

REPORT

24th Meeting of Officials

Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

Apia, Samoa

17 - 19 September 2013



SPREP
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional
Environment Programme

PO Box 240, Apia, Samoa
E: sprep@sprep.org
T: +685 21929
F: +685 20231
W: www.sprep.org

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Opening

1. The twenty-fourth SPREP Meeting of Officials (24SM) was held in Apia, Samoa from 17 to 19 September 2013. American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, France, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, United Kingdom, United States of America, Vanuatu and Wallis and Futuna attended. The complete list of participants is attached as Annex I.

2. The opening ceremony was held on the evening of 16 September. The ceremony commenced with an opening prayer by Pastor Fa'afetai Fata followed by welcoming remarks by the Director General of SPREP. The Director General highlighted the work of SPREP in the past year and paid tribute to staff member, Lui Bell, who passed away in November 2012. A Lui Bell Scholarship Scheme for young marine scientists was being established in his memory. The Director General thanked the Government of Samoa for its continued and gracious hosting of the Secretariat. The Director General's speech is attached as Annex II.

3. The Meeting was officially opened by the Prime Minister of Samoa, the Honourable Tuilaepa Fatialofa Lupesoliai Aiono Sailele Malielegaoi. In his keynote address, the Prime Minister highlighted a number of successes and achievements and noted the increasing level of practical programmes and support provided by SPREP to Pacific island countries. He added that his government was pleased to have partnered with SPREP over the last 20 years. The Prime Minister's address to the Meeting is attached as Annex III.

4. The Minister for Environment of Samoa, Hon. Fa'amoetaulua Lealaiauloto Taito Ulaitino Dr Faale Tumaalii also made a statement at the commencement of the Meeting on Tuesday 17 September. The Minister stressed the

importance of integration and regional cooperation and urged the Meeting to reflect on ways to improve this collaboration. His statement is attached as Annex IV.

AGENDA ITEM 2: Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

5. In accordance with the "*Rules of Procedure of the SPREP Meeting*" (Rules 8.1 and 8.2), which call for alphabetical rotation of the Chair and Vice Chair for meetings hosted by the Secretariat, Nauru was appointed the Chair, and American Samoa the Vice-Chair, of the Twenty-fourth SPREP Meeting.

6. The Chair of the Twenty-third SPREP meeting, New Caledonia (Ms Caroline Machoro), thanked the Secretariat and its staff for enabling her to conduct her chairmanship in an effective and smooth manner. The outgoing Chair noted that significant success had been made under the Chair of New Caledonia, particularly with regard to increasing the engagement and collaboration of the territories in SPREP's work. She further outlined a number of achievements made over the past year. Ms Machoro also paid tribute to Lui Bell. Ms Machoro's speech is attached as Annex V.

7. The Director General acknowledged the generous hosting of the 23SM by New Caledonia and thanked Ms Machoro for her guidance to the Secretariat and its membership over the past year.

8. The representative of Nauru, Mr. Elkoga Gadabu, thanked Ms Machoro for her leadership and guidance to SPREP, thanked Members for their confidence in him and took the Chair.

9. The Meeting:

- **confirmed** the Representative of **Nauru** as **Chair**; and
- **confirmed** the Representative of **American Samoa** as **Vice-Chair**.

AGENDA ITEM 3: Adoption of Agenda and Working Procedures

10. The Meeting reviewed the agenda and agreed that the agenda item on Strategic Financial Issues be deferred to the second day of the meeting in order to accommodate a request by the USA as they were awaiting budget information from Washington. The Revised Agenda is attached as Annex VI.

11. Australia advised that given that the recently elected Government of Australia was yet to be sworn in, any decisions of substance or policy commitments would need to be confirmed by the incoming government.

12. Suggested hours of work for the Meeting were approved and are contained in the attached (24SM/WP.3/Att.1).

13. An open-ended Drafting Committee comprising American Samoa, Australia, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Samoa, Tokelau and United States, was appointed to assist with the preparation of the Report of the Meeting. The Vice-Chair would chair the Report Drafting Committee.

14. The Meeting:

- **considered** and **adopted** the Revised Agenda;
- **agreed** on hours of work; and
- **appointed** an open-ended Report Drafting Committee, comprising a core group of American Samoa, Australia, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, New Caledonia, Samoa, Tokelau and United States.

AGENDA ITEM 4: Action taken on decisions made by the 23rd SPREP Meeting

15. The Secretariat reported on actions taken on the decisions of the 23rd SPREP Meeting, and on action taken on suggestions made by individual Members during the

Meeting. The Secretariat further reported that the majority of actions had been achieved. Several items would be discussed in subsequent agenda items. The Secretariat advised that the Pan-Pacific Tsunami Awareness Week requested in 2012 had been discussed with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and Members and that a tsunami awareness month would be run in October, 2014.

16. New Zealand advised on a tsunami workshop hosted by New Zealand in Wellington (12-16 August, 2013), which focussed on new products and standard operating procedures. The workshop was attended by 15 countries.

17. The Meeting:

- **adopted** the Report.

AGENDA ITEM 5.1: Presentation of Annual report for 2012 and Director General's Overview of Progress since the Twenty-Third SPREP Meeting

18. The Director General presented the 2012 SPREP Annual Report to Members and provided an overview report on progress since the 2012 SPREP Meeting.

19. He highlighted the Secretariat's change management process, noting that this had increased the level of practical and tangible support to SPREP Pacific Island Members, while also improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the Secretariat.

20. The Directory General also highlighted the following points:

- ✓ increasing SPREP support to Pacific Island countries and territories during the past year;
- ✓ doubling SPREP's direct financial and technical support for member countries over the 2010-2012 period;

- ✓ increasing the SPREP budget from USD7.6 million in 2009 to USD18.8 million in 2013. It was also noted that over this period, salary costs as a percentage of the total SPREP budget had dropped from 49% in 2009 to 27% in 2013. The major increase in the funding for SPREP had thus been mostly allocated to practical programmes in Pacific Island countries and territories; and
- ✓ SPREP has responded clearly and effectively to the directions from Members, including through implementing the majority of decisions from the 2012 SPREP meeting and implementing all recommendations from the 2008 Independent Corporate Review.

21. Niue commended the Secretariat on the annex detailing expenditure allocations to each Member and noted this information provides assurance that support and services are being delivered to Members. Similarly, Niue commended the table on member contributions adding that it provides the basis for favourable consideration of the membership contribution paper to be discussed later in the meeting.

22. The Director General stated that the Secretariat had made significant efforts to improve the transparency and accountability of its operations and these appendices were part of this effort. He further noted that the funding disbursements did not represent all of the Secretariat's support to Members and that staff time and other non-financial support was not captured in the Overview Report and that these would represent some two thirds of the total support provided.

23. France commended the Secretariat's work over 2012 and 2013 and, in particular, its work on climate change. The representative advised that climate change is a major issue for French Territories and France would actively support the Secretariat in its climate change activities.

24. Samoa advised that waste management is a priority issue for Samoa and acknowledged and welcomed the Secretariat's support in this area. Samoa also acknowledged Secretariat support in developing its third State of the Environment report and national sector plan. Samoa further noted that a priority area for Secretariat support to Samoa is on the revision and update of the National Environmental Management Strategy (NEMS).

25. New Caledonia cautioned that increasing the budget should not be viewed as an end in itself but rather the focus should be on delivery of quality and sustainable results. New Caledonia also noted that French Territories had not received as much financial support as other Members. SPREP support could be of a non-financial nature.

26. French Polynesia congratulated the Secretariat for its excellent support on waste management and invasive species and on recruiting a liaison officer for the French-speaking territories. The representative encouraged the Secretariat to further build on its support to French Polynesia, especially in the area of climate change.

27. The United Kingdom commended the Secretariat on the Overview Report and its work over 2012 - 2013. The representative advised that United Kingdom will continue to be an advocate for SPREP in the European Union where appropriate. The United Kingdom further indicated interest in supporting the Secretariat on activities relating to climate change negotiations in particular.

28. Solomon Islands acknowledged the assistance provided by the Secretariat in climate change and waste management. The representative advised that a priority area for technical assistance is in environmental monitoring and reporting. Solomon Islands also expressed that it would like to see more Secretariat presence in Solomon Islands,

perhaps as in-country positions attached to projects.

29. The Meeting:

- **noted** the report.

AGENDA ITEM 5.2: Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report (PMER) on the 2012 Work Programme and Budget

30. In accordance with the SPREP Meeting Rules of Procedure, the Secretariat presented its Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report (PMER), which serves as a review by the Secretariat of its progress in implementing the SPREP work programme. The Secretariat noted that this was the first time it was reporting on the SPREP Strategic Plan 2011 - 2015. The 2012 PMER was also presented on the basis of the new organisational structure which reflects the priorities of the Strategic Plan. The Secretariat further expressed the hope that, with donor support and availability of funding in the future, this internal assessment would be supplemented with independent evaluations of aspects of SPREP's work on a rolling basis.

31. Australia, Fiji, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue and United States commended the Secretariat for the detailed report.

32. United States noted SPREP's good work in increasing its activities despite the static core budget. The representative noted appreciation for the marine species conservation team and the turtle database officer. He requested that the Secretariat provide a summary report on the status of issued turtle tags on a regular basis, observing that the longer that SPREP goes without receiving data from tags, the higher the probability of losing that data. The Director General advised that the turtle monitoring was a long running programme, and that the passing of Lui Bell had left a gap, however a new Advisor had been recruited and would take up the position shortly. The

Secretariat also undertook to follow up on the suggestion of reporting on turtle tags.

33. United States further expressed interest in the status of funding for PI-GOOS (Pacific Island Global Ocean Observing System) and PI-GCOS (Pacific Island Global Climate Observing System), noting the funding gap and also commended the establishment of the Pacific Meteorological Desk. The Secretariat clarified that the PI-GOOS had now been moved to core funding and that the NOAA funds could now be used for programmatic activities. The position was based within the Pacific Meteorological Desk, and the capacity of this programme had increased from one person four years ago to five now.

34. United States referred to a point in the 2012 report which suggests non-delivery of NOAA funding of USD319,000. The representative reminded the meeting that United States had announced at the 23SM that this funding was not available. The Secretariat corrected this misperception.

35. Nauru requested further information on whether projects were on track or not. The representative also noted that it would be valuable to have the report highlight issues and constraints related to projects.

36. Fiji expressed pleasure at being able to host the 9th Pacific Nature Conservation Conference from 2 to 6 December 2013 and urged Members, regional partners, development partners and civil societies to attend.

37. New Zealand noted that monitoring and evaluation had progressed to reporting against the Strategic Plan and encouraged the Secretariat to incorporate higher level outcomes reporting in addition to outputs. New Zealand also commended the Secretariat on its work in identifying partnerships to secure support for Members.

38. Niue requested information on how the UNDP Ridge to Reef Programme would be implemented with SPREP, observing that if the PACC model were to be followed, this would mean a greater amount of work for the Secretariat. The Secretariat advised that it was committed to providing support on Ridge to Reef to Members, but noted that this would be determined by individual member countries.

39. Australia noted that the report could be a model for other regional organisations and observed that it was moving towards reporting based on both outcomes and outputs. Australia commended SPREP on its role in combining Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management in the Joint Roadmap process and also expressed appreciation of the ongoing work on invasive species gap analysis and the success of the Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN).

40. The Meeting:

- **adopted** the report.

AGENDA ITEM 5.3: Audited Annual Accounts for 2012

41. In accordance with Financial Regulation 27(e), the Secretariat presented its Audited Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2012, noting that these were prepared in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

42. The Secretariat advised that the auditors had provided an unqualified opinion of the Secretariat's financial operations for 2012.

43. United States commented that the audited report followed best practice, requesting that in the future the review team be exclusively external experts.

44. The Director General clarified that there were two auditing processes to be

reported on: the audited accounts, which are reviewed by a solely external committee; and the internal audit function, which reports to a combined board of internal and external members, to be addressed in a later agenda item.

45. Niue acknowledged the financial report and moved that it be adopted.

46. Tonga commented that having regional projects implemented at a national level resulted in some real issues, however the representative noted that regional projects implemented by the Secretariat were not currently experiencing these challenges.

47. The Meeting:

- **adopted** the audited Financial Statements and Auditors' Report for 2012.

AGENDA ITEM 6.1: Strengthening Regional Linkages Update

48. The Secretariat advised on progress on Strengthening Regional Linkages, following the decision of the 23SM in 2012 that recommended the placement of SPREP contracted sub-regional Desk Officers in Federated States of Micronesia and Republic of the Marshall Islands, and to explore options with Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) to enhance coordination and delivery of services to South West Pacific Members.

49. Host country agreements and Desk Officer Terms of Reference had been developed and recruitment processes were underway in RMI and FSM.

50. The Secretariat further advised that the Director General had met with the MSG Director General and his team in March, 2013 and it was agreed to strengthen linkages between SPREP and MSG particularly focused

on climate change and environment in Melanesian countries. The MoU will be signed in December, 2013 during the 9th Nature Conservation Conference.

51. The Secretariat highlighted that funding for the desk officer positions was provided through savings within the core budget and advised that in the future alternative funding support would be necessary to sustain these positions.

52. FSM and RMI commended the Secretariat for its efforts to advance the positions in both countries and FSM advised that they were ready to sign off on the host government agreements.

53. Palau acknowledged that they had not been involved in the last three SPREP meetings but sought consideration of the Meeting to extend Palau the same support to enable Palau to be included in this trial of regional positions.

54. Solomon Islands and Vanuatu commended the Secretariat for progressing negotiations with the Melanesian Spearhead Group. Solomon Islands commended the EbA Choiseul Province project progress and recommended that the Secretariat consider placing a position in Solomon Islands to work on this project.

55. Nauru sought clarification from the Secretariat on whether the desk officers' mandate was national or sub-regional. The Secretariat clarified that these were sub-regional roles and would be closely supported from the SPREP main office.

56. New Caledonia welcomed the placement of the French Government seconded position to SPREP and noted that this assistance should be integrated across all SPREP divisions throughout all French speaking countries and territories in the Pacific in the same spirit of strengthening regional linkages. The representative also echoed Nauru's comments

and stated that the desk officer positions must not be restricted to one country and it should be clearly stated that these positions would have sub-regional mandates.

57. France clarified that the French Government supported the position of an advisor based at SPREP with the intention that the incumbent would work across all activities within SPREP.

58. The Secretariat stressed that the desk officer positions were to be implemented as a trial and that a cost benefit analysis would be provided to Members at the next meeting.

59. The Meeting:

- **noted** the developments in relation to the placement of technical officers in FSM and RMI, and the respective host agreements to be finalised with the two Member governments;
- **directed** the Secretariat to continue strengthening its partnership mechanisms with the MSG to enhance coordination and delivery of services; and
- **directed** the Secretariat to review the effectiveness of the Desk Officers arrangement, including a cost benefit analysis for consideration by the 2014 SPREP Meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 6.2: Accessing Multilateral Financing - Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Adaptation Fund (AF) Accreditation

60. The Secretariat provided an update on the progress made in its efforts to become a Regional Implementing Entity (RIE) under the Adaptation Fund (AF) and a Project Agency under the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The Secretariat advised that, although the GEF and AF processes are separate, there are many

common issues, hence the progress report being combined in one paper.

61. On the **Adaptation Fund**, the Secretariat reported on the various institutional level improvements made in order to satisfy the accreditation criteria. These included establishing an Internal Audit function within the Secretariat and the introduction of a comprehensive mechanism for monitoring and evaluation of project activities. Reforms to SPREP's policies and procedures to improve effectiveness and transparency had also been undertaken. The Secretariat had submitted further documents evidencing this progress which, as at July, 2013, was under consideration by the Accreditation Panel.

62. The Secretariat further advised that it had been comprehensively documenting the accreditation process and planned to make the relevant information available for Members as soon as possible so as to assist interested Members, which are applying to become National Implementing Agencies.

63. On pursuing **accreditation as a GEF Project Agency** under the GEF's *Expanding the GEF Constituency* Initiative, the Secretariat advised that the core objective of SPREP gaining Project Agency status was to increase the funding for Pacific Island Countries from GEF and provide Members with an alternative, regionally owned and accountable institution to implement GEF projects.

64. The Secretariat provided details of the process and advised that a Value Added Review (VAR) of SPREP's completed application (conducted by the GEF) had identified particular areas of comparative advantage and strength at SPREP but it had also noted that progress was required in some areas, including in project design and development, monitoring and evaluation, fiduciary standards and environmental and social safeguards.

65. In order to address these issues, the GEF Secretariat invited SPREP to develop a Medium Sized Project. A Project Identification Form (PIF) was developed and cleared by UNDP GEF on 11th April 2013 and the Project Document was now being developed in close collaboration with partners, including UNDP-GEF and the UNEP Frankfurt School Collaborating Centre for Climate and Sustainable Energy Finance. On completion, the Project Document will be submitted directly to the GEF CEO.

66. The Secretariat advised that one of the key aims of the project was to enable SPREP to become an accredited GEF Project Agency by the time GEF 6 is operational.

67. Niue acknowledged the progress made by the Secretariat toward the goal of accreditation for both the GEF and Adaptation Fund. The representative thanked SPREP and UNDP for their combined assistance in completing the PIF for GEF 5 for Niue. He highlighted the internal capacity challenge in light of the magnitude of resources required to discharge and deliver projects to their people. Niue further acknowledged the useful collaboration between SPREP and UNDP as evident in the PACC and PACC+ projects and requested that this collaboration and partnership continue to support countries with the Ridge to Reef programme.

68. France commended SPREP on its progress in this area and suggested an amendment to the recommendations. This was subsequently agreed, noting a reservation by Australia.

69. Republic of the Marshall Islands supported the recommendations as revised and reported that they would express their support for SPREPs application when meeting with the GEF CEO.

70. The Meeting:
- **noted** the progress made on the Adaptation Fund and GEF Accreditations and encouraged the work to be continued as soon as possible;
 - **encouraged** Members of SPREP, who are also Members of the GEF and the AF, to strongly support the accreditation application of SPREP to these agencies to become a GEF Project Agency and noting that in regards to GEF this requires a second accreditation phase;
 - **encouraged** interested donors and partners to consider supporting the Accreditation process at SPREP, through financing and secondments; and
 - **noted** Australia's reservation on the second recommendation.

AGENDA ITEM 6.3: GEF Programmatic issues - (GEF 6, Ridge to Reef programme, internal coordination issues)

71. An update was provided on the use of GEF 5 and STAR allocations for the Ridge to Reef Programme for the Pacific Islands noting that, in response to the delays in accessing the GEF 5 resources by countries, the Ridge to Reef Umbrella Programme was proposed as a viable platform to help SPREP member countries lock in their STAR and other GEF funding windows before the end of GEF 5 cycle in June 2014.

72. The Secretariat advised that the Ridge to Reef Programme had effectively replaced the GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability (GPAS under GEF 4) and noted that all 14 SPREP Member countries eligible for GEF funds were now participating in the Ridge to Reef Programme either through its regional IWRM

component, national Ridge to Reef projects or both.

73. The GEF Constituency Meeting for the Pacific Islands held in Sydney, Australia noted multiple requests from SPREP Member countries to engage the Secretariat for supporting the development of their Project Identification Forms (PIF) and Project Preparation Grant (PPG) in collaboration with their preferred GEF Implementing Agency (IA).

74. The Secretariat had prepared its 'support package' that identifies co-financing leverage as well as making technical staff available to support the development of the country ridge to reef project document, in addition to technical backstopping during the implementation of activities.

75. New Caledonia stated that while as territories they do not have access to GEF funding, there are other funding sources such as those available from the European Union, which funds programmes such as INTEGRE in Wallis and Futuna, French Polynesia, New Caledonia and Pitcairn and the RESCCUE programme, financed by the AFD, in four countries, Fiji, Vanuatu, New Caledonia and French Polynesia. The delegate highlighted the importance of establishing a process for sharing information amongst similar programmes that are not necessarily funded through GEF to avoid repetition and duplication.

76. New Zealand supported the recommendations and the representative reported that New Zealand had worked hard to provide support in the GEF Council for PICs needs and offered to provide further assistance to access GEF funding where needed.

77. Fiji, Kiribati and Tonga acknowledged SPREP GEF assistance with the ridge to reef programme.

78. Fiji reported on the challenges encountered in carrying out a consultative process for the ridge to reef programme and stressed that this approach would require engagement of multiple stakeholders. The delegate also emphasised the need to ensure integration and linkages with national mechanisms to ensure country capacities are addressed.

79. Tonga requested SPREP's assistance to access GEF Operational Support Funding for capacity development. The representative also noted that Tonga's GEF5 was split between UNDP and FAO.

80. The Secretariat advised that the respective Implementing Agencies (IA) were responsible for providing support to countries on GEF project development. On the issue of application for focal points for GEF funding the Secretariat advised that forms had been circulated.

81. In response to a query from Samoa, the Secretariat clarified that "locked in" referred to all STAR resources that had been allocated to set priorities.

82. Kiribati commended SPREP's support to Kiribati and asked for continued support for PIF and PPG national prioritisation process. The representative also noted cross-cutting issues requiring SPREP support and echoed Tonga's request in asking SPREP's support to explore other funding sources.

83. The Secretariat advised of the upcoming GEF Expanded Constituency Meeting in Apia in October for countries to raise funding support for the National Prioritisation Formulation Exercise for GEF 6.

84. The Meeting:

- **noted** that the Ridge to Reef Umbrella Programme has locked in some SPREP Member countries' GEF 5 resources;

- **noted** that the Secretariat will closely follow the replenishment discussions and communicate with SPREP Member countries who are eligible to access GEF funds on the new GEF 6 programme cycle and allocation of resources; and

- **noted** that the Secretariat will continue to provide key support to its Member countries in the preparation of new projects for GEF 6 programming.

AGENDA ITEM 6.4: Review of SPREP, including review of the SPREP Strategic Plan

85. The Secretariat advised that two reviews were due in 2014. These are a review of SPREP, focused on developments since the independent corporate review, and a mid-term consultative review of the Strategic Plan. In view of the costs and inter-linkages between the two reviews, the Secretariat proposed that both reviews be incorporated and implemented as one.

86. The Secretariat advised that the budget for the combined review was estimated at USD160,000. The Secretariat had earmarked USD100,000 for this review in the 2014 budget and additional support was being sought.

87. Australia advised that they had provided two secondments to SPREP to enhance corporate capacity of SPREP and were keen to see a review of the effectiveness of the new structure. The representative also expressed support for both reviews to be carried out as one. However, Australia observed that the terms of reference for the review needed more detail given the importance of this review and suggested a 'Friends of the Chair' group to review the Terms of Reference. The representative sought clarification on the membership of the review team and recommended that the team members should possess organisational,

strategic planning and technical skills. The representative also noted that Australia would actively participate in the review process.

88. France supported linking both reviews in order to minimise costs. However, the representative observed that a considerable amount of money had previously been spent on reviews and he stressed that while approving the review, France would not be in a position to provide further resources to the proposed process.

89. Cook Islands, Fiji, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Samoa and United States offered their support by way of joining the Friends of the Chair group to consider the scope of the review. Samoa expressed further support for the recommendation from the Secretariat and welcomed the suggestion of a cost effective approach to undertaking the review.

90. Tonga noted that considerable time and cost had already been spent on this process and cautioned against establishing additional processes unnecessarily.

91. The friends of the chair group reported on its recommendations. The group found that while there would be savings in combining the two reviews, based on cost of the previous reviews, it was considered that the amount of USD200,000 (and not USD100,000) should be allocated to this work. Since this was core business of the Secretariat, the group further advised that this should come from the organisation's core budget.

92. The Meeting:

- **approved** the implementation of the combined 2nd Independent Corporate Review of SPREP and the mid-term review of the SPREP 2011 - 2015 Strategic Plan in 2014;
- **approved** the amended proposed scope of the reviews (Annex VII);

- **directed** the Secretariat to ensure the reviews are considered by the 2014 SPREP Meeting; and
- **agreed** that the budget of USD200,000 for the review be sourced from the core budget, given that these activities are core business of SPREP.

AGENDA ITEM 6.5: Audit Committee Report

93. The Secretariat reported on activities of the Audit Committee over the period July 2012 to June 2013 and advised that SPREP had established its Internal Audit Unit with the recruitment of the Internal Auditor in July 2012. The establishment of this position aimed to improve governance of the Secretariat and was also in response to issues raised by the EU assessment in 2011 and by the Accreditation Fund Panel. The Chair of the Audit Committee, Tagaloa Fa'afouina Su'a, provided the meeting with background on the Audit Committee and its activities. These are also outlined in WP.6.5.

94. United States commended the Secretariat for establishing the Audit Committee, which is considered a best practice in corporate governance. The representative further expressed the view that he would prefer greater external representation on the committee.

95. New Zealand, as an external Committee Member, commented that internal members served as advisors on key decisions made by the external members. The representative welcomed additional external representation on the Committee.

96. Tonga supported the United States intervention and added that the Audit Committee members should be representative of all the SPREP members.

97. Samoa noted with appreciation, the report of the committee and supported the Secretariat's recommendations. He further supported the independence of the Audit Committee going forward.

98. The Secretariat acknowledged the work of the Chair and members of the Audit Committee and also clarified that the New Zealand representative on the Committee represents metropolitan member states, and the Tokelau representative represents small island member states.

99. Solomon Islands expressed hope that this exercise would expand external representation but that it would not result in additional costs.

100. The Secretariat advised that cost was an important consideration as this would need to be met from the core budget. It was suggested that additional interested volunteers be appointed in an effort to minimise cost.

101. The Meeting:

- **noted** the activities performed by the Audit Committee during the 2012-2013 period; and
- **requested** the Internal Audit Committee to consider appointing additional independent members that are in a position to be involved.

AGENDA ITEM 6.6: Preparations for the Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) Conference 2014

102. The Secretariat advised the Meeting on preparations for the 2014 SIDS Conference to be held in Samoa from 1 to 4 September, 2014 preceded by a week of preparatory activities and subsidiary meetings from 25 to 29 August. The theme proposed by Samoa for the meeting is "The Sustainable Development of SIDS through Genuine and Durable Partnerships".

103. The Secretariat advised that the UN General Assembly had also adopted a decision to declare 2014 the "International Year of SIDS." This conference will provide input into the ongoing development of sustainable development goals (SDGs) and the post-2015 development agenda.

104. The Secretariat outlined the arrangements by CROP and UN Agencies to support Pacific Island Countries in formulating their national and regional positions for the SIDS Conference 2014. The main support mechanisms are the Sustainable Development Working Group (chaired by PIFS and SPREP) and a regional task force.

105. The Secretariat observed that the agenda for the Pacific Preparatory Meeting was largely managed by Pacific SIDS Missions in New York and that the Meeting was, for the most part, run as a closed meeting for States only. The territories (American Samoa, New Caledonia and Tokelau) were excluded from some of the closed sessions but were invited to be part of the country delegations and later allowed to attend in their own right.

106. CROP and UN agencies were given opportunity to participate in parallel sessions with other development partners but the objectives of these sessions were not clear. There was no finalised outcomes statement from the Meeting although mechanisms were agreed for it to be finalised out of session.

107. The Secretariat observed that the running of the Nadi Preparatory Meeting was a departure from how the preparatory meetings for Rio+20, WSSD, UNCED and the two previous SIDS conferences were run. In the past the Pacific had adopted an open engagement with all partners, in particular the CROP agencies, which are viewed as an extension of the Member states, providing technical, policy and regional advice and support for implementation.

108. Given this situation where SPREP and other CROP agencies may not be able to be directly involved with consultations through the continuing preparatory process and also at the Conference itself, the Secretariat proposed modalities for SPREP engagement in order to provide the necessary support to Members.

109. Niue sought clarification from SPREP on timing of the 25th SPREP meeting to avoid conflict in resources dedicated to the SIDS meeting held around the same time. The Secretariat noted that, in addition to the SIDS, several meetings were planned for that time next year and recommended that this issue be discussed under agenda item 15.

110. United States agreed with Niue on the possible issue of dates. The representative expressed his country's understanding of the importance of the SIDS conference. He observed that both the previous Barbados and Mauritius reports were very broad and hoped SIDS would focus on key outcomes. The Secretariat advised that Samoa, as host, desired action oriented initiatives based on partnerships, not an open ended wish list.

111. Samoa expressed appreciation for the paper and noted that in the past, there had been challenges with external agencies taking the lead without appropriate direction on technical issues. However Samoa would aim to be as inclusive as possible in planning the SIDS meeting and the representative added that Samoa had appointed a National Coordinator for the meeting. Samoa also expressed appreciation to bilateral partners in planning the conference and invited all Members and partner agencies to the event.

112. New Zealand noted support for SPREP's proposed modalities and expressed support for Samoa's theme of building partnerships. New Zealand stated its offer to assist Samoa in managing some of the logistical challenges presented by this event. New Zealand also

noted it was providing support to Nauru in its role as Chair of AOSIS in the lead up to the SIDS event.

113. New Caledonia noted its support of the recommendations and expressed hope that rules regarding country and territory participation would be made clear to avoid the type of confusion as was seen in the preparatory meeting in Fiji.

114. The Meeting:

- **noted** the progress with the preparatory process for SIDS Conference 2014; and
- **approved** SPREP's proposed engagement modalities for the conference.

AGENDA ITEM 6.7: Proposal: Pacific Climate Change Centre

115. The Secretariat provided an update on a proposal to JICA for Grant Aid to build the Pacific Climate Change Centre (PCCC). A detailed proposal had been submitted to the Japanese Government through Samoa's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 13th June 2013. A decision on the outcome of the proposal was expected to be taken when the next round of applications is considered by the Government of Japan in October 2013.

116. United States indicated support for the proposal however the representative noted the need to work with SPREP's existing partners to leverage assistance to support SPREP's Climate Change programme for the benefit of Members. United States queried whether the building proposal was in order to address the issue of office space for the Secretariat. The representative observed the need for the Pacific Region to be serviced with information to assist with building resilience to climate change and noted that building the centre was

just a first step and that SPREP would need to work with other partners to identify the roles of the centre. United States requested more detailed information on the building proposal and how the centre would work with other organisations that are providing similar type of climate change assistance, including links with the World Meteorological Organization. The representative advised that the concept currently on the table was not sufficient for the United States to make an informed opinion.

117. Australia echoed the comments of the United States and noted interest in how the centre would enhance coordination of climate change programmes in the region. The representative also suggested that the Secretariat provide an assessment on the impact of the proposed centre's maintenance costs on SPREP's budget. She further requested advice on the expected timeframe for the construction. The representative added that Australia would need to reserve its position on the centre as this was an ongoing commitment with associated costs and Australian support would need to be confirmed by the incoming Australian Government. She requested that the proposal be made available to Members.

118. Niue associated itself with comments of United States and Australia regarding the question on the functions of the proposed centre. The delegate requested information on the types of climate change related programmes that the centre would bring and asked how it would work in relation to other CROP agencies.

119. Fiji advised that the current proposal had insufficient information for a project of this magnitude and suggested deferring this to the mid-term review of the strategic plan.

120. Federated States of Micronesia, France, French Polynesia, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu supported the proposed centre. It was noted that the concept had been discussed and agreed at the 23SM and questioning the

decision was pointless. The point was also made that the centre was endorsed at the recent Forum Island Leaders' meeting in the Republic of the Marshall Islands. The representative of French Polynesia added that his country would like to participate in all climate change programmes and benefit from the centre. The representative of France added that the current concern was whether or not the Government of Japan would agree to funding the centre.

121. The Secretariat advised that it would share the full proposal with Members via email and stressed that the proposed centre would not change the SPREP programme in that it would not result in adding new functions or any additions to the existing climate change services of SPREP to Members. The proposed centre would serve to enhance effective delivery of climate change services to Members and this would be done in collaboration with others such as the CROP executive group and Working Arm on Climate Change (WACC).

122. The Secretariat also highlighted that the centre would be based around partnerships which included strengthening existing partnerships with other regional agencies and the WMO, the regional office of which is hosted in SPREP. The development of the new centre would provide the opportunity to build outreach with other potential partners. Training and the sharing of science, IPCC reports and modeling were also envisaged through the centre.

123. In response to a question from Nauru, the Secretariat clarified that the proposal to the Government of Japan was essentially for a building.

124. The Meeting:

- **noted** the progress made on the application to the Government of Japan;

- **requested** the Secretariat to provide further information relating to ongoing operational and maintenance costs of the centre, once advice is received from the Government of Japan; and
- **noted** Australia's reservation on this recommendation.

AGENDA ITEM 7.1: Report on Members' Contributions

125. In accordance with the Financial Regulations, the Secretariat submitted its report of Members' contributions for 2012 and the status of Members' contributions received in 2013 (up to 31st July).

126. A total of USD880,733 was received by the Secretariat in 2012 leaving a balance of USD532,961 of unpaid contributions as at 31 December 2012.

127. Contributions due for 2013 were USD1,069,774 and as at 31st July, the Secretariat had received USD874,803 in respect of the 2013 contributions, and prior years' unpaid contributions. The total unpaid contributions as at 31 July 2013 was USD727,928.

128. United States reminded the Meeting that SPREP has no membership fees and that the SPREP Treaty notes that SPREP will be funded by voluntary contributions. Therefore there should be no reference to "outstanding contributions". The representative reiterated the importance of these voluntary contributions and informed the Meeting that its contribution would be paid in full with an additional USD35,000 this year. He stressed that this extra contribution did not set a precedent and requested that the documents prepared reflect the accurate contributions. SPREP should not have the expectation that

these additional funds would be available in the next year.

129. Cook Islands, New Caledonia, Niue and Vanuatu advised that their respective contributions would be paid accordingly.

130. Cook Islands urged Members to consider paying their unpaid contributions and reminded the Meeting that Members owned the Secretariat and received significant benefits as a result of the organisation and its staff.

131. Nauru stated that although it was not in a position to pay its contributions in full, it was committed to making payments by way of installments and noted that the Government of Nauru was in discussions with the Secretariat regarding payment of the outstanding contributions.

132. New Zealand observed that it was pleasing to see the number of countries committed to SPREP and suggested that the Director General write to countries that had not attended the last five SPREP meetings or not paid contributions in the last five years to seek confirmation that they wish to retain their Membership of SPREP.

133. Samoa reminded the Meeting that financial contributions were not new as most countries are also Members of multilateral agreements that also require yearly membership contributions.

134. United Kingdom sought clarification regarding the annex on the balance of payment.

135. France noted that the issue of contributions continued to be an endless problem. The representative observed that while membership contributions were important, the outstanding amounts were in fact, an individual and not a collective Member problem. Therefore individual Members needed to make the commitment to contributions.

136. United States raised the issue of Guam no longer being a member of SPREP, yet its contributions continued to be reflected in the documentation. The Secretariat advised that United States, as the SPREP Treaty signatory, would need to give authorisation for Guam's withdrawal. This approval had been recently received and the Secretariat would follow up with Guam to confirm its withdrawal.

137. The Meeting:

- **agreed to** collectively and individually pay current and outstanding contributions in full in 2013, in due course.

AGENDA ITEM 7.2: Increase in Membership Contributions

138. In response to a request from the 2012 SPREP Meeting, the Secretariat presented a paper to provide justification for an increase in membership contributions.

139. The Director General stressed the need for Members to seriously consider the current level of membership contributions, observing that since 2003, the time of the previous increase, significant changes had occurred in SPREP's operating environment.

140. WP 7.2 and its attachment provide details of the issues raised. The paper highlighted the reliance of SPREP's core funding on membership contributions and noted that core funds comprise all the necessary functions that keep the organisation operational. The burden on core funds has increased as the organisation's level of programmatic funding increases.

141. The Secretariat further highlighted that non-funded, extra-budgetary requests by Members, such as the work in Strengthening Regional Linkages, and unforeseen expenses such as medical evacuations are also met from

the core reserve, which in recent times had decreased significantly.

142. The Secretariat outlined various measures it had put in place to address these increases, however despite these efforts, there remained a need for additional funds.

143. Members acknowledged measures to balance the budget and the need to address the Secretariat's growing financial needs. The substantial growth of SPREP's work programme was also recognised. There was no consensus however, regarding agreement to increase membership contributions by 22 per cent.

144. France, French Polynesia, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, United Kingdom, United States and Vanuatu advised that they were not in positions to take on the proposed increase in member contributions.

145. Cooks Islands and Nauru supported the proposal to increase membership contributions. Federated States of Micronesia, while supporting the proposed increase, indicated that due to the budgetary situation in the country it would be difficult to commit to the full 22% increase. Australia, acknowledged the need for an increase, but advised that any Australian support for an increased financial commitment would need to be confirmed by the incoming government. Fiji asked to reserve their position on this agenda item.

146. Niue recommended investigating the possibility of sharing a portion of Implementing Agency funds with SPREP since the Secretariat played a major role in supporting countries with project implementation and reporting.

147. United States encouraged the Secretariat to amend its budget to reflect existing and not desired/projected contributions, noting that some hard decisions may be needed.

148. France observed that member contributions were not only in cash but also included secondments and funding for projects. France further noted that around 16 percent of all European Funds to the Pacific came from France.

149. Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, New Caledonia stressed that SPREP was their organisation and observed that paying membership contributions was indicative of ownership and support. The Federated States of Micronesia noted that there had not been an increase in SPREP member contributions in the past 10 years.

150. New Caledonia suggested a "two-tiered" approach whereby there would be a compulsory contribution to address the base needs and a voluntary contribution where those Members who are able, can provide additional funds.

151. Nauru mentioned that it would be important to note the cumulative effect on national budgets of other CROP organisation increases.

152. New Zealand, United Kingdom and Solomon Islands suggested a phased approach to increasing member contributions.

153. Samoa urged the Secretariat to adopt a more vigilant approach to collect outstanding contributions from Members.

154. Palau proposed an incentive approach or reward for countries that do good work.

155. The Secretariat advised that membership contributions had, in general, improved over the past four years and that in fact, the outstanding fees from Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam and Nauru accounted for 60 percent of total outstanding member contributions.

156. The Secretariat stressed that it was committed to delivering more services but that there were budget implications for this. Other CROP organisations were in a better position to deliver their core services due to increases in their budget.

157. On the idea of sharing implementing agency fees, the Secretariat advised that it was not receiving its full administration fee for the PACC and PIGGAREP projects. On the phased approach proposed by New Zealand, the Secretariat noted that a five percent increase was suggested by some members six years ago and that this was not approved.

158. The Secretariat also clarified that Members had approved use of SPREP's two million dollar reserve to balance the budget each year. As of December 2012, USD600,000 remains in the reserve.

159. The Meeting discussed the establishment of a working group to deliberate inter-sessionally on this issue and report back to the 2014 SPREP meeting. New Zealand urged that the Membership move quickly to address the issue (within the next 3 months) so that ideas could be discussed in national capitals well before the next SPREP meeting.

160. A friends of the chair group comprising Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, France, Kiribati, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Samoa, United Kingdom and United States was established to move the discussion forward.

161. New Zealand, as Chair of the friends of the chair group, reported back to the Meeting on its recommendations. The group stated that the work of the proposed Working Group should be linked to the independent corporate review of SPREP and should take into account relevant experiences of other CROP agencies with regard to increasing membership contributions and managing outstanding contributions.

162. Niue advised that his government had approved increase in their contributions but was yet to confirm if that meant 2013 or 2014.

163. United States requested that Members look at a variety of ways to increase core funding looking beyond just the membership contributions.

164. Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, France, French Polynesia, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Samoa, United Kingdom and United States agreed to start work immediately to address this issue well in advance of the next SPREP meeting.

165. The Meeting:

- **agreed** to set up a Working Group to look at the issue of membership contributions and to consider innovative options including potential incremental increases in membership contributions over a number of years;
- **directed** the Working Group to produce a recommendation by March 2014; and
- **welcomed** any contributions that Members choose to make in addition to their annual membership contribution.

AGENDA ITEM 7.3: Multi-Year Funding

166. The Secretariat outlined the multi-year funding arrangements with Australia and New Zealand, noting that funding support from the two countries accounts for 23% of the organisation's budget. The benefit of this longer term funding arrangement (over the 2013 – 2015 period) is that it allows for more certainty over the three year period and better delivery of services for Pacific Island Members of SPREP.

167. United States and France advised that their budgeting systems did not permit multi-year funding.

168. Niue acknowledged the commitment of New Zealand and Australia and encouraged others to do so.

169. The Meeting:

- **noted** SPREP's new multi-year funding arrangements with Australia and New Zealand; and
- **expressed** its appreciation to Australia and New Zealand for their support to the Secretariat through the new multi-year funding arrangements.

AGENDA ITEM 8.1: Annual Market Data: Internationally Recruited Staff and Locally Recruited Staff

This was a closed session.

170. The Meeting:

- **approved** the implementation of 50% of the proposed 2012 Annual Market Data for Internationally recruited staff salary scales;
- **approved** the salary scale included in the submission to be effective from 1 January 2014;
- **noted** the delay in the 2013 Annual Market Data report for Locally recruited staff salary scales – any substantive salary increases shall be presented to the SPREP Meeting and that implementation will be subject to availability of funding through savings;
- **noted** that further work continues to be carried out by the CROP HR/Harmonisation Working Group on other staff terms and conditions, and the SPREP Meeting shall be advised of any proposals that may have substantive staffing and financial implications in the future; and
- **noted** Australia's reservation on this item.

AGENDA ITEM 8.2: SPREP Director General

- 2012/2013 Performance Review
- 2013/2014 Performance Development Plan

This was a closed session.

171. The Meeting:

- **noted** the review and evaluation of the Director General's Performance Development Plan for 2012-2013; and
- **endorsed** the Performance Development Plan for 2013-2014.

AGENDA ITEM 8.3: SPREP Director Generals' contract

- Process for recruitment
- Job Description

This was a closed session.

172. The Meeting:

- **endorsed** the proposed process outlined in Table 1, WP 8.3 for the process of recruitment for the DG post;
- **endorsed** the extension of the current DG's contract for another two months, from October 2015 to 31 December 2015;
- **provided** comments and advice regarding the Job Description of the Director General post and agreed that the job description would be finalised as part of the SPREP corporate review process; and
- **endorsed** the amendments to the Rules of Procedure for Appointment of Director to reflect the current organisational structure.

AGENDA ITEM 8.4: Extension of Contract for the Deputy Director General

This was a closed session.

173. United States proposed extension of the DDG's contract for another two and a half years in order to provide for a year of overlap with the incoming Director General for the sake of continuity.

174. The Meeting:

- **endorsed** the extension of the current DDG's contract for another two and a half years, to be completed by 31 December 2016.

AGENDA ITEM 8.5: Report of the Inter-sessional Working Group on the Retention Allowance

175. The Chair (New Zealand) of the Inter-sessional Working Group on the Retention Allowance reported on the group's findings, which are detailed in WP 8.5.

176. The Working Group was of the view that the Retention Allowance is not a priority staff issue at the moment given that retention rates are quite high. A Learning and Development budget had been introduced in 2012 and the Secretariat had implemented a performance-based remuneration system. The Working Group recommended that the Secretariat should build on continuous learning and development as well as strengthening its performance based remuneration system as incentives for retention of high performing staff.

177. The United States indicated that retention allowances were not human resource best practice, nor an effective incentive. The representative advised that training and professional development were more important.

178. The Working Group advised that in light of its findings, it was not in a position to recommend approval of the retention allowance.

179. The Meeting:

- **noted** the report of the Chair of the Intercessional Working Group; and
- **noted** the recommendation by the Working Group for the Secretariat to monitor the retention rates for the next 2 years and to report to the 2015 SPREP Meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 8.6: Report by the Director General on Staff Appointment Beyond 6 years

180. The Secretariat provided background on the reappointment of Mr Espen Ronneberg to the position of Climate Change Adviser, Climate Change Division, for a further 3-year term noting that this was in accordance with Staff Regulation 6 (m) on the Six Year Rule. Details of the process are outlined in WP 8.6.

181. The Meeting:

- **noted** the reappointment of Mr Espen Ronneberg to the position of Climate Change Adviser, Climate Change Division, for another three year term.

AGENDA ITEM 9.1: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management Division - 2014 Overview

182. The Secretariat provided an overview of key activities of the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management Division in the areas of Island and Oceanic Ecosystems, Threatened and Migratory Species and Invasive Species. Challenges were also identified and included: the need for Members and donors to recognise that the invasive species issue must move

beyond policy recognition to action (including funding); establishing EbA as a core approach to climate change adaptation in the region; strengthening regional and donor commitment to implementation of the Pacific Oceanscape Framework; and maintaining and strengthening technical support in key programmes to enable high quality service to members. These issues were addressed in the subsequent papers.

AGENDA ITEM 9.1.1: Development of a Pacific Islands regional invasive species programme proposal for submission to GEF 6

183. Members were advised of the significant opportunity under GEF 6 to develop a Pacific Islands regional invasive species programme to address the negative environmental, social and economic impacts of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) to Pacific Island Countries and Territories.

184. The proposed programme provides a specific opportunity to strengthen SPREP's regional invasive species management programme and assist in the implementation of *The Guidelines for Invasive Species Management in the Pacific: a Pacific strategy for managing pests, weeds and other invasive species* (SPREP, 2009).

185. The Secretariat advised that this potential new project would support a stronger regional invasive species programme, and develop further the existing Pacific GEF 4 funded IAS 10-country project, to extend its current activities past the life of the present programme and generate new in-country projects for Members that are implementing their National Invasive Strategies and Action Plans (NISAP's).

186. The Secretariat advised that the proposal will target 'global set aside funds' not 'country allocations' under the GEF 6 funding.

187. Cook Islands, Fiji, France, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Samoa and Solomon Islands fully endorsed the recommendation that SPREP develop a regional GEF 6 invasive species project.

188. Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Samoa and Solomon Islands advised that the proposal must align with country priorities and be developed through consultations with Member countries.

189. Kiribati stated that consideration to include biodiversity based livelihood aspects should be integrated and paramount in the proposal.

190. Fiji noted that it was part of GEF 4 but had a strong interest in joining the GEF 6 proposal noting that terrestrial invasive species management and biosecurity are key issues for the country.

191. In response to issues raised by several Members, the Secretariat acknowledged the slow implementation of GEF 4 and advised that the GEF 6 proposal would be developed in consultation with all Member countries and will build on the regional invasive species strategy and lessons from GEF 4. The size and scale of the project proposal would depend on the interest from the Member countries.

192. The Meeting:

- **directed** the Secretariat to develop a regional terrestrial and marine invasive species project for submission to GEF 6, in coordination with Members, partners, and other interested parties. This proposal would include:

- Comprehensive prevention, early detection, eradication and control components that emphasise a risk management approach, focusing on priority pathways, risks and priority ecosystems and species.

- Targeted eradications where proven, low-cost and effective eradication would result in the complete removal of IAS and the survival of globally significant species and/or ecosystems, as well as improved economic development through the removal of IAS that impact on agriculture, forestry and fisheries.
- Strengthening SPREP's regional support infrastructure through greater technical support and expert advice,
- The creation of standard operating procedures, and training to support countries to increase their capability and capacity in IAS management.

AGENDA ITEM 9.1.2: Pacific Invasives Species Capacity Development Strategy

193. The Secretariat presented the Pacific Invasive Species Capacity Development Strategy (PISCDS), which aims to address gaps in capacity development efforts in the Pacific to enable implementation of the *Pacific Islands Guidelines for Invasive Species Management*. The Strategy will also support Pacific countries' commitments to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Aichi Target 9 – Invasive Species) and the review of the National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plans. It will also contribute to implementation of the 2012 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Communiqué, which reaffirmed the importance of dealing effectively with invasive species.

194. The PISCDS was developed with a funding grant from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) to the Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN/SPREP) and the Pacific Invasives Initiative (PII).

195. Fiji, France, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands and Samoa expressed support for the strategy.

196. United States stated that addressing invasive species requires collective action. The representative noted the value of the strategy for addressing invasive species in the region and stressed the need for inclusivity in terms of partners and regional expertise such as SPC, PII, PILN. The representative called for including French and US territories in implementing the strategy.

197. Solomon Islands noted past courses by USP and SPREP, which raised the need to include invasive species in these courses. The representative emphasised the need for long term training as well as developing partnerships with USP and national universities to sustain training beyond project lifetimes. The representative suggested that the strategy look at long term capacity building and that its scope be expanded to include wider biodiversity conservation. This was also supported by Fiji and Kiribati and New Zealand noted the inclusion of capacity building in the GEF6 proposal.

198. French Polynesia reported on a recent stocktaking exercise and risk analysis assessment on invasive species in the inhabited islands of French Polynesia, which could provide support on capacity building to protect islands of particular economic interests.

199. Fiji raised the issue of the level of control countries would have over the strategy and asked whether it was a strategy for partners to work in countries. The representative requested that the strategy also address sustainability issues, levels of expertise, on-going training and ownership and also expressed interest in obtaining technical assistance and specific information on biosecurity.

200. New Caledonia stressed the importance of coordination with agricultural and plant control sectors and the need to link this strategy with the conservation of endangered species, which often are impacted by invasive species. Focus should be on controlling invasive species that affect endangered species. The representative also noted that various organisations and players were already involved, with a lot of research undertaken and innovative solutions, which could provide useful information for the strategy. She also offered to share New Caledonia's Invasive species communication strategy, which had been developed and adopted in 2010.

201. Samoa suggested that the GEF6 proposal also include implementation of the Strategy.

202. Republic of Marshall Islands recommended building the Micronesian biosecurity plan into the Strategy.

203. Kiribati encouraged SPREP to assist countries with the implementation of the strategy through GEF-PAS and GEF 6, given the importance of invasive issues in countries including the need to address capacity constraints. The representative also requested that SPREP secure resources to assist Members to ensure outcomes from the GEF-PAS project are used to update the strategy and asked SPREP to work with partners at the regional and national levels to assist countries address invasive species issues.

204. Papua New Guinea noted the challenges of addressing problems in trying to manage invasive species and observed that invasive species had adversely impacted endemic species and livelihoods. The representative suggested that a long term programme be developed and for governments to lead implementation of national programmes. The representative requested that the strategy not be limited to 10 countries

but be left open to facilitate knowledge sharing.

205. The Secretariat advised that the strategy is broad, inclusive and promotes country and individual input. The Secretariat further advised that the strategy addresses most of the concerns raised and acknowledged that the Strategy was developed in partnership with the Pacific Invasive Partnership and countries.

206. The Meeting:

- **approved** the Pacific Invasive Species Capacity Development Strategy (PISCDS), and gave its support to building Pacific Islands capacity to manage invasive species; and
- **encouraged** Members, partners and donors to support implementation of the PISCDS.

AGENDA ITEM 9.1.3: Ecosystem based Adaptation as a core approach linking protection of ecosystem services, enhanced resilience, improved adaptation and sustainability

207. The Secretariat discussed ecosystem based adaptation in the context of using biodiversity and ecosystem services to help people adapt to the adverse effects of climate change and to address resource management challenges that weaken the resilience of intact ecosystems. Current projects were outlined and it was noted that these had resulted in increased experience in and knowledge of EbA.

208. The Secretariat further outlined other proposed projects, including the UN-Habitat programme on incorporating EbA components into urban adaptation programmes. It was highlighted that EbA projects also provide an opportunity for better integration and cooperation between SPREP's divisions and between multiple government sectors.

209. Members indicated support for EbA and expressed particular interest in the proposed EbA work in urban settings, noting that they looked forward to more detail on this.

210. United States noted that EbA had been incorporated into National Sustainable Development Plans of several countries but the representative urged the Secretariat to look beyond this and ensure that capacity building also takes into account integration at local planning level, which is the level at which land use decisions are taken. United States stated that it would like to see EbA approaches spread seamlessly throughout the decision making hierarchy.

211. Niue raised the idea of documenting the lessons learned from the various projects and encouraged consultation of traditional knowledge holders in determining EbA interventions.

212. Kiribati observed that different countries were at different stages of EbA development and had varying needs. The representative encouraged the Secretariat and its divisions and other CROP agencies such as SPC to coordinate their work prior to visiting the countries. The representative further encouraged the Secretariat to secure the necessary technical support and expertise to ensure that priority needs are adequately met.

213. New Caledonia recommended development of good practice guidelines or tools to support local elected representatives of all SPREP member countries and territories of SPREP with incorporating EbA in urban environments on the basis of the results and experience derived from the six pilot urban sites.

214. The Meeting:

- **noted** current project proposals which implement ecosystem based adaptation projects within PICTs;

- **directed** the Secretariat to pursue more EbA opportunities for PICTs and to work collaboratively across divisions to incorporate ecosystem adaptation options in conjunction with wider adaptation approaches; and
- **encouraged** Members to pursue adaptation initiatives that incorporate natural solutions to adaptation.

AGENDA ITEM 9.1.4: Utilising the Pacific Oceanscape Framework to effectively focus regional and national marine and terrestrial management efforts

215. The Secretariat outlined progress with the Pacific Oceanscape Framework, noting that the concept was endorsed by Pacific Island Forum leaders at their 40th Meeting in August 2009, and repeatedly endorsed by Leaders at subsequent meetings.

216. The CROP Marine Sector Working Group acts as the support and implementation mechanism for the Oceanscape Framework and the office of the Ocean Commissioner but is limited by the lack of funding for dedicated staff and implementation of key actions. Fundraising has been further limited by a lack of clear indication from within line agencies of Member countries that there is support for the Oceanscape Framework.

217. A report, commissioned by SPREP and SPC (through the Marine Sector Working Group) identified some priority areas to progress implementation of the framework and concept notes have been developed to seek funding to address key gaps and needs. These are detailed in WP 9.1.4 and its attachments.

218. Members generally expressed support for the Oceanscape Framework but raised concerns regarding duplication of efforts under the Ocean Commission and the role of the

Ocean Commissioner. They also requested clarification on the concept notes and on the mechanism for implementation.

219. United States highlighted developments such as of the Phoenix Islands Protected Area and the Papahānaumokuākea Marine Protected Area and advised that they wished to expand the management of these marine areas in alignment with the Oceanscape Framework. The representative noted that some of the key roles of the Ocean Commissioner were already being addressed by SPC (boundary delimitation, deep sea mining and fisheries). The representative further encouraged Members to use SPREP resources (for example the PI-GOOS and the Coastal and Marine Advisor expertise) to establish national ocean programmes. United States requested additional information on the concept note relating to the maritime boundary treaty, noting that Kiribati and United States, with assistance from SPC's SOPAC division, had recently signed the maritime boundary treaty defining the coordinates between the two countries. The United States further advised that it reserved its support of the Oceans Commission pending further review of information to be provided by the Secretariat regarding the role of the Commission and its engagement with CROP and other regional bodies.

220. New Zealand offered to provide technical expertise and scientific advice to support spatial planning and oceans policy in Pacific island countries and territories.

221. Australia acknowledged Pacific Leaders' commitment to this issue but advised that it needed to reserve its position on the second recommendation until Australian support could be confirmed by the incoming Australian government.

222. France expressed strong reservation for the creation of a Pacific Ocean Commission

advising that it would be more complex to implement the initiative. The representative further queried whether the functions of the Ocean Commission could be taken up by an existing agency.

223. Nauru, Niue and Solomon Islands also made statements supporting the Framework but requested additional information and highlighted concerns relating to duplication of efforts with respect to the Ocean Commission. Nauru noted that the concept notes had been developed through consultation with other agencies. Nauru expressed support for the concept notes 5 and 6.

224. Samoa stressed that the Oceanscape Framework remained the main objective. The representative also indicated interest in some components of the concepts, including the boundary delimitations.

225. Tonga expressed reservation in endorsing the recommendations that made reference to competencies undertaken by SPC's SOPAC division and PIFS.

226. Kiribati encouraged the Secretariat to consult with countries on the Oceanscape Framework and look at how it fits with programmes of countries and other agencies.

227. Papua New Guinea recommended reviewing the Oceanscape to align it with the Coral Triangle Initiative and other existing strategies and initiatives.

228. New Caledonia acknowledged the effort by SPREP to improve the coordination and governance, observing that this was at the heart of Rio+20. The representative also stressed that it was important to support regional initiatives such as PACIOCEA which integrates national initiatives such as New Caledonia's Strategic Analysis.

229. The Secretariat advised the Meeting that the process for establishing the Ocean

Commission had come out of previous meetings of Leaders and from the Pacific Islands Regional Oceans Policy. Regional agencies were working together to support these decisions through the CROP agencies (Marine Sector Working Group) and that all concept notes had been developed in collaboration with relevant agencies. (SPC and the Western and Central Pacific Tuna Fisheries Commission; SPC-SOPAC on boundary issues; and SPREP on marine protected areas, marine spatial planning and marine species protection). It clarified that the proposal was for a small office to support the Ocean Commission. The Secretariat acknowledged New Zealand's offer to provide technical expertise and scientific advice to support spatial planning and oceans policy in Pacific island countries and territories and also recognised Australia's assistance through CSIRO on marine spatial planning.

230. Tokelau advised on the establishment of the Global Ocean Commission in February 2013. Alike Faipule Foua Toloa of Tokelau is one of the 14 selected global commissioners.

231. The Meeting:

- **re-affirmed** the Pacific Oceanscape Framework as the over-riding regional vision and framework guiding sustainable use and conservation of the Pacific Ocean;
- **noted** the concept notes on the Pacific Oceanscape Framework;
- **directed** the Secretariat to work with Members and partners under the Oceanscape Framework to support marine and terrestrial management actions in PICTs, including the establishment of protected areas, integrated management and marine spatial planning and seek funds to do so;

- **encouraged** efforts to coordinate and align regional mechanisms and investment strategies to the Pacific Oceanscape Framework; and
- **noted** Australia's reservation on the second recommendation.

AGENDA ITEM 9.2: Climate Change Division - 2014 Overview

232. The Secretariat provided an overview of key activities of the Climate Change Division in the areas of implementing adaptation measures; improving capacity, knowledge and understanding of climate change risks and reduction; and contributing to greenhouse gas reduction. Challenges included the need to identify and secure funds to meet additional requests received during the year; for implementation of the joint national action plans (JNAP); for key positions at the Pacific Meteorological Desk; and for implementation of the Pacific Islands Meteorological Strategy (PIMS).

AGENDA ITEM 9.2.1: 2013 Pacific Climate Change Roundtable (PCCR)

233. The Secretariat provided background on the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable (PCCR), which is the region's key mechanism for facilitating climate change dialogue, networking and coordination in the region. SPREP provides secretariat functions for the PCCR through a steering committee comprising of country representatives, CROP agencies, regional NGOs and donor and UN agencies representatives.

234. The PCCR was held in Fiji in July 2013 and key outcomes were outlined. These included a statement to the joint meeting of the PCCR and the Pacific Disaster Platform and the reaffirmation of the working group's modality, with the addition of a working group on loss and damage.

235. Other issues discussed are outlined in WP 9.2.1 and its attachment (the report of the PCCR).

236. Tonga expressed support for the recommendations.

237. Nauru expressed support for the PCCR as the key mechanism for facilitating climate change dialogue and highlighted the need for continued dialogue between PCCR to enhance the effectiveness of each PCCR, particularly in relation to the working groups.

238. The Meeting:

- **noted** the outcomes of the PCCR, in particular the statement to the joint meeting; and
- **endorsed** SPREP's activities for progressing the PCCR outcomes.

AGENDA ITEM 9.2.2: Report of the Second Pacific Meteorological Council Meeting

239. The Secretariat presented its report on the 2nd session of the Pacific Meteorological Council (PMC), which was held in Nadi, Fiji from 1-5 July 2013. Details are outlined in WP 9.2.2.

240. Australia, France, New Zealand, New Caledonia and United States endorsed the rules and procedures for the PMC and commended SPREP and PMC members on the good work done to date and the success of the July 2013 PMC meeting in Nadi.

241. New Zealand noted that there was still a requirement to clean up some text from the PMC meeting and that the New Zealand Meteorological service will provide suggestions soon to appropriate SPREP staff.

242. Solomon Islands observed that the rules and procedures had already been endorsed at the PMC meeting and

recommended amending the recommendation to reflect this.

243. United States advised that they were pleased to see the media coverage of the PMC meeting and encouraged the Secretariat to continue this excellent effort. The representative further encouraged the Pacific Meteorological Desk to continue to work with partners such as NOAA. United States also suggested that the 3rd PMC meeting be included in the budget for 2014.

244. New Caledonia, supported by France, proposed collaboration between the Secretariat, Pacific Countries and New Caledonia where national forecasters would be trained by Meteo France, with training and tutoring costs being borne by Meteo France and travel costs funded by other sources.

245. The Secretariat acknowledged Members' support and appreciation of the Pacific Meteorological Desk. The Secretariat noted New Caledonia's proposal and advised it would take this into further consideration. It also advised that the 3rd meeting of the PMC would be in 2015 so the budget and workplan for that meeting will be in the 2015 budget.

246. The Meeting

- **noted** the report of the 2nd Meeting of the Pacific Meteorological Council;
- **commended** the PMC for its contribution to the betterment of the livelihoods of the people of the Pacific through improving and expanding the delivery of weather and climate services in the region;
- **endorsed** the Rules of Procedure of the Pacific Meteorological Council;
- **noted** the establishment of the Pacific Island Climate Services Panel subject to final determination and requested SPREP to report back to the next SPREP Meeting on its status; and

- **thanked** the regional and international partners who have made financial and in-kind contributions to SPREP in the ongoing work to strengthen meteorological services in the region, including from the Government of Finland, COMSEC and AusAID.

AGENDA ITEM 9.2.3: Climate Change Roundtable (PCCR) and Regional Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Platform Joint 2013 (Roadmap)

247. The Secretariat advised on its participation as a lead partner in the recent joint meeting (July 2013), noting that the 2011 SPREP Meeting had requested the Secretariat to work with Members and partners, to develop a strategy for an integrated regional framework for Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation and Disaster Risk Management (DRM) by 2015. The joint meeting is part of the regional process (roadmap process) for developing the new integrated regional strategy on climate change and disaster risk management.

248. The Secretariat advised that a final draft of the integrated strategy was expected to be tabled at the SPREP Meeting in 2014. The strategy would outline implementation, funding arrangements and an M&E framework. Funding was being sought now for implementation of the roadmap process. The process is already in train and will culminate in 2014 when it is presented to the SPREP meeting for endorsement.

249. Members commended the work of the Secretariat and its partners in this area and encouraged additional and entrenched collaboration where possible, and urged the Secretariat to share information with Members on the work in climate change and disaster risk management. United States, French Polynesia, and United Kingdom indicated they were

unable to provide funding for the roadmap. New Caledonia advised it represents the French speaking territories within the steering committee and that inclusion of funding for the roadmap would be proposed for territory budgets in the following year.

250. The Meeting:

- **noted** the outcomes of the Joint Meeting;
- **endorsed** SPREP's role in progressing the joint meeting outcomes;
- **invited** SPREP Members and Partners to discuss and support SPREP's role in the roadmap process;
- **invited** members of SPREP to take into account this decision in the SPREP budgeting process for the coming years;
- **requested** the Secretariat to seek funding for the Roadmap process and report back to the 2014 SPREP meeting; and
- **noted** Australia's reservation on recommendations 3, 4 and 5.

AGENDA ITEM 9.2.4: Join National Action Plan (JNAP) Review

251. The Secretariat advised Members on the findings of the review of the Joint National Action Plan for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (JNAP). SPREP and the SOPAC Division of SPC started this process in 2009 to support countries in the integration of climate change and disaster risk management. By 2013, the 'JNAP partnership' had expanded to include regional UN agencies and the Pacific-Australia Climate Change Science Adaptation Planning program (PACCSAP). One of the outputs of the JNAP project funded by PACCSAP involved conducting a review of the JNAP process. The objective of the review was to identify lessons learned from the JNAP process in view of improving the process. Details of the

process and the executive summary of the review are provided in WP 9.2.4 and its attachment.

252. Members acknowledged the Secretariat for progress in assisting countries with the development of national JNAPs.

253. Niue sought clarification on who the multiple partners were and specifically on whether these included partners that would assist in the implementation of the JNAP activities nationally.

254. Fiji advised it was embarking on developing their JNAP with assistance of SPC.

255. Australia agreed with the findings of the review, in particular the coordination process amongst partners, and the continued lead coordination of SPREP with SPC. The representative further encouraged the Secretariat to continue this delivery as part of its core programme.

256. Kiribati thanked the Secretariat for its excellent support in the development of the Kiribati Joint Implementation Plan (KJIP) and also for its assistance in other related areas of work.

257. Solomon Islands noted that they would incorporate CC and DRM into their national development plan but would not develop a JNAP.

258. The Meeting:

- **noted** the findings of the JNAP review.

AGENDA ITEM 9.2.5: Up scaling the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) and The Pacific Island Greenhouse Gas Abatement for Renewal Energy (PIGGAREP) project

259. The Secretariat provided an update on the progress of the PACC and PIGGAREP

projects noting that these were in their fourth and sixth years of implementation, respectively. The Secretariat outlined the various funding arrangements for the two projects, including the upscaling activities funded by the Government of Australia and for PACC and the additional funding to PIGGAREP from the SIDS DOCK to support implementation of renewable energy "hardware" projects in 6 Pacific countries. Details are outlined in WP9.2.5.

260. The Secretariat advised that participating countries had requested that the two projects be up-scaled and replicated. All countries noted a strong wish that the projects continue after the GEF funding runs out at the end of 2014.

261. Australia, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Samoa and the United States commended SPREP on the progress of PACC and PIGGAREP project activities. Fiji, Niue and Samoa encouraged countries to take the initiative and initiate dialogue with donors and partners on this issue and not put undue pressure on SPREP's metropolitan members.

262. Federated States of Micronesia requested Members to assist with sourcing funding to carry on these two projects. The representative registered appreciation to SPREP for the valuable support towards climate proofing in their country.

263. Samoa stressed the need to provide guidance to inform the future of these two projects and pointed out the need to reaffirm and reinforce the decisions of the project boards.

264. The Meeting:

- **noted** the progress to date of PACC and PIGGAREP;
- **noted** the Secretariat's continued management and advocacy initiatives to progress these projects to a

successful completion or possible further phase;

- **invited** SPREP Members and donors to discuss and consider options for continuing support for the PACC and PIGGAREP activities so that these projects can be upscaled and replicated to meet country priorities and continue to be key elements of SPREPs work; and
- **noted** Australia's reservation on this decision.

AGENDA ITEM 9.2.6: Pacific Preparation for the UNFCCC COP 19

265. The Secretariat informed Members of the key issues and preparations undertaken by the Secretariat on behalf of Members for the 19th **Conference of the Parties (COP 19) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**. These are detailed in WP 9.2.6.

266. The United Kingdom noted the Majuro Declaration and pointed out that the United Kingdom was the first post-Forum dialogue partner to endorse the Declaration. The representative outlined the United Kingdom's assistance to support LDC advocacy, including assistance to Nauru as chair of AOSIS, a climate diplomacy project with Republic of Marshall Islands and a similar project with USP. The representative also reaffirmed SPREP's role of providing scientific and technical support to Members and emphasised that the Secretariat should focus on this and not advocate a position on issues. He recommended revising the recommendation to capture the scientific and technical and non-political nature of SPREP.

267. United States suggested all Members should be invited to pre-COP meetings, however the Secretariat explained that the high level nature of the agenda meant that capacity was limited. The Secretariat said that they would provide an overview to all Members.

268. United States proposed alternative text for paragraph three of the working paper. The alternative text provided is:

Paragraph 3

“Additional UNFCCC meetings have been held this year, including two meetings of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform Action (ADP), which was held in Bonn, in April and June 2013. This meeting focused on enhancing near term ambition-given that the current international pledges fall short of where science recommends, as well as discussing options for a new protocol, legal instrument, or agreed outcome with legal force that will apply to all Parties, to be negotiated by 2015, to begin in 2020.”

269. Australia endorsed the proposed activities to prepare for COP19 and offered to work with Pacific countries to ensure a successful outcome. The representative observed that COP19 would ensure steps after 2020. Australia advised of the partnership with UN agencies to deliver a programme to develop negotiating capacities.

270. The Secretariat noted Australia’s support to AOSIS negotiation training and suggested to broaden this programme to include other areas.

271. The Meeting:

- **endorsed** the proposed activities in support of providing scientific and technical support to Pacific Island delegations, and invited Members in a position to do so, to offer technical or financial support; and
- **further noted** the two upcoming COP 19 preparatory meetings, the first to be held in the region (Apia) in October 2013, and the second to be held in Warsaw, directly ahead of the COP.

AGENDA ITEM 9.2.7: Updates on New Climate Change Initiatives (FINPACC and PPCR)

272. The Secretariat introduced two new climate change projects, specifically: The Report of the Reduced Vulnerability of the Pacific Island Country Villagers' Livelihoods to the Effects of Climate Change (FINPAC) Project; and the Regional Pilot Programme on Climate Resilience (PPCR).

273. The United Kingdom expressed appreciation that SPREP had secured funding from the Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience, to which the United Kingdom contributes almost half of the resources. The representative added that the United Kingdom would likely be interested in working with SPREP on implementing the PPCR, which could assist in raising the SPREP profile in the United Kingdom.

274. Australia expressed interest in working closely with SPREP in coordinating FINPAC activities with other meteorological programmes in the region and commended SPREP for its work in this area. The Secretariat offered to follow up with Australia on linking the specific programme activities with FINPAC implementation.

275. French Polynesia expressed interest in benefiting from Secretariat expertise in climate change and wished to cooperate with SPREP on these new projects. The representative also called for assistance on climate change generally and requested Secretariat support for developing a climate change policy in French Polynesia. New Caledonia endorsed these comments and requested similar support from SPREP.

276. The Secretariat noted that it was not due to lack of interest that such support had, to date, not been provided to French Polynesia and New Caledonia, but was reflective of the conditions placed on SPREP by the funding

agencies. SPREP would endeavour to source funds that could be utilised for French Polynesia and New Caledonia and other territories, and noted that the outcomes of the two projects would be shared with all Members.

277. Niue requested information on the implementation schedule of FINPAC, and requested further information on the components, noting similarities to the ridge-to-reef programme. The representative also asked for information on the best placement of the project in-country, as the Niue Meteorological Service may be over stretched for implementing FINPAC. The Secretariat clarified that the implementation schedule and arrangements would be discussed with the Niue Government, and that SPREP would accommodate any concerns arising, but noted that FINPAC was aimed at strengthening the outreach to communities by the National Meteorological Services.

278. Nauru noted that there were also connections between the PPCR and ridge-to-reef projects and called for integration. The Secretariat responded that such integration was critical and would be pursued in consultation with the participating countries.

279. The Meeting:

- **noted** the commencement of the two new climate change projects at SPREP; and
- **provided** guidance and comment regarding the implementation of these projects.

AGENDA ITEM 9.3.1: Clean Pacific 2012 Campaign Highlights

280. The Secretariat highlighted key achievements of the Clean Pacific 2012 Campaign, and lessons learnt during implementation. A number of activities were

implemented under a partnership agreement between SPREP and the Westpac Banking Corporation, and these are outlined in WP 9.3.1 and elaborated in the SPREP 2012 Annual Report.

281. Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, New Caledonia, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tonga commended the Secretariat on the Clean Pacific Campaign 2012.

282. Specific additional assistance was requested, including for: Cook Islands on tyres and batteries and incineration options; Solomon Islands on septic sludge; Samoa and Kiribati on waste oil; and Kiribati on developing atoll dumpsites.

283. French Polynesia, New Caledonia and Wallis Futuna offered additional assistance on waste management issues for islands, including a study conducted by French Polynesia on cost effective management of waste.

284. Australia encouraged the continued use of private and public partners to resource waste management needs and programmes.

285. The Secretariat noted that the various requests would be included in current waste management programmes and projects. The Secretariat also thanked the Government of Japan and the European Union for their substantial support for waste management in the region.

286. The Meeting:

- **noted** the accomplishments and lessons learnt from the Clean Pacific 2012 Campaign.

AGENDA ITEM 9.3.2: Waste Management Donor Coordination

287. The Secretariat outlined for Members a proposed mechanism for an interim regional coordination mechanism for waste

management aimed at improving regional coordination of waste management support. The mechanism and cost implications are detailed in WP 9.3.3.

288. Members noted the challenges of solving waste issues in the Pacific highlighting issues of sustainability of projects.

289. Niue highlighted the long term challenges of solving waste issues in the Pacific. Niue requested the Secretariat to take caution in focusing on seeking and coordinating funding, and suggested the Secretariat could focus on synthesising best practices such as in relation to POPs and solid waste. Niue reminded countries that they are also obliged to take some responsibility for their own waste management.

290. French Polynesia encouraged donors to fund treatment. A user pays fee system was being established in French Polynesia, which provides an example of a government process to address waste issues. The representative also noted that building waste management facilities was very costly.

291. American Samoa referred to the Waigani Convention and requested the permission of the United States for American Samoa to become a party to the Convention, in order to engage more fully in issues of waste management.

292. Kiribati referred to Waigani and Basel reporting, suggesting that the reporting developed by SPREP should also comply with reporting needs of waste related conventions, and that training in fulfilling these reporting needs be undertaken with countries.

293. Solomon Islands suggested the Secretariat look specifically at in-country mechanisms such as education institutions to support waste management actions. The representative also noted specifically that

waste issues were trade related and therefore needed a response at a regional level.

294. France suggested that Members also look at the source of waste, and called for exporting countries to look at initiatives in their own country to reduce waste at source. For example, they should export products with less packaging, or allow for a return of the packaging. New Zealand, Australia and the United States, as SPREP members could be invited to ask their respective governments to encourage a reduction of waste at source.

295. The Meeting:

- **endorsed** the interim approach to improve regional donor coordination and sustainable financing of waste management; and
- **encouraged** Members to comply with the reporting format and approach required under the Waigani and Basel conventions and directed the Secretariat to **continue** work on sharing best practice information on waste management and reduction of waste generation, in coordination with other partners.

AGENDA ITEM 9.3.3: GEFPAS and EDF10 Waste Management Funding Update

296. The Secretariat provided an update on progress towards securing additional hazardous waste management funding for the region and advised on the funding arrangements through GEF-PAS and EDF10 that had been secured over the past year.

297. The total value of the five year GEF-PAS funds (to be implemented by UNEP and FAO and executed by SPREP) is USD 9,221,450 (USD 2,796,000 cash plus in kind support). The total value of the European Union project is 7,850,000 Euros. This is a four year project and will cover 14 Pacific island countries (Cook

Islands, FSM, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu) as well as Timor Leste. More detail is provided in WP 9.3.2.

298. Cook Islands noted the need to also address linkages with the Stockholm, Rotterdam and Basel Conventions. Cook Islands, supported by Fiji and Samoa, requested that the Secretariat participate in meetings of the Parties to the Conventions to be better aware of the issues under these Conventions and to assist Members attending these meetings. It was also noted that the three conventions had now been merged, which would be beneficial to the Pacific. The representative further observed the recent adoption of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, which some Pacific Members would be signing in the first week of October 2013. The Secretariat explained that it was not currently funded to attend these Conventions, but that it has made every effort to align its plans with their formal decisions and outcomes.

299. Niue noted significant progress had been made in asbestos management, indicated that many lessons could be learned from Niue, and requested the Secretariat to continue to work with them on this issue.

300. Fiji requested the Secretariat to be more specific about the type of in-kind support that could be expected. Fiji also emphasised that in-kind support should not place additional burden on national staff, and noted that additional staff may be needed for this project.

301. Kiribati also asked for further clarification on in kind support, noting the capacity and human resource limitations of many countries to provide in-kind support to this very large five year project. The representative advised that Kiribati currently had only two waste management staff dealing with waste issues over 33 islands, and that it

would require assistance to hire an additional staff member to support this project. Tonga also noted similar concerns about burdening national capacity with expectations of in-kind support.

302. The Secretariat clarified that these projects would focus on capacity building and training, but it was expected that countries would nominate existing in-country focal points and relevant staff, to whom training would be provided.

303. American Samoa noted the importance of placing an emphasis on hazardous waste reduction, and requested more education programmes in this area.

304. The Meeting:

- **noted** the additional resources being allocated to the improvement of hazardous waste in the Pacific region over the next 5 years, in direct response to the request from SPREP members;
- **encouraged** Members involved in these projects to provide in-kind support to the Secretariat to implement these two hazardous waste management projects over the next 4-5 years; and
- **noted** the importance of linking these activities with relevant conventions, including the three chemical conventions.

AGENDA ITEM 9.3.4: PACPLAN Review 2013

305. The Secretariat presented the *revised Pacific Islands Regional Marine Spill Contingency Plan (PACPLAN 2013)* and provided background to its development and outlined its content. PACPLAN sets out the technical and geographical scope for a regional response, and provides the guiding principles under which any

regional response to *Tier 3 marine spills* should be undertaken. Details are provided in WP 9.3.4.

306. Australia, France, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru and USA noted their appreciation to the Secretariat in developing the PACPLAN.

307. United States requested clarification on the status of the fourth workshop in addition to the three already held in Auckland, Sydney and Honolulu. United States also noted that countries need national plans, as the regional PACPLAN is only to augment national plans, and relies upon them.

308. Australia noted that a number of incidents in recent years had highlighted the need to ensure PACPLAN is up to date and effective. The representative suggested that updating technical information such as contact people and addresses should be a SPREP core function. In this context, Nauru noted that there was erroneous contact information for them and asked the Secretariat to amend.

309. Kiribati requested assistance to develop a NatPlan and thanked the donors that had enabled Kiribati to participate. The representative noted that the National Disaster Management Plan recognised the importance of the NatPlan, and that Kiribati was keen to make it operational.

310. France acknowledged the International Maritime Organization (IMO) for providing resources to organise the workshops, and noted France's support of the PACPLAN through resources in New Caledonia.

311. Fiji advised that they had recently ratified the MARPOL convention, promulgated marine pollution legislation and endorsed their NatPlan.

312. The Secretariat thanked the metropolitan Members for their support, and noted that a consultation meeting had been

held in the margins of the 23rd SPREP Meeting in New Caledonia in addition to the three workshops.

313. The Director General asked countries who were aware that their contact details were incorrect to send the correct details to the Secretariat.

314. The Meeting:

- **endorsed** *PACPLAN 2013* as the framework for regional oil spill and hazardous and noxious substances spill response.

AGENDA ITEM 9.4.1: ACP MEA update

315. The Secretariat informed the Meeting of the activities carried out by the EMG Division since its formation and the implementation of the ACP MEA Project. Details of the activities are outlined in WP9.4.1. The Meeting discussed specific issues under subsequent agenda items.

AGENDA ITEM 9.4.2: Update on State of Environment (SoE) Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting in the Pacific

316. The Secretariat advised on activities carried out by SPREP (Environmental Monitoring and Governance Division) to improve SoE monitoring, assessment and reporting and outlined planned activities. Details are provided in WP 9.4.2.

317. Members noted that countries were in various stages of developing national state of environment reports. The importance of developing robust indicators was noted and further assistance was requested from the Secretariat to ensure synergy between national and regional SOE indicators. The similarity of indicators developed for waste management and climate change was highlighted and it was

noted that these could be useful for the SOE report. Members also requested Secretariat consideration of other initiatives including Ocean Health Index and BIORAP for inclusion in the regional SOE template.

318. The Meeting:

- **noted** the progress with SoE activities;
- **provided guidance** on future work of the EMG Division regarding SoE and related activities; and
- **noted** that the SOE process should support relevant national and regional activities.

AGENDA ITEM 9.4.3: Update on National Environment Management Strategies and Environment Impact Assessment in the Pacific

319. The Secretariat provided an update on the EIA and NEMS work in the region and advised that the EIA process is the primary mechanism for development control from an environmental perspective. Most Pacific countries now have legislation, policy or processes for EIA. The Secretariat noted that countries faced increasing and new challenges due to population growth, urbanisation, industrialisation, new challenges, such as deep sea mining and climate change, and that these needed to be addressed through strengthened national EIA processes. The Secretariat also noted that both NEMS and EIA initiatives contribute to strengthened environmental governance as an important contribution to facilitate sustainable development. Details are outlined in WP 9.4.3.

320. Fiji recommended that countries should engage multiple sectors such as Housing, Local Government and Planning.

321. The Meeting:

- **noted** the progress with NEMS and EIA activities; and
- **provided guidance** on future work of the EMG Division regarding NEMS, EIA and related activities.

AGENDA ITEM 9.4.4: Facilitating Resilient Development in the Pacific: Strengthening Capacity in the Use of Cost-Benefit Analysis (P-CBA Initiative)

322. The Secretariat presented the Pacific Cost Benefit Analysis Initiative (P-CBA Initiative) which aimed to strengthen decision making processes within SPREP Members and highlighted the increasing use of the Cost Benefit Analysis and its effectiveness to the design of projects and policies and their subsequent implementation in the region. The Secretariat advised that most economic analyses had been delivered through non-national entities (CROP organisations, development partners, consultants and others), which reaffirmed the limitation in this expertise in smaller administrations of Members. Such constraints could hamper access to or implementation of nationally and externally financed development projects.

323. The Secretariat further advised that the proposed P-CBA Initiative was presented at the July FEMM, the 2013 Pacific Climate Change Roundtable, and also at the Climate Change Finance Workshop in June 2013. Further details and background information are in the 24SM/Officials/WP9.4.4 Att.1

324. The Secretariat further advised that formal input from Members on the level and type of capacity building assistance in CBA would help to further develop the P-CBA Initiative.

325. The Meeting:

- **endorsed** the proposed P-CBA Initiative; and
- **requested** that Pacific Members submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) letter to the P-CBA Working Group through their national SPREP focal points, who together with the Ministries of Finance will be the lead co-ordinating agency for this initiative.

AGENDA ITEM 9.5: Consideration and Approval of Proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2014

326. The Director General reminded Members that the Work Plan and Budget had been on the website for six weeks. He noted that there were two issues discussed at this meeting, which would have budgetary implications. The original budget had since been revised to reflect the decisions of the Meeting on those issues. He added that additional funding would also be required for the Reviews, and this would be covered from a reallocation from within the existing budget. The Director General was pleased to inform Members that the Secretariat was presenting a balanced budget for financial year 2014 of USD22, 243,296 million.

327. The Finance Manager presented Members with a summarised overview of the FY2014 SPREP budget. It was noted that the total budgeted income for 2014 is USD22, 243,296 is made up of USD 3,541,690 from core and USD 18,601,696 from Programme Funds. The total budgeted expenditure was balanced and matched the total income of USD 22,243,296.

328. The Secretariat further advised that Membership fees had been adjusted to note the withdrawal of Guam, as well as the fact that

the request for increased fees was not accepted. Membership contributions represented 5% of the total budget (a reduction of 1% compared to 2013).

329. The budget would be expended in three categories: personnel costs remain at 29%, operating costs at 70%; and capital costs at 1%. These percentages remained the same as the previous year. In terms of priority areas of spending, Climate Change represented 42% of funding (a reduction of 12% due to the closure of the PACC and PIGGAREP Projects); Biodiversity at 16% (no change from 2013), Waste Management at 18% (an increase of 13% due to the EDF project); Environmental Monitoring and Governance at 7% (a reduction of 1%). Expenditure for Executive Management and Cooperate services remained at 17% (same as previous year).

330. It was noted that a list of all donors is provided on page 7 of the budget report.

331. Niue acknowledged the work of the Secretariat and thanked the Financial Division for a very comprehensive presentation of the 2014 budget. Niue also noted the adjustments that were made, based on the discussions related to an increase on membership contributions. The representative urged that further discussions on raising additional funds be held urgently, as recommended, and put forward the notion of adopting the budget. This was supported by the Cook Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia.

332. Cook Islands noted that if membership contributions were up to date, the budget would be quite different, and reminded countries that the work programme of the Secretariat in fact belongs to the Member countries.

333. The Secretariat thanked Members for their strong support.

334. The Meeting:

- **considered** and **approved** the proposed Work Programme and Budget of USD\$22,143,286 for 2014.

AGENDA ITEM 10.1: Items Proposed by Members - Outcomes of the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (Bangkok, March 2013) of relevance to SPREP members

335. Australia and New Zealand provided an update on relevant outcomes of the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) held in Bangkok in March 2013.

336. In terms of listings, Australia advised, that the Conference had decided to delay the date of entry into force by 18 months for the amendments regarding seven shark and ray species, to give Parties sufficient time to implement the listings. These listings will come into effect on 14 September 2014. Australia, as Oceania Representative, encouraged SPREP Members to approach them if they needed any administrative assistance in implementing the new listings. Australia also encouraged Oceania Parties to work collaboratively in relation to the listings. Australia advised that to start collaborative regional work it and the New Zealand CITES authorities were planning a preliminary workshop towards the end of 2013 to be held in Australia. CITES Parties and non-Parties in the region would be invited to participate.

337. New Zealand thanked Australia for taking the lead on the joint paper and for working collaboratively on regional CITES issues. The representative indicated that New Zealand had been conducting CITES implementation workshops for the region since 2010, with at least 10 workshops completed to

date, and expressed New Zealand's interest in continued provision of CITES implementation support to the region.

338. Cook Islands, while not a party to CITES, advised that they abide with the permitting system as it relates to the species covered under CITES. The representative indicated that Cook Islands was working closely with New Zealand to facilitate Cook Islands' accession to CITES. Niue also expressed its intention to work with New Zealand to facilitate its accession to CITES.

339. Samoa recognised Australia's excellent representation of the Oceania region interests in the CITES Standing Committee, and welcomed the offer of assistance by Australia and New Zealand for further capacity building.

340. Fiji also welcomed the offer of technical assistance and observed the need for decisions to be translated into management actions at the national level. The representative also requested that the CITES focal points list be circulated.

341. Solomon Islands reiterated its previous (2012) request for assistance from New Zealand on development of wildlife legislation aligned with CITES.

342. New Caledonia indicated that as a territory, it is not a signatory to CITES, but that it is still concerned by the Convention since France is a signatory. A local CITES implementing law containing a 4th annex that includes a list of locally protected species would be promulgated. This would allow a link between the Nagoya Protocol, CITES and the protection of endangered species within one single regulatory framework. The representative suggested that relevant information be communicated on the approach by New Caledonia to interested Members. France expressed its support in relation to the approach adopted by New Caledonia.

343. The Meeting:
- **noted** the outcomes of the of the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) held in Bangkok in March 2013;
 - **encouraged** Members of SPREP, who are a Party to CITES to implement the outcomes adopted by the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties
 - **encouraged** Members of SPREP, who are a Party to CITES to work collaboratively in relation to the sharks and ray listings, particularly determining non-detriment findings and resolving technical and administrative issues for implementing the listings;
 - **encouraged** Members of SPREP, who are a Party to the CITES Convention to utilise the vessel chartering provisions provided for under Resolution Conf. 14.6 (Rev CoP16) on Introduction From the Sea, to report to the Convention Secretariat, as and when requested, in relation to Decision 16.49 on how they are applying those provisions and meeting their Convention obligations; and
 - **encouraged** Members of SPREP, who are not yet Parties to CITES to join the Convention.

AGENDA ITEM 10.2: Items Proposed by Members - *Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction Update on the United Nations led discussions on the issue of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction*

344. Australia presented a paper (WP10.2) providing background and information on the

issue of Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ).

345. Fiji, France, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Samoa and Solomon Islands agreed that the Secretariat should undertake further discussions with Members to ensure that Pacific Island issues are represented in UN led discussions on BBNJ. France further stressed that SPREP undertake to understand the issues outlined in attachment 1 of the paper.

346. French Polynesia observed that the scientific understanding of marine biodiversity and its migratory nature had been well established by the international body of scientists. Therefore, this issue should be dealt with at an international level.

347. United States noted that not all delegations shared the same view and that some believed progress could be made through better implementation of existing instruments. United States also felt that this would constitute a poor use of the Secretariat's resources. The representative noted that paragraphs 4, 7 and 11 did not represent the views of all Members.

348. The Secretariat noted that this paper was raised as information awareness and not to seek a decision for the Pacific on moving forward with the BBNJ. It also noted that the Secretariat's 2014 work plan did include work under this topic.

349. Australia agreed to delete Recommendation 2 and 3 of the paper if Members agreed. Fiji expressed opinion that the Secretariat was best placed to lead this and the representative wished the text to remain.

350. An amended text for Recommendation 2 was proposed by Samoa to reflect the need for Pacific Island countries' effective participation at global discussions of this matter. After discussion Members agreed on amended text below.

351. The Meeting:

- **noted** the update on the United Nations led discussions on biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction and the forward process; and
- **requested** the Secretariat to facilitate further information sharing amongst SPREP Members, over the next year, within existing resources and coupled where appropriate with existing programmes.

AGENDA ITEM 11.1: CROP Executives Meeting Report

352. The Director General presented an update on the outcomes of the CROP Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Meetings in 2013.

353. France confirmed support to the SIDS meeting, and recalled the importance of the UNFCCC COP- 21 to be held in Paris in 2015.

354. The Meeting:

- **noted** the verbal presentation of the SPREP Director General on CROP CEOs Meetings in 2013.

AGENDA ITEM 12: Statements by Partners and Donors

355. The 24SM was attended by several observers, which included CROP agencies, non governmental organisations and other conservation and environment groups. Observers made statements outlining their areas of work and potential partnerships with Members and the Secretariat. The list of Observers and the observer statements are attached as Annex VIII.

AGENDA ITEM 13: Other Business

356. Tokelau proposed that the Secretariat prepare a paper to raise Member awareness on

the emerging issue of climate engineering. Cook Islands, Niue, Republic of Marshall Islands, United Kingdom, United States and France urged that, in keeping with current SPREP priorities, that rather than a preparing a paper, the Secretariat instead commit to keeping Members informed of the issue as relevant information becomes available from the UNFCCC COP and the IPCC processes. The additional role of the Secretariat on this could be raised for consideration at a future SPREP Meeting.

357. The Meeting:

- **noted** the paper presented by Tokelau; and
- **requested** that the Secretariat keep Members informed of developments on the topic of climate change engineering.

AGENDA ITEM 14: Date and Venue of the 25th SPREP Meeting (2014)

358. Cook Islands stated readiness to host the next SPREP Meeting, while being mindful of the dates due to major international meetings in 2014.

359. Niue suggested the SPREP meeting to be held back to back with the SIDS Meeting in Samoa.

360. The Secretariat advised that the next meeting would include a Ministerial component.

361. The Meeting:

- **acknowledged** the offer of Cook Islands; and
- **requested** that the 25th SPREP Meeting venue and dates be agreed between the Secretariat and the Cook Islands government.

AGENDA ITEM 15: Adoption of Report

362. The Meeting adopted the report of the 24SM.

AGENDA ITEM 16: Closing

363. Cook Islands, on behalf of the Members, thanked the Chair for taking on the role, noting that this was the first time he had chaired a meeting of this sort. The representative of the Cook Islands thanked the SPREP Director General, Deputy-Director General and staff.

364. The Director General thanked the Members for their input through the week and further thanked the interpreters and translators, the management and staff of Tanoa and the Government of Samoa for hosting SPREP. He acknowledged Members for their constructive and wise guidance throughout the

past year and thanked in particular, the Chair of the 23rd SPREP Meeting, Ms Caroline Machoro. The Director General also mentioned the troika and its members and concluded by thanking the Chair of the 24SM for his leadership and for keeping the meeting on track.

365. The Chair of the 24SM thanked all Members for their contribution, noting the excellent discussion that provided in a good understanding of Member needs and priorities. He commented on the well organised meeting and expressed thanks to the Secretariat staff. He further thanked the Director General and the Deputy Director General for their assistance and guidance in his role as Chair. He looked forward to continuing to work with SPREP and closed by thanking the Government and people of Samoa for their hospitality.

The Meeting was closed at 7.35pm.

ANNEX I: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

AMERICAN SAMOA

Mr. Fa'amao Asalele Jr
Deputy Director
American Samoa Environmental
Protection Agency (ASEPA)
PO Box PPA
Pago Pago, American Samoa 96799
Tel: (684) 633 2304
Fax: (684) 633 5801
E: faamao.asalele@epa.gov.as

Ms. Line Kruse
Acting Territorial Planner
American Samoa Department of
Commerce (DOC)
A.P Lutali Executive Building 2nd Floor
Pago Pago, American Samoa 96799
Tel: (684) 633 5155
E: line.kruse@doc.as

Mr. William Sili
Program Manager
American Samoa Environmental
Protection Agency (ASEPA)
PO Box PPA
Pago Pago, American Samoa 96799
Tel: (684) 633 2304
Fax: (684) 633 5801
E: william.sili@epa.gov.as

AUSTRALIA

Ms. Christine Schweizer
Assistant Secretary
International Branch, DSEWPAC
GPO Box 787
Canberra, ACT 261
AUSTRALIA
Tel: +61 2 6274 9424 Mb: +61 404 823 022
E: Christine.schweizer@environment.gov.au

Ms. Ilisapeci Waqabaca Masivesi
Program Manager
Climate Change and Environment - AusAID
37 Prince's Rd, Tamavua
Suva, FIJI
Tel: +679 338 8284
E: ilisapeci.masivesi@ausaid.gov.au

Ms. Fiona McKergow
Director
Climate Change, Environment and
Disaster Risk Management Section
Pacific Regional Branch
GPO Box 887, Canberra, ACT 2601
Australia
Tel: +612 6178 5842
E: Fiona.mckergow@ausaid.gov.au

Mr. Kevin Goh
Policy Program Manager
Climate Change, Environment and
Disaster Risk Management Section
GPO Box 887, Canberra, ACT 2601
Canberra ACT2601
Australia
Tel: +612 6178 5751
E: kevin.goh@ausaid.gov.au

Mr. Shin Furuno
Program Manager
International Adaptation Strategies
PACCSAP
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685 66315
E: shin.furuno@climatechange.gov.au

Mr. Toby Stone
General Manager
Marine Environment Division - AMSA
82 Northborne Ave, Braddon, ACT 2612
Australia
Tel: +02 6279 5627
E: toby.stone@amsa.gov.au

COOK ISLANDS

Mr. Vaitoti Tupa
Director
National Environment Service
PO Box 371
Rarotonga, Cook Islands
Tel: (682) 21 256
Fax: (682) 22 256
E: Vaitoti@oyster.net.ck

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

Mr. Gerson Jackson
Ambassador
FSM Embassy
37 Loftus St
Suva, Fiji
Tel: +679 992 4081
Fax: +679 330-4081
E: gajackson@gmail.com

Ms. Christina Fillmed
Yap State Environmental
Protection Agency
PO Box 178
Colonia, Yap 96943
FSM
Tel: +691 350-2113/2317
Fax: +691 350 3893
E: cfillmed@gmail.com

FIJI

Mr. Saverio Baleikanacea
Acting Permanent Secretary for Local
Govt, Urban Development, Housing &
Environment
PO Box 2131
Government Building
Suva, Fiji
Tel: +679 3317201
Fax: +679 3304634
E: s.baleikanacea@govnet.gov.fj

Ms. Eleni Tokaduadua
Principal Environment Officer
Dept of Environment
Magan House
19 Macgregor Rd
PO Box 2109
Government Buildings
Suva, FIJI
Tel: +679 331 1699
E: eleni.tokaduadua@govnet.gov.fj

FRANCE

Mr Jean-Luc Faure-Tournaire
Deputy Representative of France
7 rue de Sebastopol
98807 Noumea
New Caledonia
Tel: +687 260480
Fax: +687 261266
E: jean-luc.faure-tournaire@diplomatie.gouv.fr

Ms. Christine Fort
Chargee de mission Environnement
Direction du service d'Etat de l'Agriculture
de la Foret et de l'Environnement
98845 Noumea Cedex
New Caledonia
Tel: +687 232443
Fax: +687 232440
E: christine.fort@dafe.nc

FRENCH POLYNESIA

Mr. Engel Raygadas
Conseiller Technique
Ministry of Tourism and Ecology
Papeete, French Polynesia
Tel: (689)-50.88.60
Fax: (689) 29.46.99
E: raygadas@tourisme.min.gov.pf

KIRIBATI

Ms. Nenenteiti Teariki-Ruatu
Acting Director
Environment & Conservation Division
Ministry Environment, Lands & Agriculture
Development
P.O. Box 234
Bikenibeu, Tarawa-Kiribati
Tel: +686-28211
Fax: +686 28425
E: nteariki@gmail.com
E: nenenteitir@environment.gov.ki

MARSHALL ISLANDS

Mr. Bruce Kijiner
Office of the President
PO Box 2
Majuro 96960
Marshall Islands
Tel: +692 625 3345
Fax: +692 625 4021
E: bruce.kijiner@ntamar.net
E: kijinerb@gmail.com

NAURU

Mr. Elkoga Gadabu
Acting Secretary
Dept of Commerce, Industry and Environment
Government Offices
Yaren , Nauru
Tel: +674 558 6206
E: elkoga28@gmail.com

Mr. Tyrone Deiye
NBSAP 2 Coordinator
Dept of Commerce, Industry and Environment
Government Offices
Yaren , Nauru
Tel: +674 556 9200
E: tdeiye@gmail.com

Ms. Stephanie Ziersch
Environment Adviser
Dept of Commerce, Industry and Environment
Government Offices
Yaren , Nauru
Tel: +674 558 1840/+61 (0) 412 299
E: stephanieziersch@gmail.com

NEW CALEDONIA

Ms. Caroline Machoro
President of the Environment of the
Northern Province
BP 41 98860 Kone
New Caledonia
Tel: +687 47 72 00
E: c.machoro@province-nord.nc

Ms. Anne-Claire Goarant
Regional Cooperation & External Affairs
Government of New Caledonia
14 rue G Clemenceau
98800 Noumea Cedex
New Caledonia
Tel: +687 75 28 59
E: anne-claire.goarant@gouv.nc

Ms. Julie Anne Kerandel
Maritime Affaires Office
Government of New Caledonia
2 bis rue F. Russeil
98800 Noumea Cedex
New Caledonia
Tel: +687 24 24 92
E: Julie-anne.kerandel@gouv.nc

Christine Poellabauer
Chargee de mission environnement aupres de la
presidente
Province Sud, BP L1
98849 Noumea Cedex
New Caledonia
Tel: +687 25 80 00
E: christine.poellabauer@province-sud.nc

Helene Wabete
Chargee de mission environnement aupres de la
presidente
Province Sud, BP L1
98849 Noumea Cedex
New Caledonia
Tel: +687 25 80 00
E: helene.wabete@province-sud.nc

NEW ZEALAND

Mr. Stuart Horne
Deputy High Commissioner
High Commission Office
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685 21 635
Fax: +685 20 086
E: stuart.horne@mfat.govt.nz

Ms Andrea Stewart
Development Manager-Environment & Climate
Change - MFAT
195 Lambton Quay, Private Bag 18901
Wellington 5045, New Zealand
Tel: +64 4 439 8368
E: andrea.stewart@mfat.govt.nz

Mr. Doug Ramsey
Manager, Pacific Rim
NIWA
PO Box 11115, Hamilton Gate
10 Silverdale Rd, Hamilton 3216
New Zealand
Tel: +64 4 386 0300
E: doug.ramsay@niwa.co.nz

Ms. Annie Wheeler
External Engagement Manager
Department of Conservation
Conservation House, 18-32 Manners St, Te Aro
6011
Wellington, New Zealand
Tel: +64 9 307 4843
Fax: +64 9 307 4843
Email: awheeler@doc.govt.nz

Ms. Erin Morriss
Policy Officer - MFAT
195 Lambton Quay, Private Bag 18901
Wellington 5045
New Zealand
Tel: +64 4 439 82103
E: erin.morriss@mfat.govt.nz

NIUE

Mr. Sauni Tongatule
Director
Department of Environment
PO Box 80
Alofi, NIUE
Tel: (683) 4021
Fax: (683) 4391
E: sauni.tongatule@mail.gov.nu

PALAU

Ms. Charlene Mersai
Climate Change Coordinator
Office of Environment & Response
Office of President
PO Box 6051, Koror PW 96940
Palau
Tel: 488 6654
Fax: 488 6460
E: charmairsai@gmail.com

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Mr. Vagi Rei
Manager – Marine EM
PNG Dept of Environment & Conservation
PO Box 6601, Boroko
National Capital District
Papua New Guinea
Tel: +675 301 4530
Fax: +675 323 8371
E: vrei@gmail.com

SAMOA

Mr. Taulealeausumai Laavasa Malua
Chief Executive Officer
Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685 67201 Mb: 7773261
E: taulealea.malua@mnre.gov.ws

Mr. Faleafaga Toni Tipamaa
ACEO -Environment & Conservation
MNRE
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685 23800/67200 Mb: 7247004
E: toni.tipamaa@mnre.gov.ws

Mr. Suluimalo Amataga Penaia
ACEO -Water Resources
MNRE
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685 67200 Mb: 7772519
E: amataga.penaia@mnre.gov.ws

Ms. Annie Rasmussen
ACEO- GEF
MNRE
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685 20855 Mb: 7711162
E: annie.rasmussen@mnre.gov.ws

Mr. Tagaloa Jude Kohlase
ACEO - PUMA
Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685 67200 Mb: 7519776
Email: jude.kohlase@mnre.gov.ws

Mr. Sala Sagato Tuiafiso
ACEO – Renewable Energy
Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685 67200 Mb: 7772456
E: sagato.tuiafiso@mnre.gov.ws

Ms. Filomena Nelson
ACEO – Disaster Management
Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685 67200 Mb: 7700661
E: filomena.nelson@mnre.gov.ws

Frances Brown-Reupena
ACEO – Water Sector Coordinator
Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685 67200 Mb: 7282116
E: frances.reupena@mnre.gov.ws

Ms. Tasha Shon
ACEO - MFAT
Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685 21171
E: tasha@mfat.gov.ws

Ms. Rona Meleisea-Ah Liki
Principal Foreign Services Officer
Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685 23800
Fax: +685 23175
E: rona@mfat.gov.ws

Ms. Olive Vaai
Foreign Affairs Officer
Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685 23800
Fax: +685 23175
E: olive@mfat.gov.ws

SOLOMON ISLANDS

Mr. Melchoir Matakai
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Environment, Climate Change
Disaster & Meteorology
PO Box 21, Honiara
Solomon Islands
E: psmatar@mecm.gov.sb

TOKELAU

Mr. Jovilisi Suveinakama
General Manager
Apia/National
SAMOA
Tel: +685-20822
Fax: +685 21761
E: jovilisi@lesamoa.net

Kelemen Tavuto
Environment Manager
Atafu, Tokelau
Tel: +685-20822
E: mennytavuto@gmail.com

Mr. Mark Bonin
SIDS Consultant/ Advisor
PO Box 3298
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685-20822/3
E: boninmj@yahoo.com

Ms. Emily Russell
Vaitele
PO Box 3298
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685-7297919
E: emilyjoyboyd@gmail.com

TONGA

Mr. Asipeli Palaki
Director
Ministry of Lands, Survey & Natural Resources
PO Box 5
Nukualofa, Kingdom of Tonga
Tel: (676) 23611/23210
Fax: (676) 23216
E: ceo@lands.gov.to

TUVALU

Mr. Pasuna Tuaga
Assistant Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Private Mail Bag
Vaiaku, Funafuti
Tuvalu
Tel: +688-20117
Fax: +688 -20117
E: ptuaga@yahoo.com

UNITED KINGDOM

Mr. Tony Clemson
First Secretary (Political & Economics)
British High Commission
44 Hill St, Wellington 6011
New Zealand
Tel: +64 4 924 2842
Mb: +64 0 21 224 2842
E: tony.clemson@fco.gov.uk

Mr. Bert Tolhurst
Political Officer
British High Commission
Suva, Fiji
Tel: +679 322 9121 Mb: +679 707 7672
E: bert.tolhurst@fco.gov.uk

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mr. Apar Sidhu
Deputy Director
Office of Ocean & Polar Affairs
U.S Department of State
2201 C Street NW,
Washington DC, USA
Tel: +202 647 3013
E: sidhuas@state.gov

Mr. Jason Brenden
Regional Environmental Officer
United States Embassy in Fiji
158 Princes Rd
Tamavua
Suva, FIJI
Tel: +679 331-4466 Ext 8166
E: brendenja@state.gov

Ms. Sandeep Singh
Regional Environmental Officer
United States Embassy in Fiji
158 Princes Rd
Tamavua
Suva, FIJI
Tel: +679 331-4466 Ext 8210
E: singhsk1@state.gov

Dr. Stephen R. Piotrowicz
Oceanographer
Office of Ocean & Polar Affairs
United States/ NOAA
1100 Wayne Ave, Suite 1202
Silver Spring, Maryland, 20910
USA
Tel: +1 301-427-2493
E: steve.piotrowicz@noaa.gov

Ms. Christina E. Velez Srinivasan
Global Climate Change Advisor for
USAID/PacificUS Agency for International
Development
Annex 2 Building, US Embassy
1201 Roxas Blvd, 1000 Ermita
Manila, Phillipines
Tel: +632 310 4830
E: cvelez@usaid.gov

VANUATU

Mr. Michael Mangawai
Corporate Services Manager
Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources
PMB 9063
Port Vila, Vanuatu
Tel: +678 5333830
E: mjmangawai@vanuatu.gov.vu

WALLIS AND FUTUNA

Mr. Fredrick Baudry
President de la Commission de l'équipement et
Del l'Environnement
Assemblée territoriale de
BP 31 Havelu
Wallis et Futuna
Tel: +681-72 3413
E: baudryf@mail.wf

CROP AGENCIES/ADVISERS

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT (PIFS)

Mr. Exsley Taloiburi
Climate Change Coordination Officer
Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS)

Suva, FIJI
Tel: +679 3320 218
E: exsleyt@forumsec.org.fj

SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY (SPC)

Mr. Andrea Volentras
Climate Change Adviser
Noumea
New Caledonia
Tel: +687 26 2000 Ext 31205
E: andreav@spc.int

Ms. Cristina Casella
Advisor
DRM & Climate Change Policy
Suva, Fiji
E: cristinac@spc.int

UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC (USP)

Dr. Helene Jacot Des Combes
Science Department
University of the South Pacific
Suva, FIJI
Tel: +679 323 2331
E: helene.descombe@usp.ac.fj

Professor John Hay
University of the South Pacific (USP)
Rarotonga
Cook Islands
Tel: +682 25350
E: johnhay@ihug.co.nz

PARTNERS

AUSTRALIAN MET

Ms. Amanda Amjadali
Australian MET
Australia

Mr. Mark Caughey
Australian MET
Australia

Mr. Sheng Guo
Australian MET
Australia

Ms. Janita Prasad
Australian MET
Australia

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA IN SAMOA

Mr. Cui Shaozhong
Second Secretary
Chinese Embassy
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685-28935
E: shaozhongcui@mfau.edu.c

Ms. Max Xiuli
Chinese Embassy
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685-28935
E: shaozhongcui@mfau.edu.c

CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL (CI)

Ms. Leilani Duffy-Iosefa
Terrestrial Program Manager and OIC
Conservation International
PO Box 2035
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685-21593
E: lduffy@conservation.org

Mr. Schannel van Dijken
Marine Program Manager
Conservation International
PO Box 2035
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685-21593
E: svandijken@conservation.org

Mr. Steven Katona
Marine Program Manager
Oceans Health Index Scientist
Conservation International
Arlington, Washington DC
USA
Tel: +685-21593
E: skatona@conservation.org

FRENCH MARINE PROTECTED AREAS AGENCY

Ms. Anne Littaye
PACIOCEA Project Manager
1 rue Marcek CREUGNET- Motor pool
BP18939
Noumea 988857
New Caledonia
Tel: +687 231703 Mb: +687 733 733
E: anne.littaye@aires-marines.fr

DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR INTERNATIONALE ZUSAMMENARBEIT (GIZ)

Ms. Marita Manley
Climate Change Advisor
SPC/GIZ -CCCPIR
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale
Level 3, Module 2, Plaza 1, FNPF Building,
Downtown Blvd, 33 Ellery Street
Suva, Fiji
Tel: +679 3305 982
Fax: +679 3315 446
E: marita.manley@giz.de

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY - AUSTRALIA

Mr. Samuel Mackay
Sen. Analyst, Climate Change Adaptation
170 Kessels Road
Nathan QLD 4111
Australia
Tel: +61 2 401 235 4046
E: Samuel.mackay@griffin.edu.au

Ms. Rebecca Keogh
Manager-International Business Development
Unit
170 Kessels Road
Nathan QLD 4111
Australia
Tel: +61 2 407571977
E: r.keogh@griffin.edu.au

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW (ICEL)

Ms. Milena Bellini Sheppard
Permanent Representative ICEL
108-110 Sodosberger Allee
Bonn, Germany
E: milenabellinisheppard@gmail.com

Mr. Jack Sheppard
Assistant Representative
ICEL to United Nations
E: jackdavid@vtxnet.ch

INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE (IUCN)

Mr. Mark Borg
Advisor
IUCN Oceania
Suva, Fiji
Tel: +679 3319084
E: rucim1205@gmail.com

INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION (IWC)

Ms. Christine Schweizer
International Whaling Commission
International Branch, DSEWPAC
GPO Box 787
Canberra, ACT 261
AUSTRALIA
Tel: +61 2 6274 9424 Mb: +61 404 823 022
E: Christine.schweizer@environment.gov.au

ISLAND CONSERVATION

Dr. Raymond Nias
Director Southwest Pacific Region
20 George St, Pennant Hills,
NSW 2120
Australia
Tel: +61 414 917 297
E: ray.nias@islandconservation.org

JAPAN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY (JICA)

Mr. Masami Fuwa
Director General
Global Environment Department - JICA
Nibancho Center Building 5-25, Niban-cho
Chiyoda-Ku
Tokyo 102-8012
Japan
E: fuma.masami@jica.go.jp

Mr. Hideo Noda
Director
Global Environment Department - JICA
Nibancho Center Building 5-25, Niban-cho
Chiyoda-Ku
Tokyo 102-8012
Japan
E: noda.hideo@jica.go.jp

Mr. Shun Nesaki
Assistant Director
Global Environment Department - JICA
Nibancho Center Building 5-25, Niban-cho
Chiyoda-Ku
Tokyo 102-8012
Japan
E: shun.nesaki@jica.go.jp

Ms. Shinobu Mamiya
Specialist in International Development
Evaluation
International Development Associates Ltd
Tokyo 102-8012
Japan
E: mimiya.shinobu@nifty.com

Ms. Shinobu Mamiya
Specialist in International Development
Evaluation
International Development Associates Ltd
Tokyo 102-8012, Japan
E: mimiya.shinobu@nifty.com

Mr. Katsuhiko Sasaki
Resident Representative - JICA
Apia, Samoa
E: sisika.katsuhiko@jica.go.jp

Mr. Shiro Amano
Chief Advisor
Japanese Technical Cooperation Project
Of Regional Initiative on Solid Waste
Management in
Pacific Island Countries (J-PRISM)
PO Box 240, Vailima, Samoa
Tel: +685 21929 Ext: 253
E: amano.shiro@jica.go.jp
E: amano46@gmail.com

Mr. Faafetai Sagapolutele
Assistant Chief Advisor
Japanese Technical Cooperation Project
For Promotion of Regional Initiative on
Solid Waste Management
Pacific Island Countries (J-PRISM)
PO Box 240, Vailima, Samoa
Tel: +685-21929 Ext: 223
Email: faafetais@hotmail.com

Mr. Hiromichi Kano
Project Coordinator / Training Planning
Japanese Technical Cooperation Project
For Promotion of Regional Initiative on
Solid Waste Management
Pacific Island Countries (J-PRISM)
PO Box 240, Vailima, Samoa
Tel: +685-21929 Ext: 258
Email: Kano.Hiromichi@jica.go.jp

Mr. Makoto Tsukiji
Project Coordinator
Japanese Technical Cooperation Project
For Promotion of Regional Initiative on
Solid Waste Management
Pacific Island Countries (J-PRISM)
PO Box 240, Vailima, Samoa
Tel: +685-21929 Ext: 258
E: makotot@sprep.org

Mr. Mohamoud Riad
J-PRISM Expert (in charge of
Samoa, PNG, Solomon, Vanuatu)
Yachiyo Engineering Co
Tokyo 102-8012
Japan
E: riad@intl.yachiyo-eng.co.jp

Mr. Akira Haseyama
J-PRISM Expert (in charge of FSM (Pohnpei &
Kosrae) RMI)
EX Research Institute Ltd
Tokyo 102-8012
Japan
E: haseyama@exri.co.jp

Mr. Risa Muranaka
J-PRISM Expert (in charge of FSM (Yap & Chuuk)
Palau)
EX Research Institute Ltd
Tokyo 102-8012
Japan
E: muranaka@exri.co.jp

Ms. Peuina Parkinson
J-PRISM Project Assistant
JICA
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685 21929
E: preinap@sprep.org

MSG SECRETARIAT

Mr. Stanley Wapot
Governance & Sustainable Development Division
MSG Secretariat
PMB 9105
Port Vila, Vanuatu
Tel: +678 27791
E: sj.wapot@msg.int

PACIFIC CONSULTANTS CO LTD

Dr. Mariko Fujimori
Director of PC-Institute for
Global Environment Research
Japan/ Pacific Consultants Co Ltd
1-7-5, Sekio, Tama-shi Tokyo 206-8550
Japan
Tel: +81-42-372-7129
Email: mariko.fujimori@tk.pacific.co.jp

Mr. Kumiko Kajii
Senior Researcher of PC-Institute for
Global Environment Research
Japan/ Pacific Consultants Co Ltd
1-7-5, Sekio, Tama-shi Tokyo 206-8550
Japan
Tel: +81-42-372-7082
E: kumiko.kajii@tk.pacific.co.jp

Mr. Shigezane Kidoura
Senior Researcher of PC-Institute for
Global Environment Research
Japan/ Pacific Consultants Co Ltd
1-7-5, Sekio, Tama-shi Tokyo 206-8550
Japan
Tel: +81-42-372-7941
E: kumiko.kajii@tk.pacific.co.jp

PACIFIC INVASIVES INITIATIVE (PII)

Dr. Soud Boudjelas
Programme Manager
Pacific Invasives Initiative (PII)
University of Auckland
New Zealand
Tel: +64 9 923 6805
Fax: +64 9 373 7042
E: s.boudjelas@auckland.ac.nz

THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS

Mr. Francois Devinck
Global Ocean Legacy
Senior Advisor
10Rue Du RP De Fenoyl
98800- Noumea
New Caledonia
E: francois.devinck@mls.nc

UNEP

Mr. Prakash Bista
Climate Change Consultant
UN Building, 2nd Floor
Rajdamnern Nok Ave
10020 Bangkok
Thailand
Tel: +668818603005
Email: bista5@un.org

Dr Greg Sherley
Task Manager Biodiversity Conservation
UNEP
Matautu, Apia
Samoa
Tel: +685-23670
Mobile: +685-7505346
E: greg.sherley@undp.org

UNESCO

Dr. Denis Chang Seng
Programme Specialist for
Natural Science
UNESCO Office
Matautu Uta
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685 24276
E: d.chang-seng@unesco.org

Ms. Anne Meldau
Natural Science Intern
UNESCO Office
Matautu Uta
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685 24276
E: a.meldau@unesco.org

UN HABITAT

Ms. Sarah Mecartney
Pacific Program Manager
United Nations Human Settlements Programme
414 Victoria Paradae
Suva, Fiji
Tel: +679 323 7717
Email: mecartney-unhabitat@un.org

USAID

Mr. Stephen Mead Smith
Chief of Party
USAID Coastal Community Adaptation Project
(C-CAP)
Port Moresby
Papua New Guinea
Tel: +675 7056 0467
E: stephen_smith@dai.com

WMO

Mr. Henry Taiki
Programme Officer
WMO Resource Mobilization Office
PO BOX 3044
Vailima, APIA
SAMOA
Tel: (685) 25706
Fax: (685) 25771
E: htaiki@wmo.int

FRENCH LANGUAGE SOLUTIONS

Interpreters

Mr. Bertold Schmitt
Ms. Karine Dreyfus
Ms. Marie-Francoise Bourgoin

Translators

Mr. Olivier Richard
Ms. Valerie Hassan
Mr. Pierre Pellerin

Technical Engineer

Mr. Alan Doyle

SPREP - CONSULTANT

Mr. Peter E J Thomas
Director
TierraMar Consulting
PO Box 8262
Woolloongabba QLD 4102
Tel: +61 7 3310 4091
Mb: +61 0 410 440 377
E: peter@tierramar.com.au

SPREP SECRETARIAT

PO Box 240
Vailima
Apia
Samoa
Tel: (685) 21 929
Fax: (685) 20 231
Email: sprep@sprep.org

David Sheppard
Director General

Kosimiki Latu
Deputy Director General

Stuart Chape
Director, Biodiversity & Ecosystem Management

Netatua Pelesikoti
Director, Climate Change

David Haynes
Director, Waste Management & Pollution
Control

Sefanaia Nawadra
Director, Environmental Monitoring &
Governance

Clark Peteru
Legal Adviser

Alofa S Tuuau
Finance & Administration Adviser

Anthony Talouli
Pollution Adviser

Easter Galuvao
Biodiversity Adviser

Tim Carruthers
Coastal & Marine Adviser

Michael Donoghue
Marine Species Adviser

Esther Richards
Solid Waste Management Adviser

Philip Wiles
PI GOOS Officer

Neville Koop
Meteorology & Climatology Adviser

Makelesi Gonelevu
Knowledge Management Officer

Gianluca Serra
GEF – Project Facilitator

Penina Solomona
Convention on Migratory Species Officer

Simeamativa Leota-Vaai
Human Resource Adviser

Seema Deo
Communications & Outreach Adviser

Christian Slaven
IT Manager

Miraneta Williams-Hazelman
Information Resource Centre Manager

Support Team

Apiseta Eti
Rosanna Galuvao
Pauline Fruean
Theresa Fruean Afa
Joyce Tulua
Makerita Atiga
Pulemalie Habiri
Eveli Tagi
Billy Chan-Ting
Ainsof So'o
Luana Jamieson
Jolynn Fepulea'i
Christine Purcell
Monica Tupai
Makereta Kaurasi
Maraea Pogi
Leilani Chan Tung
Rachael Levi
Elama Tofilau
Ioane Iosefo
Naheed Hussien
William Kunai
Tologauvale Leaula
Amosa Tootoo
Lawrence Warner
Faamanatu Sititi
Taranaki Seiuli

ANNEX II: OPENING STATEMENT BY DAVID SHEPPARD, SPREP DIRECTOR GENERAL

Honourable Prime Minister
Ministers
SPREP Members
Ladies and gentlemen

Good evening, Bon Jour, Talofa.

Thank you Reverend for your wise words.

Thank you Prime Minister for honouring us with your presence this evening.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to you all to this Official Opening Ceremony for the 24th SPREP Meeting.

I hope your journey here was a safe one, and that the week ahead will be a productive and enjoyable one for you all.

I am well aware this is a busy time for all of us working in the environmental field and that you are all busy people. Thank you for making the time to attend this very important meeting.

It is pleasing to note that 24 out of the 26 Members of SPREP are attending this year's SPREP Meeting, including our newest member, the Government of the United Kingdom.

In total this SPREP Meeting will welcome around 150 participants, including over 20 partner organisations. For SPREP this represents a record - congratulations to you all on being part of such a record breaking event.

16 June this year was a special day for SPREP, marking 20 years since the SPREP Agreement came into force. We celebrated with a great party at SPREP and a very large birthday cake.

The Agreement was signed in one of the halls at the Papauta Girls School just down the road from SPREP's current campus.

Why it was held there ? Well, at that time there were not many places in Apia large enough to hold more than 100 people who came for the meeting, after cyclones Ofa and Val in 1990 and 1991 had destroyed many buildings and homes in town.

Former SPREP Director, Iosefatu (Joe) Reti tells me that it was an interesting meeting, with some heated discussions, particularly regarding who could, and who could not, sign but that all issues were resolved through discussion and good will on all sides - in line with the Pacific way

Since that time SPREP has grown but so have the environmental challenges facing our region.

The Pacific Islands Forum held in Majuro two weeks ago issued a Communique which places strong emphasis on environmental issues, including invasive species and the management and conservation of the Pacific Ocean. Leaders highlighted climate change as the greatest threat to the peoples of the Pacific.

This high prominence reflects the fact that the environmental cannot be separated from sustainable development and the livelihoods of people in our region. This linkage has underlined the approach of SPREP.

The challenges in our region are unique, immense and they are growing.

The Forum Meeting in Majuro noted that many Pacific countries and territories are

taking decisive action to adapt to climate change. In the words of President Loeak of the Republic of the Marshall Islands to the Forum: "In the Pacific we are doing more than waving our hands in distress" and he added: "these actions send a clear message to the rest of the world that if we can do it, you can too".

This spirit of developing "Pacific solutions to Pacific problems" runs through many of the programmes at SPREP and many activities undertaken in Samoa.

For example, the The Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) Project is delivering practical, tailored on ground climate adaptation projects in Pacific countries SPREP Members, in key sectors such as water, agriculture and coastal infrastructure. Today's 3rd Pacific Environment Forum noted ecosystem based approaches can and must play a key role in Pacific responses to climate change.

On the theme of Pacific solutions, I would highlight a world first from Tokelau which now generates 100% of its energy from solar energy rather than from expensive imported diesel.

SPREP's Clean Pacific Campaign has highlighted the need for tailored responses to waste and pollution in the Pacific. This Campaign emphasized that "every action counts".

The take home message is to think about what you can do to address environmental issues - in your home, in your village, in your community. Think about what you can do and remember that "every action counts"

SPREP is putting our money where our mouth is. Some examples of how we are "walking the talk" include running our vehicles on coconut

biodiesel - all are running well -applying composting and recycling at our compound, and aiming to have our meetings, such as this years' SPREP Meeting, paper free.

We have a busy week ahead of us with many matters of pressing importance for our region.

We look forward to receiving the benefit of your collective wisdom and guidance as we move forward.

We will be reporting to this meeting on many positive developments with SPREP over the last year.

As one key example, I am very pleased that SPREP has more than doubled the level of financial and technical advice and support to our Pacific island members over the last few years, and we will continue and strengthen this support.

The outcomes from this years' SPREP Meeting will feed directly into a number of key events.

Firstly, the five yearly Pacific Nature Conservation Conference which will be held in Fiji this December, Secondly, and most importantly, the landmark Small Islands Developing States Conference which will be held in Samoa in September next year, and will provide a once in a lifetime opportunity for our region and for SIDS.

In closing I would like to acknowledge the hard work of SPREP staff, over the last year.

Many of you have had the opportunity to work directly with our staff members. We look forward to strengthening the bonds of this relationship – both professional and personal - over the coming week and beyond.

SPREP pays tribute to SPREP Staff Member, Lui Bell, who sadly passed away in November, 2012. We aim to keep his memory alive through a Lui Bell Scholarship Scheme for young marine scientists.

I thank and applaud the efforts of SPREP Members to ensure a better Pacific environment is passed on to our children and future generations.

Thanks are due to our host country. Samoa is a beautiful country and I hope you will be able to visit some of its sites and attractions. SPREP

is indeed fortunate to be so generously and graciously hosted by the Government of Samoa. We deeply appreciate this support and generosity.

Thank you Prime Minister for your continued and strong support for SPREP over many years

I look forward to a positive, busy and enjoyable week together.

Thank you,

Merci beaucoup

**ANNEX III: OPENING STATEMENT BY HONORABLE TUILAEPA FATIALOFA LUPESOLIAI
AIONO SAILELE MALIELEGAOI, PRIME MINISTER OF SAMOA**

Ministers
Members of SPREP
Members of the Diplomatic Corps
Director General of SPREP and SPREP staff
Ladies and gentlemen

It is a great pleasure to officially open this years' SPREP Meeting.

It has been 20 years since the signing of the SPREP Agreement which established SPREP as an independent regional organisation.

SPREP arrived soon after Cyclones Ofa and Val caused immense devastation to the islands of Samoa. It was a time of rebuilding and reconstruction for Samoa and a challenging time for us all.

20 years ago was also a time of building for SPREP. At that stage they were the newest and smallest regional organisation, having recently split off from the Secretariat of the Pacific Community – SPC.

There were a number of options for the location of SPREP within the region and the Government of Samoa at that time played a key role in ensuring that the decision was taken to move to Samoa.

This is a clear reflection of the importance placed by the Government of Samoa on the environment and on the importance of SPREP.

A well managed and healthy environment is a cornerstone of sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Samoa and for our Pacific peoples more generally.

Samoa recognizes the importance of this issue and we have developed many programmes to ensure a well managed and healthy environment, including the one million tree programme, improvement management of our waste and water, and taking practical steps to address the loss of important biodiversity.

As an example, by protecting the forests in the upper catchment area of Apia we are ensuring that people living in Apia will have a sustainable and clean supply of fresh water for now and for the future.

The last 20 years has seen environment becoming a more important issue and it has also seen a strengthening of the role and importance of SPREP.

When SPREP came here it had a small but dedicated staff. Since that time the organisation has grown to address a range of critical issues for the Pacific.

SPREP's programme now supports practical programmes in all Pacific countries, including on protecting biodiversity, reducing and better managing solid waste and hazardous material, and addressing the impacts of climate change.

SPREP is the lead agency in the Pacific region for climate change.

This is an issue of vital importance for me and for my fellow Pacific leaders. At our Forum Meeting two weeks ago we signed off on the Majuro Declaration for Climate Leadership.

This Declaration noted that climate change is the greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and well-being of the peoples of the Pacific

and one of the greatest challenges for the entire world.

My Government recognizes that climate change is a reality, that it is an urgent issue and that we have to act now.

We are taking decisive action to adapt to climate change and to ensure an increasing part of our energy needs are met through renewable energy.

I applaud the decision by SPREP Members to develop the Pacific Climate Change Centre at SPREP.

This Centre will be a focus for innovation and climate leadership in this region and in the world. It has the full support of my Government and we have sent this proposal to the Government of Japan with the strong endorsement of the Government of Samoa.

Samoa and other Pacific island countries greatly appreciate commitments made under the Copenhagen Accord to provide 100 billion US dollars per annum by 2020 to support climate change efforts by developing countries. We also welcome the establishment of the Green Climate Fund.

However it is important that these commitments are matched by action.

I note the pace of disbursement has been very slow and we urge the international community to quickly and fully meet their pledges to help the nations of the Pacific – the most vulnerable countries on earth to the impacts of climate change.

SPREP has been at the forefront of efforts to address climate change in our region. The landmark PACC – Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change – project, developed jointly

between SPREP and UNDP, is developing many practical programmes to address the impacts of climate change, including in sectors such as water, agriculture, and coastal zone management.

The increasing emphasis placed by SPREP and its members on protecting natural ecosystems as a key front line response to the effects of a changing climate is very positive. It must continue.

The close collaboration over recent years between SPREP and SPC to integrate regional and national efforts on climate change and disaster management is an important development for this region.

These areas cannot be considered in isolation. Better linkage between climate adaptation and disaster management is a vital step towards a more climate resilient Pacific.

I also congratulate SPREP on its many efforts to protect and better manage biodiversity – a critical issue given that our plant and animal species in the Pacific are being lost at alarming rates.

In Samoa we have partnered with SPREP on many programmes to protect and manage biodiversity including the removal of rats from the Aleipata islands and a major survey of biodiversity in the upland areas of Savaii.

Efforts to manage both solid and hazardous by SPREP and many partners, including the Japanese Government, through JICA, have also made a positive impact in our region. Samoa has been pleased to trial the innovative Fukuoka method of solid waste management which is now being more widely applied in the region.

I note that SPREP has been undertaking an aggressive change management programme

over the last few years and also that this is increasing the level of practical programmes and support provided to Pacific island countries. We are seeing the benefits of this approach in Samoa. I commend these activities and urge that they continue.

The Government of Samoa has been pleased to partner with SPREP on many programmes over the last 20 years. But we must not rest on our laurels as the challenges ahead for our Pacific environment are many and varied.

I see from the papers for this meeting that you will have a very busy time ahead of you over the next 3 days.

I wish you all the best for a successful Meeting and for an enjoyable stay in Samoa.

It is now my pleasure to declare the Twenty Fourth SPREP Meeting officially open.

**ANNEX IV: STATEMENT BY HONORABLE FA'AMOETAULOA LEALIAULOTO TAITO
ULAITINO DR FAALE TUMAALII, MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND
ENVIRONMENT GOVERNMENT OF SAMOA**

Pastor Fa'afetai Fata
Director General of SPREP, Mr David Sheppard
Country Delegates,
Members of the Diplomatic Corps
Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to address you all this morning on the occasion of the Opening of the 24th intergovernmental meeting of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).

This opportunity today to say a few words, comes at an opportune time when the political stance and positions of small island states on key environment components like climate change, disaster management, water resources, seabed mining and others are being revisited. Among these arises the Need to address challenges of integration. Integration is probably the most pertinent of suggested solutions for environment sustainability over the last four or five years, and there seems to be a drive mainly for visibility of such an old and entrenched way in our Pacific communities, but is being flashed back at us like a new discovery. I would say that integration is really about being mindful, and considerate of our people and fellow neighbors. I say that collaboration with and among communities is an old and well established way of life. Neighbors used to look after each other, villages have customary traditions that encourage harmony, respect, and togetherness within its setting, where common land is used, developed and governed publicly, while the private settings are kept and developed personal preferences. No wonder, we have tended to put ourselves in the forefront mostly, because the goods derived from the natural resources at our disposal, although respected are seldom accorded the prioritisation they deserve.

Our Environment is a blessing from God. Like all good things that we as humans have been

endowed, and upon which our sustenance, our lineages, our future and sustainability of all things depend on, how we develop and nurture the natural resources at our disposal shall instill a sense of responsibility as well as inclusivity, so that all are involved effectively.

I have noted with concern the worrying trends in declining biodiversity endemism, increase in species invasiveness, the degradation of water and marine ecosystems from land based activities and contaminants, the spoiling of island beauty by irresponsible littering, all of which have persisted for some time now. There is also the rising trends of natural and anthropogenic disasters that all impinge on the environment, which at times prolong recovery efforts, worsen poverty and exacerbate our vulnerability to adverse impacts of these phenomena.

What is becoming most devastating is our smallness, remoteness and sensitivity that makes small islands the most vulnerable to climate change impacts, and ozone depletion risks. Samoa places much emphasis on ensuring adaptation to climate change remains a priority at international, regional and national levels. This does not mean that mitigation is not as important, because even though any reductions in our emissions will be only a minute contribution to the global rate, it is a show of commitment, as well as realizing economic savings from the escalating fossil fuel prices. I believe that renewable energy technologies now tested and applied in our islands will pave the path for sustainability within the energy sector, that also mitigate climate change, and the development of a Pacific Climate Change Centre is a positive medium to achieving the same. Samoa is supportive of this initiative

and remains committed to hosting such a centre.

SPREP has existed now for more than 20 Years, Samoa's own environment mission is about as old as the SPREP itself. I do believe that we have come a long way already. But what have we done collectively to place our region at the forefront of anything that is pleasing to our environment. We only have to look at ourselves, the achievements that have been made, and decide if we have done enough, and given sufficient intellect to the issues that we face in the environment sector. I am sure ladies and gentlemen, you may already have all the answers. That is why you are all here, to benefit this gathering with guidance that you can provide to SPREP. I only want to remind us all that the environment and all the resources it has on offer to us, is free and infinite. Governments place appropriate prohibitions, control measures and even fees on them only, in order to be able to keep their extraction, and utility within sustainable levels.

At a regional level, we shall all follow as we do at the national level. We share a vast expanse of ocean, that is rich in marine and pelagic resources. Not one country can protect it on its own, which is why we must all work together to protect and monitor its ability to sustain our fisheries dependent economies. Our Pacific biodiversity is unique with much endemism, and I encourage all members of SPREP to increase actions to avoid their extinction.

Ladies and Gentlemen, at about this time next year, Samoa will be hosting the largest ever conference held in this part of the world. The fourth SIDS conference will see all of the United Nations family congregate in Apia, and I am pleased to see SPREPs support and close collaboration with our MNRE to show case

our regions programmes and progress to date.

The regional and interregional preparatory meetings have taken place and am glad to note that theme of sustainable and nurtured partnerships have received accorded support. Strong economies of development partners have made effective contributions to our regional environment management systems. This is appreciated. We must also make our own contributions more effective and beneficial to our selves, even if it is in kind. A key partnership is our shared collaboration with the SPREP. SPREP needs to be strengthened through sufficient resourcing that encourages and assures efficient performance and delivery. I am glad therefore to learn that SPREP is in the process of becoming a GEF Implementing Agency. Samoa has its own GEF national office, and our progressive experience is testament to the benefits that are directly received with closer exchanges with the GEF. I wish SPREP success in this matter.

Respected Delegates, Let this week of discussions, experience sharing, and collective thinking and collaboration bear fruits that will last a lifetime. Let the outcomes of your deliberations also continue to clear, and map the road forward towards sustainability that is premised on genuine and beneficial partnerships within your individual countries, and between you all, both north-south and south-south understandings.

I wish you all a successful meeting, and hope that you will have time to visit our scenic sites and night spots, that I believe our frequent visitors among you are familiar with in Apia.

Bless you all, SOIFUA.

ANNEX V: STATEMENT BY MS CAROLINE MACHORO, CHAIR OF THE 23RD SPREP MEETING, GOVERNMENT OF NEW CALEDONIA

New Caledonia chaired SPREP for one year. This was a new experience for me and I would like to thank Members for their trust. I would also like to thank the SPREP staff for their support and for the services provided to Pacific countries and territories. I am particularly grateful to the SPREP Director, David Sheppard, and Deputy Director, Kosi Latu, who ensured a smooth and participatory chairmanship. I am also thankful to the efficient and dynamic team that supported me in New Caledonia, in particular Anne-Claire Goarant from the Regional Cooperation Service of the Government of New Caledonia.

This experience has been both exciting and instructive. I am pleased that SPREP is closer to its Members and effectively meets their expectations. The New Caledonia chairmanship has fostered a better

integration of French and American territories with the organisation and I welcome this development. It has also fostered a more inclusive collaboration among SPREP Members, irrespective of their status, thereby capturing the spirit of Pacific island solidarity.

This sense of solidarity, which is our strength and our uniqueness, allows us to develop specific governance and management actions, like the Marine Species Management Plan, the Special Waste Management Strategy, the Pacific delegation at Rio+20, and the future Joint Strategy for Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction.

I would like to extend my best wishes to the incoming chair from Nauru, with the hope that he will enjoy chairing this beautiful organisation as much as I did.

ANNEX VI: AGENDA**Agenda Item 1: Opening Prayer****Agenda Item 2: Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair****Agenda Item 3: Adoption of Agenda and Working Procedures****Agenda Item 4: Action Taken on Matters Arising from Twenty-Third SPREP Meeting****Agenda Item 5: 2012 Overview**

- 5.1 Presentation of Annual Report for 2012 and Director General's Overview of Progress since the Twenty-Third SPREP Meeting
- 5.2 Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report on the 2012 Annual Work Programme and Budget
- 5.3 Audited Annual Accounts for 2012

Agenda Item 6: Institutional Reform and Strategic Issues

- 6.1 Strengthening Regional Linkages update
- 6.2 Accessing Multilateral Financing – Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Adaptation Fund (AF) Accreditation
- 6.3 GEF Programmatic issues -(GEF 6, Ridge to Reef Programme, internal coordination issues)
- 6.4 Review of SPREP, including review of the Strategic Plan
- 6.5 Audit Committee Report
- 6.6 SIDs conference 2014
- 6.7 Pacific Climate Change Centre (PCCC) - Proposal

Agenda Item 7: Strategic Financial Issues

- 7.1 Report on Members' Contributions
- 7.2 Increase in membership contribution
- 7.3 Multi-year funding

Agenda Item 8: Corporate Services

- 8.1 Annual market Data
- 8.2 SPREP Director General's Performance Assessment
- 8.3 Director General's contract
- 8.4 Deputy Director General's contract
- 8.5 Report of the Inter-Sessional Working Group on Retention Allowance
- 8.6 Report by the Director General on Staff Appointment Beyond 6 years

Agenda Item 9: 2014 Work Programme and Budget

- 9.1 Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management (Overview)
 - 9.1.1 *Development of a Pacific Islands regional invasive species programme proposal for submission to GEF 6*
 - 9.1.2 *Pacific Invasives Species Capacity Development Strategy*
 - 9.1.3 *Ecosystem based Adaptation as a core approach linking protection of ecosystem services, enhanced resilience, improved adaptation and sustainability*
 - *(Report on the outcomes on the 2013 Pacific Environment Forum PEF)*
 - 9.1.4 *Utilizing the Pacific Oceanscape Framework to effectively focus regional and national marine and terrestrial management efforts*
- 9.2 Climate Change - (Overview)
 - 9.2.1 *2013 Pacific Climate Change Roundtable (PCCR)*
 - 9.2.2 *Report of the Second Pacific Meteorological Council Meeting*
 - 9.2.3 *Climate Change Roundtable (PCCR) and Regional Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Platform Joint 2013 (Roadmap).*

- 9.2.4 *Join National Action Plan (JNAP) Review*
 - 9.2.5 *Climate Change Project Sustainability - Up scaling the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) and The Pacific Island Greenhouse Gas Abatement for Renewal Energy (PIGGAREP) project.*
 - 9.2.6 *Pacific Preparation for the UNFCCC COP 19*
 - 9.2.7 *Updates on New Climate Change Initiatives (FINPACC and PPCR)*
 - 9.3 Waste Management and Pollution Control - (Overview)
 - 9.3.1 *Clean Pacific 2012 Campaign Highlights*
 - 9.3.2 *Waste Management Donor Coordination*
 - 9.3.3 *GEFPAS and EDF10 Waste Management Funding Update*
 - 9.3.4 *PACPLAN Review 2013*
 - 9.4 Environmental Monitoring & Governance - (Overview)
 - 9.4.1 *ACP MEA update*
 - 9.4.2 *Update on SOE*
 - 9.4.3 *NEMS/EIA*
 - 9.4.4 *Facilitating Resilient Development in the Pacific: Strengthening Capacity in the Use of Cost-Benefit Analysis (P-CBA Initiative)*
 - 9.5 Consideration and Approval of Proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2014
- Agenda Item 10: Items Proposed by Members**
- 10.1 Outcomes of the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (Bangkok, Thailand, March 2013) of relevance to SPREP members (***by Government of Australia and New Zealand***)
 - 10.2 Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction - (***Information Paper by Australia***)
- Agenda Item 11: Regional Cooperation**
- 11.1 CROP Executives Meeting Report
- Agenda Item 12: Statements by Observers**
- Agenda Item 13: Other Business**
- Agenda Item 14: Date and Venue of Twenty-Fifth SPREP Meeting**
- Agenda Item 15: Adoption of Report of the Twenty-Fourth SPREP Meeting**
- Agenda Item 16: Close**
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ANNEX VII: SCOPE OF 2014 REVIEWS

Scope of 2014 Reviews:

1. **Independent Corporate Review of SPREP**
2. **Mid-term Review of the SPREP Strategic Plan**

Objectives

1. To undertake the 2nd Independent Corporate Review of SPREP; and
2. To undertake a mid-term review of the SPREP Strategic Plan 2011-2015

Scope of Reviews

1. 2nd Independent Corporate Review:

Assess the overall performance of the Secretariat over the last 5 years, and in particular the progress undertaken to address the recommendations of the 2008 1st ICR endorsed by the 19th SPREP Meeting, with specific reference to:

- The Secretariat's performance over the last five years against stated objectives, 2011-2015 Strategic Plan, and other SPREP Member mandates and directives.
- SPREP's corporate systems and processes and their effectiveness.
- The impact of SPREP activities in achieving environmental outcomes and how this is integrated into work programmes and contributes to national and regional development.
- A participatory/consultative process with members and key stakeholders of the quality of services provided in terms of timeliness, quality of technical and advisory services, and results of capacity building support.
- The level of financial and technical resources that the Secretariat needs to service its members, deliver its strategic priorities and support its core functions.

- Related current regional initiatives and analysis of implications for the role/mandates of SPREP in the region as a CROP organisation, including the consistency of mandates relative to SPREP strategic priorities.
- Developing a revised job description for the Director General, taking into account the feedback from members at the 24th SPREP Meeting.
- recommendations for moving forward

2. Mid-term Review of SPREP Strategic Plan 2011-2015:

In conjunction with the 2nd ICR, undertake a mid-term review of the current strategic plan as required in the plan. Specifically to assess:

- The effectiveness, as measured by agreed indicators defined in the plan, of delivery against the goals and targets in the Strategic Plan.
- The relevance of the priorities and targets identified in the Strategic Plan to guide the ongoing implementation of the plan to 2015, and to inform the formulation of the next Strategic Plan.
- Challenges and issues encountered in implementing the Strategic Plan, including effectiveness of member and partner engagement.
- Extent to which the Secretariat is working in synergy with SPREP members to achieve the agreed priorities and targets of the plan and sustainable outcomes.
- Identify and review synergies, linkages and gaps with other relevant regional strategic instruments, with particular regard to formulation of the next Strategic Plan.

- Recommendations for improving delivery of the Strategic Plan during 2014-2015, including identification of any priorities and targets that require focused support (technical, financial, collaboration, etc) to ensure their achievement.

Review approach

- Establishment of a SPREP member Reference Group to work closely with the Secretariat in the first instance to define detailed review ToR; and with the Independent Review Team (IRT), during review implementation, comprising relevant sub-regional representation from Micronesia, Melanesia, Polynesia and a metropolitan members.
- Engagement of an Independent Review Team (IRT), comprising comprehensive expertise and experience in: Pacific regional environmental and developmental issues; organisational and thematic strategic planning; monitoring and evaluation; Pacific regional organisation architecture, interactions, mandates, policy and planning instruments; engagement with national government agencies; participatory and consultative approaches relevant to the Pacific.
- Establishment of a SPREP Secretariat support team to assist in implementation of the reviews.

Extensive consultation with SPREP Members, partners, donors and staff, through an open and transparent process of consultation including convening sub-regional workshops.

- Submission of review reports to the 2014 SPREP meeting.

Time Frame

In view of significant regional and national commitments in 2014 it is proposed to complete the 2nd ICR and Strategic Plan mid-term review in the first half of 2014. This will require:

- Establishment of member Reference Group and finalization of review ToR : November 2013
- Tendering for consultants for Independent Review Team (IRT): November-December 2013
- Engagement of IRT: January-February 2014
- Regional consultations and draft review preparation: March-May 2014
- Circulation of draft reviews for comments: June 2014
- Reviews finalized and included in 25th SPREP Meeting agenda papers: July 2014

Cost

\$200,000 with \$100,000 currently secured by the Secretariat.

ANNEX VIII: STATEMENT BY PARTNERS AND DONORS

CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC ISLANDS PROGRAMME (CI)

Honorable Chair of the 24th SPREP Meeting
Government Representatives from SPREP member countries
Representatives from CROP Agencies IGOs and fellow NGOs
Director General of SPREP
Ladies and Gentlemen

Conservation International congratulates SPREP on another year of success noting from the words of the Director General's opening remarks that SPREP has now doubled its support to its member countries.

We at Conservation International are proud of our partnership with SPREP having collaborated on many regional, and in-country projects, including most recently the Key Biodiversity Area analysis work with Kiribati, the Biodiversity Rapid assessment in Nauru, and the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund Program for the Polynesia-Micronesia Hotspot. We are happy to see that some of the projects we have supported with SPREP were highlighted this week, such as the Aleipata Island Restoration Project, and the Upland Savaii Biodiversity Rapid Assessment (or RAP) both here in Samoa. The outcome of that Biodiversity RAP also provided an indication of the increased impacts of invasive species that have now found their way up on the cloud forest and threatens the critical status of some of Samoa's bird species such as the tooth-billed pigeon or manumea, Samoa's flagship bird.

We applaud SPREP for driving the environmental agenda for the Pacific region and enhancing its engagement in the Pacific Oceanscape Framework by taking the lead to effectively focus regional and national marine and terrestrial management efforts in an

integrated approach. CI is a founding NGO partner in the Oceanscape and we are pleased that member countries have endorsed SPREP to continue to use the Pacific Oceanscape Framework as an over-arching regional integrated management strategy. The momentum under the Oceanscape continues to build well with the Pacific Regional Oceanscape Project of the World Bank illustrating how the Leaders' initiative has captured global attention. CI is also very heartened at the increasing number of country commitments to the Oceanscape, particularly in the form of large-scale ocean and island protected areas and we are pleased to partner with SPREP to support many of these including the Cook Islands Marine Park and Coral Sea MPA.

We are happy to hear of other initiatives being discussed this week such as the Micronesian Challenge, and Coral Triangle Initiative both of which are large ambitious sub-regional initiatives that CI is proud to support and has done from their inception.

We have worked hard with SPREP to integrate our own internal regional strategy to align with SPREPs and will continue to work with SPREP in all areas where we can be useful and helpful to Pacific Island states and add value. We will be increasingly managing all our work through the Pacific Oceanscape Framework, and drawing on our global network of expertise and fundraising to assist with its implementation.

In that note, I thank you Chair, Director General, and all SPREP members and wish everyone here a pleasant return home and look forward to when we next meet again at the 2014 SPREP meeting.

Faafetai Lava - Soifua

**CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF
MIGRATORY SPECIES OF WILD ANIMALS
(CMS)**

**Draft Strategic Plan for Migratory Species
2015-2023 - Comments by 30 Sept 2013**

As decided by COP10 of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), a Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023 is being prepared by the Strategic Plan Working Group.

A first draft of the Strategic Plan has now been released for comments by 30 September 2013. The draft presents proposed Goals and Targets for migratory species, based on the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

The draft Plan is for all migratory species as defined by the CMS, and as a Strategic Plan for Migratory Species it will thereby serve as a guiding framework for all work supporting the conservation of migratory species.

All CMS Parties and stakeholders are highly encouraged to engage in this important exercise by commenting on this first Draft Plan. This will ensure the development of a strong and realistic Plan in support of the conservation of migratory species.

The Working Group and CMS Secretariat would therefore very much appreciate hearing your views by 30 September 2013, and these should be emailed to cms@cms.int, inesverleye@gmail.com and wjackson@doc.govt.nz.

The draft Plan is available in English, French and Spanish on the CMS web page here: http://www.cms.int/bodies/StC/strategic_plan_2015_2023_wg/strpln_wg_drafts.html

INTERNATIONAL CONSERVATION (IC)

Thank you Chair for this opportunity to address the 24th meeting of SPREP

Dear SPREP Members and delegates

As a recent addition to the list of SPREP partners, Island Conservation is pleased to be able attend the SPREP meeting here in Apia, Samoa.

Island Conservation is dedicated to preventing the extinction of island species that are threatened by invasive species across the globe. With some of the highest rates of extinction of island species, we believe that that our collective efforts in the Pacific to prevent, control and wherever possible eradicate, invasive species needs to grow significantly.

At the last meeting of SPREP we announced a new global campaign – Small Islands Big Difference – that seeks to significantly increase the level of financial resources available for this urgent work. This campaign involves numerous partners across the world with a concern for island biodiversity.

Island Conservation is therefore delighted to note that the GEF has announced that its proposed *Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy Program 5: Avoiding Imminent Extinction in Island Ecosystems: a time-sensitive agenda* has been developed specifically to tackle the global problem of invasive species. We certainly hope that eligible Pacific Island countries will support this initiative and make full use of the opportunity.

Island Conservation reiterates its commitment to work with partners across the Pacific to protect island biodiversity at risk from invasive species, and out of respect for the food security, livelihoods, health and cultures of Pacific Island peoples.

Thank you.

STATEMENT BY THE INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE (IUCN)

The International Union for Conservation of Nature would like to congratulate the Director General of SPREP, both for his leadership qualities and for his vision for conservation in the region. We would also like to congratulate the very capable and professional SPREP team that are employed with implementing that vision in the region.

SPREP is not alone in the implementation of a vision for the Pacific, as a region that seeks the welfare of its people without compromising the health of the ecosystems that sustain them. We are all in the same canoe travelling in this beautiful ocean of ours. There are many International and Regional Intergovernmental organisations and International and National Non-Government Organisations paddling this same canoe with SPREP. IUCN is also here with our own paddle making sure we put in our share. As we come to share a common vision, this should ensure that our canoe keeps heading towards that direction... one just hopes we'll be heading in the right direction. And importantly we must also ensure we are all paddling in unison.

As any professional paddlers would tell you, for paddlers to row in unison and in harmony they need to practise together and often. Practice will transform them from good individual paddlers into one formidable team. I think we need more practice. One cannot overemphasize the importance of partnerships in the region. The current state of the environment in the Pacific requires us to make the most of these partnerships. Things are not getting better. Our Oceans and our forests are sick. Their condition (at least in this region) is not terminal but we need to act and act with urgency. Even more critical is the need to stop the loss of biodiversity. We

are losing species at an alarming rate and we need to take action now.

IUCN appreciates that we cannot serve the environment and conservation of species without having to deal with the challenges of development. A lot of IUCN Oceania's efforts this year have been spent in helping countries shift from a model of economy that is driving us further into a downward spiral ... to a model (a Green Economy model) that provides for people's needs, while ensuring that this is not done at the expense of our natural environment. IUCN is here to stay in the region and we stand ready to assist countries with their conservation efforts and particularly to help them shift to more sustainable economic models. We applaud Solomon Islands and Vanuatu for their commitment to do so.

To continue the canoe analogy... there are a number of paddlers that are not here with us at this meeting. IUCN, being a Union with State and NGO members, needs to also recognise the important roles that our NGOs... big and small... play in our countries and with our communities. I would also be failing in my duties if I don't recognise the superb work that many of our Pacific people from within their organisations have been doing for conservation. One of these people was the late Tui Macuata from Fiji, who earlier this year, passed away, in the same ocean he worked so hard to protect. He is a reminder that we can achieve much with the right leadership, and that includes traditional leadership. Ratu Aisea's commitment to conservation, both marine and terrestrial, and his involvement with locally protected areas, should be an inspiration to all of us.

It is becoming increasingly obvious that we cannot continue with *Business as Usual*. *Business as Usual* means we will continue losing our precious resources to outside interests... continue degrading our

ecosystems... and continue losing our species in the process. We obviously need a different way of doing things and we need our leaders from Governments, Intergovernmental Organisations, NGOs and the Private Sector to step up and make a difference. We need to ask ourselves, each and everyone one of us, "If we don't do it, who will?"

And it would certainly take us further if we actually embark on a new Green Economy path, together. And that, my friends, is our challenge today.

Fa'afetai, Vinaka, Thank you.

INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION (IWC)

The International Whaling Commission is the inter-governmental organisation (IGO) charged with the conservation of whales and the management of whaling. The IWC consists of 88 Contracting Governments who are signatories to the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling.

The work programme of the IWC continues to grow and diversify. Current, active work strands include whale watching, conservation management plans, entanglement, ship strikes and marine debris. Collaboration with other IGOs and regional organisations like SPREP is key to the success of these projects, and the IWC welcomes the leadership demonstrated by SPREP in advancing cetacean conservation in the Pacific Islands region.

Whalewatching

Whale watch operators, scientists, and government officials from over 20 countries gathered in Brisbane in May 2013 to discuss a 5 year Strategic Plan for Whale Watching and

the development of a web-based 'Living' Handbook. Whale watching is a fast-growing sector with economic benefits for a diverse range of coastal communities. However, unless well-managed it has the potential to have a negative impact on whales and their habitat. The IWC 5 year plan aims to develop and convey best practice, and the Living Handbook will become an evolving repository for all aspects of advice including training, governance, capacity building and compliance.

Conservation Management Plans

Conservation Management Plans (CMPs) aim to improve conservation outcomes for the world's most endangered cetacean populations. CMPs are tailored, flexible tools which enable targeted management of human activities. Importantly, they are designed to complement existing international conventions and agreements, national legislation and management regimes. To assist this process, the IWC is developing inventories of regional cetacean conservation measures, and welcomed the first of these inventories, for the South Pacific, which was presented to the Commission at its 64th Annual Meeting in 2012. Three CMPs are already underway and the CMP Working Group met in Brisbane in May 2013 to review progress and agree the expansion of the programme.

Entanglement

The IWC is leading a global programme which aims to tackle whale entanglement on a number of levels. On a practical level, a network of individuals from all over the world is receiving professional training in the tools and techniques needed to disentangle whales safely.

Since this work began, over 500 people from 20 countries have received training in

disentanglement practices. Around the world, 1,000 rescues have been completed safely. Two expert workshops have been held, and the heads of all the world's national and regional whale entanglement response programmes have come to together to share experience and help build capacity elsewhere. The number of requests for training and assistance continues to rise and, the IWC entanglement network is striving to meet demand. This year, training has been conducted in USA and South America, a further workshop is taking place in the Caribbean in October.

Ship strikes

The IWC has also been working to raise awareness and concern regarding collisions between vessels and whales. Ship strike poses a threat to both the whale and those on-board the vessel. The IWC has created an international database through which incidents can be reported and analysed, helping to inform work to reduce collisions. Over the coming months, the IWC will be seeking to raise awareness of this database, and encourage wider usage.

Marine debris

In May, the IWC brought together experts from around the world to better understand marine debris and its effect on cetaceans. Man-made ocean debris includes plastics, abandoned and lost fishing gear, glass and metal. Ingestion and entanglement can cause horrific suffering to marine mammals and the IWC is co-ordinating efforts to understand the nature and impact of marine debris on whales and small cetaceans with two workshops. The first aimed to assess the extent of the problem. The second in 2014 will look at mitigation and conservation.

For more information: www.iwc.int

MELANESIAN SPEARHEAD GROUPS (MSG)

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished members of SPREP,
Director General and staff of SPREP,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

May I first of all, convey warm greetings from the Director General and staff of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) Secretariat and say how pleased we are to be invited by SPREP to participate at this Annual Meeting.

Mr Chairman, on behalf the Director General, I wish to also extend to you our warmest congratulations on your appointment as Chair of the SPREP Meeting. We are confident that under your capable and wise leadership, we will achieve a successful outcome at this meeting.

The MSG acknowledges the important role of SPREP in implementing environmental and climate change programs in close collaboration with all Members in our Pacific community. As a regional partner, we value our relationship with SPREP and look forward to building an enduring partnership through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) soon to be signed by both our organizations. This will be one of our many important achievements in the young life of our organization as we strive to find our place in the region amongst the many and well established regional organizations including this esteemed Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), in serving the common interests of our members. We are therefore, privileged to be here today

Mr. Chairman,

Over the years, the MSG has been working on a number of key priorities which have contributed significantly to sustainable

development in the region. In more recent times, one of these priorities has been in the area of Climate.

The year 2012 saw the MSG take leadership on environment and climate change when our Leaders signed the MSG Declaration on Environment & Climate Change which has seen members committing themselves to developing framework arrangements under the four key pillars: Melanesia's Green Growth Framework, Melanesia Terrestrial Commitment, Blue Carbon Initiative and Melanesia Green Climate Fund.

Whilst monitoring the implementation of the Declaration, the Secretariat will continue to facilitate the participation of members in regional and international forums such as the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and at the same time, continue to advocate climate change and environment issues on behalf of its members with relevant regional and international organizations. Hence, the significance of our presence here today.

Mr. Chairman,

We wish to re-emphasize how much we value SPREP's increased presence in Melanesia in view of the relative size of Melanesia's rich and diverse terrestrial ecosystem and biodiversity in the Pacific. SPREP is already an important Partner in the MSG Environment and Climate Change Meetings and will also continue to play an important role in providing technical assistance to our Technical Advisory Committee Meetings in the years to come. The MSG plans to utilize SPREP's expertise on environment and climate change through close collaboration and joint leveraging of resources to implement Environment and Climate Change programs in Melanesia. For this, members of the SPREP, we wish to extend to you our deepest gratitude and look forward to further

strengthening this partnership between both our organizations.

Mr Chairman,

Again, it has been an honour and privilege to participate at this distinguished Annual Meeting of the SPREP and on behalf of the Director General and the staff of the MSG Secretariat, we thank you for allowing us this opportunity.

Thank You.

PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS – GLOBAL OCEAN LEGACY

In the last few years, Pew Charitable Trusts, through its Global Ocean Legacy programme, has actively contributed to the establishment of large, highly protected marine areas in the Pacific region and the rest of the world.

This is the first time that Pew Charitable Trusts has attended the annual SPREP Meeting and we are grateful for the relationships it has allowed us to forge with such an active environmental organisation.

Pew Charitable Trusts and its Global Ocean Legacy programme also welcome the constructive dialogue established with Member States and various organisations sharing similar challenges in the areas of climate change, good governance, waste management and biodiversity conservation.

The Global Ocean Legacy programme aims to establish large, highly protected marine areas where commercial extractive activities would be banned.

Global Ocean Legacy is in the process of establishing field offices, including in French Polynesia, Easter Island and New Caledonia, led and managed by local staff who will take part in the joint implementation of ocean

protection projects, both in EEZs and coastal areas.

These actions are or will be covered, as required, by memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with the relevant States.

Global Ocean Legacy will thus be able to share its experience and knowledge with various project groups and, when needed, support the dissemination of information at all levels.

To conclude, I would like to personally thank SPREP for inviting me to its 24th annual meeting and look forward to our successful joint actions for the preservation of our oceans.

PACIFIC ISLAND FORUM SECRETARIAT (PIFS)

Chair,

Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to make an intervention on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. Before I continue I would like to convey the SG's apology for not being able to attend this meeting due to pre-existing duty travel.

I would also like to congratulate the Secretariat on what has been a very successful meeting and to thank the Government and people of Samoa for the warm hospitality that they have accorded to us all.

As you will be aware, the Forum Secretariat works closely and collaboratively with SPREP on many matters. Over the last year or so this has largely been in the areas of, Ocean Management, Sustainable Development, and Climate Change, through the relevant coordination mechanisms of CROP and the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable.

Ocean Management

Recent efforts under the Oceanscape Framework have strongly focussed on the development of an implementation plan designed to transform commitments into action, taking into account the many current activities in the region that contribute to achieving the objectives of the Oceanscape Framework. The draft implementation plan and a series of associated concept notes (7) were endorsed by Leaders in Majuro who directed the CROP Marine Sector Working Group to use the concept notes to secure additional resourcing.

Over the past year, the PIFS Secretary General in his role as Ocean Commissioner has continued to champion the region's Ocean-related management and conservation efforts. 2013 commitments have included co-chairing the United Nations Regular Process South-West Pacific Regional Workshop which will contribute to a global 'State of the Oceans' report that will be released in early 2015.

The Ocean Commissioner has also been highly engaged in the design process for the World Bank-led Global Partnership for Oceans (GPO) which draws on the holistic approach of the Oceanscape Framework. With the support of the World Bank we anticipate the region will see the launch of the World Bank's Pacific Regional Oceanscape Programme (PROP) in late 2014. While the PROP is likely to have a primary focus on oceanic fisheries management we hope that it will also integrate components on marine habitat conservation, and inshore fisheries management.

Sustainable Development

As the region gears up towards the SIDS2014 conference, we look forward to continuing our support to members through the CROP

Sustainable Development Working Group and other mechanisms. This SDWG which is co-chaired by SPREP and PIFS has helped coordinate the development of 30 thematic briefs and will meet again on 17 of October in Suva to map-out support for the conference which will focus on launching innovative and concrete partnerships to advance the sustainable development of SIDS.

As the Pacific SIDS continue to formulate their position ahead of the SIDS2014 conference, the global ‘gaps’ appearing around key PSIDS issues including climate change, infrastructure, oceans, and means of implementation may indicate where the brunt of the region’s campaigning efforts should flow.

While issues such as climate change and oceans must be considered as strong priorities for FICs ahead of SIDS2014, the challenge will be defining exactly what aspects of these broad ranging issues should be championed.

Climate change

Pacific Islands Forum Leaders continue to reaffirm that climate change remains the greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and well-being of the peoples of the Pacific.

Despite their relatively small contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions, many PICs are taking leading demonstrative steps at the highest political level to commit to significant mitigation efforts. The Majuro Declaration for Climate Leadership captures this collective commitment from Forum Leaders and is intended to spark a new wave of climate leadership that accelerates the reduction and phasing down of greenhouse gas pollution worldwide.

This Declaration will be presented by the Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum to the

Secretary-General of the United Nations as a contribution to his efforts to catalyze ambitious climate action and mobilize political will for a universal, ambitious and legally-binding climate change agreement by 2015. This Declaration and the actions under it are intended to complement, strengthen and augment processes under way and commitments already made, including those under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol.

Leaders also recognized the need for strengthened national systems to plan for, access, deliver, absorb and monitor climate change financing. They called on donors and development partners to report on their climate change financing and how they differentiate or integrate such financing with their ODA allocations, noting New Zealand and Australia’s existing efforts in this regard. Leaders urged donors to continue to simplify and harmonise their assessment, implementation and reporting processes for funding and assistance to reduce the complexity of current arrangements, and reiterated member countries’ preference for using national systems and modalities for channeling climate change finance guided by relevant country owned policies and plans for adaptation, mitigation and risk reduction.

The Forum Secretariat will continue to support the coordination of this climate change financing work in the region in collaboration with SPREP, other CROP agencies and partners including UNDP, AusAID, EU, USAID, ADB and the World Bank into the future. Through the Pacific Climate Change Finance Assessment Framework developed through the Nauru Case Study completed early this year, we are hopeful that FICs would be in a better position to make informed decisions on how to effectively access and manage international climate change resources.

Finally allow me to commend SPREP for pursuing the establishment of a Pacific Climate Change Centre through funding under the Japanese Government, and noted that all CROP Executives have welcomed and supported this initiative during the recent meeting in August.

Let me reiterate on behalf the Forum Secretariat our sincere gratitude to the host government of Samoa and to the Secretariat for allowing us to participate in this important meeting.

Thank you very much.

SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY (SPC)

SPC works closely with SPREP on a number of fronts this meeting highlighted our collaborative work in a number of areas such as maritime delimitation, climate change, biodiversity, monitoring and evaluation work.

In the area of climate change and in relation to new initiativea, as indicated by SPC director general at the forum leaders meeting and in the context of the working arm of the crop CEOS on climate change, SPC supports SPREPS climate change centre initiative. SPC will also be working closely with SPREP on the pilot program for climate resilience

SPC looks forward to further enhancing our excellent working relationship in the interests of our members

Thank you Mr Chair

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)

Over the last 12 months, UNEP has been running six environment programmes in the Pacific region as an Implementing Agency including five funded by the Global Environment Facility. At least another four are in the pipe-line under GEF 5 including two regional programmes (Capacity Development and Access and Benefit Sharing) and country projects with Republic of Marshall Islands and Palau. Further, two programmes are planned under GEF 6 which the SPREP meeting has signalled support for – including a whole of region umbrella programme on Invasive Alien Species and biosecurity. Along with partners such as SPREP, support has been provided developing the Pacific component of the Global Programme for Oceans – the Pacific Oceanscape. UNEP hopes that, in future, complimentary niches can be found with SPREP after it becomes a GEF Implementing Agency so the current high degree of cooperation currently enjoyed may continue. UNEP continues to remain at the service of any SPREP members to advise on further project design and environmental management and will continue to support them in preparations for the SIDS Conference in September 2014 in Apia, Samoa.

UNEP has relocated its office to the SPREP campus in Apia Samoa and this has proved extremely beneficial – hopefully for both parties. This move is underpinned with a formal MOU signed by the respective heads of agencies in which they commit to close collaboration and cooperation. I would like to record my personal deep gratitude for the support provided by SPREP colleagues over the last five years in my solo role in the Pacific working for UNEP. UNEP is seeking ways to increase the number of staff located in the Pacific and expand its collaboration with its other partners including Conservation International.

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO)

Thank you Chair,

Let me start with expressing my great interest to participate as an observer in the 24th SPREP meeting in Apia, Samoa. I commend SPREP for the excellent organization of the official meeting as well as the very informative side events.

UNESCO is very pleased to work in partnership with SPREP in the Pacific region. Some examples of this partnership include the 2012 publication of “E-waste for Journalists” and Heritage in Young Hands youth workshop at the 2012 Festival of Pacific Arts.

SPREP is a member of the Steering Committee of the Pacific Heritage Hub, a regional facility for knowledge management, capacity building and partnership development in the area of heritage, established at the University of the South Pacific. Our collaboration continues later this year with the up-coming Pacific Nature Conservation Round Table and UNESCO Pacific World Heritage Meeting.

UNESCO is working on a number of issues relevant to SPREP’s core activities, particularly climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and ecosystem based management . To name just a few examples, very recently we have collaborated with SPREP in our multi-country project “SPARCK”-Sharing Perceptions of Adaptation, Resilience and Climate Knowledge.

Additionally, we have worked closely with SPREP regarding our recent climate change and the law training workshops held in Suva and Apia respectively.

UNESCO supports the development of the intergrated strategy for DRR and CCA as part of the Roadmap process in the Pacific. We have engaged actively in the joint meeting

organised by SPREP, SPC and UNISDR in Nadi, and will continue to do so .

We are currently preparing to revitalize PacMAB, the UNESCO Pacific Man and Biosphere Reserve Network. On this note, I would like to share with participants that UNESCO will be organizing the 4th PacMAB regional meeting in April 2014. I am sure this initiative is also of great interest to SPREP and its members.

As noted various times during this week’s meeting, the Third SIDS Conference to be held in Samoa in 2014 will be the biggest event to take place in the Pacific region to date.

UNESCO is looking forward to joining forces in order to make it a success! We are looking ahead to continuing cooperation with SPREP in the lead-up to the SIDS Conference in Samoa and beyond.

Thank you for your kind attention.

UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC (USP)

Mister chair, honourable ministers and delegates. On behalf of the Vice Chancellor of the USP, I thank you for this very informative meeting and for the opportunity for USP to make this short statement.

We are happy to observe the progress made by SPREP since last year on the different projects, epecially those conducted on climate change, biodiversity & conservation and waste management. USP continues to support SPREP programmes in the region, and we look forward to working more closely with SPREP to deliver support to Pacific Countries and Communities particularly with regards to managing climate change impacts.

Since the last meeting we have continued our collaboration with SPREP on the climate

change portal for the region, we are also working together in the roadmap technical working group and under the Adaptation and mainstreaming working group of the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable that we are coordinating together and with other partners this year. We hope that through all these activities, the exchange of information between the SPREP PACC project and the USP adaptation projects such as the USP-EU-GCCA and the USAID-CCAP projects that we consider essential will continue to improve this year.

We are happy to have regular discussion with SPREP and the National Meteorological Services also interested on the capacity development of Meteorological services. The outcomes of the discussion between national meteorological services, SPREP and USP last week will support the deepening of our collaboration on this topic. For example, USP will continue to work to have its courses recognized by WMO and to meet WMO standards so it may be possible to designate USP as a WMO Regional training center. We look forward to continue to work with SPREP on this topic and to support capacity building of the national meteorological services in the region. USP is also, as mentioned earlier, working together with SPREP to prepare a baseline survey under the FINPAC project. This programme will be more effective if scholarships are available for students, including meteorological officers. Our AusAID funded FCLP program has now ended, and the scholarship funds under the USP-EU-GCCA project are already totally committed. We are currently working to secure funds to continue

to offer scholarships for the climate change program, including part-time scholarships to allow professionals, particularly meteorological officers, to pursue their studies while continuing their work and we invite SPREP and its members to highlight this as a need for the region for climate change, disaster risk reduction and the national meteorological services.

As I already mentioned last year, as university, our main asset/strength is our students. We have currently about 150-200 students enrolled under the climate change program, including MSc and 8 PhD. In order to train them to be the most useful for the region after they graduate, we consider it important to give them information, examples, cases studies from the region. The participation of these students in SPREP projects as interns, or as part of their research for a Master or PhD program would provide them with a practical knowledge of regional issues but would also provide support for SPREP projects and would participate in knowledge sharing between the different regional organizations. Nine students have now completed a Masters in climate change since the beginning of the climate change programs at PaCE-SD, and more will graduate in April next year. I would like to use this opportunity to encourage SPREP and the delegates to support these students to stay in the region by providing them with internship or, even better, working positions, to make sure that these students from the region, trained in the region, will use their knowledge and skills to support the regions actions to adapt to climate change.