CIRCULAR

FILE: AP 4/12/8

TO: SPREP National Focal Points for Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu

DATE: 27 April 2018

CIRCULAR: 18/24

SUBJECT: Update on the Inform Project Progress

Dear Focal Points,

SPREP is currently executing the UN Environment-GEF funded regional project aimed at *Building National and Regional Capacity to Implement Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA) by Strengthening Planning and State of Environment Assessment and Reporting in the Pacific* referred to as the **Inform project.** The project is in its first year of implementation and I am pleased to provide you with the following update on progress achieved to date:

1. *Inception meeting*

The project inception meeting was held in November, 2017 and was attended by your respective representatives. The Inception Meeting Report which contains key outcomes of the meeting was circulated to all participants 18th December 2017

2. *Project Steering Committee*

A key outcome of the Inception Meeting was the election of members of the Project Steering Committee. The membership of the PSC was endorsed at the first PSC meeting and it consists of Nauru, Papua New Guinea and Tonga. The Terms of Reference of the PSC was also reviewed and endorsed by the meeting participants.

3. *Project Management team (PMU)*

The PMU is housed at SPREP within the Environmental Monitoring and Governance Programme. For you information, Mr. Paul Anderson was appointed to the Project Manager/Chief Technical Adviser position and Ms. Sela Simamao as the Project Financial and Technical Assistant. Two additional project officers (Environmental Monitoring and Reporting Specialist and the Environmental Monitoring and Reporting – GIS) will be joining the team in June, 2018. The recruitment of the Systems Analyst will commence soon.

In addition to the project team, we have also engaged the services of technical experts on short term consultancy contractual arrangements to provide specific technical services for the project. Eighty Options Company was hired as the Systems Analyst Consultant to assess the technical requirements for establishing national environmental data portal and reporting tool in participating countries. We have also signed an agreement with the Environmental Defenders Officer (EDO), NSW, Australia to carry out specific activities in drafting data management agreements to facilitate access to, management, and use of data.

4. Environment data portal

Based on discussions between the Inform Project team and country focal points including technical advice from the Systems Analyst Consultant, Drupal Knowledge Archived Network (DKAN) has been identified as the preferred database solution for the environmental data portal.

The DKAN software package, also known as the *Environment Data Portal* has been tested in Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Tuvalu, PNG and the Solomon Islands. I am pleased to say that the Environment data portal is operational and available online and can be accessed by inserting the country name to the following link: [insert country name]-data.sprep.org for example, niue-data.sprep.org

The project team is working hard to make sure that DKAN (Environment data portal) is launched and rolled out in the remaining countries before the end of December, 2018.

An important step in setting up the administration of the national Environment Data Portal is for countries to identify someone in country that will act as the “site administrator” of the data portal. Currently, it has been assigned to the Director/Head of the Department of Environment in your respective countries, however we would encourage that this be decided locally and the Inform Project team will be available in setting it up.

5. Indicator reporting tool

Another key output of the project which is the *indicator reporting tool,* is still under development, with the Cook Islands currently trialing the reporting tool before rolling it out to the rest of the countries in the second and third of 2018.

6. Project co-financing

As discussed at the inception meeting and in accordance with the official letters of co-financing from each participating country, we will be requesting our counterparts in country to update the co-financing table that was most recently completed during the Inception Meeting.

7. Schedule of country visits and planned activities

While we are rolling out country level activities, it is important that you are aware of the schedule of activities planned for your respective countries. This will assist with your own planning processes and to ensure these are included in your respective plans for the rest of 2018. In this regard, please find attached a schedule of planned country visits including key activities to be carried out by the Inform project team. Kindly confirm or otherwise advice of

any proposed changes to the schedule that you may wish to make to accommodate any potential conflicts with any of your national level commitment.

As the project is picking up momentum with the activities implemented to date, there is still a tremendous amount work to be done. Thus, your continued support and cooperation will be greatly appreciated to ensure the expected outcomes and results of the project are successfully achieved.

Yours sincerely,



Stuart Chape
Acting Director General
SPREP

2017 -2018 Inform Country MissionSchedule

Country	Proposed Dates	In-Country Activities
Tuvalu	December 2017	- Appraisal and testing of database hosting requirements
Nauru	06th – 09th February 2018	- Inception Workshop
Solomon Islands	12th – 16th February 2018	- Inception Workshop - Data Portal use training
Federated States of Micronesia		- Appraisal and testing of database hosting requirements - Data Portal use training
Niue	26th – 29th March 2018	- Inception Meeting - Data Portal use training
Cook Islands	03rd – 06th April 2018	- Appraisal and testing of database hosting requirements - Data Portal use training
Papua New Guinea	18th – 25thMay 2018	- Inception Meeting and Capacity Building - Scope in country support, SOE process
Vanuatu	July	- Scoping exercise - Inception and capacity building
Federated States of Micronesia	August	- SOE and NEMS Inception - Inform Inception - SOE and NEMS Consultant identification - iCLim & Inform Assessment
Republic of the Marshall Islands	August	- NEMS Launch - Inform Reporting Tool training - Inform Inception & Capacity Building
Kiribati	September	- SOE and NEMS Inception - Inform Inception - SOE and NEMS Consultant identification
Sub- Regional Workshop	September	
Solomon Islands	October	- SOE & NEMs Writeshop - Inform Capacity Building
Niue	October	- SOE & NEMS Launch - Inform Capacity Building
Papua New Guinea	November	- Inform Capacity Building - SOE Consultant selection
Samoa	On going	- SOE support - DKIF, Inform Assessment