



Report of the Second SPREP Executive Board Meeting

2-4 September 2020

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Second Executive Board Meeting was held from 2 - 4 September, 2020. This was a virtual meeting held via Zoom.
2. Present in the virtual meeting were TROIKA Members: Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Solomon Islands; Sub-regional Constituency Members: French Polynesia, for Polynesia, Guam and Kiribati for Micronesia, New Caledonia for Melanesia, and New Zealand for the Metropolitan Members. Observers were: Cook Islands, Fiji, Tonga, United Kingdom, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and World Meteorological Organization (WMO). A list of participants is attached as Annex 1.

AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING

3. The opening prayer of the Second Executive Board Meeting was made by the Director General of the Secretariat.
4. The keynote address, a recorded video, was presented by Hon. Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister of Samoa.

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), Solomon Islands was appointed the Chair of the Second Executive Board Meeting, and Guam was appointed the Vice-Chair.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. **confirmed** the Representative of **Solomon Islands** as **Chair**; and
2. **confirmed** the Representative of **Guam** as **Vice-Chair**.

AGENDA ITEM 3: ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND WORKING PROCEDURES

6. The Meeting reviewed the Provisional Agenda and the suggested hours of work.
7. On behalf of the Polynesia constituency, French Polynesia expressed concerns on the length of the agenda in light of this being a virtual Meeting and

requested that all presentations be brief to allow the Executive Board to focus on key issues.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. **considered and adopted** the *Provisional Agenda*; and
2. **agreed** on hours of work

AGENDA ITEM 4: ACTION TAKEN ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 29TH SPREP MEETING

8. The Secretariat reported effective actions against the decisions and directives from the Twenty-Ninth SPREP meeting (29SM) held in Apia, Samoa from 3 – 5 September 2019.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. **noted actions taken** against the decisions and directives of the 29th SPREP Meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 5: 2019 OVERVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FIRST SPREP PERFORMANCE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2018-2019

AGENDA ITEM 5.1: PRESENTATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2019 AND DIRECTOR GENERAL'S OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS SINCE THE 29SM

9. The Director General presented the 2019 SPREP Annual Report to Members and provided an overview report on progress over the last year.
10. In response to a query from French Polynesia on behalf of the Cook Islands, the Director General confirmed that the European Union has been flexible in adapting EU-funded project work plans and budgets as well as reprogramming some of the EU projects to address post-Tropical Cyclone Harold needs. The Director General advised that the possibility of variations to agreed contract modalities to mitigate COVID-19 challenges is an issue the Secretariat would like to discuss further with all partners including the EU, noting the EU has asked to delay this discussion until October to provide for updated COVID-19 forecasts.
11. A query from French Polynesia on percentages of work done, or not done by the Secretariat due to COVID-19 was deferred by the Chair to be addressed in *Agenda Item 5.2*.
12. New Zealand commended the 2019 Annual Report noting the valuable role of the Secretariat in the Region and its agility in a world of COVID-19 and proposed that future Annual Reports focus on outcomes reporting, including impacts on budgets and delivery of activities.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. ***noted the Director General's 2019 SPREP Annual Report.***



AGENDA ITEM 5.2: COVID-19 IMPACTS ON SPREP

13. The Director General updated the Meeting on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Secretariat's operations and the expected delivery of activities in 2020, noting the Secretariat's commitment to maintain delivery of the agreed work programme and budget to the highest level possible.
14. French Polynesia emphasised the urgency of adapting to the pandemic, noting the forecast budget is just over 50% and expressed a desire for the Secretariat to increase the amount of on-ground action it implements.
15. The Chair, Kiribati, New Caledonia and New Zealand noted that the whole world has had to adapt to COVID-19 and congratulated the Secretariat on its response to the impacts of the pandemic.
16. The Secretariat responded to the question posed by New Zealand seeking more explicit details by noting that the specifics of impacts and forecasting of project activities as well as planning for the remainder of 2020 are provided in the Annex to Working Paper 5.2.
17. Kiribati and New Caledonia congratulated Solomon Islands for the election to the Chair, and Samoa for their efforts over the past 12 months.

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18. New Zealand enquired as to SPREP's organizational resilience to the impacts of the pandemic. The Secretariat noted a number of actions taken to ensure the occupational safety and health of the Secretariat's staff, in line with the Samoan State of Emergency measures and including some stronger than those taken by the Samoan Government.
 19. Kiribati noted that the Environment Departments of small countries are heavily impacted by COVID-19, including the financial burden of virtual engagement in the work of the Secretariat. The Secretariat outlined a survey undertaken this year with Members seeking information on Members' connectivity challenges,

noting that the Secretariat has been able to provide some support for Member connectivity, and would be happy to discuss directly with Kiribati what assistance may be possible.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. ***noted the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the SPREP 2020 work programme and forecast reduction in expenditure of the 2020 budget; and***
2. ***noted the Secretariat actions to manage the consequences of these impacts to maintain delivery of support to Members to the highest level possible.***

AGENDA ITEM 5.3: STRATEGIC OUTCOMES FROM THE 2018/2019 PIP SYNOPSIS

20. The Secretariat presented on its performance in achieving the strategic outcomes from implementation of SPREP's first PIP (2018-2019) and the Annual Work Programme and Budget for 2020 – 2021.
21. New Zealand acknowledged the difficulty in producing the report and highlighted its high quality, noting it is impressed by the amount of work undertaken and commended the Secretariat for its reporting against outcomes.
22. New Zealand suggested it would be beneficial to consider inclusion of a dashboard overarching the table *WP 5.3 Att2* to provide a graphic summary of progress. New Zealand also proposed from a governance perspective, that in future the Secretariat's working papers guide the Board to areas for specific governance consideration such as risk management. New Zealand also suggested that the Executive Board reflect on the desirability of working

papers addressing governance issues for the consideration of the Board and requested discussion on this topic at the end of the meeting.

23. In response to clarification sought from Solomon Islands, the Secretariat confirmed that COVID-19 impacts are included in the Enterprise Risk Register and provided further clarification of upgrades recently completed in risk management, noting that SPREP's updated Risk Framework follows international best practice beginning with project level risk, by identifying the context of the risk, the effectiveness of existing controls and assessing the likelihood and the consequences of occurrence resulting in a 'traffic light' risk rating. Summary data including management plans for each risk, is recorded in the Enterprise Risk Register. An Enterprise Risk Management Plan detailing those enterprise risks which have been prioritized by SMT is provided to support monitoring of management measures by SMT.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. **noted** the PIP 2018-2019 Strategic Outcome Report;
2. **noted** the Annual Work Programme and Budget (AWPB) 2020-2021 and progress made towards achievement of the 2018-2019 programme of work and budget, and 2018-2019 PIP strategic Outcomes;
3. **considered** Secretariat responses in addressing cross-cutting issues in implementation of the first PIP; and
4. **noted** that the PIP strategic planning mechanism will be evaluated after completion of the second (2020-2021) PIP in 2022.



AGENDA ITEM 5.4: AUDITED ACCOUNTS FOR 2019

24. In accordance with Financial Regulation 27(e) the Director General is required to submit audited financial statements to the SPREP Meeting, while Regulations 30-32 prescribes the manner in which the financial statements are to be presented and audited.
25. Financial Regulation 33 requires the Director General to circulate to each SPREP Meeting the Auditors Report on the financial operations of SPREP, together with such remarks as the Director General may wish to offer, prior to the SPREP Meeting.
26. The auditors have provided an unmodified audit opinion of the Secretariat's financial operations for 2019.
27. The Secretariat presented its 2019 audited accounts conducted by KPMG Fiji to the meeting, reporting a total income of USD 4.1 million and total expenditure in of USD 4.2 million with a net deficit for 2019 of \$ 81,977.
28. French Polynesia queried the Secretariat's deficit and sought clarification on why the 2019 audited report showed more expenditure than income. The Secretariat explained that while there was a growth in expenditure resulting from its increased project portfolio there was a shortfall in income due largely to the delays experienced in implementing projects. These delays resulted in an overall realisation of only 54% of the Secretariat's budget for 2019 with respect to related income from project implementation.
29. The Chair then sought the Secretariat's clarification on how it would build its reserves through sustainable financing strategies. The Secretariat explained that sustainable financing remains a key priority for its Senior Management Team and it will continue to work with Friends of the Chair to progress this.
30. The Director General assured the Board that the Secretariat continues to exercise a number of measures to address financial sustainability with a view to rebuilding reserves, including managing foreign exchange exposure and controlling core costs wherever possible to relieve pressure on the core budget. The Secretariat reaffirmed its commitment to keeping its core costs as low as practically possible given the challenge of generating income during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. **reviewed and adopted** the audited Financial Statements and Auditors' Report for 2019.

AGENDA ITEM 6: REGIONAL COOPERATION

AGENDA ITEM 6.1: BLUE PACIFIC VISION AND THE 2050 STRATEGY

31. The Secretariat presented a brief synthesis of the Blue Pacific vision and development of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent including strengthening the regional architecture, noting that the final product will be delivered in 2021 during the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat meeting.
32. New Caledonia on behalf of Melanesia, thanked the Secretariat for its support to the 2050 Strategy, seconded by French Polynesia on behalf of Polynesia.
33. Fiji, New Caledonia, and Vanuatu noted that they have completed their 2050 consultations and will submit their reports to the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), acknowledging that other Melanesian constituency Members are in the process of completing consultations and will submit before the extended deadline.
34. French Polynesia reported that the Cook Islands are cautious of how climate change issues are addressed in the 2050 Strategy and have requested the Secretariat to note this. The Director General agreed this to be an important issue and noted that the Secretariat had consistently advised PIFS that the relevant regional frameworks already in place, and in many cases such as the FRDP, already being acted upon, should form the basis of the Drivers of Change discussion. The Secretariat will continue to be mindful of the nuances within this.
35. French Polynesia sought information on the role of the Secretariat in respect of the nuclear legacy issue. The Director General confirmed the Secretariat is part of the Council of Regional Organizations of the Pacific (CROP) Task Force providing technical advice and support to Member countries.
36. The Chair, noting that the priorities identified by the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders in the 2050 Strategy cut across SPREP's mandate, observed that while this emphasizes the importance of the Secretariat's work, he was concerned about the capacity of the Secretariat to deliver and implement. The Director General confirmed the Secretariat's similar concerns, noting that the Secretariat is awaiting a response from PIFS on resources and funding available to implement the 2050 Strategy.
- The Executive Board Meeting:***
1. ***noted the limited progress to date and requested that SPREP remain engaged in the development of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.***

AGENDA ITEM 6.2: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM LEADERS AND SIS LEADERS DECISIONS

37. The Secretariat presented an overview of the coordinated efforts of SPREP to implement the Forum Leaders' and Small Islands States Leaders' decisions from the 50th Pacific Islands Forum in 2019 in relevant areas of the SPREP mandate.
38. The Director General urged Members to sign up to conventions under the International Maritime Organization Convention given the mechanisms and resources available to assist signatories in the event of oil spills.

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39. French Polynesia on behalf of Polynesia congratulated the Secretariat on work completed, noting that the Secretariat has a key role in providing technical advice to Members, specifically referencing the BBNJ negotiations.
 40. French Polynesia and New Caledonia acknowledged the importance of CROP agencies' coordination with New Caledonia proposing that sub-regional leaders' decisions such as those of the Melanesian Spearhead Group be included. The Director General noted

that the purpose of the CROP Plan 2020 is to coordinate CROP efforts and advised that he will seek clarification at the next CROP coordination meeting on how Leaders decisions will be taken into account at sub-regional levels by the CROP.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1 ***noted*** the coordinated efforts of SPREP to implement the CROP Strategic Work Agenda for 2019 -2020 of the Forum Leaders' and SIS Leaders' decisions from the 50th Pacific Islands Forum.

AGENDA ITEM 6.3: SPREP SUB REGIONAL PRESENCE

41. The Secretariat updated the Executive Board on the status and operations of SPREP's project-funded Melanesian sub-regional presence, and reported on progress in the establishment of the SPREP Northern Sub-regional office as directed by the 29th SPREP Meeting (29SM).
42. The Deputy Director General, responding to a question from New Caledonia about the funding status of the sub-regional offices, noted that the three Melanesian offices (in Fiji, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands), are project offices funded by projects without core funding support, while the Northern sub-regional office is funded by core budget with financial support from the host country Republic of Marshall Islands.
43. The Chair informed the Executive Board Meeting that Solomon Islands is funding the cost of hosting the Solomon Islands office and suggested that the establishment of offices in countries supported by projects and host countries instead of the core may offer the Secretariat a model for operating sub-regionally.

44. The Deputy Director General noted that while the Northern Sub-regional Office was opened in the Republic of Marshall Islands in November 2019, it is operating under the transitional budget approved by 29SM which is proving adequate for current 2020 and 2021 operations. Meanwhile as directed by 29SM, the Secretariat is working with the Transitional Office Manager and Northern SPREP Members to develop an operating model and seek more financing to support the full-scale operations of the office.
45. The Director General noted the important role that the sub-regional offices have provided in delivering activities and programmes in-country during COVID19 pandemic travel restrictions.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. ***welcomed*** the innovative approach by the Secretariat to support the sub-regional presence in Melanesian countries funded through projects and Government support and recommend this approach as a model for the region in terms of organisational resilience; and

expressed appreciation to the Solomon Islands Government for providing office space in Honiara;

2. **welcomed** the formal opening of the SPREP Northern Sub-regional Office;
3. **noted** the on-going work by the Micronesians Members' Working Group and further **encouraged** the Micronesians SPREP Members to actively work alongside the Transitional Office Manager to complete the costed draft operating model and budget to ensure

timely identification of new funding sources for a fully funded SPREP Northern Sub-regional Office;

4. **noted** that the interim budget will support the work of the Northern Sub-regional Office as currently structured for the remainder of 2020; and
5. **requested** the Secretariat to report to Members with a budget that can support the proposed operating model for the Northern Sub-regional Office when that has been achieved.

AGENDA ITEM 7: INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT FOR 2020

AGENDA ITEM 7.1: 10TH PACIFIC ISLANDS CONFERENCE ON NATURE CONSERVATION AND PROTECTED AREAS

46. The Secretariat presented an update on the revised approach for convening the postponed 10th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas and associated Pacific Islands Environment Leadership Awards (PIELA), noting that while the Conference would now be virtual, the PIELA will still need to be a live event at a date to be confirmed. The Secretariat also acknowledged New Caledonia's commitment and hard work in preparing for the event.
47. New Zealand, on behalf of France, sought clarification on the links between the State of the Environment Report and the State of Conservation in Oceania Report. The Secretariat considered that both reports will be of importance for Pacific islands engagement and participation in key international biodiversity events such as the Fifteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2021.
48. Kiribati highlighted the costs to PICTs in maintaining connectivity to engage in the Secretariat's virtual events, including the

10th Conference. In response the Secretariat advised it will seek a solution for connectivity cost issues for island states to enable full participation and engagement in the virtual conference.

49. New Caledonia acknowledged the presentation by the Secretariat confirming that local participants are being mobilized to attend. New Caledonia also supported the request from Kiribati on behalf of Micronesia for assistance to ensure their virtual participation to the Conference.
50. New Caledonia noted that travel restrictions for New Caledonia had been extended to March 2021 except for repatriation flights and advised the Secretariat to take this into account when coordinating the PIELA dates.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. **noted** the postponement of the 10th Pacific Islands Nature Conservation and Protected Areas Conference as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the change of delivery modality to a virtual conference;

2. **endorsed** national participation in consultation and sessions on the draft Framework held prior to, and as part of, the Conference; and
3. **endorsed** national support of the conference by encouraging participation of key national stakeholders to participate virtually, or other contribution.

AGENDA ITEM 7.2: UPDATE ON CBD COP15 AND INPUT TO THE POST-2020 BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

51. The Secretariat presented an update on the status of CBD CoP15 and the SPREP regional process to provide input into the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. **noted** the actions taken to provide input into the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework prior to the CBD COP15 in 2021;

2. **encouraged** countries to submit their own input to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity for the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework; and
3. **directed** the Secretariat to continue to support Members with the processes for providing input into the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework prior to the CBD COP in 2021.

AGENDA ITEM 8: STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

AGENDA ITEM 8.1: PACIFIC CLIMATE CHANGE CENTRE

52. The Secretariat updated Members on progress in the operations of the Pacific Climate Change Centre (PCCC).

53. New Zealand, on behalf of France recalled the Director General's visit to Paris and his signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with Meteo France. France has indicated its strong interest in implementing the partnership including with the meteorological office in New Caledonia which was also visited by the Director General.

54. Kiribati congratulated the Secretariat on operationalising the PCCC and its new programs and encouraged the Secretariat to consult with Members before finalising training modules. Kiribati also sought confirmation that that modules will build upon what has

already been made available. The Secretariat confirmed that the modules will be tailored to country needs, and developed in collaboration with other CROP agencies as appropriate.

55. The Secretariat acknowledged the assistance from New Zealand in resourcing of the Centre's personnel and support to the PCCC training programmes. New Caledonia, acknowledged the assistance from Government of Japan for the training provided through the PCCC.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. **noted** the progress and key achievements of the Pacific Climate Change Centre.

AGENDA ITEM 8.2: UPDATE ON EU EDF 11 PROGRAMME ENGAGEMENT

56. The Secretariat provided a presentation to the Executive Board on progress in the development of SPREP programmes funded through European Union 11th European Development Fund (EU EDF-11).

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. ***noted*** the implementation status of EDF-11 ACP and OCT programmes including the impact of COVID-19 restrictions.

AGENDA ITEM 8.3: KIWA INITIATIVE – NATURE BASED SOLUTIONS FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE

57. The Secretariat updated the Second Executive Board Meeting on the participation of SPREP in the Kiwa Initiative – Nature-based solutions for climate resilience programme, which officially began in March 2020.
58. In its presentation the Secretariat advised that the Kiwa Initiative has created a Pacific governance structure in the form of a Steering Committee which is to include Pacific representation and that the Steering Committee has approached the Secretariat with a request for the Executive Board constituencies to provide representatives to the Steering Committee as voting members. As this proposal had only been received the night before the Executive Board Meeting, it had not been possible to include these additional recommendations in the Meeting documents.
59. French Polynesia commented that it had been following the development of the Initiative and recommended that the SPREP Executive Board representation

be the model for Pacific membership of the Kiwa Initiative Steering Committee, proposing that Members be identified to represent the sub-regional constituencies on this Committee.

60. New Caledonia and New Zealand commended the AFD and advised the Executive Board to fully consult Pacific Members and constituencies to ensure all concerns have been addressed and to guide next steps.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. ***noted*** the development and commencement of the Kiwa Initiative – Nature-based solutions for climate resilience and the funded implementation role of SPREP under Sub-Component B1;
2. ***endorsed*** SPREP's engagement and implementation of the KIWA initiative; and
3. ***agreed*** that the Secretariat will engage with Kiwa to provide more information on their proposal and for Members of the Board to subsequently consult with their constituencies and provide the Secretariat with the views of Members by the end of October 2020.

AGENDA ITEM 8.4: SPREP ACCREDITED ENTITY ROLE

61. The Secretariat reported on progress as a Regional Accredited Entity with the Green Climate Fund and Adaptation Fund in assisting Members to access climate finance, stressing the importance of Members' climate action

ideas to clearly target Green Climate Fund (GCF) and Adaptation Fund funding criteria.

62. The Secretariat also provided an update on SPREP's accreditation status noting that it has accessed USD 28.5 million in

climate financing over the past 5 years, and successfully had SPREP accreditation to the GCF upgraded from risk category C to B, raising possible funding levels from small-scale (US\$ 50 million) to medium-scale projects (up to US\$ 250 million). The Secretariat also advised that as accreditation to the GCF is provided in 5-year agreements, the Secretariat is preparing to apply for re-accreditation in 2021.

63. French Polynesia and New Zealand congratulated the Secretariat for its excellent work in bringing climate finance into the Pacific region, noting that the GCF upgrade to enable US\$250 million projects underscores the importance of this work in bringing new funding into the region.
64. French Polynesia noted the important role of the Secretariat during the Polynesian Leaders Group Meetings and

as host of the Pacific Climate Change Centre.

65. New Zealand's asked whether the Secretariat anticipated any roadblocks to the re-accreditation, to which the Secretariat advised that none are expected as the Secretariat has strengthened its systems over the past years and continues to improve internal processes. This progress should support the re-accreditation process.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. ***noted*** progress on SPREP's role as a regional implementing entity;
2. ***noted*** the need for Member Country climate finance project ideas to conform with GCF investment criteria; and
3. ***noted*** the re-accreditation process for the GCF.

AGENDA ITEM 9: GOVERNANCE, INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND MECHANISMS

AGENDA ITEM 9.1: AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

66. The Audit Committee Chair Tupuola Oloialii Koki Tuala updated the Meeting on the SPREP Audit Committee's work over the past 12 months.
67. New Zealand, on behalf of Australia, welcomed the report from the Audit Committee, and noted that Gender Equity and Social Inclusion activities are included as a priority for the Secretariat. New Zealand also acknowledged the work of the Friends of the Chair Committee on Sustainable Financing (Australia, Cook Islands, France, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and United Kingdom) noting this work was integral to the continued delivery of the Secretariat's functions.

68. The Chair commended the Audit Committee on its report.
69. In response to a question from Solomon Islands, the Director General provided background to recommendation four which requests additional support for the Secretariat's Internal Auditor. The Director General noted that this function, as with many others, was unable to be resourced under the current financial position and the impact on the budget of COVID-19.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. ***commended*** the efforts of the Director General and all staff in the early and satisfactory completion of the financial accounts and audit, and ***acknowledged*** the work of the Audit Committee;

2. **noted** the improved process used by the Secretariat to provide the draft financial statements to the AC for review prior to the issuing of the final audit opinion, and the consultation between the AC and the External Auditor;
3. **noted** that the late receipt of member's voluntary contributions remains an issue, causing financial constraints on the Secretariat's annual budget, and **requested** Members to provide their voluntary contributions to the Secretariat in a timely manner;
4. **requested** the Secretariat address the human resource issue within the Internal Audit Unit as resources permit; and
5. **noted** and **approved** the report of the Audit Committee for the period July 2019-July 2020.

AGENDA ITEM 9.2: PARTNERSHIP ENGAGEMENT AND RESOURCE MOBILISATION STRATEGY

70. The draft SPREP Partnership Engagement and Resource Mobilisation Strategy was presented to the Executive Board.
 71. Solomon Islands and New Zealand commended the Secretariat for the draft Partnership Engagement and Resource Mobilisation Strategy. Solomon Islands further noted the inclusion of the process for review and reiterated the importance of partnerships and the leadership role SPREP provides Members in the environment sphere. Solomon Islands also agrees with the principles in that they are relevant to the region.
 72. New Zealand noted the importance of a Partnership Engagement and Resource Mobilisation Strategy being in place and noted that the paper could benefit from added detail around implementation and measuring success, and asked whether the Strategy was developed with any particular partnerships in mind. The Secretariat advised that the development of the Strategy was not targeting any particular partnerships, but considered the principles to be relevant to all, adding that assessing gaps and opportunities in relation to the Performance Implementation Plan (PIP), would recognise the full range of SPREP partnerships, current and potential.
 73. New Zealand also noted that some items in the presentation and paper do not match those in the Working Paper. The Secretariat acknowledged this, noting that the presentation had sought to summarise the detail in the paper.
 74. Solomon Islands recognises that the Partnership Engagement and Resource Mobilisation Strategy is a high-level document but noted the importance of details expected from its implementation plan.
- The Executive Board Meeting:**
1. **endorsed** the draft Partnership Engagement and Resource Mobilisation Strategy.

AGENDA ITEM 9.3: COUNTRY AND TERRITORY STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORKS

75. The Secretariat presented its proposal for refocusing Country and Territory Action Plans at a more strategic and practical level on the concept and process of 'Country and Territory Strategic Partnership Frameworks'.
76. French Polynesia, Kiribati and New Caledonia acknowledged the initiative of the Secretariat and the importance of this paper noting the need to meet with their constituencies first to be able to provide proper feedback to the Secretariat.

77. French Polynesia noted the importance for work to be aligned with Pacific priorities including those of Polynesian countries. New Caledonia advised that it has a strategic partnership in place with the Pacific Community (SPC) and acknowledged the importance of a similar partnership with SPREP taking into account lessons learnt.

78. New Caledonia acknowledged the pilot project for developing strategic partnership frameworks with the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu and looked forward to receiving advice on how these were to be undertaken.

79. The Secretariat advised that the phased approach was important to accommodate capacity within the Secretariat to manage the development of 21 partnership agreements for all SPREP PICTs, acknowledged the interest from the Melanesian countries and welcomed feedback from the forthcoming Polynesian constituency meeting.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. ***endorsed the concept and process for developing Pacific Strategic Partnership Frameworks; and***
2. ***agreed to consult within their constituencies and report back to the Secretariat by the end of 2020.***

AGENDA ITEM 9.4: SPREP INDEPENDENT CORPORATE REVIEW AND MID TERM REVIEW OF THE SPREP STRATEGIC PLAN 2017 2026

80. The Secretariat sought guidance for a process for undertaking a combined Third Independent Corporate Review of SPREP and the Mid-Term Review of the SPREP Strategic Plan 2017-2026.

81. New Zealand advised that while the Metropolitan Constituency as a whole was not in a position to fully fund the joint review, Australia and New Zealand expressed their interest in principle to fund parts of the review, in recognition of the importance of both reviews to good corporate process and the value in combining them. This was welcomed by the Secretariat.

82. In response to a query from New Zealand on how outcomes from past reviews have been incorporated, The Secretariat advised that outcomes from the 2014 Corporate Review were incorporated into the new Secretariat Strategic Plan and in the functional design of the new Corporate Structure adopted by Members.

83. New Zealand noted the importance of ensuring specific monitoring and

evaluation expertise is included in the review team, and asked whether Member input would be sought on the Terms of Reference and in guiding the review itself.

84. The Secretariat confirmed that specific M&E expertise will be a critical component of the Terms of Reference which would be open for Member input, and noted that in past reviews, a successful approach taken by the Secretariat has been the establishment of a reference group of Member countries to guide the review. The Secretariat envisaged taking the same approach for this review.

85. New Zealand noted specific interest from Australia on the Secretariat's work to support gender equity and social inclusion and welcomed strategies on how to achieve this through the review. The Secretariat assured that this will be included in the Terms of Reference, and reconfirmed that the ToR will be circulated for input before finalisation.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. **approved** the proposal to combine the Independent Corporate Review of SPREP with the Mid-Term Review of the SPREP Strategic Plan 2017-2026, to be undertaken in 2021 at lesser cost than that of two separate reviews;
2. **approved** the attached draft Terms of reference and timeline for this Review noting the intention to establish a Reference Group of Members to guide the Review;

3. **directed** the Secretariat to ensure the outcomes of the combined Review are considered by the 2021 SPREP Meeting; and
4. **noted** the interest in principle from Australia and New Zealand to assist with funding the Review noting that this is not included in the 2021 budget.



AGENDA ITEM 9.5: PEOPLE STRATEGY

86. The Secretariat presented the People Strategy to the Executive Board, as required by Organisational Goal 5 of the SPREP Strategic Plan.
87. French Polynesia, New Zealand and Solomon Islands commended the Secretariat on the People Strategy noting its importance. French Polynesia requested the Secretariat to be mindful of the financial implications to come due to COVID-19 impacts. New Zealand noted the diversity within the Secretariat emphasised by the Strategy and stressed the importance of this to the Secretariat.
88. The Secretariat responded to a query from the Chair on funding actions

envisaged by the Strategy, noting that while funding is important, there are aspects that can be implemented without financial resourcing, pointing out that the first year of action does not require funding allowing time to seek funding opportunities later in its development. The Secretariat noted that in recognition of this issue, an internal sub-committee has been formed to source funding opportunities to implement the strategy.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. **reviewed and endorsed** the final draft of the People Strategy.



AGENDA ITEM 9.6: REVIEW OF STAFF REMUNERATION TERMS AND CONDITIONS

89. The Secretariat presented an update on the implementation of the 29th SPREP Meeting decision to engage an independent consultant to review the Secretariat's Remuneration System, seeking endorsement of a way forward for this process.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. **deferred** the engagement of an independent consultant to review the Secretariat's Remuneration Systems to 2021; and
2. **noted** that a report will be provided to the 2021 SPREP Meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 9.7: SPREP DIRECTOR GENERAL'S PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT - CLOSED SESSION

90. The Troika presented a Paper on the performance assessment of the Director General to the closed session.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. **noted and endorsed** the review completed by the Troika of the DG's PDP for the period Sept 2019 - Sept 2020, acknowledging the many initiatives and positive outcomes despite the current challenges of COVID-19, as well as areas requiring attention over the next year; and

2. **noted and endorsed** the proposed way forward by the Troika for the DG's next PDP, Sept 2020 – Dec 2021. Members are invited to propose relevant and appropriate specific targets they wish to be included in the DG's next PDP by the end of September 2020. The Troika will work with the DG over the next month to finalise the next PDP targets by end of October 2020.

AGENDA ITEM 9.8: PROCESS FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL (DG) FOR 2021 – CLOSED SESSION

91. The Executive Board discussed the Director General's Job Description in preparation for the recruitment in 2021, and considered the process for the recruitment of the next Director General.



The Executive Board Meeting:

1. **noted** that as of 31st July 2020, no comments have been received by the Secretariat from Members on the Job Description of the Director General post; and
2. **considered and approved** the proposed recruitment process presented to the Board (Table 1 of WP 9.8).

AGENDA ITEM 10: STRATEGIC FINANCIAL ISSUES

AGENDA ITEM 10.1: REPORT ON MEMBER'S CONTRIBUTIONS

92. The Secretariat reported on Members' Contributions, noting that the audited Financial Statements as at 31st December 2019 identified total contributions received from Members of US\$1,270,103, which is an increase of US\$97,362 from 2018 contributions of US\$1,172,741. Noting that overall, collection of members' annual contributions has improved over the past 3 years, the Secretariat advised that as at 30th June 2020 the total balance of outstanding net contributions from members at 31 December 2019 was USD\$13,161 - a significant improvement in membership collection compared to prior years (2016-\$288,612; 2017-\$82,101; 2018-\$60,117; 2019-(\$13,161).

93. The amount anticipated from Members at 30th June 2020 was USD\$1,184,876, by which date the Secretariat had received USD\$497,654 or 42% of the 2020 contributions. Together with prior years' outstanding contributions SPREP is now carrying an outstanding balance on unpaid contributions from members of USD\$674,061.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. **considered** the report and **addressed** the issue of outstanding member contributions; and
2. **committed** itself collectively and individually to paying current and outstanding contributions in full in 2020.

AGENDA ITEM 10.2: SUSTAINABLE FINANCING

94. The Secretariat provided an update on actions undertaken by SPREP to address core budget pressures for 2020 arising from the global impacts of COVID-19, seeking guidance from the Executive Board on options and actions to address the resulting challenges.
95. New Zealand advised that metropolitan Members are not able to bridge the funding gap for many different reasons, however consultations within the metropolitan constituency did raise possible options for exploration including consideration of the project management fees being paid up front.
96. The Secretariat confirmed all options raised by New Zealand have been considered, this includes possible flexibility in terms of contract modalities, which will see further discussion between the Secretariat and partners as well as possible flexibility with project management fees.
97. Solomon Islands enquired after progress in freezing recruitment of new positions, and specifically the Deputy Director General, Technical Programmes position. The Director General confirmed that this recruitment has been put on hold due to financial constraints, however he noted that the recruitment of the Deputy Director General Governance and Operations position is continuing as it is fully funded.
98. The Secretariat clarified for Board Members that savings made from a lack of travel due to COVID-19 does not equate as income to the Secretariat as the majority of travel for 2020 was related to project funding and not from the core.
99. New Zealand commended the Secretariat for its impressive scope in exploring opportunities for cost savings, considering this approach to have set the standard for all CROP. In acknowledging this, the Secretariat noted that it had reduced costs in excess of USD 1 million from the core budget.
100. The Chair suggested that the Secretariat explore options for funding opportunities beyond its normal scope.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. ***considered the report and provided guidance on options proposed to address the impact of COVID-19, on the Secretariat's financial position.***

AGENDA ITEM 11: 2020 2021 BIENNIAL WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET

AGENDA ITEM 11.1. CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE

Agenda Item 11.1.1: Climate Change Resilience Highlights of 2020-2021 Work Programme

101. The Secretariat provided an update of the Climate Change Resilience 2020-2021 Work Programme activities for 2020-2021, including challenges and opportunities.
102. New Zealand noted that Australia would welcome the opportunity to support the COP26 Pavilion.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. ***noted the updated highlights of the Climate Change Resilience 2020-2021 Work Programme.***



Agenda Item 11.1.2: Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific and the Pacific Resilience Partnership (FRDP).

103. The Secretariat updated Members on progress of the Secretariat in implementing the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP) and the Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP).
104. French Polynesia confirmed its role as the Chair of the PRP Task Force and commended the CROP for the hard work and collaboration, expressing gratitude to the Secretariat for leading the communications and engagement work for the PRP, and noting the many achievements this has made possible.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. **noted** the progress of the Secretariat in supporting the implementation of the FRDP;
2. **noted** that the Secretariat's rotation as CROP representative on the PRP Taskforce will end this year;
3. **noted** that the Secretariat will continue to be a member of the PRP Support Unit; and
4. **noted** the Secretariat will continue to lead the Communications and Engagement Sub-Committee.



Agenda Item 11.1.3: UNFCCC COP26 Update

105. The Secretariat informed the Executive Board Meeting of developments in relation to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26).
106. New Zealand expressed interest in working with the Secretariat and Pacific Members to advance Pacific priorities at COP26 and sought discussions with the Secretariat as planning for COP26 in Glasgow progresses.
107. Samoa sought confirmation of the role of SPREP in COP26 coordination given the interest of the PIFS' advocacy and engagement sub-committee in COP26. The Secretariat confirmed its agreed role leading the One CROP-Plus regional collaboration in all UNFCCC COP processes, noting the need for clear demarcation of roles and responsibilities to avoid duplication and confusion around CROP support.

108. The Cook Islands stressed the importance of the Secretariat leading the COP26 One CROP-Plus coordination given its significant technical and historical experience in the UNFCCC process and in working with Members.
109. Samoa and Solomon Islands encouraged the Secretariat to continue its lead coordination role in the One CROP-Plus for the UNFCCC Process.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. **noted** the developments around UNFCCC COP26 and the implications for planning in the region; and
2. **welcomed** the support provided by the One CROP-Plus team led by SPREP.



AGENDA ITEM 11.2: ISLAND AND OCEAN ECOSYSTEMS

Agenda Item 11.2.1: Island and Ocean Ecosystems Programme 2020-2021 Update

110. The Secretariat provided an update of Island and Ocean Ecosystems work programme activities for 2020-2021 and current and forthcoming opportunities.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. ***noted*** the update on key implementation activities for the 2020-2021 PIP.

Agenda Item 11.2.2: Development of the Pacific Regional Invasive Species Management Support Service (PRISMSS)

111. The Secretariat informed Members of the newly formed Pacific Regional Invasive Species Management Support Service (PRISMSS) mechanism supporting practical implementation of invasive species management actions in the Pacific and encouraged the use of the PRISMSS for invasive species activities in the Pacific.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. ***noted*** the progress in the development of the PRISMSS; and
2. ***encouraged*** Members and their invasive species coordinators to actively maintain communications with and utilize the PRISMSS.

Agenda Item 11.2.3: Outcomes of The Pacific Ecosystem-Based Adaptation to Climate Change (PEBACC) Project

112. The Secretariat updated Executive Board Members on the outcomes of the Pacific Ecosystem-based Adaptation to Climate Change (PEBACC) project and its focus on strengthening and protecting natural ecosystem services to enhance resilience to climate change.

113. French Polynesia, Kiribati and Solomon Islands commended the Secretariat for its work through PEBACC.

114. The Secretariat advised that it is finalising arrangements for phase two of this project to enable implementation to be maintained in the current Melanesian countries, and extend coverage to the other sub-regions, noting in particular Polynesia and the French territories.

115. In response to a query from Kiribati, the Secretariat confirmed Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) training will be conducted during phase two of the PEBACC and will involve all Pacific island Members.

116. Solomon Islands noted the significance of the Ecosystem and Socio-economic and Resilience Analysis and Mapping (ESRAM) Reports conducted during PEBACC, and commended the role of PEBACC in catalysing a new way of thinking and operating in the Solomon Islands Ministry for the Environment where EbA is at the core of all work.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. ***noted*** the outcomes of the PEBACC project in promoting ecosystem-based adaptation in Fiji, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands, and the region;
2. ***noted*** the success of the project in securing an additional €4 million to implement a second 4-year phase;
3. ***encouraged*** participating government ministries and departments to continue their support for the demonstration projects and seek to expand and apply the knowledge gained on EbA to new areas; and
4. ***encouraged*** all Pacific island country governments to adopt ecosystem-based adaptation as an effective approach to building climate resilience in the region.

AGENDA ITEM 11.3: WASTE MANAGEMENT AND POLLUTION CONTROL

Agenda Item 11.3.1: Waste Management and Pollution Control Programme 2020-21 Update

117. The Secretariat provided an update of Waste Management and Pollution Control key work programme activities for 2020-21.
118. New Zealand, on behalf of Australia, noted that the paper didn't adequately capture activities, challenges or responses to challenges, leading New Zealand to once again stress the need for discussion on the desirability of papers addressing the governance role of the Executive Board at the end of the Meeting.
119. New Zealand, on behalf of Australia, noted a strategy endorsed at the Thirteenth SPREP Meeting in 2002 on WW2 Wrecks, requesting this strategy

complement the Pacific Islands Marine Spill Contingency Plan (PacPlan) and not merge. The Secretariat noted a subsequent Meeting after 13SM, guided the Secretariat to action support based upon request only by Members. The Secretariat advised it is now in a partnership with the University of Newcastle and the Major Projects Foundation to address WW2 wrecks with 53 wrecks being listed as high priority.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. ***noted*** the update on key implementation activities for the 2020-21 PIP.

Agenda Item 11.3.2: The Cleaner Pacific 2025 and Development of the New Implementation Plan 2021 To 2025

120. The Secretariat presented the 2021-2025 Implementation Plan for the Pacific Regional Waste and Pollution Management Strategy 2016-2025 (Cleaner Pacific 2025).
121. New Zealand on behalf of the metropolitan constituency commended the Secretariat for work undertaken, and progress made. New Zealand also enquired whether the plan addressed Member priorities and whether funding for all activities was secured.
122. The Secretariat confirmed the Implementation Plan was developed to meet the needs of Members and noted that the source of funding for activities is yet to be confirmed, observing that current projects will extend to the lifespan of this project helping to fund some of the activities identified.
123. New Zealand asked after the quality of feedback received to the Implementation Plan given this was by necessity virtual. The Secretariat confirmed that limited

feedback had been received, although those submissions received had been helpful in developing the Plan. In response to a supplementary question from New Zealand about available data sources to enable the Implementation Plan, the Secretariat noted it is working with data from the JICA JPRISM2 and the Inform Project.

124. The Chair requested the Secretariat distribute the Implementation Plan to all Members promptly as this paper was a late one. Both language versions were immediately uploaded to the Executive Board webpage.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. ***endorsed*** in principle the new Implementation Plan 2021 – 2025 for the remaining period of the CP2025; and
2. ***requested*** Members to work with SPREP and other partners to improve the regional management of waste and pollution over the next 5 years using the new Implementation Plan 2021-2025.

AGENDA ITEM 11.4: ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING & GOVERNANCE

Agenda Item 11.4.1: Environmental Monitoring and Governance Programme 2020-21 Update

125. The Secretariat provided an update of the Environmental Monitoring and Governance work programme activities for 2020-2021 including challenges and opportunities.

126. The Chair thanked the Secretariat and EMG for work undertaken across the region.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. ***noted*** the update on key implementation activities for the 2020-2021 PIP.

Agenda Item 11.4.2: Draft Regional Guidelines on Regional Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment Reports for Pacific Island Countries and Territories

127. The Secretariat presented the draft regional Guidelines for the production of Regional Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment (SEA) reports for Pacific island Countries and Territories.

the training is part of the plan for these guidelines with training to be undertaken virtually until it is possible to do so in person.

The Executive Board Meeting:

128. Kiribati and New Zealand commended the Secretariat on this work.
129. New Zealand on behalf of France and New Zealand noted several minor errors within these guidelines seeking to work directly with the Secretariat to address.
130. Kiribati noted the need for capacity building on these guidelines noting this to be crucial for the Micronesian constituency to enable implementation of the guidelines. The Secretariat noted

1. ***approved*** the Regional Guidelines on Strategic Environmental Assessment for Pacific island Countries and Territories; and
2. ***urged*** Members to promote and use the approved Guidelines as a planning tool to systematically evaluate the environmental and socio-economic impacts of Members' policies, plans and programmes.

Agenda Item 11.4.3: Policy Guidance Note for the Periodic Update of The Regional State of Environment and Conservation Report for the Pacific Island Region

131. The Secretariat presented an update on progress in developing the first Pacific Regional State of the Environment and Conservation Report, advising of its planned release to the 10th Nature Conservation Conference in November and requesting the Executive Board to consider preparation of guidance for the periodic updating and reporting on the regional state of environment and conservation in the Pacific.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. ***welcomed*** the development of the first Pacific Regional State of the Environment and Conservation report planned for release in November 2020; and
2. ***noted*** the desirability for the development of a Policy Guidance Note for periodic reporting in the future.



AGENDA ITEM 11.5: CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET FOR 2021

Agenda Item 11.5.1: 2021 Supplementary Budget

132. Approval of the Secretariat's Supplementary Work Programme and Budget for 2021 in the Biennial Budget for 2020-2021, was sought from the Executive Board.
133. French Polynesia, New Caledonia and New Zealand congratulated the Secretariat for its hard work facing the challenge of COVID-19, with New Zealand also expressing appreciation for a clear presentation and the agility of the Secretariat under difficult circumstances. New Caledonia encouraged the Secretariat to pursue options for organizational resilience discussed earlier in the Executive Board Meeting.
134. French Polynesia sought clarification on the slight reduction in the supplementary budget 2021 relative to the provisional 2021 budget approved last year. The Secretariat noted that the figure provided

at 29SM for the 2021 budget was provisional and based on projects at the time. Since then, additional projects and agreements have been added to the project portfolio and many projects and programmes included in the provisional budget from 2019 have been restructured resulting in the current tables.

135. The Chair noted the financial outcome is well received given the challenges from COVID-19.

The Executive Meeting:

1. ***considered and approved the proposed Supplementary Work Programme and Budget of USD\$30,411,287 for 2021. The provisional budget for 2021 as approved last year at the 29SM was USD\$30,453,596.***

AGENDA ITEM 12: OTHER BUSINESS

136. The Executive Board Meeting was open for other business to be presented.
137. The Director General acknowledged New Zealand's request to discuss the focus of Executive Board papers. New Zealand suggested that papers focus more at strategic level outcomes with less of a focus on outputs, to enable the Executive Board to make key decisions and deliver on its governance role (for example, through risk management). The Director General agreed to reflect on the suggestions and to continue to improve the design and focus of papers with particular emphasis on governance issues.

138. New Zealand, with support from Solomon Islands, also suggested such a reporting approach could flow into the Annual Report, to ensure the Report provides details of progress towards achieving the goals of the Secretariat's Strategic Plan.
139. Cook Islands, French Polynesia and New Zealand commended the Chair and Secretariat for delivering a quality Executive Board meeting that achieved a significant amount of work.
140. Cook Islands thanked Samoa for their previous chairmanship and the value they added to the Secretariat's efforts.

141. Cook Islands further thanked Japan and New Zealand for their partnership delivery for the Pacific Climate Change Centre and the projects they have delivered through the Secretariat.

142. The Chair thanked the Secretariat, Executive Board members and observers for contributing to the success of the first virtual Executive Board meeting.

143. The Director General thanked the Chair for his management of the meeting, and the Executive Board members for their active engagement in the proceedings. The Director General also thanked the Secretariat staff for their efforts in delivering a successful Executive Board meeting.



AGENDA ITEM 13: DATES OF THE 30TH SPREP MEETING

144. The Secretariat sought dates for the Thirtieth Annual SPREP Meeting and recommended 6-10 September 2021 as suitable.

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. **agreed** to host the 30th SPREP Meeting on 6-10 September 2021.

AGENDA ITEM 14: ADOPTION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE SECOND EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

The Executive Board Meeting:

1. **adopted** the outcome of the Second Executive Board Meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 15: CLOSE

ANNEX 1: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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6. Tagaloa Cooper-Halo, Director CCR Programme
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14. Billy Chan Ting
15. Charlie Reid
16. Audrey Pereira
17. Rebecca Polestico
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19. Rosanna Galuvao
20. Nanette Woonton
21. Angelica Sefo
22. Leanne Moananu
23. Gregory Barbara
24. Sabrina Reupena
25. Amanda Wheatley
26. Juney Ward
27. Ofa Kaisamy
28. Vainuupo Jungblut
29. Isabella Rasch

-
30. Bradley Nolan
 31. Joshua Sam
 32. Vitolina Samu
 33. Rupeni Mario
 34. Sione Fulivai
 35. Tile Tofaeono
 36. Filomena Nelson
 37. Siosinamele Lui
 38. Laura Mitchell
 39. Emma Arasi-Sua
 40. Miraneta Williams-Hazelman
 41. Lagi Reupena
 42. Luana Jamieson
 43. Marion Tuipulotu-Chan Chui
 44. Roger Warren
 45. Sepastiano Paulo
 46. James Faiumu
 47. Melanie King
 48. Ella Stracham
 49. Carmen Fepuleai
 50. Teuila Fruean