

# Our Ocean, Our Pacific, Our Islands

SPREP working with Members and partners for Sustainable Development Goal 14



The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) is the regional intergovernmental organisation for the protection and sustainable development of the Pacific island environment. SPREP was created as a partnership by 26 Member<sup>1</sup> countries scattered over thousands of kilometres of ocean sharing common elements of culture, history, and environment. SPREP and her Members work toward a collective vision of a resilient Pacific environment sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.

## *Warm Pacific Greetings!*

“ The ocean defines us as a Pacific people. It underpins our livelihoods and way of life. Although most SPREP Members have small populations and economies, they are Large Ocean Island States responsible for managing more than ten per cent of the planet’s oceans. Approximately 98% of this area, totalling over 30 million square kilometres, is contained within the Exclusive Economic Zones of SPREP Members. The ecosystem services provided to the entire planet by the ocean in the SPREP region can be valued in many billions of dollars annually.

The Secretariat hosts technical expertise in a wide range of oceans issues. In anticipation of the increasing severity of ocean ecosystem impacts, especially from climate change, SPREP is committed to increasing its capacity to address ocean issues and to collaborating with Members, Council of the Regional Organisations of the Pacific agencies, and supporters to protect the health and resilience of our ocean for the benefit of SPREP Members and future generations.

We look forward to working with you all in partnership to enhance the work in our Pacific region to achieve SDG 14 together. ”

– Mr Kosi Latu, Director General, SPREP

<sup>1</sup> SPREP Member Countries are American Samoa, Australia, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, France, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, United States of America, United Kingdom, Vanuatu, and Wallis and Futuna.

# Working with our Members

## Our Ocean, ocean acidification and climate change

SPREP is helping our Members address the impacts of ocean acidification and climate change with our ocean project design/management, access to finance, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change negotiations support, adaptation and mitigation policy and planning support, and support for National Meteorological Services through the Pacific Meteorology Desk Partnership.

The New Zealand Pacific Partnership on Ocean Acidification project aims to help build resilience to ocean acidification in coastal communities and ecosystems. The project focusses on monitoring and research, implementation of practical adaptation options, and capacity building, in partnership with the University of the South Pacific and the Pacific Community, and with support from New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Principality of Monaco.

Our work in this area is built upon a foundation of strong partnerships. We welcome new partners to support Pacific resilience and adaptation, and strengthen Pacific requests for mitigation of climate change impacts.



## Our Ocean and marine pollution

SPREP directly provides assistance to Member needs and priorities regarding ship-sourced and terrestrial sources of marine pollution, as well as assistance in addressing legacy waste such as WWII wrecks and nuclear waste. This action is governed in the Pacific Regional Integrated Waste and Pollution Management Strategy 2016–2025: Cleaner Pacific 2025, a strategy that addresses solid, hazardous and chemical waste and pollution control.

Some of the priority areas for addressing marine pollution in the Pacific region include management of municipal solid waste, marine debris including microplastic and ship-sourced pollution, recyclables such as PET bottles, chemicals such as persistent organic pollutants (POPs), herbicides, ozone-depleting substances (ODS), mercury, used oil and lubricants, disaster waste, and legacy waste such as WWII wrecks and nuclear waste.

Work with us as we support Pacific actions to meet MEA obligations, improve waste management, and mitigate the impacts of pollution.

## Our Ocean and marine conservation

Our ocean is home to some of the world's most threatened marine species, many struggling to survive the impacts of human activities. In the past, the populations of great whales that overwinter in warm Pacific islands waters were drastically depleted by industrial fleets. SPREP members have contributed to saving our whales by declaring over 12 million square kilometres of the EEZs of Pacific island countries and territories as whale sanctuaries, and as their populations recover, whale-watching is becoming an important revenue earner in our region, demonstrating the economic benefits that conservation can bring.

Sharks, rays, turtles and other species are vital to the health of both coastal and oceanic ecosystems, but poorly-managed fishing has made several formerly abundant species threatened or endangered. SPREP has worked with our Members and the international conventions CITES and CMS to introduce management measures that will ensure a sustainable future for Pacific species, protect vital habitat, and develop ecotourism opportunities.

In a rapidly-changing ocean, however, all marine organisms are threatened by climate change.

We welcome support for our species and habitat conservation work to ensure sustainable populations alongside sustainable use. Join us in partnership for innovative conservation and ecotourism.



## Integrated management of our ocean

“Integrated Ocean Management” is effective joint action across all key sectors, understanding our shared reliance on a healthy ocean ecosystem. Collaboratively managing the uses of our ocean ecosystem, to minimise impacts on other parts and users of the system, helps to keep our ocean in a healthy condition to continue supporting us into the future.

Achieving truly integrated, ocean management across multiple sectors and systems requires good knowledge of how the ocean works as a system. In 2011, all Pacific island Leaders endorsed the Vision and Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape, under which all our island states, regional agencies and NGOs work together for a sustainable Pacific Ocean environment. We have two key mechanisms that assist implementation of this Framework: the Marine Sector Working Group of marine technical (CROP) agencies, and the Pacific Ocean Alliance for targeted discussions on technical and policy issues.

Our future environmental and economic security demands that we jointly set in place these higher environmental and social standards for ocean uses. Sophisticated global consumer markets are calling for sustainable products and are ready to pay for them.

We welcome support for effective cross-sectorial integration through training, networks of action, and our mandate for regional environmental impact assessment guidance.

# SPREP at the UN Ocean Conference

## Working in partnership with UN Environment

Support for Pacific island countries is provided in a special partnership between SPREP and UN Environment. To connect Pacific delegates with recent marine science for action on SDG 14, factsheets about 27 Pacific marine issues are available: [bit.ly/2rwYGKY](https://bit.ly/2rwYGKY)

“One of the key roles of our office is to ensure that knowledge of Pacific concerns is raised with global networks, programmes and initiatives and that the Pacific’s regional efforts link well with what is being done globally,” said Mr Sefanaia Nawadra, Head of UN Environment’s Pacific Sub-Regional Office.

UN Environment Pacific works to five strategic priorities for country-driven management, with a focus on ocean management as a cross-cutting issue – UN Environment is committed to working with Pacific partners on the environment dimension of the Pacific Oceanscape Framework and other Pacific Ocean initiatives. UN Environment and SPREP are revising our MOU to increase our focus on the ocean, to be signed at UNEA 3.

UN Environment works to link national needs and actions with global policy and funding sources. In the Pacific, key action areas are the Regional Seas Programme, Global Environment Facility projects, and environmental governance support through multiple channels. UN Environment recognises gender as a cross-cutting priority and works to promote women’s participation in achieving sustainable development, with an understanding of gender dynamics and differentiation in each region, country, and context. A new SPREP and UN Environment partnered site hosts profiles of Pacific female ocean leaders here: [bit.ly/2qaceHB](https://bit.ly/2qaceHB)

The side event “**Healers of Our Ocean: Asia-Pacific women leading action to achieve SDG 14**” will be held 3:00–4:30 pm, Monday 5 June, Conference Room 12, UNHQ.

## Implementing durable and sustainable partnerships for the implementation of SDG 14

Partnerships are a key priority for the Secretariat in working with Member countries and territories to implement SDG 14. Support for implementing the SAMOA Pathway (Small Islands Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action) is strong testament to this.

The SAMOA Pathway reaffirms the commitment of SPREP and Members to promote and support national, subregional and regional efforts to assess, conserve, protect, manage and sustainably use the ocean, seas and their resources by assisting research and the implementation of strategies on coastal-zone and ecosystem-based management.

*SPREP has four partnership commitments listed in the Ocean Registry:*

### 1. Clean Seas for a Cleaner Pacific #15962

As an answer to the call to action on clean seas, we have formed a partnership between UN Environment, SPREP and partners to cooperate in the delivery of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter, a #CleanSeas Campaign for the Pacific and implementation of the Cleaner Pacific 2025 Strategy to reduce marine debris and achieve a Clean Pacific Ocean. The Pacific island countries will be beneficiaries through national governments, local communities, women, men, children, indigenous peoples, and fisherpersons. Partner organisations include Pacific island countries, regional intergovernmental organisations, civil society organisations, academic institutions, and other UN agencies. To see more, please visit: [bit.ly/2rNFJ3T](https://bit.ly/2rNFJ3T)

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### 2. The Pacific Ocean Research Alliance #15810

PORA focusses on connecting and growing coastal and offshore ocean research with an aim to source and provide marine data for decision makers, build Pacific capacity, connect international, regional and national experts and stakeholders, and support the Pacific Ocean Alliance and the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner. The beneficiaries are Pacific island countries and territories, with resulting data and information also of global value. Partners include Pacific island countries and territories as well as a wide range of partners from research institutions, UN organisations and Pacific regional organisations. For a full list of partners, please visit: [bit.ly/2rxyn77](https://bit.ly/2rxyn77)

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### 3. The Pacific Partnership on Ocean Acidification #15798

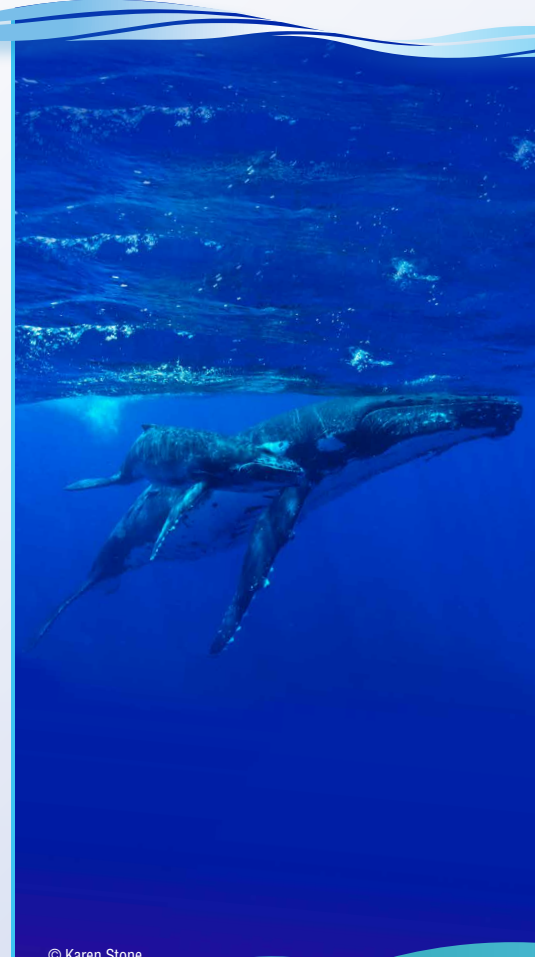
This partnership aims to build off of the NZ Pacific Partnership on Ocean Acidification project with a goal of building resilience to ocean acidification and climate change impacts on oceans in coastal communities and ecosystems. The beneficiaries are Pacific island countries and territories. Partners to date include Governments, Pacific regional organisations, research institutions, universities, development partners, and UN agencies.

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### 4. Protecting, conserving and restoring whale populations in the Pacific islands #16006

In April 2017, SPREP and the Kingdom of Tonga hosted the ‘Whales in a Changing Ocean’ conference, bringing together a wide range of experts and stakeholders to address issues impacting whales (<https://www.sprep.org/whales-in-a-changing-ocean-conference-2017/home>), including a whole suite of new threats, including noise, entanglement in fishing gear, ingestion of plastic debris, ship strike and, most insidious of all, climate change. Many of the participating governments and organisations have signed a Voluntary Commitment to save whales and to collectively address with our partners the emerging threats for the ocean’s largest creatures. For more information: [bit.ly/2qTtuCD](https://bit.ly/2qTtuCD)

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## Partnership Dialogues

Mr Kosi Latu, Director General of SPREP, will be featured as part of the panel for the Partnership Dialogue 1 on the theme “Addressing Marine Pollution”, Monday, 5 June 2017, 3:00 – 6:00 pm in Conference Room 4, UN Headquarters. SPREP will also be represented in several other partnership dialogues, aiming to raise our voluntary commitments for our Pacific region, in our interventions.

## SPREP Side Event

### The Pacific Voyage – Our Ocean, Our People, Our Pacific

8 June, 3:00 – 4:30 pm, Conference Room 12, UN Headquarters  
 Ocean Pollution • Ocean Conservation • Ocean and Climate Change

Our Pacific periscope is focussed on Integrated Ocean Management so we all understand that what we do on land will have an impact on our reef. Our capacity to govern our ocean must be strong and well-resourced, and our

Pacific island countries are committed to this. We will tell our story about how our island people are being affected by marine debris and pollution, ocean acidification and marine conservation. Our region is empowered, a beacon highlighting Pacific leadership in many areas as we showcase our genuine and durable partnerships of action to help us achieve SDG 14, in line with the SAMOA Pathway, actions that can be further enhanced with new support. Let's celebrate our Ocean together. Join us on our Pacific Voyage to achieving SDG 14 for our ocean, learning about our people and our Pacific.

## Promoting our Pacific Actions

An interactive Pacific booth showcasing our Pacific people, environment and region is located in the 1B Neck Area, first basement area of the UN Secretariat, between the Vienne Café and conference elevators. We will be sharing information of Pacific Actions, showcasing films, holding daily e-photo activities sharing messages on social media and distributing Pacific sei's to promote Pacific island visibility at the UN Ocean Conference. Make time to pop in and see us!

## 'Our Pacific islands, Our Ocean, Our Home' Photo Exhibition

5–9 June 2017. Express Bar – Level 3 General Assembly Hall Building (TBC)

A joint partnership between the Government of Fiji and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) featuring captured moments by photographer Mr Stuart Chape. The photo exhibition brings 'Our Pacific islands, Our Ocean, Our Home' to the heart of the United Nations, linking the essence of SDG 14 and the intrinsic value of the Pacific Ocean to the Pacific way of life.

## SPREP Media Partnerships

SPREP is working in partnership with Ms Makereta Komai, Senior Editor and Manager of PINA/PACNEWS Agency and Mr Samisoni Pareti, Senior Editor of Islands Business International to provide Pacific media coverage of issues and news at the UN Ocean Conference as independent members of the media.

## Sharing our messages

Our news will be distributed regionally as well as shared on [www.sprep.org](http://www.sprep.org), the SPREP Facebook page [www.facebook.com/SPREP.PEIN/](https://www.facebook.com/SPREP.PEIN/) and our Twitter feed @SPREPChannel. We will be sharing messages for Our Ocean on Facebook and Twitter using the #SaveOurOcean #4Paclands #MoanaVoices hashtags.

## Join us on our voyage ahead

As we journey into the future, SPREP will be working for the better health of our Ocean as a cross-cutting theme of our Strategic Action Plan 2017–2026, which can be found at [www.sprep.org](http://www.sprep.org). The Secretariat hosts technical expertise in a wide range of oceans issues. SPREP's ability to provide this support to Members requires continued prioritisation of ocean management capacity, joint regional action, and support through global partners with the benefit of a healthy ocean for all and positive global impacts of sustainable Pacific development. We look forward to working with you in partnership to help bring about a better Pacific for us all.

## Team SPREP at the United Nations Ocean Conference

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