



Mr. Kosi Latu, Director General of SPREP.

Message from Mr. Kosi Latu, Director General of SPREP

Welcome to another edition of SPREP-Tok.

April was a milestone month for our Pacific islands as our member countries displayed global leadership in signing the Paris Climate Accord. We commend our island members, six of whom both signed and ratified the Agreement. We look forward to working with you all in making a difference through the Paris Agreement for the benefit of our Pacific island region and the world.

April also saw the launch of our two year Pacific regional Protect Pacific Whales – Ocean Voyagers Campaign. We are grateful to the Deputy Prime Minister of Samoa for launching this very important campaign which will help strengthen the conservation of these iconic creatures and our Pacific ocean.

The year has gone by fast as we come close to the halfway mark of 2016, before we know it we'll be sharing our December issue of SPREP Tok! We have all had a busy past month and know the rest of the year to come will be in the same vein – we hope you take time out to enjoy our natural environment we are all working to protect and we also hope you enjoy reading this issue of SPREP-Tok.

Onwards and upwards.

Kosi

Director General, SPREP

LATEST NEWS



Image courtesy of Karen Stone.

PROTECT PACIFIC WHALES – OCEAN VOYAGERS

A two-year Pacific campaign to “Protect Pacific Whales – Ocean Voyagers” was launched by the Deputy Prime Minister of Samoa last month. The campaign aims to promote the conservation of whales through a range of initiatives and awareness raising activities.

It is being co-ordinated by SPREP in partnership with Pacific islands and partners.

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H.E. Dr. Hilda Heine, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands signing the Paris Agreement.

PACIFIC ISLANDS SHOW GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AT THE SIGNING OF THE PARIS CLIMATE ACCORD

The Pacific islands, amongst the most vulnerable to climate change, have displayed global leadership when the Paris Agreement opened for signing on 22 April. Fiji, Nauru, Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa and Tuvalu submitted their ratification during the special signing ceremony at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

The Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, The Kingdom of Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu were the Pacific islands that signed once it was open for signature in New York.

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Mr. Henry Kaniki of the Arnavon Islands Conservation Area, Solomon Islands, training to capture a Hawksbill Turtle, a species under the protection of CITES.

CITES SECRETARY-GENERAL VISITS SAMOA

The Convention in International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Secretary-General, Mr. John Scanlon, visited Samoa in early April and participated in a range of events and meetings with SPREP and partners in an effort to bring about stronger representation of the Pacific region in CITES and to support further implementation.

CITES is an international agreement between 182 contracting parties and it seeks to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival.

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Flooding in Vanuatu.

MULTI-BILLION DOLLAR CLIMATE FUND APPROVES VANUATU READINESS PROPOSAL

Vanuatu is the first Pacific island country to have an 'Activity Area 4' grant under a the Green Climate Fund – multi-billion dollar climate fund – awarded. Activity Area 4 grants will support project development. This follows news recently that the Cook Islands have received their first payment for a Readiness Grant in Activity Areas 1 & 2. Activity Areas 1 & 2 focus on supporting country coordination and planning. There are now a total of four Readiness Grants approved for Pacific island countries with more in the pipeline.

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Participants at the third Steering Committee Meeting of the Pacific POPs Release Reduction Project. Photo: A.Carvan/SPREP

PACIFIC POPs RELEASE REDUCTION PROJECT REACHES MID-TERM MILESTONE

The third Steering Committee Meeting of the Pacific POPs Release Reduction Project was held in Suva, Fiji from the 11-12 April, and was attended by representatives of 13 Pacific island countries, as well as staff from SPREP and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The project aims to reduce persistent organic pollutants (POPs) in the Pacific region through the improved management of solid and hazardous waste.

Countries represented at the meeting were Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

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THE PARIS AGREEMENT AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

The historic Paris Agreement, which was adopted at the UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP21) last year, was the topic of a 3-day High Level gathering of Pacific countries.

The gathering, which was held in Samoa from 4-8 April 2016, aimed to inform and prepare the Pacific region to meet their obligations as set out in the Paris Agreement.

The Agreement's main aim is to keep the temperature rise this century well under 2 degrees Celsius, and to drive efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius about pre-industrial levels.

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THE VERY FIRST 3D MODEL OF NAURU LAUNCHED

A three-dimensional model of Nauru was unveiled on Saturday 16 April by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Nauru, Hon. Baron Waqa, in an official ceremony.

The model was constructed during training on Participatory Three-Dimensional Modelling (P3DM), which was held in partnership between SPREP, the Government of Nauru, the Samoa Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) and the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation.

The three-dimensional model will help Nauru identify, establish and manage their natural resources including conservation sites.

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H.E Baron Waqa, President of the Republic of Nauru with the Participatory 3-Dimensional Model of Nauru.



CREATING NEW PATHWAYS FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND DISPOSAL OF USED OIL

With stockpiles of used oil reaching critical volume in some locations, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and SPREP have explored the possibility of using used oil as a supplementary fuel source for electrical generation in the medium term.

SPREP's Hazardous Waste Adviser, Dr Frank Griffin, reported on the preliminary findings of a used oil diesel extender study which was commissioned by the project and undertaken by the Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane, Australia.

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When used oil is dumped, it can have a devastating impact on the environment.



Identifying Shark Fins:
Silky and Threshers

PACIFIC SHARK AND RAY SYMPOSIUM FORGES NEW ALLIANCES

New alliances to protect sharks and large rays were formed between Pacific island and Indian Ocean states at a Pacific Shark and Ray Symposium convened by SPREP in Nadi.

Delegates from Fiji, Palau, Papua New Guinea and Samoa exchanged information with representatives of the Governments of the Maldives and Sri Lanka, and discussed the September meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on International Trade on Endangered Species (CITES), at which Fiji will be leading a proposal to place all nine species of rays of the genus *Mobula* on CITES Appendix II.

[Read more ...](#)

Silky and Threshers Sharks – fin identification guide for Customs officials.



TALKING ABOUT OUR ENVIRONMENT WITH SPREP

Correcting common inaccuracies in climate change reporting and ensuring correct environment information is shared, was at the core of a one-day training hosted by SPREP for journalism students from the National University of Samoa (NUS) and crew members of the Gaulofo.

The training touched on topics of biodiversity, climate change and marine pollution, and has been an annual event with NUS since 2012. This year is the first time the crew of the Gaulofo have taken part, and it is hoped that the partnership will strengthen in the coming year.

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OCEAN ACIDIFICATION REPORT FOR THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

The Pacific Islands Ocean Acidification Vulnerability Assessment is the very first report of its kind which highlights the vulnerability of Pacific islands to Ocean Acidification.

The report provides Pacific island communities insight into future changes in ocean chemistry due to acidification caused by oceans absorbing the increased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

The Pacific Islands Ocean Acidification Vulnerability Assessment is an outcome of the Pacific Ocean Acidification project, coordinated by SPREP in partnership with the Pacific Community and the University of the South Pacific, with support from the Government of New Zealand and the Principality of Monaco.

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SPREP-TOK FRENCH NEWS



Image courtesy of Niue Tourism Office

LANCEMENT DE LA CAMPAGNE PROTÉGEONS LES BALEINES DU PACIFIQUE, NAVIGATRICES DES OCÉANS

La campagne régionale Protégeons les baleines du Pacifique, Navigatrices des Océans a été inaugurée le 14 avril 2016. Elle est coordonnée par le PROE, ses membres s'étant engagés à concentrer leurs activités en 2016 et 2017 sur la conservation des baleines.

Cette campagne est l'opportunité unique pour le PROE, ses pays et territoires membres et ses partenaires de promouvoir la protection des baleines face à de nouvelles menaces ; valoriser leur potentiel de source de revenu pour les communautés du Pacifique grâce au développement de bonnes pratiques pour les observer ; sensibiliser le public à leur conservation mais aussi à la conservation des océans. Ce qui surviendra dans les océans impactera inévitablement les baleines.

Venez célébrer avec nous les baleines et leur rôle central dans de nombreuses cultures du Pacifique !

Pour plus d'information, visitez notre site internet en français <https://www.sprep.org/yearofthewhale/accueil> ; et contactez-nous à pacificwhales@sprep.org.

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