



Report of the First Executive Board Meeting

10-11 September 2018
Apia. Samoa



SPREP Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

SPREP First Executive Board Meeting (1st : 2018 :
Apia, Samoa)

Report of the First Executive Board Meeting, Apia, Samoa,
10 – 11 September 2018. – Apia, Samoa : SPREP, 2019.

19 p. + annexes ; 29 cm.

ISBN: 978-982-04-0863-0 (ecopy)

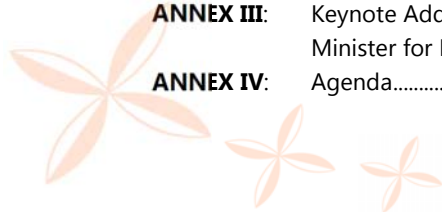
1. Environmental policy – Oceania – Congresses.
2. Conservation of natural resources – Oceania –
Congresses. 3. Environmental protection – Oceania
- Congresses. I. Pacific Regional Environment
Programme. II. Title.

363.7099

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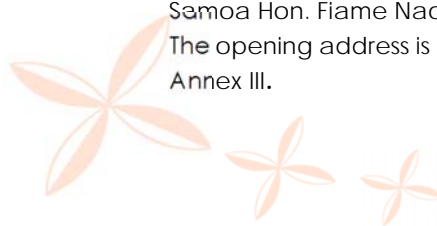
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AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING

1. The first Executive Board was held on 10 and 11 September, 2018 in Apia, Samoa.
2. The 2018 Executive Board comprised representation from Australia (Metropolitan Members), Cook Islands (Polynesian Members), Federated States of Micronesia (Micronesian Members), Fiji (Melanesian Members), France (Francophone Members, and current Troika Members: Niue, Palau, and Papua New Guinea. A full list of participants is available in Annex 1.
3. The opening prayer was made by the representative of Cook Islands.
4. The opening remarks from the Director General of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Mr Kosi Latu are attached as Annex II.
5. The Meeting was officially opened by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Government of Samoa Hon. Fiame Naomi Mata'afa. The opening address is attached as Annex III.



AGENDA ITEM 2: APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

6. The Rules of Procedure of the SPREP Meeting require that the Chair and Vice Chair be alphabetically rotated. Accordingly the Executive Board appointed Papua New Guinea as Chair and France was appointed as Vice Chair of the First Executive Board of SPREP (EB1).

the support from all Members and the Secretariat during its term as Chair of the SPREP Executive Board Meeting.
7. As outgoing Chair, Palau represented by Ms. Gwendolyn Sisor, acknowledged
8. The Executive Board:
 - **confirmed** the Representative of **Papua New Guinea** as **Chair**; and
 - **confirmed** the Representative of **France** as **Vice-Chair**.



AGENDA ITEM 3: ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND WORKING PROCEDURES

9. The Meeting reviewed the Provisional Agenda and the suggested hours of work.
10. The Meeting appointed a Report Drafting Committee comprising Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji and France.
11. The Meeting:
 - **considered** and **adopted** the Provisional Agenda (attached as Annex IV);
 - **agreed** on hours of work; and
 - **appointed** an open-ended Report Drafting Committee comprising Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji and France.



AGENDA ITEM 4: ACTION TAKEN ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THE TWENTY-EIGHTH SPREP MEETING

12. The Secretariat reported by way of a Working Paper on actions taken against the decisions and directives from the Twenty-Eighth SPREP Meeting (28SM) held in Apia, Samoa from 19 – 21 September, 2017.

13. The Executive Board:

➤ **noted actions taken** against the decisions and directives of the Twenty-Eighth SPREP Meeting.



AGENDA ITEM 5: 2017 OVERVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPREP STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2026

AGENDA ITEM 5.1: Presentation of Annual Report for 2017 and Director General's Overview of Progress since the Twenty-Eighth SPREP Meeting

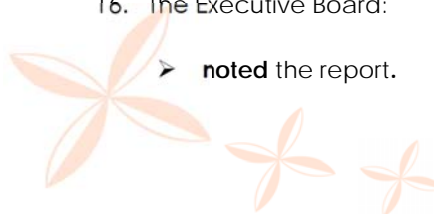
14. The Director General presented an update and highlights of activities undertaken in 2017 plus those since the Twenty-Eighth SPREP Meeting covering the period from January 2017, to September 2018.

Vanuatu and Solomon Is), and core support for Micronesian Desk officers, and that it will likely be not possible to have a presence in all Member countries.

15. In response to a question from Niue, the Director General noted that SPREP's in-country presence is determined by either project funding (in the case of Fiji,

16. The Executive Board:

➤ **noted** the report.



AGENDA ITEM 5.2: SPREP's 25th Anniversary

17. The Director General presented an update on the activities under the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of SPREP.

acknowledged the significant contribution SPREP has made to building capacity and assisting legal and technical capacity in the region especially in strengthening the unity of Pacific island countries on environment issues and in particular at international conferences such as the Twenty-first Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

18. 2018 is the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary year of SPREP. The Pacific inter-governmental regional environment organisation was established through the signing of the SPREP Agreement in June, 1993.

19. Executive Board discussion emphasised the achievements of SPREP since its inception, and in particular (Australia, Federated States of Micronesia, and Cook Islands congratulated SPREP on achieving the significant milestone of its first Executive Board Meeting.

21. Responding to queries from Cook Islands and Federated States of Micronesia on the visibility and communication of SPREP's 25 years of achievements, The Director General noted that recognition of the 25th Anniversary is being undertaken within available budget and highlighted the role of social media in sharing the information. However, he

20. Australia noted that as a major donor and founding member, it is proud to be associated with SPREP, and

acknowledged further work is needed to share information and improvements will be made in the next couple of months through available avenues including a page on the SPREP website.

22. In response to a query from the EB Chair the Director General advised that information on the 25th anniversary had been communicated to all focal points.
23. France congratulated SPREP on the achievements and sought improved communications with the French territories including in French language.

24. The Chair encouraged Members to support SPREP on this activity and where possible to dedicate national resources to support this landmark event.

25. The Executive Board:

- **recommended Members promote** SPREP's 25 years of service to the Pacific where possible; and
- **noted** the work undertaken by SPREP thus far, within the available work plan, resources and green guidelines, to commemorate SPREP's Twenty-Fifth year anniversary.

AGENDA ITEM 5.3: Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report (PMER)

26. In accordance with the SPREP Meeting Rules of Procedure the Secretariat presented its Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report on the 2017 Work Programme and Budget.
27. France expressed its satisfaction with the Secretariat's budget; the approval of Green Climate Fund and Adaptation Fund projects working in French territories; and support given to Members particularly in preparing for the UN Ocean Conference and hosting portals. The representative from France relayed the offer from New Caledonia to share its expertise in knowledge management.

28. Australia thanked the Secretariat for an impressive portfolio of support across the Pacific region, and for providing detailed information on achievement of successful impacts in 2017. Australia also noted that it was pleased to support Pacific engagement during the Year of the Whale with its focus on important marine mammal areas.

29. The Executive Board:

- **considered** the performance of the Secretariat in 2017; and
- **noted** that the 2018 Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report will be the first opportunity to report against the 2017-26 SP and 2018-19 Performance Implementation Plan.

AGENDA ITEM 5.4: Performance Implementation Plan

30. The Secretariat provided an update on the implementation of the 2018 – 2019 Performance Implementation Plan (PMER).
31. In response to a query from Australia, the Secretariat advised that the issue of the organisational structure would be addressed in following agenda items.
32. On behalf of New Zealand, Australia welcomed the PMER updates on SPREP's work in invasive species management. In response, the Secretariat thanked

New Zealand for its support including via secondment from the Department of Conservation and highlighted work under the USD 6.5 million GEF6 Project at covering Niue, Tonga, Tuvalu and Republic of Marshall Islands, noting that this will see a SPREP officer placed in Republic of Marshall Islands. The Secretariat also advised that the Eleventh European Development Fund (EDF 11) will include a significant component on invasive species management.

33. France encouraged the Secretariat to present the Performance Implementation Plan (PIP) update to all Members particularly with respect to country action plans.
34. In response to a query from Federated States of Micronesia, the Secretariat advised SPREP has and will continue to work with agencies of the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific

(CROP) ensuring the SPREP strategic plan is aligned to those of other CROP colleagues to avoid duplication of work, ensure efficient use of available resources, and to continue CROP collaboration with input from national Member governments.

35. The Executive Board:

- **noted** the Secretariat's progress in PIP implementation.

AGENDA ITEM 5.5: Audited Annual Accounts for 2017

36. In accordance with Financial Regulation 27(e), the Secretariat presented its Audited Annual Accounts for the year ending 31 December, 2017. The Secretariat noted that the Audited Annual Accounts for 2017 had been prepared in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), and advised that the auditors had provided an unqualified opinion of the Secretariat's financial operations for 2017. The Secretariat also reported that the organisation is no longer in deficit and can report a positive balance, albeit minimal.

37. Cook Islands, on behalf of the Polynesia sub-region, congratulated the Secretariat for the hard work and positive balance on the reserve, bringing SPREP out of the negative balance status, where it had been for many years.

38. The Chair reiterated the unqualified audit report and commended the Secretariat for the great work in ensuring financial sustainability.

39. The Executive Board:

- **reviewed and adopted** the audited Financial Statements and Auditors' Report for 2017.

AGENDA ITEM 6: REGIONAL COOPERATION

AGENDA ITEM 6.1: Framework for Pacific Regionalism

40. The Secretariat provided an update on the 'light' review of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism (FPR), noting links to other regional prioritising initiatives. SPREP sought the views of Members' on the way forward.
41. In response to a query from Australia as to if any further information would be relayed to the review team and the consultants, the Director General reiterated the Secretariat had conveyed information to the consultant on the review being undertaken. The Secretariat proposed to the consultation team that the review should not be done in isolation but in partnership with


other regional prioritising mechanism frameworks underway in the region.

42. The Secretariat further added that it was important to ensure resource implications were to be included in the review process.

43. The Executive Board:

- **noted** the engagement of SPREP in the Review;
- **considered** the issues of Framework of Pacific Regionalism and provided guidance to the Secretariat in its further engagement with the Review; and
- **requested** Members to participate in the review.

AGENDA ITEM 6.2: Implementation of Pacific Islands Forum and SIS Leaders Decisions

44. The Secretariat reported on the implementation by the Secretariat on the Pacific Islands Forum and Small Island States (SIS) Leaders decisions of the Forty-Eighth Pacific Islands Forum noting that the Secretariat's work is firmly aligned with the Pacific Leaders' Blue Pacific Narrative.
45. The Director General presented a table describing key elements of the Pacific Island Forum and SIS Leaders' decisions including decisions up to 10 August, 2018.
46. France strongly supported the work of the Secretariat on addressing plastics issues and asked for an update on plans.
47. The Secretariat highlighted the Pacific Regional Marine Litter Plan which has been endorsed by the Pacific Leaders, as well as a toolkit for countries to adapt to help them address marine debris challenges including that of plastics. The toolkit provides support for drafting legislation and for engagement in stakeholder communications and awareness.
48. The Secretariat noted the support provided to Vanuatu for developing a communications strategy to raise awareness of plastics issues in support of the Government's 2018 plastics ban.
49. France sought further clarification on the actions to address plastics including microbeads, in the context of integrated management of Maritime Exclusive Economic Zones.
- The Secretariat outlined the emphasis placed upon country leaders to complete and finalise Maritime boundaries and noted that further work is needed to progress the Call for Action on banning plastic microbeads, recommended by France at the Twenty-eighth SPREP Meeting in 2017.
50. The Cook Islands noted the success of the Marae Moana Marine Park, highlighting an important 'sister agreement' with New Caledonia which provides for sharing of lessons learnt in Marine Protected Area management, drawing on Cook Islands strengths in working with the community and customary leaders, and New Caledonia's strengths in science and research.
51. The Secretariat encouraged the development of further partnerships such as the Marae Moana Marine Park, and hoped to see more of these from other Members.
52. The Executive Board:
- **noted the actions of the Secretariat to implement the relevant** decisions of the Pacific Islands Forum and SIS Leaders decisions of the Forty-Eighth Pacific Islands Forum in 2017; and
 - **noted the verbal update of the Director General on** the Forty-Ninth Pacific Islands Forum in 2018.
- 

AGENDA ITEM 6.3: Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP)

53. The Secretariat provided an update on progress of the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP) and the Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP) Taskforce. The PRP taskforce membership consists of: 5 positions for countries and territories; 5 positions for Civil Society Organisations and private sector; 5 positions for CROP agencies, academia, development partners and UN Agencies and Multi-lateral banks.
54. The first PRP meeting held in May, 2018 in Suva Fiji resulted in three working groups to spearhead three priority areas: development of criteria to enable initiatives to align with FRDP; development of a communication and

engagement strategy; and preparation for the First Pacific Resilience Meeting under the new governance arrangements.

55. French Polynesia (through Cook Islands) acknowledged with appreciation the support from SPREP to develop the communication and engagement strategy, noting the October deadline. The Secretariat confirmed that the October deadline would be met.

56. Australia noted SPREP's role in developing the communications and engagement strategy, and sought clarification as to whether it would address the dissemination of information. The Secretariat confirmed this will be an integral part of the strategy.

57. France appreciated the efforts of SPREP, and in particular the Climate Risk Early Warning Systems (CREWS) initiative, noting the importance of including early warning systems in the communications and engagement strategy.

58. The Executive Board:

- **endorsed** the role of SPREP as the member representing the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific on the Pacific Resilience Partnership Taskforce;
- **endorsed** the role of SPREP in the development of the Communications and Engagement Strategy for the successful implementation of the Framework for Resilience Development in the Pacific. (FRDP); and
- **noted** the establishment of the SPREP's FRDP Coordinator role.

AGENDA ITEM 6.4: Strengthening Regional Linkages Update

59. The Secretariat presented an update to Members on work undertaken to strengthen the regional presence and linkages of SPREP.

60. The Secretariat outlined the two approaches currently used for funding SPREP's regional offices, the first being project funded offices in Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu courtesy of the GIZ-funded PEBACC Project, and the second being the core-funded Desk Officers in Federated States of Micronesia and Republic of Marshall Islands, with this funding now committed to SPREP's contribution to the proposed Northern Sub-regional office.

61. The Secretariat noted that now seven countries in the northern sub-region (RMI, FSM, Palau, CNMI, Guam, Nauru and Kiribati) support the request of Micronesian Leaders for the establishment of a northern sub-regional office, hosted by the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

62. As requested by the 28th SPREP Meeting, the Secretariat presented an indicative budget for the office and reported on progress in discussions with the 7 Northern Members, noting the current funding gap of US\$103,000, and sought Executive Board guidance on approaches to fill the funding gap.

63. Federated States of Micronesia expressed approval of the establishment and operation of the Northern office but noted reservations of the financial sustainability without support from the rest of the Micronesian countries, further suggesting a sustainability framework allowing for commitment of countries to support the office at various stages.

64. A small group comprising FSM, Australia and Cook Islands was asked to work with the Secretariat to draft a recommendation to the Board taking into account the comments of Members.

65. The Executive Board:

- **noted** the Vanuatu SPREP country office is providing strengthened project and liaison support to Vanuatu for the Green Climate Fund Vanuatu Climate Information Services for Resilient Development Project and the Pacific Ecosystem-based Adaptation to Climate Change (PEBACC) Project in Vanuatu, with anticipated additional staff from other projects;
- **noted** the Fiji office will continue to be supported by the existing PEBACC and forthcoming projects and continues to provide strengthened project and liaison support to Fiji and partner agencies of SPREP located in Suva, with

anticipated additional staff from other projects;

- **recommended** that the Secretariat works with the Northern Members to finalise the business plan and budget for the Northern sub-regional SPREP office as the basis for them to confirm their commitment and contribution to the establishment and sustainable operations of the office;
- **recommended** that the SPREP Republic of Marshall Islands Desk officer work with Republic of Marshall Islands to coordinate this work; and
- **requested** Northern Members to report on progress to Twenty-Ninth SPREP Meeting.



AGENDA ITEM 6.5: UNFCCC COP24 Engagement Plan

66. The Secretariat presented the One Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) Plus Twenty-Fourth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework convention on Climate Change (COP24) Engagement plan to the Executive Board.

67. The Chair commended SPREP for its lead role in coordinating and engaging with countries in preparation for the UNFCCC COP24 in Poland.

68. Australia advised the meeting it was interested in seeing the negotiating priorities of the Pacific island Members once these were finalised and available.

69. The Executive Board:

- **endorsed** the role of SPREP as the lead coordinator for the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP)- Plus Engagement Plan for the Twenty-Fourth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP24); and
- **endorsed** the One CROP Plus Engagement Plan for COP2.



AGENDA ITEM 7: STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP ISSUES

AGENDA ITEM 7.1: Pacific Climate Change Centre

70. The Secretariat provided an update on the progress of the Pacific Climate Change Centre (PCCC).

71. France strongly supported the initiative noting the existing research agencies in the Pacific such as the Research Institute Development (IRD) in New Caledonia and the Centre for Insular

Research and Observatory of the Environment (CRIOBE) in French Polynesia. SPREP is a partner of the IRD through an MoU.

72. In response to a query from Cook Islands, the Secretariat advised the PCCC steering committee had endorsed the strategy and business plan with detailed work to be developed as the next steps.

73. The Executive Board:

- **noted** progress with planning for the Pacific Climate Change Centre (PCCC);
- **endorsed** SPREP's role in leading the development of the Strategy and Business Plan for the PCCC.
- **endorsed** the strategy and Business Plan for the PCCC.



AGENDA ITEM 7.2: Update on SPREP EU EDF-11 programme and project engagement

74. The Secretariat provided an update on the progress in the development of SPREP projects funded through the European Union – Eleventh European Development Fund (EU-EDF11). This included updates on:

- EU-EDF-11 African Caribbean Pacific (ACP) Objective 2.1- Pacific-European Union Marine Partnership (PEUMP) – to be implemented by the Pacific Community (SPC), Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), SPREP, and University of the South Pacific (USP)
- EU-EDF-11 ACP Objective 2.2 Pacific-European Union Waste Management Programme (*PacWaste Plus*) – implemented by SPREP with SPC and USP
- EU EDF-11 Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) PROTEGE programme – implemented by SPC, SPREP and OCT's

76. Further clarification was sought from New Zealand on the involvement of International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in the PEUMP Project for which the Secretariat outlined IUCN is contracted directly due to their role in the project development and also as a partner to SPREP through a MoU between the two organisations.

77. Australia acknowledged SPREP for securing EU funds and undertook to continue to encourage the EU and other development partners support SPREP's core costs associated with implementing projects should funding models remain an issue.

75. The Secretariat advised a tendering process for the by-catch component of the PEUMP project was implemented in response to a query from New Zealand presented by Australia.

78. The Executive Board:

- **noted** progress in the development and commencement of EDF-11 Pacific - African Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (PACP) and OCT programmes and associated SPREP projects.



AGENDA ITEM 7.3: Update on Ocean-related Strategic Engagements

79. The Secretariat presented an update on the 2017-2026 Strategic Plan cross-cutting focus on oceans and initiatives taken since the UN Oceans Conference in 2017.

80. The Secretariat advised the Ocean Strategy highlighted during the Twenty-eighth SPREP Meeting (28SM), requires review before being made available in response to a query from Australia.

81. The Secretariat outlined the partnership between SPREP and the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and the outcomes of this partnership in response to queries from France.
82. France recommended engagement by the Secretariat with the Climate Adaptation and Biodiversity French Agency for Development Initiative, as these are in line with the work of the Secretariat.
83. Australia indicated its support for sustainable management of the ocean and noted that it provides a package of \$10 million per annum to support sustainable ocean governance including fisheries development, management and compliance. Australia also indicated that it is keen to work with SPREP to address marine plastics.
84. The Executive Board:
- **noted** the increasing level of donor and partner support for SPREP ocean-related projects and programmes that will deliver 2017-2026 Strategic Plan outcomes for Members.



AGENDA ITEM 7.4: SPREP's Accredited Entity Role

85. The Secretariat provided an update to the Executive Board on the implementation of SPREP's Accredited Entity (AE) role with the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and Adaptation Fund (AF), as well as the GEF Council Decision on Accreditation and SPREP's engagement and support in GEF-7.
86. The Secretariat noted it was working with partners, National Designated Authorities and all accredited entities, ensuring that there is collaboration with these partners to ensure good outcomes for all.
87. France congratulated the Secretariat for the large amount of proposals in the pipeline.
88. Australia noted the large portfolio of projects the Secretariat is involved with, underscoring the importance of ensuring that SPREP has sufficient resources for implementation. Australia also noted the need to ensure multi-country proposals are coordinated in partnership with other accredited entities.
89. The Secretariat advised the implementation of the Project Review Management group (PMRG) an internal Secretariat team to review both new and ongoing projects to ensure the maintain an excellent standard.
90. The Executive Board:
- **noted** progress with implementing SPREP's Accredited Entity Role.



AGENDA ITEM 8: GOVERNANCE, INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND MECHANISMS

AGENDA ITEM: 8.1: Audit Committee Report

91. The Secretariat presented a report on the activities of the Audit Committee (AC) between 1 July 2017 and 30 June 2018.
92. Australia acknowledged the Secretariat's efforts in reducing expenses, further congratulating the Secretariat for maintaining a positive reserves account in the long term.

Australia also noted the completion of the Risks Management Manual/Policy and the audit report which are important for upholding SPREP's accreditation and reputation as a safe entity for investment.

93. France noted the AC report and the effort of the Secretariat in capturing foreign exchange losses in the report.

94. The Executive Board:

- **noted** the improvement in internal controls resulting from the implementation of the new and revised policies approved by the Secretariat in 2016;
- **noted** the extensive work conducted on the Financial Management Information System (FMIS) and the Project Management Information System (PMIS)
- **recommended** that the FMIS modules that were not purchased at the time of the procurement of the new FMIS due to financial constraints be prioritised for procurement as soon as finances permit;
- **noted** that late receipt of Member's voluntary contributions remains an issue, causing financial constraints on the Secretariat's annual budget;
- **requested** Members to provide their voluntary contributions to the Secretariat in a timely manner.
- **congratulated** the Secretariat for the positive results in 2017 and encourages management to maintain the positive reserves account in the long term;
- **commended** the efforts of the Director General and all staff in the early and satisfactory completion of the financial accounts and audit;
- **noted** the positive outcome of the External Auditors' audit of the 2017 Annual financial statements;
- **welcomed** the new practice adopted by the Secretariat of providing the draft financial statements to the Audit Committee (AC) for review prior to the finalisation of the audit opinion including the opportunity of consultation between the AC and the External Auditor;
- **noted** the funding constraints of the Secretariat to address the capacity challenges of the Internal Audit Unit, and encourages the Secretariat to continue its efforts to address this when resources are available.
- **noted** the completion of the risk management Manual/Policy, and its focus on three forms of risks to be managed:
 - Enterprise wide risks
 - Programme/Department specific risks and Project risks
- **encouraged** the Secretariat to regularly review and update the risk register and in particular the enterprise risks noting that this will form the basis of the Internal Auditor's work plan;
- **noted** the completion of the Fraud Prevention and whistleblower protection manual/policy and the work done to date by the Secretariat in this important area of SPREP's internal control framework, including the awareness raising tasks of the Internal Auditor;
- **noted** the activities of the Audit Committee members and the Internal Auditor; and
- **approved** the report and recommendations of the Audit Committee for the period July 2017-June 2018.



AGENDA ITEM 8.2: SPREP Director General's Performance Assessment – closed session

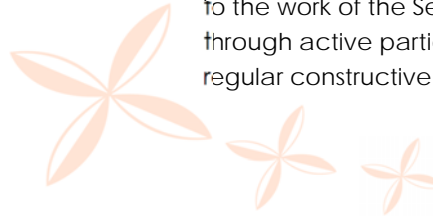
95. This was a closed session.

96. The Meeting:

- **noted and endorsed** the review completed by the Troika of the Director General's Performance Development Plan (PDP) for the period Sept 2017- Sept 2018; and
- **endorsed** the proposed way forward by the Troika for the Director General's next PDP, Sept 2018 – Sept 2019. The Troika will

work with the Director General over the next month to finalise the next PDP targets by end of October 2018; Members were invited to propose specific targets as they see fit; and

- **noted** the valuable contribution that Members of the Troika provide to the work of the Secretariat through active participation and regular constructive feedback.



AGENDA ITEM 9: STRATEGIC FINANCIAL ISSUES

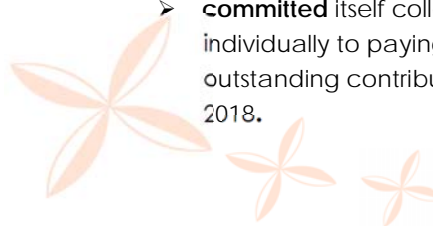
AGENDA ITEM 9.1: Report on Members' Contributions

97. The Secretariat provided a report on Member contributions for the consideration of the Executive Board.

98. The Secretariat confirmed receipt of USD 22,396.00 payment from French Polynesia as at 31 August in response to a query from French Polynesia presented from Cook Islands.

99. The Executive Board:

- **considered** the report and **address** the problem of outstanding Member contributions; and
- **committed** itself collectively and individually to paying current and outstanding contributions in full in 2018.



AGENDA ITEM 9.2: Sustainable Financing

100. The Secretariat provided an update on actions undertaken to address core budget pressures and enable long-term sustainable financing for SPREP.

101. Fiji recommended an internal business development function for the Secretariat to secure sustainable financing measures noting at least three projects SPREP can work with Fiji on which will allow for sustainable financing. The Secretariat noted it is open to exploring options for maintaining sustainable financing of SPREP including that of philanthropic partnerships and will continue dialogue with Fiji on the business development function.

102. The Cook Islands proposed the Secretariat develop a robust plan making a strong case that seeks approval from Members on their preferred option as opposed to an open end plan which may result in no commitment from Members to increase payments. The Secretariat noted different Members are in different stages of capacity to increase their contributions however this is an option the Secretariat is interested in.

103. France noted it will maintain current contributions with no increase.

104. Australia proposed the Friends of the Chair as a mechanism to facilitate discussions about Member fees and sought

information from SPREP about progress with implementation of the new organisational structure given the significant financial cost implicated with it.

105. The Secretariat provided an updated on the financial impact of the new organisational structure endorsed in principle at the Twenty-eighth SPREP Meeting in 2017 in response to queries from Cook Islands and Australia. The Secretariat advised the new organisational structure established in 2018 outlines positions needed to implement the 2017 – 2026 SPREP Strategic Plan all positions of which are to be filled based upon priority needs

and available funding noting the goal is to fill these throughout the full ten year term of the Strategic Plan.

106. The Executive Board:
- **considered** and **noted** the above report on Sustainable Financing measures by the Secretariat; and
 - **recommends** establishment of Friends of the Chair to enable engagement of Members on sustainable financing and resourcing; and
 - **provided** comments/views on any further action to be undertaken by the Secretariat.



AGENDA ITEM 10: 2019 WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET

AGENDA ITEM 10.1: Climate Change Resilience

Agenda Item 10.1.1: Pacific Climate Change Research Strategy

107. The Secretariat provided an update on the development of the Climate Change Science and Services Research Strategy, outlining this was a direct response to the request from the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services Directors which included feedback from a consultative workshop in April 2017 led by SPREP and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation of Australia (CSIRO). This is under review to be presented to the Pacific Meteorological Council in 2019.

Australia was pleased to support the workshop in April 2017 to develop the research strategy and noted the importance of seeking input from other CROP agencies and countries that were not able to attend.

110. The Secretariat and expressed interest in exploring possible collaboration with Papua New Guinea and the Green Climate Fund Readiness project.

111. The Executive Board:

- **noted** the progress made on the development of the Pacific Climate Change Science and Services Strategy.



Agenda Item 10.1.2: Pacific Climate Change Report Card

108. The Secretariat acknowledged the support from Australia through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and (CSIRO) for the kind financial and technical assistance to its development.

112. The Secretariat presented on the first ever Pacific Marine Climate Change Report Card that was published in June 2018 in partnership with the Centre for Environment Fisheries and Aquaculture (CEFAS) and launched as part of World Oceans Day.

109. Australia advised the placement of a Climate Change Adviser with the Papua New Guinea Climate Change Authority that could provide some support to the PNG finance readiness project.

113. The Chair and France congratulated the Secretariat on the development of the Report Card, especially on the quality of the publication.
114. France further queried on the linkage between the Pacific Marine Climate Change Report Card and the Climate Change Matters (CCM) as well as the frequency of the publication. The Secretariat clarified the Pacific Marine Climate Change Report Card and the Climate Change Matters newsletter were two separate publications and while the CCM was a monthly publication, the report card was a one-off publication.
115. The Secretariat further clarified that Members and development partners

are regularly approached to submit stories to be included in the CCM which is supported by the Climate and Oceans Support Programme for the Pacific.

116. The Secretariat also acknowledged that based upon the positive feedback to the Pacific Marine Climate Change Report Card it will seek support from partners to continue this in the coming years.

117. The Executive Board:

- **endorsed** the Pacific Marine Climate Change Report Card; and
- agreed to promote** the Pacific Marine Climate Change Report Card.



AGENDA ITEM 10.2 Island and Ocean Ecosystems

Agenda Item 10.2.1: *Proposed Global Environment Facility (GEF) - 7th Replenishment Cycle -Healthy Oceans Programme Framework Document (PFD)*

118. The Secretariat presented to the Executive Board on the Pacific GEF Constituency Initiative to establish a large-scale oceans programme for funding through the International Waters focal area of the Global Environment Facility 7th replenishment and the status of the technical assistance provided by the Secretariat to support the GEF Pacific Constituency.
119. The Secretariat provided an overview of the Island and Ocean Ecosystem 2019 key projects, including the role of the Government of New Caledonia as host of the Tenth Nature Conservation Conference in 2020.
120. Australia advised of its support for the Framework for Pacific Oceanscape for which a total of AUD 1.38 million is allocated over a three year period from 2018 to 2020 for the Pacific Ocean's Commission to coordinate and advocate on cross-sectoral ocean issues in the region.

121. Australia enquired about the work of the Secretariat of the International Ramsar Convention on Wetlands for which the Secretariat clarified it will renew the MoU with the Ramsar Secretariat as this is an important instrument in the Pacific region.
122. The Secretariat further explained it has not been directly involved with the implementation of Ramsar Convention but has supported Ramsar through the collaboration with other partners and programmes such as the Ecosystem-based Adaptation project. The Secretariat is working with WWF Fiji to develop the nomination of the Great Sea Reef in Fiji as a Ramsar wetland site of international significance. The Secretariat also funded the visit of a representative from the Macuata Province in Fiji to a Ramsar site in the Philippines for an exchange of ideas, knowledge and experiences. The Secretariat noted the Ramsar Convention Officer is based at the International Union for Conservation of Nature in Suva, Fiji.

123. France on behalf of New Caledonia noted that territories cannot benefit from the GEF funding. The Secretariat advised it engages territories where possible, in activities under projects they are not eligible for funding for.
124. France on behalf of New Caledonia thanked the Secretariat for the development of the Healthy Ocean concept announcing they are ready to meet with the consultant. The secretariat noted all documentation on the development of the Healthy Ocean will be provided to New Caledonia and other territories.
125. The Executive Board:
- **noted** the support provided to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Pacific Constituency on development of an oceans framework;
 - **endorsed** the development of the Oceans Framework Programme Framework Document (PFD) for GEF-7 funding; and
 - **endorsed** the development of an Action Plan for the environmental dimension of the Pacific Oceanscape Framework and the Blue Pacific resolution for consideration by the 2019 SPREP Meeting.
- Agenda Item 10.2.2: Pacific Year of the Coral Reef 2018 - 2019**
126. The Secretariat presented on the Pacific Year of the Coral Reef biennium 2018 – 2019 and its associated activities, as well as the proposal to develop the Coral Reef Action Plan for 2020 – 2030.
127. Australia, Cook Islands and the Polynesian sub-region, Fiji and New Zealand supported the Coral Reef Action Plan and the Pacific Year of the Coral Reef 2018 – 2019.
128. Fiji requested the Coral Reef Action Plan include capacity building to implement coral reef management plans, and to monitor coral reefs. The Secretariat explained this and other aspects will be included in the proposed Coral Reef Action Plan and further proposed further discussions with Fiji.
129. New Zealand, through Australia, proposed that this initiative and other programmes build upon work undertaken such as that of the Pacific Island Ocean Acidification Partnership.
130. Australia highlighted these proposed initiatives are complementary to existing programmes supported by Australia.
131. Cook Islands highlighted the need for further guidance on interaction with coral such as in the tourist industry where there is direct interaction between people and the coral reef ecosystems. The Secretariat confirmed it has provided similar guidance on whale watching and can design similar toolkits for corals.
132. Federated States of Micronesia queried if studies had been undertaken on impacts of typhoons and cyclones to coral reefs. The Secretariat highlighted the Pacific Marine Climate Change Report card and the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change 1.5 report yet to be released may provide further insight.
133. The Chair also noted the role of human behaviour and its impact on coral reefs is also of relevance, citing the fishing practice of using explosions to stun fish.
134. France requested the Coral Reef Plan be detailed and proposed the following amendments to Working Paper 10.2.2.
135. Section 6: “Some funding governments are responding to the urgency of the problem. The France-Australia Coral Resilience Initiative, an integral part of the Franco-Australia cooperation programme agreed by



both countries in 2016, is of special importance to the Pacific Islands. As part of this initiative, a commitment to enhance the resilience of coral ecosystems in the Pacific was undertaken by the French President and the Australian Prime Minister during the French President's visit to Australia in May 2018 and reaffirmed at the High level Dialogue on Climate Change and Biodiversity with Pacific leaders held in Noumea in May 2018. This initiative is focused on understanding the self-resilience parameters of coral reef ecosystems in the region, essential to the development of policies and actions to manage and protect the reefs.”

136. Section 10: it will reiterate the importance of referring to the need to coordinate the Regional Coral Reef

Action Plan 2020-2030 with the multi-year strategies of the International Coral Reef Initiative.

137. New Caledonia through France, informed the Executive Board of the adoption of a 3-year legislation on Coral Reef. This is a major step to the future of Marine Parks under the Pacific Year of the Coral Reef. New Caledonia will share information with SPREP under the Pacific Year of the Coral Reef.
138. The Executive Board:
- **endorsed** the Pacific Year of the Coral Reef biennium 2018 – 2019 and the scope of proposed activities; and
 - **approved** the proposal for a Regional Coral Reef Action Plan for 2020 – 2030.

AGENDA ITEM 10.3 Waste Management and Pollution Control

Agenda Item 10.3.1: *Clean Pacific Roundtable*

139. The Secretariat presented on the Second Clean Pacific Roundtable (CPRT) hosted in Fiji, to help bring about a Pollution-free Pacific.

140. The Executive Board:

- **endorsed** the Report and Outcome Statement of the 2nd Clean Pacific Roundtable and;
- **acknowledged** the strong support of Fiji towards the successful implementation of the 2nd Clean Pacific Roundtable.

Agenda Item 10.3.2: *Pacific Marine Litter Action Plan*

141. The Secretariat presented on the Pacific Marine Litter Action Plan, 2018-2025 seeking endorsement. The Secretariat noted the Pacific Marine Litter Action Plan aligns with the Cleaner Pacific 2025 Strategy and has a planned review for 2020.

142. France raised the request from New Caledonia to fully participate in the implementation of the Pacific Marine Litter Action Plan.

143. Australia (including on behalf of New Zealand) expressed full support for the plan seeking clarification on the effects of marine litter on biodiversity within the plan. The Secretariat outlined the MoU with the University of Newcastle for which PhD scholarships for Pacific islanders to focus on areas of climate change resilience, ecosystem and biodiversity management, environmental governance and waste pollution and control.

144. The Director General further noted the 2018 Pacific Island Leaders Forum expressed concern for Pacific marine litter, further advising the Pacific Games 2019 will be plastics free for which there has been multiple interest from both the private and public sectors.

145. The Executive Board:

- **endorsed** the *Pacific Marine Litter Action Plan*.

Agenda Item 10.3.3: *Proposed Global Environment Facility (GEF) – Seventh Replenishment Cycle – Islands Programme Framework Document (PFD)*

146. The Secretariat presented on the Pacific GEF Constituency initiative to develop a Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) islands programme for funding through the Chemical and Waste focal area of the GEF Seventh Replenishment.

147. The Secretariat noted UN Environment have engaged a consultant to assist with project development for which SPREP is aiming to have the project developed in March 2019 ready for submission to the GEF Council in May 2019, seeking GEF CEO approval by mid-2020.

148. The Executive Board:

- **noted** the Pacific Global Environment Facility (GEF) Constituency Initiative

to develop a Small Islands Developing States Islands programme for funding through the Chemical and Waste focal area of the GEF 7th replenishment;

- **endorsed** the Secretariat's continued technical support to the Pacific GEF Constituency through the development of a Programme Framework Document as a key element in progressing the Pacific's pathway to a pollution free Pacific as adopted through the framework of the Cleaner Pacific 2025; and
- **encouraged** collaboration with all relevant partners, especially the Pacific Island Countries and UN Environment in the development of the Programme Framework Document and Pacific Child Project for submission to the GEF council for funding consideration under the GEF7 funding cycle.



AGENDA ITEM 10.4: Environmental Monitoring & Governance

Agenda Item 10.4.1: *Building national and regional capacity to implement multilateral environmental agreements by strengthening planning and the state of environmental assessment and reporting in the Pacific. Referred to as the Inform Project.*

149. The Secretariat provided an update to the Executive Board on the implementation status of the Inform Project and to seek continued support of the environmental portal and reporting tool. The Secretariat noted work under the Inform Project includes the establishment of national environment data portals in 14 Pacific island countries with data sharing protocols.

150. France expressed its support for the development of databases especially data portals that complement those the Pacific community (SPC) has undertaken, further requesting if the Secretariat could work with New

Caledonia in monitoring national environment priorities.

151. France sought feedback from Cook Islands on the trial phase of the Inform Portal noting the interest from New Caledonia in the database.
152. Cook Islands confirmed that they have trialled the Inform data portal and reporting tool still in the initial stage, noting the value in the portal is substantiated if the country has data to populate. The trialled reporting tool was only used to show possibilities to the stakeholder but have not used it formally.
153. Cook Islands advised it was impressed with the tool and noted it's potential to go beyond the environment sector and looks forward to the protocols being developed by the Secretariat, proposing these can be discussed in country allowing for ministries to contribute.

154. Cook Islands sought clarification on the second recommendation, whether the use of the environmental portal and reporting tool should be endorsed or just considered for which the Secretariat noted it recommended endorsement of portal use for environment planning, reporting and decision making as well as for other sectors.

155. The Executive Board:

- **noted** substantive progress in developing national and regional Inform databases and reporting tool;
- **endorsed** the use of the environmental portal and reporting tool as key tools to support monitoring, reporting, planning and decision making processes in country; and
- **directed** the Secretariat to continue to support the environmental reporting and planning process through the Inform project.

Agenda Item 10.4.2: Update on National Environment Management Strategies (NEMS) in the Pacific

156. The Secretariat presented to the Executive Board on the review and development of National Environment Management Strategies (NEMS); and sought guidance on SPREP's current and future work in this area.

157. The Secretariat noted the importance of the National Environment Management Strategies as an overarching strategic planning frameworks to address environmental issues in a holistic and integrated manner.

158. The Executive Board:

- **noted** progress with National Environment Management Strategies (NEMS);
- **supported** the effective use of NEMS as mainstreaming policy tools to inform sector and national level planning processes including linkages to key international and regional policy instruments; and
- **directed** the Secretariat to continue to **support future** on-going work on NEMS and related activities.

AGENDA ITEM 10.5: Consideration and Approval of Proposed Supplementary Work Programme and Budget for 2019 in The Biennial Budget for 2018-2019

159. The Secretariat presented the Secretariat's Supplementary Work Programme and Budget for 2019 in the Biennial Budget for 2018-2019 for approval.

160. During the Twenty-Eighth SPREP Meeting, the Members unanimously approved the Biennial Budget for 2018-2019, with the supplementary budget for 2019 to be approved at this year's Executive Board Meeting.

161. The Secretariat outlined a financial report on the budget is provided each quarter which the Audit Committee reviews, noting it is very cautious in

managing financial risk in response to a query from Australia on how well the actual 2018 budget has been tracking against its forecast budget and if risks are accounted for in the 2019 supplementary budget.

162. The Director General noted approaches have been taken to manage the risks that can be posed by foreign exchange, further elaborating that agreements not signed on expected dates by partners and donors can affect the budget. Programme fees are another risk which is monitored.

163. Cook Islands queried on behalf of French Polynesia in reference to pages 5-6 of the working paper in terms of Member contributions, whether the percentages are increases of Member contribution or not. The Secretariat confirmed this figure does not reflect an increase in Membership fees.
164. The Secretariat further noted that it has formulated the budget in a conservative manner –, specifically it is just an earmark of overstating the

expenditure level, with the strategy for follow up notices for collection of Membership fees have been implemented with various capitols and countries.

165. The Chair thanked the Members for the queries, and the Executive Board:

- **considered and approved** the proposed Supplementary Work Programme and Budget of **US\$33,236,447** for 2019.



AGENDA ITEM 11: ITEMS PROPOSED BY MEMBERS

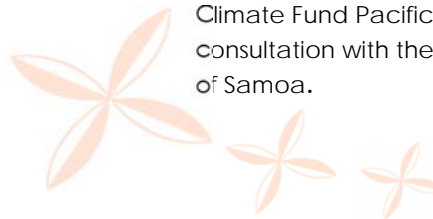
AGENDA ITEM 11.1: Green Climate Fund Pacific Presence

166. The Executive Board was presented with the proposal for a Green Climate Fund Pacific (GCF) Regional Office to be established in Apia as per Government of Samoa offer in previous GCF meetings.
167. Samoa advised that they had offered to host the GCF office at the GCF Pacific Structured Dialogue in Tonga in 2017, and in 2018 in Federated States of Micronesia.
168. Samoa reaffirmed their support of the Pacific climate change issues through the hosting of the Pacific Climate Change Centre to address all climate related issues, and as host country of the Secretariat in Apia.
169. Australia confirmed their support to expand the GCF presence in the Pacific and will pursue the offer at the GCF Board Meeting this year in Bahrain.

170. Federated States of Micronesia asked for more information on the GCF Office arrangements between SPREP and the Government of Samoa for which the Secretariat clarified that the proposal is for the Pacific region. The Secretariat noted the Pacific Climate Change Centre (PCCC) is located at SPREP which would provide synergies for the GCF Office to be co-located at the PCCC as well. The Secretariat stated that the GCF has an office already established in the Caribbean.

171. The Executive Board:

- **supported** the offer by the Government of Samoa; and
- **endorsed** SPREP hosting the Green Climate Fund Pacific Office in consultation with the Government of Samoa.



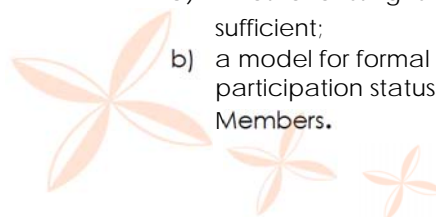
AGENDA ITEM 12: OTHER BUSINESS

AGENDA ITEM 12.1: EU participation in SPREP Biennial Meetings

172. European Union have expressed wanting to become a 'permanent observer of SPREP' for SPREP meeting. They already have observer status, but want a similar status to what has been

implemented by the Pacific Community. Pacific Community have created a new broader category giving the European Union broader observer status beyond the Meeting.

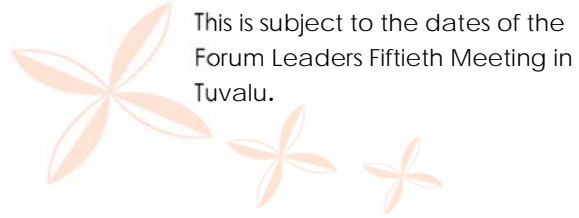
173. Deputy Director General noted that European Union is the largest contributor to SPREPs supplementary budget at the moment contributing approximately 31% for the 2019 budget.
174. The Secretariat, Australia, Cook Islands and Fiji urged that this may be a matter to be discussed by all SPREP Members, and that an open-ended Friends of the Chair be established to progress this in the meantime.
175. France queried whether Article 4 of the Rules of Procedure can be applied to this circumstance whereby observers can be given the right to speak by seeking permission of the Chair.
176. European Union falls under Rule 5.3 of 'may' invite, under the Rules of Procedure.
177. Cook Islands highlighted Rule 6.3 which states once invited observers can be given rights at discretion of the Chair.
178. The Secretariat, Cook Islands, Fiji and Australia queried if European Union is seeking to participate as a category beyond observer status in the current Rules of Procedure, including having a status outside the SPREP Meetings. The Secretariat has sought clarification on this matter from the European Union.
179. Australia is encouraged that EU wants to be involved in SPREP, and notes that there may already be an appropriate process for Observers to be involved in the Meeting. The Secretariat could review the current process and ensure there is clarity as to how the existing rules can be applied and allow observers to provide technical advice or engage during the meeting accordingly.
180. Australia further noted if one observer is allocated a different status because it is a significant donor, this will set a precedence for other donors.
181. The Secretariat advised that the EU was looking for more status than the current observer model under SPREP's Rules of Procedure.
182. Australia, Cook Islands and Fiji cautioned using funding for justification beyond the status of observer for participation in the SPREP Meeting.
183. France supports and proposed that a mode for long-term engagement could be considered to support participation of European Union at the SPREP Meeting, and reminded the Executive Board of the European Union's engagement in the region. France noted its interest to participate in the Friends of the Chair Group.
184. The Executive Board:
- **recognised** the request of the European Union (EU) for formal participation in SPREP Meetings;
 - **considered** that this is an issue for the full membership of SPREP to consider; and
 - **noted** the greater involvement of non-traditional partners and **recognise** that similar requests might be made in the future; and
 - **recommend** that a Friends of the Chair/Open Ended Working Group with an initial membership of Australia, Cook Islands and France be convened to discuss this issue and recommend to the Twenty-Ninth SPREP Meeting:
 - a) whether existing rules are sufficient;
 - b) a model for formal participation status for non-Members.



AGENDA ITEM 13: DATE AND TIME OF THE TWENTY NINTH SPREP MEETING

185. The Executive Board:

- **noted** the 29th SPREP Officials and High Level Meeting will be held in Apia Samoa in first week of September 2019.



AGENDA ITEM 14: ADOPTION OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIRST SPREP EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

186. The Executive Board:

- **adopted** the recommendations of the First SPREP Executive Board Meeting.

Information Paper 1 – PACPLAN Workshop Report

Australia brought the PACPlan Workshop paper to the meeting's attention and thanked SPREP for its support for the workshop and countries for attending. The Secretariat thanked Australia for kicking off the review of PACPlan with the workshop as PACPlan is important for members to meet their obligations of the

Waigani and Noumea conventions. SPREP advised that the 3rd review of PACPlan is underway and a revised plan will be put to members at the next SPREP meeting. SPREP is planning to replicate the Australian workshop with other metropolitan members if possible.

AGENDA ITEM 15: CLOSE



ANNEX 1: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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ANNEX II: OPENING REMARKS FROM MR. KOSI LATU, SPREP DIRECTOR GENERAL

Hon. Fiame Naomi Mata'afa, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Environment for Samoa
Outgoing Chair of the SPREP Meeting, Ms. Gwen Sisor for Palau
Incoming Chair of the SPREP Executive Board, HE Ms. Lucy Bogari, Papua New Guinea High Commissioner to Fiji
Executive Board Members
SPREP colleagues
Ladies and gentleman

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to the first SPREP Executive Board meeting. This occasion is symbolic as this is the first such meeting of the Executive Board as we implement the new governance arrangements laid out by our Members, in this our 25th year since the signing of the SPREP Treaty.

Having recently returned from Nauru for the 49th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting I am reminded of the important role of SPREP in serving our region and the reason why we were first established as an intergovernmental organisation - 'to promote co-operation in the Pacific region and provide assistance in order to protect and improve its environment and to ensure sustainable development for present and future generations.'

Our mandate is now at a critical juncture when our environment is under ever increasing pressure. In this short period of time we have witnessed the increase of unprecedented waste and pollution pressures from human induced activities such as industrial and agricultural run-off, marine debris, oil and chemical pollution, population growth, coastal development and modernization, over-fishing and resource extraction. These pressures have been exacerbated by the challenges of climate change, extreme weather events including storms and droughts. The impacts of all these activities threaten our environmental, social and economic resilience.

In recent years, we have seen a renewed sense of Pacific collective action driven by the Framework for Pacific Regionalism and the Blue Pacific narrative which aligns well with the priorities of SPREP. The recent Leaders Communique notes there is much more work for SPREP to do alongside our CROP Plus colleagues: on the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific and the Pacific Resilience Partnership; support for the Pacific in the preparation and the negotiations for COP24; the new Implementing Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity on Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction; the reaffirmed commitment by Leaders to eliminate marine litter and the urgency of implementing the Pacific Marine Litter Action Plan as endorsed by our recently concluded Clean Pacific Roundtable; and recognition that waste is indeed a critical issue for our 'Blue Pacific'.

To achieve the Leaders priorities which are all linked to our mandate at SPREP we must focus our efforts on the work we do, to ensure SPREP is able to allocate and direct technical and financial resources accordingly to make a difference where it has greatest impact. Our Strategic Plan 2017-2026 approved by our Members in Niue in 2016, articulates a vision that ensures '*A resilient Pacific environment sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures*'. Our mandate, our vision and our values as the *premier regional organisation for the environment and climate action* - ensures that SPREP works in partnership with all of our members including our metropolitan members and development partners - to address the many challenges in our region. Our strategic priorities of Climate Change Resilience; Island and Ocean Ecosystems; Waste Management and Pollution Control; and Environmental Monitoring Governance are all environmental challenges for our Pacific region which has a direct impact on the sustainable development of present and

future generations. In 2018 the number one development partner of SPREP is the European Union through EDF 11 funding with the commencement of multimillion projects that integrate across all of our strategic priority areas.

The COP23 Presidency role of the Government of Fiji in Bonn and as co-host with the Government of Sweden of the UN Oceans Conference in New York last year highlights the leadership and capacity of our Pacific region and demonstrates what we are capable of achieving on a global scale. The important leadership role of Fiji and our Pacific region in both of these critical global events further strengthened the '*ocean-climate change nexus*' and raised the voice of the Pacific to the highest levels for support and action in our home islands. The **Boe Declaration** recently endorsed by Pacific Leaders in Nauru last week, reaffirms that climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of Pacific island people and further emphasises the urgency to implement the Paris Agreement.

In the lead up to the 8th Pacific Leaders Meeting in Iwaki, Japan, the ground breaking ceremony of the Pacific Climate Change Centre was held at SPREP in May this year with the presence of the Hon. Prime Minister of Samoa and the Ambassador of Japan. The Government of Samoa as the host of SPREP have generously laid the foundations for the Pacific Climate Change Centre which is currently under construction and to be completed mid next year. The PCCC is a journey led by our members that was first discussed on the SPREP Meeting agenda in 2011. The PCCC will be a globally respected Centre of Excellence providing practical information, support and training to address the adaptation and mitigation priorities of Pacific island communities. It will be underpinned by strong partnerships with Pacific Governments, applied research institutions, donors, civil society and the private sector.

The recent Joint Ministerial Statement by the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade for New Zealand and the Hon. Minister of

Foreign Affairs for Japan highlighted the vision of partnership and joint commitment to the PCCC. Japan will provide additional support through technical cooperation from mid-2019 to SPREP to assist Pacific island countries to enhance their capacities through training programmes; and New Zealand will provide the necessary human resources for the PCCC, including exploration for deployment of climate change experts to Pacific Island countries. These commitments underpin the importance of partnerships and the pivotal role of the PCCC to combat climate change.

In noting our Pacific Leaders priorities, there are many challenges we cannot address alone without the support of our Members. I would like to thank the Government of Australia for your multiyear financial support towards our core budget which enables SPREP to do what it does best. The renewal of our multiyear partnership this year is a significant investment in SPREP. I would also like to thank the Government of New Zealand which has also provided consistent multiyear funding support. The financial support committed by SPREP Members enables SPREP to be a dynamic and responsive organisation to meet the needs and aspirations of our Pacific region. We cannot do what we do without our SPREP Members.

Our 25th year of the SPREP Treaty highlights the foresight of our Members to provide a platform for the environment to be protected for current and future generations. In January this year we officially launched the SPREP Pacific Year of the Coral Reef in Fiji at a high level UN Environment event. In celebrating 25 years of the SPREP Treaty, we have held celebrations alongside key SPREP events including the ground breaking ceremony of the Pacific Climate Change Centre with the Hon. Prime Minister of Samoa; the Clean Pacific Roundtable in Fiji with the Hon. Prime Minister of Fiji; the Protected Areas BIOPAMA II Regional Inception Workshop with IUCN; the Protected Areas BIOPAMA II Workshop in the Cook Islands; and the SPREP Open Day with over 100 local school children. These

celebrations are just a few examples of what the SPREP team will continue to do alongside members throughout the remaining year to recognise the partnership with our Members that is the true spirit of SPREP.

As this is our first SPREP Executive Board meeting, this will be an experimental and dynamic process and serve as a true test on whether this model effectively meets the needs and expectations of all of our members, noting engagement of the full membership is every two years. We want to

ensure that whatever can be done to improve the service of the Secretariat that this forum will enable such feedback and likewise ensure that SPREP remains a member driven organisation as envisaged in the SPREP Treaty 25 years ago. Our mandate and our service to the region remains more than relevant and necessary in these pressing environmental times, to ensure a healthy, prosperous and resilient Pacific future.



ANNEX III: KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY THE HON. FIAME NAOMI MATA' AFA, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER & MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, GOVERNMENT OF SAMOA

Distinguished members of the SPREP
Executive Board

SPREP Members

Director General of SPREP

SPREP Staff

It is my pleasure as the host government of SPREP to open the first meeting of the SPREP Executive Board, in this the 25th anniversary of the SPREP Treaty which established SPREP in 1993 as an intergovernmental organisation. The foresight of SPREP Members to recognise the importance of conservation management and the integral links of our environment with our way of life, our people, our culture, ensures that our heritage with our will for sustainable development, belongs to present and future generations of the Pacific.

SPREP has been an important partner for my government since its establishment. When the government invited SPREP to be based in Apia, it was based on the visionary premise that the presence of SPREP through capacity-building and availability of technical expertise in the environment sector would strengthen the vital connection between sustainable development and conservation here in Samoa and indeed the region. I am pleased to share, that with all of the environmental commitments Samoa has made the legacy of SPREP is helping countries at the national and regional level to implement action on the ground; as well as the leveraging of diverse partnerships to enrich the capacity, technical expertise and resources available to serve our Pacific region.

As recognised in the SPREP Strategic Plan 2017-2026 the ocean is a crosscutting theme across all of the work of SPREP and it is in this area that many challenges remain. Globally 63 to 273 million sharks are killed each year in

commercial fisheries to meet the high demand of shark fins. This year Samoa with the support of SPREP and the Pew Charitable Trust hosted the first Pacific Ministerial Shark Symposium, which brought together Pacific island ministers and high level political representatives with partners including scientists, to agree on ways to improve shark conservation in the region.

As part of the Symposium, Samoa announced a Shark and Ray sanctuary making it the eighth such sanctuary in the Pacific, where sharks are now protected in our 128,000 square kilometres EEZ¹. In October last year, Samoa successfully lobbied for the inclusion of blue sharks on Appendix II of the Convention on Migratory Species. These are but a few tangible examples of SPREP working with government and partners such as the Pew Charitable Trusts to enable action on the ground. Helping national and local agencies learn more about the role of shark sanctuaries; the need for coordination of obligations to be met; and how different agencies can work together to enforce the regulations; and address these conservation efforts within our very own EEZ.

While oceans is a cross cutting theme for all of the work of SPREP, climate change resilience is the overarching concern of SPREP. The close collaboration between the Governments of Japan and Samoa and SPREP, on the Pacific Climate Change Centre is a milestone for the region. The building is now well underway on the SPREP campus with capacity building programmes to be developed with the continued assistance of JICA. The importance of the PCCC recognised at the 8th Pacific Leaders Meeting hosted by the Prime Minister of Japan in May this year, which my Prime Minister co-chaired, as the chair of the 48th Forum Leaders. The Centre while based in

¹ Under the Shark Sanctuary provisions of the Marine Wildlife Protection Regulation 2018.

Samoa will be a shared regional resource, serving as a catalyst for climate action in our region, which is at the forefront of climate change impacts. The PCCC complements the role of SPREP as the lead CROP agency in supporting Pacific countries on climate change negotiations and as an accredited entity to the Green Climate Fund and Adaptation Fund. The RIE role of SPREP enables tangible support to countries to enable their national aspirations on climate change and sustainable development to be met.

While we recognise the impacts of climate change, we also acknowledge the importance of a Clean Pacific for our continued health and prosperity. The second Clean Pacific Roundtable was recently hosted in Suva, Fiji and saw over 170 participants from throughout the region attend with the generous support of the European Union, JICA and the Government of Fiji. There was shared commitment to the Forum Leaders 2017 commitment to fast track the development of policies to ban the use of single-use plastic bags, plastic and styrofoam packaging. And I am pleased that the presence of the private sector was duly recognised as an important stakeholder of the Roundtable, including the Samoa Recycling and Waste Management Association, which is the first association of its kind in the region, established by the private sector in Samoa with the support of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, JICA and SPREP that will no doubt continue to be replicated throughout the Pacific.

As noted from the Roundtable the *'Pacific region is one of the least polluters at a global scale but is adversely affected by the impacts of pollution to the environment from greenhouse gas emissions and plastic. Plastics are no longer considered just a waste issue but also a food security and climate issue as well.Plastics production and the incineration of plastic waste gives rise globally to approximately 400 million tonnes of carbon dioxide a year, adding to the generation of greenhouse gases. With respect to food security, a study on fish ingestion with samples from New Zealand,*

Samoa, Tahiti and Rapa Nui showed that 97 percent of all fish species sampled contained micro-plastics in their digestive systems. This is 30 percent higher than the global average'.

The Clean Pacific Roundtable demonstrates the work we must all do to protect our environment, and more often than not like climate change the source of our problems lie outside of our region. Despite this the leadership of the Pacific to take action for the environment shows the continued foresight of our region to lead by example as demonstrated by the COP23 Presidency of the Government of Fiji. I am glad to see the commitments made in the Clean Pacific Outcome Statement are included in the agenda for your deliberations, as there is much more work for all of us to do, to effectively address waste management and pollution in our Pacific.

SPREP like our region has demonstrated resilience, a willingness to adapt to change, recognition of the importance of partnerships to tackle the many challenges of our environment we cannot address alone; and most importantly SPREP recognises the interconnectedness of our people, our environment, our ocean and our land, which cannot be separated, as they are one in the same. That is the foresight our SPREP Members had 25 years ago under the SPREP Treaty. I am proud that SPREP is based here in Samoa, and in its 25 years of service to our region SPREP remains faithful to its mandate *'to promote co-operation in the Pacific region and provide assistance in order to protect and improve its environment and to ensure sustainable development for present and future generations.'*

May I wish you every success in your deliberations of the first SPREP Executive Board meeting. My government looks forward to welcoming you again to the 29th SPREP Meeting and to the official launch of our Pacific Climate Change Centre in 2019.

ANNEX IV: AGENDA

Agenda Item 1: Opening Prayer

Agenda Item 2: Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

Agenda Item 3: Adoption of Agenda and Working Procedures

Agenda Item 4: Action Taken on Matters Arising from Twenty-Eighth SPREP Meeting

Agenda Item 5: 2017 Overview and Implementation of the SPREP Strategic Plan 2017-2026

- 5.1 Presentation of Annual Report for 2017 and Director General's Overview of Progress since the Twenty-Eighth SPREP Meeting
- 5.2 SPREP 25th Anniversary
- 5.3 Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report on the 2017 Annual Work Programme and Budget
- 5.4 Performance Implementation Plan
- 5.5 Audited Annual Accounts for 2017

Agenda Item 6: Regional Cooperation

- 6.1 Framework for Pacific Regionalism
- 6.2 Implementation of the Pacific Islands Forum and SIS Leaders decisions
- 6.3 Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific
- 6.4 Strengthening Regional Linkages update
- 6.5 COP24

Agenda Item 7: Strategic Partnership Issues

- 7.1 Pacific Climate Change Centre
- 7.2 European Development Fund 11
- 7.3 Oceans Strategic Partnerships
- 7.4 SPREP's Accredited Entity Role

Agenda Item 8: Governance, Institutional Arrangements and Mechanisms

- 8.1 Audit Committee Report
- 8.2 SPREP Director General's Performance Assessment – **closed session**

Agenda Item 9: Strategic Financial Issues

- 9.1 Report on Members' Contributions
- 9.2 Sustainable Financing

Agenda Item 10: 2019 Work Programme and Budget

- 10.1 Climate Change Resilience
 - 10.1.1 *Climate Change Research Strategy*
 - 10.1.2 *Climate Change Report Card*
- 10.2 Island and Ocean Ecosystems
 - 10.2.1 *Proposed GEF 7th Replenishment Cycle – Healthy Oceans Programme Framework Document (PFD)*
 - 10.2.2 *Pacific Year of the Coral Reef 2018/2019*

- 10.3 Waste Management and Pollution Control
 - 10.3.1 *Clean Pacific Roundtable*
 - 10.3.2 *Marine Pollution*
 - 10.3.3 *GEF – 7th Replenishment Cycle- Islands Programme Framework Document (PFD)*
- 10.4 Environmental Monitoring & Governance
 - 10.4.1 *INFORM project*
 - 10.4.2 *NEMS*
- 10.5 Consideration and Approval of the supplementary budget for 2019 and pipeline projects

Agenda Item 11: Items Proposed by Members

- 11.1 GCF Pacific Office

Agenda Item 12: Other Business

- 12.1 EU participation SPREP biennial meetings

Agenda Item 13: Date and time of the Twenty Ninth SPREP Meeting

Agenda Item 14: Adoption of Report of the First SPREP Executive Board Meeting

Agenda Item 15: Close

For Information

- Information Paper 1 – PACPLAN Workshop Report
- Information Paper 2 – Regional Decisions
- Information Paper 3 – Regional Recycling Centre

