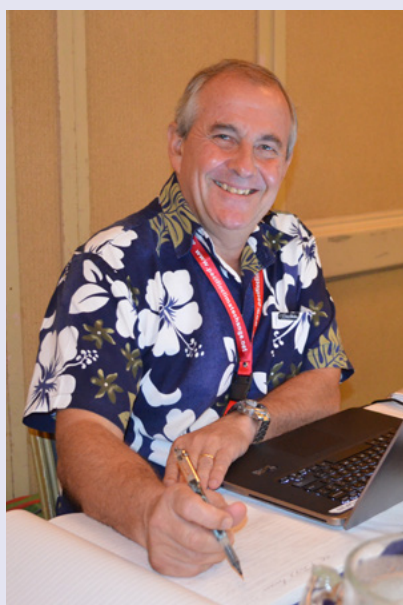




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Earlier this month I had the pleasure of visiting Tonga to attend the opening of a [new water supply system for the Upper Hihifo District](#) that has been installed through the Pacific Adaptation for Climate Change (PACC) Project.

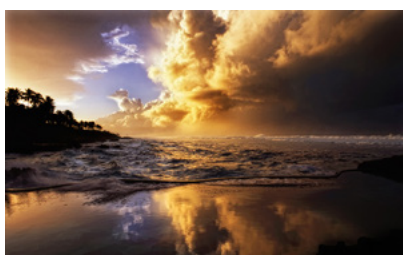
As a result of this fantastic initiative, more than 2,000 residents in the area now have ready access to water at all times of the day and the storage capacity will provide a valuable buffer to the community during periods of drought. This project is a great example of how PACC is implementing practical solutions for adaptation that address priorities at both a national and community level.

We recently hosted the PACC team here at SPREP headquarters to focus on monitoring and evaluation for the project as it prepares for completion at the end of this year. If you haven't visited our [PACC webpage](#) lately I would urge you to do so as it features numerous examples which, like the Hihifo project, demonstrate how efforts to foster resilience to climate change for the future so often improve quality of life and wellbeing in the present.

David Sheppard  
**Director General**

### LATEST NEWS

#### ECHOING THE CALL FOR SWIFT, CONCENTRATED AND GLOBAL ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE



© S.Chape / SPREP

The latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) paints the starkest picture yet of the extreme challenges facing our planet as a direct result of climate change. The report outlines how the impacts of climate change are already taking place in all continents and oceans around the globe and warns that, in most cases, people and governments are not adequately prepared. SPREP's Director General, Mr David Sheppard, welcomed the release of the report and [echoed the call for swift, concentrated and global action](#) to respond to the indisputable risks that are identified.

#### LUI BELL MEMORIAL POST-GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP FOR MARINE SPECIES CONSERVATION



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SPREP is inviting applications for the [Lui Bell Memorial Post-Graduate Scholarship for Marine Species Conservation](#), which was established in 2013 to honour the life and work of Lui Bell and his commitment to the conservation of marine species in Pacific islands. The scholarship aims to develop the expertise of Pacific island nationals in areas related to the conservation and management of the region's migratory species – dugongs, marine turtles, sharks and cetaceans, and thus support implementation of marine species conservation priorities in the region. The deadline for applications is 31 May, 2014.

## PACWASTE HEALTHCARE WASTE BASELINE SURVEY LAUNCHES IN FIJI



© J.Tavane / SPREP

Work has commenced on [healthcare waste baseline surveys](#) in 15 different Pacific island countries and territories. The purpose of these surveys is to collect information about current healthcare waste practices across a range of hospitals and health clinics. This information will be used to identify cost effective and sustainable improvements to healthcare waste management across the region and identify the priority countries and interventions for both the short and long term. It will also inform the development of a healthcare waste and infection control training package to be rolled out over the next two to three years under the PacWaste project.

## SUPPORT FOR STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT REPORTING IN THE COOK ISLANDS AND BEYOND



© M.Graham / SPREP

Representatives from SPREP facilitated a special workshop with key environmental stakeholders from the Cook Islands to pave the way for the commencement of a State of the Environment (SOE) assessment for the island group. This important initiative is part of a larger body of work, being led by SPREP's Environmental Monitoring and Governance division, to develop and implement a regional SOE programme for all Pacific island countries and territories. There has been strong interest in this body of work from SPREP's Pacific island members, reflecting [the value of SOE reporting and monitoring to the region](#).

## HANDBOOK LAUNCHED FOR PACIFIC ENVIRONMENT NEGOTIATORS



© A.Carvan / SPREP

A new handbook, designed to provide Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEA) negotiators with practical advice on handling the complexities of international environmental governance, has been launched by SPREP and the United Nations Environment Programme. Environmental agreements forged at international meetings are crucial to addressing the worst effects of environmental degradation. The forums and processes required to achieve these outcomes often have a unique language – combining international policy, law and careful diplomacy. [The MEA Negotiator's Handbook for the Pacific Region](#) guides individuals through the processes and skills required to improve the chances of a desired outcome.

## PACIFIC CLIMATES SERVICES SHARE LESSONS LEARNED AT KEY REGIONAL CONSULTATION



© N.Woonton / SPREP

From 31 March to 4 April the Cook Islands hosted the Regional Consultation on Climate Services for Pacific Small Island States and Related Meetings. More than 60 delegates, including representatives from the Meteorological Services of each Pacific island country and territory, attended the conference which was coordinated by SPREP and the World Meteorological Organization. Highlights included reports on [lessons learnt by the Tonga Meteorological Services from Cyclone Ian](#), how Meteo France has joined [the fight against vector borne diseases in French Polynesia](#) and updates on the [Tarawa drought response plan](#) and the Samoa Meteorology Division's [Climate Early Warning System](#).

For more news from SPREP please visit our website at [www.sprep.org](http://www.sprep.org)



## THE RARE AND ELUSIVE POLYNESIAN MEGAPODE



© A.Goth

The globally endangered Polynesian megapode (*Megapodius pritchardii*) is an unusual ground-dwelling bird which is endemic to Tonga. In Latin, 'megapodius' means 'big-footed' which is no doubt a reference to the bird's robust legs, used to dig nests and burrows underground. In Tonga, the Polynesian megapode is known as the 'malau'.

Unlike most birds, the Polynesian megapode does not incubate eggs using body heat. Instead it buries them in warm volcanic sands where they are incubated by geothermal sources. This very specific tactic, while effective from a time-management perspective, limits the bird to settlements on volcanic islands.

Fossil records indicate that in pre-human times there were four or five species of megapode in existence across Tonga, Fiji, New Caledonia, Samoa and Niue. Currently the Polynesian megapode, endemic to Tonga, is the only species that survives in Polynesia.

The cause of these extinctions was undoubtedly the arrival of humans on the islands, who hunted (and continue to hunt) the birds for meat and eggs. Invasive species, such as rats and cats, probably didn't have a significant impact on the initial decline in numbers, but they have certainly impeded subsequent attempts to re-establish the population.

In the early 1990s, efforts were made to boost the numbers of the Polynesian megapode by translocating eggs and chicks from its single and threatened population in Niuafu'ou to sites on the remote and uninhabited islands of Fonualei and Late.

In September of last year, SPREP conducted a field survey led by top international ornithologist, Dr David J Butler, to assess the status of these colonies.



© A.Goth

The team were pleased to discover that the population on Fonualei had possibly doubled during the past ten years – increasing from around 300–500 adult individuals in 2003 to approximately 1,000 in 2013.

Unfortunately however, the survey team did not observe any Polynesian megapodes on Late, suggesting that the translocation programme has failed in this location.

Later this year, SPREP is planning a survey on the island of Niuafu'ou where preliminary work has suggested that the local community is still collecting eggs for customary purposes. A big challenge for the project will be to assess whether the current rates of egg collection are sustainable. If not, work will be undertaken at local and national level to find a way to sustainably manage this activity.

SPREP's survey work of the Polynesian megapode in Tonga is carried out through the Global Environment Facility - Pacific Alliance for Sustainability Integrated Island Biodiversity project executed by SPREP in partnership with the Tonga's Ministry of Land, Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources and implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme.

REWARDING EXCELLENCE AT SPREP

The 2013 Director General’s Award of Excellence was presented to four members of the SPREP team at a special ceremony on 28 March, 2014. The award, established last year, is presented to staff who have demonstrated exemplary and exceptional work that is beyond the scope of their formal position.

**Dr David Haynes**

Director, Waste Management and Pollution Control



In 2013, David Haynes secured major funding to support waste management and pollution control programmes in the Pacific islands. This resulted in a four-fold increase in the budget of the Waste Management and Pollution Control Division in 2013.

David has also overseen the expansion of our work to the French Territory members of SPREP.

**Mr Bruce Jefferies**

Terrestrial Ecosystems Management Officer



Bruce Jefferies was acknowledged for his outstanding work on designing and implementing the rapid biodiversity surveys in three countries – Samoa, Nauru and Tonga – which have each made significant contributions to the state of scientific knowledge in these

countries. His work has also had a substantive impact on strengthening national polices as well as ‘south-south’ capacity-building.

**Ms Esther Richards**

Solid Waste Management Adviser



Esther Richards helped develop the waste management donor round table concept accepted by SPREP members for implementation in 2014. She led the Clean Pacific Campaign in 2012 and 2013, pioneering a private sector partnership with Westpac

Bank. Esther also championed the development of internal environmental policies at SPREP.

**Ms Nanette Woonton**

Media and Public Relations Officer



Nanette Woonton’s commitment to developing capacity and empowering young Pacific journalists in environment reporting has resulted in strong and positive partnerships with tertiary institutions and other partners. Her work has encouraged and inspired

journalists throughout the region and has significantly raised SPREP’s profile in the media.

COMING UP

**29 July – 1 August:** Forum Leaders Meeting (Palau)

**1 – 4 September:** UN Conference on SIDS (Samoa)

**25 September:** COP to the Noumea Convention (RMI)

**26 September:** COP to the Waigani Convention (RMI)

**29 September:** Pacific Environment Forum (RMI)

**30 September – 2 October:** SPREP Meeting of Officials (RMI)

**3 October:** Environment Ministers’ Session of SPREP Meeting (RMI)

**6 – 14 October:** CBD COP 12 (Korea)

**4 – 9 November:** CMS COP (Ecuador)

**1 – 12 December:** UNFCCC COP 20 (Peru)

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



**SPREP**  
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