



MESSAGE FROM MR. KOSI LATU, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF SPREP



Mr. Kosi Latu, Director General of SPREP.

Talofa,

We are almost at the end of another year, and the coming months are going to be especially one for the Secretariat, with many international conferences to be held before we bid farewell to 2016.

I would like to congratulate the Pacific delegation to the 17th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species, which was held in Johannesburg in early October. They were successful in their bid to get all species of mobula rays as well as various species of thresher and silky sharks listed on Appendix II of the Convention. Malo lava!

Our partnership with the People's Republic of China continues to grow from strength to strength, with the handing over of their annual financial support to assist with the various projects and programmes undertaken by the Secretariat. We are grateful to the Chinese government for their continued support of the important work that SPREP does in the Pacific region.

I hope you enjoy reading the stories in this month's SPREP-Tok.

Soifua,

Kosi.

LATEST NEWS



Some of the Fiji delegation to the CITES COP17 in Johannesburg.

SHARKS AND RAYS GET CITES PROTECTION IN LANDSLIDE VOTES

Silky sharks, and all three species of thresher sharks and all nine species of mobula rays (devil rays) will be listed on Appendix II of the Convention for the International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES) after a series of landslide votes at the 17th Conference of the Parties to CITES in Johannesburg, South Africa. Species listed on Appendix II require an export permit from the country of origin and an import permit from the country of destination. Both exporting and importing countries must be satisfied that any trade that occurs is not detrimental to the conservation and sustainable use of the species traded.

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SPREP Director General, Mr Kosi Latu, with Associate Minister Hon. Taefu Lemi Taefu at the handover of the GEPAS IAS Project. Photo: SPREP

SPREP HANDS OVER GEF PAS INVASIVE AND ALIEN SPECIES PROJECT TO GOVERNMENT OF SAMOA

SPREP officially handed over the Samoan component of the Global Environment Facility Pacific Alliance for Sustainability Regional Project for the prevention, control and management of invasive species in the Pacific island to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment in October.

The project was completed over the past five years in Samoa and eight other Pacific island countries and has been the largest expenditure of resources for invasive species management in the Pacific. The Samoan component was led by SPREP in partnership with MNRE.

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His Excellency Mr Wang Xuefeng, Chinese Ambassador to Samoa, with SPREP Director General, Mr Kosi Latu. Photo: SPREP

SPREP RECEIVES ANNUAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

The Government of the People's Republic of China officially handed over the financial component of its annual assistance to SPREP in October. The Chinese Ambassador to Samoa, His Excellency Mr Wang Xuefeng, presented a cheque for USD 150,000 to SPREP Director General Kosi Latu at a ceremony held at the SPREP campus in Vailima.

The People's Republic of China has provided financial support and assistance to SPREP since 2003, to enable them to carry out the work that they do within the Pacific region, which H.E Ambassador Wang has said the Chinese government consider to be very important.

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Participants of the PIMS review which was held at the SPREP campus, Vailima. Photo: SPREP

MID-TERM REVIEW TAKES PLACE FOR PACIFIC ISLAND METEOROLOGICAL STRATEGY

A review of the Pacific Island Meteorological Strategy (PIMS) 2012-2021 to encompass current and emerging priorities for the Pacific region was the objective of a regional workshop held at SPREP in October. The Strategy was adopted by the Pacific Meteorological Council in 2012 to set out the strategic priorities for strengthening the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHS) in the Pacific region, to ensure they can effectively deliver their basic and core functions on weather and climate over the next decade.

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SPREP staff aboard the Fleur de Passion sailboat. Photo: A.Wheatley/SPREP

FLEUR DE PASSION VISITS SAMOA

The Swiss ship Fleur de Passion was in Samoa for a brief visit in September as part of their Southern tour. The ship's expedition, which started in 2015 and will conclude in 2019, aims to promote scientific research, cultural and socio-educational projects, as well as environmental issues.

The Honorary Consul-General of Switzerland to Samoa, Sylvie Salanoa, invited members of the SPREP staff aboard the ship while they were in Samoa for a tour of the ship, and also to discuss the projects which they plan to undertake.

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Panel discussions underway during the presentation of the RMI SOE. Photo: SPREP

STATE OF ENVIRONMENT REPORT FINDINGS PRESENTED IN REPUBLIC OF MARSHALL ISLANDS

A team of four from SPREP carried out a week-long workshop in the Republic of the Marshall Islands in October. The workshop's main objective was to present the findings of the State of Environment report, provide updates on the development of the National Environment Management Strategy, as well as conducting an Environmental Impact Assessment Training over four days with a field component.

The findings of the SOE report put together by SPREP's Environmental Monitoring and Governance Division for the Republic of the Marshall Islands were presented to key stakeholders, and covered the results of the SOE, its uses and applications in funding proposals, as well as reporting and planning for Multilateral Environmental Agreements.

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Meteorological Officers from the Pacific participating in discussions. Photo: SPREP

EARLY WARNING, EARLY ACTIONS – BUILDING RESILIENCE OF PACIFIC ISLAND COMMUNITIES

Lessons learnt by partners as they worked together to strengthen island resilience to climate change and disaster risks, were discussed at a three day gathering in Fiji in October. National Meteorological Services, Disaster Management Offices, Red Cross Societies, SPREP and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies worked with island communities to implement the Finnish-Pacific project. Known as FINPAC, the project implemented a two-pronged approach to help reduce vulnerability to Pacific communities.

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Surveying coral reefs. Photo: A.Smith/ Reef Ecologic

SPREP AND REEF ECOLOGIC SUPPORT CORAL REEF MANAGEMENT FOR PACIFIC ISLANDS

SPREP, in partnership with Reef Ecologic and the University of Queensland, facilitated participation by SPREP member countries in the International Coral Reef Management and Leadership Fellowship programme, which aimed to build capacity to protect coral reefs as a foundation for sustainable development. The 2016 Coral Reef Management and Leadership training course, organised by Reef Ecologic, was held in Townsville and on the Great Barrier Reef in Northern Queensland in October.

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The proposed Pacific Climate Change Centre

THE PACIFIC CLIMATE CHANGE CENTRE, THE REGIONAL HUB FOR INCLUSIVE COLLABORATION

The great strides being made on the global climate change scene will ripple into action throughout the Pacific islands with the Pacific Climate Change Centre (PCCC). Nearing establishment, this will be the shared regional hub for inclusive collaboration to meet the priority adaptation and mitigation priorities of Pacific island countries and territories.

Funded by the Government of Japan in partnership with the Government of Samoa and SPREP, the PCCC will be hosted in Apia. It will be ready for action as of 2018.

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The P3DM exercise in Taveuni. Photo: SPREP

COMMUNITIES CONSTRUCT 3D MAP FOR TAVEUNI ISLAND, FIJI

The people of Taveuni are now able to view for the first time their island on a tangible 3 dimensional model map after a 9 day community workshop which was held in October on the island. The workshop, supported by SPREP through its Pacific Ecosystem based Adaptation Project (PEBACC) in partnership with the leaders and people of Taveuni employed the Participatory 3 Dimensional modelling (P3DM) to document physical, and cultural landscapes of the island.

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Participants of the PICOF-2. Photo: SPREP

PACIFIC ISLANDS CLIMATE OUTLOOK FORUM FOCUSES ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND INFORMATION RELEVANCE

The second Pacific Island Climate Outlook Forum brought together national, regional and international experts on climate services and disaster risk reduction to explore common approaches and best practices for climate services that can be extended throughout the Pacific region. With the cyclone season closing in, the two-day event hosted by the Fiji Meteorology Service in Nadi placed a special focus on disaster risk reduction and the importance of climate information for community preparedness.

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Learning about best-practice decontamination practices from PacWaste expert, Mr John O'Grady. Photo: F.Griffin/ SPREP

NAURU TAKES ACTION ON ASBESTOS

The Government of Nauru has taken the pro-active step of arranging for the training of government employees to enforce the safe removal of asbestos across the island. Representatives from Nauru's Department of Commerce, Industry and Environment, relevant government sectors and interested community representatives attended an intensive training programme in the safe removal, storage and handling of asbestos material, in October.

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Cook Islands Met and DMO staff at PICOF-2. Photo: SPREP

PREPARING FOR TROPICAL CYCLONE OUTLOOK IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Eight to ten Tropical Cycones expected to be named are forecast for the Pacific island region this cyclone season, with elevated activity to the North of the Coral Sea and close to the international dateline near Tonga and Niue. This was announced at the Second Pacific Islands Climate Outlook Forum (PICOF-2).

PICOF-2 brought together national and regional Pacific island met staff, international experts, and representatives of key Pacific island priority sectors including disaster management to discuss the seasonal climate outlook and the application of this information to sectoral decision making, in particular, that in the disaster risk reduction sector.

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SPREP Director for Climate Change, Dr Netatua Pelesikoti. Photo: SPREP

ENHANCING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE THROUGH THE PACIFIC ROADMAP FOR STRENGTHENED CLIMATE SERVICES IN THE REGION

A workshop to further hone the Pacific Roadmap for Strengthened Climate Services in the region was held in Fiji in October. A Pacific Roadmap Action Plan for the implementation of the WMO Global Framework for Climate Services was developed through regional consultations with national meteorological services and partners. The Pacific Roadmap Action Plan for strengthened climate services focussed on the needs of the national met services and the key sectors that rely on their information and advice for development planning and decision making.

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Authors of case studies with the newly published compendium. Photo: SPREP

SUCCESSSES, GOOD PRACTICES, LESSONS LEARNT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CLIMATE SERVICES IN THE PACIFIC SHOWCASED

National Meteorological Services across the Pacific and partners celebrated an outstanding achievement in showcasing some of the successes, good practices and lessons learnt in the provision of climate services through the launch of a compendium of case studies titled – ‘Pacific Islands Meteorological Services in Action: A Compendium of Climate Services Case Studies.’ The compilation of the compendium was led by SPREP through funding from the Government of Finland as part of the Finnish-Pacific (FINPAC) Project on Reduced vulnerability of Pacific island country villagers’ livelihoods to the effects of climate change.

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