SPREP
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

PO Box 240, Apia, Samoa
E: sprep@sprep.org
T: +685 21929
F: +685 20231
W: www.sprep.org

The Pacific environment, sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.

Natural Solutions for Island Resilience

CIRCULAR

FILE: AP 4/5/1 **TO:** SPREP National Focal Points

DATE: 26 May 2015

CIRCULAR: 15/40

SUBJECT: **Strengthening Environmental Impact Assessment in the Pacific: Guidelines for Practitioners**

Dear Members,

SPREP is circulating a draft document for review, titled ***Strengthening Environmental Impact Assessment in the Pacific: Guidelines for Practitioners*** (EIA Guidelines).

The EIA Guidelines build on SPREP's long-running EIA assistance programme for member countries and they address a target in SPREP's *Pacific Regional Environment Programme Strategic Plan 2011-2015,* to develop Pacific-related models for environmental assessment.

SPREP last published general EIA Guidelines in the 1990s, so this document represents an updated version that also covers new ground by:

1. emphasizing the importance of assessing *both* the potential impacts of development on the environment and the potential impacts of the environment on development, especially impacts related to climate change and natural disasters;

2. providing a practitioner-focused overview of the environmental impact assessment (EIA) process, supported by an EIA toolkit that includes templates and checklists for different stages of the EIA process;

3. highlighting the need to include risk assessment as part of the EIA process;

4. providing an introduction to strategic environmental assessment (SEA), a tool that can support EIA; and

5. linking the EIA process to Multilateral Environmental Agreements.

Sections of the EIA Guidelines have been tested and validated in EIA training workshops delivered in Tonga, Tuvalu and Samoa.

An invitation is now being extended to all SPREP Members to provide feedback on the content and overall structure of the draft document. Comments should be submitted to Melanie Bradley, Environmental Planning Officer, at melanieb@sprep.org by **Wednesday 17th June**.

The finalized EIA Guidelines will be tabled at the 2015 SPREP Meeting for endorsement.

Thank you for your kind assistance.

Yours sincerely,



Stuart Chape
Officer-In-Charge

SC/MB/pf