Report of the Twenty-seventh SPREP Meeting of Officials and High Level Ministerial Segment

19 – 22 September 2016
Alofi, Niue



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

PROTECT PACIFIC WHALES – OCEAN VOYAGERS

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

SPREP Library/IRC Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

SPREP Meeting (27th : 201 : Alofi, Niue)

Report of the Twenty Seventh (27th) SPREP Meeting,
19th – 22nd September, Apia, Samoa : SPREP, 2016.

p. cm.

ISBN: 978-982-04-0638-4 (print)
978-982-04-0639-1 (ecopy)

1. Environmental policy – Oceania - Congresses.
2. Conservation of natural resources – Oceania – Congresses.
3. Environment protection – Oceania – Congresses.
I. Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) II. Title.

363.7099

Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Agenda Item 1: Opening 1

Agenda Item 2: Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair 1

Agenda Item 3: Adoption of Agenda and Working Procedures 1

Agenda Item 4: Action Taken on Matters Arising from the Twenty-sixth SPREP Meeting 2

Agenda Item 5: 2015 Overview 2

5.1: Presentation of Annual Report for 2015 and Director General's Overview of Progress since the Twenty-Sixth SPREP Meeting 2

5.2: Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report (PMER) on the 2015 Work Programme and Budget 3

5.3: Audited Annual Accounts for 2015 3

Agenda Item 6: Institutional Reform and Strategic Issues 4

6.1: Strengthening Regional Linkages Update 4

6.2: Access to Climate Finance – Adaptation Fund (AF) and Green Climate Fund (GCF) 5

6.3: GCF MSP Accreditation Update 6

6.4: Pacific Climate Change Centre 7

6.5: Framework for Pacific Regionalism 8

6.6: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 9

6.7: Priorities under the Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape (FPO) 9

6.8: SPREP Strategic Plan 11

6.9: Audit Committee Report 11

6.10: EDF 11 12

6.11: FRDP 13

6.12: Governance arrangements for Biennial SPREP Meetings 14

6.13: SPREP and UNEP Partnership 15

Agenda Item 7: Strategic Financial Issues 16

7.1: Report on Members' Contributions 16

7.2: Sustainable Financing 17

Agenda Item 8: Corporate Services 18

8.1: SPREP Director General's Performance Assessment – CLOSED SESSION: 18

8.2: Triennial Review 18

8.3: Appointment of External Auditors 19

Agenda Item 9: 2017 Work Programme and Budget 20

9.1: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management Division – Overview 20

9.1.1: Outcomes of Regional CBD and CITES Pre-CoP Meetings 21

9.1.2: Year of the Whale Update 21

9.1.3: Revision of Marine Species Action Plans 22

9.1.4: 19th PIRT Outcomes 24

9.2: Climate Change Division – Overview 24

9.2.1: Outcomes of the Finland-Pacific Reducing Vulnerability in PICs communities (FINPAC) 26

9.2.2: Paris Agreement follow-up and Preparation for COP22 26
9.2.3: Pacific Islands Partnership on Ocean Acidification 28
9.2.4: Progress and Future of the PPCR Regional Track: Mainstreaming and the RTSM 28
9.3: Waste Management and Pollution Control Division – Overview 29
9.3.1 Outcomes of the 2016 Clean Pacific Roundtable 30
9.3.2: Marine Debris 30
9.3.3: Disaster Waste Management 31
9.3.4: Asbestos in the Pacific 32
9.3.5: Update on the formulation of J-PRISM Phase II 33
9.4: Environmental Monitoring and Governance Division – Overview 33
9.4.1: Strategic environment assessment 33
9.4.2: BBNJ negotiations 34
9.4.3: Environmental monitoring data collation support services 35
9.5: Consideration and Approval of Proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2017 35

Agenda Item 10: Items Proposed by Members 36
10.1: Hydrology (Samoa) 36

Agenda Item 11: Regional Cooperation 37
11.1: CROP Executives Meeting Report 37

Agenda Item 12: Statements by Observers 38

Agenda Item 13: Other Business 38

Agenda Item 14: High-Level Ministerial Segment (22nd September) "A Resilient Pacific" 38

14.1: Opening and Prayer: 38
14.2: Sustainable Development Goals: Challenges of implementation for the Pacific 38
14.3: Climate Change: Climate Action – Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts 38
14.4: Oceans: Life Below Water – Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources 38

Agenda Item 15: Date and Venue of the Twenty-Eighth SPREP Meeting 39

Agenda Item 16: Adoption of Report of the Twenty-Seventh SPREP Meeting 39

Agenda Item 17: Close 39

ANNEX I: List of Participants 40
ANNEX II: Opening Address by SPREP Director General 46
ANNEX III: Keynote Address by the Honorable Toke Talagi, Premier of Niue, ... 49
ANNEX IV: Agenda 51
ANNEX V: Statements by Observers 53
ANNEX VI: Opening Address of High Level Segment by Honorable Billy Talagi 58
ANNEX V: Alofi Communiqué 60

INTRODUCTION

1. The Twenty-seventh SPREP Meeting of Officials and High Level Ministerial Segment (27SM) was held from 19-22 September, 2016 in Alofi, Niue.

2. Present at the Meeting were representatives from American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, France, Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga, United Kingdom and United States of America. Apologies were received from French Polynesia, Guam, Solomon Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Wallis and Futuna. A full list of participants, including observers, is attached in Annex I.

Agenda Item 1: Opening

3. The official opening ceremony was held on 17 September at Millennium Hall in Alofi, Niue. The ceremony commenced with an opening prayer and blessing by Rev Vili Kamupala Viviani and was followed by welcoming remarks from the Director General of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Mr Kosi Latu. The Director General's speech is attached as Annex II.

4. The Meeting was officially opened by the Honourable Premier Toke Talagi of Niue. The Honourable Premier's opening address is attached as Annex III.

Agenda Item 2: Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair

5. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the SPREP Meeting, the Meeting host Niue was appointed as Chair and Federated States of Micronesia was appointed as Vice Chair of the 27SM.

6. The Chair of the Twenty-sixth SPREP Meeting (26SM), HE Ms Jackie Frizelle representing New Zealand, thanked Members and the Secretariat for the privilege of serving as Chair in the preceding 12 months. The Chair of the 26SM noted that the previous year had been an historic one for the Pacific environment and that SPREP had been at the centre of many key successes.

7. Ms Josie Tamate, representing Niue, thanked the Chair of the 26SM for her leadership and took the Chair.

The Meeting:

- **confirmed** the Representative of Niue as Chair; and
- **confirmed** the Representative of Federated States of Micronesia as Vice Chair.

Agenda Item 3: Adoption of Agenda and Working Procedures

8. The Meeting reviewed the Provisional Agenda and the suggested hours of work.

9. The Meeting appointed a Report Drafting Committee comprising Australia, United States, Niue, France, American Samoa and New Caledonia to be chaired by the Vice Chair.

10. France conveyed apologies from French Polynesia. France also commented that working papers for the 27SM were distributed too close to the commencement of the Meeting and further noted that the full complement of French language papers were yet to be received. The United States later also noted the difficulties presented by the late publication of the working papers. The Director General apologised to France and to all Meeting delegates for the delay in distributing papers and assured the Meeting that steps had been taken to ensure that the issue does not happen again.

The Meeting:

- **considered** and **adopted** the Provisional Agenda (attached as Annex IV);
- **agreed** on hours of work; and
- **appointed** an open-ended Report Drafting Committee comprising Australia, United States, Niue, France, American Samoa and New Caledonia to be Chaired by Federated States of Micronesia as Vice Chair of the 27SM.

Agenda Item 4: Action Taken on Matters Arising from the Twenty-sixth SPREP Meeting

11. The Secretariat reported, by way of a Working Paper, on actions taken against the decisions and directives from the Twenty-sixth SPREP Meeting (26SM) which was held in Apia, Samoa from 22-24 September, 2015.

12. In response to a request from Australia, the Secretariat agreed that actions arising from Agenda Item 7.2 relating to budgetary matters would be addressed during the Meeting.

The Meeting:

- **noted** actions taken against the decisions and directives of the 26SM.

Agenda Item 5: 2015 Overview

Agenda Item 5.1: Presentation of Annual Report for 2015 and Director General's Overview of Progress since the Twenty-sixth SPREP Meeting

13. The Director General presented the 2015 SPREP Annual Report to Members and provided an overview report on progress since the 26SM.

14. United Kingdom, France and Australia thanked the Director General for the report and congratulated SPREP on all the actions undertaken in 2015.

15. France acknowledged the key role played by SPREP in working with Pacific nations to mobilise and present a common voice at COP21 in Paris. France noted that many Pacific island Members had ratified the Paris Agreement, but that more nations would need to ratify the Agreement to ensure that it becomes a Treaty.

16. Australia said that it was pleased to be able to support the Secretariat's activities through multi-year funding and noted two additional partnerships not covered in the report, namely the partnerships with the Australian Bureau of Meteorology and Griffith University. The Director General noted the strong platform of partnerships that SPREP has established with Australian entities and commented that these would

be discussed in more detail throughout the Meeting.

The Meeting:

- **noted** the report.

Agenda Item 5.2: Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report (PMER) on the 2015 Work Programme and Budget

17. In accordance with the SPREP Meeting Rules of Procedure, the Secretariat presented its Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report (PMER) on the 2015 Work Programme and Budget.

18. New Zealand noted that the report shows the breadth and depth of the work of the Secretariat in 2015, but encouraged reporting against outcomes rather than activities which would lead to simpler reports focused on the difference that SPREP is making in the Pacific. Samoa, United States, New Caledonia and France agreed that SPREP's monitoring of results and reporting can be improved and more strategically focused.

19. New Caledonia stated that the new SPREP Strategic Plan reflects the need for better measuring of the outcomes and results and noted that giving effect to this will require a changed mindset by Secretariat staff and Members as to how reporting is carried out. New Caledonia suggested that a summary report is sent to Ministers.

20. France concurred, and stressed the importance of the PMER highlighting the achievements of the year in concrete terms. France also noted that the delayed receipt of the Meeting papers did not allow for a more comprehensive comment.

21. The Director General noted that this would be the last time that the Secretariat will report in this format and that the new SPREP Strategic Plan, scheduled for discussion in Agenda Item 6.8, would guide the development of a Performance Implementation Plan (PIP) and associated Results Framework to improve SPREP's results planning, performance reporting and learning.

22. With reference to the budget, New Zealand sought clarification on the reference to 87% of the approved budget being spent and enquired as to what happens to the unspent portion. In response, the Director General explained that the spending of funding depends on the time of receipt during the year and the time allowed for expenditure. The Secretariat further noted that some funds can be rolled over to the following year, while others need to be returned to the donor.

The Meeting:

- **noted** achievements as presented in the 2015 PMER.

Agenda Item 5.3: Audited Annual Accounts for 2015

23. In accordance with Financial Regulation 27(e), the Secretariat presented its Audited Annual Accounts for the year ending 31 December, 2015, and noted that the auditors had provided an unqualified opinion of the Secretariat's financial operations for 2015.

24. Australia noted the issue of the current deficit and advised that further comment on this would be provided in Agenda Items 7.2 and 9.5. Australia noted that it does not owe additional funding under the 'extra extra budget' line. The Secretariat noted this clarification and thanked Australia for its continued support of SPREP.

25. In response to a question from New Caledonia, the Secretariat explained that a table outlining SPREP expenditure by country or territory would be provided before the end of the Meeting.

26. While acknowledging concerns regarding the budget deficit, the Secretariat explained that the core budget deficit is a common issue across CROP agencies and provided assurance that it would be eliminated by the time of the next SPREP Meeting in 2017.

The Meeting:

- **reviewed** and **adopted** the audited Financial Statements and Auditors' Report for 2015.

Agenda Item 6: Institutional Reform and Strategic Issues

Agenda Item 6.1: Strengthening Regional Linkages update

27. The Secretariat updated Members on SPREP in-country Officers employed through the Pacific Ecosystem-based Adaptation to Climate Change (PEBACC) project, the signing of the Host Country Agreement with Fiji (and subsequent launch of the Fiji Office), the signing of the Host Country Agreement with Federated States of Micronesia and the current status of Desk Officers in Republic of the Marshall Islands and Federated States of Micronesia.

28. New Caledonia noted that the sub-regional presence had enabled the Secretariat to provide dedicated and direct assistance in-country and acknowledged efforts of the Secretariat to reduce costs through the co-location of offices. New Caledonia emphasised that the Secretariat's sub-regional presence would become more crucial as it moved into a biennial SPREP Meeting format.

29. Federated States of Micronesia noted the success of the current arrangement in Federated States of Micronesia and suggested that additional Desk Officers, with specialties in different areas, would amplify this success.

30. Fiji acknowledged the value of the recent establishment of a SPREP office in Suva.

31. United States requested that the Secretariat provide details of the responsibilities and accomplishments of the Desk Officers to assess the impacts, benefits and resource implications of the trial arrangement. New Caledonia, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia, American Samoa, France and Fiji supported this proposal.

32. New Zealand proposed a light study be undertaken to obtain information on the roles of the Desk Officers and what a cost benefit analysis might cover, stressing that such a study could be carried out in-house to minimise costs. United States proposed that the study could be done without any additional travel required and United

Kingdom suggested that the study could potentially be based on existing reports already available with the Secretariat.

The Meeting:

- **noted** the signing of the host country agreement with the Government of Fiji and official launch of the SPREP Fiji Office in 2016;
- **noted** the signing of the host agreement with the Government of Federated States of Micronesia;
- **noted** that SPREP is finding innovative ways to reduce the costs of sub-regional offices including aligning to project activities and budgets, and co-location with other organisations; and
- **directed** the Secretariat to provide an in-house report on the roles, achievements, and costs of the Desk Officers and report back to the SPREP Meeting in 2017, and to provide advice on the need for, cost and proposed timing of undertaking a cost-benefit analysis of the Desk Officers arrangement.

Agenda Item 6.2: Access to Climate Finance – Adaptation Fund and Green Climate Fund

33. The Secretariat reported to the Meeting with an update on SPREP's delivery as a Regional Implementing Entity (RIE) for the Adaptation Fund (AF), Green Climate Fund (GCF) and associated climate finance matters.

34. The Secretariat noted its intention to continue to pursue programmatic approaches to climate action driven by country priorities, and continue to deliver key 'readiness' support for countries.

35. United States and Australia expressed appreciation to France for its support and leadership in organising and hosting COP 21. The Meeting recognised the efforts of the Pacific island community in building consensus for an Agreement.

36. Kiribati, Nauru, Cook Islands, Tokelau, and Samoa thanked SPREP for its support in project development and capacity building, and Kiribati and Australia expressed their gratitude for support provided by the GCF Pacific Coordinator. The Meeting agreed that building capacity within the Secretariat and Members is a priority.

37. Federated States of Micronesia noted that leaders endorsed the FRDP during the Pacific Island Forum meeting in Pohnpei, and that SPREP should therefore align its activities and programmes with this decision. This suggestion was supported by Cook Islands and New Zealand.

38. United States detailed several of its programmes dedicated to helping participants address climate change, including by building capacity for them to access climate change funding through ADAPT Asia Pacific, Institutional Strengthening in PICs to Adapt to Climate Change, and the newly announced Climate Ready programme.

39. The Meeting noted that as the only RIE in the region, SPREP needs to take the lead on collaboration, coordination and cooperation with other regional agencies and Implementing Entities.

40. Kiribati, Samoa and Fiji expressed support for SPREP's programmatic approach. The Secretariat noted that this will streamline

its support to Members, and encouraged Members to work with the Implementing Entity that is most appropriate to their needs.

41. New Caledonia and Tokelau noted that as territories they are not eligible for GCF and AF funding and requested that the Secretariat consider other sources of support and to work to include them in climate change activities. The Secretariat agreed that efforts will be made to ensure that all Members benefit from activities being undertaken.

The Meeting:

- **noted** the issues raised, including the preferred programmatic approach to delivery, and provided feedback;
- **considered** and **advised** the Secretariat on country and/or regional priorities that it would like to see addressed through the AF or GCF;
- **tasked** the Secretariat to strengthen its own capacity to support Members' ability to access climate finance including through readiness support from the GCF; and
- **tasked** the Secretariat to compile information about existing initiatives to build SPREP Members' capacity to access climate finance.

Agenda Item 6.3: GEF MSP Accreditation Update

42. The Secretariat provided an update on the GEF Council's accreditation pilot and the implementation of the medium size project (MSP) for SPREP to become an accredited agency to the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

43. Niue noted the issue of the shortfall of GEF-6 resources and reported that it is using its USD 3.8 million allocation to develop proposals with UNDP in order to mobilise resources quickly.

44. United States acknowledged the Secretariat's progress towards achieving accreditation with GEF and expressed the view that such accreditation would be of significant benefit to the Pacific region in improving access to the fund.

The Meeting:

- **noted** the MSP deliverables and results towards building the Secretariat's capacity to comply with GEF accredited standards and that the MSP will be completed by the end of 2016;
- **noted** the GEF's Governing Council decision to defer the discussion on the future of the GEF accreditation towards the end of GEF-6, 2018 and that the Secretariat would follow-up and prepare its application in due time;
- **noted** the potential shortfall of GEF-6 resources and encouraged Member countries to liaise with their council representative and alternate representative to engage effectively on this matter and requested the Secretariat to monitor and report back to Member countries the decision of the GEF council meeting in October 2016;
- **considered** the programmatic approach pathway for GEF-7 programming by Pacific island Countries;
- **invited** Member countries to identify and request support needed to expedite full programing of their GEF-6 STAR; and

- **agreed** that the Secretariat must maintain improved capacity and continue to strengthen its function as an Executing Agency and Implementing Agency.

Agenda Item 6.4: Pacific Climate Change Centre

45. The Secretariat updated Members on the progress of planning for the Pacific Climate Change Centre (PCCC) and reported on preliminary discussions about the Centre's potential role within the region.

46. The Chair commended SPREP for its vision in considering the PCCC as much more than simply a building. New Caledonia, Federated States of Micronesia, Australia, Cook Islands, United States, New Zealand, Niue, United Kingdom and France commended the progress made on the PCCC and noted the support provided by the Government of Japan and the Government of Samoa.

47. Australia proposed that the Steering Committee should include representatives of other CROP agencies and metropolitan Members. The suggestion to include other CROP agencies was supported by New Zealand.

48. New Caledonia, Federated States of Micronesia, Australia, Cook Islands and United States expressed support for the establishment of a Steering Committee to develop a governance and operating model for the PCCC and Federated States of Micronesia, Australia, United States, and New Zealand expressed interest in being part of the Steering Committee. France also expressed interest in participating in the Steering Committee, potentially through IRD or SPC.

49. New Caledonia suggested that the Steering Committee could be the same as the PRP and that a report could be submitted to the PRP meeting in December. Cook Islands agreed and added that the Steering Committee should work closely with working groups set up by the Pacific Island Forum Leaders Meeting.

50. New Zealand recommended tabling the PCCC proposal at the next meeting of the CROP Chairs and CEOs Joint Steering Committee on Governance and Financing Review. New Zealand further suggested that the Secretariat may wish to consider updating and strengthening the July 2015 business case for the PCCC.

51. Niue highlighted the need to build capacity on the ground and suggested looking at a 'one-stop shop' for mobilising financing and identifying how small island countries can be best supported.

52. United Kingdom noted that climate change is a cross cutting issue and that it is important to send a clear early signal about the PCCC's operational priorities. United Kingdom stated that it would welcome a coordinating role and recommended networking opportunities with universities in the United Kingdom.

53. The Secretariat thanked the Members for their enthusiasm, and agreed that the Steering Committee should to be broadened to include CROP agencies and metropolitan Members. The Secretariat

also noted the importance of integrating activities with the FRDP and the PRP.

The Meeting:

- **noted** the progress of the Pacific Climate Change Centre;
- **endorsed** the role of the Pacific Climate Change Centre as a shared regional hub for inclusive collaboration to meet the priority adaptation and mitigation priorities of Pacific island countries and territories;
- **endorsed** the Pacific Climate Change Centre as a platform for fostering and enhancing genuine partnerships and collaboration for addressing the challenges of climate change resilience for the Pacific region;
- **noted** with appreciation the Governments of Japan and Samoa for their generous support of the Pacific Climate Change Centre, and requested for the Chair of the SPREP Meeting to convey to Japan and Samoa a note of appreciation; and
- **endorsed** the proposal that SPREP convene a small Steering Committee of Members and CROP agencies to drive the regional consultation on the regional vision, operating model, and governance arrangements for the PCCC, and to engage with the Leaders mandated working group process to elaborate on the Pacific Resilience Partnership to implement the FRDP.

Agenda Item 6.5: Framework for Pacific Regionalism

54. The Secretariat updated the Meeting on the progress of initiatives related to the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, noting its submission of two regional policy initiatives for consideration by the Specialist Sub-Committee on Regionalism (SSCR), its involvement in the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) led review of regional Governance and Financing for the CROP, and progress made towards CROP harmonisation.

55. The representative observer from the PIF welcomed SPREP's efforts to integrate the Framework for Pacific Regionalism (FPR) into its new strategic plan. The observer acknowledged that the regional public policy process, under the FPR is on-going and would require the continued engagement and commitment by SPREP, including the SCCR and its consultative processes, Leaders priority initiative on regional Governance and Financing, and the review of the CROP Charter.

56. New Caledonia, New Zealand and Cook Islands expressed support for the Framework, particularly for its principle of inclusive participation and its thematic areas.

57. New Zealand noted the challenges of resourcing among multiple CROP agencies and of aligning agency priorities with the Framework. New Zealand expressed the opinion that the timing of the two reviews is appropriate and timely given the development of the new SPREP Strategic Plan.

58. Cook Islands expressed the desire to receive clear recommendations from both reviews and requested advice on the implications of the cost recovery on Members. The Secretariat responded that the CROP CEOs had held initial discussions on harmonisation and cost recovery, particularly on a standard fee for services.

The Meeting:

- **noted** the update on the Framework for Pacific Regionalism and its implications for SPREP; and
- **provided** advice and guidance as per the above.

Agenda Item 6.6: Sustainable Development Goals

59. The Secretariat provided an update on progress made towards implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

60. France welcomed the engagement of the Secretariat in the SDGs, noting the widespread global consultation process used in their development, and hence their global applicability.

61. New Caledonia acknowledged the participation of the Secretariat in the Sustainable Development Working Group, and commended the work by this group, notably the development of the SPC bilingual database (NMDI) to record the monitoring of implementation of the SDGs.

62. New Zealand observed that many national development plans are aligned to the SDGs, hence with so much investment in the SDGs, SPREP should consider adopting the relevant SDGs into its results framework for streamlined reporting.

The Meeting:

- **noted** progress with the SDG process;
- **endorsed** SPREP's involvement with the delivery of the environmental dimension of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development; and
- **requested** the Secretariat aligns the SPREP results framework to relevant SDGs.

Agenda Item 6.7: Priorities under the Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape

63. The Secretariat provided the Meeting with an update on current ocean priorities under the Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape (FPO).

64. Australia, New Caledonia, Nauru, Niue, Tonga, Federated States of Micronesia and Samoa thanked the Secretariat for the comprehensive paper and congratulated SPREP for its work in this area. Nauru expressed its appreciation of assistance provided to Nauru by SPREP in Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) negotiations.

65. Australia sought clarity on the meaning and intent of the term 'major regional oceans initiative', noting the need for securing a more stable funding base. The Secretariat explained that this recommendation was to develop a programmatic approach to addressing oceans issues and to secure more long-term or sustainable funding, for example through large proposals to the GCF and other major donors.

66. United States noted the efforts by the Secretariat to provide technical support for members in the BBNJ negotiations, and to advance integrated ocean management, and the many significant related outcomes of the Our Ocean conference held in Washington DC in 2016 including both public and private initiatives.

67. The Meeting noted the recent creation of the world's largest Marine Protected Area (MPA) through the augmentation of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument in Hawaii and the second largest MPA in Pitcairn Islands and congratulated United States and United Kingdom for these developments.

68. United Kingdom advised that Pew will be funding satellite monitoring in the Pitcairn Islands MPA for the next four years and thanked SPREP for securing funding to support this surveillance.

69. In response to a question from Samoa, the Secretariat explained that the UN Oceans Conference will be held in New York, United States. The Secretariat further explained that the venue of the conference was determined by leaders and by the UN.

70. Samoa and New Caledonia expressed regret that the Conference would not be hosted in the region. Fiji clarified that while the conference will no longer be held in Fiji, the Government of Fiji will be co-hosting the New York conference with the Government of Sweden.

71. New Caledonia advised the Meeting of its collaboration with Cook Islands and Australia and stressed the importance of sharing knowledge with other states and neighbouring states sharing the same space.

72. New Caledonia commended the strong commitment for oceans shown by PIF Leaders at their recent Pohnpei meeting and Federated States of Micronesia shared the statement made by PIF Leaders in the Meeting Communiqué. New Caledonia further noted the initiative of SPC to propose to its members to discuss a regional agreement for cooperation among Pacific island countries and territories to support responsible deep sea mineral management in the Pacific region.

73. Niue sought clarification on which agency was taking the lead in providing technical support on high seas and BBNJ. The Secretariat advised that as the lead regional organisation on the environment it provides the lead on a range of related technical issues on BBNJ, but noted that this technical advice is most effective for Members when delivered in concert and close collaboration with the technical advice from the other CROP agencies.

The Meeting:

- **noted** SPREP's efforts to advance the interests of Members on biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) and integrated ocean management, including through participation in the 2017 UN Oceans Conference;
- **encouraged** Member participation in the upcoming CBD-Sustainable Oceans Initiative (and Pacific Ocean Alliance) regional workshops on integrated ocean management and marine Aichi Targets;
- **encouraged** SPREP to collaborate with partners in the spirit of the Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape, to mobilise resources to support the operation of regional activities and mechanisms such as the Marine Sector Working Group (MSWG) and the Pacific Ocean Alliance (POA), and to provide technical support in cooperation with the Office of the Pacific Oceans Commissioner (OPOC); and
- **endorsed** the Secretariat to collaborate with partners and

coordinate with the OPOC, the MSWG and the POA to develop a major regional oceans initiative for substantive action on achieving sustainable ocean economies, balanced with conservation of biodiversity and mindful of Pacific cultural and social values, consistent with the Pohnpei Oceans Statement.

Agenda Item 6.8: SPREP Strategic Plan

74. The Secretariat presented the draft SPREP Strategic Plan 2017-2027, as requested at the 26SM in 2015, for the Meeting's discussion and endorsement.

75. The Meeting acknowledged the excellent work of the Secretariat and all other parties involved in developing the SPREP Strategic Plan 2017-2027 and made special reference to the thoughtful and highly consultative process employed in its development.

76. The Meeting also applauded the strong emphasis that the Plan places on the issues of oceans and climate change.

77. Tonga, Samoa and Niue expressed concern that the plan does not include any reference to work in the realm of Ozone Depleting Substances. The Secretariat explained that work in this area is covered by the broader themes outlined under Waste Management and Pollution Control.

78. New Zealand, United States, New Caledonia, Niue and United Kingdom made suggestions for minor amendments to the text of the report, all of which were supported by Members and incorporated into the Plan.

79. United States suggested inclusion of an organisational goal to achieve a balanced and sustainable budget.

80. Samoa made a suggestion for the diagram of the fale to include a 'foundation'. This suggestion was supported by the Meeting and the Secretariat agreed to incorporate a foundation on the fale that references Pacific island cultures and values. This amendment was also incorporated into the Plan.

81. Australia noted that it looks forward to working with SPREP in the implementation of the Plan through the provision of continued technical and financial support.

82. The Secretariat thanked the Meeting for its positive comments, guidance and support.

The Meeting:

- **adopted** the SPREP Strategic Plan 2017-2027; and
- **directed** the Secretariat to work closely with the FoC to complete the Performance Implementation Plan (PIP) and the Results Framework and to report back to the 2017 SPREP Meeting.

Agenda Item 6.9: Audit Committee Report

83. New Zealand, on behalf of the Audit Committee, reported on activities performed by the Audit Committee during the period 1 July, 2015 – 30 June, 2016 as per the Internal Audit Policy and the Audit Committee Charter.

84. New Zealand noted that the Secretariat had received an unqualified audit opinion but emphasised that the issue of repeated

deficits needed to be addressed. The Director General acknowledged that the budget deficit is an important issue, but also noted that the deficit had been reduced significantly in the past year and that the Secretariat was confident of reducing the deficit further.

85. New Zealand queried whether it may be beneficial to have additional members appointed to the Audit Committee. The Secretariat noted that this issue was being discussed by the Audit Committee. New Zealand also encouraged the Secretariat to prioritise the finalisation and adoption of the foreign currency policy and review of the reserve policy.

86. New Caledonia noted that the diagrams in the report were useful and requested whether it would be possible for the reports to be shared more widely. The Secretariat agreed to raise this query with the Audit Committee and reiterated the fact that the Audit Committee operates independently.

87. In response to a question from New Caledonia about policies in place for fraud, foreign exchange losses and other issues, the Secretariat explained that a large number of policies had been developed with assistance from the MSP and that many of these were currently being trialed. The Secretariat further confirmed that a fraud policy is in place.

88. In response to a comment from Australia regarding enterprise risk management, the Secretariat stated that it is considering a dedicated full time role responsible for implementing a risk management plan as recommended by the Audit Committee. The Secretariat further noted that this responsibility is currently delegated to the Deputy Director General.

The Meeting:

- **endorsed** the report from the Audit Committee for the period July 2015 – June 2016, and requested an update to Members on the Secretariat's response to the recommendations of the Audit Committee by March 2017.

Agenda Item 6.10: EDF11

89. The Secretariat updated Members on the progress of the Pacific European Union Marine Project (PEUMP) and the waste management component of the Eleventh European Development Fund (EDF11) Pacific Regional Indicative Programme (RIP).

90. New Caledonia thanked the Secretariat for the information provided on EDF 11 for the overseas territories component of this fund noting its involvement in programming for this fund (regional authority). New Caledonia expressed its support in maximising implementation of these funding sources for the region.

91. New Caledonia asked the Secretariat if it was involved in discussions on how the European Union will interact in the region when the Cotonou Agreement finishes in the near future. The Secretariat advised it has not been involved in discussions on the Cotonou Agreement.

92. Niue thanked SPREP and the European Union for the support already provided through the EDF10 PacWaste project, particularly in the areas of asbestos and healthcare waste, and looked forward to the continuation of this through the EDF11

projects being developed. Niue asked France to convey its gratitude to the European Union.

93. The United Kingdom advised that its commitment in the current EDF funding cycles (EDF11) include a 15% contribution from the United Kingdom despite the recent Brexit result and confirmed its continued commitment to the region.

94. France thanked Niue for acknowledging the financial support from the European Union and assured Niue that it will convey this to the European Union Ambassador in Suva. France further advised that it also provides an 18% contribution to the EDF11 funding cycles. France also welcomed the comments provided by the United Kingdom.

The Meeting:

- **noted** that although the EDF 11 project on sustainable use of marine resources, PEUMP, has been delayed, it appears to now be on track for implementation to begin in late 2017 or early 2018;
- **noted** that the Government of Sweden may contribute significant further funding to PEUMP;
- **agreed** to collaborate with the Secretariat once implementation begins, specifically to investigate the mitigation of turtle by-catch in commercial fisheries and to undertake a range of activities to promote ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change and conservation of coastal biodiversity; and
- **noted** the progress of the EDF11 Management of Waste component is on schedule to commence early 2018 with a continuation of stakeholder consultations throughout 2016/2017.

Agenda Item 6.11: Update on the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific: An Integrated Approach to Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management

95. The Secretariat provided an update on the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP) noting that the revised FRDP had recently been submitted to, and endorsed, by Leaders at the Forty-seventh Pacific Islands Forum in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia.

96. Noting that successful implementation of the FRDP depends on the development of strong partnerships, the Secretariat sought support from the Meeting for the proposed Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP) which would be responsible for measuring progress, overseeing monitoring and evaluation, and developing a communication strategy for the FRDP.

97. The Secretariat, by way of a Working Paper, also provided details of a proposed tripartite arrangement between PIFS, SPREP and SPC to coordinate FRDP implementation and manage the PRP, thus harnessing the strengths and comparative advantage of each of the three CROP agencies to build resilience to climate change and disasters in the Pacific region.

98. New Zealand, Tonga, New Caledonia, France, Australia and Samoa commended the Secretariat for its role with engaging in the development process of the FRDP and PRP and acknowledged further work is needed to strengthen collaboration among CROP agencies and relevant partners to ensure successful implementation of the Framework.

99. Australia noted that Pacific Island Forum Leaders tasked PIFS with coordinating with agencies partners and stakeholders to progress the working group for the FRDP.

100. Some Members noted that the PCCC could be a platform to link strategies and coordinate efforts to implement the Framework.

The Meeting:

- **supported** the FRDP as approved by the Leaders Meeting;
- **supported** the Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP) as the new partnership formed under the FRDP;
- **tasked** the Secretariat to continue working in close collaboration with Members, CROP agencies and relevant partners in the implementation of the FRDP to ensure integrated good governance of the FRDP, and the best use of the region's technical and political resources to build Pacific resilience to climate change and disaster risk reduction; and
- **tasked** the Secretariat to report back on progress to the SPREP Meeting in 2017.

Agenda Item 6.12: Governance arrangements for Biennial SPREP Meetings

101. The Secretariat, by way of a Working Paper, presented three potential options (with variations) for governance arrangements for biennial SPREP Meetings and invited Members to consider the options and provide feedback.

102. New Zealand expressed its preference for a simplified option that supports the reasoning behind holding biennial SPREP Meetings, notably to achieve cost savings and productivity efficiencies for the Secretariat. New Zealand added that the governance option must ensure that Members can monitor performance and enable important decision-making in non-SPREP Meeting years. For this reason, New Zealand supported the idea of an Executive Board noting that the Troika could still operate within the Executive Board and the Chair could be the same person.

103. France suggested that a board or committee should comprise sub-regional representation (Melanesia, Micronesia, Polynesia plus Metropolitan countries) with the Chair position rotating between the groups. France noted that these points assist with the current challenges of bilingual representation as it would enable Francophile representation within each sub-regional group.

104. Australia expressed confidence in a suitable governance mechanism being found and agreed with New Zealand that this requires principles to determine the governance structure needed and well-defined Terms of Reference.

105. United States noted that an Executive Board would allow for a greater and broader representation of SPREP Members at discussions of essential items of business such as the budget or review of the annual work.

106. New Caledonia supported the suggestions of New Zealand and others to simplify the governance arrangement and expressed a preference for an Executive Board. New Caledonia added that the mandate and Terms of Reference for the chosen governance option must be endorsed by the full SPREP Membership.

107. The Secretariat, in response to a question from New Caledonia, clarified that the biennial SPREP Meeting cycle will commence from the 2017 SPREP Meeting in Apia.

108. United Kingdom noted that an Executive Board would bring multiple co-benefits, but that it should be a simplified arrangement with a clear mandate and Terms of Reference.

109. New Zealand noted that the Troika role is needed for consistency of engagement and monitoring, whilst the Executive Board role is needed for review and decision making. New Zealand further noted that Troika function is nimble and provides continuity in operation during both SPREP Meeting and non-SPREP Meeting years, and the Executive Board is more representative and has oversight and monitoring tasks in years between SPREP Meetings. New Zealand suggested that both roles are needed.

110. The Chair called for the formation of a Friends of the Chair (FoC) group - comprising Australia, Cook Islands, France, United States, New Caledonia, New Zealand and Niue - to meet on the margins of the SPREP Meeting to progress the discussion further.

111. The FoC reported back to the Meeting with a set of recommendations which were endorsed by the Meeting.

The Meeting:

- **agreed** to the establishment of an Executive Board (EB) to be the SPREP decision-making body in the alternate years of Biennial SPREP Meetings;
- **agreed** that the Executive Board would be comprised of the Troika plus 4 additional Members representing Melanesia, Micronesia, Polynesia and Metropolitan Members;
- **agreed** that the Secretariat, in conjunction with the FoC develop TOR for the EB based on the following principles:
    1. A body to take key governance decisions in years alternate to the SPREP Meeting
    2. Membership based on Member representation and equity, including bilingualism
    3. A mechanism that is cost effective and sustainable
    4. A mechanism that is flexible to include other membership as necessary
    5. A mechanism that ensures that the Secretariat remains accountable to Members
    6. Other existing governance mechanisms (Troika and Audit Committee) remain
        - noted that the TOR should include rules of procedure including for:
        - representation by sub-regions and metropolitan Members
        - EB reporting to Members
        - Initial review of the arrangement at 2019 SM
- **requested** that the FOC report the proposed structure and TOR for the EB to the 2017 SPREP Meeting and include a comparative assessment of costs relative to Apia-based SM and non Apia-based SPREP Meeting.
- **agreed** the initial meeting of the EB will be immediately following the 2017 SPREP Meeting, thereafter meeting annually face to face taking opportunities of other regional meetings to save costs with back-to-back meetings as well as by electronic means.

Agenda Item 6.13: SPREP and UNEP Partnership

112. Mr Sefanaia Nawadra of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) updated the Meeting on the implementation of the strategic priorities, approved by the 26SM, for the UNEP Pacific Office and the UNEP-SPREP partnership.

113. New Caledonia thanked SPREP and UNEP for their collaboration and sought further information on the workshop on Green Economy/South-South Cooperation. UNEP explained that the workshop will fund seven countries to exchange ideas on green economies and that it is open to territories at their own cost. It was further explained that a series of workshops are planned, including one in the north Pacific.

114. Niue thanked UNEP for facilitating the GEF-PAS 'Prevention, control and management of invasive alien species in the Pacific islands' project and noted that Niue is looking forward to the next invasive species project under GEF-6.

The Meeting:

- **noted** with appreciation the progress in the status of implementation of the strategic priorities for the UNEP Pacific Office and the UNEP-SPREP Partnership;
- **endorsed** the recommended changes to the strategic priorities merging priorities IV with V and VI with VII respectively;
- **noted** the outcomes of UNEA 2 and the steps taken to follow up on implementation especially the relevant resolutions;
- **conveyed** appreciation and congratulations to Samoa for its effective leadership in guiding the SAMOA Pathway Resolution through to successful adoption at UNEA 2;
- **urged** Members to note the dates for UNEA 3, OECPR-3 and Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum and fully engage with the preparatory process for UNEA 3 including proposing priorities and themes for the UNEA-3, accredit their Permanent Representatives to UNEP and attend the Second Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific; and
- **conveyed** its congratulations, through the Chair of SPREP, to Mr Erik Solheim on his election as the Executive Director of UNEP and our commitment to continued strengthening of our partnership with UNEP under his leadership.

Agenda Item 7: Strategic Financial Issues

Agenda Item 7.1: Report on Members' Contributions

115. In accordance with Financial Regulation 14, the Secretariat reported to the Meeting on the status of Member contributions as at 31 December, 2015 and provided an update on the status of Member contributions as at the time of the Meeting.

116. The Secretariat noted that outstanding voluntary contributions, as at 15 September 2016, amounted to USD 695,622 and clarified that additional voluntary contributions of USD 21,478 were received as a result of the 5% optional voluntary increase requested by the Secretariat at the 26SM.

117. France noted that Members' contributions are a recurring problem, and that it's unfair to ask for voluntary contributions, when it is generally the same Members who don't pay their contributions. Rather than call for voluntary contributions, France believed that it would be better to find ways to encourage Members to pay their contributions promptly.

118. United States, Federated States of Micronesia and United Kingdom clarified their financial arrangements that relate to their contributions. United States reminded the Meeting that the 26SM had encouraged the increase of voluntary contributions, not made it mandatory.

119. The Secretariat acknowledged points made by the Meeting and thanked those Members who had made arrangements for the payment of outstanding contributions.

The Meeting:

- **considered** the report and **addressed** the problem of outstanding Member contributions; and
- **committed** itself collectively and individually to paying current and outstanding contributions in full in 2016.

Agenda Item 7.2: Sustainable Financing

120. The Secretariat presented a report to Members on actions undertaken by SPREP to achieve sustainable financing for the organisation.

121. United States noted its current policy for zero nominal growth in international organisation budgets and member assessments, and for organisations to establish priorities and absorb cost increases for high priority programmes and initiatives through cost reductions in lower priority programmes and initiatives.

122. Australia requested the Secretariat to furnish budgetary information early in the year to inform discussions on budget and further requested the Secretariat to prepare a draft budget for 2018-2019 to be tabled at the 2017 SPREP Meeting. This was supported by New Zealand.

123. New Zealand reinforced the importance of financial sustainability being built into every governance and management mechanism at the Secretariat and suggested that the Secretariat provide a brief quarterly update to the Troika on performance against budget for core, reserve and project funding. New Zealand stressed the importance of delivering a balanced budget and asked that the policies on foreign exchange losses and on reserves be completed and implemented as soon as possible, with a report on this provided to Members. New Zealand encouraged discipline around the firm application of a realistic administration fee with exceptions reported to Members. They also stressed that new initiatives and partnerships should be assessed with a view to their financial and resourcing implications including net impact on budget.

124. Niue expressed concern at the potential burden that additional reporting may place on the Secretariat. New Zealand clarified that the reports could be very brief and should be a normal part of the Director General's financial oversight of SPREP anyway and so it should not be an

extra burden. Provision of these reports to the Troika could potentially be a temporary measure until the budget situation improves. France expressed the view that quarterly financial updates should be a regular occurrence, not a temporary measure.

125. New Caledonia expressed concern about the suitability of certain project-funded consultants to match local and regional needs and contexts and requested that all projects managed by the Secretariat should consult national counterparts in the selection process of consultants.

The Meeting:

- **reviewed** and **noted** the update report by SPREP on Sustainable Financing;
- **noted** the progress made on measures to ensure a sustainable budget and directed the Secretariat, working with the Friends of the Chair, to further report to Members on options and actions that address the Secretariat's core budget pressures, by the end of March 2017. The options developed will be considered and used by the Secretariat to inform preparation of the 2018 – 2019 budget where considered appropriate;
- **noted** that the Secretariat will provide a brief quarterly update to the Troika and Members on performance against budget for core, programme, reserve and project funding; and
- **directed** the Secretariat to complete the policies on foreign exchange, reserves, and cost recovery by December 2016 and to report back to Members on any exemptions to these policies.

Agenda Item 8: Corporate Services

Agenda Item 8.1: SPREP Director General's Performance Assessment

126. This was a closed session.

The Meeting:

- **noted** and **endorsed** the review completed by the Troika of the DG's PDP for the period Jan-Sept 2016;
- **endorsed** the proposed draft annual PDP for the DG for the period Sept 2016 – Sept 2017 and request the Troika to work with the DG to finalise this Plan;
- **noted** the valuable contribution that members of the Troika provide in the work of the Secretariat through active participation and regular constructive feedback; and
- **approved** adoption of a 360 degree process as part of the DG's appraisal.

Agenda Item 8.2: CROP Triennial Review of Staff Terms and Conditions

127. The Secretariat updated the Meeting on the Secretariat's position on the Report of the 2015 CROP Triennial Review of Staff Terms and Conditions.

128. The Secretariat also informed the Meeting of key developments that have taken place within the participating CROP agencies over the past year, including an invitation from the Chair of the 2015 Forum Officials Committee (FOC) to consider the concept of a Joint Members Sub-Committee on Remuneration, and invited the Meeting's views and suggestions on this proposal.

129. The Secretariat noted that there had been no progress in the Triennial Review, that there was no longer a unified position on harmonisation and that some CROP agencies were considering withdrawal from the process. The Secretariat noted that it continues to be committed to the principles of harmonisation, although affordability and keeping up with the market are problems.

130. New Zealand stated that the current recommendations posed a difficulty as the recommendations of CROP Executives were not in line with the messages that New Zealand is receiving from CROP Governing Councils. New Zealand requested clarification about whether SPC was proposing abandonment of harmonisation, and suggested that the Secretariat should accept the invitation to join the FOC Joint Members Sub-Committee on Remuneration.

131. Cook Islands agreed with New Zealand and urged the Secretariat to continue work on this process.

132. New Caledonia noted that harmonisation comes at a cost, and that this needs to be considered before finalising a position.

133. The Secretariat reiterated that it supports harmonisation, but acknowledged that some CROP partners have had difficulties, because of their financial capability, and that this has been discussed for some time.

134. France noted the need to harmonise remuneration among CROP agencies, but observed that there is substantial competition, with both regional and international organisations namely, in terms of salary.

135. The Meeting agreed on the establishment of an inter-sessional Friends of the Chair (FoC) working group comprising Australia, Cook Islands and New Zealand, to propose next steps for engaging in the regional process for harmonisation of remuneration.

The Meeting:

- **noted** that the Secretariat continues to support the principles of CROP Harmonisation of Remuneration;
- **tasked** the Secretariat to set up an inter-sessional Friends of the Chair on next steps for engaging in the regional process for harmonisation of remuneration; and
- **directed** the Secretariat to accept the invitation from the Chair of the Forum Officials Committee 2015 to participate in the sub-committee.

Agenda Item 8.3: Appointment of External Auditors

136. In accordance with Financial Regulation 29, the Secretariat updated the Meeting on the appointment of external auditors, noting the term of office of the Secretariat's current external auditor will expire on 31 October, 2016.

137. The Secretariat advised that a tender had been advertised for the audit of its 2016 and 2017 accounts. Six tender proposals had been received and all six tenders satisfied the required criteria. The tender evaluation committee recommended that the contract be awarded to BDO Samoa for the financial year ending 31 December 2016 and then to tender again next year for the external audits for the two (2) years 2017 and 2018.

138. United States requested the Secretariat to provide more explanation on the selection of BDO Samoa as the recommended auditor to the financial audit for 2016. United States noted that the evaluation report stated that all bidders were capable of doing the job. Given this, the United States requested clarification on why the tender should not be awarded to the lowest bidder.

139. The Secretariat advised that the panel had considered recommending the lowest bidder for the audit, however, due to the change in personnel at SPREP it was felt that continuity was of prime importance.

140. Following the Secretariat's clarification, United States noted that the 25SM had recommended against awarding the contract to BDO in 2016 and expressed hope that this commitment would be honoured in 2017. The United States underscored that it is financially prudent, and a good governance practice, to regularly rotate audit firms.

141. In response to a query from American Samoa about whether the full proposals could be provided, the Chair urged the Meeting to base its decision on the summary information already provided.

The Meeting:

- **considered** the paper and **endorsed** the appointment of BDO Samoa for one (1) year only, to audit SPREP's 2016 financial accounts, reiterating that BDO not be selected the following year and a competitive tender be issued for 2017.

Agenda Item 9: 2017 Work Programme and Budget

Agenda Item 9.1: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management Division – 2007 Overview

142. The Secretariat presented an overview of the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management Division's work programme activities for 2017 in the areas of island and oceanic ecosystems, threatened and migratory species and invasive species.

143. The Secretariat also updated the Meeting on the outcomes of the Pacific Environment Forum which preceded the 27SM.

144. France thanked the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management Division for its important work, and applauded the initiatives planned, and already undertaken, for the Year of the Whale.

145. In response to a comment from France on the need for increased attention for marine turtles, the Secretariat explained that SPREP has maintained a turtle programme for many years and although this is currently in hiatus, the associated database is still maintained and regularly utilised.

146. The Secretariat further noted that the issue of turtles as by-catch will be an important component of the EDF 11 funded Pacific European Union Marine Project (PEUMP).

The Meeting:

- **noted** the 2017 work programme for the SPREP Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management Division.

Agenda Item 9.1.1: Outcomes of the regional joint CBD COP13 and CITES COP17 preparatory meeting

147. The Secretariat updated the Meeting on the outcomes of the joint preparatory meeting for Thirteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 13) and the Seventeenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES COP17) which was held from 15-16 August in Apia, Samoa.

148. Tonga, New Caledonia, United States and New Zealand thanked the Secretariat for their work in this area.

149. New Caledonia and France expressed an interest in participating in future preparatory meetings for the CBD and CITES. France noted that an invitation to the meeting had not been received but that if it had, it would have most certainly been accepted.

The Meeting:

- **welcomed** the outcomes of the joint preparatory meeting for CBD COP13 and CITES COP 17 including the Pacific Voyage: One Pacific Voice campaign and approach.

Agenda Item 9.1.2: Year of the Whale Update

150. The Secretariat updated Members on activities conducted as part of the Year of the Whale programme and invited the Meeting to review and discuss initiatives proposed for 2017, including an exhibition at the Tjibaou Cultural Centre in Noumea and a major regional conference called 'Whales in a Changing Ocean' to be held in Tonga.

151. Tonga noted the economic importance of whales to Tonga's economy and the exponential increase in activities from eco-tourism linked to whales.

152. New Caledonia expressed its gratitude in being able to host the whale exhibition at the Tjibaou Cultural Centre in Noumea and gave special thanks to New Zealand to giving this exhibition a regional perspective.

153. Australia informed the Meeting that Australia and New Zealand are co-sponsors of the forthcoming resolutions that will be introduced to the International Whaling Commission. Australia also advised that notable Australia experts will be attending the conference in Tonga and that it intends to report on SPREP's activities at the upcoming International Whaling Commission Meeting.

154. In response to a question from France about the processes set up for the conference in Tonga, the Secretariat advised the conference is a fully funded event at the technical level and that the Secretariat would be seeking participation from scientists from French Polynesia, New Caledonia and France.

155. Samoa inquired as to whether there are any strategies developed on minimising noise impacts on whales. Samoa further commented they would be interested in piloting such a strategy and noted the economic importance of this for eco-tourism. The Secretariat advised that the

main noise issues are from large vessels and military applications, but sponsors are promoting traditional craft of electric motors (powered by solar) and small diesel (powered by coconut oil) which are useful for pilot applications and could be scaled up in the future.

156. United States noted the 2014, 2015 and 2016 Our Ocean Conferences resulted in international commitments of USD 9.2 billion to ocean conservation and protection and commitments to protect over nine million square kilometres of ocean, an area that is the size of the United States.

The Meeting:

- **noted** with approval the implementation of activities organised by the Secretariat for Year of the Whale, and agreed (subject to the provision of funding support) to ensure their representation at the conference, Whales in a Changing Ocean, to be held in Nuku'alofa in March-April 2017; and
- **invited** Members, supporters and potential collaborators, including the International Whaling Commission and the Convention on Migratory Species, to provide technical and financial assistance in the planning and implementation of 2016 - 2017, Pacific Year of the Whale, in particular for Whales in a Changing Ocean, to be held in Nuku'alofa in March-April 2017.

Agenda Item 9.1.3: Revision of Marine Species Action Plans

157. The Secretariat reported to Members on recent initiatives related to the conservation of threatened and migratory marine species covered in SPREP's Marine Species Action Plan.

158. Australia, New Caledonia and New Zealand expressed their support for the recommendations.

159. Australia noted that the Secretariat was seeking support to convene a regional workshop in 2017 or 2018 on marine species to develop a revised Marine Species Action Plan and requested a clearer picture on the development of the next Plan for 2018-2023, with budget options. Australia also noted that the Whales Symposium in Tonga could provide a useful opportunity to begin this process and affirmed its offer to provide technical assistance in the revision of the action plan.

160. New Caledonia noted that the National Museum of Biodiversity in Paris is organising a workshop in late 2016 on monitoring the egg laying of sea turtles in New Caledonia. It expressed its disappointment about the recent visit to Noumea of the consultants appointed to provide a comprehensive report on ecotourism in the region, which they thought had been ill-prepared. It also requested that SPREP provide examples of protocols for monitoring the egg laying of turtles and a written update on the functioning of the Secretariat's TREDS database programme on sea turtles, as well as information on stranding networks, in order to draft provisional TOR in view of implementing this type of network in New Caledonia. It also suggested for SPREP to provide clearer explanations to local authorities on implementing a sub-regional task force on invasive species in Melanesia.

161. New Zealand noted its strong support of the conservation of sharks and other vulnerable species and noted that the five species of turtle that frequent New Zealand waters are fully protected under the Wildlife Act. While recognising the constraints for Pacific island countries in becoming signatories to CITES, New Zealand supported and encouraged efforts by SPREP to increase membership. It also expressed its support for the reduction of marine debris and said that it is working closely with SPREP in the lead-up to the next meeting of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.

162. The Secretariat thanked Members, welcomed Australia's offer of technical support in revising the Marine Species Action Plan and assured New Caledonia that it would be happy to respond and engage on their request. The Secretariat also recognised the support and effort of New Zealand and Australia in supporting Members on CITES issues, especially in the recent pre-COP meetings.

163. The Secretariat noted that there is an ongoing programme with Wallis and Futuna on invasive species and biodiversity and informed the Meeting about an upcoming visit to Wallis and Futuna, jointly with New Caledonia, and agreed to provide updates. It also noted the partnership with Noumea Convention and the upcoming meeting of Melanesian invasive species practitioners.

164. United States commended the conservation efforts of the Secretariat and valued the contribution of the Pew Charitable Trusts in supporting a Sharks and Rays Officer. It also supported the need to comprehensively tackle marine debris including reduction of marine litter from land-based sources.

With reference to dugong, the Meeting:

- **noted** the engagement of Solomon Islands and Vanuatu in the global initiative for the conservation of dugong and seagrass habitat funded by the Global Environment Facility and the Convention on Migratory Species.

With reference to turtles, the Meeting:

- **reaffirmed** SPREP's commitment to a programme under the EDF 11 PEUMP project, to reduce and mitigate the by-catch of turtles in commercial fisheries; and
- **endorsed** the Secretariat's engagement in a new regional initiative on hawksbill turtles, led by WWF.

With reference to sharks and rays, the Meeting:

- **noted** with approval the progress made through the appointment of a Shark and Ray Conservation Officer and agreed that the Secretariat should continue to actively support Fiji in its proposal to list mobula rays on CITES Appendix II.

With reference to International Conventions, the Meeting:

- **endorsed** SPREP's increased level of engagement with the CITES Secretariat and called on donors and supporters to consider funding the establishment of a CITES Officer at SPREP.

With reference to marine debris, the Meeting:

- **endorsed** efforts to reduce the amount of non-degradable marine debris, in particular that which is generated by the fishing industry.

With reference to regional cooperation, the Meeting:

- **agreed** to encourage those government agencies of Members who have not already done so to approve the release to the Secretariat of the GEN-3 Observer Reports, held by SPC, on by-catch of non-target threatened species and species of special interest in commercial fishing operations in Members' EEZs.

With reference to ecotourism, the Meeting:

- **agreed** to participate in the Secretariat's review of ecotourism in Member countries.

Agenda Item 9.1.4: Outcomes of the Nineteenth Pacific Islands Round Table for Nature Conservation

165. The Secretariat provided an update to Members on the work of the Pacific Islands Round Table for Nature Conservation, with a view to informing the Meeting on the outcomes of the Nineteenth Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation on mainstreaming biodiversity.

166. United States congratulated the efforts of the Secretariat on its work on biodiversity and agreed that efforts should be undertaken in an integrated and comprehensive manner.

167. Niue enquired whether FAO was invited to Round Table and if they made a presentation on agriculture related work including the FPAM project. The Secretariat confirmed that this was the case.

The Meeting:

- **noted** the key role of the Pacific Islands Round Table for Nature Conservation as a coordination mechanism for implementing the Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Islands region 2014-2020;
- **agreed** that mainstreaming biodiversity should be an integral part of the revised and updated NBSAPs; and that it should be implemented in a more coordinated, inclusive and integrated manner involving key stakeholders at national, sectoral, and local levels; and
- **noted** with appreciation the outcomes of the Nineteenth Pacific Islands Round Table for Nature Conservation on Mainstreaming biodiversity.

Agenda Item 9.2: Climate Change Division – 2017 Overview

168. The Secretariat provided an overview of the Climate Change Division's work programme activities for 2017 in the areas of implementing adaptation measures, improving capacity, knowledge and understanding of climate change risks and reduction and contributing to greenhouse gas reduction.

169. Niue, New Zealand, Tonga, Australia, Samoa and France thanked the Climate Change division for its report and for its ongoing work in this important field.

170. Niue expressed the view that SPREP should be working to ensure that it is seen as the champion of climate change issues in the Pacific region. New Zealand and the Secretariat endorsed this view and noted the elevation and increased

emphasis on climate change in the new SPREP Strategic Plan.

171. Australia noted the recent announcement from the Australian Prime Minister of AUD 300 million over the coming four years towards climate change related initiatives in the Pacific region. Australia further noted that a fundamental theme emerging from the subsequent consultation process has been the importance of coordination at the national, regional and global level. The Secretariat agreed that coordination is crucial and emphasised SPREP's willingness to work transparently and cooperatively with multiple partners to coordinate initiatives at a regional level.

172. Samoa expressed appreciation for the pre-COP training provided by SPREP, and noted the work and progress of the FINPAC and COSPAC projects. Samoa further acknowledged the assistance provided by NOAA on capacity building for Pacific Meteorological staff and the valuable assistance provided by the Meteorological Services of both New Zealand and United Kingdom.

173. United Kingdom commented that the United Kingdom Meteorological Services was pleased to be providing targeted support on upper air data to the Pacific region, and noted the importance of building predictive capacity to increase understanding of global climate changes.

174. France informed the Meeting of its involvement in an international working group that has been formed to explore the reduction of greenhouse gases in the area of marine transport. Niue thanked France for raising this issue. The Secretariat also noted this development and advised the Meeting of an International Maritime Organization (IMO)/European Union initiative that is looking at the issue of shipping and greenhouse gas emissions globally. The Secretariat advised the Meeting that SPREP and SPC have submitted a joint EOI to the European Union and the IMO and is awaiting an outcome.

175. United Kingdom advised the Meeting of an upcoming Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and urged Pacific island Members to bring a strong voice to this gathering, noting that a funding source for climate change mitigation projects will be created through the ICAO.

176. Tonga informed the Meeting of the Pacific Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency located in Tonga.

177. New Caledonia proposed to insert a recommendation thanking IUCN members for adopting motion 060 during the IUCN's world convention, which further reinforces the international community's awareness of this issue. It also wishes to continue working on defining a resilience policy for New Caledonia.

The Meeting:

- **noted** the 2017 work programme for the SPREP Climate Change Division; and
- **thanked** IUCN members for the adoption of motion 060 Pacific Region Climate Resilience Action Plan.

Agenda Item 9.2.1: Outcomes of the Finland-Pacific Project on Reducing Vulnerability in Pacific Island Countries

178. The Secretariat updated the Meeting on the outcomes and lessons learned from the implementation of the Finland-Pacific Project on Reducing Vulnerability in Pacific Island Countries (FINPAC).

179. Samoa, Niue and Tonga thanked the Secretariat and the Government of Finland for the FINPAC project.

180. Samoa noted the assistance provided by FINPAC in improving forecasting, awareness and early warning systems in Samoa. Niue also noted the benefits the project has provided including a new weather station, two metrological displays for awareness, a compendium and two village pilot projects.

181. Both Samoa and Niue commented that the FINPAC project finishes at the end of this year and expressed strong interest in a continuation of this first phase potentially through further funding from the Government of Finland, Government of Sweden or other non-traditional donors.

182. New Caledonia supported the comments made by Samoa and Niue and requested that the reports generated in the context of the FINPAC project be shared. It informed Members that Météo France in NC can usefully supplement the FINPAC project by supporting National Meteorological Services (NMSs), especially French-speaking ones, such as those in Vanuatu.

The Meeting:

- **noted** with appreciation the Government of Finland financial and technical support to the Pacific, the NMS and partners;
- **noted** the outcomes of the FINPAC Project; and
- **encouraged** SPREP to explore opportunities through a new project proposal to the GCF or other donors to replicate the lessons learned and address the gaps from the FINPAC Project.

Agenda Item 9.2.2: Paris Agreement and Preparation for COP 22

183. The Secretariat updated the Meeting, by way of a Working Paper, on the Paris Agreement and SPREP's support for Pacific island Members attending the Twenty-second Conference of the Parties (COP 22) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

184. The Meeting commended France for its leadership in Cop 21.

185. France thanked the Meeting for recognising its efforts at COP 21, thanked the Small Island Developing States for support during the conference and praised the Pacific island nations for raising the profile of climate change impacts.

186. France noted the importance of Pacific island nation contributions to the success of COP 21 and, noting the ratification by seven Pacific island nations already, urged the remaining Pacific island nations to also ratify the agreement by the December 2016 deadline. France advised

that the European Union is also very active on this issue and aims for all European Union members to ratify the Agreement by the end of the year.

187. France advised that its overseas territories will also be included through a specific contribution which indicates the high level of support France and its territories have for the Convention. New Caledonia has been invited to provide a list of activities it will undertake to meet this Convention by October 2016. New Caledonia advised that this information will also be provided to the Secretariat.

188. Tonga noted its past support for COP 21 and continued support for COP 22 and its intent to ratify the Convention during this week.

189. Australia advised that it signed the Paris Agreement on 22 April 2016 and is working hard to ratify it by the end of this year. Australia stated that it remains deeply committed to the Paris Agreement and actions on climate change and noted its continued support through capacity building of negotiators particularly for female contributors. Australia advised that together with New Zealand they would be hosting 'Pacific drinks' in Marrakesh this year.

190. United States commended the crucial role by Pacific islands in the successful conclusion of the Paris Agreement and noted the United States and China had recently signed the agreement on the margins of the G-20, bringing it much closer to meeting the threshold for entry into force of 55 countries representing 55% of carbon emitters. United States also noted its continued efforts to assist Pacific nations and other vulnerable nations to overcome the impacts of climate change.

191. United States advised of its pledge of USD 3 billion to the GCF and its recommendation that 50% of this is provided to more vulnerable countries, which includes Pacific island countries, and reminded the Meeting of President Obama's recent pledge of USD 30 million at the Pacific Island Conference of Leaders for new Pacific programming to combat climate change.

192. United States also urged those nations that will be attending the next Montreal Protocol meeting to support the phase down in HCFCs which, if eliminated, can reduce global warming by 0.5 degrees Celsius.

193. United Kingdom advised the Meeting of its deep commitment to COP 22, stated that United Kingdom is committed to reduce its own emissions by 80%, and said that it expects to ratify the Convention shortly.

The Meeting:

- **noted** the information presented in this paper;
- **provided** additional comments regarding ways in which SPREP can support PICs to implement the Paris Agreement;
- **provided** additional comments regarding ways in which SPREP can support PICs at COP 22; and
- **encouraged** those in a position to do so to provide additional resources to support SPREP's work in this area.

Agenda Item 9.2.3: New Zealand Pacific Partnership on Ocean Acidification

194. The Secretariat updated Members on the New Zealand Pacific Partnership on Ocean Acidification (PPOA) project and its efforts to expand the project into a regional programme with support from the GCF.

195. New Zealand and United States thanked the Secretariat and other partners and acknowledged contributions by the Principality of Monaco and involvement of NOAA, NIWA and others.

196. New Zealand and Australia also welcomed the recent progress on development of the GCF coastal ecosystems resilience programme of work.

197. Australia noted the involvement of the Pacific region in the Fourth Global Symposium on Ocean Acidification in a Changing World in Melbourne, Australia.

198. United States noted the wide range of activities it is undertaking in the area of ocean acidification such as the Argo (ocean buoys) programme, training personnel in management and monitoring of ocean acidification, and committing funds to address ocean acidification in ACP countries.

199. Niue urged the Secretariat, Members and partners to continue increasing Member and partner involvement in the ocean acidification issue.

The Meeting:

- **noted** with appreciation the support for the PPOA project from New Zealand and the Principality of Monaco;
- **encouraged** SPREP and Member countries and territories to prioritise ocean acidification monitoring and adaptation efforts under climate change, and to coordinate their efforts regarding ocean acidification; and
- **encouraged** SPREP to continue to work to develop the PPOA project into a full regional programme of work through support from the GCF and other donors.

Agenda Item 9.2.4: Progress and Future of the SPCR Pacific Regional Track: Mainstreaming and the Regional Technical Support Mechanism

200. The Secretariat updated the Meeting on the progress of work being undertaken as part of the Strategic Program for Climate Resilience; Pilot Program for Climate Resilience - Pacific Regional Track (SPCR-PR) components and sought the Meeting's support to ensure that mainstreaming work is further progressed in other countries.

201. Noting that the SPCR-PR components implemented by SPREP and administered by Asia Development Bank ends on 1 June, 2017, the Secretariat invited direction from Members on the Regional Technical Support Mechanism (RTSM) and how it could best continue to provide support to Members into the future.

202. Samoa acknowledged the support through the RTSM but expressed concern about technical difficulties with the online submission of proposals. The Secretariat apologised for the technical problem and advised the Meeting that it would endeavour to resolve the issue.

203. New Zealand thanked the Secretariat on the update and welcomed the mainstreaming approaches used. New Zealand further expressed interest in hearing from countries that are part of the RTSM on the usefulness of the mechanism to meet country needs. The Secretariat noted that Federated States of Micronesia was the only RTSM-participating Member present and therefore agreed to prepare a report on the usefulness of RTSM and circulate it to Members.

The Meeting:

- **noted** the progress made under the SPCR-PR track;
- **directed** the Secretariat to ensure that the mainstreaming tools and approach developed under the SPCR-PR are built into the suite of SPREP technical services to assist its members address CCA and associated DRR;
- **invited** direction from the Meeting on the future of the RTSM when the SPCR-PR program ends on 1 June, 2017; and
- **requested** the Secretariat to provide the report on the usefulness of the mainstreaming tools and the RTSM by the end of October 2016.

Agenda Item 9.3: Waste Management and Pollution Control Division – 2017 Overview

204. The Secretariat provided an overview of the Waste Management and Pollution Control Division's work programme activities for 2017 in the areas of solid waste management support, pollution management support and hazardous waste management support.

205. Niue, Tonga and Federated States of Micronesia acknowledged the ongoing support provided by the Waste Management and Pollution Control Division.

206. Niue expressed particular appreciation for the efforts of the European Union-funded and SPREP-administered PacWaste project. Niue further acknowledged the assistance provided by Australia and New Zealand for the waste recovery facility.

207. Tonga and Niue requested SPREP support with the development of national waste management strategies and plans. The Secretariat noted these requests.

208. New Caledonia noted the fruitful relationship that the Waste Management and Pollution Control Division has established with the INTEGRE project and commented that New Caledonia looks forward to working closely with the Division through the forthcoming EDF 11 funded projects. New Caledonia welcomed the transversal work carried out alongside other divisions and partners. It confirmed that private and public stakeholders in New Caledonia are prepared to share practical tools and experience in terms of waste management and pollution control.

209. In response to a question from New Caledonia about the SPREP/SPC proposal for a Maritime Technical Centre, the Secretariat advised that the proposal seeks to explore low carbon transportation options in the Pacific region.

The Meeting:

- **noted** the 2017 work programme for the SPREP Waste Management and Pollution Control Division.

Agenda Item 9.3.1: Outcomes of the 2016 Clean Pacific Roundtable

210. The Secretariat updated the Meeting on the successful outcomes of the inaugural Clean Pacific Roundtable and the 2016 Clean Pacific Roundtable Outcomes Statement.

211. Federated States of Micronesia noted its participation in the Clean Pacific Roundtable and indicated its support of the Outcomes Statement.

212. Kiribati thanked the Secretariat and acknowledged the funding provided to the Clean Pacific Roundtable by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the European Union.

213. New Caledonia offered its apologies for not being present at the Clean Pacific Roundtable. The Secretariat thanked New Caledonia and accepted its apologies.

The Meeting:

- **noted** the successful outcomes of the inaugural Clean Pacific Roundtable;
- **commended** the financial support provided by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the European Union towards the inaugural Clean Pacific Roundtable;
- **noted** with appreciation the 2016 Clean Pacific Roundtable Outcomes Statement; and
- **endorsed** the proposal for the Clean Pacific Roundtable to be held every two years, under the direction of a Cleaner Pacific Steering Committee.

Agenda Item 9.3.2: Marine Plastics and Debris Management

214. The Secretariat provided a detailed update with recommendations, by way of a Working Paper, on its recent research and analysis on plastic ingestion by marine fish.

215. France and Australia welcomed the action on marine plastics and thanked the Secretariat for its presentation.

216. France noted that this issue has great significance to the Pacific region. France informed the Meeting that it has adopted a law banning plastic bags and distributed to Members the Statement of intent of the third Ocean Conference in Washington.

217. Australia noted that marine debris is a global problem, and that while different nations have differing capacities, smaller countries could benefit from observing and learning from the solutions of others. Australia reported that it is currently updating its Plastics Threat Abatement Plan for Marine Life which may have a useful approach for countries to use. Australia also noted that it is working with Australian states, territories and industry to phase out the use of micro-plastics in care products by 2018.

218. United Kingdom informed the Meeting of its legislation to ban micro-beads in cosmetics and noted that United Kingdom has introduced a plastic bag charge which has resulted in an 80% reduction in plastic bag use.

The Meeting:

- **noted** the progress of the analysis of plastics ingestion by fish in the South Pacific. The report will be made available at the end of 2016 upon completion of all sample analysis from Samoa, French Polynesia and Easter Island;
- **noted** the progress on raising the issue and coordination with Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) in the region to address pollution violations from distant water fishing nations (DWFNs);
- **work** with SPREP to encourage the relevant member country departments to support the inclusion of fishing vessels into the text of the Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control in the Asia-Pacific Region (Tokyo MOU) and urged for ratification and improved implementation of key international instruments on fishing vessel safety, including the 2012 Cape Town Agreement, STCW-F, and the Work in Fishing Convention (No. 188);
- **supported** the ongoing modelling, monitoring and investigation of fates and effects of marine debris to identify sources of both local accumulation points and far-field dispersal pathways of marine debris from potentially significant source points including fishing vessels;
- **endorsed** the Secretariats efforts establish itself as the regional node for marine litter to investigate further marine debris impacts, and monitoring of micro plastic ingestion in most common fish species stomachs and commercial fish species for persistent organic pollutants; and
- **endorsed** and **supported** the development of a Marine Debris and Plastics Action Plan to implement marine debris management practices, enhance community based removal programmes and implementation of the Pacific Regional Port Reception Facilities Plan.

Agenda Item 9.3.3: Establishment of a Regional Coordinating Mechanism on Disaster Waste Management

219. The Secretariat updated Members on recent activities related to disaster waste management and sought the Meeting's endorsement for the establishment of a Regional Coordinating Mechanism on Disaster Waste Management in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, that incorporates the principles of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and facilitates the provision of timely technical and financial assistance for disaster waste management to affected SPREP Member countries and territories.

220. Samoa thanked the Secretariat for the report and acknowledged its support for the Regional Disaster Waste Management Guidelines. In response to a question from Samoa, the Secretariat advised that disaster waste management is covered under Goals 1 and 2 of the FRDP.

The Meeting:

- **noted** the development of the Regional Disaster Waste Management Guidelines to be linked to the regional context through the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP); and
- **endorsed** the development of a Regional Coordinating Mechanism on Disaster Waste Management by the Clean Pacific RT established Disaster

Waste Management Working Group (DWM-WG), consistent with established principles of CROP harmonisation.

Agenda Item 9.3.4: Asbestos in the Pacific

221. The Secretariat presented to the Meeting on asbestos in the Pacific region, noting that asbestos is widespread in seven Pacific island countries, that asbestos materials are being reused and resold in at least five locations and that 'new asbestos' materials are being sold at retail outlets in at least two locations. Detailed information on these findings is outlined in the PacWaste publication, circulated to all delegates, called The State of Asbestos in the Pacific.

222. The Secretariat invited the Meeting to discuss these findings and to consider endorsing a Pacific-wide ban on asbestos imports and the resale/reuse of existing asbestos materials.

223. Australia, Nauru, France, New Zealand, Kiribati and Federated States of Micronesia expressed strong support for a Pacific-wide ban of asbestos.

224. Samoa, Tonga and Cook Islands voiced concern about the resources required to implement an asbestos ban. Cook Islands and Tonga stated that they would welcome a ban on asbestos in the future but that they could not currently support the recommendation to endorse a Pacific-wide ban on asbestos due to resourcing and capacity concerns.

225. Samoa queried what the implications of such a ban would be on World Trade Organization (WTO) membership.

226. New Zealand noted that its legislation to ban the manufacturing and importation of asbestos was approved recently and offered to share the relevant text and its analyses with Pacific island Members. New Zealand further noted that it is member of the WTO and could also provide advice in this area. Australia also offered to share information on this topic.

227. Australia further advised the Meeting of an upcoming conference convened by its Asbestos Safety Eradication Agency to take place in Adelaide in November through which information would be shared on communication and best practice in dealing with the challenges associated with asbestos. The Secretariat thanked Australia for this information and noted that it would be attending the conference.

228. United States noted that the manufacture, import and export of asbestos products, while regulated, is still legal in the United States, and that until such a time as it changes that policy via its own internal procedures, it cannot join in a pacific-wide asbestos ban. United States noted the environmental and health concerns of Members and suggested that the recommendation should seek to provide Secretariat support to members for addressing those concerns. It also suggested the recommendation, be changed from 'endorse' to 'consider,' particularly in light of concerns voiced by Members on WTO implications and the need to more fully consider the broad policy implications of a ban.

229. In acknowledgement of concerns voiced by some Members around a proposed

Pacific-wide asbestos ban, the Meeting endorsed a re-worded recommendation.

The Meeting:

- **noted** The State of the Asbestos in the Pacific synthesis report produced under the PacWaste project which summarises the findings of the project's Regional Asbestos Baseline Survey;
- **welcomed** the outcomes of the Clean Pacific Roundtable;
- **noted** Pacific island Members' interest in banning asbestos imports in the context of a healthy and clean Pacific; and
- **directed** the Secretariat to provide advice to members on the implications and mechanisms of managing issues around asbestos.

Agenda Item 9.3.5: Update on the formulation of J-PRISM Phase II

230. The Secretariat updated the Meeting on the formulation, outline and objectives of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) funded Japanese Technical Cooperation Project for Promotion of Regional Initiative on Solid Waste Management in Pacific Island Countries Phase II (J-PRISM II).

231. Kiribati noted that while it is not part of J-PRISM Phase II, it is pleased to be still participating in the regional training component and thanks JICA for this opportunity.

The Meeting:

- **noted** the outline and objectives of J-PRISM II both regionally and in individual Pacific island countries;
- **acknowledged** the opportunities presented by J-PRISM II to develop individual and institutional capacity for the improvement of solid waste management in the Pacific region; and
- **encouraged** other development partners to collaborate with J-PRISM II through SPREP.

Agenda Item 9.4: Environmental Monitoring and Governance Division – 2017 Overview

232. The Secretariat provided an overview of the Environmental Monitoring and Governance Division's work programme activities for 2017 in the areas of enabling frameworks, strengthening environmental legislation, mainstreaming, building capacity and monitoring and reporting.

The Meeting:

- **noted** the 2017 work programme for the SPREP Environmental Monitoring and Governance Division.

Agenda Item 9.4.1: Strategic Environmental Assessment

233. The Secretariat provided an update on SPREP's strategic environmental assessment (SEA) work and sought endorsement from the Meeting of SEA awareness-raising and capacity-building for SPREP Members.

234. Kiribati acknowledged the Secretariat's effort in this work and welcomed the proposed assistance, noting that it will also serve to raise awareness and significantly build capacity at the national level.

235. New Caledonia acknowledged the usefulness of the division's work, particularly their methodological guides,

such as the one on Environmental Impact Assessments. As part of the Secretariat's cost recovery policy, New Caledonia encouraged the Secretariat to include a budget line in each project that would be dedicated to translating technical documents into French, to ensure that this cost is not charged to the operational budget.

236. Niue advised the meeting that the recent EIA training greatly assisted in its preparation of official documents that went through the Government process for endorsement.

The Meeting:

- **endorsed** SEA awareness-raising and capacity-building for Member countries, through inclusion of an SEA module in the regional EIA Training Manual and through SEA-focused workshops.

Agenda Item 9.4.2: BBNJ Negotiations

237. The Secretariat updated the Meeting on the progress of work in Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) negotiations and sought endorsement from Members of SPREP's role in the development of an International Legally Binding Instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction.

238. Nauru expressed its appreciation to the Secretariat for building capacity and technical understanding in the important area of BBNJ.

239. Australia echoed the comments from Nauru about the importance of this work and thanked the Environmental Monitoring and Governance Division for its report. Australia highlighted its active engagement in the area of BBNJ and acknowledged the support of the Secretariat and other regional agencies.

240. United States noted SPREP does not have a formal role in the BBNJ Preparatory Committee process currently ongoing in the UN. United States further noted SPREP's support of the P-SIDS is technical in nature, in collaboration with other regional agencies and partners, and requested SPREP keep Members informed.

241. The Secretariat thanked the Meeting for its comments.

The Meeting:

- **welcomed** SPREP's role providing technical assistance to Members in the BBNJ process;
- **noted** with appreciation SPREP's continued technical support of Pacific island Members in collaboration with other regional agencies and partners, in particular the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner, to keep Members informed; and
- **encouraged** more active engagement of Members in the BBNJ process.

Agenda Item 9.4.3: Environmental Monitoring Data Collation Support Services

242. The Secretariat updated the Meeting on environmental monitoring data support services provided by SPREP to Members and sought endorsement for continued environmental monitoring data support services.

The Meeting:

- **noted** the environmental data management services provided to Members through the various platforms noted above;
- **endorsed** SPREP's efforts to continue working with Members to collate, store and manage environmental data; and
- **undertook** to facilitate, through appropriate data-sharing agreements, access to data in order to determine baseline information and to allow for updating of currently held data.

Agenda Item 9.5: Consideration and Approval of Proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2017

243. The Secretariat presented its proposed annual Work Programme and Budget for 2017.

244. New Zealand stated that the forward budget projections did look promising, but queried the overall fiscal situation of SPREP going into 2017, and the balance at end 2017. The Secretariat responded that the overall budget deficit at the start of 2017 is not certain at this point in time, but that the actual expenditures projected against budget will be brought up to date in coming weeks. It was noted that income is excluded from the budget if not fully guaranteed.

245. On the issue of reserves, New Zealand queried whether the 5% voluntary increase in contributions was now being allocated to reserves or whether it was being used to offset the deficit. The Secretariat clarified that reserves have never been included in the budgetary consideration as they are built up over time, noting the resolution from the 26SM to use the voluntary contributions towards the reserve. However, as these have been received in different timeframes, the Secretariat has awaited inclusion of the reserve until there is greater confidence in the amounts received.

246. With regard to arrangements with European Union, New Zealand queried whether SPREP would be receiving a 7% management fee instead of 12%, and if so what would be the impact on programme support. The Secretariat noted that there is a common position of CROP, and that this position will be negotiated as a common approach to in order to ensure that a fair fee is received for undertaking work.

247. New Zealand noted the opportunity to ensure that the strategic plan is properly resourced, and not to rely on funding opportunities alone. New Zealand further suggested that this requires a degree of selectivity in deciding on funding opportunities. The Secretariat agreed that the strategy needs to be resourced and funding aligned with the strategy. In discussions with the Government of Sweden, it became clear that SPREP has been under their consideration as a partner for some time. The Secretariat noted that the Government of Sweden has been given an appreciation for the work of SPREP and the new Strategic Plan, so that this new partnership is based on priorities identified by Members. The Secretariat will continue to ensure that new and existing partners add value to the strategic plan.

248. Australia queried certain terms used in the budget, in particular unsecured income which has a substantial increase, as well as the term other income. The Secretariat clarified that the term unsecured income represents what would be injected into core income, and relates to programme management fees that are expected to be received from new projects such as that from Sweden. Australia encouraged the use of footnotes in future budget papers in order to better explain terms used.

249. New Caledonia noted that while there is a decrease in the budget from 2015, it does not consider this as a major problem given that it is a pivotal year especially with the adoption of the new strategic plan. There are reasons for optimism given the forecast contained in the pipeline of projects. New Caledonia also noted the increase in workload for the Secretariat, and noted that SPREP needs to continue to build its capacity to be reactive and continue to do real work on the ground via tangible results.

250. Australia confirmed that it looks forward to signing a new multi-year agreement now that strategic plan is adopted.

251. New Caledonia noted that it had not had sufficient time to consult fully on the budget, and will revert to the Secretariat in due course to indicate any topics or issues that are of particular interest.

252. Niue acknowledged the efforts of the Secretariat, and noted that there would be opportunities for the Secretariat under the GEF and GCF to support projects for Members.

253. The Secretariat noted that such an effort is underway as part of the Smaller Island States Strategy for developing a joint proposal for GCF together with PIFS, and indicated readiness to work with Members for projects for the unallocated GEF funds.

The Meeting:

- **considered** and **approved** the proposed Work Programme and Budget of USD 15,164,886.

Agenda Item 10: Items Proposed by Members

Agenda Item 10.1: Regional Hydrology Programme

254. Samoa presented a proposal for the establishment of a Regional Hydrology Programme within SPREP, and invited the Meeting to discuss and endorse the proposal.

255. New Caledonia noted its strong interest in hydrology matters and informed the Meeting that a partnership in this regard is under construction with French Polynesia. New Caledonia made reference to a recent meeting with the WMO where it was proposed that a new project be established, through which the SPC-developed HYCOS programme can be revived. New Caledonia stated that it is in favour of implementing a regional hydrology Programme and would wish to participate in it. It stated that it would favour a broader recommendation requesting regional organisations and WMO to implement the recommendations of the PMC3, rather

than only request institutional support within SPREP.

256. Samoa explained that the proposal concept for a Regional Hydrology Programme arose from the Nuku'alofa Declaration. Samoa further commented that the SPC water and sanitation programme mainly focuses on water management but is not very active in the area of hydrology.

257. The observer from SPC thanked Samoa for raising the issue and acknowledged that there is a need for further attention in this area. Samoa emphasised the excellent work of HYCOS but raised the issue of sustainability and continuity.

258. New Zealand noted the strong regional interest in hydrology and the need for the gap in this area to be acknowledged.

259. Niue and Tokelau supported the initiative proposed by Samoa. Tokelau further expressed appreciation and gratitude to the Government of Samoa for assisting with training Meteorological Services staff.

The Meeting:

- **endorsed** the request from Samoa for support for a hydrological services program;
- **recommended** that SPREP, SPC and WMO discuss the implementation of the PMC3 recommendation, and work out the details for ensuring that there is a clear demarcation of mandates; and
- **commended** SPREP, SPC and WMO for their partnership, and requested them to continue to strengthen their collaboration and partnership in cross cutting issues such as meteorological and hydrological services.

Agenda Item 11: Regional Cooperation

Agenda Item 11.1: CROP Executives Meeting Report

260. The Director General provided a verbal briefing on the outcomes of the CROP Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Meetings in 2016, noting that these meetings are a valuable mechanism for sharing information and developing ways of working together.

261. In response to a query from New Zealand, the Director General explained that a consolidated written report would be made available to Members.

262. Tonga thanked the Director General for the verbal report and noted Tonga's appreciation of the CROP approach to support it received during COP 21.

263. Samoa also expressed its appreciation of the regional cooperation approach taken by CROP agencies, especially in assisting with meteorological services and climate change efforts, and thanked the Director General for the verbal report.

The Meeting:

- **noted** the verbal report of the Director General on CROP CEOs meetings in 2016.

Agenda Item 12: Statements by Observers

264. The 27SM was attended by a range of observers which included CROP agencies, NGOs and other conservation and environment groups. Observers made statements outlining their areas of work and potential partnerships with Members and the Secretariat. The list of observers and the observer statements are attached as Annex V.

Agenda Item 13: Other Business

265. There was no other business.

Agenda Item 14: High Level Ministerial Segment

266. The High Level Ministerial Segment of the 27SM was held on 22 September, 2016 with Ministers and other High Level officials attending. The Meeting was chaired by The Hon. Billy Talagi, Niue's Minister for Natural Resources.

Agenda Item 14.1: Opening and Prayer

267. The High Level Ministerial Segment commenced with a musical performance from students of Niue Primary School and continued with an opening prayer by Reverend Navy Salatielu.

268. Opening remarks from The Hon. Billy Talagi are attached as Annex VI.

Agenda Item 14.2: Sustainable Development Goals

269. Ministers and High Level delegates discussed the SDGs, the challenges of implementation for the Pacific, and how best to contextualise global issues into a regional and national context for a resilient Pacific.

270. Presentations were made by: The Hon. Siaosi Sovaleni, Deputy Prime Minister, Government of Tonga; The Hon. Taefu Lemi Taefu, Associate Minister, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Government of Samoa; The Hon. Vodrick Detsiogo, Assistant Minister, Government of Nauru; and HE Jackie Frizelle, New Zealand High Commissioner, Samoa.

Agenda Item 14.3: Climate Change

271. Ministers and High Level delegates discussed the challenges and opportunities for the Pacific post COP 21 and progress towards implementation of the Paris Agreement.

272. Presentations were made by: Mr Jean-Luc Faure-Tournaire, Représentant permanent adjoint de la France auprès de la CPS et du PROE; and The Hon. Wilbur Heine, Minister of Education, Government of Republic of the Marshall Islands.

Agenda Item 14.4: Oceans

273. Ministers and High Level delegates discussed the UN Oceans Conference which will be held in New York in June 2017 and co-hosted by Fiji. Delegates noted that the Conference provides an opportunity to articulate key ocean issues for the Pacific including the Blue Economy, Marine Protected Areas, Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdictions (BBNJ), and Conservation for Sustainable Livelihoods.

274. Presentations were made by: The Hon. Lorna Eden, Assistant Minister, Local Government, Housing and Environment, Government of Fiji; The Hon. Tebao Awerika, Minister, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development, Government of Kiribati; The Hon. Kiriau Turepu, Minister, National Environment Services, Government of Cook Islands; and Ms Deb Callister, Assistant Secretary, Marine and International Heritage Branch, Australian Department of the Environment and Energy.

Agenda Item 14.5: Alofi Communiqué

275. Ministers and High Level delegates agreed to a communiqué, which is attached as Annex VII.

Agenda Item 15: Date and Venue of the Twenty-eighth SPREP Meeting

276. The Meeting:

- **agreed** that the Twenty-eighth SPREP Meeting would be held in Samoa in 2017 at a date to be advised by the Secretariat.

Agenda Item 16: Adoption of Report of the Twenty-seventh SPREP Meeting

277. The Meeting:

- **adopted** the recommendations and decisions from the Report of the Twenty-seventh SPREP Meeting.

Agenda Item 17: Close

278. The Meeting was formally closed at 5.20pm on 22 September, 2016.

ANNEX I: List of Participants

AMERICAN SAMOA

Mr. Fa'amao Asalele
Deputy Director
American Samoa Environmental
Protection Agency (AS-EPA)
PO Box PPA
PAGO PAGO, American Samoa 96799
E: faamao.asalele@epa.as.gov

Mr. Neil Pilcher
AS-EPA's SPREP Coordinator
AS-EPA
PAGO PAGO, American Samoa 96799
E: neil.pilcher@epa.as.gov

AUSTRALIA

Ms. Deb Callister
Assistant Secretary
Marine and International Heritage Branch
Australian Department of the Environment and Energy
E: Robert.christie@environment.gov.au

Robert Christie
Head of Delegation
Assistant Secretary
Pacific Aid Effectiveness and Advice Branch
Pacific Division
Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
E: deb.callister@environment.gov.au

Ms. Sharon Lane
Assistant Director
Pacific and Coral Triangle Section
Marine and International Heritage
Australian Department of the Environment and Energy
E: Sharon.lane@environment.gov.au

Ms Rhona McPhee
Assistant Director
Fisheries and Environment Section
Pacific Division
Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
E: Rhona.McPhee@dfat.gov.au

COOK ISLANDS

Hon. Kiriau Turepu
Minister
National Environment Services
Government of Cook Islands
Cook Islands
E: joseph.brider@cookislands.gov.ck

Mr. Joseph Brider
Director
National Environment Service (NES)
Rarotonga
Cook Islands
P: (682) 21 256
E: joseph.brider@cookislands.gov.ck

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

Mr. Wilson Waguk
Deputy Chief of Mission
FSM Embassy in Fiji
Suva
E: waguk.finkol@gmail.com

FIJI

Hon. Lorna Eden
Assistant Minister
Local Government, Housing and Environment
Government of Fiji
Suva, Fiji
E: lorna.eden@govnet.gov.fj

FRANCE

M. Jean-Luc Faure-Tournaire
Representant Permanent Adjoint de la France
Aupres de la Communaute du Pacifique et du PROE
Délégation Française auprès de la CPS
Nouméa / Nouvelle-Calédonie
T: (687) 261603
E: jean-luc.faure-tournaire@diplomatie.gouv.fr

KIRIBATI

Hon. Tebao Awerika
Minister
Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development
Government of Kiribati
P.O. Box 234
Bikenibeu, Tarawa
Kiribati
E: awerika@gmail.com

Mr. Taulehia Pulefou
Senior Environment Officer
Chemical and Waste Management unit
Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development
PO Box 234
Bikenibeu, Tarawa
Kiribati
P: (686) 28647/28211/28507
F: (686) 28334
E: taulehiap@environment.gov.ki

MARSHALL ISLANDS

Hon. Wilbur Heine
Minister of Education
Government of Marshall Islands
PO Box 2
Majuro
Marshall Islands 96960
E: warwick47@gmail.com

NAURU

Hon. Vodrick Detsiogo
Assistant Minister
Government of Nauru
Government Offices
Yaren District
Republic of Nauru
E: mavis.depaune@naurugov.nr
monmave@gmail.com

Ms Mavis. Depaune
Acting Secretary
Dept of Commerce, Industry and Environment
Government Offices
Yaren, Nauru
T: +674 557 3133 ext 303
M: +674 557 3369
E: mavis.depaune@naurugov.nr mon mave@gmail.com

NEW CALEDONIA

Ms Anne-Claire Goarant
Regional Cooperation & External Affairs
Government of New Caledonia
14 rue G Clemenceau
98800 Noumea Cedex
New Caledonia
T: +687 75 28 59
E: anne-claire.goarant@gouv.nc

NEW ZEALAND

H.E. Jackie Frizelle
High Commissioner
New Zealand High Commission
Beach Road, APIA
P: (685) 21 711
F: (685) 20 086/30765
E: Jackie.frizelle@mfat.govt.nz

Ms Lou Sanson
Director-General
Department of Conservation
59 Boulcott Street
PO Box 10420
Wellington, New Zealand
E: l.sanson@doc.govt.nz

Ms Andrea Stewart
Development Manager Environment
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
New Zealand
E: andrea.stewart@mfat.govt.nz

Ms Huia Lloyd
Pou Tairangahau
Department of Conservation
New Zealand
E: h.lloyd@doc.govt.nz

Mr Doug Ramsay
Manager Pacific Rim, National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA)
New Zealand
E: Doug.Ramsay@niwa.co.nz

NIUE

Hon. Billy Talagi
Minister for Natural Resources
Premier's Office
Government of Niue
Alofi, Niue
T: (683) 4200
E: Billy.Talagi@mail.gov.nu

Dr Josie M. Tamate
Director General
Ministry of Natural Resources
Government of Niue
Niue Public Service Building
Alofi, Niue
E: Josie.Tamate@mail.gov.nu

Mr Richard Hipa
Secretary to Government
Ministry of External Affairs
Government of Niue
E: richard.hipa@mail.gov.nu

Mr Sauni Tongatule
Director
Department of Environment
Ministry of Natural Resources
Government of Niue
E: sauni.tongatule@mail.gov.nu

Ms Natasha Toeono-Tohovaka
Senior Project Manager - DAFF
Fonuakula
Niue Island
E: Natasha.Tohovaka@mail.gov.nu

SAMOA

Hon. Taefu Lemi Taefu
Associate Minister
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
Government of Samoa
Apia, Samoa
E: amataga.penaia@mnre.gov.ws

Mr. Suluimalo Amataga Penaia
Chief Executive Officer
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
Private Mail Bag
APIA, Samoa
P: (685) 67200
F: (685) 23176
E: amataga.penaia@mnre.gov.ws

Mr. Mulipola Ausetalia Titimaea
Assistant Chief Executive Officer - Meteorology
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
Private Mail Box
Samoa
E: Ausetalia.Titimaea@mnre.gov.ws

Ms. Tuiolo Schuster
Assistant Chief Executive Officer – Corporate Services
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
Private Mail Box
Samoa
E: tuiolo.schuster@mnre.gov.ws

Ms. Filomena Nelson
Assistant Chief Executive Officer - DMO
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
Private Mail Box
Samoa
E: Filomena.nelson@mnre.gov.ws

TOKELAU

Ms Luisa Naseri-Sale
Acting Manager, Environment Division
EDRNE
Tokelau
T: +685-20822
E: lnaseri.sale@tokelau.tk

TONGA

Honorable Siaosi Sovaleni
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communications (MEIDECC)
Government of Tonga
Nukualofa, Tonga
E: paulm@mic.gov.to

Mr. Paula Ma'u
Chief Executive Officer
MEIDECC
Government of Tonga
Nukualofa, Tonga
E: paulm@mic.gov.to

Ms. Mafile'o Masi,
Chief Environmentalist
MEIDECC
Government of Tonga
Nukualofa, Tonga
E: mafileo.masi@gmail.com

UNITED KINGDOM

Mr Daniel Lund
Head of Climate Change and Regional Affairs
Office of the High Commissioner
PO Box 1355
Suva, Fiji
E: Daniel.Lund@fco.gov.uk

Mr David Carlin
Divisional Director of UK CEFAS
British High Commission
Office of the High Commissioner
PO Box 1355
Suva, Fiji
E: David.Carlin@fco.gov.uk

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Ms. Candy Green
Head of Delegation
Deputy Chief of Mission
U.S. Embassy Wellington, New Zealand
E: GreenC@state.gov

Mr. Craig Halbmaier
Environment, Science, Technology and Health Officer
U.S. Consulate General Auckland, New Zealand
E: HalbmaierCA@state.gov

Mr. Mark R. Mineo
Regional Environmental Officer
U.S. Embassy Suva, Fiji
E: MineoMR@state.gov

Mr. Min Kang
International Relations Officer
U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs
E: KangMG@state.gov

Dr. Steve Piotrowicz
Oceanographer
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Climate Program Office
E: steve.piotrowicz@noaa.gov

Ms. Sandeep K. Singh
Regional Environment and Climate Change Policy Specialist
Regional Environment Office for the Pacific
U.S. Department of State
U.S. Embassy, Suva, Fiji
Tel: 679 331-4466 x 8210/
Fax: 679 330-2998/
E: SinghSK1@state.gov

CROP AGENCIES

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECREATARIAT

Ms Cristelle Pratt
Deputy Secretary General
Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
Private Mail Bag
Suva, Fiji Islands
P: +679 331 2600
E: cristellep@forumsec.org

SECREATARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY

Ms. Sylvie Goyet
Director of Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Programme
SPC, Noumea
New Caledonia
E: sylvieg@spc.int

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC

Dr. Morgan Wairiu
Deputy Director, Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development (PaCE-SD)
E: morgan.wairiu@usp.ac.fj

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL

Ms. Sue Taei
Director
Conservation International Islands
E: staei@conservation.org

Ms. Lagipoiva Cherelle Jackson
OHI Manager Pacific
Conservation International Islands
Vailima, Apia Samoa

P: (685) 21593
E: cjackson@conservation.org

COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION (CSIRO)

Dr Piers Dunstan
Project leader and Theme leader (CSIRO)
GPO Box 1538 Hobart, TAS, 7001
Australia
Phone: +61 3 62325382
E: Piers.Dunstan@csiro.au

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANISATION

Mr. Keneti Faulalo
Regional Manager
Pesticides Risk Reduction and Biodiversity Projects
E: Keneti.Faulalo@fao.org

GIZ

Dr Jan H. Steffen
Project Director
Marine and Coastal
Biodiversity Management in Pacific Island Countries MACBIO
76 Gordon Street, Level 2
PO Box 14041
Suva, Fiji
T: 679 3305 866
E: jan.steffen@giz.de

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

Ms. Jaana Dielenberg
Griffith University
E: j.dielenberg@griffith.edu.au

JAPAN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY (JICA)

Mr. Kunihiro Yamauchi
Director General
Global Environment Department
JICA
P: +81-3-5226-9543
E: Yamauchi.Kunihiro@jica.go.jp

Ms. Mizuki Hosokai
Global Environment Department
JICA
P: +81-3-5226-9543
E: hosokai.mizuki@jica.go.jp

Mr. Faafetai Sagapolutele
Assistant Chief Advisor, J-PRISM, JICA
J-PRISM (Japanese Technical Cooperation Project for Promotion of Regional Initiative on Solid Waste Management in Pacific Island Countries)
C/O – SPREP
Apia Samoa
P: Tel: +685-21929 (ext.253)
E: faafetais@hotmail.com

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

Michael Looker
Director
The Nature Conservancy (NZ and Pacific)
E: mlooker@TNC.ORG

THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS

Ms Joan Yang
Senior Officer
The Pew Charitable Trusts
901 E Street NW
Washington, DC 20004
P: 01 202 540 6526
E: JYang@pewtrusts.org

Ms Jennifer Sawada
Officer, Global Sharks Conservation for The Pew Charitable Trusts
The Pew Charitable Trusts
901 E Street NW
Washington, DC 20004
P: 01 202 540 6366
E: jsawada@pewtrusts.org

UNEP

Ms. Isabelle Louis
Regional Director
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Mr. Sefanaia Nawadra
Head
UNEP Pacific Office
SPREP Headquarters
P.O Box 240
Apia, Samoa
Tel: +685-21929 Ect.362
Email: sefanaia.nawadra@unep.org

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY

Mr Dan Sinclair
School of Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences
Faculty of Science
Victoria University of Science
PO Box 600
Wellington 6140
New Zealand

Ms Nicole Phillips
School of Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences
Faculty of Science
Victoria University of Science
PO Box 600
Wellington 6140
New Zealand
Tel: +64 4 463 4719

NGOs

Ms Coral Pasisi
Tofia Niue
E: coralpasisi@yahoo.com

Ms Fiafia Rex
Oma Tafua
E: omatafua@gmail.com

INTERPRETATION TEAM

Mr. Alex Fairie
Conference and Translation Coordinator
On Call Interpreters
E: alex.fraire@oncallinterpreters.com

Mr. William Raye
Technician
On Call Interpreters
E: william.raye@oncallinterpreters.com

Mr. Marc Orlando
Interpreter
On Call Interpreters
E: academictrans@hotmail.com

Mr. Philippe Tanguy
Interpreter
On Call Interpreters
E: P.Tanguy@unswglobal.unsw.edu.au

SPREP SECRETARIAT

PO Box 240
Apia, Samoa
Ph: 685 21919
Fax: 685 20231
Email: sprep@sprep.org

Mr. Kosi Latu - kosil@sprep.org
Director General
Mr. Roger Cornforth - rogerc@sprep.org
Deputy Director General
Mr. Stuart Chape - stuartc@sprep.org
Director – BEM
Dr. Netatua Pelesikoti - netatuap@sprep.org
Director – CCD
Mr. Clark Peteru - clarkp@sprep.org
Acting Director – EMG
Ms. Simeamativa L. Vaai - simeamativav@sprep.org
HR Adviser
Ms. Petra Chan Tung - petract@sprep.org
Finance and Admin. Adviser
Mr. Stewart Williams - stewart@sprep.org
Dr. Frank Griffin - frankg@sprep.org
Ms. Ma Bella Guinto - mabellag@sprep.org
Ms. Amber Carvan - amberc@sprep.org
Mr. Espen Ronneberg - espenr@sprep.org
Dr. Tommy Moore - tommym@sprep.org
Mr. Meapelo Maiai - meapelom@sprep.org
Mr. David Moverley - davidm@sprep.org
Mr. Michael Donoghue - michaeld@sprep.org
Mr. Warren Lee Long - warrenl@sprep.org
Ms. Easter Galuvao - easterg@sprep.org
Mr. Michinobu Aoyama - michinobua@sprep.org
Ms. Apiseta Eti - apiseta@sprep.org
Ms. Maraea Pogi - maraeap@sprep.org
Mr. Ainsof So'o - ainsofs@sprep.org
Mr Kevin Floyd (Consultant)

Annex II: Director General's Opening Remarks, Mr Kosi Latu

Rev Vili Kamupala Viviani
Hon Toke Talagi – Premier of Niue
Hon Ministers, Excellencies, distinguished delegates to the SPREP meeting,
CROP representatives, Partners, SPREP staff, ladies and gentlemen.

It is a great honour for me to welcome all the SPREP delegates and partners to this 27th SPREP Meeting which is also my first SM as Director General of SPREP. Welcome to Niue – and as Niueans say welcome to the ROCK.

But let me firstly convey my sincere gratitude to the Premier of Niue, the Government and people of Niue for hosting the SPREP meeting. Thank you for your generosity and hospitality. We appreciate very much the hard work and effort that has gone into ensuring that the 27th SM takes place in Niue. This is the first time that Niue has hosted the SM. Niue is the perfect location and venue for the SPREP Meeting. As many of you are aware, this year and next year have been designated by SPREP as the "Year of the Whale", and several of you since arrival this week have been fortunate enough to have seen the whales here in Niue.

Over the past several weeks, I have attended with Pacific Leaders various international and regional meetings which have focussed on some of the key issues which are on the agenda for this SPREP Meeting this week. At the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2 weeks ago in Honolulu, our Pacific leaders were active in their engagement on a range of issues including oceans, climate change, and biodiversity. It was evident in Honolulu that the Pacific continues to punch above its weight by providing strong leadership on ocean conservation. Many of the SPREP Pacific island members such as Kiribati with the Phoenix Islands Marine Protected Areas, Cook Islands, and New Caledonia have some of the largest MPAs not just in the Pacific but in the world. The State of Hawaii followed in the example of the Micronesian Challenge by promulgating the Aloha Challenge. This was followed up by President Obama's announcement 2 weeks ago on the extension of the Papahanamokuakea marine sanctuary – which at 1.5 million square kiometres is the worlds' largest. Two days ago, another SPREP Member, the UK announced the Pitcairn marine protected area – which at 830,000km^2 now the world's second largest marine sanctuary. What was heartening for me in Honolulu was the fact that Pacific Leaders expressed a good understanding of what the challenges and threats were in relation ocean conservation and management. However, declaration of large marine protected areas/sanctuaries is just the first step. After declaration comes the hard work of ensuring effective management of these large areas of ocean by addressing the threats. Many of us in this meeting, and with other partners, need to work together to harmonise and leverage our limited available resources to help develop capacity in MPA management.

The ocean is also a key determinant of climate. It absorbs 90% of atmospheric heat and 25% of anthropogenic CO2. This is causing ocean acidification which is impacting our coral reefs, crustaceans and marine life in general. In the long term this will impact the livelihoods and food security of coastal communities who

depend heavily on marine resources. Whilst climate change is the most pressing issue for the Pacific – we need to address it in an integrated way with ocean and other ecosystem and sustainable development related issues.

At the recent Forum Leaders meeting in Ponphei last week, Leaders stressed the need for Pacific island countries which had yet to sign up and ratify the Paris Agreement to do so as soon as possible. The US again showed great leadership when it signed together with China the Paris Agreement during the IUCN World Conservation Congress. 13 Pacific island countries have signed and 8 have ratified the Paris Agreement. There is certainly a momentum following the signing by US and China, and whilst globally we are still short of the number of countries required for the Paris Agreement to enter into force, there is optimism that it could enter into force by the end of the year. In collaboration with key partners, the SPREP Secretariat has developed a programme of support to assist Members to follow up on the Paris Agreement. A High Level Support Mechanism – a regional workshop for Ministers and officials will be held in Apia the week after the SPREP meeting to prepare Members for COP22 which will be held in Marrakesh from 18-22 November. The critical issues of climate change and oceans together with other priority areas are addressed in the new draft strategic Plan for SPREP which will be discussed next week as a key agenda item of the SM. The draft strategic plan firmly places climate change as the most pressing concern and overarching issue for the region that affects almost every dimension of society.

An important platform for realising SPREPs vision on climate change is the Climate Change Centre which is being developed at SPREP. The Pacific Climate Change Centre or the PCCC will be a climate hub for the Pacific. It will be hosted by SPREP but as your regional inter-governmental agency, the Centre is a shared resource for the whole region for coordinating climate change initiatives and for innovation of new ideas for programmatic approaches on adaptation, mitigation and climate finance matters. The PCCC will be a conduit and catalyst for strengthening partnerships on climate change. Partners will be co-located at the PCCC where experts and scientists from the region can apply research and collaborate with SPREP to coordinate the provision of support services to the region including capacity building. SPREP is strategically positioned with the PCCC to offer the region and SPREP members a platform for improved coordination of the Framework for Resilience Development in the Pacific: An Integrated Approach to Address Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (FRDP) as recently approved by our Leaders on the 10th September. The PCCC which is being funded by the Government of Japan in close collaboration with the Government of Samoa - will begin construction in April-June 2017 with completion in 2018.

The draft Strategic plan also underlines the importance of oceans as a cross-cutting theme that affects other priority areas. Also at the centre of the vision of the draft strategic plan is the concept of resilience – helping communities to be resilient in the face of climate change, climate induced disaster and other environmental changes and threats. In this respect the new strategic plan also maintains our commitment to the critical

issues of biodiversity and ecosystem management, waste management and pollution control, and environmental governance and monitoring. If we do not continue to address these priorities the impact of climate change and disasters will be worse than predicted, and resilience of communities - and indeed nations – will be continue to decrease. Equally, maintaining the health of our oceans is critically dependent on improving the management and health of island ecosystems and communities. Our future resilience will of course be a product of our land-based ecosystems and economies as well as our ocean ecosystems and economies.

For the past 6 years SPREP has been through a major change management process which has vastly improved its effectiveness and efficiency by putting in place the required organisational systems and processes. This has enabled SPREP to be accredited to both the Adaptation Fund and the Green Climate Fund. SPREP is one of 8 accredited IAs in the Pacific but the only regional IA. These international funds provide both challenges and opportunities for SPREP. To take advantage of the opportunities that GCF offers, SPREP is building up its capacity to assist SPREP members to access climate finance in support of readiness proposals and/or in development of full proposals. Whilst there has been improvement in the way GCF has been trying to address challenges for countries to access climate finance, there are clearly still many challenges. However, we are currently developing a programmatic and integrated approach to how we assist our Members in the delivery of GCF funded projects that will be focused on SPREP's strategic priorities, key strengths and comparative advantage. This will be done in collaboration with our CROP and other organisational partners to ensure that GCF delivery maximises benefits for Members. In conclusion, the draft strategic plan for SPREP positions SPREP strategically and uniquely within its mandate to respond effectively to the existing, new and emerging environmental challenges of the region.

Many of these issues and challenges are on the agenda for discussion by officials to discuss – and also on the agenda of the Ministerial segment on Thursday next week. I look forward to these discussions and to a successful SM in the next few days.

THANK YOU

Annex III: Keynote Address by Premier Government of Niue, Honorable Toke Talagi

Deputy Prime Minister of Tonga, Ministers, His Excellency High Commissioner Ross Ardern, Director General of SPREP, Meeting Delegates, SPREP Secretariat Staff, Minister of Natural Resources Billy Talagi and spouse, local dignitaries, fakalofa lahi atu.

It is my pleasure to formally welcome you to Niue. I wish and hope that you will have an enjoyable yet productive week ahead of you during your stay on our Rock. Please take some time out to visit the sites and enjoy the hospitality of the Niue people.

The theme for the meetings this week is Resilient Pacific. So, what does it take to be resilient? Some of you may say, we are already resilient. But in what sense?

The changing climatic patterns is starting to challenge our current knowledge and models developed over the years to help us make predictions and inform our actions. Temperatures for the sea record highest levels for Niue in February this year and its impact will start to show eventually. There is coral bleaching, deforestation, erosions, certain species are endangered, and loss and damage from cyclones and sea level rising.

Earlier this year, we witness the destruction and the aftermath left by Category 5 Cyclone Winston. We also witness the flow of assistance going to Fiji to help them recover. Why do we have to wait for a Category 5 cyclone or a tsunami before those assistance, especially those that have been facilitated through the various international conventions and declaration, to become available?

In all good intentions, we have made international declarations, negotiated, agreed and ratified conventions to govern our actions and to give due care for the environment but somehow those efforts have not really filtered across in tangible outputs. We have graduated from Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Developments Goals, but what do we have to show? Yes, there are funding avenues for us to tap into but why is it that we can't access those funds?

I note that the Paris Agreement that was concluded late last year is gathering momentum and I congratulate those members who have signed and even ratified it. Niue recently completed our internal processes and we will be signing the Paris Agreement in the near future. We will be seeking to ratify this Agreement immediately and urge the metropolitan members and partners to do so. The Pacific region and leaders have called for immediate attention at various meetings on climate change and the need to keep the predicted rising temperature at the agreed level of 1.5 degrees or lower. I echo those calls because it is not just my responsibility or my fellow leaders in the Pacific to safeguard the environment and our livelihoods.

Caring for the environment comes with responsibilities and challenges. Each and every one of us are responsible for keeping our environment as pristine as possible, to ensure the various ecosystems and biodiversity are conserved and safeguarded, and to put

forth actions to mitigate and adapt against the continual threat of rising temperatures that will affect our food systems and our way of life, our livelihoods. Yet, our actions and our realities tend to challenge those responsibilities.

We all have a responsibility to preserve and conserve our natural resources, and to build and enhance our resilience. The Pacific has been vocal in advocating our vulnerabilities to the world. Let's start advocating for a more resilient Pacific and focus our strengths instead to mitigate and adapt to changing climate patterns. Palau for example have closed 80% of its EEZ and essentially becoming an aquarium for that part of the region.

Niue through its UND/GEF Ridge to Reef project will look to establish a number of protected and/or conservations areas on land and within its EEZ. We are also working with education institutions and non-profit organisation on marine spatial planning and taking the bottom-up approach instead of a top-down approach because our people and our communities know their circumstances best. Niue has also made a commitment in our Energy Roadmap and reflected in our INDCs to become 80% Renewable Energy with financial support or at least 30% if we are to use our own resources.

The point I would like to make is this: the Pacific is not sitting idle. We are resilient in our own make-up but are now required to enhance our resilience to address the vulnerabilities caused by sea level rising, climate change and many others.

I understand that you will be endorsing the SPREP Strategic Plan at this meeting and will also be discussing the governance arrangements as SPREP move from annual meetings to a biennial process. I also understand this is the last SPREP meeting to be hosted outside of Samoa. Whilst I applaud this decision as a prudent financial measure, I urge all members to ensure that we continue to have an effective oversight on our Secretariat. After all, the Secretariat is there to serve us and provide technical advice and assistance so we can continue to strengthen our resilience against the impact of climate change and other environment challenges.

I wish you well in your deliberations in the coming week and declare the 27th SPREP Meeting opened. Kia Monuina e fono kua amanaki ki ai. Fakaue lahi

Annex IV: Agenda

Agenda Item 1: Opening Prayer

Agenda Item 2: Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

Agenda Item 3: Adoption of Agenda and Working Procedures

Agenda Item 4: Action Taken on Matters Arising from Twenty-Sixth SPREP Meeting

Agenda Item 5: 2015 Overview

- 5.1 Presentation of Annual Report for 2015 and Director General's Overview of Progress since the Twenty-Sixth SPREP Meeting
- 5.2 Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report on the 2015 Annual Work Programme and Budget
- 5.3 Audited Annual Accounts for 2015

Agenda Item 6: Institutional Reform and Strategic Issues

- 6.1 Strengthening Regional Linkages update
- 6.2 Access to Climate Finance - Adaptation Fund (AF) and Green Climate Fund (GCF)
- 6.3 GEF MSP Accreditation Update
- 6.4 Pacific Climate Change Centre
- 6.5 Framework for Pacific Regionalism
- 6.6 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- 6.7 Priorities under the Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape (FPO)
- 6.8 SPREP Strategic Plan
- 6.9 Audit Committee Report
- 6.10 EDF 11
- 6.11 FRDP
- 6.12 Governance arrangements for Biennial SPREP Meetings
- 6.13 SPREP and UNEP Partnership

Agenda Item 7: Strategic Financial Issues

- 7.1 Report on Members' Contributions
- 7.2 Sustainable Financing

Agenda Item 8: Corporate Services

- 8.1 SPREP Director General's Performance Assessment – closed session
- 8.2 Triennial Review
- 8.3 Appointment of External Auditors

Agenda Item 9: 2017 Work Programme and Budget

- 9.1 Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management (Overview)
  - 9.1.1 Outcomes of Regional CBD and CITES Pre-CoP Meetings
  - 9.1.2 Year of the Whale Update
  - 9.1.3 Revision of Marine Species Action Plans
  - 9.1.4 19th PIRT Outcomes
- 9.2 Climate Change - (Overview)
  - 9.2.1 Outcomes of the Finland-Pacific Reducing Vulnerability in PICs communities (FINPAC)
  - 9.2.2 Paris Agreement follow-up and Preparation for COP 22
  - 9.2.3 Pacific Islands Partnership on Ocean Acidification
  - 9.2.4 Progress and Future of the PPCR Regional Track: Mainstreaming and the RTSM

9.3 Waste Management and Pollution Control - (Overview)

9.3.1 Outcomes of the 2016 Clean Pacific Roundtable
9.3.2 Marine Debris
9.3.3 Disaster Waste Management
9.3.4 Asbestos in the Pacific
9.3.5 Update on the formulation of J-PRISM Phase II

9.4 Environmental Monitoring & Governance - (Overview)

9.4.1 Strategic environment assessment
9.4.2 BBNJ negotiations
9.4.3 Environmental monitoring data collation support services

9.5 Consideration and Approval of Proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2017

Agenda Item 10: Items Proposed by Members

10.1 Hydrology (Samoa)

Agenda Item 11: Regional Cooperation

11.1 CROP Executives Meeting Report

Agenda Item 12: Statements by Observers

Agenda Item 13: Other Business

Agenda Item 14: High-Level Ministerial Segment (22nd September) "A Resilient Pacific"

14.1 Sustainable Development Goals: Challenges of implementation for the Pacific
14.2 Climate Change: Climate Action – Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
14.3 Oceans: Life Below Water – Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources

Agenda Item 15: Date and Venue of Twenty-Eighth SPREP Meeting

Agenda Item 16: Adoption of Report of the Twenty-Seventh SPREP Meeting

Agenda Item 17: Close

Annex V: Observer Statements

Pacific Islands Forum (PIFs)

Thank you Chair for this opportunity to make a few remarks on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

And through you to thank your Government and the people of Niue, as well as the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme for hosting this meeting.

Framework for Pacific Regionalism

At the 26th SPREP Meeting, the Forum Secretariat was given the opportunity to share the vision of the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders to deepen Pacific regionalism, within the context of the *Framework for Pacific Regionalism*.

The *Framework* articulates Leaders' expectations that the regional agenda will strive for a higher level of ambition, and that our coordinated and collective regional efforts will deliver results that make a practical and positive difference to the lives of Pacific peoples.

The *Framework* also represents Leaders' commitment to inclusivity and transparency in the development of regional public policy, as facilitated through various regional meetings as well as a Specialist Sub-Committee for Regionalism (SSCR) established by Forum Leaders in 2014.

SPREP's active contribution to this process, both through advice and in response to Leaders' 2015 decisions has been very welcomed, and we thank Director General Kosi Latu for his leadership in ensuring close collaboration and cooperation with CROP as-a-whole in engaging with this overarching regional Framework.

SPREP provided two submissions to this year's SSCR process, relating to implementing the Paris Agreement and integrated oceans management – both of these issues were widely discussed at the 47th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting held in Pohnpei a few weeks ago.

The priorities determined by Leaders this year – fisheries, climate change and the adoption of the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP), as well as the two Leaders' Pohnpei Statements on our Ocean and on Resilient Development – will require the collective effort of all our member countries and territories, regional and international organisations, the private sector and civil society if they are to be achieved.

We hope that implementing the initiatives identified through the Framework will move us towards a deeper sense of regionalism and the brighter future that we all strive for, and we look forward to working closely with SPREP and other partners in this endeavour.
As the permanent Chair of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific, the Forum Secretariat continues to work with our technical agencies, including SPREP, to support our member countries.

This includes through various CROP working groups, regional networks/partnerships and alliances, and regional meetings at the Official and Ministerial levels. As well in joint exercises such as the collaborative review of the CROP Charter and the initiative on regional governance and finance.

We thank SPREP for the constructive engagement in these important processes and initiatives and welcome this opportunity to speak to the SPREP Governing Council. We will

continue to support member-led efforts to strengthen cohesion between governing councils across the CROP family.

The Forum Secretariat intersects closely with SPREP in the areas of climate finance and also on ocean-related matters through the current capacity of our Secretary General as the Pacific Ocean Commissioner.

Last week, Forum Leaders called for regional coordination and support to member countries in the lead up to the High-Level UN Conference on the Implementation of SDG 14 on Oceans and Seas, as well as the ongoing international negotiations on biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ).

This Forum Secretariat and the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner looks forward to working closely with SPREP and other key partners in these important global processes in the coming year.

Recognising Smaller Island Sates

Recently**,** SIS* Leaders endorsed an SIS Regional Strategy 2016-2020 as the strategic platform to ensure greater influence and presence by the SIS in shaping the regional policy agenda and direction.

- (*The SIS comprise eight of your smaller island states and include the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Tuvalu.)

The Strategy supports the principles of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism and aims to ensure its priorities are included in, and aligned to, the Framework.

SIS Leaders have emphasised the importance of translating their Strategy into time bound actions, supported by genuine and durable partnerships. As an important regional organisation, SPREP has a critical part to play in progressing the aspirations of the SIS.

The Strategy calls for action in five key result areas, of which two are most pertinent to SPREP's areas of work, including:

- **Climate finance**: an SIS regional programme to access Green Climate Fund resources for national implementation; and,
- **Marine**: sustainable and enhanced economic financial returns for SIS from marine resources, including focused SIS actions embedded within the implementation of the Regional Fisheries Roadmap

PIFS is currently drafting the Strategy's Implementation Plan and CROP agencies and relevant partners will be called on to engage and to confirm the extent of their support and resourcing.

At their recent meeting in Pohnpei, SIS Leaders requested CROP agencies to integrate key actions of the SIS Strategy into their programme frameworks.

Analysis of Governance and Financing

Finally, I would like to make brief remarks on the PIFS-led analysis of governance and financing options in the pursuit of Pacific regionalism, which was included in your paper on the "Framework for Pacific Regionalism."

The Pacific region's countries and territories are at the heart of the analysis, which seeks to support the deepening of regionalism and achieving the Leaders Vision, as envisaged by the *Framework for Pacific Regionalism*.

It seeks to identify the most effective arrangements for drawing upon the resources and political attention necessary to achieve the region's shared priorities - and this necessitates a region-wide conversation.

Governing bodies of CROP agencies, such as this and future SPREP meetings play a key role in facilitating the coherence of a shared regional agenda. They are also key to ensuring appropriate and proportionate allocations are made of collective resources, and that there is continued improvement in CROP cooperation, coordination and collaboration.

We are pleased that the former SPREP Chair, New Zealand, as represented by High Commissioner to Samoa, HE Ms Jackie Frizelle (accompanied by SPREP's DG), was able to participate in the first meeting of the Joint CROP Steering Committee on RGF – comprising all Chairs of CROP governing bodies - held in Suva in July, 2016.

We encourage all PICTS to engage as actively as possibly in the regional dialogue that will be facilitated by this analysis.

Closing Remarks

In closing, I would like to, on behalf of PIFS Secretary General Dame Meg Taylor, thank Director-General Kosi Latu and the SPREP staff for a productive 2015/16 period and for the continued collaboration and commitment shown in working with the Forum Secretariat and with other members of the CROP family, as we seek to serve our countries and territories as best we can.

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

Chair,

On behalf of the SPC Director General, Dr Colin Tukuitonga, let me first join others in thanking Niue for the hospitality in hosting this meeting, and extending appreciation to the SPREP Secretariat for an excellent organisation and for attending to our various needs.

The Pacific Community is grateful to SPREP for the opportunity to attend this meeting. I would like to convey the apologies of SPC Director General, Dr. Colin Tukuitonga, who is unable to attend but who extends his best wishes for very fruitful discussions on the matters before the Meeting.

As you know, SPC places great value on its long term relationship with its partner organisation SPREP, as well as ongoing collaboration with other CROP agencies and partners in the Pacific, as a way to deliver most effective and comprehensive assistance to our region.

I am pleased to report that SPC has been enhancing its collaboration with SPREP. Let me take that opportunity to highlight a few areas:

- On Climate Change, SPC has been contributed to the SPREP-led One CROP team preparing and attending UNFCC COPs, works closely with SPREP on designing GCF and Adaptation projects to the benefit of PICs and collaborates on issues such as ocean acidification or renewable energy center in Tonga;
- On Deep Sea Mining, SPC welcomes the contribution of SPREP on environmental aspects of DSM, as SPC pursues work to provide assistance to PICs in policy, regulations and capacity building and in framing a regional DSM agreement;
- On fisheries, SPC welcomes the progress in the EU-PEUMP project and the contribution of SPREP in implementation of that project;
- SPC welcomes the Leaders' endorsement of the FRDP and the convening by PIF of the forthcoming working group that will develop institutional and implementation arrangements. I confirm that SPC wishes to take an active role in structuring a most efficient architecture for coordinating and

implementing the FRDP, in all areas of disaster risk reduction, resilience building and adaptation, and climate change mitigation and welcomes further partnership with SPREP to ensure most efficient implementation in our respective areas of competence.

- Through the EU INTEGRE and AFD/FFEM projects, SPC carries out joint activities in areas such as waste management, ecotourism, ICZM or organic farming and, through these initiatives, ensuring full integration of the pacific territories and countries in regional approaches.

I would also like to take this opportunity to underscore that SPC is committed, like SPREP and other CROP agencies, to undertake internal institutional changes such as strengthening cross-programmatic collaboration, enhancing efficient financial management, putting in place full cost recovery of our actions and refocusing our programme where we add values to our Members's priorities. SPC shall pursue collaboration with SPREP on enhancing synergies in our respective strategic plan and identifying commonly-agreed solutions to address our structural and financial challenges.

I thank you for your attention.

United Nations Environment (UNEP)

Madame Chair, Honorable Ministers, delegates, ladies and gentlemen, UN Environment is committed to continue working with SPREP and other partners to support Pacific Island States to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and implement the SAMOA Pathway and relevant Resolutions of the United Nations Environment Assembly 2016. We are committed to facilitate our engagements through the UN Environment Asia Pacific and Pacific Sub-regional offices to strengthen our partnerships In 2017 we will focus our support in three key areas:

- Supporting oceans related issues in particular to use UN Environment's global and regional networks and platforms such as the Global Oceans Conference in June 2017 to raise the profile of Pacific initiatives on oceans, in particular the Pacific Oceanscape Framework.
- Promoting Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) in areas such as waste management, tourism, procurement, food waste, clean technology, energy efficiency and education. UN Environment will share its experience in addressing SCP in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean to develop a Pacific approach for resource efficiency.
- Supporting the Pacific climate change resilience initiatives through access to finance and technology, and explore the nexus between climate change , human rights and gender in the Pacific.

Underpinning all this is our continued partnership with SPREP to strengthen environmental governance so as to meet Sustainable Development Goals through effective policy and regulatory frameworks and robust policy and planning processes. We will further support the strengthening of capacity of Pacific Island countries in data assessments, monitoring and reporting of the environmental dimensions of integrated approaches for sustainable development with socio and economic dimensions.

Finally let me thank all Pacific Island countries for your continued support and financial contributions to UN Environment and we welcome your continued engagement in 2017 in the 2nd Asia Pacific Ministerial and Environmental Authorities Forum and the 3rd United Nations Environment Assembly to raise

and advocate the environmental successes and needs of the Pacific

Isabelle Louis, Director, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

---

University of the South Pacific (USP)

USP is pleased to be invited to this 27th SPREP Council meeting and wish to congratulate Kosi Latu for the first SPREP Council Meeting as Director General. USP looks forward to continuing the good and cordial working relationship with SPREP as part of the CROP organisations partnership.

USP has partnered and collaborated with SPREP and other CROP agencies in a number Committees and Initiatives including the Climate change Round table, the Pacific Climate Change portal and UNFCCC COP preparations, the Technical Working Group on the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP) and other Regional Networking for example on EIA.

In terms of projects, USP is a partner in the Pacific Islands Ocean Acidification Vulnerability Assessment and few others.

USP will continue to collaborate and partner with SPREP in future opportunities such as the Pacific Climate Change Centre, especially in the areas of training and research.

The USP is the regional institute for Teaching, Learning and Research and our academic programmes cover the four SPREP core priorities and focus areas including Climate Change and Resilient Development; Ecosystem and Biodiversity Protection; Waste Management; and Environmental Governance. We hope that lessons learnt and experiences from implementing activities under these four priority and focus areas can feed into USP's academic programme so that we can continue to tailor the courses that are relevant and appropriate and meet the needs of the Pacific Island Countries and Territories that we serve.

Finally, USP would like to thank the Government and people of Niue for hosting this 27 SPREP Council meeting and for the wonderful hospitality.

Thank you madam Chair.

Annex VI: Opening Address by the Minister of Natural Resources Government of Niue, Honorable Billy Talagi

Fellow Ministers, Director General for SPREP, SPREP Meeting delegates and staff, Fakaalofa Lahi Atu kia mutolu oti. Fakaaue ke he haana fakalofa noa kua moua e tautolu e aho fulufuluola nei.

It is my pleasure to formally welcome you to Niue. Thank you for accepting my invitation to come to Niue for this High Level Segment. I wish and hope that you will have had an enjoyable yet productive week ahead of you during your stay on our Rock.

Our theme for this High Level Session is Resilient Pacific and we have been invited to speak on 3 broad categories, Sustainable Development Goals, Climate Change and Oceans. I will provide some overall remarks.

Resilient Pacific. What does this mean? I am pleased to note that SPREP's overarching vision for its new Strategic Plan captures the essence of survival and endurance. Pacific Islanders are survivors as we have faced so many challenges especially in the political world switching colonial rule to independent or self-governed states. We have also survived many natural disasters, although increasingly, we are starting to feel the cost of such on our economies, environment and our way of life. We have endured and we have adapted because our people matters; our cultures and traditions, and our environment matters. Therefore, I am pleased that the Strategic vision for SPREP for the next ten years is for a Resilient Pacific environment sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.

Yes, we are survivors and we have endured however at some point we need to take stock of our FALE and ensure we are bedded down firmly to withstand storms and category 5 cyclones that will hit us in many forms. Yes, we are parties to a number of Multilateral Environment Agreements to safeguard and/or protect our environment especially endangered species of fauna and flora but are those having any impact? Do we need to be part of those MEAs to be ensured our environment is safe and endangered species are protected? There are things that we can do to safeguard our environments and protect endangered species at the local levels and these are the things we can do without cost. This is because we have traditional knowledge and ways. But these traditional knowledge and ways are also being challenged.

The changing climatic patterns are already challenging our current knowledge and the models developed over the years to help us make predictions and inform our actions. I understand that the Category 5 Cyclone that recently hit Fiji at the beginning of this year was very severe to the point where our scientists may need to extend the measure on the strength of the Cyclones. For the last cyclone season for Niue, we had at least 4 cyclones that hovered around us and although we were fortunate that we escaped a direct hit, the patterns of the cyclones baffled us and challenged our knowledge. Normally, cyclones travelled from the northwest and head south east but the last season, this was not. Our eastern side of the island and the people residing in that part got to the experience for the first time the impact of rough seas and

strong winds that were normally experienced by those residents in the western side of the island. Our National Disaster Committee declared Yellow Alert but residents in the western side of the island did not think the winds were strong enough to warrant boarding up their houses. This is risky because as we observed from Fiji experience with Cyclone Winston.

Temperatures for the sea record highest levels for Niue in February this year and its impact will start to show eventually. Coral bleaching is imminent due to rising temperature and we have already observed the impact of this in our region. Therefore, I am pleased to that there is a project on Ocean Acidification that is currently in place and moreso, that the Ocean is a crosscutting theme in the SPREP strategic plan. We are large ocean states and therefore we have our sea as the food bank for our people. Seafood features prominently in our everyday diets and therefore we need to safeguard our oceans. If our corals are bleached, our food source will be at risk and this is something we do not want.

As indicated earlier, climate change is already challenging our traditional knowledge, our way of life and our food sources for survival. If we are to be a resilient pacific, we need to adapt and mitigate. Yes, we do have the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and international assistance and support. And we have been successful in receiving support to address our vulnerabilities. However, I do believe we now need to change our tactics and focus on our strengths instead of our vulnerabilities to enhance our resilience. We are resilient but like any house that has battled cyclones, we need to strengthen and tighten our harnesses so we can survive and endure many more that yet to come our way.
Lastly, I acknowledge the work of SPREP members and the secretariat throughout the week. They have worked tirelessly to put before us a plan that will bring forth a promising future to accommodate some of our challenges and vulnerabilities in this changing environment. Our spirit of togetherness is highly needed to progress towards that future.

Niue strongly reaffirms the need for the secretariat to take the lead and champion the issues in respect to climate change and FRDD (Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific).

Today's forum offers us the opportunity to put together some of the harnesses of survival and I look forward to our deliberations this morning.

Fakaue lahi.

Annex VII: Pacific Environment Ministers' Declaration - Alofi Communiqué

At the Twenty-seventh SPREP Meeting Ministerial segment held on 22 September 2016 in Alofi, Niue, Environment Ministers and Ministerial Representatives adopted the following Declaration.

We, the Environment Ministers, and Ministerial Representatives:

Affirming that the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* is a concerted effort by the world community to overcome intractable global problems, including environmental sustainability and the existential threat to Pacific island countries and territories caused by climate change and the acute pressures confronting our region's ocean;

Recognising that urgent measures are needed to increase Pacific island countries and territories' resilience to withstand these threats and to achieve environmental sustainability so as to collectively build resilient Pacific communities;

1. <u>2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</u>

ACKNOWLEDGE SPREP's past and current work on sustainable development, oceans, climate change, biodiversity, waste, and resilience building;

NOTE SPREP's participation in the development of a draft Outline of the Pacific SDGs Roadmap for joint regional reporting and implementation on the sustainable development goals (SDGs), the SAMOA Pathway and the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, noting that the final Roadmap will be submitted to Leaders for approval in September 2017;

NOTE that SPREP will assist Pacific Members in the delivery of the environmental dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development including Goal 13 "Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts", Goal 14 "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development" and Goal 15 "Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss";

URGE SPREP Members to incorporate relevant SDG targets within national planning and monitoring documents and national development plans;

2. <u>Climate Change</u>

WELCOME the Paris Agreement and emphasise the importance of achieving the Paris Agreement's commitment to pursuing efforts to limit the global temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrialised levels, and **RECOGNISE** that climate change is an existential threat for many SPREP Members which must be addressed with urgency;

APPRECIATE the Forum Leaders' endorsement of the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP): An Integrated Approach to Addressing Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management and agree for it to be fully elaborated and operationalised upon the entry into force of the Paris Agreement and TASK

the Secretariat to continue working in close collaboration with Members, CROP agencies and relevant partners in the implementation of the FRDP to ensure integrated good governance of the FRDP, and the best use of the region's technical and political resources to build Pacific resilience to climate change and disaster risk reduction;

AGREE our common understanding of resilience as the ability of a system, community or society exposed to natural hazards or climate change, to resist, absorb, accommodate, recover and transfer the consequences of a hazard event or of climate change in a timely and efficient manner;

ACKNOWLEDGE that to build effective resilience, proactive responses to climate change and disasters must include consideration of political, economic, social, and environmental factors and be inclusive of all stakeholders;

ENCOURAGE capacity to be built into national weather services for better forecasting, prediction and long term projections;

EXPRESS our deep concern and commitment to address climate change impacts and other hazards as a development priority in the Pacific region and reiterate the call for SPREP to renew efforts to secure strategic partnerships towards achieving sustainable outcomes for resilience in the region;

ACKNOWLEDGING the breadth of responsibilities associated with addressing climate change impacts and other hazards, **CALL** upon SPREP to work with other CROP agencies in order to build consensus among partners leading to practical adaptation and mitigation interventions for Members;

EXPRESS appreciation for the joint partnership by SPREP, the Government of Samoa and the Government of Japan to establish the Pacific Climate Change Centre as a regional hub and centre of excellence for coordinating strategic and effective Pacific solutions on climate change, and supporting implementation of high level agreements such as the Paris Agreement, the SAMOA Pathway, the SDGs, and the FRDP;

RECOGNISING the constraints of least developed countries and small island states in the Pacific region **CALL** on all development partners to collaborate effectively towards a quick, timely and effective delivery of climate change financing to Pacific island Members;

ACKNOWLEDGE the critical role of SPREP, working in close collaboration with other partners, to assist Members to access climate financing from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Adaptation Fund (AF) and other sources of funding that Members are eligible to receive for addressing impacts of climate change and natural hazards;

COMMEND SPREP's success in attaining accredited entity status with both the GCF and the AF, and note its work towards accreditation with the GEF, and ENCOURAGE the Secretariat to strengthen its capacity to facilitate Members access to these funds, including through available readiness funding;

CONFIRM that with the threat of climate change we commit ourselves to continue to work to address this challenge, with the support of SPREP, at the international level;

3. Oceans

REAFFIRM that the Pacific region's most important natural resource is the ocean which underpins our identity and community livelihoods, as reaffirmed by the Leaders in their Pohnpei Ocean Statement, and **ENDORSE** integrated ocean management as a crucial policy approach of the Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape, to ensure that multi-sectoral, multi-jurisdictional and multi-level governance systems lead to sustainable blue economies, noting that many Members are now progressing with EEZ-scale ocean policies and marine spatial planning, to guide their way to a sustainable future;

APPRECIATE the Leaders' reaffirmation of support to the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner given its central role with respect to ocean governance and integrated ocean management in the region, under the Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape.

CONGRATULATE the United States of America on its announcement to greatly expand the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, now the largest marine protected area in the world, and also **CONGRATULATE** the United Kingdom on the establishment of the Pitcairn Islands Marine Reserve and **NOTE** that these initiatives add to the existing commitments by Pacific island countries and territories to protect the Pacific Ocean, including establishment of large-scale reserves and sanctuaries by Palau, Cook Islands and New Caledonia;

NOTE that the UN Conference on Oceans and Seas to support the implementation of SDG14, 5 – 9 June 2017, will now be held in New York, co-hosted by Fiji and Sweden. The Conference will provide the Pacific with another opportunity to lead the way and demonstrate its collective interest in the sustainable development, management and conservation of the Pacific Ocean and its resources;

NOTE with concern the predicted threats from ocean acidification and rising sea temperatures, especially in conjunction with El Niño events, including impacts on coral reefs and fish resources that support the livelihoods of Pacific island people;

CALL on SPREP and its partners to strengthen their efforts to build capacity in Pacific island Members to design and implement programmes to protect and sustainably manage coral reefs, lagoons, nearshore waters, mangroves and seagrass to mitigate the impacts of warming waters and adapt to climate change impacts and ocean acidification;

NOTE that ocean health is also critically dependent on reducing the impact of pollutants from both marine and land-based sources and **CALL** on SPREP to work with Members and partners to develop integrated approaches to address this critical issue, including marine debris;

NOTE with concern the rapid decline in populations of many shark species and the decrease in other iconic marine species that are part of Pacific natural and cultural heritage.

CONGRATULATE Fiji for being a regional and global leader in championing conservation measures for sharks and rays at the forthcoming CITES Conference of the Parties, in addition to Palau and Samoa for co-sponsoring the proposals;

SUPPORT resolution of issues relating to Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction and **NOTE** with appreciation SPREP technical support to Pacific island Members engaged in the Development of an International Legally Binding Instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction.

SINCERELY THANK the Government and People of Niue for the warm and generous hospitality extended to us during our stay in Niue, and **THANK** the Secretariat for its efforts in organising this successful meeting.

Alofi, Niue
22 September 2016