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Natural Solutions for Island Resilience

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

CIRCULAR

FILE:	AP 2/17/2	**TO:**	SPREP National Focal Points:
DATE:	18 March 2016		Samoa, Fiji, PNG, Solomon Islands,
CIRCULAR:	16/14		Vanuatu, Palau

SUBJECT: **Invitation to the Pacific Sharks and Rays Conservation Symposium 19 - 20 April 2016, Nadi, Fiji**

Dear Focal Points,

The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) wishes to extend an invitation to attend a Pacific Sharks and Rays Conservation Symposium. The workshop will be held at the Tanoa International Hotel, Nadi from 19 - 20 April 2016.

The main focus of the two day symposium will be to highlight the rising global recognition of the importance of shark conservation with a focus on the recent listings of shark and ray species on Appendix II of CITES, new developments and trends in the global shark fin trade, and the suite of benefits that shark conservation provides for countries with large ecotourism industries. It will include a hands-on experience with shark fins, detailing how Customs and Fisheries officials can visually identify at the port of landing or export the shark species that were listed on CITES Appendix II in 2013,and the species that will be proposed for listing at this year's Conference of Parties in September. There will also be a presentation by trade experts, to provide details on the latest data coming out of the Pacific. The symposium will also provide a forum to discuss and exchange successes and challenges, and to identify capacity needs that national Governments need to address to implement effective shark conservation measures through international, regional and/or domestic shark legislation.

SPREP will support travel costs and accommodation for one (1) nominated participant to the symposium. We would appreciate receiving confirmation and nomination form (Annex 1) at your earliest convenience but no later than **1 April 2016**. A drafted Agenda will be sent to you prior to the symposium.

Please kindly send through the nomination form to Ms. Juney Ward juneyw@sprep.org with a copy to Ms. Makerita Atiga makeritaa@sprep.org who will be arranging the logistics of travel and accommodation.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Stuart Chape
Officer-in-Charge