

SIDS-Tok

A special bulletin from the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme on the third United Nations Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS)



SPREP

Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

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It is my great pleasure to introduce this special bulletin which we have prepared to keep our members and partners abreast of the many wonderful activities that SPREP has been involved in through our participation at the third United Nations Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in Apia which concluded late last week.

As I mentioned in [my speech to the plenary of the conference](#), our key objective in attending was to actively support our 21 Pacific island country and territory members, just as we have previously done for the Rio, Barbados, Johannesburg, Mauritius and Rio+20 conferences.

In the words of The Hon. Prime Minister of Samoa “the ‘special case of SIDS is a clear recognition by partners of our vulnerabilities and the unique challenges faced by our small, isolated, but incredibly beautiful and unique island nations.”

I hope you enjoy reading about some of the terrific outcomes achieved at the conference with regard to partnerships, renewable energy, climate change and disaster risk management, oceans and biodiversity, and waste management.

David Sheppard
Director General

PARTNERSHIPS



SAMOA CREATES UNITED NATIONS HISTORY

As the curtain fell on the third United Nations Conference on Small Island Developing States, the host government of Samoa and the United Nations celebrated the historical US\$1.9 billion in partnership pledges made in the four days of the conference. “Without a doubt, these partnerships leave a legacy with impact. Never before has a United Nations conference of this nature achieved this success in a short number of days,” said Conference Secretary General, Wu Hongbo. [Read more...](#)



UNEP OPENS FIRST SUB REGIONAL OFFICE AT SPREP IN SAMOA

The Hon. Prime Minister of Samoa and Mr Achim Steiner Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) officially opened the new UNEP subregional office for the Pacific based at SPREP in Samoa and signed the Host Country Agreement. “The formal opening of UNEP’s presence in the Pacific is a celebration on many fronts. This is a collaborative effort between the United Nations, the United Nations agency, a regional organisation and the Pacific island nations.” [Read more...](#)



STRENGTHENING NATURAL SOLUTIONS IN THE PACIFIC REGION

A five-year, €5 million project has been signed on the cusp of the third UN Conference on SIDS. The project was signed between SPREP and the German Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety. The Pacific Ecosystem-based Adaptation to Climate Change (PEBACC) Project, will strengthen ecosystem based adaptation through activities in Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu as a key measure of adapting to and building resilience to climate change. [Read more...](#)



IMPROVING CLIMATE INFORMATION AND REDUCING DISASTER RISK

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and SPREP signed a historic partnership agreement that aims to improve the way in which weather and climate information is delivered, understood and acted on, by communities living with the everyday impacts of climate change. The three-year Letter of Agreement was signed at the SPREP headquarters in Apia by Jagan Chapagain, Director of the IFRC's regional office for Asia Pacific and David Sheppard, Director General of SPREP. [Read more...](#)



COORDINATED CONSERVATION FOR A LIVING PACIFIC

Greater conservation outcomes for protecting Pacific island biodiversity and building resilient communities are expected from an updated partnership forged between WWF-Pacific and SPREP. In renewing their long established collaboration, the two major environment bodies have agreed to pool resources and technical expertise to address the various environment challenges that face the region, including tackling climate change issues using the ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) approach. [Read more...](#)



PARTNERSHIPS FOR A BETTER PACIFIC ENVIRONMENT

A long-standing relationship between Conservation International and SPREP was strengthened during the third United Nations Conference on Small Island Developing States at the launch of the Regional Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Islands Region 2014 - 2020. [Read more...](#)



PARTNERSHIPS FOR OCEAN PROTECTION

SPREP, the National Geographic Society and the Waitt Foundation have announced a new partnership to promote marine resource conservation and the associated sustainable economic development of SIDS in the Pacific region. The focus of their joint work will be on biodiversity and ecosystem management to promote further expansion of the Pacific's marine reserve network and the repair of damaged ecosystems through a work programme to be executed jointly through 2015-16. [Read more...](#)



SAMOA AND SPREP, A PARTNERSHIP MOVING FORWARD

A long-established partnership between SPREP and the Government of Samoa continues to flourish in the lead up to the third UN Conference on Small Island Developing States. “Samoa has been a most generous and supportive host country for SPREP since we arrived in 1992. Now is the opportune time for SPREP to support Samoa in hosting the historical event, one that happens only every decade, and for the first time, in a Pacific island nation,” said Mr David Sheppard, Director General of SPREP. [Read more...](#)



PRESIDENT OF KIRIBATI OPENS ‘GREEN ECONOMY’ DIALOGUE

How can our economies grow without destroying our surrounding environment and the natural resources we rely upon? How can long-term sustainable development be balanced against the needs of immediate poverty eradication? HE Anote Tong, President of Republic of Kiribati, said of the global community: “We have to find alternative pathways to develop. It is not an easy topic, for it calls for what we believe are sacrifices. But time and time again, whilst they may seem like sacrifices today, they are in fact they are the most rational moves to be made for our future.” [Read more...](#)



BLUE GREEN ECONOMY WAY TO GO FOR ATOLL NATIONS

The head of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Ms Christiana Figueres believes the blue green economy concept is not an option for small atoll nations, but it is the only option they have. Speaking at a side event, Ms Figueres said given the threats posed by climate change, a blue green economy is the only concept that would guarantee growth. “Because blue green economy puts environment back into the centre of the economy, and no longer is environment left by the side as it used to be in past,” said the UNFCCC Executive Secretary. [Read more...](#)

RENEWABLE ENERGY



SIDS DOCK: RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY FOR SIDS

Over 150 delegates and members of the international development community were stunned to see leader after leader approach the podium to sign a historic sustainable energy and climate resilient treaty that will significantly change the lives and destiny of over 20 million small islanders. Led by the Deputy Prime Minister of Samoa, multiple leaders from the Pacific, Caribbean and African, Indian Ocean and Mediterranean Sea regions, forcefully raised their voices in unison and accepted responsibility for fulfilling the commitment to the SIDS Sustainable Energy mechanism – SIDS DOCK. [Read more...](#)



PIGGAREP IN THE SPOTLIGHT AT RENEWABLE ENERGY FORUM

The Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project (PIGGAREP) was one of several key activities highlighted at Saturday’s Renewable Energy Forum in Apia. Attending the Forum were around 300 SIDS leaders, development partners and stakeholders from around the globe, all gathered together with the explicit task of identifying the elements needed to transform island energy sectors and to discuss how renewable energy is helping many SIDS to achieve sustainable economic development. [Read more...](#)



RENEWABLE ENERGY: THE WIND BENEATH OUR WINGS

Ahead of the Renewable Energy Forum, Samoa's Prime Minister has highlighted the critical importance of renewable energy to the future of small island developing states. Speaking at the opening of Samoa's first wind farm at Aleipata, Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi made reference to the historical relevance of Samoa's easterly trade winds to the people of our islands, and the importance of harnessing this natural source of energy to preserve our future. [Read more...](#)

CLIMATE CHANGE



LAUNCH OF 'VITAL HARBOURS' SHORT FILM

Amidst resonating drum beats and island dancers, the Cook Islands launched 'Vital Harbours' a short film that makes up part of the Vital Series developed under the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change Project at the third UN Conference on Small Island Developing States in Samoa this week. Sharing the story of the PACC project in the Cook Islands, the short film launched by the Prime Minister of the Cook Islands, Hon. Henry Puna, captures the work that was carried out to construct a harbour for the island of Mangaia. [Read more...](#)



COOPERATION ON CLIMATE CHANGE DATA

An event to help enhance collaboration among SIDS in the area of climate change data and information management components took place during the third UN Conference on SIDS. Hosted by the Government of Vanuatu, the National Advisory Bureau of the island nation is striving for greater collaboration among SIDS member countries on strategies for sharing climate change and disaster risk reduction data and information. [Read more...](#)



WEATHERFRONT – PROTECTING SMALL ISLAND COMMUNITIES

The cameras of the world were focused on Leaders of the Small Island Developing States as they took part in a televised panel discussion. Hosted by David Eades from BBC World this was an opportunity to showcase a Pacific perspective of extreme weather events and the need for small island nations to improve vital weather and climate services. [Read more...](#)



SIDS CHALLENGED TO INVEST IN CLIMATE SERVICES

Leaders of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) have been challenged to prioritise investment in their meteorology and climate services because the end result saves lives and properties. That's the advice of Cuba's Weather Forecasting Services director, Dr Jose Rubiera, one of the panelists on a technical panel discussion in Apia Monday, titled "Managing Cyclones from Cuba to Samoa" moderated by BBC World Service presenter, David Eades. [Read more...](#)



DISPLACEMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE CHANGE

For centuries, war, famine and persecution have resulted in the forced movement of populations both within national borders and across them. Unfortunately there is a serious legal gap with regard to people who are forced to leave their countries because of extreme weather events, rising sea levels or drought. A recent side event brought together stakeholders from around the globe to discuss the issue of displacement and climate change. [Read more...](#)



COMMUNICATING CLIMATE INFORMATION

Early lessons gained from a regional project to strengthen the link between National Meteorological Service and the communities indicate the need to communicate weather information and how it impacts the population in a simple and timely manner. Part of the strategy is to allow people at the community level to take ownership of the information and empower their people to make choices that will protect them in any extreme weather event. [Read more...](#)



STRATEGY FOR CLIMATE AND DISASTER RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT

The work of the Pacific in integrating climate change and disaster risk management was showcased at the SIDS side event, Building Pacific Resilience – the Strategy for Climate and Disaster Resilient Development in the Pacific (SRDP). The Government of Tonga led the event with support from SPC, SPREP and UNISDR. The Pacific is leading the way, globally, on this process as it will be the first region in the world to fully integrate disaster risk management and climate change in a single overarching regional strategy, which focuses on resilient development. [Read more...](#)



PACIFIC LEADERS SHARE THEIR VIEWS ON CLIMATE DIPLOMACY

Tuvalu's Prime Minister, Hon. Enele Sopoaga told delegates at the third United Nations Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) that his island nation will only support countries at the United Nations that are sympathetic to its climate change demands. He was making reference to developed countries that have come to the Pacific to lobby for votes for a seat at the United Nations Security Council and other UN agencies. [Read more...](#)



SIDS LEADERSHIP COMMENDED AS SAMOA PATHWAY ADOPTED

Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Christiana Figueres has paid tribute to the leadership role that SIDS are playing in the push to adopt a legally-binding global climate change agreement in Paris next year. Ms Christiana Figueres says the fact that the outcome document of the conference known as the SAMOA Pathway was negotiated before the start of the conference was "quite remarkable." [Read more...](#)



CLIMATE-RESILIENT PARTNERSHIPS SHOWCASED IN SAMOA

The Climate-Resilient Islands Partnership Parallel event brought together different island regions before the third United Nations Conference on Small Island Developing States in Samoa. Held at SPREP, the event discussed the strength in partnerships, highlighting the work of the Caribbean, Indian Ocean and Pacific regions, namely the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre, Indian Ocean Commission and SPREP. Coordinated by the Commonwealth Secretariat, the event also heard from the European Union who provided a perspective as a development partner. [Read more...](#)



TIDE PROJECTIONS HELP IN SAMOA PARLIAMENT CONSTRUCTION

Sea level rise projections were applied in the construction of Samoa's new parliament building, this was shared by Dr Netatua Pelesikoti the Director of SPREP's Climate Change Division. For better decision-making, Dr Pelesikoti said good scientific data collection is imperative. "It was through analysing tide gauge data and projecting the future state of sea level rise that the location of the new parliament building of Samoa in Mulinu'u was determined, as well as the height of its floor," said Dr Pelesikoti. [Read more...](#)

WASTE MANAGEMENT



MOVING THE '3R'S + RETURN' FORWARD IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Reduce, reuse, recycle and return is the suggested plan of action for Pacific island countries and territories. SPREP Director General David Sheppard emphasised the need for Pacific island nations to not only embrace the 3R's of reduce, reuse and recycle, but to also consider the option of returning waste to larger countries for recycling or in the case of organic waste, return it back to the soil through composting. [Read more...](#)



SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION IN SIDS

Best practice waste management has been highlighted as one of the most pressing, and immediate, environmental and social issues facing the region. Dr David Haynes, Director of Waste Management and Pollution Control at SPREP, joined representatives from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Caribbean Community and the South Pacific Tourism Organisation on a high level panel to discuss the scaling up of best practices and sustainable consumption and production policies in SIDS. [Read more...](#)



SAMOA PREVENTING THE OCEAN FROM BECOMING A DUMP

Samoa's initiative to end marine litter was highlighted at a side event led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and SPREP during the third SIDS Conference in Apia this week. Titled "The Last Straw – preventing our oceans from becoming dumps", the side event noted the huge environmental, aesthetic and commercial impacts of pollution from marine debris and litter. [Read more...](#)



FRAMEWORK FOR NATURE CONSERVATION AND PROTECTED AREAS

Launching their framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas (NCAPA) in the Pacific Islands Region, Pacific SIDS have issued a challenge to the rest of the world to follow suit. “The Framework and its supporting mechanism, the Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation, represents an outstanding example of the kind of partnership platform that is being promoted at the 3rd SIDS Conference,” says Hon. Tony De Brum, Foreign Affairs Minister for the Republic of the Marshall Islands. [Read more...](#)



OCEAN ACIDIFICATION: AN URGENT ISSUE FOR SIDS

Samoa’s Environment Minister Faamoetaulua-Lealaialuloto Taito Dr Faale Tumaalii has urged small island states to do more to rehabilitate, protect and preserve their threatened marine environments. The comments were made at the opening of a two-day workshop on ocean acidification, jointly hosted by New Zealand and the United States in partnership with SPREP. [Read more...](#)



CHILDREN IN SAMOA BECOME ENVIRONMENT ADVOCATES

At the signing of the Pacific Mangrove Charter, the story of children that have turned environmental advocates shone through at the third United Nations Conference on SIDS. Year 8 student of St Mary’s School Delphine Silao and 14-year old Patrick Teo of Loto Taumafai Secondary School, told delegates attending the UN SIDS Conference how their views towards the environment changed drastically when they participated in a 3D model project as part of their science class. [Read more...](#)



DATA TO ACTION – DURABLE PARTNERSHIPS BENEFIT PICTS

The close partnership between the Government of Australia and SPREP was highlighted at a special side event called “Ocean Journey: From data to action.” Facilitated by the Deputy Director General of SPREP, Mr Kosi Latu, the event brought together Australian Senator Brett Mason with heads of Meteorological services from Samoa and Kiribati. [Read more...](#)



RESCUING THE GLOBAL OCEAN – THINK GLOBAL, ACT LOCAL

The Global Ocean Commission was presented for the first time in the Pacific at a panel discussion on the edge of the third UN Conference on Small Island Developing States. The recently released report on the state of the global oceans was the topic for discussion. Minister Sengebau confirmed Palau’s declaration to ban commercial fishing from its extensive territorial waters stating, “the Pacific Ocean is the lifeblood of our societies and community. Banning fishing is the bargaining chip we have at the table when we negotiate with the other countries.” [Read more...](#)



PACIFIC SHARK HERITAGE PROGRAMME LAUNCHED AT SPREP

The Pacific Shark Heritage Programme was launched this week at the campus of SPREP during the third UN Conference on Small Island Developing States in Apia, Samoa. The Programme, a joint effort by the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) and TRAFFIC, will ensure that shark and ray species are managed under viable long-term strategies in Pacific waters. The aim of the Programme is to work with governments throughout the Pacific region to assist them in sustainably managing their shark and ray populations while safeguarding cultural history of the Pacific island nations. [Read more...](#)



THE SOLOMON ISLANDS SHOW US A BETTER WAY

The Deputy Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands, Hon. Manasseh Maelanga, stood in front his audience at the 2014 SIDS conference to address an issue that can impact upon many developing countries. The Deputy Prime Minister showed his obvious pride when he spoke of a partnership that is “a bold step away from the usual approach” and “a success story in its own right”. The generosity of modern development assistance means that many projects can be taking place at the same time and often working in the same sector without coordinating their approaches. [Read more...](#)



CREATION OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN ALLIANCE

The launching of the Pacific Ocean Alliance under the leadership of the Pacific Islands Forum has won praise from the World Bank and other ocean conservation groups and leaders attending the third United Nations Conference on Small Island Developing States in Samoa. Ms Rachel Kyte, Vice President and Special Envoy, Climate Change Group, World Bank said leaders of the Pacific have been at the forefront in ocean protection initiatives. [Read more...](#)



'IT'S IN OUR DNA TO CONSERVE THE OCEAN'

Two days before world leaders begin their weeklong conference on sustainable development in this Pacific island nation, many small island developing states have been inspired to follow the lead of countries like the Cook Islands, Kiribati and Palau in turning a large part of their oceans into marine reserves. This development comes as SPREP signed a partnership with the National Geographic Society and the Waitt Foundation to promote marine parks in the Pacific. [Read more...](#)



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Our vision: The Pacific Environment, sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.