TOK PISIN, THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SOUNDING LANGUAGE IN THE WORLD

Papua New Guinea's Tok Pisin has recently been officially recognised as the 'most beautiful sounding language in the World!' A study by the Journal of Psychological and Cognitive Sciences in 2024 found that people listening to languages from all over the globe chose Tok Pisin as the most beautiful.

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## VANUATU INTRODUCES INNOVATIVE CLIMATE RISK ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK FOR TOURISM SECTOR

In a groundbreaking move aimed at bolstering Vanuatu's tourism industry against climate risks, the government has unveiled a Rapid Climate Risk Assessment Framework and methodology. The pioneering framework, specifically tailored for the tourism sector, marks a significant step in proactively addressing the challenges posed by climate change to one of Vanuatu's key economic pillars.

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## CELEBRATING THE 200TH OCEAN AND CLIMATE OUTLOOK FORUM

Often the smallest beginnings can be the mightiest. In October 2007, when dial-up internet was still in use and the best mode of discussion across the Pacific was by telephone and facsimile and two-way radio! Pacific Met Teams began a monthly meeting to discuss weather and climate experienced, and what lay ahead for them all. This was originally known as the Online Climate Outlook Forum (OCOF).

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## MAGNIFYING PACIFIC ISSUES IN A GLOBAL DECLARATION ON WASTE

Pacific voices were given the lens to magnify their concerns when it comes to waste management on the global stage. Over a two-day period, Pacific Islands have undergone consultations for their input into the Pre-Zero Draft Declaration on the 3 R's – Reduce, Reuse and Recycle, and Circular Economy.

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## PACIFIC CLIMATE CHANGE ROUNDTABLE A PLATFORM TO ADVANCE CLIMATE CHANGE PRIORITIES, TO BE HELD BIENNIALLY FROM 2025

The Pacific Climate Change Roundtable (PCCR) is back to stay, and will be held biennially from 2025 to provide national climate change focal points with a platform to advance their national climate change priorities.

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## AMERICAN SAMOA AND SPREP INK SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES FOR POTENTIAL AREAS OF COLLABORATION TO ADDRESS THE TRIPLE PLANETARY CRISIS

As the world battles with the realities of the triple planetary crisis, the need for meaningful regional partnerships for a Resilient Pacific cannot be understated. On 3 May 2024, the Government of American Samoa, and the SPREP signed a Summary of outcomes for potential areas for collaboration.

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## OUR ISLANDS WELCOME ONGOING COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE WASTE ACTIONS IN THE PACIFIC

It was good news for Pacific waste management this week as the announcement of the next phase of the Committing to Sustainable Waste Actions in the Pacific (SWAP) Project was made, it will begin in January 2025. The SWAP, now in its final year having started in 2020, helped improve sanitation, environmental, social, and economic conditions in our Pacific Islands through proper waste management.

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## NAURU AND SPREP STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIP THROUGH DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK

The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) is helping to build a more resilient environment for Nauru by working with the Government to develop a Strategic Partnership Framework (SPF). A SPF is a high-level agreement that identifies a member country's environment and resilience priorities.

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## "THE ABAS HAS BEEN CHARTED, WE MUST ACT NOW" - TUVALU PRIME MINISTER AT SIDS4

As Tuvalu battles sea level rise, the greatest threat to its survival, the island nation also faces great challenges in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. This is a target that most likely won't be met until 2065, as forecasted in a UNDP regional human development report.

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## PRIME MINISTER OF THE KINGDOM OF TONGA, HON. HU'AKAVAMEILIKU SIAOSI SOVALENI VISITS SPREP

On 23 May 2024, the Secretariat were honoured to host the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Tonga, Honourable Hu'akavameiliku Siaosi Sovaleni at the Pacific Climate Change Centre. The special visit by the Prime Minister followed his keynote address at the 4th Pacific Ocean Pacific Climate Change Conference, a partnership between the National University of Samoa, Victoria University of Wellington New Zealand and SPREP.

The visit included a bilateral discussion with SPREP Director General Mr Sefanaia Nawadra, Deputy Director General Ms Easter Chu Shing and the Senior Leadership Team, followed by a talanoa session with SPREP staff.

The Prime Minister shared on the environmental priorities of Tonga, and also extended his gratitude to the Secretariat for its continued support and coordinated efforts in genuine partnership with the Kingdom, ensuring a resilient Pacific environment.