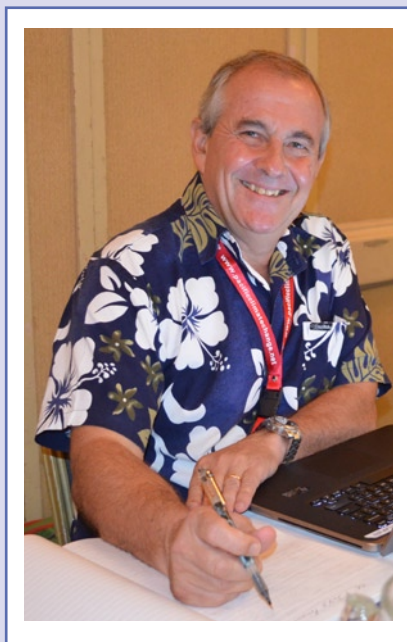




### ISSUE 01 – FEBRUARY, 2014



Greetings from Apia!

The SPREP headquarters is set at the foot of Mount Vaea, overlooking the Botanical Gardens in Apia, Samoa. SPREP's multi-cultural, multi-lingual staff of 86 is fortunate to work in this beautiful and peaceful environment because of the generosity of our host, the Government of Samoa.

Our many donors and partners enable the organisation to operate with excellent communication technology, smooth financial and procurement systems and a host of skilled and talented staff who provide technical support and assistance to our island members in the area of environmental management, conservation and resilience building for climate change.

Through *SPREP-Tok* we hope to keep our members and partners up-to-date with the latest news and to highlight some of the important networks and partnerships that contribute to successful environmental outcomes in the Pacific region.

David Sheppard  
**Director General**

### LATEST NEWS

#### EUROPEAN UNION AND SPREP LAUNCH €8 MILLION PACWASTE PROJECT



Poor waste management practices have negative impacts on the environment as well as on public health, water resource quality, fisheries, agriculture, tourism and quality of life. SPREP is implementing a four year, eight million Euro project to provide fundamental on-ground improvements in the way priority, high-risk wastes are managed in Pacific island countries to help build a healthy, economically and environmentally sustainable Pacific for future generations. The PacWaste project is funded by the European Union under its 10th European Development Fund (EDF10). The project will focus on three priority hazardous waste streams including asbestos, E-waste and healthcare waste. [Read more online...](#)

#### PACIFIC YOUTH HELP TO SPREAD THE NEWS ABOUT CONSERVATION



At the 2013 Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas, nine journalism students from the University of the South Pacific and Fiji National University were mentored by a team of media professionals to develop daily news for the duration of the conference. The gathering of over 800 registered delegates took place in Suva, Fiji from 2-6 December last year. SPREP was proud to work in partnership with the Fiji National University (FNU), University of the South Pacific (USP) and Pacific Islands News Association (PINA) to undertake this activity, which was funded by the Pacific Assistance Media Scheme (PACMAS). [Read more online...](#)

## NEW INITIATIVES IN MARINE MAMMAL CONSERVATION



In partnership with several other agencies, SPREP will promote a number of exciting new initiatives in marine mammal conservation over the coming year. These initiatives directly support the SPREP Marine Species Action Plans 2013-2017 and will strengthen our ongoing work in this area. One of these initiatives is a new website designed to improve the documentation of whale and dolphin strandings throughout Oceania. SPREP will also work with the Convention on Migratory Species, national authorities and experts to improve the conservation of dugongs and sea grass beds under a programme funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). [Read more online...](#)

## SUPPORTING SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES TO REDUCE PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS



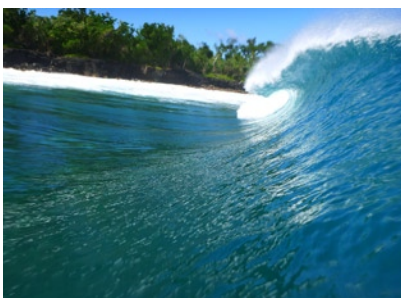
Unintentionally produced persistent organic pollutants (uPOPs) are a major environmental concern for the Pacific region, where the burning of rubbish and organic matter is a common practice. A five year GEF-PAS project has recently commenced to reduce uPOP releases in the Pacific through the introduction of sound management of solid and hazardous wastes. The project is funded by the Global Environment Facility, and co-financed by the French Development Agency (AFD) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The project is being implemented through SPREP by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). [Read more online...](#)

## FOSTERING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE ON ABAIANG



The Government of Kiribati has nominated the island of Abaiang to pilot a 'whole-of-island' approach around community resilience to climate change and natural hazards. The approach is supported by the SPC, GIZ, SPREP and USP programmes on climate change and is made possible by support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the European Union, and the Government of Australia. Residents of Abaiang have thrown their support behind this initiative. In November last year, over 168 members of the community attended a special event to present the findings of an integrated vulnerability assessment. [Read more online...](#)

## GUARDING AGAINST THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE THROUGH IMPROVED WEATHER FORECASTING



Effective weather forecasting and meteorological data collection is crucial to help guard against the impact of climate change and extreme weather events. SPREP's Pacific Meteorological Desk supports national meteorological services in the region to manage, enhance and disseminate weather and climate information. A number of successful activities were undertaken in this area in 2013 including the second meeting of the Pacific Meteorological Council in Fiji. At this special event, representatives from 17 national meteorological services got together to discuss a broad range of issues including tsunami warning and response, tropical cyclone forecasting, drought and water management and forecasting for civil aviation. [Read more online...](#)

NURTURING A NEW GENERATION OF PACIFIC ENVIRONMENT LEADERS



SPREP is supporting two key capacity building initiatives for young people in environmental management and decision making.

The Pacific Emerging Environment Leaders' Network, established in 2011, continued to grow through 2012 and 2013. PEEL, as the network is known, is a multi-disciplinary group of early career professionals who exhibit a particular passion for and commitment to improving the state of the environment and people's lives in the Pacific islands, through their specific work areas. The [second forum of PEEL](#) was held in Fiji in June 2013, bringing together the original membership and a group of young students from the University of the South Pacific's Future Climate Leaders' Project. PEEL provides a forum for these young leaders to share ideas, experiences and lessons as they work toward their vision of "leading, generating and inspiring environmental action in the Pacific". The work of PEEL is shared through their Facebook page and blogspot (peelinitiative.blogspot.com).



Recognising the drive and enthusiasm of younger people, SPREP also hosted the 6th workshop of the United Nations Environment Programme's Pacific Youth Environment Network (PYEN) in November 2013. PYEN is a network of 15 to 25 year old Pacific island youth with an interest in the environment. The 31 participants at the 6th workshop, held in Suva, Fiji also attended and actively participated in the 9th Pacific Islands Nature Conservation Conference from 2 to 6 December. A [short film](#) was produced and shared at the Conference as part of the youth submission to the development of the [Pacific Regional Framework for Nature Conservation, 2014-2020](#).

ENGAGE

TRANSCENDING GEOGRAPHIC BOUNDARIES THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

The continued growth and uptake of mobile internet and social media in the Pacific islands region presents a tremendous opportunity for regional bodies, like SPREP, to transcend geographic boundaries and quickly share information, ideas and solutions. Our Facebook page, for example, currently engages almost 10,000 individuals and organisations who share an interest in the natural heritage and sustainability of the Pacific environment.

We invite all our readers to be a part of the conversation by liking us on Facebook or following us on Twitter.

[www.facebook.com/SPREP.PEIN](http://www.facebook.com/SPREP.PEIN)  
[www.twitter.com/sprechannel](http://www.twitter.com/sprechannel)



We hope you enjoyed reading *SPREP-ToK*. Your feedback and suggestions are most welcome.

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

