

SPREP-Tok

A monthly e-bulletin from the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

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OUR 'NEW NORMAL' FOR OUR PACIFIC ENVIRONMENT AND PEOPLE - FOR NOW AND BEYOND

We at SPREP are no different to other organisations, entering into a 'new normal' for this period, with meetings, workshops and panel discussions being coordinated online with people across different oceans and time zones.

As a global pandemic, COVID-19 has impacted our way of life as we know it, halting travel and large gatherings while highlighting the need for safe hygiene. We pay our deepest respects to the many across our planet who have passed due to COVID-19 complications and remember the many family members and friends affected by the virus.

At this time of tragedy there is much uncertainty for us all, and we stand in solidarity with our Pacific islands and our global community as we work to address COVID-19. We are adapting to bring back as much normalcy as possible under these circumstances with the burdening knowledge that the cyclone season has wreaked further havoc upon our Pacific family impacting Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. The level of support we can provide is hampered by the processes in place to halt the growth of COVID-19, yet we persevere to support in ways that we are able to.

At SPREP, our Pacific safety and our role in building our Pacific resilience are major priorities for our staff and our Members. This has meant we continue to work with our Members to increase their resilience albeit remotely and in half day shifts to allow for sanitising of our premises on a regular basis. Many of our staff have returned home, working remotely, to be with family over this time.

While we work under these alternate conditions during this period, there is thought to what the 'new normal' may be as we go forward after COVID-19 or how we can apply lessons learnt over this time to continue a stronger and more resilient environment for all times.

As human activity around the world has paused to slow and control the spread of COVID-19, it is clear that nature is benefitting from this time of lessened human impact. With roads clear of traffic, factories closed and air travel at a standstill - global greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution is much reduced and species are thriving. With less traffic on roads, there are reports from across the world, of animals roaming freely along highways and roads.

As we prepare to come out of the restrictions that COVID-19 has forced on us, we must plan to sustain these gains and ensure that we do not lose sight of the harsh lessons that have been learned.

We can define our new Pacific normal by less carbon intensive and more biodiversity-aware ways of carrying on our business and building the resilience of our communities and the ecosystem services that sustain us.

SPREP stands ready to continue working with our Pacific islands region to help our Members build upon this 'new normal' for a resilient Pacific environment and people.

For the full column.



Mr. Kosi Latu, Director General of SPREP.



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Our vision: A resilient Pacific environment sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.

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GLOBAL PANDEMIC POSTPONES UNFCCC COP26



The Twenty-Sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change has been postponed. The decision was taken by the COP Bureau of the UNFCCC with the United Kingdom and Italy.

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EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF MEDICAL WASTE ESSENTIAL DURING PANDEMIC



As the world grapples with the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, countries are now facing another challenge as a result – how to manage medical waste safely and effectively.

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INVASIVE SPECIES THREATEN GLOBALLY IMPORTANT SEABIRDS IN KIRIBATI



To tackle the threat that invasive species pose to endemic species, Kiribati has developed the National Invasive Species Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2020 (NISSAP).

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MANAGING PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS IN PNG



One of the most prevalent persistent organic pollutants in Papua New Guinea, with links to cancer in humans was targeted during a scoping mission towards the end of 2019.

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'AOPO COMMUNITY SEEKS TO PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE



'Aopo village chief councillors met in March this year with the Samoa UNDP-GEF Global ABS project and the SPREP Regional GEF ABS Project to present a draft 'Aopo Community Biocultural for the village council's review and feedback.

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PACIFIC CLIMATE PREDICTION IMPROVED WITH NEW ACCESS-S MODEL



New climate products to help improve weather and climate forecasting through the Australian Community Climate Earth System Simulators-Seasonal (ACCESS-S) model are now available to Pacific Met services.

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REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS ENVIRONMENTAL DATA PORTAL TRAINING WORKSHOP



The RMI Green Climate Fund Readiness Programme, in collaboration with the Inform Project through the Climate Change Directorate, hosted a training workshop on the Republic of Marshall Islands Environmental Data Portal at the end of March.

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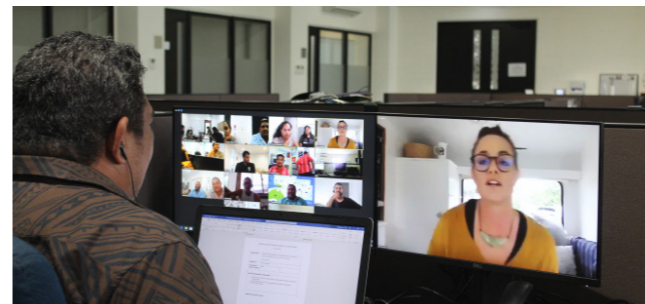
PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES FOR RECONSTRUCTION AFTER TROPICAL CYCLONE HAROLD IN VANUATU



Vanuatu has the highest disaster risk in the world, making it the most vulnerable to natural hazards, according to the WorldRiskReport 2019.

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PACIFIC ISLAND CLIMATE OUTLOOK FORUM ENTERS NEW FRONTIER



The Sixth Pacific Islands Climate Outlook Forum ushered in a new era for the annual forum which brings together representatives of Pacific National Meteorological and Hydrological Services, regional partners and global centre of climate predictions.

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SOLOMON ISLANDS STATE OF ENVIRONMENT REPORT ENDORSED BY CABINET AND TABLED IN PARLIAMENT



A newly endorsed State of Environment report for Solomon Islands is now available for public viewing and download on the Solomon Islands Environment Data Portal.

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PACWASTEPLUS ENGAGES WITH COUNTRIES USING INNOVATIVE RESOURCES



With the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic continuing to spread and its impacts upon human health and the economy intensifying daily, governments are urged to treat waste management as an urgent and essential public service.

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TROPICAL CYCLONE SEASON OFFICIALLY OVER



Eight tropical cyclones crossed the Exclusive Economic Zones of the South Pacific this 2019-2020 tropical cyclone season that officially ended in April. In meteorological terms, this is known as a 'near normal' season.

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