

# NIUE

## NATIONAL STOCKTAKE REPORT



**NATIONAL CAPACITY SELF ASSESSMENT PROJECT  
FOR GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT  
TAKATAKAIMOTU  
GOVERNMENT OF NIUE**

**MARCH, 2006**



# **NIUE NCSA STOCKTAKING**

## **REPORT OF THE CONSULTANT**

**14 March 2006**

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

CC	Climate Change
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Forest and Fisheries
DEA	Department of External Affairs
DJLS	Department of Justice, Lands and Survey
DoE	Department of Environment
GIS	Geographic Information System
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GoN	Government of Niue
IWP	International Waters Project
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCSA	National Capacity Self-Assessment
NEMS	National Environment Management Strategy
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
POPs	Persistent Organic Pollutants
PSC	Public Service Commission
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

## **Executive Summary**

The biggest challenge to capacity building in Niue is its small population coupled with the high turnover of the limited number of technical officers in the public service. Line agencies such as Department of Environment, Department of Agriculture, Forests and Fisheries and others rely on one or two individuals to carry out their environmental responsibilities and although an Environment Council is stipulated under the Environment Bill to help coordinate the environmental activities of relevant agencies, such Council has not been established.

There has been a number of capacity building related initiatives in Niue in the past ten years. Most of these initiatives were carried out as components of specific donor-funded projects and programmes, and as can be expected, capacity development emphasis was often placed on capacity and skills required to achieve specific project outputs and outcomes.

The NCSA stocktake was carried out on 17 to 24 January 2006 after it was deferred several times for various reasons. The stocktake is the first of several activities to be carried out over the next 18 months to implement the Niue NCSA. The Department of Environment is the lead agency although it is expected that project implementation will involve a number of key agencies of government and other groups.

## **Introduction**

The Government of Niue (GoN), through the Department of Environment (DoE) has received funding from UNDP/GEF to assist government articulate its capacity needs and priorities with respect to the global environment taking into account the three global conventions on biodiversity, climate change and desertification/land degradation. With this help from UNDP/GEF, GoN is now undertaking a National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) project to identify, through a country-driven consultative process, the priorities and needs for capacity building of relevant government agencies, NGOs and other interested groups (the stakeholders).

An important part of the NCSA process is a thorough understanding of the interests and potential contributions of the different stakeholders as this will provide an insight into who can be involved, what role they might be expected to play in the process, or how they might become involved. Another important part of the process is taking stock of what capacity building initiatives have been done in the past, the status of any on-going initiatives and what other capacity related activities might be planned in the near future. These then were the focus of the Niue NCSA stocktake which constituted the first part of the NCSA project.

The stock take of previous capacity building initiatives in Niue was carried out from 17 to 24 January 2006. It is noted that during this same week, the Niue Cabinet was debating a possible restructure of the Niue Public Service with the view to reduce the number of government departments to less than ten. It is highly possible that some key NCSA stakeholders (such as DoE, DAFF, etc) could be affected by this move so that it is wise to monitor what transpires from Cabinet discussion and if necessary, change NCSA processes to accommodate any new structure that might result.

## **The Stocktaking Process**

As per the TOR for the consultancy, the stocktaking was carried out through a variety of means. They include (i) a written questionnaire requesting potential stakeholders to indicate their interest and potential contribution to the NCSA project, (ii) a meeting of potential stakeholders to introduce the NCSA and to help identify key capacity issues and constraints, and (iii) follow up, face-to-face consultations with key agencies and individuals to discuss their functions and their expectations from the NCSA project.

Some agencies were able to identify during the stakeholders meeting the category of stakeholder they want to be in. They also managed to identify and suggest others who were not at the meeting as potential stakeholders and it was agreed that these agencies and individuals will be contacted by DoE. Copies of the stakeholders questionnaire were hand delivered to these agencies and their responses were collected and sent to the consultant in Apia for review and processing.

In addition to the questionnaire and the stakeholders meeting, the consultant was also able to hold face-to-face interviews with senior officials of government agencies not only reaffirm their interest in the NCSA but also how they wish to participate in the project. Due to short notice, not all potential stakeholders were available to meet with the consultant, however

most of these agencies were able to confirm through the questionnaire their interest and contribution to the project.

A copy of the stakeholder questionnaire is attached as Attachment 1 and an Analysis of the responses to the Questionnaire is at Attachment 2. The Minutes of the Stakeholders meeting is at Attachment 3.

## **The Expected Outputs**

The TOR for the consultancy lists the following outputs for the consultancy:

1. Stakeholder analysis
2. Review of all relevant reports and publications
3. Thematic profiles (situation analysis) for each thematic area (i.e. biodiversity, climate change and land degradation) and
4. Issues Prioritization Matrix (based on review of thematic profiles)

The stakeholder analysis is found in Attachment 2 to this report while the review of reports and publications is in Attachment 4. The Thematic Profiles and Issues Prioritization Matrix are in Attachments 5 and 6 respectively. A brief discussion on each of the outputs is presented in the following section.

## **Discussion**

### ***Stakeholder Analysis***

Except the DoE, DEA and to some extent DAFF, most agencies of government and local NGOs have limited understanding of the three conventions. Some have 'heard' of one or two of the conventions but it was rare to find any, other than the ones mentioned above, who have heard of all three. The same is true of the NCSA project. Despite intensive consultations held during the preparatory phase of the project, a large number of people who were asked to complete the questionnaire claimed to have very little awareness and/or understanding of the project. This may have affected their decision regarding the role their agencies might want to play in the project. The analysis of the responses to the stakeholder's questionnaire is in Attachment 2.

It is pointed out that the number of respondents to the questionnaire was far greater than shown in Attachment 2. Because the questionnaire addressed respondents both as individuals and as part of an organization, and many individuals replied in their capacity as a member of an organization, the information contained in Attachment 2 represent a brief account of what several people said about the various organizations they work for.

While the questionnaire provided some guidance to help respondents chose how they and their agencies might want to be involved in the project (i.e. as a key stakeholder, a member of a thematic group, involved in stakeholder consultations or simply being informed of NCSA progress), it was clear that only a small number of respondents used this guide, with many expressing an interest in being part of a committee of some sort. Most participants at the stakeholders meeting however expressed interest in being considered as key stakeholders

because they have significant environmental responsibilities and are willing to undertake capacity assessments under the project. These participants also suggested that other agencies not present at the meeting be invited to be involved in the project. A detailed account of the matters discussed at the stakeholders meeting is contained in Attachment 3 to this report.

### ***Review of relevant reports and publications***

Attachment 4 contains a review of reports and publications received by the consultant. A huge amount of the reports and publications were reviewed prior to the consultant's travel to Niue. This helped in the design of the thematic profiles and the issues and constraints matrices and especially the discussions with the stakeholders.

Most of the reports received dealt with biodiversity whilst only a couple of reports were relevant to land degradation. This is understandable given the fact that climate change and land degradation activities have only just started in Niue in the last few years. Nevertheless, the NEMS and WSSD reports provided a very comprehensive analysis of the environmental concerns and priorities for the country. The current review was greatly enhanced by the availability of these reports.

The review indicated that an enormous amount of work has been carried out in the past to identify and document the capacity needs of Niue. Unfortunately, there seem to be very little done to actually address the needs as identified. Some attempts have been made to provide through short term courses and workshops, the technical training that is needed to implement technical projects, but these have not been complemented by institutional and systemic improvements needed to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of such efforts.

### ***Thematic Profiles***

Compared to climate change and land degradation, biodiversity conservation has not been an entirely new concept to the people of Niue. It is not surprising therefore that there is a much wider understanding and appreciation of the need to sustainably manage what is left of Niue's natural resources than climate change or land degradation. This is not to say that there are no immediate need to build Niue's capacity in this area. On the contrary, the future of the single biodiversity position in DoE is in doubt after donor funding runs out in early January 2006. The Biosafety position in DAFF will confront the same situation shortly.

The same is true of climate change. The senior officer who was responsible for the climate change has recently been promoted to another position within government. He has been replaced by another officer from the Meteorological Division on contract and will return to her old job once the contract ends.

There are several cross-cutting issues affecting all the thematic areas. Participants at the stakeholders' workshop were asked to prioritize a list of issues for each thematic area and the results were analyzed and used in the development of the thematic profiles (Attachment 5).



### ***Issues Prioritization Matrix***

Issues identified through the review of reports and publications were listed by the consultant and given to participants at the stakeholders' workshop to prioritize. Copies of the list were also given to other people who were not at the workshop, but were considered to have interest in the project. Due to time constraints, it was not possible to hold follow up discussions with these individuals while the consultant was still on Niue. Their responses were collected and sent to the consultant for review in Apia.

Although concern for land degradation has only recently been brought to the fore, the issues surrounding the thematic area are relatively well known as was evident in the review of reports and publications. Many reports list practices such as agriculture mechanization (use of bulldozers), use of chemicals and slash and burn to be contributing to land degradation on Niue.

Again, the complex and technical nature of climate change issues were evident in the ranking by participants of issues listed in the matrix where lack of understanding and lack of trained people to deal with climate change issues are rated very highly.

Attachment 6 shows to the average rating by the respondents to the issues listed for each thematic area. The matrix for land degradation was developed using information gathered the review of reports and publications.

### **Findings**

The following are some preliminary findings resulting from the stocktake but it is expected that more will be revealed when the assessment of each key stakeholder's is carried out.

- The capacity needs and constraints of Niue are well documented although there has been little action to actually address these needs and constraints.
- The biggest challenge to any efforts to build Niue's capacity to meet its environmental obligations is its small population.
- The high turn over of technical staff, mainly to senior administrative positions in government, makes capacity building initiatives difficult to sustain and ineffective.
- Existing technical capacity in the three thematic areas is largely dependent on specific project funding - they face considerable uncertainty once project funding ends.
- Although an Environment Council is envisaged under the Environment Bill to help coordinate all environment activities of the government of Niue, such Council has not been established. The setting up of this Council should help resolve the current situation where environmental responsibilities are spread over a number of agencies with little coordination.
- There is very little local capacity to carry out self-assessments unless a group of people are trained to carry out this task for their own agencies.

**Attachments**

**Attachment 1: NCSA STAKEHOLDERS' QUESTIONNAIRE**

Dear .....,

You may be aware that the Government of Niue, through the Department of Environment has received funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to assist the government articulate its capacity needs and priorities with respect to the global environment taking into account the three global conventions on biodiversity, climate change and desertification/land degradation. With this help from GEF, the government will soon undertake a National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) project to identify, through a country-driven consultative process, the priorities and needs for capacity building of government agencies, NGOs and other interest groups (the stakeholders) in Niue. An important part of this process is a thorough understanding of the interests and potential contributions of different stakeholders as this will provide an insight into who can be involved, what role they might be expected to play in the process, or how they might become involved. I have noted with appreciation the invaluable support and contribution that you and your agency have made to the environment cause in the past and I am looking forward to your much needed support, as a stakeholder, to the NCSA project. In this respect, I would be grateful if you could spare a few minutes of your time to indicate to us by responding to the following questions, your interest and potential contribution to the NCSA project.

- 1. Are you or your agency interested to become involved in the NCSA project? If yes, why?

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- 2. How would you like to be involved in the NCSA project?<sup>1</sup>

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- 3. Does your agency or organization have a capacity building mandate? If yes, please explain.

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<sup>1</sup> Stakeholders could chose to become involved in any or a combination of NCSA activities and relationships such as: being a key stakeholder; member of a thematic working group; included in stakeholder consultations or simply being informed of NCSA progress. Key stakeholders are expected to have significant responsibilities for the environment and are willing to undertake in-house capacity assessments as part of the NCSA process.

4. Do you or your agency have information or expertise in capacity development?  
If yes, please elaborate.

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5. Have you or others in your agency been involved in any capacity assessment work in the past?

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6. Do you know of any other people or groups who might be interested in participating in or contributing to the NCSA?

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7. If you have answered 'yes' to questions 1 and 2, what do you hope to achieve through your participation in the NCSA?

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8. Do you have any other comments to offer?

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Thank you for your cooperation. Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned should you require further clarification relating to any of the above questions or to the NCSA project in general.

Yours truly,

Tagaloa Cooper

**Attachment 2: NIUE STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS**

Economics Planning Division	Interested in NCSA, has training functions with strengths in HRD and management issues, project planning, communication, leadership and performance management. Has been involved in staff needs assessment and organizational development.	EPD's expectation from the NCSA is to ensure integration of project issues into national development processes, develop further capacity and share information. EPD is recommended a <b>key stakeholder</b> for the NCSA.
Public Service Commission	PSC is interested in becoming involved in the NCSA although it is not quite sure what the project is about. PSC has a capacity building mandate and has been involved in previous capacity building initiatives and has some in-house expertise in capacity development. Main expectation is to see what knowledge and skills from the NCSA will be relevant to their line of work.	PSC is a member of the NCSA Steering Committee and has recommended an awareness programme to increase peoples' awareness about what the NCSA is about. Given its direct responsibility for building a strong professional public service in Niue, it is inevitable that the PSC be a <b>key stakeholder</b> for the NCSA.
Department of External Affairs	As the focal point for GEF and international conventions, the DEA is interested in the NCSA to provide general oversight and guidance as required. Has some expertise in capacity development but limited staff numbers present a huge problem.	The DEA as the focal point for GEF and international conventions is a <b>key stakeholder</b> but is not expected to undertake capacity assessment under the project. DEA sees the NCSA as a means to enhancing its capacity and knowledge as a focal point..
Department of Environment	DoE is the executing agency for the Niue NCSA and is therefore a <b>key stakeholder</b> . DoE does not expertise in capacity development but has been involved in previous capacity assessment work.	DoE's expectation from the NCSA is to be able to identify key and important capacity needs of the department in relation to the Rio Conventions. DoE is a <b>key stakeholder</b> for the NCSA
Meteorological Division	As implementing agency for the Climate Change project,	MD has incorporated a capacity building component

	MD is interested to use information gathered through the NCSA to contribute to capacity building component of climate change project. MD has information on capacity building relating to climate change and had carried out a capacity assessment of public servants as part of its climate change project.	in its climate change project proposal and is looking at potential linkages with the NCSA. MD will be an important <b>key stakeholder</b> for the NCSA.
Niue Tourism Authority	NTA sees the environment, people and culture as the basis for its Product Development Initiative. It is interested in participating in the NCSA but has no information or expertise in capacity development.	NTA's interest in the NCSA is in increasing awareness about the linkage between the environment and tourism. Unless specifically requested, it is suggested that the NTA be included in stakeholder consultations but not as a key stakeholder at this point.
Niue Island Fisheries Association	NIFA supports the NCSA and is willing to contribute information to assist the project. Some of its members have information and expertise in capacity development while others have been involved in some capacity building projects in the past.	NIFA, because of the diversity of its membership is probably best suited to any <b>working groups</b> set up under the project. This will enable different members to attend specific meetings, discuss and acquire specific information of relevance to its members.
Niue Chamber of Commerce	NCC is interested in any projects that help enhance community's capacity to achieve sustainable development and much of its work is intended to achieve this purpose. It has limited capacity, but has been involved in some capacity building activities in the past.	Like NIFA, it is recommended that NIFA become involved in the <b>working groups</b> so that individual members can pursue their specific needs through these groups. It will be extremely difficult to carry out individual assessments for each NIFA member.

**Attachment 3: PROCEEDINGS OF THE NIUE NCSA STAKEHOLDER'S MEETING, THURSDAY 19 JANUARY 2006**

A meeting of representatives from agencies directly responsible for implementing Niue's obligations under the Rio Conventions and the NCSA consultant was held at the Department of the Environment on Thursday January 19<sup>th</sup>. The meeting was also attended by coordinators of GEF and UNEP-funded projects in Niue such as the NBSAP, Climate Change, Biosafety, POPs and IWP. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Sauni Tongatule, Director for the Environment.

After a few welcoming remarks by the chairman, the participants then introduced themselves and the agencies/projects they work for. This was followed by a brief narrative presentation by the consultant focusing on the purpose of the meeting and its expected outcome(s).

The main purposes of the meeting were:

- To provide an introduction to the NCSA and its process including this consultancy and its expected outputs;
- Finalise and confirm the NCSA stakeholders; and
- Kick start the process for the identification of priority issues and constraints to capacity building in Niue.

In his introduction, the consultant provided a brief background to the origin of the NCSA project and its links to the Rio Conventions. He then discussed the Niue NCSA process and the need for the stocktake (this consultancy). He explained the importance of the NCSA as a coordinated approach for accessing GEF funds for capacity building work relating to the three Conventions.

Following this introduction, a few questions were raised by the participants including what impact the NCSA will have on other capacity building funding proposals that have either been prepared or are anticipated.

To help the participants with their discussion of the matter, it was decided that, given the large number of agencies and organizations working or interested in environmental issues, two categories of stakeholders will be created. These are:

1. **Key stakeholders** involving agencies and NGOs with direct responsibilities for the implementation of Niue's obligations under the CBD, UNFCCC, UNCCD and other Conventions such as the POPs and Biosafety Protocol.
2. Other stakeholders involving other agencies and organizations with interest in the environment.

To facilitate decision on who the key stakeholders were, two key questions were asked of the participants.

- (a) Do your agency / organization have direct responsibility for the implementation of Niue's obligations under any of the three Conventions? And
- (b) Is your agency / organization willing to undertake a self-assessment under the NCSA process?

All agencies / organizations participating at the meeting indicated their interest in being key stakeholders for the NCSA. They also recommended other agencies who were not present to be considered under this category, subject to further checking with the agencies concerned.

The key NCSA stakeholders are therefore:

1. Environment Department;
2. Department of Agriculture, Forests and Fisheries;
3. Meteorological Service;
4. Department of External Affairs

Others agencies/organisations recommended as key stakeholders subject to further checking are:

5. Department of Lands and Survey;
6. Department of Education;
7. Public Works Department;
8. Public Service Commission;
9. Organic Farmers Association;
10. Fisheries Association;
11. Tourism Office; and
12. Women's Committee

Category 2 stakeholders include:

13. Council of Churches;
14. National Youth Council;
15. Any others who may wish to express an interest in participating in the project.

To assist participants decide on the priority issues and concerns for Niue, a draft list of issues highlighted in the reports provided for the consultants review was prepared and given to them to comment on, add to, or elaborate on as needed. Due to limited time, participants opted to take the lists away for thorough checking and return to consultant for review. This was agreed and there being no other business, the Chairman called the meeting to a close.

#### **Attachment 4: REVIEW OF REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS**

The following reports and publications were received and reviewed by the consultant as part of the NCSA stocktake exercise.

**“Niue Foou – A New Niue” , A Cyclone Heta Recovery Plan, April 2004, Economic, Planning, Development and Statistics, Premier’s Department, Government of Niue, 2004.**

1. The Cyclone Heta Recovery Plan (CHRP) integrates action necessary for Niue to recover from cyclone Heta with the objectives of the Niue Integrated Strategic Plan 2003-2005. It provides the people of Niue with a clear understanding of the path the government intends to follow in getting the country back to an economic footing. It also provides prospective donors with a picture of what assistance is required and how such assistance fit into the overall development of the country.
2. The CHRP defines the aims, strategies and outcomes for building a ‘new’ Niue. It identifies, through extensive stakeholders’ consultations, five focus sectors for the plan. They are:
  - i) Financial stability;
  - ii) Governance;
  - iii) Economic development;
  - iv) Social development; and
  - v) Environment protection
3. Action Plans have been prepared for each focus sector wherein priority ratings, timeframes and costs for each action of the Plan are provided. Where possible, donors have also been identified.
4. In the Economic development sector, an important aim has been identified as the ‘maximising the use of Niue’s resources in a sustainable manner.’ Strategies for the achievement of the aims in this sector include:
  - Adopt sustainable fisheries management and practices for the industry;
  - Rehabilitate tourism infrastructure through appropriate support for accommodation, sea tracks and scenic sites maintenance and product development
5. In the Social Action Plan, actions are planned to restore and preserve damaged heritage sites and raise natural disaster and preparedness awareness.
6. Under the Environment Action Plan, there is a gambit of actions proposed for the management of natural resources, conservation of biodiversity, management of wastes in addition to global responsibilities. The latter include participation in



environmental conferences and meetings, maximizing returns from existing regional and international environment programs and facilities, sourcing of external expertise, and carrying out studies on sea level rise and its effects on Niue.

### **Niue Integrated Strategic Plan 2003-2008**

7. The aim of the Niue Strategic Plan 2003-2008 is to address the major challenges (finance and population drop) in a 'new' way to ensure a prosperous Niue in 5 years time, for those who are committed to the Niue lifestyle by choice.
8. Vanilla, fishing and tourism have been targeted for special attention in the plan for their potential to create employment and contribute cash to the economy. These however will not be promoted at the expense of the environment but will use Niue's 'clean image' through initiatives such as organic farming and eco-tourism.
9. The Vision Statement of the Plan espouses that 'Niue will be recognized for its unspoiled and unique environment, particularly its pristine waters. It will protect that environment through sustainable environmental practices such as a managed fishery and organic farming. There will be a flourishing tourism industry based largely on the attractions that the unique environment offers.
10. The Strategic Objectives of the Strategic Plan have been adopted by the Cyclone Heta Recovery Plan 2004 and the two plans are consistent in their approach to achieving their respective aims.

### **Niue National Development Plan (undated)**

11. This Plan is the same as the Niue Integrated Strategic Plan. (It is possible that this was an earlier draft/version of the NISP).

### **National Action Plan – Addressing Land Degradation and Drought**

12. The Niue National Action Plan (NAP) was prepared as part of Niue's obligation under the UNCCD to which Niue acceded in August 1998. The NAP identified the following key thematic areas to address land degradation on Niue:
  - Sustainable management of land clearance;
  - Soil diagnostics;
  - Soil rehabilitation;
  - Sustainable cropping management practices;
  - Agroforestry;
  - Forestry;
  - Waste water and water resource management;
  - Capacity building; and

- Governance.
13. Actions required to address each key thematic area are provided and section 9.10 list the kind of capacity that is required to be built in order for Niue to effectively address land degradation and drought issues.
  14. It is noted that much of the capacity building required is in training officers of the line agencies (agriculture, forestry and water division) and increasing the capacity of the same agencies to improve performance. Capacity building requirements as identified in this report are summarized in Annex 1.

### **Niue National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan**

15. The Niue Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) is an expression of Niue's commitment to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to which it acceded in 1996.
16. The Vision of the NBSAP is for 'Niue to be an environmentally friendly nation in which conservation and the sustainable management of biological resources support all the living community'. There are six Goals for the Plan and actions intended to achieve these goals are grouped into seven theme areas as follows:
  - Conservation and sustainable management of terrestrial habitats;
  - Conservation of terrestrial species;
  - Coastal, inshore and marine biodiversity;
  - Governance;
  - Waste management and water resources;
  - Pests and invasive species; and
  - Public awareness and education
17. Each of the first six themes have more than one objectives with actions listed to achieve those objectives. Responsibility for each action has been assigned to different stakeholders from government, NGOs, the private sector and village communities.
18. Whilst the NBSAP provides a comprehensive account of the actions needed to effectively conserve Niue's biodiversity, it does not offer either an assessment of Niue's current capacity to implement these actions or its future capacity requirements to do so. The closest it tried to do so is in Objective 4 of Theme 6 where it says 'Build the capacity required to manage the threats posed by invasive species'. What this capacity is not clear.

**In-situ and Ex-situ Conservation Measures – Capacity Needs Assessment: A Consultancy Report for the Biodiversity Enabling Activity Project. Sauni Tongatule, 2004**

19. This report was prepared to assist the identification of local knowledge and information from civil society and government agencies that will help the development of the Action Plan for the In-situ and Ex-situ conservation of Niue's biological diversity identified in the NBSAP as a priority area needing urgent action.
20. The main issues identified during the consultation that happened as part of the process for developing this report include:
  - resource depletion;
  - education and awareness;
  - legislation;
  - documentation and published materials;
  - training and capacity needs; and
  - alien invasive species
21. Proposals and Action Plans for forestry, awareness and education programmes, agro-biodiversity, marine and coastal biodiversity, training and capacity building and biodiversity documentation of in-situ and ex-situ conservation are contained in this report along with estimates of costs required to implement activities of the Plan. Agencies targeted for funding are also identified although it is not clear if these sources have been approached and have agreed to support the activities against which their names have been placed.
22. An interesting feature of this report and the process it used is the effort taken to identify stakeholders and their interest or influence in resource use. Whilst families, landowners and village councils have greater interest and influence over ownership and use of land and marine biodiversity, government (through its various agencies) have greater influence in the development and monitoring of plans, policies and legislation pertaining to these resources.
23. What this suggests is that neither the communities nor the government on their own can succeed in the conservation of Niue's land and marine biodiversity. What is required is a strong partnership between the two that is built on mutual trust and respect for each other.
24. A summary of the main issues, training and capacity needs identified during the preparation of this report is presented in Annex 2.

**Niue National Environmental Management Strategy (NEMS), South Pacific Regional Environment Programme 1994**

25. The NEMS was prepared as an important step for Niue to guide and assist its ultimate goal of sustainable development. It contains a set of strategies and programmes through which Niue may achieve sustainable development.

26. Key strategies for the attainment of sustainable development are grouped into six broad objectives which together, form the overall environmental strategy for Niue. The six objectives are:
- Integrating environmental considerations into sustainable economic development;
  - Improving environmental awareness and education;
  - Strengthening the resource information database;
  - Protecting areas of high ecological, wilderness and cultural value;
  - Improving waste management and controlling pollution; and
  - Sustainable use and management of natural resources
27. Specific actions and programmes to achieve each objective are listed but again, no assessment of existing capacity to implement these programmes and activities was ever undertaken. More recent plans and strategies refer to the NEMS often as background information and the programmes contained therein have pretty much been overtaken by new initiatives.
28. A summary of capacity building related activities of the NEMS is presented in Annex 3.

### **Niue Environmental Legislation Review, Clark Peteru, SPREP / UNDP 1993**

29. This Legislation Review encompassed four interrelated tasks:
- Collection of data on policy, legislation, regulations, decrees and administrative practices which have a bearing on environmental and resource management;
  - Interviews with relevant government and non-governmental personnel to identify environmental issues that need addressing in the review and identification of overlaps;
  - Review and assessment of the effectiveness of this legislation, policies, administrative practices, and identification of any overlaps or gaps; and
  - Recommendations relating to amendments to existing legislation, and / or the need for new legislation.
30. This review contains a number of recommendations relevant to the Rio Conventions. Recommendation 12(a) requires a list of environmental treaties to which Niue is a party to be compiled while recommendation 12(b) calls on the government of Niue to determine its obligations under each of these treaties.
31. Recommendations under the Biodiversity section have been well integrated into the Niue National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) however except for a few recommendations under the Agriculture and Mining sections, land degradation issues are not well addressed. There are no recommendations pertaining to climate change.

32. Although this review did not deal directly with capacity issues, the series of recommendations it made have far reaching implications on Niue's financial and human resources. Moreover, it is however worthy to note that despite its limited capacity, a number of these recommendations have formed an important part of several strategies and plans for the overall management and sustainable utilization of Niue's natural environment.

#### **The Status of Birds, Peka and Rodents on Niue 1994-1995, Ralph Powlesland and Rod Hay. SPBCP/SPREP**

33. This report was prepared to update the information available on the birds and peka on Niue.
34. Whilst the disastrous effects of recent cyclones on bird populations on Niue may have rendered the findings of this survey irrelevant for current planning and management efforts, some of the technical recommendations contained therein are considered worthy of implementation even with the declined populations of today. The implementation of these recommendations would again require resources (both human and financial) which are unfortunately in short supply given other government priorities. (An update of this work was undertaken post cyclone Heta, see paragraphs 54 to 57)

#### **Niue – The State of the Environment Report 1993**

35. The SOE was prepared as part of the NEMS project. It presented a concise report on the state of Niue's environment which acted as a benchmark against which changes to the environment can be gauged.
36. The SOE provided basic background information on Niue's various environmental sectors and hence supports the implementation of the NEMS. It is also a source of general and educational information about features of Niue's environment and issues that need addressing. Although it does not particularly address capacity issues, this report provides a comprehensive account of the country's environment which can help resource management and planning, including for capacity building.

#### **Cyclone Heta Recovery Project – Progress Report to 31 July 2004**

37. This is simply a report on progress achieved in implementing the Cyclone Heta Recovery Plan. Much of the report is a discussion of progress with rebuilding of damaged infrastructure however it is noted that some of the problems identified are environmentally-related. These are to do with the removal of the asbestos roofing stockpile resulting from the re-roofing project; the removal of waste metal adjacent to the Niue Hotel and the removal of the remaining oil sludge from the damaged fuel tanks. It is suspected that the lack of action on these problems could be attributed to the fact that is no or little local capacity to deal with these problems.

## **Biosafety (Living Modified Organisms) Regulations 2004, Government of Niue**

38. These Regulations provides for the protection of Niue from the introduction (intentional or accidental) of LMOs. A National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) is designated as the National Competent Authority for all matters relating to the Cartagena Protocol and shares responsibility with the Department of Environment and the Director for the implementation of the Regulations.
39. A Technical Advisory Group is established to provide technical support and advice to the NCSD as required while a Risk Assessment Panel appointed by the Minister on the recommendation of the NCSD reviews risk assessments undertaken for proposals relating to the importation of LMOs.
40. There seems to be a certain amount of overlap between the functions of the Council, the Department of Environment and the Director. To make things more complicated, the UNEP-funded Biosafety Project for Niue is implemented by the Department of Agriculture, Forests and Fisheries (DAFF) while legal authority under the Biosafety Regulation and Policy rest with the Minister and Director for the Environment. An assessment of the capacity of these groups to carry out their responsibilities under these Regulations could help resolve some of these overlaps.

## **Government of Niue – National Biosafety Policy, August 2004**

41. The objectives of the National Biosafety Policy are:
  - To implement procedures to control the importation, and require labeling of LMOs, LMO products and their derivatives into Niue;
  - to protect Niue's fragile environment and biodiversity, including genetic resources, through biosafety control;
  - to protect the health of Niue's residents, taking into account the need for safe medicines as well as the advantages and disadvantages of modern technology;
  - to protect niche markets for the national economy including eco-tourism, organic agriculture and fisheries, by using biosafety mechanisms;
  - to protect Niue's unique cultural values and customary heritage that includes our traditional knowledge and genetic resources;
  - to enable consultation and active participation by all stakeholders in the biosafety framework, including policy development, decision making processes, implementation and monitoring; and
42. Except for human pharmaceuticals which are given exemption from the Biosafety Permit process in the case of health emergency, the policy cover a broad range of activities including:

- Import and export of LMOs;
  - Placing on the market of LMOs and products containing LMOs and their derivatives (such as food, seeds and animal feeds);
  - Contained use of LMOs (such as research in laboratories); and
  - Filed testing of LMOs and large scale or commercial releases into the environment (including cropping)
43. Although the Biosafety Regulations gives the NCSD primary responsibility for its implementation, the National Biosafety Policy is administered by the Minister for the Environment and the Environment Department while the NCSD facilitates communication and information sharing between government and non-government stakeholders. As noted in paragraph 40 above, the UNEP-funded Biosafety Project, the only such project currently being implemented in Niue, is under the direction of DAFF which has no legal authority to do so under the Biosafety Regulation and Biosafety Policy.
44. Risk assessment is an important aspect of biosafety work. In the case of Niue, the Environment Department coordinates the risk assessment process and establishes the Risk Assessment Panel. The NCSD considers the application, the risk assessment report and any community submissions having regard to the National Biosafety Policy. The Minister takes the NCSD's recommendation on the risk assessment to Cabinet who makes the final decision. The ED notifies the applicant of the decision within 270 days of receiving the application.
45. For the effective implementation of the Regulations and Policy, the capacity of the following agencies and groups will need to be assessed and built.
- Environment Department;
  - NCSD;
  - Technical Advisory Group;
  - Risk Assessment Panel; and
  - Other line agencies (such as Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Quarantine and Health) whose expertise may be required in the undertaking of risk assessments.
46. The Policy document recognizes the importance of capacity building in biosafety issues especially in the implementation of the National Biosafety Framework. It recommended capacity building to include:
- Strengthening and building the capacity of the administrative framework, including handling requests for LMO activities and developing technical expertise to undertake risk assessments and management;
  - Strengthening national technical facilities such as equipment and laboratories for risk assessment and inspection purposes and facilities to store and dispose of LMOs; and

- Strengthening information systems, including links to Biosafety Clearing House and a database of applications and information stored in Niue; and
  - Building the capacity of key stakeholders, both government and non-government, to participate in and contribute to biosafety issues, including the administrative framework.
47. Risk assessments often require a good understanding of the plant and animal science and it is therefore imperative that people with this background are involved in either the Risk Assessment Panel or the Technical Advisory Group.

**Report to the Government of Niue and the United Nations Development Programme – Invasive Plant Species on Niue following Cyclone Heta, 2004**

48. This report emanated from a post cyclone Heta survey which aimed to determine if any new invasive plant species were introduced during the cyclone and to assess the expansion in range and vigor of species previously recorded. As was expected, light-loving species that take advantage of disturbances and openings in the forest have become more prevalent. However, although a few species not noted before were found, none of them appeared to have arrived and established as a result of post-cyclone activities. On the basis of this, the report suggested that the main task facing Niue was to continue to deal with the serious invasive plants that were present before the cyclone, some of which are already expanding in range and vigor encouraged by the cyclone disturbance.
49. Table B in the report provides a summary of major invasive species present on Niue with recommendations for their management. Management actions include monitoring for further spread, discourage further planting of species, and research for control methodology. The latter will definitely require the building of the necessary capacity at relevant border agencies to ensure the effective control and assessment of impacts to the environment from any intentional or accidental introduction of invasive species.

**UNFCCC: Niue Island Initial National Communication, June 2000**

50. The National communication report is Niue's contribution to the implementation of the UNFCCC to which it is party. It describes the series of actions taken in compliance with its obligations under the Convention. It notes that although Niue has a well educated, highly literate population, it is a very small population base and this is considered a major limiting factor to building the capacity of the nation as a whole.
51. Chapter 6 of the report provides a discussion on the country's capacity to respond to climate change as well as its specific capacity building needs. The need to build or strengthen the national capacity to integrate climate change into medium and long term planning was identified as so was the need to identify and



prioritise cost effective measures which will assist policy makers and government to take appropriate action to address climate change issues.

52. A survey of public servants was carried out to determine the extent of the level of local skills and to assess their capacity to tackle issues relating to climate change. Amongst other things, the survey identified an urgent need for ongoing training in the science of climate change and policy making. Some of the key training and capacity building activities recommended include:
- Participation of at least three senior level delegates in regional/international forums allowing for an improved continuation of information dissemination;
  - Scholarships in climate change science to be offered;
  - Training in sector analysis of Niue's vulnerability to adverse effects of climate change. These sectors are coastal zone (i.e. tidal movement/sea level measurements), waste management, forestry, agriculture, marine resources and coral reefs.
  - Build capacity to analyse and recommend sound, appropriate and user friendly technology for data collection, collation and interpretation;
  - Training of relevant personnel such as legal officers in policy making for climate change;
  - Build capacity to develop sound and effective policies which ensure the protection of the climate and promote sustainable development;
  - Build capacity to conduct in-depth studies into very vulnerable areas and to recommend appropriate remedial actions;
  - Build capacity to promote effective awareness campaigns to ensure maximum exposure to all sectors of the community in the long term.
53. Finally the report noted that the science and language of climate change is difficult for the wider community to understand and as can be expected, it is extremely difficult for communities to respond appropriately to something they do not fully understand. The second Communications report is under preparation.

**Status of birds and rodents on Niue Island following Cyclone Heta in January 2004, R.G. Powlesland and D.J. Butler.**

54. This report details the findings of a post-cyclone Heta survey carried out by the authors on Niue's birds and rodents during September 3-19 2004. Data from this survey were compared to a similar survey carried out in September 1994.
55. A number of recommendations were made as a result of the findings of the survey, most relate to the long term conservation of lupe, a treasured species for Niueans. The recommendations with capacity building implications include:

- i) Encourage the development of a cyclone contingency plan to manage injured and starving wildlife after a cyclone;
- ii) Promote the development of a wildlife conservation education programme suitable for school children, and also for distribution to villages;
- iii) Encourage the appropriate training of current DoE staff in the areas of wildlife monitoring and predator control. Enable a staff member to spend 3-6 months seconded to the Department of Conservation in New Zealand to acquire such training in the field.

### **The Status of Peka (Tongan flying fox, *Pteropus tonganus*) on Niue, September 2004.**

- 56. This is a report on a survey carried out on 27 different sites to determine the status of peka on Niue after cyclone Heta. The key results from this survey show that a) the number of peka observed had declined by 95% from the 1998 surveys; b) only one small roost was being used, other peka were scattered in the forest; and c) the decline in the peka number is the result of over-hunting as well as cyclone Heta.
- 57. Recommendations from the report target the banning of hunting of lupe and peka for at least five years. The report also requires the Department of Environment to decide how many peka can be shot each hunting season based on the number of peka they see during surveys. It is also recommended that hunters should never shoot more than 10% of the population each year as peka do not reproduce fast enough for high amounts of hunting to continue. The enforcement of all these recommendations calls for increased capacity within the enforcement agencies concerned.

### **Threats to Niue's Biodiversity, Sauni Tongatule**

- 58. This report provides a comprehensive discussion of the threats to Niue's biological diversity. They include deforestation, invasive alien species, natural disasters, changed farming systems, unsustainable logging, changed fishing, hunting and fire management practices, and infrastructure development. The report continues with an assessment of the gaps and deficiencies in addressing the threats. They include lack of human resources, enforcement of legal frameworks, and the lack of funding.
- 59. Although the report contains elements of an action plan to address threat to Niue's biodiversity, the listing of the key issues faced by Niue in relation to Invasive Alien Species is particularly important as this has not been listed by any previous reports. The issues are:

- Shortage of scientific information on basic biology for assessment of the risks and opportunities for management.
- Lack of awareness about the impact caused by invasive species on biodiversity;
- Lack of coordination and collaboration among relevant intergovernmental agencies and among stakeholders;
- Existing legislation do not cover IAS that threaten biodiversity except to a limited extent, agriculture;
- Shortage of technically trained staff to carry out regular assessment of the status of Niue's biodiversity;
- Lack of proper quarantine facilities to ensure proper risk assessments are carried out on potential IAS; and
- Insufficient funding to establish proper infrastructure and facilities and to carry out management or research on IAS.

**Ko E Ha Mautolu A Motu Fakahelhele: Our Precious Island – Niue Sustainable Human Development Situation Analysis 2002, UNDP & Government of Niue, October 2002**

60. The Sustainable Human Development Situation Analysis (SHDSA) is the first report of its kind for Niue. It provides a qualitative analysis of the issues influencing the level of human development in Niue.
61. At the outset, the report two of the most pressing issues facing Niue, which could negatively impact on livelihoods in the country. These are:
- The small and declining population aided by the lack of opportunities and ease of emigration to New Zealand; and
  - Lack of a reliable air service which will strengthen links with the Niuean community in New Zealand and improve accessibility to potential growth markets, including tourism.
62. The report list physical threats to the island's biodiversity as:
- i) limited supply of fresh water resources;
  - ii) forest clearance;
  - iii) decline in soil fertility and structure;
  - iv) increased cost of herbicides and fertilizers;
  - v) unsustainable management of marine resources;
  - vi) limited information and understanding at community level about managing resources in a sustainable manner;
  - vii) loss of traditional conservation practices as western thinking and attitudes become more prevalent; and
  - viii) ineffective legislation for the protection of the environment.

63. The report concludes by stressing that the security and development of *social capital, or the relations generated between people*, is as central to the development of Niue as the development of human and natural capital. The indicators of such social capital are:
- empowerment (having access to knowledge and skills to participate);
  - participation (having avenues for using and refining these skills); and
  - building new groups (establishing systems by which to address the issues facing the country today).
64. Information taken from the final report “Niue Study on the Maintenance of a Living Community” March 2002 by Lincoln International offer a Common Vision and Goals for the Government of Niue which have far reaching implications for capacity building in the island.

### **Common Vision**

Niue prides itself as a world example of a country that makes use of its natural resources without overexploitation to develop economic opportunities for all its inhabitants whilst at the same time enhancing its culture, community strengths, and spiritual values and embracing a modern economy.

### **Goals**

*Transport* – establish a commercial reliable and efficient airline and shipping service thereby providing access, and exits for national, economic and social needs, increase visitor numbers to Niue, and offer commercial opportunities.

*Economic development / employment* – provide more income earning opportunities for disadvantaged families outside the public sector, through sustainable business opportunities, economic development initiatives including tourism.

*Land tenure* – revise the land titling and / or issue of land entitlement and develop an improved land titling system to promote economic and social development.

*Education and training* – coordinate, communicate and provide educational opportunities locally and overseas that are relevant to the vision and needs of Niue. It should encompass academic, technical, trade, art, sports and life skill areas. It should also take into account language, culture, isolation and declining population.

*Village Community* – a village community which is proud of its identity, sustains and fosters participation, cooperation, unity, religion and culture.

*Population* – to prevent further population decline and to devise a system that will encourage development of a viable population.

*Spiritual health, culture and attitudes* – to involve the church in future decision-making processes at the national level in order to consider spiritual values alongside economic, political and cultural values.

*Governance, Relationship with New Zealand* – remain a self-governing nation with necessary economic and administrative support from New Zealand.

*Relationship with Niueans in New Zealand* – to encourage continuing support from Niueans in New Zealand and to open communications lines between the two Niuean communities.

**Niue National Implementation Plan for Persistent Organic Pollutants, 2003,  
Chapter 3, by Gaylene Tasmania and Natash Toeono**

65. Niue became a signatory to the Stockholm Convention in 2002. However, except for the Customs Import Prohibition (Insecticide Order) 1964 which prohibits the import of Benzene Hexachloride (BHC) and Dichloride Diphenyl Trichlorethane (DDT) unless consented to by the Minister of Customs, there is no legislation governing the intentional production and use of POPs in Niue. This situation has given rise to suggestions for the banning of the intentional production and use of POPs in Niue and the preparation of appropriate legislation to this effect.
66. The lack of legislation to govern the production and use of POPs also resulted in the lack of any proper management system to deal with PCBs especially those in electrical capacitors and other electrical equipment. The need to address this situation was regarded a very high priority for action at a national workshop held in September 2004. Building the necessary capacity to implement this action was identified a key activity for the NIP.
67. The preparation of Niue's NIP is in accordance with its obligations under the Stockholm Convention (the POPs Convention). The Department for the Environment is responsible for coordinating the implementation of the Plan while the National Coordinating Committee (NCC) oversees its implementation.
68. The NIP has identified several management options to address the requirements of the POPs Convention. Each option has a specific strategy and action plan (with goals and objectives) for implementation. Agencies with direct responsibility for the implementation of each management option have also been identified in the Plan and so are the timetables for implementation and resources needed.
69. Capacity related activities of the NIP focus mainly on the engagement of consultants to design assist with training and awareness raising programmes in some cases the construction of storage facilities for waste, conducting of EIAs

and other technical advice. Support by government to many of these activities is mainly in-kind contributions leaving donor agencies and governments to foot the bill.

**National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention in Niue (Final Draft), 1 July 2005**

- 70. This Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention was prepared under an enabling activity project funded by the GEF. The objective of the project was to ‘create sustainable capacity and ownership in Niue to meet its obligations under the Convention, including the preparation of the NIP (see foregoing section).
- 71. While there are several areas of overlap (and sometimes duplication) between the NIP and the Stockholm Convention Implementation Plan, the latter provides a more detailed description of how the government will meet its obligations under the Convention to phase out POPs sources and remediate POPs contaminated sites on Niue as articulated in Article 7 of the Convention.
- 72. Like the NIP, the Implementation Plan for the Convention also contain Activities, Strategies and Action Plans for its implementation. The activities of the two plans are identical and could be easily combined into a single document to avoid duplication and confusion.
- 73. In the section dealing with ‘Development and Capacity Building Proposals and Priorities, a summary of capacity building proposals is provided (see Table 2 below).

Table 2: Summary of Capacity Building Proposals for Niue

<b>POPs Issue</b>	<b>Capacity Building Proposal</b>
POPs Pesticides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training in legislative review and drafting of regulations;</li> <li>- Formulation of methodologies for pesticide disposal</li> </ul>
PCBs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training in identification, removal and storage of PCBs in electrical equipment;</li> <li>- Training in conducting national PCB inventory;</li> <li>- Training on database use and management</li> </ul>
Dioxins and Furans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training on BAT/BEP guidelines including filed training on existing sources around Niue;</li> <li>- Training on application of BAT/BEP when undertaking an EIA;</li> <li>- Training on collection of information on medical and quarantine wastes;</li> <li>- Training on incinerator use;</li> </ul>

	- Training on compost making and other alternatives to open burning
Contaminated sites	- training in identification and management of contaminated sites, including clean-ups; - training in sample collection procedures; - training in environmentally sound storage and disposal procedures

### Niue Waste Management Plan, Prepared by Greg Wolff, AusAID 2000

74. At the request of the Government of Niue, AusAID in 1997, provided a Water Supply Operations Adviser to provide advice on the provision of a safe and efficient water supply for the Niuean population through the development of an integrated plan for water and waste management. The waste management component of the project was not completed within the timeframe for the project and a Waste Management Adviser was then provided for 12 months to complete this component of the project.
75. The Waste Management Plan was developed with input by the Niue community and with the support of the Waste Management Working Group who managed the process. The WMP seeks simple and sustainable solutions for Niue's waste management problems with affordability and practicality being the principal considerations.
76. Although the WMP predates Niue's joining of the POPs and other related regional and international conventions, the Plan does address issues and concerns also included in the POPs Convention such as agriculture chemicals, car and other batteries, hospital wastes and hazardous substances.
77. In a preliminary chemical survey carried out under a SPREP Project, the following chemical quantities were estimated for Niue.
- A total of three disused electricity transformers suspected of containing PCBs;
  - A total of 1.5 tonnes of waste pesticides including small quantities of ethoprophos and chlordane stored at two locations;
  - A total of four tones of waste fertilizers stored at the Department of Agriculture research farm;
  - A total of 300 kg of unwanted medicines stored at the hospital; and
  - Minor contamination by oil at the Department of Public Works depot.
78. No specific recommendations were made to dispose or clean the sites where chemical wastes have been found except that Niue should be included in regional programmes (SPREP, NZODA/SPREP, UNEP, WHO and FAO).

## Activities of key stakeholders and other groups in Niue

79. The **Department of the Environment (DoE)** has primary responsibility for coordinating activities relating to the conservation and management of Niue's environment and natural resources in accordance with the Environment Bill and is largely responsible for the implementation of Niue's obligations under environmental conventions. The DoE was established as a separate entity of government in 2003 (it was formerly part of the Department of Community Affairs) when the Environment Bill was passed by Niue's Parliament.
80. Some environmental programmes for which the DoE was responsible for implementation in recent years include the following:
- Establishment of the Huvalu Conservation Area (with funding assistance from the GEF/UNDP-funded South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme (SPBCP). The SPBCP came to an end in 2001 and although the communities of Hakupu and Liku are committed to sustaining the project, the lack of further funding either from government or donor agencies is making the task a daunting one for the villages concerned.
  - Capacity Building for Environment Management Programme (CBEMP). As the name suggests, this project aimed at building national capacity for environment management in the Pacific islands and was one of the first such initiatives to address this critical issue for many PICs.
  - Implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). Implementation of the NBSAP started in 2001 with activities focusing mainly on resource surveys and inventories to determine the status of avifauna after the cyclones that affected the islands. With donor funding coming to an end very shortly, very little has been achieved in recent months and it is expected that this situation will continue until other sources of funding are identified and accessed. The NBSAP is due for revision in February 2006, but it is uncertain if further funding will be available to support the single biodiversity position that is currently funded under the NBSAP. If not, then DoE is likely to lose the only officer it now has to handle all of its biodiversity responsibilities.
  - Pacific Environment Information Network (PEIN). This regional project was implemented by SPREP and provided Pacific island countries like Niue support for the effective documentation, exchange and use of environmental information.
81. In addition to the above activities, the DoE is also responsible for the coordination of annual environmental campaigns associated with World Environment Days in June each year.

## Department of Agriculture, Forests and Fisheries (DAFF)



82. In addition to its core functions, DAFF is also the implementing agency for the POPs, Biosafety and IWP projects in Niue. It is however noted that the Biosafety Regulations and Biosafety Policy for Niue give the Minister and Director of Environment the mandate for addressing all matters pertaining to Biosafety in the country. Similarly, waste management issues including POPs are included in the Niue 2000 Waste Management Plan that the Health Department is responsible for.
83. It is not clear if DAFF will continue to have responsibility for Biosafety in future. What is clear is that DoE does not at present have the capacity to implement the biosafety project especially with the uncertainty surrounding the Biodiversity Officer position under the NBSAP. Should it be necessary to transfer responsibility for biosafety to DoE in accordance with the Biosafety Regulation and Biosafety Policy at some time in future, the personnel now with DAFF will need to go with it. The same is true should POPs responsibility be assumed by the Department of Health.
84. DAFF administers the Pesticides Act 1991 and has established a National Pesticides Committee which amongst other things, reviews applications for pesticide import permits and determines the conditions of imported chemical and their sale.
85. DAFF has prepared a funding proposal for a Sustainable Land Management Project under the GEF Medium Size Grant programme. This project aims to support activities relating to capacity development and mainstreaming of sustainable land management issues as part of Niue's attempt to address its obligations under the UNCCD. The proposal is currently under consideration by UNDP/GEF.
86. DAFF also works very closely with a number of NGOs such as the Young Farmers Association, the Fisheries Association and the Organic Farmers Association.

### **Niue Health Department**

87. The Health Department (in particular, the Environmental Health Section) has important responsibilities for the protection of Niue's environment. It is primarily responsible for the implementation of the waste management plan for Niue and has authority to issue permits or licenses for importation of chemical used by the Department. The Health Department is also the implementing agency for the Waigani Convention which was ratified by Niue in August 2003.

### **Department of Justice, Lands and Survey**

88. DJLS is mainly responsible for the management of land in Niue. Its key functions being land registration and dealing with land ownership issues. The Department maintains a GIS (one of just a couple on the island) and database

system but has only one qualified operator on staff. Other staffs using the system pick up their skills on the job and staff turn over especially in this area is a constant worry.

### **Department of Education**

89. Niue is fortunate in that it has a relatively small population which can easily be reached. On the minus side, there is an acute lack of human and financial resources to enable training and education programmes to be carried out more effectively. The Department of Education is keen to become more involved in environmental activities, and despite the lack of staff, could play an important role in activities of the NCSA. Informal discussions with the Director of Education suggest that the Department is interested in becoming a key stakeholder in the NCSA.

### **Department of External Affairs**

90. The DEA is the official contact point for Niue for all regional and international organizations as well as international conventions and agreements. DEA serves as the clearinghouse for all information relating to international conventions although it has no capacity to undertake assessment of technical and other reports to the various convention secretariats. DEA is a member of the NCSA Steering Committee and will participate as a key stakeholder for the project.

### **Department of Meteorology**

91. Safeguarding the environment and contributing to the sustainable development of Niue are two of the key objectives for this Department. The Department is responsible for implementing the climate change project and has produced Niue's Initial Communication report to the Secretariat of the UNFCCC. The second report is due for release soon.
92. The senior climate change officer has recently been appointed to another position in government and his replacement has just taken over responsibility for the project. The need to train more people in the climate change science has been recognized as an important priority for the Department. Like so many other donor funded projects in Niue, the climate change project and, for that matter, all climate change related activities of government are dependent on a couple of individuals whose training in climate change science are seen as an important priority for future capacity building initiatives.

### **Tourism Office**

93. The Niue Sustainable Human Development Situation Analysis 2002 notes that it is widely accepted that tourism holds the key to economic growth for Niue. The Tourism Office therefore has an important role in the social and economic development of Niue. The Tourism Office is however well aware of the need to strike a balance between economic development and environmental protection

and national development plans and strategies have been developed with this objective in mind.

94. This Office manages more than 20 tourist sites on the island but has only one field staff and despite the priority accorded tourism development by government, it is unlikely that this situation will change in the very near future. The NCSA should help identify the most critical capacity needs of the Tourism Office and assist government access other sources of funding to support capacity development in this sector.

**National Assessment Report of Niue to the World Summit on Sustainable Development 2002. Prepared by Tagaloa Cooper and Judy Nemaia with assistance from David Butler.**

95. The WSSD report constituted an extensive assessment of Niue's environmental, social and economic development progress since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. It addressed the issues and obstacles facing Niue whilst noting recommendations for further progress. The national consultations that was carried out as an important part of the process for the preparation of this report reinforced the urgent need to strengthen the capacity of not only the national government but more importantly the civil society as equal partners in sustainable development.
96. Section 4 list the concerns under three headings of Environment, Social and Economic, a summary of progress achieved since 1992 and a list of work still required to be done. The latter list provides a very useful guide to the priority work needed to be done but little discussion as to the capacity of government and communities to implement them. The list however contain several references to the need to build national capacity in different areas to implement the work that remains to be done.
97. The discussion under the section on Social Concerns (4.0.2) notes that although some strengthening of individuals agencies capacity had occurred during the delivery of some regional and international programmes since UNCED, ongoing capacity has not increased significantly. Three concerns have been identified. They are:
  - Disjointed management of the environment – This referred to the placement of environmental responsibilities within a number of government agencies. Although this situation has to some extent been resolved with the establishment of a stand alone Department for the Environment, the Environment Planning Unit is still with the DJLS, while POPs, Biosafety and IWP are under with DAFF. It is understood that Cabinet is currently considering a possible restructuring for the Public Service which may indeed result in the amalgamation of certain departments. This will probably help alleviate the concerns expressed here.

- Lack of a coordinating body to address sustainable development issues – While there have been several task forces and steering committees established under various programmes, these were seen to be working in isolation and thus the need for a single entity to oversee the work of these task forces and committees to make sure they are properly coordinated.
- Lack of capacity – The lack of capacity across all agencies dealing with environment and sustainable development was recognized as an important concern. The DoE has very limited staff of its own, the rest being donor-funded posts established for the implementation of specific projects. The same is true for other agencies such as DAFF and Health where one or two individuals are responsible for environmental activities of these agencies.

98. The discussion on education and public awareness noted that a good deal of environmental education has been delivered especially through the primary school although more local material was needed. It identified the provision of information to adults to allow them to make better and informed decisions as the priority for further action. Active national and village environmental campaigns focusing on sustainable development was considered necessary to achieve this goal but building the necessary capacity to produce, promote and use such materials remains a challenge with the limited capacity currently available.

**Attachment 5: COMPARISON OF NATIONAL CAPACITY ACROSS THE  
THREE THEMATIC AREAS – THEMATIC PROFILES**

	<b>Biodiversity</b>	<b>Climate Change</b>	<b>Land Degradation</b>
Legal instruments, policies and/or non-regulatory mechanisms-effectiveness, overlaps, gaps or inconsistencies.	Biosafety Regulation and Policy gives power to Minister and Director of DoE, however biosafety activities are being carried out by DAFF. One staff position exists within DAFF. DoE has one staff member under NBSAP contract to end January 2006.	A Capacity Building Team was established to tackle capacity building needs but it is uncertain if this team is still active. Some uncertainty about future of two existing CC posts in Meteorological Office after donor funding.	No capacity exists at present but DAFF is leading efforts to seek GEF funding for land degradation initiatives. GEF proposal aims to develop human and institutional capacity needed for SLM development.
Responsibilities and activities of relevant ministries, agencies and other government institutions. Are these coordinated and complementary?	Yes, but mainly through a task force established under NBSAP which is ending soon. There is no permanent Biodiversity Officer position in DoE and this may affect coordination in future.	Yes, a task force comprising representatives of many government agencies and NGOs has been established and has been very effective in the production of the Initial Communication Report.	No one agency is coordinating activities and responsibilities of government and other institutions. It is expected this will be addressed if funding proposal for a land degradation project is successful.
Respective roles and contribution of industry, public interest groups in research sector. Which organizations have major interest and programs in relevant subject area.	No research capacity exists! Vegetation and avifauna surveys are often outsourced to agencies outside Niue. Research needs are usually identified by DoE or outside groups. 'Research' so far has been limited to forest and bird surveys on island.	Because of limited capacity, research initiatives are carried out as part of regional programmes. Local activities are limited to collection and compilation of relevant data and information.	Agriculture and forestry are the main stakeholders and will remain so in future. There is limited capacity in DAFF and local NGOs but funding constraints prevent any major research initiatives.
What relevant information and database exists, where are they located and who has	No biodiversity database exists in DoE. There is limited information at Forestry and	There is no climate change database at Meteorology. Information is kept mainly in paper files	DJLS operates a database and GIS mainly on land registration and land ownership. There is

access to them? Are all relevant data needs addressed? What are the major gaps?	Fisheries. There is a need to have the information gathered from the various surveys stored in a user-friendly database system for common use.	and sometimes in electronic files. (See also comment under Biodiversity column). Need to investigate expansion of DJLS database to include climate information.	general recognition of the need to extend the scope of the database but need funding for this to happen. (see also comment under climate change column)
Which relevant projects have been implemented and what are their impacts and lessons learned?	Huvalu Conservation Area was established under SPBCP as the first and only community-based CA in Niue. The need to involve local land owners and users in project management was a key lesson from this project. NBSAP developed with community participation a framework for the management of Niue's biodiversity.	The Niue Climate Change Enabling Activity project produced a Capacity Building Report which amongst other things identified the need for training to be ongoing even beyond the life of donor-funded projects. It also identified the need to train lawyers, analyzers, researchers and scientists who together will improve the capacity of Niue to deal with cc issues.	Apart from agriculture and forestry activities, no specific project has been undertaken in this area. The GEF proposal aims to develop land information systems as well as identify other project concepts and ideas for consideration of the donor community.
What kinds of capacity development projects have been undertaken? What were the short-term and long-term impacts of these projects and activities?	Several projects were able to identify the capacity needs and constraints of Niue but none was able to actually address these needs. Some technical staff have been recruited to manage specific projects but these arrangements were for limited terms only.	A scholarship position was funded under the CC project but this has been offset by the loss of the technical officer who has been behind the success of the project in the past few years. Other short and long term training opportunities are being investigated.	None to date but the GEF proposal has a strong component on Training and Human Resource Capacity Building for SLM.
What relevant technical capacity exists and is this infrastructure	Only one full time technical position is currently available but not for long.	Although the Director of Meteorology will be able to help, there is	As stated elsewhere, there is no existing capacity on sustainable land

<p>available and sufficient to address the objectives of the respective areas?</p>	<p>Two senior officers in DoE have biodiversity backgrounds and could fill in the void but are also heavily involved in other work of the department. DAFF has a number of technical people but again are specifically employed to perform specific functions.</p>	<p>only one technical officer and a secretary handling cc work. The task teams created under the CC project could help lessen the impact of this but these task teams have not been meeting regularly as they should for various reasons including the perception that the project was going well and does not need members' assistance.</p>	<p>management until the GEF proposal for a SLM project is approved.</p>
<p>What is the level of awareness and understanding within government and the public concerning the thematic area?</p>	<p>There is a high level of awareness and understanding of biodiversity conservation in all sectors of government and communities. Awareness raising programmes have been conducted involving the general public and schools over the years.</p>	<p>Although there is general awareness and understanding of the devastating effects of climate change, there is little understanding of the technical issues to enable government officials to fully comprehend and negotiate on an equal footing with their peers from the more developed countries.</p>	<p>Government agencies such as DAFF and DoE are well aware of the issues in this thematic area. However, there is very little awareness or understanding at the community level.</p>
<p>What human resources are available, and through which organizations, to work on the respective thematic area?</p>	<p>At most three at DoE and a few more at DAFF but it is noted that the majority of these staff is on project funding and are likely to be lost to the agencies once projects are completed. Other agencies participate in various committees but are</p>	<p>The Meteorological Division one technical person and a secretary dealing with climate change issues, both are funded under the CC project. Many other people are involved through various working groups and task forces but these groups have not been called to meet</p>	<p>No human resources are currently available on a full time basis, however, senior staff of DAFF have been involved in the development of a medium-sized GEF project to partly alleviate this situation.</p>

	not directly involved in biodiversity work on a day-to-day basis.	in the past few months.	
What financial resources might be available at the national level for action plans concerning the thematic area?	At the end of the NBSAP, there will be no funding available to implement action plans in this thematic area. DAFF may have some human resources but is constrained by the lack of funding to implement activities of the action plans.	Like the biodiversity thematic area, the Meteorological Division has been relying on donor support for the implementation of activities of its action plans. The single technical staff now handling cc work is expected to return to her old job within the Division at the completion of time with the project.	None
Has there been any monitoring and evaluation of capacity development projects and activities during or after their execution? How was their effectiveness or success measured?	Except for the WSSD report which provided an assessment of Niue's environment since the UNCED, no monitoring or evaluation of capacity development projects were carried out.	As in the biodiversity thematic area.	This is not relevant as no project has been carried out in this thematic area.
Do individuals have an incentive to acquire new skills and technical capacity related to the thematic area? Do they have sufficient opportunity to do so?	There are no financial incentives except the possibility of promotion to a higher position. There are opportunities to acquire new skills but these have to be considered alongside other government priorities.	Individuals are motivated and are keen to acquire new skills but there is uncertainty surrounding the climate change project after donor funding. The CC project has provided opportunities for scholarship training in this field.	No individual is working in this area just yet but it is assumed that when there is, that person would be keen to receive training in this area.
Are individuals in contact and	Individuals participating in the	Individuals participating in the	DAFF staff are expected to take the



<p>exchanging knowledge and experiences with appropriate peers? Are there barriers to communication within and across relevant institutions focused on the thematic area?</p>	<p>NBSAP project are in regular contact but this may be affected when this project comes to an end in early 2006. The only barrier to communication is the ad hoc nature in which it occurs.</p>	<p>CC project have been in regular contact until recently. The technical nature of cc issues makes it difficult for some individuals and agencies to fully comprehend the main issues and concerns.</p>	<p>lead in this area if the GEF proposal is successful. Internal mechanisms for communication may be in place but DAFF may need to look at other mechanisms for communicating with other stakeholders in this area.</p>
<p>Does any untapped capacity exist or is there capacity that could be redeployed to better effect? Is there capacity in danger of being lost?</p>	<p>The capacity that is there now is fully utilized but the NBSAP position is in danger of being lost to DoE when the project is closed unless DoE can secure other sources of funding to keep the post.</p>	<p>As in the biodiversity area, there is uncertainty surrounding the cc position in the Meteorological Division after project ends. The Division is likely to take back the officer but it is not known how much of her time will be dedicated to cc work.</p>	<p>There is some capacity at DAFF but this is not specifically assigned to land degradation work.</p>
<p>Are capacity development efforts sufficiently linked to existing or future legal, regulatory, or institutional requirements and responsibilities? Has capacity built in the past proved to be sustainable over the medium and long-term?</p>	<p>Yes, but most efforts have been limited to identifying capacity that is required, not building it. The high turn over of trained personnel especially in the technical areas will always pose a threat to any capacity that is built for Niue.</p>	<p>As in the biodiversity area.</p>	<p>Not relevant.</p>

**Attachment 6: Issues Prioritization Matrices**

**BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

Note: Ranking issues against the criteria in the following Matrix will allow a simple comparison of the relative importance of each and should thereby facilitate further group discussion on setting, confirming or reviewing priorities. Such a tool however, should not be seen as an end in itself. It is first and foremost an evaluation tool. Simply adding values assigned to each issue will not take into account the different weighting assigned to particular criteria.

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Scale of Problem<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Level of Concern<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Ability to Adequately Address Issue<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>Priority Ranking<sup>5</sup></b>
Lack of concern about loss of biological resources	Local, national	high	low	1
In-situ conservation of biological diversity	Local, national	high	low	1
Ex-situ conservation of biological diversity	Local, national	high	medium	2
Establishment of protected areas	Local, national	Medium to high	Low to medium	2
Sustainable management of biodiversity	Local, national	high	low	1
Control of invasive species	National, regional	high	low	1
Recording and protection of indigenous conservation knowledge	National, local	high	low	1
Control of feral animals	Local, national	Medium to high	Low to medium	2
Cost-benefit analysis of biodiversity conservation	Local, national, regional	Medium to high	low	2
Mobilising community support for biodiversity conservation	Local, national	medium	medium	3
Accessing government and / or donor funding for biodiversity conservation	National, regional	high	low	1
Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into government plans	Local, national	medium	medium	3

<sup>2</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Enter low, medium or high

<sup>4</sup> Enter low, medium or high

<sup>5</sup> Provide relative ranking from 1 to 5 of the problem being faced by the country (1=most severe problem(s), 2=second most severe, etc.)

and strategies				
Sharing experiences and lessons learned	Local, national	Low to medium	medium	3
Legislation, policies and action plans	National, regional	medium	medium	4
Law enforcement	Local, national	medium	Low to medium	2
Staffing issues (turnover, lack of technical training, skills, etc)	Local, national	high	low	1
Lack of coordination among agencies with environmental responsibilities	Local, national	medium	Low to medium	3
Lack of public awareness about importance of biodiversity conservation	Local, national	medium	medium	3
Lack of Political will and support	Local, national, regional	high	low	1
Confusion about role of technical committees vs government agencies	Local, national	Medium to high	low	3
Disjointed donor-funded initiatives	National, regional	Medium to high	low	2
Lack of government funding	national	high	low	1

**Attachment 6(b)**

**CLIMATE CHANGE**

Note: Ranking issues against the following criteria will allow a simple comparison of the relative importance of each and should thereby facilitate further group discussion on setting, confirming or reviewing priorities. Such a tool, however, should not be seen as an end in itself. It is first and foremost an evaluation tool. Simply adding the values assigned to each issue will not take into account the different weighting assigned to particular criteria.

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Scale of Problem</b>	<b>Level of Concern</b>	<b>Ability to Adequately Address Issue</b>	<b>Priority Ranking</b>
Lack of understanding about climate change issues	Local, national, regional	high	low	2
Lack of trained staff to deal with technical aspects of climate change	national	high	low	2
Indifferent attitude to climate change as a long term problem based on predictions	Local, national	medium	low	2
Failure to demonstrate the link between climate change and decline in agriculture production, increase in natural disasters, and health issues.	Local, national, regional	high	medium	2
Inability of SIDS to successfully argue their case against the more developed countries	National, regional, global	high	low	1
Reluctance of government to invest in anticipatory adaptation measures	Local, national	high	low	1
Failure to integrate climate issues into economic planning and other sector plans	Local, national	high	Low to medium	1
Need for database and information systems for accurate monitoring and data collection	Local, national	high	low	1
Need for policies dealing with disaster preparedness	national	high	medium	3
Need for further studies to determine the impacts of climate change on human health	Local, national, regional, global	high	low	2
Significantly high cost likely to be incurred to implement certain mitigation options by a country that contribute little if anything to the cause of climate change	Local, national, regional	high	low	2

Lack of funds to develop appropriate protective measures	Local, national, regional	high	low	2
Need to integrate climate change science into school curriculum	Local, national	medium	medium	4
Need to conserve coastal forests as first line of defence against cyclone-induced wave action	Local, national	high	medium	3
Lack of political support	Local, national	high	low	1

**Attachment 6© Sustainable Land Management**

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Scale of the Problem</b>	<b>Level of Concern</b>	<b>Ability to Adequately Address Issue</b>	<b>Priority Ranking</b>
Best practices and guidelines for SLM are not integrated into development planning	national	medium	low	3
Lack of an SLM Monitoring and Evaluation system for agriculture and forestry use	national	medium	low	2
Lack of capacity in government agencies to use Land Information System (LIS) as a planning tool	national	high	low	1
Lack of code of practice for land clearance	national	medium	medium	3
Limited understanding of the links between forest clearing and declining soil fertility and productivity	Local, national	medium	medium	3
Lack of local capacity to address soil rehabilitation and restoration	national	medium	low	1
Need to mainstream SLM into national development processes	national	high	low	1
Limited capacity for alternative commercial sustainable agricultural and forestry systems	Local, national	medium	low	2
Inadequacy of existing policies and regulations to fully address SLM issues	national	high	low	2
Limited number of staff trained in SLM practices and approaches	national	high	low	2
Need for research and in-depth training in the effective use of land information and data for planning and management purposes	national	high	low	1
Loss of traditional farming practices in preference for more effective mechanical practices	Local, national	low	low	4