
15th SPREP Meeting

Report of the Fifteenth SPREP Meeting of Officials

**13 - 16 September 2004
Pape'ete, French Polynesia**

Meeting Report

Introduction

1. The Fifteenth SPREP Meeting of Officials (15SM) was convened in Pape'ete, French Polynesia, from 13 to 16 September 2004. A list of Representatives of the SPREP member countries and territories as well as observers is attached as **Annex I**.

Agenda Item 1:

Official Opening

2. Delegates were welcomed with the traditional Tahitian greeting (*orero*). The Chair of the Fourteenth SPREP Meeting (14SM), Mr Cama Tuiloma, Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Local Government, Housing, Squatter Settlement and Environment, Fiji, called the Meeting to order and thanked the government of French Polynesia for the warm welcome. The Chair thanked Members for the support accorded to him over the past year and highlighted some of the main achievements of the Secretariat during this time. The full text of the Chair's speech is attached as **Annex II**.

3. The Director of SPREP, Mr Asterio Takesy, also expressed his deep gratitude to His Excellency, President Oscar Temaru, the Vice President Mr Jacqui Drollet and the people and government of French Polynesia for the warm welcome and hospitality. The good work of the outgoing Chair was also acknowledged. The full text of the Director's speech is attached as **Annex III**.

4. The Vice President of French Polynesia, Jacqui Drollet welcomed delegates with a warm *ia orana*. The Vice President spoke of the powerful links connecting the Maohi people to the land and nature. The profound changes facing Tahiti and the severe impacts on the environment over the past two hundred years was highlighted. The Vice President spoke of challenges facing the world today and the need to promote sustainable development in an equitable manner that took into account cultural heritage, the mainstreaming of ecology and sustainable development as well as preservation of the islands culture and identity. The Vice President then declared the Meeting open. The full text of the Vice President's speech is attached as **Annex IV**.

Agenda Item 2:

Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

5. The Meeting:
- appointed the representative of French Polynesia as Chair and the representative of New Zealand as Vice-Chair.

Agenda Item 3:

Adoption of Agenda and Working Procedures

6. The Meeting:
- adopted the revised Provisional Agenda (attached as **Annex V**), agreed on hours of work and appointed an open-ended Report Drafting Committee work.

Agenda Item 4:

Action Taken on Decisions Taken by the Fourteenth SPREP Meeting

7. The Secretariat reported on the implementation of matters arising from the 14th SPREP Meeting as outlined in the Secretariat's working paper and under ensuing agenda items.
8. The Meeting:
- noted the actions taken by the Secretariat on decisions taken by the 14th SPREP Meeting.

Agenda Item 5:

Performance Review/Overview of Developments in 2003

Agenda Item 5.1: Presentation of Annual Report for 2003 and Director's Overview of Progress since 14SM

9. The Director provided an overview of the Secretariat's progress since the 14th SPREP Meeting (attached as **Annex VI**) and made special mention of organisations and donors who collaborated, assisted and worked in partnership with the Secretariat in the implementation of the Secretariat's work programme.

10. A number of representatives commended the Secretariat on the work completed.

11. The Meeting:

- endorsed the report.

Agenda Item 5.1(a): Secretariat's Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report on the 2003 Work Programme and Budget

12. The Secretariat briefly outlined activities implemented in the 2003 calendar year.

13. General commendation was expressed by a number of Members for the range of achievements detailed in the report.

14. The following consensus points emerged from subsequent discussion:

- The move to Strategic Programmes should allow a more strategic approach, including reporting of work outcomes and outputs at a higher level.
- Future Meetings will include more detailed discussion by programme staff of programme outcomes, achievements, challenges and lessons learned as well as long-term objectives and vision for the future. Further, discussion would include the status of the regional environment and information from Members on the value of SPREP's work at the national level.
- Need for a breakdown of financial information similar to that included in the proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2005.
- Indication was requested in subsequent reporting to show whether capacity has been built in member countries that could be used to measure the success of the activities undertaken.

15. The Meeting:

- approved the report, with the associated points for attention.

Agenda Item 5.2.1: Report on Members' Contributions

16. In accordance with Financial Regulation 13, the Secretariat reported on the receipt of Members' contributions with an update on the status of contri-

butions received up to 10 September 2004.

17. The Secretariat advised the Meeting that a total of USD\$841,510 had been received by the Secretariat in 2004, leaving a balance of contributions outstanding of USD\$371,765. The total received represented 69% of 2003 unpaid contributions and 2004 total contributions. Unpaid contributions to date made up 38% of total 2004 contributions.

18. The Meeting:

- noted the revised report including the status of unpaid Membership contributions.
- committed itself to paying current and outstanding Membership contributions in full as soon as possible in 2004.
- encouraged the Secretariat to continue to work with countries with outstanding contributions to have these paid at an early date.

Agenda Item 5.2.2: Audited Annual Accounts for 2002

19. The Secretariat tabled the Audited Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2003, in accordance with SPREP Financial Regulations. A surplus of \$124,697 in the core budget would be carried forward for use in 2004 in the core budget. The surplus from project funds of \$1,769,939 would also be carried forward for use in projects in 2004.

20. The Meeting requested clarification of the primary function and the decision to cease charging depreciation, which were satisfactorily dealt with by the Secretariat.

21. The Meeting:

- adopted the revised Financial Statements and Auditor's Report.

Agenda Item 6:

SPREP Action Plan 2005-2009

22. The Secretariat tabled the draft SPREP Action Plan for Managing the Environment of the Pacific Islands Region for the Period 2005-2009, for consideration and recommendation to the Environment Ministers for endorsement.

23. A number of representatives conveyed their support for the draft Action Plan, particularly the move away from sectoral issues and the more holistic focus on priority environmental issues specifically climate change, conservation and waste management. Interest was further expressed in seeing how the outputs of the Strategic Programmes would contribute to the outcomes listed in the SPREP Action Plan.

24. The representative of Australia suggested a few amendments in section 5.3 that were accepted by the Members and the SPREP Action Plan was adjusted accordingly.

25. The Meeting:

- endorsed the draft SPREP Action Plan for Managing the Environment of the Pacific Islands Region for 2005 – 2009 as amended for recommending to the Environment Ministers' Meeting for approval.

Agenda Item 7:

Programme Strategy

Agenda Item 7.1: SPREP Strategic Programmes 2004 - 2013

26. The Secretariat presented a final version of the SPREP Strategic Programmes 2004-2013 and a realigned organization structure.

27. The Meeting expressed general approval of the Strategic Programmes and saw the strategic programmes as a major reference document that would help the Secretariat organise its work, and assist with transparency and accountability.

28. The Meeting noted that the document would be revised and refined over time, taking into account the following points:

- that there was a need to show how the strategic programmes link back to the Action Plan;
- that more detail was required in the activities under the outputs of the programmes;

- that increased clarity was required about what would be achieved at the component level;
- that indications were required as to how to maintain equity in the assistance provided to Members;
- that the development of country profiles would be a useful tool for the Secretariat to monitor the equity and performance of its work to Members;
- that the Pacific Futures programme was of key interest for France, which was keen to see countries in the region contribute to the global improvement of environmental governance; and
- that the Secretariat assist countries in identifying their capacity building priorities, development of appropriate indicators in environmental reporting and monitoring for standardisation processes.

29. The Meeting listened with interest to the intervention of the French representative, who outlined the contents of an initiative targeting the progressive transformation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) into the United Nations Environment Organization. The representative specified that the proposal, meant to improve coherence and synergies among the various institutions dealing with environmental issues on an international level, would supplement efforts already underway to reinforce UNEP.

30. The Meeting:

- approved the second draft of the Secretariat Strategic Programmes as amended;
- noted that the Strategic Programmes was a living document that would be refined and improved over time; and
- approved the realigned organization structure (attached to the Strategic Programmes) for phased implementation as current employment contracts expire and as funding becomes available.

Agenda Item 7.2: Resourcing Strategy

31. The Secretariat provided the Meeting with an update on its efforts to further advance its Resourcing Strategy and explore ways to improve its fund-raising capabilities and communication with SPREP stakeholders.

32. The Meeting provided the following points to assist in the further development and implementation of the Resourcing Strategy:

- that donors were interested in a long-term view of the priorities of member countries;
- that increased public awareness efforts were required to acquaint donors with the increases in capacity at the national level;
- that SPREP as an organisation had to compete for funding with other organisations, with donors using the following criteria: the efficiency of the organisation; the cost effectiveness of its operation; the regularity and transparency of its reporting on their activities; and
- that SPREP should continue its efforts to strengthen its role as a regional organisation.

33. The Meeting:

- noted the status of the Secretariat's Resourcing Strategy for the Organisation.

Agenda Item 8:

Staff Remuneration - Triennial Review

Agenda Item 8.1: Triennial CROP Remuneration Review on Professional Staff

34. The Secretariat presented the final draft report of the triennial CROP Remuneration Review.

35. After some discussion and clarification, the Meeting approved:

- a one off 5% increase for SPREP professional staff for 2004, based on satisfactory performance, to be effective from 1 January 2004 on the basis that it would not be funded through a Membership contributions increase;
- all 15 recommendations of the 2004 CRWG report (attached as **Annex VII**), including a 5% equal increase across the CROP and SPREP professional staff salary scale, effective from 1 January 2005, and on the basis that it would not be funded through a Membership contributions increase; and

- the stabilisation mechanism (attached as **Annex VIII**) also to be effective from 1 January 2005.

Agenda Item 8.2: Triennial Remuneration Review of SPREP Support Staff

36. The Secretariat presented the findings of a triennial review of the terms and conditions of support staff.

37. The Meeting approved:

- (i) the upgrading of the minimum salary of all five grades of support staff to the 75th percentile of the local employment market as stipulated in the Staff Regulations while the maximum remain at current levels. The new scale is attached as **Annex IX**;
- (ii) extension of the current maximum salary at which overtime rates are based from WST28,600 p.a. to WSST36,200 p.a.; and
- (iii) (i) and (ii) become effective from 1 January 2004.

Agenda Item 9:

Recommendations of the Joint Task Force (JTF) on SPREP Core Services and Budget

38. The Secretariat presented the main conclusions of the Joint Task Force on SPREP Core Services and Budget noting that this would require the following key changes to the Financial Regulations:

Regulation 2

Definitions

Corporate Services means translation and interpretation, library, publications and information, information and communications technology, property management, personnel administration, general administration and finance.

Regulation 3

The Annual Budget Estimates will cover:

- (i) **Core Fund Budget** – Core Budget income and expenditure proposals covering Executive management and support including Executive management's functions in Regional Coordination and International Cooperation, Donor Liaison and Consultation with Members; Servicing the SPREP Meeting and Corporate Services.
- (ii) **Programme Fund Budget** – Programme funding and expenditure

39. The Meeting:

- approved the conclusions of the JTF and the changes as proposed in the revised Financial Regulations.

Agenda Item 10:

Regional Conventions

40. The Secretariat presented the Meeting with a brief summary of the major decisions taken at the Conferences of the Parties to the Apia, SPREP and Waigani Conventions held prior to the SPREP Meeting.

41. The Meeting:

- noted the main decisions of the Joint Conference of the Parties to the Apia and SPREP Conventions, and the need to provide any necessary support to facilitate the successful implementation of these decisions;
- noted the decisions of the Second Conference of the Parties to the Waigani Convention, and the need to provide any necessary support to facilitate the successful implementation of these decisions; and
- called on SPREP Members not yet Parties to the regional Conventions for their support by becoming Parties

Agenda Item 11:

Work Programme and Budget

Agenda Item 11.1: Island Ecosystems Programme

Agenda Item 11.1.1: Regional Support Mechanism For National Capacity Self-Assessments

42. The Secretariat presented a proposal to establish a Regional Support Mechanism for Pacific island countries and territories to implement their National Capacity Self Assessments (NCSA).

43. The Meeting supported SPREP's involvement in assisting countries in the process and noted:

- The importance of the process and the short time frame for its completion;
- The potential for the Secretariat to back-stop national activities particularly in relation to the development of the toolkit and benchmarking;
- Potential linkages with related activities, such as the national biodiversity capacity assessment, millennium development goal reporting and national sustainable development strategies;
- Several countries had commenced implementation of the NCSA;
- The need to consider subsequent work to build capacity following the assessment;
- Australia's commitment of AUD\$413,000 to support the project.

44. The representative from the United Nations Development Programme noted that NCSA was a nationally driven exercise that was designed to be flexible to complement related exercises and promote harmonisation. At the global level the Secretariat of the Global Environment Facility received conflicting information relating to national needs. This was because synergies between related multi-lateral environmental agreements were not always promoted or supported. The NCSA was designed to assist in addressing this constraint.

45. The Meeting:

- endorsed the approach proposed by the Secretariat.

Agenda Item 11.2: Pacific Futures Programme

Agenda Item 11.2.1: Pacific Islands Environment Outlook 2004

46. The Secretariat informed the Meeting of progress in developing the Pacific Islands Environment Outlook, 2004 (PIEO 2004).

47. The representative of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) noted that UNEP was producing three such documents in time for the Barbados Programme of Action Ten Year Review (BpoA+10) and expressed her gratitude to SPREP for its assistance.

48. Members commended the Secretariat for the excellent report and noted:

- the very helpful information it contained that would in particular assist with policy development and planning at the national level;
- the importance of producing such a document for the BpoA+10;
- that the Secretariat would endeavour to acquire data from Territories not previously involved in the process;
- that the Secretariat would continue to assist countries in the process; and
- the need for further time to consider the report in detail.

49. The Meeting:

- noted the development of the PIEO 2004;
- undertook to provide comments to the Secretariat by 15 October 2004; and
- agreed that PIEO 2004 would be circulated to Members by November 2004.

Agenda Item 11.2.2: Climate Change, Climate Variability and Sea Level Rise

50. The Secretariat informed the Meeting of the status of the climate-related programmes in SPREP.

51. In discussion, the Meeting:

- approved the second phase of PIREP so long as there were sufficient funds to carry out the activities;
- expressed some concern about possible duplication of work with SOPAC's energy

work and the need to collaborate closely with SOPAC and other relevant CROP agencies; and

- noted the inadequacy of funds for Phase 1 and encouraged wide consultation with stakeholders.

52. The Meeting:

- endorsed the approach taken by the Secretariat to address greenhouse gas mitigation and adaptation measures;
- endorsed the approach made by the Secretariat in support of assisting Pacific island countries with their Second National Communications,
- strongly encouraged participating countries to approve ODS regulations;
- endorsed the initiative taken by the Secretariat to address waste ozone depleting substances;
- noted the recommendation of the *ad hoc* Working Group on Climate Change; and
- requested PIREP to collaborate with SOPAC in the implementation of Phase 2.

Agenda Item 11.3: Proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2005 and Indicative budgets for 2006 and 2007

53. The Secretariat presented the proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2005 and indicative budgets for 2006 and 2007.

54. The Meeting noted:

- with appreciation France's stated intention to increase its level of funding support to the Secretariat and to the region in general;
- with appreciation the new work programme and budget format;
- that the format may be periodically refined to provide Members with a better means to evaluate work programme implementation;
- the positive development in reducing the unsecured proportion of the budget from 34% in 2004 to 19% in 2005;
- Australia's focus on support to the organization through programme funding to achieve agreed outcomes;

- New Zealand's preference for providing programme funding (currently tagged to specific staff positions), with flexibility to support one-off projects where the need arose;
- risks associated with preparing annual budgets on the basis that all Member contributions would be received;
- the allocation of some donor programme funds to cover a shortfall in the core budget arising from outstanding member contributions;
- the potential for the Secretariat to access additional sources of funding assistance, particularly in relation to the EU, through Member Pacific French territories;
- the need to develop and implement the Resourcing Strategy to strengthen collaboration with existing and new partners;
- that activities and verifiable indicators for the annual work programme needed to be more specific than was provided in the Action Plan and the Strategic Programmes;
- the need to include costs associated with executive appointments in the 2005 work period;
- that the Environmental Impact Assessment Officer is currently unfunded;
- the need to secure funds for the Donor Liaison Officer post and for continued support to the PEIN initiative;
- opportunities to use experts in French Member territories to support implementation of specific work programme activities;
- the need to clearly identify activities, within the Pacific Futures Programme, that address management and public education regarding rapid population growth; and
- the availability of a strategy for the Year of Action Against Waste and the draft Solid Waste Management Strategy.

55. The Meeting:

- requested the Secretariat to investigate the possibility of increasing the Project Management Fee from non-member countries and organisations to help free up funds for programmatic work;
- requested increased clarity in relation to

personnel and personnel costs associated with outputs;

- requested the Secretariat to produce a discussion paper addressing the effects of human population on the environment, in close consultation with other CROP agencies including the University of the South Pacific; and
- approved the proposed 2005 Work Programme and Budget on the understanding that the Secretariat would adjust the allocation of funds to reflect negotiations with donors and circulate the revised final document to Members within one month and where possible, the revised final document would also incorporate greater specificity in work program activities and verifiable indicators.

Agenda Item 12:

Institutional Matters

Agenda Item 12.1: Proposed Name Change For SPREP

56. The Secretariat presented Samoa's formal proposal on changing the name of the SPREP Organization and Secretariat.

57. The Meeting:

- agreed that the new name for the Organisation be the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (while retaining the acronym SPREP) and the Secretariat be the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).
- agreed to recommend this change to the 5th Environment Ministers' Meeting for endorsement by consensus of all Parties attending the SPREP Environment Ministers' Meeting, and that the proposed name changes be used immediately thereafter.

Agenda Item 12.2: Process for Recruitment of Director

58. The Secretariat informed the Meeting of relevant procedures in the agreed process of recruitment of the post of Director.

59. Representatives of the following countries volunteered to participate in the Selection Advisory Committee (SAC): Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, France, New Zealand, Republic of Marshall Islands, Tokelau, Samoa and the United States.

60. During subsequent discussion, the Meeting offered the following points:

- that the experience and attributes include reference to the advantage of a knowledge of both official SPREP languages;
- that consideration be given to harmonising the procedures of appointment with the other CROP agencies, which would require a change to the SPREP rules; and
- that the Terms of Reference be amended to present the position as more exciting and appealing.

61. The Meeting:

- requested the Secretariat to prepare a paper for the next SPREP Meeting with a view to harmonising with practices evolving in other CROP agencies on reappointment of incumbents and a mechanism to enable all Pacific island countries and territories to comment on the performance of the incumbent director;
- appointed a SAC with representatives from Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, France, Republic of Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Tokelau, Samoa and the United States, chaired by French Polynesia as Chair of the SPREP Meeting; and
- approved a Terms of Reference for the Position of Director, attached as **Annex X**.

Agenda Item 12.3: Proposed Amendment to Staff Regulations

62. To meet concerns expressed at the 14th SPREP Meeting, the Secretariat proposed to the Meeting a new section to be added to Staff Regulation 11 as follows:

Appointment of Director and Staff
Regulation 11

Staff

“(e) When appointing staff, the Director shall comply with the SPREP recruitment procedures and will

ensure that these processes are transparent, equitable and based on merit.”

63. The Meeting noted:

- that the Secretariat was developing a policy on sexual harassment that would be made available to Members.

64. The Meeting:

- requested that copies of the detailed recruitment procedures of the organisation be made available to Members;
- requested that Members resident in Samoa be involved in the recruitment of senior staff positions, such as the new Programme Manager positions; and
- approved the proposed amended text.

Agenda Item 12.4: Revised Financial Regulations

65. The Secretariat presented revised Financial Regulations that catered for the current programme format and presentation. There was substantial subsequent discussion during the Meeting, leading to a number of requests.

66. The Meeting:

- requested that the Secretariat seek the advice of its current auditors on the adequacy of the new Financial Regulations.
- agreed that the wording of 8(b) (i) and 8(b) (ii) be amended as follows:
 - 8(b) (i) replace “after consideration of donor requirements” with “in a manner consistent with donor requirements”.
 - 8(b) (ii) replace “consultation with donors where appropriate” with “in a manner consistent with donor requirements”.
- agreed that the wording of regulation 10 be amended as follows:
 - change “two thirds of the previous year’s approved budgetary expenditure” to “one quarter of the previous year’s approved budgetary expenditure” as well as to seek the advice of the auditors on the amount of expenditure permitted.

- requested additional wording for Regulation 16c to reflect the idea that if requested by donors then any interest generated from programme and project funding should revert back to the programme and not be credited to the core fund. This request is to be actioned from the 2006 Budget; and
- requested that the audited financial statements of the Secretariat be detailed to the level of the programme components (refer to regulation 27).
- approved the proposed revised Financial Regulations (attached as **Annex XI**), with the amendments above, to become effective immediately after the conclusion of the 15th SPREP Meeting.

Agenda Item 12.5: Palau - Notice of Desire to Accede to the SPREP Agreement

67. The Secretariat updated the Meeting on developments with ratifications and accessions to the Agreement Establishing SPREP (1993). Palau in a Diplomatic Note dated 14 April 2004 informed the Government of Samoa as Depository of its desire to accede to the Agreement Establishing SPREP (1993) pursuant to Article 10(5). The Government of Samoa notified Parties of Palau's request in a Note dated 26 May 2004.

68. The Meeting:

- welcomed Palau's request to accede to the SPREP Treaty;
- welcomed the advice from Vanuatu that it intends to accede to the SPREP Treaty before the 16th SPREP Meeting; and
- noted that the United States remains in the process of accession.

Agenda Item 12.6: Appointment of Auditor

69. The Secretariat presented information to the Meeting's to enable it to decide on the appointment of Auditors to audit the accounts of SPREP for 2004 and 2005.

70. The Meeting:

- endorsed the appointment of Lesa ma Penn to audit SPREP's 2004 and 2005 financial accounts.

Agenda Item 13:

Regional Coordination

Agenda Item 13.1: Report of CROP Heads Meeting

71. The Secretariat informed the Meeting of the summary decisions of the 2004 Meeting of the CROP Chief Executives. The Meeting noted that paper with gratitude.

Agenda Item 13.2: BPoA+10 Progress Report

72. The Secretariat reported on progress after the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002 leading to BPoA+10. The Meeting noted that paper with gratitude.

Agenda Item 13.3: Update on five Pacific WSSD Type II Partnership Initiatives facilitated by SPREP

73. The Secretariat provided the Meeting with an update on the status and progress of the five Pacific WSSD Type II partnership initiatives facilitated by the Secretariat that include: Waste Management, Mainstreaming Conservation and Traditional Knowledge, Planning for Sustainable Community Lifestyles, Capacity Building and Adaptation. The Meeting noted that paper with gratitude.

Agenda Item 13.4: Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Forum and Draft Framework for Integrated Strategic Action

74. The Secretariat reported on the outcomes the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Forum (PIROF), 2-6 February 2004. The Meeting noted the paper with gratitude.

Agenda Item 13.5: International Waters Project

75. The Secretariat provided a Status Report for the International Waters Project (IWP) that was implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the International Waters of the Pacific Small Island Developing States. The Meeting noted the paper with gratitude.

Agenda Item 14:

Items Proposed by Members

76. The representative of France informed the Meeting that France was suggesting that the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) change progressively to become the World Environment Organisation. There were presently over 500 environmental instruments worldwide. The continuing growth in the number of Agreements suggested a need to rationalise efforts in dealing with them. France had initiated a process on environmental governance that included the involvement of over 20 countries. SPREP would be kept informed of progress of the work of this group.

77. The representative of France also informed the Meeting of the Coral Reef Initiative that the President of the Republic of France M. Jacques Chirac announced in 2003.

Agenda Item 15:

Statements by Observers

78. The texts of the statements by observers are attached in **Annex XII**.

Agenda Item 16:

Other Business

79. The Secretariat presented a draft agenda for the Ministerial Meeting for discussion.

80. The Meeting:

- accepted the draft agenda for presentation to the Ministerial Meeting.

Agenda Item 17:

Date and Venue of the 16th SPREP Meeting

81. The Meeting:

- agreed that the venue for the next SPREP Meeting would be at the SPREP Secretariat in Apia, Samoa, in September 2005, with

the exact dates to be announced by the Secretariat in due course, after consultation with the Chair.

Agenda Item 18:

Adoption of Report

82. The Meeting:

- adopted the draft report of the Meeting presented by the Drafting Committee with amendments; and
- endorsed the draft Letter of Transmittal to the 5th Environment Ministers' Forum with agreed amendments.

Agenda Item 19:

Close

83. In closing the Meeting, the Chair, Vice President Mr Jacqui Drollet, noted that the region was not only working for itself but was also working for its children's future. He noted that the Meeting had achieved very satisfactory outputs but that there was a continued need to stress the financial commitment required from its stakeholders.

84. The Chair thanked the Director, Deputy Director and SPREP staff who had made the Meeting so successful, then officially closed the Meeting.

85. The Director expressed his appreciation to the Chair for his able steerage of the meeting. He thanked French Polynesia for the enormous effort invested in making the Meeting such a success. He also thanked the Members for their enthusiastic participation in the meeting. The Director went on to thank the observers who had made such interesting contributions to the Meeting. The Director then thanked the staff of the President's and Vice President's offices who had worked hard to make the Meeting so successful.

Annexes

Annex I - List of Participants

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Annex II: Official Opening Statement By Director of SPREP Mr Asterio Takesy

(salutations)

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to Ia Orana Maeva to you all to the 15th SPREP Meeting, and I join his Excellency President Temaru in welcoming you to exotic French Polynesia. On behalf of the delegates and secretariat, I wish to express our deep gratitude to his Excellency President Oscar Temaru, the people and government of French Polynesia – for the warm welcome and hospitality that have been so kindly extended to us since our arrival. Your Excellency President Temaru, we have all been touched by the warmth of your welcome and the kind and caring way that we have been looked after by your people.

This 15th SPREP Meeting will go down in the history of the organization as the first to be held on the soil of a French speaking member since the organization became independent. With the excellent preparation and support so generously provided by our host, it will be a successful and a memorable one as well. That is the happy aspect; the not so happy side is that my French is non-existent and what's more, in my case, the saying, "you can't teach an old dog new tricks" could not be more true.

Mr. Chairman, allow me a moment to welcome and thank our CROP representatives for their expressed support with their valued presence. We very much look forward to their participation at this meeting and the side events. In the same vein, on your behalf Mr. Chairman, let me acknowledge with gratitude the presence of some UN agencies—UNDP, UNEP, and UNU, as well as a good number of non-governmental organizations. I thank you all for honoring our invitation to these meetings and we look forward to your valued contributions.

Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates, over the past year I undertook to learn the job and broaden my understanding and knowledge of member countries and territories as well as SPREP's donor partners. My focus from the start has been on ways to improve the efficiency while strengthening the management of the secretariat. The SPREP secretariat is a pool of some of the best talent in our region. As a testament to this fact, early this year the EU/SPREP Pacific Environment Information

Project won an internationally recognized award, the Stockholm Award out of a field of more than 900 contestants. Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in recognizing the manager of the project in SPREP whose hard work and professional talents contributed in no small way to securing such a distinguished award.

Upon assuming this post, I elected to face its numerous and complex challenges through a team approach, given the diverse talents of the SPREP secretariat. This approach in my view is the best avenue to the successful execution of SPREP'S mandate, achievement of the goals of SPREP'S Action Plan, and implementation of SPREP'S Strategic Programmes. I will continue to work hard to solidify SPREP'S team spirit, and strengthen cooperation with partners and stakeholders.

In this connection, I should like at this juncture to point to the successful outcome of the meeting of the Joint Task Force on SPREP Core Services and Budget that was established by the 14th SPREP Meeting. Its report and recommendations are before you and I commend them to you distinguished delegates. In itself the meeting was indeed a success; furthermore it demonstrated the clear advantage of collaboration—by bringing the members and secretariat to think together in confronting the constraints and challenges SPREP faces. This is progress, one that we must build upon as we ride the wave of an integrated approach to managing the environment at the national, regional and international levels.

Following on from the agreement in principle by the 14th SPREP Meeting to migrate from the project based to a strategic programmatic approach, the secretariat embarked on an ambitious undertaking. We launched a change management project that would enable the secretariat to position itself to implement the strategic programmes better. This was assisted by professional consultants funded by grant assistance from NZ government for which we are grateful, while there remains some distance yet to be covered, the goal line is in view, so that when reached, among others, it would bring about change in organizational behaviour, clarify roles and reporting relationships, foster greater collaboration and sharing across the organization, and commitment to shared organizational goals. A cru-

cial component of this project is a realistic assessment of the secretariat structure needed to carry out its implementation role. Before you is our proposed realignment of the structure that parallels the strategic programmatic approach.

Again, working closely with members, we have completed the review of the current action plan for managing the environment of the Pacific islands region (2001-2004) which contributed greatly to the joint formulation of the proposed new Action Plan (2005-2009). That proposal is now before this meeting for consideration and decision.

Similarly, your secretariat undertook and completed the refinement of the SPREP strategic programmes, as directed by the last SPREP meeting. This is now tabled at this meeting for consideration and approval.

Reflecting back for a moment, Mr. Chairman in my opening statement last year I stated that the significant environmental issues facing the Pacific islands region cannot be addressed by SPREP alone. That it would need to work more closely with others who have a mutual interest in the Pacific environment. Prominent among them are the CROP agencies where there would appear to be significant opportunities to strengthen our collaborative efforts, and that I would dedicate considerable efforts to this end early in my term. I have done just that, Mr. Chairman. I have attended the council meetings of most of the CROP agencies and participated where appropriate in their respective proceedings. I have been most encouraged by the substantive collaborative work among crop agencies and the cooperation heads and staff of the various agencies have extended to my staff and me.

I also committed myself to seeking to establish mutually beneficial partnerships with development assistance agencies and non-government organizations. I am pleased to see a number of these with us today,

many of whom SPREP is now very much engaged with in areas of the environment. Additionally, new partners have joined our ranks at SPREP—UNEP has placed a Biosafety officer, while RAMSAR provided a Wetland officer. As well, the US Western Fisheries Management Council funded a new assistant turtle database officer and NOAA supported a new Climatology Advisor. We are grateful to the MacArthur Foundation for their decision to partner with SPREP as signified by their first financial contribution to its work. We are nearing conclusion of discussions with IFAW and IUCN on concrete ways we can work together.

Fund raising is an art that CI and TNC have perfected and they do not see the need for SPREP to reinvent the wheel and have not disagreed in sharing their secret with us, I think.

Turning to our current partners, we have stayed the course to strengthen and broaden our relationships. PRC has contributed financially to the corporate support of SPREP while Japan is continuing its support for waste management in the region.

Mr. Chairman, we have made some modest progress in translating our resourcing strategy into action. However, much remains to be done. Final approval of the strategic programmes and the new action plan will greatly improve our prospects for success in efforts to stabilize the financial base of the organization.

I would like to conclude by pledging to you my utmost to bring about progressive performance improvement of your secretariat. Respect and confidence are critical ingredients for building long-term partnerships and regional cooperation. Together with the secretariat, I will continue to work hard to earn both, in support of the organization.

I THANK YOU – MAURU'URU.

Annex III: Statement by Mr Cama Tuiloma, Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Local Government, Housing, Squatter, Settlement & Environment, Government of Fiji

Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen;

Bula!!!

It is indeed an honour and a privilege for me to warmly welcome all of you this morning to this important regional meet, the **Fifteenth SPREP Meeting of Officials**.

Let me first convey our sincere gratitude and thanks to the **Leaders and the Government of French Polynesia and its people**. For those of us who are gracing your shores for the first time, it is a dream and experience come true to be here and to enjoy and share the friendliness of your people and the serene beauty of your islands.

Thank you for accommodating us and for the warmness and hospitality you have accorded us. **Maururu**. (Thank you very much in Tahitian)

Let me also thank the Director and his staff for enabling this meeting to take place, as it has in the past, with all other meetings, to progress the work of the Secretariat with the SPREP Member Countries and other organisations, in all its administrative aspects. I believe that without the tremendous preparations and organisations of the Secretariat, it would have been quite difficult to hold and progress these meetings satisfactorily, as they have been.

Last but not least, let me sincerely thank the Members, particularly their Delegates who are here, for your attendance, which is key to the deliberations and success of this meet. Let me also thank the Members and the Director and staff of SPREP for the advice and support accorded to Fiji as Chair for the Fourteenth SPREP Meeting of Officials to date.

I believe it is proper for me to say a few words on SPREP's activities, and I am not going to steal the **thunder from the Director's report**, but it is my pleasure to report that during the period of the Fourteenth SPREP Meeting of Officials in the last 12 months, we have worked hard with the Secretariat to establish many milestones. One that I want to particularly mention is the new **SPREP Strategic Programme** which is a ten-year plan. It is linked to the new **SPREP Action Plan** that is reviewed every five years. The Strategic Programme embodies the vision of SPREP members and stakeholders for the long term management of our environment. It identifies broad priority areas and focuses on areas of regional issues. I believe that these long-term strategic approaches will augur well for the future operations of the Secretariat, with well-planned and well-coordinated work programmes that are endorsed in these SPREP Meetings. This sets the scene for the direction of SPREP and the management of the protection and conservation of our Pacific Island natural environment.

To put that in a real Pacific Islands perspective, now we have built our canoe (ie. **The SPREP Strategic Programme**), and we have put the sails up (ie. **The SPREP Action Plan**), and we want to ride into the waves and winds of challenges where the prevailing Pacific breezes will sustain and be kind to our journey towards Island Ecosystems and Pacific futures.

With that vision and plan in mind, I look forward to welcoming the new Chairman and also look forward to working with him, and I urge all SPREP member countries to support him as you have supported me.

With those few words, I thank you for your attention.

Merci beau coup (Thank you very much in French)

**ANNEX IV - Speech given by His Excellency Jacqui DROLLET,
Vice- President and Minister of the Environment
Government of French Polynesia**

Honourable Chairman of the *Assemblée de Polynésie française*,
His Excellency the Ambassador,
Representatives of the High Commissioner
Madame la Députée,
Ladies and Gentlemen officially representing the SPREP member countries,
Ladies and Gentlemen representing environmental protection associations,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Ia Orana, Manava,

Pu fenua,

PU FENUA, the placenta.
My placenta, my first envelope, is a part of me.
It links me to my mother,
It links me to all my ancestors,
It is my connection to my past and my culture.

My placenta lies buried in my land;
It left my mother's womb and was gathered into the belly of my land.
It is a symbolic, fleshly, powerful link binding Maohi mankind to Maohi land.

Over my placenta, my mother planted an Uru sapling.
Today it is a splendid, generous tree.
This tradition seals the alliance between Maohi mankind and nature,
and makes of mankind a fundamental component of nature.

I give this example to illustrate the extent to which Nature has formed the basic matrix for endeavours and all plans throughout the traditions, history and culture of our Maohi world.

Is this still true today?

For the past two centuries we have been in contact with a different civilization, a different way of thinking, with different values; and life in our small island communities has undergone profound disruption.

The overriding principle of capitalist profit; the unrestricted rule of Money, the triumph of individualism as the sole motor for economic and social progress; the egotism of nations, all have taken a hand in bringing the societies of our small global village to the situation we now face: an ever-widening gap between rich and poor countries; the exploitation of poor countries' natural wealth by richer nations; population imbalances, severe assaults on the environment leading sooner or later to endangering our civilisation's very existence... This is now our heritage... What can be done?

What can we do faced with this overwhelming economic mechanism, we who are small pockets of humanity, lost in middle of our vast Pacific ocean, one of the planet's last ecological lungs? What can we do, ringed by the American continent, which dominated the events of the 20th century; Asia, now preparing to succeed the Americans in the current century, and Australia, the island continent, seen by some as the promised land? We, who have been called by History to sit at the centre of geopolitical gravity for the coming decades?

Since the seventies, the international community has been questioning this type of development that is leading the tenants of our global village to the ecological, economic and social impasses that are the hallmarks of today's major global imbalances.

The Earth Summit on Environment and Development held in Rio, in which I had the honour of participating in 1992, marked the first time that heads of state of all nations came together to ponder the fundamental issue of global governance for our planetary village. 170 countries adopted the Earth Summit's recommendations on biodiversity, climate change and forests. For the first time, all nations agreed to share responsibility for the future of our planet. Considerable progress was made in heightening universal awareness of our common destiny.

The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and its regional counterpart, the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) enter completely into this new international frame-

work involving the synergy required for intergovernmental implementation that gives priority to environmental protection policies while keeping sustainable development in mind. It is therefore with great pride, gratitude and a sense of responsibility that we have the privilege and honour of welcoming, for the first time in our country, the 5th SPREP Environment Ministers' Meeting.

But first, let us put all this into perspective. Sustainable development is a type of development that meets the needs of the present while preserving the needs of future generations. The concept of sustainable development is intended as a coherent way of meeting a number of challenges which can be summarized as follows: reconciling the need for progress with the planet's limited resources, keeping the long term in mind.

Therefore, development cannot be accomplished:

- By making serious and irremediable changes in the biosphere's equilibrium, both overall and locally;
- By gratifying the individual aspirations of some to the detriment of the mutual needs of the many;
- By sacrificing tomorrow in favour of the interests of today, in both the area of economics and that of our heritage, transmitted down the generations to us.

On the other hand, the importance of protecting the environment and biodiversity should not eclipse the prime importance of mankind. Economic development should not be undertaken in a manner that focuses solely on the enrichment of some to the detriment of social conditions for the many. Mankind is indeed the central component in sustainable development.

Men and women, integrated into their natural environment, in their cultural dimension, in their History, in their identity, must be the architects of their own development.

This presumes that the following dimensions are all taken into account in any plan for economic development:

- The cultural dimension
- The environmental dimension
- The social dimension

This approach is most particularly meaningful in our island communities, where each community's culture is still a strong pillar in our society, and where the small size of our territories calls for great vigilance with regard to pollution produced by population growth and new means of consumption, and where the fragility of the Pacific ocean ecosystem comes to bear on any outlook on long-term development.

Giving citizens their say, involving them in the reflexion, decision making and implementation process for economic projects, this is the great social challenge of sustainable development: it represents a major mutation that must be organised within the framework of citizenship culture.

Making businessmen into players in the sustainable development process also teaches them that profit, though certainly legitimate, should not represent the ultimate horizon for their activities. Respect for the environment, participatory management and mobilization of employees around economic projects, social involvement: all these are components that must be activated to build true citizens' enterprises.

Our role is to set up the structures, methods and regulations necessary for the implementation of international agencies' recommendations on sustainable development and environmental protection.

Forward-looking structures capable of providing the framework for and organising reflexion on our spatial planning for the short, medium and long term, to foster coherence between local development policies and each country's general planning programme, which in turn must harmonise with the recommendations made by international agencies.

Improved **regulations**, dealing with procedures linked to development to promote projects coming under the canopy of sustainable development,

Operational structures capable of implementing vigorous policies to protect both nature and sustainable development: drinking water networks, treatment of household and industrial waste, sanitation of waste water, natural parks, reserves for biodiversity, protection of endangered species, ecomuseums, development of each community's cultural heritage...

Government methods that involve citizens in the processes of reflexion, decision-making and follow-up for development projects.

A special effort to **insert ecology and sustainable development in our educational structures at all levels**, from nursery school through university.

For us, small Pacific communities, we would do well to remain aware, both of our island identity and of the necessary convergence of our regional needs with those of the international community, particularly with regard to all issues involving the protection of the ocean, fisheries resources, and various types of pollution.

We must pool both our thinking and our operational solutions in the area of nature protection, so that our efforts can be enriched by the successful experiences of others.

These are the goals of this 15th SPREP conference, which we have the pleasure of welcoming to our Country for the first time, and which I now declare open.

Maururu.

Jacqui DROLLET
Vice-President

Minister of the Environment

Annex V: Agenda

- 1. Official Opening**
- 2. Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair**
- 3. Adoption of Agenda and Working Procedures**
- 4. Action Taken on Matters Arising from Fourteenth SPREP Meeting**
- 5. Performance Review/Overview of Developments in 2003**
 - 5.1 Presentation of Annual Report for 2003 and Director's Overview of Progress since the Fourteenth SPREP Meeting
 - 5.1(a) 2003 Annual Work Programme and Budget – Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report
 - 5.2 Financial Reports
 - 5.2.1 *Report on Members' Contributions*
 - 5.2.2 *Audited Annual Accounts for 2003*
- 6. Action Plan Review and New Action Plan 2005 – 2009**
- 7. Programme Strategy**
 - 7.1 SPREP Strategic Programmes
 - 7.2 Resourcing Strategy
- 8. Staff Remuneration - Triennial Review**
 - 8.1 Triennial CROP Remuneration Review on Professional Staff
 - 8.2 Triennial Remuneration Review on Support Staff
- 9. Joint Task Force Report on SPREP Core Functions and Budget**
- 10. Regional Conventions**
 - 10.1 Report of the Joint Conference of the Parties for the Noumea and Apia Conventions
 - 10.2 Report of the Conference of the Parties of the Waigani Convention
- 11. Work Programme and Budget**
 - 11.1 Island Ecosystems Programme
 - 11.1.1 *Regional Support Mechanism for National Capacity Self Assessments*

11.2 Pacific Futures Programme

11.2.1 *Pacific Islands Environment Outlook 2004*

11.2.2 *Climate Change, Climate Variability and Sea Level Rise*

11.3 Proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2005 and Indicative Budgets for 2006 and 2007

12. Institutional Matters

12.1 Proposed Name Change for the Organisation

12.2 Process for Recruitment of Director

12.3 Staff Regulations – amendments

12.4 Revised Financial Regulations

12.5 Palau – Notice of Desire to Accede to the SPREP Agreement

12.6 Appointment of Auditors

13. Regional Coordination

13.1 Report of CROP Heads Meeting (Information Paper)

13.2 BPOA + 10 Progress Report (Information Paper)

13.3 Update on Pacific Type II Initiatives (Information Paper)

13.4 Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Forum and Draft Strategic Action Framework (Information Paper)

13.5 International Waters Project (Information Paper)

14. Items Proposed by Members

15. Statements by Observers

16. Other Business

16.1 Draft Agenda for the 5th Environment Ministers' Meeting

17. Date and Venue of Sixteenth SPREP Meeting

18. Adoption of Report

19. Close

ANNEX VI: Presentation of the SPREP Annual Report 2003 and the Director's overview of progress since the 14th SPREP Meeting

I would like to table the SPREP annual report for 2003 and give an overview of SPREP'S progress since the fourteenth meeting, give some consideration of the impact that the secretariat's work has had over the year, mention the developments surrounding the strategic programme approach and look a little into the future.

In this year's annual report, I am most concerned to be looking outward and to demonstrate the impact that SPREP'S work has had. By impact, I mean the positive effect that our work has had on the people of the Pacific. In some cases this is easy to demonstrate, for example in SPREP'S work to safeguard fresh water supplies to communities. In others, it is more difficult, especially in the areas where we have been working to have Pacific viewpoints taken into account at major international meetings.

I need not state that SPREP cannot do everything for all countries. Rather, given its budgetary and staff constraints size restrictions, it must be selective, working where it can be most effective, developing pilot projects that can be carried forward by collaborators, or training people so that they can continue the work themselves. During 2003 the work of the secretariat has been gradually advancing across a broad front and we have also been placing ourselves more and more at the centre of national, regional and international environmental affairs.

Working in partnership with talented people and like-minded organizations has been an important cornerstone in reaching out to our regional communities and achieving some of the goals we have set out to attain. Our limited staff numbers sometimes makes it necessary to seek out people who are able to implement elements of our various programmes for us. For example Australian Volunteers International has been instrumental in helping SPREP make this happen, with a human resources development officer who worked in RMI, Kiribati, the Cook Islands and Niue assisting environment departments with institutional strengthening and individual capacity-building skills. This work will have a very specific and positive effect within the countries. On the waste management side, the government of Japan continues to support SPREP'S effort through JICA volunteers.

Looking skywards, training has also been a component that SPREP and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) have collaborated on in a joint effort to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Air conditioning systems in cars, offices and utilities are culprits in releasing greenhouse gases, more so when they have not been properly maintained. Training industry personnel in best practices has been one approach that has been very successful in changing the behaviour of the people who are actually using and controlling the gases.

Many SPREP members are now aware of adaptation type measures to counter the threat to their island lifestyles from climate change. I pleased to report that the project on capacity building for the development of adaptation measures in Pacific island countries (CBDAMPIC) has developed an innovative guide that is having considerable impact in pilot sites in the Cook Islands, Fiji, Samoa and Vanuatu. Funded by Canada international development assistance, the new approach lets the people themselves take the lead in the work. They themselves identify areas of most concern about climate change, sort out what needs to be done and how they should do it.

Introducing alternative methods of analysis to increase community participation is never easy, particularly in traditionally based developing countries. However, the GEF-funded international waters programme has started to win over communities using a methodical analysis method for resolving water-related issues in pilot communities in Palau and the kingdom of Tonga. The impact here has been to encourage greater community involvement in environmental decisions.

Out at sea, shipping carried more than 90 percent of world trade and the Pacific provides many of the key shipping lanes. Lots of shipping also means the potential for enormous amounts of waste to be dumped haphazardly from these vessels. During 2003, SPREP worked closely with the international maritime organization to successfully modify an international legal instrument to both set out standards for ship owners and port authorities, as well as providing more practical arrangements to deal with shipping wastes. This

is having an immediate impact on improving the handling of ships' waste, as well as relieving many Pacific countries of the heavy burden of handling the international ships' waste.

Pollution, neglect and degradation have all contributed to the declining volume of many marine resources. Efforts to conserve what remains are approaching a crisis point. Fish for subsistence for example are not only smaller but are a lot harder to find. For tiny isolated islands with small populations like Tokelau, this poses questions about their lifestyle and future existence. During 2003, SPREP began a detailed study on this atoll to develop practical plans to pilot the active management of the conservation areas and an awareness-raising programme on marine resource use and conservation. In this way, the Tokelau residents can look forward to a steady supply of food from the sea in the future.

One thing all Pacific islands have in common is an over-dependence on fossil fuels to power homes, villages, transport, communication and businesses. Our fragile economies and transport logistics make this system especially vulnerable to problems of supply and price fluctuation. How we can use our own natural resources as alternative energy supplies is the reason behind the Pacific islands renewable energy programme. This is a GEF through United Nations development programme project that offers some promising possibilities, not to mention cost savings. The potential renewable energy that is on offer, virtually on our doorstep, could one day provide many Pacific islands with self-sufficient energy systems.

Conversely, the quest for the dollar is frequently the root cause of the world's spiral into the environmental abyss. This paradox is seen clearly in the Solomon Islands, where production of shell money by women ensures a traditional currency and an ancient cultural legacy is still maintained. Yet the demand for the shell is threatening the resources from which it comes. Shell money has great indigenous significance and the role that local women play in safeguarding inshore resources is proving to have an immeasurable value of its own. A secretariat study had the immediate impact of establishing better management of these resources so that they are being protected yet can still be exploited to improve livelihoods

At the regional level the work to conserve our environment continues through the Pacific Roundtable for Nature Conservation, which, since starting in 1997, has been gaining good momentum and support. The trump card for the Roundtable is that it brings together on an equal footing public and private sector donors, civil groups and others with an active role in nature conservation. This group supports the 5-year action strategy for nature conservation, which is focussed on mainstreaming the environment.

Again at the regional level, during 2003, SPREP was invited to attend the Forum Economic Ministers meeting and witnessed some welcome progress in the approach of partnering environment needs and economic policy. The ministerial statement called for more proactive interaction between treasury and environment departments, by developing strategies that complement both agendas. As we are all aware, this is no easy task, given, for example, the trade imbalances with developed countries, and the ongoing battle to control inflation with limited national budgets. However, the forum ministers have now given clear indications they are keen to do their part for environmental concerns and economic development to come together. This can only augur well for the future.

The economies of small island developing states of the Pacific are not closed systems. They are affected by many national, regional and international influences. With their limited human and natural resources it is nearly impossible for most of these Pacific SIDS to support their aspirations for sustainable development, as individual countries. SPREP, with other regional organizations and partners, play an extremely important role in coordinating and supporting these countries, collectively, to move their sustainable development agenda forward. To this end SPREP has been advocating the use of national assessment reports, which have been developed for international meetings like the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and the 10 year review of the Barbados Programme of Action, as a basis for the development of national sustainable development strategies. In this way sustainable development becomes a priority in the national government and core elements are funded continually under the national budget. This demonstrates to international partners that the countries themselves are taking ownership of their sustainable development priorities.

Sometimes it is necessary to make some significant changes to the way we operate in order to better embrace SPREP'S vision for the future. The SPREP meeting in 2003 agreed that the secretariat would move from a project-based organisation to a programmatic way of working in order to better embrace SPREP'S vision for the future. Focusing on programme delivery will give the secretariat the space to be more flexible in our initiatives and plans that can more readily meet the needs of our members. This also provides our partners with a clear framework to work from, be it financial, in-kind assistance or joint implementation. The overriding factor is that this system will allay many concerns held by our member countries and territories over the secretariat not being responsive enough to the needs of the members. During 2003, management worked closely with staff to begin refining the programmatic approach, to establish a clear resourcing strategy and to prepare the organisation for the change. Later in this meeting we will have the opportunity to discuss the outcomes of these efforts, but I would like to acknowledge here the very great amount of work that various members of the secretariat staff have put into this initiative, as well as the support of the New Zealand government.

I must make mention with due gratitude of the significant support we have had from several non-member countries and organizations. Just recently the people's republic of china provided a generous grant for SPREP activities. The government of Japan has continued to contribute with financial assistance and volunteers who have provided important expertise for some of our programmes and logistical services.

We also welcome the Washington-based conservation international who, along with the world meteorological organization, have subregional offices in the SPREP secretariat. Of course the organizations' four metropolitan members, Australia, France, New Zealand and the United States, have shown valuable support for all our initiatives and programmes, as have our friends and counterparts from regional and international organisations, such as the United Nations development programme and the United Nations environment programme.

This year has been one of change for SPREP yet a year of consolidation for me. As we worked to deal with the change from a project to a programme structure within the secretariat and strive to meet the many requirements of the members, I have been able to take a firmer hold of the direction in which SPREP is heading. But there is much work that lies ahead in change management for it cannot be done quickly. With demonstrated improvements to the quality of life appearing across the pacific, a definitive strategy, the move to the programmatic approach, a revised management structure, a dynamic resourcing initiative, and of course the continued loyalty of an expert and committed staff, with direction and support from you members I believe that the way ahead is now clearer for our pacific people's environmental efforts to secure the best for their families and communities.

ASTERIO TAKESY

DIRECTOR

ANNEX VII: Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation 1:

Efficiency gains should be fully exploited by CROP agencies before any requests for increases in Member contributions are considered by Governing Bodies.

Recommendation 2:

The CROP Harmonisation and Remuneration Guiding Principles and Strategies, as presented in Annex I, be adopted.

Recommendation 3:

CROP agencies should continue to use the SDR to denominate salary scales and should adopt the stabilisation mechanism described (refer paragraph 18), effective from 1 January 2005. Further compensatory payment for exchange rate fluctuations, such as the 5% one-off temporary adjustment approved for 2004, was no longer necessary.

Recommendation 4:

In the case of an unpredictable event that significantly impacts on exchange rates, CROP agencies should immediately investigate and implement appropriate remedial action.

Recommendation 5:

The median of the APS no longer be used as the comparator market for professional staff and Australia (public service sector), Fiji (all organisations) and New Zealand (public service sector) markets be established as reference markets.

Recommendation 6:

Annual tracking of the reference market data and analysis of CROP recruitment, retention and other data for monitoring CROP salary scales should be undertaken.

Recommendation 7:

Data from all three markets should be reviewed by a CROP agency working group annually and submitted to the CROP Heads meeting. If a recommendation for a salary increase is the result of this annual review, the recommendations should be presented to Pre-Forum FOC and subsequently other CROP Governing Bodies.

Recommendation 8:

The currency for comparison of reference markets should be the SDR and the appropriate exchange rate to be used for the conversion from the reference market currency to SDR should be the average for the month falling at the end of the period for which the market data is relevant.

Recommendation 9:

A 5% increase should be applied equally across the CROP professional staff salary scale effective from 1 January 2005. Movement of staff into the new salary scale will be subject to satisfactory performance except for some agencies in the transition year 2005.

Recommendation 10:

In order to contribute to the cost of the 5% increase in the salary scale, CROP agencies should continue to achieve ongoing efficiency and productivity gains.

Recommendation 11:

In future any increases to the salary scale should be applied differentially across the grades.

Recommendation 12:

CROP agencies through their Governing Bodies encourage Members to consider more favourable taxation arrangements for their staff.

Recommendation 13:

The tax exempt status of many CROP agency staff be considered in the annual examination of relativities between the CROP salary scale and the reference markets.

Recommendation 14:

The CROP harmonised remuneration arrangements as attached in Annex VI and VII be adopted.

Recommendation 15:

On the matter of the application of the six year rule to the other CROP agencies the Working Group seeks further clarification.

Proposed Harmonised Remuneration Arrangements Professional Staff

Professional Staff Remuneration Arrangements - Detail		
<i>To provide a fair, equitable and competitive remuneration package</i>		
Arrangement	Harmonised Principle	Harmonised Practice
Salary		
- Salary Scales	To pay equivalent salaries for equivalent jobs.	Salary scales assessed annually compared to the reference markets, in conjunction with recruitment and retention statistics. Reference markets Australian Public Service Sector, New Zealand Public Service Sector and Fiji All Organisation market. Salary scales denominated in SDR and paid in agreed or local currency according to the average SDR exchange rate in the preceding period.
- External job sizing	To ensure relative worth of similar positions across CROP agencies is maintained and consistent with the market.	Sample of positions across CROP agencies are validated, sized and cross-validated every three years.
- Recruitment market	To recruit professional staff from the market of the Members.	Recruit from the market of the Members subject to current market supply and donor requirements.
- Salary on Appointment	To provide flexibility in recruiting preferred candidate.	At first step or higher level of salary range at management discretion.
- Salary review on Performance	To motivate and reward for performance.	Annual salary adjustments based on performance.
- Salary on renewal of contract	To provide consistent practice.	Annual salary adjustments based on performance.
Benefits		
- Superannuation/Provident Fund	To provide minimum legal requirement in host country.	5 - 8% but no lower than minimum legal requirement of host country
- Health insurance	To provide standard health insurance.	At management discretion, depending on schemes and reasonable costs to cover spouses and dependants.
- Life and disability insurance	To provide standard life insurance.	Term life insurance cover not less than twice and not more than three times base salary of staff.

Relocation Provisions		
- Travel on recruitment and repatriation	To enable staff and dependants to travel to work station and to be repatriated.	Economy air travel and transit costs for staff member and accompanying dependants between agreed home and work station by most direct and economical route.
- Removal expenses on recruitment and repatriation	To meet costs for moving personal effects of staff and dependants to work station on recruitment and to recognised home on repatriation.	Reasonable removal expenses (packing, insuring, shipping and unpacking) from place of recruitment and on end of contract. On recruitment, 6 cub metres for staff 2 spouse 1 each dependent child. For repatriation, 8 cub metres for staff 4 spouse 1 each dependent child. Or the use of a 20ft container, which ever is the least cost.
- Establishment grant	To assist with settling in expenses.	SDR1,100 for positions recruited from outside locality of the base station.
- Accommodation on arrival and repatriation	To assist staff and dependants while finding suitable accommodation on arrival and prior to repatriation.	6 working days or with management discretion up to 12 working days hotel accommodation on arrival and up to 6 days on repatriation. Housing allowance is not paid when accommodation is paid.
- Repatriation grant	To assist staff from outside base station settle back in home location.	Allowance equivalent to two weeks salary on repatriation.
Family Provisions		
- School holiday travel	To enable parent-child reunion.	One economy class return airfare per annum for child to visit staff member at work station or one economy class return air fare for staff member or spouse to visit dependent child studying overseas.
- Home leave travel	To enable staff to maintain contact with home environment.	Return economy class airfares between place of employment and home location for staff member and dependants at the mid point of a three year contract and on renewal.
Contract Terms		
- Duration of contract ¹	To ensure recruitment and retention of the best person for the position.	3 years renewable subject to annual performance evaluation. Position to be advertised after 6 years in a post. In the case of Forsec the SG is giving effect to the Leaders decision on this issue.
- Termination of contract	To give fair notice.	Minimum of one month's notice.

¹ Clarification has been sought, refer Recommendation 15.

- Working hours	To ensure minimum legal standard.	Minimum 37 hours per week at management discretion.
- Class of travel	To ensure cost effective use of resources while being mindful of the health and well being of staff.	Normally economy class. Other class of travel at the discretion of CEO subject to agency policy.
Leave		
- Annual leave	To provide for recuperation and recreation.	25 days per annum but not less than the legal minimum. Maximum accrual is double annual amount.
- Sick leave ¹	To provide for leave for illness or accident.	30 days per annum. Medical certificate required for more than 3 consecutive days. Uncertified sick leave up to a maximum of 8 days per year. Maximum accrual 90 days.
- Other leave	To provide for leave in special circumstances.	Family Leave 6 days per annum including Paternity and Compassionate leave (for immediate family members only). Maternity leave – 60 working days after one year service. Special leave or Leave Without Pay at discretion of Head of Agency. Leave to be no less than local legal conditions and consequential needs of the organisation.
Location Specific Provisions – Apia		
- COLDA	To provide for cost of living differential between Suva and location of post.	Suva is used as the base station, with COLDA being calculated (exclusive of housing) by an independent agent.
Location Specific Provisions – Honiaria		
- COLDA	To provide for cost of living differential between Suva and location of post.	Suva is used as the base station, with COLDA being calculated (exclusive of housing) by an independent agent.
- Retention allowances	To provide for hard-ship location.	
- Location allowance	To provide for hard-ship location.	
- Annual home leave	To provide for hard-ship location.	
- Annual leave	To provide for hard-ship location.	
- Sick leave	To provide for hard-ship location.	

¹ Subject to review for productivity and efficiency gains.

Location Specific Provisions – Noumea		
- COLDA	To provide for cost of living differential between Suva and location of post.	Suva is used as the base station, with COLDA being calculated (exclusive of housing) by an independent agent.
- Child allowance	To ensure minimum legal standard.	
- Adoption allowance	To ensure minimum legal standard.	
Location Specific Provisions – Pohnpei		
- COLDA	To provide for cost of living differential between Suva and location of post.	Suva is used as the base station, with COLDA being calculated (exclusive of housing) by an independent agent.
Benefits Under Ongoing Review		
- Housing Allowance	To ensure that staff have access to a reasonable standard of housing appropriate to their position.	Rental assistance of 75% of suitable standard accommodation. Maximum rates to be reviewed at each location annually.
- Education Allowance	To enable staff to have their dependant children educated to a recognised and acceptable standard.	To cover tuition and boarding to specified levels with fees being claimable against receipts.

Proposed Harmonised Remuneration Arrangements Support Staff

Support Staff Remuneration Arrangements - Detail		
<i>To provide a fair, equitable and competitive remuneration package</i>		
Arrangement	Harmonised Principle	Harmonised Practice
Salary		
- Salary Scales	To pay equivalent salaries for equivalent jobs.	Salary scales assessed annually compared to upper quartile of the relevant local market. Salary scales denominated and paid in relevant local currency.
- External job sizing	To ensure relative worth of similar positions across CROP agencies is maintained and consistent with the market.	Sample of positions across CROP agencies are validated, sized and cross-validated every three years.
- Recruitment market	To recruit support staff from the local market.	Recruit from the local market.
- Salary on Appointment	To provide flexibility in recruiting preferred candidate.	At first step or higher level of salary range at management discretion.
- Salary review on Performance	To motivate and reward for performance.	Annual salary adjustments based on performance.
- Salary on renewal of contract	To provide consistent practice.	Annual salary adjustments based on performance.
Benefits		
- Superannuation/Provident Fund	To provide at least the minimum legal requirement in host country.	5 - 8% but no lower than minimum legal requirement of host country
- Health insurance	To provide standard health insurance.	At management discretion, depending on schemes and reasonable costs to cover spouses and dependants.
- Life and disability insurance	To provide standard life insurance.	Term life insurance cover not less than twice and not more than three times salary of staff.
Contract Terms		
- Duration of contract	To ensure tenure is in-line with the local market and/or organisational needs.	Normally renewable three-year contracts, subject to organisational needs and funding.
- Termination of contract	To give fair notice.	Minimum of one month's notice except in exceptional cases such as gross misconduct.
- Working hours	To ensure working hours in line with best practice in the local market.	Minimum 37 hours per week at management discretion.
- Class of travel	To ensure cost effective use of resources while being mindful of	Normally economy class. Other class of travel at the discretion of CEO

Leave		
- Annual leave	To ensure annual leave is in-line with best practice in the local market.	15 - 25 days per annum but not less than the legal minimum. Maximum accrual is double annual amount.
- Sick leave	To ensure sick leave is in-line with best practice in the local market.	Not less than local legal conditions. Medical certificate required for more than 3 consecutive days. Uncertified sick leave up to a maximum of 8 days per year. Maximum accrual 90 days.
- Other leave	To provide for leave in special circumstances.	Family Leave 6 days per annum including Paternity and Compassionate leave (for immediate family members only). Maternity leave – 60 working days after 1 yr service. Special leave or Leave Without Pay at discretion of Head of Agency. Leave to be no less than local legal conditions and consequential needs of the organisation.
Location Specific Provisions – Honiaria		
- Housing allowance	To ensure minimum legal standard.	
- Sick leave	To provide for hard-ship location.	
Location Specific Provisions – Noumea		
- COLDA	To provide for cost of living differential between Suva and location of post.	Suva is used as the base station, with COLDA being calculated (exclusive of housing) by an independent agent.
- Child allowance	To ensure minimum legal standard.	
- Adoption allowance	To ensure minimum legal standard.	
Organisation Specific Provisions – SPC		
- Salary scale net of tax	To pay equivalent salaries for equivalent jobs taking into account SPCs particular tax status.	

ANNEX VIII: Proposed Harmonised Remuneration Arrangements for Professional Staff

Stabilisation Mechanism

- A floor and ceiling to be set, between which salaries would be paid at the rate of exchange of the SDR and the currency of payment applicable at the time. The floor and ceiling would be set at 5% below and above a reference point. If the actual SDR exchange rate falls below the floor, the floor rate would be used to calculate salaries, and if the actual rate rose above the ceiling, then the ceiling rate would be used. In order to avoid daily fluctuations, the SDR exchange rate used in calculating actual pay will be a monthly average immediately prior to the day the pay is calculated.
- The reference point would be the average SDR exchange rate of the twelve months to December of the previous year, which would be recalculated annually to apply from 1 January.

**Annex IX: Salary Scales For Support Staff
1 January 2004**

Grade	CED Points		Samoan Tala per annum								
	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Point 2	Point 3	Point 4	Point 5	Point 6	Point 7	Point 8	Maximum
F3	240	259	25,000	26,400	27,800	29,200	30,600	32,000	33,400	34,800	36,200
F2	220	239	19,176	20,354	21,532	22,710	23,888	25,066	26,244	27,422	28,600
F1	200	219	15,552	16,108	16,664	17,220	17,776	18,332	18,888	19,444	20,000
D/E	110	199	8,304	8,866	9,428	9,990	10,552	11,114	11,676	12,238	12,800
B/C	60	109	5,544	5,876	6,208	6,540	6,872	7,204	7,536	7,868	8,200
A	40	59									

Grade: Staff Position:

- F3 Administration Officer; Personal Assistant to the Director, Personal Assistant to D/Director
- F2 Assistant Accountant; Property Services Officer; Registry Supervisor; Conference and Travel Officer; Secretary to Managers (Programmes and Corporate Services)
- F1 Assistant Librarian; Administration Assistant; Finance Officer; Programme Assistant; Records Management Assistant; Maintenance Tradesman
- D/E Customs Clerk; Driver/Clerk; Registry Clerk; Handyman; Receptionist
- B/C Teaperson/Cleaner/Clerical Assistant; Nightwatchman/Security; Cleaner/Teaperson/Messenger; Groundsman/Gardener; Cleaner
- A [No staff positions in this Grade]

Annex X: Terms of References for the position of Director of SPREP

Duties/Responsibilities of Director

1. Provision of exceptional leadership, strategic direction and overall vision;
2. Efficient and effective management and administration SPREP work programme, staff and assets;
3. Delivery of high quality advice and services to members and governing body;
4. Articulation and strong advocacy for environment concerns of the regions; and
5. Develop and maintain effective relationships through networking and interaction with other regional organisations, donors and stakeholders

Required Knowledge, Skills, Experience and Attributes

- High integrity with proven leadership qualities, managerial ability and experience at executive level in leading a multi-disciplinary, multicultural team. An academic qualification in an appropriate discipline is an advantage;
- Commitment to the social, economic and environmental aspirations of Pacific island peoples and ability to effectively communicate and liaise with members;
- Ability to advocate for and promote the environmental concerns, the protection and development of the environmental resources of the region and to cooperate effectively with other partner organisations and institutions;
- Good health and ability to travel and consult widely in the region; and
- Knowledge of both working languages would be an advantage.

Annex XI: Financial Regulations - Adopted at the Fifth Intergovernmental Meeting, Apia, Samoa, 14-18 September 1992 (As amended by the Fifteenth SPREP Meeting in Pape'ete, French Polynesia, 13-16 September 2004)

Regulation No.	Subject	PURPOSE
		Regulation 1
		These Regulations shall govern the financial administration of the SPREP.
		DEFINITIONS
		Regulation 2
		In these Regulations, unless the contrary intention appears:
		'Budget' means a consolidation of statements of income and expenditure for the Core Fund and Programme Fund budgets.
		'Core Fund Budget' means income and expenditure statements covering executive management and support including executive management's functions in regional coordination and international cooperation, donor liaison and consultation with members; servicing the SPREP Meeting and corporate services.
		'Corporate Services' means translation and interpretation, library, publications and information, information and communications technology, property management, personnel administration, general administration and finance.
		'Director' means the position referred to under Article 6 of the Agreement Establishing the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (1993).
		'Programme Fund Budget' means income and expenditure for all budget heads approved by the SPREP Meeting forming the Programme Fund budget and excludes heads falling under the Core Fund budget.
		'Reserve Fund' means the general purpose fund created out of the initial working funds (Capital Fund) of the SPREP and accumulated surpluses in past years and to be used in accordance with Regulation 18.
1	Purposes	
2	Definitions	
3	Annual Budget Estimates	
4	Budget Format	
5	Circulation of Draft Budget Estimates	
6	Adoption of the Budget	
7	Availability of and Accounting for Funds	
8	Transfer of Funds between Budget Heads	
9	No Expenditure Commitments Without Funds	
10	Authority to Spend Funds prior to Approval of Budget	
11	Levels of Contributions	
12	Notice of Contributions	
13	Payment of Contributions	
14	Status of Collection of Contributions	
15	Principal Funds of the Organisation	
16.	Programme Funds	
17	Core Funds	
18	Application of the Reserve Fund	
19	Establishment of Trust Funds and Special Accounts	
20	Purpose and Use of Trust Funds and Special Accounts	
21	Authority to Accept Extra-budgetary Funds	
22	Custody of Funds	
23	Handling of Programme and Core Funds	
24	Investment of Funds	
25	Financial Rules and Procedures	
26	Writing off of Losses	
27	Maintenance of Accounting Records	
28	Financing of Assest	
29	Appointment of Auditor(s)	
30	Regularity of Audit	
31	Assistance to Auditor(s)	
32	Scope of Audit Report	
33	Submission of Audit Report	
34	Renting/Leasing Provision	
35	Scope of Financial Regulations	
36	Powers of Acting Director	
37	Effective Date of Financial Regulations and Amendments	

‘Secretariat’ means Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme and is the organ established in Article 1 and described in Article 7 of the Agreement Establishing the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (1993).

‘SPREP’ means Pacific Regional Environment Programme and is the body established and described in Article 1 of the Agreement Establishing SPREP (1993).

‘SPREP Meeting’ means the organisation created under Article 1.2 and described in Article 3 of the Agreement Establishing SPREP (1993)

THE BUDGET

Regulation 3 - Annual Budget Estimates

The annual Budget estimates shall cover income and expenditure of SPREP and its auxiliary and subsidiary bodies for the financial year to which they relate and shall be presented in US dollars. The financial year shall be the calendar year. The annual Budget estimates will incorporate income and expenditure proposals for the Core Fund Budget and Programme Fund Budget.

Regulation 4 – Budget Format

- (a) The annual Budget estimates shall be arranged in such form and in such Parts, Heads and Sub-Heads as the SPREP Meeting may from time to time direct.
- (b) The annual Budget estimates shall comprise the following documents:
 - (i) Budget document with narratives, and
 - (ii) Any additional documents which the SPREP Meeting or Director may deem necessary and useful
- (c) The Budget estimates shall be prepared so that the estimated expenditure does not exceed total anticipated estimates of funds that will be available for the financial year.

Regulation 5 – Circulation of Budget Estimates

The annual Budget estimates for the following year will be circulated at least six weeks prior to the opening of the SPREP Meeting.

APPROPRIATIONS

Regulation 6 – Adoption of the Budget

- (a) The SPREP Meeting shall examine, amend as appropriate and adopt the annual Budget estimates.
- (b) The adoption of the annual Budget estimates shall constitute an authorisation to the Director to incur commitments and make payments for the purposes for which the expenditure was approved and up to the amounts so approved.

Regulation 7 – Availability of and Accounting for Funds

- (a) Funds shall be available for commitment during the financial year to which they relate.
- (b) Funds shall remain available for twelve months following the financial year to which they relate to the extent to which they are required to liquidate commitments.
- (c) Any commitments not discharged at the end of the twelve month period following the close of the financial year shall at that time be cancelled. If this cannot be done and the commitment remains a valid charge, the expenditure shall be charged against the budget of the year in which payment is made.
- (d) The Director may incur additional expenditure in excess of that provided in the Budget provided that funding is available and that such additional expenditure does not adversely impact on the capacity of the Secretariat to carry out and manage the activities detailed in the Budget approved by the SPREP Meeting.

Regulation 8 – Transfer of Funds between Budget Heads

The Director may:

- (a) Under the Core Fund Budget:
 - (i) transfer anticipated savings under any sub-head to meet anticipated over-expenditure under any other sub-head of the same Head; and
 - (ii) transfer available funds between budget Heads;
- (b) Under the Programme Fund Budget:
 - (i) transfer anticipated savings under any sub-head to meet anticipated

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- over-expenditure under any other sub-head to meet anticipated over-expenditure under any other sub-head of the same Head in a manner consistent with donor requirements; and
- (ii) transfer funds between budget heads, in a manner consistent with donors requirements.
 - (c) Details of such transfers or proposed transfers shall be reported to the next SPREP Meeting.

Regulation 9 – No Expenditure Commitments Without Funds

The Director shall not enter into any commitment or expenditure in respect of any budget component unless funds are available.

Regulation 10 – Authority to Spend Funds prior to Approval of Budget

Should the annual Budget fails to be adopted before the beginning of the financial year to which it relates, the Director is authorized, pending approval of the Budget to incur obligations and meet expenditure for the first three months of the financial year up to a limit of one quarter of the previous year's approved budgetary expenditure subject to any reservations which may have been placed on any individual item. Contracts falling due or effective during that period may only be continued by provisional agreement and subject to final adoption of the Budget.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Regulation 11 – Levels of Contributions

The Director shall recommend to the SPREP Meeting levels of Members' contributions based on the scale of contributions approved by the SPREP Meeting and after taking into account:

- (a) The estimated expenditure for the Core Fund for the current financial year and the succeeding financial year;
- (b) Any other revenue in addition to Members' contributions;
- (c) Any balance of uncommitted funds available from previous financial years.

Regulation 12 – Notice of Contributions

After the SPREP Meeting has adopted the annual Budget estimates the Director shall:

- (a) Transmit the relevant documents to all Members;
- (b) Inform Members of their commitments in respect of member contributions and the depository into which it is desired that the contributions be paid.

Regulation 13 – Payment of Contributions

Contributions shall be payable in US dollars. However, the Director is empowered to accept, at his discretion, the total or partial payment of contributions by a member in currencies other than US dollars which are necessary for the functioning of the Secretariat.

Regulation 14 – Status of Collection of Contributions

The Director shall submit to each SPREP Meeting a report on the receipt of member contributions.

FUNDS

Regulation 15 - Principal Funds of the Organisation

The working funds of the Secretariat shall be held in three principal funds:

- (a) The Core Fund; covering all Core Fund income and expenditure;
- (b) The Programme Fund; covering all work programme funding and expenditure; and
- (c) The Reserve Fund which is to be used in accordance with Regulation 18.

Regulation 16 – Programme Funds

- (a) Programme funds shall be used only for the purposes specified by the donors
- (b) All costs relating to any programme shall be a charge against the Programme Fund and shall be included in the Financial Statements of the Secretariat.
- (c) Any income received from the investment of Programme Funds will accrue to Core Fund miscellaneous income [unless otherwise directed by the donor]*

Regulation 17 – Core Funds

- (a) Members' contributions and any miscellaneous income shall be credited to the Core Fund.
- (b) Any surplus balance remaining in the Core Fund at the close of any financial year shall be applied first towards the settlement of any debt remaining after the close of the financial year in line with Regulation 7(b), if any, and any balance remaining thereafter shall be taken into account when preparing the estimates of the succeeding year.

Regulation 18 – Application of the Reserve Fund

The Reserve Fund may be used by the Director in any emergency or unforeseen circumstance and may authorise:

- (a) transfers from the Reserve Fund to the Programme Fund to meet unforeseen liquidity shortfalls and the Reserve Fund shall be replenished when grants to the Programme Fund are received;
- (b) transfers from the Reserve Fund to the Core Fund to meet unforeseen expenditure or shortfalls. Details of such transfers or proposed transfers are to be reported to the next SPREP Meetings; and
- (c) the funds used for purposes outlined in this Regulation shall be accounted for in the annual accounts of the Secretariat.

Regulation 19 – Establishment of Trust Funds and Special Accounts

The Director may establish Trust Funds and Special Purpose Accounts and shall inform the SPREP Meeting of the details.

Regulation 20 – Purpose and Use of Trust Funds and Special Accounts

The purpose and limits of each Trust Fund and Special Purpose Account shall be clearly defined by the SPREP Meeting and unless otherwise directed by the SPREP Meeting such Funds shall be administered in accordance with these Regulations and audited reports be presented annually to the SPREP Meeting.

Regulation 21 – Authority to Accept Extrabudgetary Funds

The Director may accept contributions for the Core Fund and Programme Fund budgets only if the purposes of such contributions from members, private organizations and other donors are consistent with the policies of SPREP and shall inform the next SPREP Meeting.

CUSTODY OF FUNDS**Regulation 22 – Bank Accounts**

The Director is authorised to open and close bank accounts and shall inform the SPREP Meeting of the details.

Regulation 23 – Handling of Programme and Core Funds

Programme Fund transactions shall be conducted separately from that for Core Fund transactions.

INVESTMENT OF FUNDS**Regulation 24 – Investment of Funds**

The Director may make short-term non-speculative investments in interest-bearing Bank deposits of monies not needed for immediate requirements.

INTERNAL CONTROL**Regulation 25 – Financial Rules and Procedures**

The Director shall:

- (a) Establish detailed financial rules and procedures in order to ensure effective financial administration and the exercise of economy;
- (b) Cause all payments to be made on the basis of supporting vouchers and other documents which ensure that the services or goods have been received, and that payments have not previously been made;
- (c) Designate the officers who may receive monies or incur obligations on behalf of the Secretariat and disburse funds;

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- (d) Maintain an internal financial control which shall provide for an effective current examination and/or review of financial transactions, in order to ensure:
 - (i) The regularity of the receipt, custody and disposal of all funds and other financial resources of the Secretariat;
 - (ii) The conformity of commitments and expenditure with the appropriations or other financial provisions approved by the SPREP Meeting, or with the purposes and rules relating to Trust Funds and Special Purpose Accounts;
 - (e) Take all precautionary measures necessary to safeguard the property, equipment and supplies of the Secretariat; and
 - (f) Arrange for the adequate protection of funds and property by insurance.

Regulation 26 – Writing off of Losses

The Director may, after full investigation, authorise the writing off of losses of cash and other assets, provided that the value of all such items written off shall be reported to the SPREP Meeting.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Regulation 27 – Maintenance of Accounting Records

- (a) The Secretariat's Financial Statements shall, among other things, include the following statements and details:
 - (i) Income and Expenditure Statements of all funds for the financial year;
 - (ii) Comparison of actual expenditure and budgeted expenditure for the financial year;
 - (iii) Balance Sheet for the financial year;
 - (iv) Cash Flow Statement for the financial year;
 - (v) Notes to and forming part of the accounts.
- (b) The accounts will be prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and modified to record income on a cash basis except for interest income and to avoid the requirement to provide for depreciation.
- (c) The Director shall also give such other information as may be appropriate to indicate the current financial position of the Secretariat

- (d) The accounts for each financial year shall be submitted by the Director to the Auditor by 31 March following the end of that financial year.
- (e) Audited Financial Statements signed by the Director are to be submitted to the next meeting of the SPREP Meeting.

Regulation 28– Financing of Assets

All liabilities in respect of the financing of assets shall be incorporated in the annual Budget estimates and annual Financial Statements.

EXTERNAL AUDIT

Regulation 29 – Appointment of Auditor(s)

On the Director's recommendation, the SPREP Meeting shall appoint biennially one or more Auditors in no way connected with the Secretariat on such terms as it sees fit to undertake the audit of the Secretariat's annual accounts.

Regulation 30 – Regularity of Audit

The Auditor shall make annually and at such other times as the SPREP Meeting considers necessary an independent audit in order to certify:

- (a) that the financial statements are in accord with the books and records of the Secretariat;
- (b) that the financial transactions reflected in the statements are accurate and in accordance with the rules and regulations, the budgetary provisions and other applicable directives;
- (c) that the securities and money on deposit and on hand have been verified by certificate received direct from the Secretariat's depositories or by actual count;
- (d) the accuracy of the records of stores, furniture, equipment and other property of the Secretariat and the adequacy of control exercised thereover.

Regulation 31– Assistance to Auditor(s)

The Director shall ensure that the Auditor is supplied with every facility required for the proper discharge of its audit duties and shall respond promptly to any queries that may be raised.

Regulation 32 – Scope of Audit Report

The Auditors, in their report on the accounts certified, shall mention:

- (a) the extent and character of their examination and any changes in accounting practice;
- (b) matters affecting the completeness or accuracy of the accounts;
- (c) the accuracy or otherwise of the supplies and equipment records as determined by stocktaking and examination of the records;
- (d) the adequacy of financial procedures including internal control matters and adherence to the financial regulations;
- (e) the adequacy of insurance cover for the buildings, stores, furniture, equipment and other property; and
- (f) any other matters which should be brought to the notice of the SPREP Meeting.

Regulation 33 – Submission of Audit Report

The Auditors shall submit their report to the Director as soon as possible following the end of the fiscal year to which it relates. The Director shall circulate the full report of the Auditors including comments on the financial operations of the Secretariat and accounts, together with such remarks as the Director may wish to offer to members, prior to the next SPREP Meeting.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Regulation 34 – Renting/Leasing Provision

The Director may enter into contracts and other agreements for the purposes of renting accommodation, office space, storage and any other requirements of the Secretariat.

Regulation 35 – Scope of Financial Regulations

These Financial Regulations are to apply to all financial activities of the Secretariat irrespective of the source of funds.

Regulation 36 – Powers of Acting Director

- (a) When the position of Director is vacant the Director's functions and powers shall be exercised according to the instruction of the Chairperson of the SPREP Meeting and, in the absence of any instruction, by the Deputy Director
- (b) In the absence from headquarters or during the incapacity of the Director, the powers and responsibilities of the Director as provided in these Regulations shall, during such periods, devolve on the Deputy Director. In the event that the Director and Deputy Director are both absent, an officer of the Director's choice shall be designated Officer-in-Charge with such powers and responsibilities as determined by the Director.

Regulation 37 – Effective Date of Financial Regulations and Amendments

- (a) These Regulations shall enter into force immediately after their approval by the SPREP Meeting.
- (b) Amendments to these Regulations will have immediate effect upon acceptance by the SPREP Meeting.

* This part of the Regulation to become effective from the 2006 budget

Annex XII: Observer Statements

Australian Marine Science & Technology (AMSAT) Statement

Mr Chairman, on behalf of the AMSAT Management, I would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation in thanking you and your Government in welcoming us to French Polynesia, to enable us to contribute to the work of the SPREP Secretariat and the Meeting.

In listening to the meeting discussions and studying the SPREP Action Plan for 2005 to 2009 and its Strategic Programmes for 2004- 2013, we note the two documents and we realize the challenges ahead, in implementing these programmes and achieving their outputs for the governments. We would like to express our intentions to work with the Secretariat and its members.

Hence this gives me the opportunity to report on some of the important progress on the implementation and management of Phase III of AusAID's South Pacific Sea Level and Climate Monitoring Project and its benefits to the SPREP countries/governments and its CROP partners.

This multi-national project addresses the objectives of your Action Plan on Climate Change, Variability, Sea Level Rise and Atmosphere, by improving the science of climate change, variability and sea level rise for the governments to take appropriate policy actions.

Our presence here is to reiterate and emphasize the important partnership that we have forged with the SPREP Secretariat, CROP Partners and the member governments in implementing this regional project .

Our project has provided continuous monitoring sea level rise, climate change and variability in the region for more than 12 years. More recently the project has completed the following activities:

- Continue monitoring and maintenance of the tide gauges;
- Installed 10 Continuous Global Positioning System (CGPS) as a network, to measure the vertical land movements. Marshall Is-

lands and Solomon Islands are yet to have their CGPS monitoring stations installed;

- Conducted Strom and Tidetrak Modelling workshops in June/July, for the Fiji, Samoa, and Tuvalu Governments and CROP partners;
- Completion of the EEZ models;
- Continuous production and distribution of reports, data, newsletter and fact sheets to stakeholders;
- Provide technical presentation/reports to the Forum Leaders Meeting in Samoa, and to the Tonga, Nauru, Kiribati and Cook Islands governments ;
- Provide resources and contribute to USP and SOPAC Training courses in Fiji and;
- Convene the Project Coordinating Committee and Information Training Working Group Meetings in Fiji.

For your information the project management has started the process of developing a strategy for the Phase IV of the project.

In concluding, may I thank you for your patience and we look forward to your continual support, partnership and understanding in progressing this project for the benefit of the governments and region.

Conservation International (CI)

M. Chairman, on behalf of Conservation International's President, Dr. Russell Mittermeier, I would like to congratulate SPREP and its members for a successful 15th meeting.

CI is a relatively newcomer in its relationship with SPREP, in fact this is our first statement to a SPREP meeting, but we have been just over the last few years, very much engaged together in a solid partnership for the conservation of Pacific Islands biodiversity. CI is a science-based organization aiming at biodiversity conservation in hotspots and wilderness areas in more than 30 countries on four continents. Its mission is to conserve the earth's living heritage, our global biodiversity, and to demonstrate that human societies are able to live harmoniously with nature. This is very much in line with the mission of the KR1 of SPREP for the Pacific Islands, and even

more so to the new strategic program on island ecosystems - thus the synergy and the strategic importance for CI to be based and work closely with the Secretariat.

Over the last two years, CI has established conservation relationships with more than 40 Pacific partners, including Governments, NGOs and other key stakeholders as part of the establishment of its Centre for Biodiversity Conservation in Melanesia with the financial assistance of the Betty and Gordon Moore Foundation. The Centre supports on-going initiatives in conservation in Papua New Guinea, New Caledonia, the Solomon Islands, and Fiji, together with leading the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund initiative for the Polynesia-Micronesia Hotspot.

For this last initiative alone, together with SPREP and other partners such as TNC, WCS, the IUCN/ISSG, the Bishop Museum, USP, WWF and more recently the Government of French Polynesia, we have spent the last year in scientific consultations and roundtables on biodiversity issues and priorities, in Pohnpei for Micronesia, in Apia for Western Polynesia, in Suva for the Fiji islands and will do so next week, here in Pape'ete, for French Polynesia.

The Donor Council of the CEPF which comprises the Heads of the GEF, the World Bank, the MacArthur Foundation, CI and the Government of Japan will meet in November this year to approve the funding of this Ecosystem Profile for Polynesia and Micronesia and this will guide the strategic directions and investments of the fund for conservation action by Civil Society across the region (around 140 key sites of global significance). The species and protected area databases, as well as the GIS map layers and meta-data produced for this profile are held at SPREP. It is great to see this used as a major contribution in the preparation of the Pacific Islands Environment Outlook 2004 for the 10 year review of the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), that your meeting of officials have just noted.

Defining conservation outcomes with regional and international significance will remain a priority of CI's on-going work in the region, and we are continuing this partnership to cover the island of New Guinea (in collaboration with TNC and CSIRO Australia), the New Caledonia Hotspot (with our New Caledonia partners) and the Melanesia Islands Hotspot comprising the Bismark group, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

The same approach in strategically defining conservation priorities will be applied in the marine and coral reef realms with the support of the Government of France, as part of the Coral Reef Initiative for the Pacific to be initiated shortly.

This coming year is full of critical challenges for SPREP and its members, with the advent of Mauritius 2005 and the BPOA+10, as well as the opportunity to influence the CBD Program of Works on Island biodiversity. It will also mark the launch of the UNESCO World Heritage – Pacific 2009 initiative among others.

In this context, I would like once again to thank the Director of SPREP and his staff for their support, without which the relevance and impact of the work described earlier for the Pacific Islands would have been much diminished, and congratulate SPREP and its members, for the adoption of its comprehensive strategic programme and action plan.

I am pleased to reaffirm Conservation International's full commitment in supporting SPREP and its members towards achieving our common goals and mission, particularly in the implementation of the islands ecosystems program, and in looking jointly at innovative ways to collaborate that make the best use of our scarce resources, even if this means, as the Director has alluded to... sharing a few secrets or two, ...perhaps... for the benefit of this partnership.

Fa'afetai lava, Maururu

Global Environment Facility (GEF)

Mr Chairman, honourable Ministers, SPREP Director Asterio Takesy, distinguished delegates and observers.

It is an honour to have been requested to address you at the opening session of the Fifth Environment Ministers' Meeting of the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme here in beautiful Pape'ete. And allow me to convey to you the best wishes of UNDP Administrator, Mark Malloch Brown, for success in your deliberations.

The theme of this meeting, "Sustaining the Pacific Environment Through Effective Partnerships" is very appropriate, since only by effective partnerships can we ensure the environmentally sustainable development of the Pacific island nations. The over-exploitation of natural resources on both land and ocean has resulted in environmental degradation which threatens sustainable development. And coming myself from the island of Goa on the west coast of India, it is clear to me that if the Pacific island nations are unable to solve these problems, they will not be able to meet the development targets in the UN Millennium Declaration, including MDG-7 which calls for reversing the loss of environmental resources by the year 2015.

Distinguished delegates, as you know UNDP is the United Nations global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with countries on their own solutions to national and global development challenges. The poor are the most vulnerable to environmental degradation – often the result of governance failures. So our UNDP-GEF projects focus on policy, legal and institutional reforms to address barriers to transfer of proven technologies and practices for sustainable development.

Since I am UNDP's GEF Executive Coordinator, I have been requested to focus on the Global Environmental Facility. You already know that the GEF was established to promote international cooperation and to finance actions to address critical threats to the global environment. Its areas of focus include biodiversity, climate change, land degradation, international waters, persistent organic pollutants, and

ozone layer depletion in CIS countries. But, more importantly, governments established the GEF as a partnership between UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank so as to utilize the strengths of the three agencies, to better promote cost-effective solutions, and to help ensure mainstreaming of the environment into sustainable development strategies and programmes. And this approach is working since every year the three agencies have to inform the GEF Council on their environmental mainstreaming activities.

UNDP's GEF cumulative portfolio combines US\$1.8 billion in GEF grants with US\$3 billion in co-financing, demonstrating the key role of co-financing in our programme, which includes support to biodiversity conservation efforts in 141 countries, climate change projects in 111 countries and collaborative efforts in 17 transboundary water bodies involving 103 countries. We also have active programmes in land degradation and POPS. And a significant part of all these projects and programmes covers regional, national and local capacity development which is UNDP's *raison d'être*.

The GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) is a corporate GEF initiative which is being implemented by UNDP on behalf of the GEF partnership. With grants under \$50,000 per project and with the average grant size of around \$15,000, SGP promotes actions at the local community level that serve to protect the global environment. SGP is active in 73 countries with over 4,000 approved projects and is the most visible face of the GEF in many countries. UNDP also implements for the GEF partnership the GEF National Dialogue Initiative – formerly called the Country Dialogue Workshops – which has assisted countries host country-driven, targeted multi-stakeholder policy dialogues on the GEF to identify country's priorities and needs, contribute to national and sectoral policies, and help build partnerships.

UNDP-GEF has 80 ongoing and pipeline projects in Pacific island nations, 70 national projects executed by Governments themselves and 10 regional projects executed by regional organizations. And of course there are also regular UNDP projects funded from core and other funding sources. Some of our key activities in the Pacific islands are as follows:

In **climate change**, 13 PICs have completed their First National Communications, and several countries are submitting proposals for their Second National

Communications. 5 least developed countries are implementing national adaptation projects. We have a medium-size project in Fiji, with others in the pipeline for Marshall Islands, Palau and Samoa. The regional renewable energy project is being implemented and discussions with stakeholders on a regional adaptation project are ongoing.

In **biodiversity**, most PICs have prepared GEF-funded National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans. Samoa, Vanuatu and Micronesia have medium-size projects, a full-size project is ongoing in Papua New Guinea, and another is under preparation in the Solomon Islands. The South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme was the first major (\$10 million) UNDP-GEF intervention in the Pacific, and a number of lessons have been learned from that project. A regional invasive species project is also under preparation.

In **international waters**, we have the Pacific SIDS Strategic Action Plan \$12 million project executed for UNDP by SPREP, and based on it we are preparing the Pacific SIDS Oceanic Fisheries Management project which would be executed by Forum Fisheries Agency. We are also looking at a Pacific SIDS Integrated Watershed Coastal Area Management project. And this is the focal area where we have most partnerships with UNEP and other bodies.

The recently approved UNDP-GEF **Land Degradation** Portfolio Project for Least Developed Countries and SIDS targets focuses on sustainable livelihoods – a key component of UNDP’s work on poverty alleviation. It targets countries that have ratified the Desertification Convention but not yet completed their National Action Plans – a total of 48 countries. \$29 million of GEF funding is reserved for these countries for expedited medium sized projects to promote sustainable land management practices through strengthened national and local level capacity development and mainstreaming into national development strategies and policies. An equal amount of \$29 million in co-financing will be leveraged.

GEF **Small Grants Programmes** have started in Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Samoa, and a new sub-regional programme is starting this month covering the Marshall Islands, Micronesia and Palau. SGP is trying to be proactive, such as by linking Niue and Cook Islands with the ongoing SGP programme in

Samoa. Co-financing efforts are continuing with the Asian Development Bank, and the Governments of Australia, France and New Zealand. SGP is making use of existing networks for coordination and communication such as USPnet and SIDSnet, and is looking into the possibility of using local NGOs for streamlined fund management.

The **National Capacity Self Assessment (NCSA)** - which covers biodiversity, climate change and land degradation - is the one opportunity countries have to honestly evaluate national capacities to meet their commitments under the environmental conventions. Agencies often find in a particular country that the three convention focal points do not effectively communicate with each other and have a poor working relationship with the country’s GEF focal point. This seriously reduces a country’s ability to benefit from synergies between the focal areas. So the NCSA process – in addition to being country-owned and driven and fostering multi-stakeholder consultations – is a unique opportunity for countries to link their global environmental obligations to national sustainable development goals and determine their capacity needs.

And then we have the constraints. As was mentioned by several delegations this week, many environmental agreements and conventions have come into force, putting additional demands on PIC country capacity. There is a significant gap in most PICs between the pro-environment commitment and the capacity to deliver environmental benefits at the national and local level. Experience from previous and on-going GEF-funded Pacific enabling activity projects shows that GEF guidelines have less flexibility than what PICs normally would require (e.g. for equipment purchase). PICs find GEF requirements for project formulation difficult and time consuming. Procedural issues such as periodic reporting, recruitment of staff and disbursement procedures often delay project execution.

Now the good news. Help is on the way! Simplifying the GEF process is one of the key priorities of both the GEF Chairman and CEO, Leonard Good, as well as UNDP, UNEP, and the World Bank. Specifically:

- for **enabling activities**, in order to reduce the huge amount of time and effort spent on individual approval processes, the GEF now approves them in umbrella packages (e.g. the Cli-

mate Change Second National Communications where 130 were approved as a package, 100 through UNDP and 30 through UNEP with large savings in administrative time and costs)

- **medium-size projects** – those under \$1 million - were supposed to be quickly formulated and rapidly approved. But many of them have taken almost as long to formulate and approve as full size projects. GEF is trying to streamline the formulation process and expedite approvals. One proposal is for super expedited approvals for grants up to \$150,000, and expedited approvals for grants between \$150,000-\$300,000. The LDC-SIDS Land Degradation Portfolio Approach is another example of expedited MSP approval under a GEF approved framework.
- for **full-size projects**, efforts are underway to streamline the approval process.

SPREP and UNDP-GEF have partnered over the last decade to address key environmental priority areas in the Pacific and UNDP has become the largest donor to SPREP which is one of our key executing agencies in the Pacific. We are currently working to further strengthen our strong working relationship so as to most effectively assist the countries we serve.

UNDP strongly advocates a regional approach to solve cross-boundary environmental problems in the Pacific. At the national level, a country's own efforts are critical. However, given the large number of environmental conventions and agreements that have to be followed, the exchange of experiences and transfer of best practices and lessons learned between island countries becomes critical and this is what SPREP is best placed to support. We believe that SPREP needs to further strengthen its core areas

of competence so as to effectively provide member countries with policy advice and quality consultancy services that support national implementation efforts. And our UNDP offices are here to assist in this effort, as witnessed by Joyce Yu, the UNDP Resident Representative in Samoa, who has been with you all week.

So SPREP and UNDP have common interests and complementary responsibilities, and during the week's discussions we have listened carefully to your needs, and this critical input will help us better align our services to meet your needs.

Finally allow me to mention that the Pacific Island UN Ambassadors in New York are a good vehicle to promote the environment and sustainable development needs of your countries, particularly on GEF issues. On Wednesday 8th Sept., my senior staff and I scheduled a briefing for 11 of the PIC ambassadors at UNDP headquarters and they provided excellent feedback which have been incorporated into this presentation. They are a powerful resource, especially given their ability to effectively liaise with both UNDP and the GEF Secretariat. We agreed that I would brief them once every six months on critical developments affecting your countries.

Mr. Chairman, since the replenishment of the GEF would be based on impacts and results achieved, we have some copies of our lessons learned in the different areas, which will be circulated to you for information. And let me conclude by thanking the government and people of French Polynesia for their wonderful hospitality which has really made this visit one to remember. I thank you.

INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR ANIMAL WELFARE (IFAW)

IFAW is pleased to participate as an Observer in the 15th SPREP Intergovernmental meeting.

IFAW

IFAW was founded in Canada in 1969 and has grown to become one of the world's leading animal welfare organizations with representation in 15 countries and more than two million supporters around the world. IFAW brings a unique perspective to animal welfare by having a clearly stated aim in its Mission Statement to "promote animal welfare policies that advance the well-being of both animals and people". IFAW is committed to achieving balanced solutions to conservation challenges - solutions that meaningfully address the needs of both wildlife and people in the world we all share.

IFAW Asia Pacific has had a long association with SPREP through collaborative work in the region's marine species programmes. This has included supporting:

- o the promotion and development of whale watching tourism widely in the region – including in Tonga, Niue, Samoa, Vanuatu, and the Solomon Islands,
- o the establishment of the IFAW Marine Awareness Centre in Vava'u Tonga,
- o the establishment and management of national whale sanctuaries and the proposal for a South Pacific Whale Sanctuary,
- o SPREP's Regional Marine Mammal Conservation Programme – including funding the 10 year review (2003) and collaboration on the new SPREP 2003-2007 Marine Species Action Plans for Whales and Dolphins, Dugongs and Turtles, and
- o the South Pacific Whale Research Consortium by funding its establishment and supporting its research on whales and dolphins.

SPREP Marine Species Action Plan 2003-2007

Developed in 2003, the SPREP 2003-2007 Action Plans for Whales and Dolphins, Dugongs and Turtles have been described by Pacific Island Forum Lead-

ers as a 'comprehensive framework' (PIF Communiqué 2003), yet more than a year later they are still largely unfunded. IFAW is deeply concerned at the current lack of resources for the region's marine species programmes and the urgent need to recruit a new SPREP Marine Species Officer. IFAW urges all SPREP members to support these Action Plans.

IFAW is committed to finding resources for these Plans and has this week signed a Memorandum of Understanding with SPREP, providing a partnership framework to achieve this.

Whale Sanctuaries

IFAW would like to take this opportunity to congratulate those SPREP members who have declared national whale sanctuaries or similar protection measures and encourages others to do so. This is a solid achievement of more than 10.5 million square kilometres of whale sanctuaries currently declared in the region.

It is well recognised that national whale sanctuaries would be complemented by the establishment of a South Pacific Whale Sanctuary (SPWS) as agreed at the 2001 SPREP Regional Forum and endorsed by Forum Leaders later that same year.

IFAW is thus disappointed and concerned [that at recent meetings of the IWC](#), some SPREP members [have failed to support](#) [or have actively opposed proposals for](#) a SPWS. Further, they have [voted to abolish](#) the existing Southern Ocean Sanctuary, the summer feeding ground for [whales that come to the Pacific to breed during winter](#). IFAW is concerned that the main reason given for this [position is concern about the alleged](#) impacts of whales on commercial important fish stocks, i.e "whales eating fish".

Whales And Fisheries Interactions

IFAW notes that SPREP has recently [implemented](#) the Forum Leaders 2003 decision to provide a comprehensive scientific assessment of the interactions of whales and fisheries in the South Pacific. IFAW commends this assessment to all SPREP members as a [comprehensive](#) summary of the knowledge in this area and notes from the report that:

“There are no reports of large whales in the South Pacific eating tuna. Furthermore, since Antarctic krill is not a prey item for tunas or other commercially valuable fish species in the South Pacific, there is also no competition for prey species between most large whales and tunas. “

The SPREP report also states:

“...smaller toothed whales are known to sometimes take hooked fish from the longlines of tuna fishermen, a behaviour defined as ‘depredation.’ With the rapid growth of domestic longline fisheries in the South Pacific, reports of these interactions have increased in recent years. It is unclear whether this is due to inaccurate reporting of shark damage to fish, an increase in the number of cetaceans in the South Pacific area, or a behaviour that has been learned by a number of cetacean species. It is also possible that the reported increase in depredation reflects the fact that local fishers are now encountering a similar scale of problem as has been experienced by distant water fishing nations operating in these waters over the past 40 years.

The Secretariat for the Pacific Community (SPC) has estimated that the impact of depredation by whales on hooked fish in the region is relatively minor (0.8%), and is significantly less than the impact of depredation by sharks. Nevertheless, industry perceives these interactions to be having an adverse economic impact on their fisheries because depredation causes loss of catch and gear, and may increase vessel operating costs. Furthermore, for an individual fisher in the South Pacific, financial losses could lead to negative actions towards cetaceans, which are normally held in high regard throughout the Pacific.”

Overall the SPREP report concluded:

1. “Large whales have no impact on commercial fisheries in the South Pacific region;
2. Removal of hooked fish by small toothed whales (depredation) is known to occur in the region, as it does in every other ocean of the world;
3. The impacts of depredation by small whales are generally minor;”

This is consistent with recent international findings, such as a [recently published](#) global study of marine mammal habits and fishing fleets, which found “about 80% of the world’s fish catch comes from regions where there is very little overlap with marine mammals, and 99% of marine mammal feeding takes place where very little fishing occurs” Kaschner (2004) as reported in New Scientist.

IFAW therefore strongly recommends to all SPREP members that there is no logical foundation to reduce support for whale sanctuaries, especially the creation

of a South Pacific Whale Sanctuary, on the basis of concern about whales eating fish.

IFAW urges SPREP members to renew their support for the proposal for a SPWS under the auspices of the IWC.

Once created, this sanctuary will complement the Forum-supported Southern Ocean Sanctuary and provide comprehensive protection for endangered great whales on their Southern Ocean feeding grounds, South Pacific breeding grounds and migratory pathways between them.

IFAW recognises it is important to address the issue of fisheries depredation and commends the Plan of Action [adopted at](#) the first ever international workshop on this issue convened by SPREP in November 2002. IFAW is currently supporting this Plan of Action by [funding a](#) researcher to work with fisheries and environment interests in Samoa, where depredation [of hooked tuna](#) has been [a concern for local fishers](#).

SPREP And CMS

IFAW believes the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) has a potentially valuable role to play in the region and has supported the two regional SPREP/CMS workshops aimed at scoping a regional arrangement for marine mammal conservation management. IFAW strongly supports the draft CMS MOU for the Conservation and Management of Marine Mammals in the SPREP region and urges SPREP members to complete this agreement well before the next CMS Conference of the Parties in 2005.

CITES

IFAW notes the upcoming 13th Conference of Parties of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), to be held in Bangkok, Thailand, from the 2nd-14th October 2004, and looks forward to working with Pacific member countries of CITES – Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea and Palau – to strengthen conservation measures designed to protect wildlife species threatened by international trade.

Of regional significance, IFAW welcomes the species proposals submitted by Australia and Madagascar to list the Great white shark (*Carcharodon carcharias*) to Appendix II with a zero annual export quota and the

proposal by Fiji, Ireland (on behalf of the Member States of the European Community), and the United States of America, to list the Humphead wrasse (*Cheilinus undulates*) to Appendix II of the Convention. Both species are threatened by international trade and listing under CITES will assist in global conservation efforts.

IFAW Calls On SPREP Members at Their 15th Meeting to

- * RESOURCE the 2003-2007 SPREP Marine Species Action Plans - including the recruitment of a new SPREP Marine Species Officer,
- * DECLARE, if [they have](#) not already [done so](#), their [national](#) waters as whale sanctuaries;
- * RENEW support for a South Pacific Whale Sanctuary under the auspices of the IWC at the 57th meeting of the IWC in [Ulsan, Korea, June 2005](#);
- * [CONCLUDE a MOU to protect marine mammals in the South Pacific under the auspices of the Convention on Migratory Species](#);
- * REPORT progress on these issues and actions at the 16th SPREP Meeting

SPREP members have [a](#) unique role to play for the recovery of marine species, including whales, dolphins, dugongs and turtles. Resources and long-term support are urgently required to fulfil the Vision agreed in the SPREP Marine Species Action Plans for these species:

“A Pacific Ocean where populations of whales, dolphins, dugongs and marine turtles have recovered to healthy levels of abundance, have recovered their former distribution and continue to meet and sustain the cultural aspirations of Pacific peoples.”

IFAW is committed to assist SPREP and its members to implement this vision wishes all delegates a productive Fifteenth meeting of SPREP and we thank SPREP and its members for the opportunity to participate.

The University of the South Pacific (USP)

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I am indeed very pleased to bring warm greetings and best wishes from USP to all the distinguished delegates of the 15th SPREP Meeting of Officials. At the outset, may I congratulate SPREP for its outstanding achievements so far and wish the organization continued success for its programmatic approaches as it enters a new decade. Mr. Chairman, SPREP and USP share similar visions in the areas of natural resource management, pollution prevention, climate change & variability, waste management, capacity building and sustainable development issues in general. It is USP's firm belief that *education, training and research* constitute the most important foundation for sustainable development.

Through its network of 3 campuses and 14 Centres (mini campuses) linked by our telecommunication network called USPNet - with its recently acquired additional bandwidth capacity - the University continues to pioneer the delivery of a flexible education programme, often reaching out to the remote unreached. In so doing, USP has been working closely with SPREP, in fields related to SPREP's new Programmatic areas: Island Ecosystems and Pacific Futures. May I highlight a few of these collaborative efforts Mr. Chairman?

Specialised Capacity Building Programmes:

- **Climate Change:** As part of the PICCAP initiative a postgraduate level training programme on '*Climate Impact, Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment*' (the V&A Program) was developed jointly by SPREP, IGCI and USP and we have been offering this 15-week IPCC type training since 1999. So far we have trained about 75 people through this programme.
- **Climate Variability:** A new initiative within the joint SPREP/USP Type II (WSSD) on "Capacity Building" is a special 2-week Training Programme on '*Climate and Extreme Events*' that was launched in June 2004, USP, Suva. This is a shorter version of the 15-week V&A Program focusing on current climate extremes such as floods, droughts cyclones etc than climate change per se. About 20 regional participants attended the training. Two in-country repeats of this training are planned for 2005 before offering it on a

regular basis. The partners in this important initiative, Mr. Chairman, are the CAPaBLE Programme of APN and START global change research networks, SOPAC, NIWA NZ and the University of Hawaii.

- **Conservation:** A similar USP (IAS-PACE)/SPREP training programme for natural resource management called Pacific Island Community-based Conservation Course, PICCC, has been developed in collaboration with the University of Wales in UK and we have offered the course twice in the last two years and it will be offered again in semester 1, 2005.
- **MEAs Capacity Building:** Another on-going area of active participation USP has with SPREP is in the promotion of the WSSD outcomes including the 14 Pacific Island's Type IIs. I would like to reiterate USP's commitment to working closely with SPREP and the regional countries to promote these initiatives. In addition, USP is fully committed to the current BPPOA+10 processes leading to the Mauritius meeting and beyond.
- **IWP:** As part of the International Waters Programme, SPREP and USP (Marine Studies Programme) have developed and implemented two special training programs last year and we are currently in the process of facilitating the postgraduate level training and research for the participating countries.
- **Renewable Energy:** USP's 'energy team' (contact PH Dept), working with UNESCAP and SOPAC, has developed a pilot training programme for 'renewable energy management'. Based on this a regional training workshop was conducted early this year. We hope this training programme will be very relevant for SPREP's PIREP initiative.
- **ICM:** The Institute of Applied Sciences (IAS) at USP and SPREP are involved in the development of a training programme for integrated coastal management (ICM) involving the concept of locally managed marine areas (LMMA), and for this we are working closely with the University of Rhode Islands.
- **SIDS Univ Consortium:** As a demonstration of this commitment Mr. Chairman, within the ambit of our joint Type II on 'Capacity Building USP has been working with other SIDS Universities in establishing a Consortium to offer joint courses, teaching/training programmes and to promote targeted re-

search activities across the SIDS region. We plan to launch this Consortium in Mauritius during the IM.

Research, Monitoring and Env. Governance

- **AIACC Res Project:** In climate change research, Mr. Chairman, the USP/SPREP / IGCI project, AIACC, requires special mention. This GEF/START funded project is a two country – Fiji and Cook Island – initiative which focuses on developing integrated assessment methodologies and models. We hope to provide regional training within the scope of AIACC and SPREP's CIDA projects.
- **Env Monitoring:** In the area of research and observational (analytical) capacity building, we see great possibilities for SPREP-USP collaboration. USP has one of the most advanced instrumental analytical capacity in the region and we will be happy to work closely with SPREP on POP & PCB issues, chemical waste management, pollution assessment, UV monitoring and data archiving. *Mr Chairman. in this context I would like to report that USP's analytical lab at the Institute of Applied Sciences has recently acquired ISO 17025 accreditation making it an internationally recognized lab in our region.*
- **Governance:** Mr. Chairman, USP and SPREP believe that good governance lies at the heart of sustainable development. USP is committed to our regions efforts to improve governance at all levels through new and innovative programs. Realising this, USP has established the Pacific Institute of Advanced Studies in Development and Governance and it is hoped that USP and SPREP will be able to work together in the 'Governance for Sustainable Development' area in future.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to say that USP is fully committed to working with SPREP through its Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development as a focal point and would like to enhance our collaboration to an MOU level partnership by this time next year.

I wish SPREP and its new Strategic Programmes all the very best.

Thank you

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Mr Chairperson, Distinguished delegates, first of all I bring you the best regards and wishes of Dr K Topfer, Executive Director of UNEP and USG of the UN. Dr Topfer attaches great importance to the SPREP region and looks forward to enhanced cooperation between UNEP and SPREP as a result of this meeting.

Allow me to congratulate the secretariat for the effective preparation of this meeting, and thank French Polynesia for hosting this important meeting in this most beautiful place. I wish also to congratulate you, Mr Chairperson, for the effective and insightful manner in which you conduct this meeting.

I would like to bring to the attention of the distinguished delegates 5 short issues:

- First the importance UNEP attaches to the Mauritius SIDS conference and UNEP's hope that the conference will deliver concrete results. I would like to draw your attention to a publication UNEP has produced in preparation for the Mauritius conference, summarizing all UNEP activities in the SIDS countries. It is obvious from this publication that there is room for a more coherent delivery by UNEP of its programmes at the national and regional level, and we are working to do so. SPREP might be instrumental in this regard.
- Secondly, with regard to the National Capacity Self Assessment that were discussed yesterday, I would like to draw your attention to the Intergovernmental Plan on Capacity Building and Technology transfer, that is currently under development in UNEP. The national capacity self assessment could provide a very useful input to this Intergovernmental plan and further guide UNEP's capacity building activities in this region.
- Thirdly I would like to bring to the attention of the distinguished delegates the mandate of UNEP to improve cooperation between different MEA's. We look forward working with SPREP and the countries in

the region in implementing this mandate, noting the work the secretariat, jointly with UNU, is proposing to undertake in this area in 2005.

- Fourthly I briefly would like to mention the new global Regional Seas Strategy, which aims at increasing the RS contribution to SD, enhance countries' ownership for the conventions they signed, and increase the visibility and effectiveness of the RS, individually and collectively. We hope SPREP will be an effective partner in this new global RS strategy and we look forward welcoming the Director and the chairperson of the CPO in Istanbul on 29th November to 2nd December this year.
- And lastly, Mr Chairperson, 80% of all pollution in the seas originates on land. As the coordinator of the GPA I will do everything within my power to ensure that the implementation of "The Regional Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Pacific Island Region for the Effects of Land-based Activities" is further enhanced in the next biennium, building amongst others on:
 - o The 4 National programme of actions we are initiating in the region jointly with SPREP and funded by the US;
 - o Our experience in the Caribbean region with the WW2BW partnership and I take the occasion to draw your attention to the report that is available of the Miami meeting;
 - o We also wish to follow up to the H2O conference – Hilltops to Oceans- we conducted, jointly with the Australian government, in Cairns this year. We trust that this conference gave the impetus for a more effective delivery of the GPA in the region.

To end, allow me, Mr Chairperson, to express once again the great importance Dr Topfer attaches to SPREP and his willingness to enhance cooperation.

Thank you.

University of California Berkeley

Mr. Chairman, first of all I would like to express my gratitude for the opportunity to attend this meeting and to say a few words on behalf of the University of California Berkeley and its Richard B. Gump South Pacific Research Station located here in French Polynesia on the island of Moorea.

Human well-being depends on the intelligent management of our interaction with natural systems. To manage intelligently, societies must make informed policy decisions; this requires an understanding of how the target system works. Generating such knowledge is the role of research scientists and a primary mission of my institution.

Natural systems are incredibly complex and research into their structure and function requires extremely high investment. Research cannot be done everywhere, therefore, and so science has often adopted a model system approach, focusing efforts on a few tractable systems, determining general rules, then applying and testing them elsewhere.

The Pacific Islands, as a region, is a model system for ecological research. The unique gradient in species richness across archipelagoes from South-East Asia to Polynesia represents a global resource for ecological science, providing an unparalleled opportunity to investigate the role of biological diversity in ecosystem structure, function, and resilience. The resulting knowledge will benefit the Pacific Islands foremost, but it will also provide new scientific insights to inform natural resource management around the world.

The Pacific Islands thus have the potential to attract significant international investment in ecological research. France has a long tradition of supporting science in the region as was impressively showcased at the French Research in the Pacific Symposium in New Caledonia a few weeks ago. For example, our colleagues at the French marine lab, CRIOBE, in Moorea have generated some of the longest term coral reef data sets in existence.

Other countries, including the United States of America, are also investing heavily in Pacific research. Just a few months ago, for example, and after an intense competition among proposed sites, the US National Science Foundation (NSF) awarded a renewable 6-year grant of approximately \$ 5 million for a new Long-Term Ecological Research (LTER) site focused on the coral reef ecosystem of Moorea. The Moorea Coral Reef LTER becomes one of only three marine sites in the prestigious 26-site LTER network.

Work carried out in Moorea by researchers associated with the Gump Station and CRIOBE will help scientists better understand the processes that drive the functions of coral reef ecosystems allowing us to make more accurate predictions of how they respond to environmental change, whether human-induced or from natural cycles.

The generation of such knowledge is fundamental, but equally important is its dissemination. The French coral reef initiative in the South Pacific is thus a timely and important effort to establish mechanisms for scientific exchange and collaboration among research hubs, such as Moorea and New Caledonia, as well as the transfer of ecological knowledge and savoir-faire from those hubs to local communities throughout the region.

To conclude, I'd like to reiterate my appreciation for this opportunity to meet with SPREP member representatives and to explore ways to promote the Pacific Islands as a model system of global significance for ecological research. SPREP, both through its members and the Secretariat, is an important partner in improving our collective understanding of Pacific ecosystems and in strengthening our ability to manage island resources to maximize human well-being in the natural environment.

Thank you, merci, mauruuru!

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Thank you. Good morning Director of SPREP, distinguished delegates and Observers, At the outset, let me reiterate our appreciation for the opportunity to participate actively in this 15th Meeting of Officials and to present Remarks at the Ministerial segment on Friday. This heralds our 13th year of support to SPREP through programme funding available from the GEF. As the largest project funder for the past 13 years, we feel that the invitation extended to UNDP –GEF is a demonstration of proactive leadership on the part of the Director to build effective partnerships, the theme of this year's Meeting. We also accept the Director's challenge put to donor agencies. In this regard, the Assistant Secretary- General of UNDP and Regional Director of the Asia/Pacific Bureau will pay a visit for the first time to SPREP Headquarters in mid-October. Frank Pinto's presence here is a testament to strengthening and expanding our support to SPREP and the PICs.

Our relationship with SPREP began in 1991 to present with a total of USD\$26,000,000 . Our partnership has accessed GEF funds with co-financing in the focal areas of biodiversity, climate change, renewable energy & international waters. A significant pipeline is also in place which carries into the next decade. In relation to the strategic work programme of SPREP, we are pleased to see the integration of UNDP project staff and project targets integrated into the ongoing work and mandate of

SPREP. We see no conflict in alignment with the key results to be achieved by UNDP projects funding.

UNDP is the United Nations global development network and sustainable environmental management & energy is one of our 4 focus priorities. As such, through our 3 Country Offices in Fiji, PNG and Samoa, the entire Oceania is covered. Dialogue with your UNDP Country Office can ensure that GEF submissions meet national priorities and global benefits. May I point out that UNDP has pledged significant resources to environmental programmes in the region. We have recently launched 2 new regional projects: one on renewable energy based in SOPAC complementing PIREP and secondly, on energy and poverty reduction. This project will have a PIC component operating out of UNDP Samoa. A third regional project on environmental governance is in the pipeline. UNDP Samoa is the Pacific focal point for regional environment programming whether from core or other resources.

Lastly, our partnership with SPREP is based upon a commitment to regional cooperation and to regional organisations to enable a coherent Pacific voice, when needed. Our global commitment is guided by the achievement of MDG goal 7:environmental sustainability; this is our collective target agreed upon by all PICs Heads of States.

Thank you very much.

5th Environment Ministers' Forum

Report of the Fifth Environment Ministers' Forum

**17 September 2004
Pape'ete, French Polynesia**

Environment Ministers' Forum Statement

Ministers of Fiji, France, French Polynesia, Kiribati, New Zealand, Niue, Samoa, Tokelau and Senior Officials of American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Marshall Islands, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Tuvalu, United States of America, Vanuatu and Wallis et Futuna, met in Papeete, 17 September, 2004, on the occasion of the Fifth Environment Ministers Meeting:

Reaffirmed the important and critical role of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) to address the environmental concerns of the Pacific region and to promote sustainable development.

Noted the importance of *The Pacific Plan* approved by the Forum Leaders to enhance regional cooperation and the important role of SPREP to assist with the implementation of the plan as well as the need to make practical advances by 2005.

Welcomed the report made by the Honorable Minister of Environment of New Zealand on behalf of the Chair of the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting and the need to further the positive dialogue between environmental and economic factors in sustainable development. The importance of this relationship was highlighted in the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting, 2004.

Approved the *Action Plan 2005-2009 for Managing the Environment of the Pacific Islands Region*.

Urged members together with the Secretariat to undertake the necessary steps at the earliest to implement the Action Plan taking in account the different approaches and partnerships needed.

Adopted the *Strategic Programmes 2004-2013* to implement the Action Plan as well as the realigned organizational structure.

Noted the outcomes of the Conference of the Parties to the Apia, Noumea and Waigani Conventions and called on SPREP Members not Parties to these conventions to become Parties and support their regional work as well as the establishment of the Pa-

cific Regional Center for Training and Technology Transfer.

Agreed that the new name for the organization be the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (while retaining the acronym SPREP) and the Secretariat be the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) with these name changes to be effective immediately.

Warmly welcomed and approved Palau's request to ~~accede to the~~ *Agreement Establishing SPREP*. The intention of Vanuatu to complete its ratification procedures before the 16th SPREP Meeting was noted. The Meeting further noted that the United States of America remains in the process of ratifying the Agreement.

Committed to participation at the highest level in Mauritius 2005 where the Barbados Programme of Action would be reviewed.

Recognised the links between the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the ten year review of the Barbados Programme of Action, the Pacific Plan, the SPREP Action Plan and the development of National Sustainable Development Strategies as per the target in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

Thanked Australia, New Zealand and other donors as well for the assistance provided to prepare for this important conference.

Urged the Secretariat to assist countries finalise preparations for Mauritius noting the need for further work on practical initiatives to address the concerns of transportation. A concern was raised that climate change vulnerabilities of Pacific SIDS were not adequately taken into account in the environmental vulnerability index (EVI).

Urged members to pay current and outstanding contributions in full before the end of 2004 and welcomed the intention of France to increase its contribution to the Secretariat.

Endorsed the decisions of the 15th SPREP Officials Meeting.

Agreed that the Environment Ministers meet every two years or as necessary.

In relation to the theme issue of the Environment Ministers Meeting on "Partnerships in Sustaining the Pacific Environment":

The Meeting:

Recognised the environmental, social/cultural and economic challenges facing the Pacific region, the importance of the environment in the planning process and the need to create, promote, build and strengthen bilateral and multilateral partnerships, involving government, non-governmental organizations, local communities and research institutions to achieve sustainable development.

Stressed the need for Members and the Secretariat to strengthen capacity in the area of research and science and the importance of further work on the people and populations in collaboration across CROP agencies.

Commended the *Coral Reef Initiative for the South Pacific* of France as well as the *White Water to Blue Water Initiative* of the United States. The *United Nations Environment Organisation Initiative* of the Government of France was also noted. The meeting also noted the organization in France in January 2005 of an international scientific conference on the theme of biodiversity, science and governance.

Welcomed the *Memorandum of Understanding between SPREP and the United Nations University* building on inter-linkages between multilateral environmental agreements and capacity development.

Noted the importance of regional organizations in the Pacific defining their mandates, roles and areas of responsibilities to avoid competition for resources and to focus on delivery to island countries and territories.

Urged the Secretariat to work with UNDP to develop a regional medium sized project to respond to the needs of member countries by 2005 and acknowledged the offer of assistance by UNEP to build on SPREP's Pacific Environment Information Network as well as the *Critical Ecosystems Initiative* of Conservation International.

Requested the Secretariat to further its efforts to increase the involvement of territories in the programs of SPREP and welcomed the Secretariat's initiative to hold a workshop in 2005 addressing increased territory participation and to report the outcome to the 16th SPREP Meeting of Officials.

Acknowledged the presence, support and contribution of the many international, regional partners, organizations and institutions in attendance.

Agreed that the 16th SPREP Meeting of Officials would be held at the Headquarters of the Secretariat in Apia, Samoa at a time to be determined later after consultation between the Chair and the Secretariat.

Expressed its gratitude to the Government of French Polynesia for their generous hospitality and the excellent organization provided to ensure a most successful meeting as well as the efficiency of the Secretariat.

Thanked the Vice-President and Minister for the Environment Jacqui Drollet for his excellent work in chairing the Ministerial Meeting.

Summary of Matters for Discussion and Decision by the Ministers

15 September 2004

The Chairman
Environment Ministers' Meeting
15th SPREP Meeting
Pape'ete
French Polynesia

Sir,

Matters for Discussion and Decision

I have the honour as Chair of the SPREP Meeting of Officials to report to you and to provide below a brief summary of the main issues we addressed over the past few days and agreed upon for your consideration and decision.

Action Plan for Managing the Environment of the Pacific Islands Region 2005 – 2009

The current Action Plan (2001 – 2004), adopted in Guam in 2000, will expire at the end of this year. Last year's SPREP Meeting launched the process for the review of the current Action Plan and for this to inform the drafting of a new Action Plan. A first draft was examined and adopted by a regional workshop in Apia, 7 – 8 June 2004, of senior environment and planning officials which we reviewed and amended earlier this week and which we now commend to you for consideration and approval.

Secretariat Strategic Programmes 2004 – 2013

Consistent with the overarching environmental priorities of the region set out in the Action Plan, the SPREP Secretariat has refined its draft Strategic Programmes, adopted at last year's SPREP Meeting in principle for phased implementation this year. We have examined this refined document and made appropriate amendments and recommend it to you for endorsement, noting that the Strategic Programme is a living document that would be refined and improved overtime. We also recommend the adoption of the realigned Secretariat structure to implement the Strategic Programmes.

Meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Apia, Noumea and Waigani Convention

The Conferences of the Parties to the above regional conventions to which SPREP is also Secretariat met last week and reported their key decisions to the SPREP Meeting for information and called on all SPREP members not yet Parties to these conventions to become Parties and support their regional work.

The key issue for the Apia Convention was the examination of its future as a relevant convention in the region. For the Noumea Convention discussion centered around the utility of amending its two protocols on waste dumping and pollution emergencies to bring these up to date with similar international instruments as opposed to urging Parties to ratify the corresponding international agreements. In the case of the Waigani Convention, the key issue was the establishment and early operation of the joint Basel/Waigani Pacific regional centre for training and technology transfer based at SPREP. The 2005 – 2006 work programme budget was adopted that would require additional voluntary member contributions as well as financial and in-kind support from the donor and international community for its activities to be implemented.

Name Change for the Organisation and Secretariat

Following your deliberations and decision on this matter last year, and consistent with the relevant provisions of the SPREP Agreement (1993), Samoa proposed a formal text for an amendment that was circulated to all contracting Parties and members in February 2004.

The matter was therefore put before our Meeting earlier this week and we agreed to recommend the amendment to you and your Meeting for adopting by consensus of all Parties attending as required by the Agreement and that the new name may be employed immediately thereafter.

The Meeting:

- **agreed** that the new name for the organisation be the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (while retaining the acronym SPREP) and the Secretariat be the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).
- **agreed** to recommend this change to the 5th Environment Ministers' Meeting for endorsement by consensus of all Parties attending the SPREP Environment Ministers' Meeting, and that the proposed name changes may be used immediately thereafter.

Palau's Request to Accede to the SPREP Agreement

The Meeting of Officials welcomed Palau's intention to become Party to the SPREP Agreement. It also welcomed advice by Vanuatu that it would deposit its instrument of ratification before the 16th SPREP Meeting and took note of information by the United States on its continuing progress towards its ratification of the Agreement.

The 10 year Review of the Barbados Programme of Action

The BPoA+10 provides an important opportunity to reinvigorate the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action, and address the new and emerging issues faced by SIDS in their pursuit of sustainable development. In line with the commitment from Forum Leaders in August 2004 it is ex-

tremely important that Pacific SIDS participate at the highest level in the International Meeting in Mauritius, January 2005. SPREP members noted the need to foster the links between the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), the BPoA+10, the Pacific Plan, the SPREP Action Plan and the production of National Sustainable Development Strategies, or the like, by 2005 in compliance with the JPOI.

2005 Work Programme and Budget and Outstanding Contribution

The Meeting welcomed the changes made by the Secretariat in presenting its 2005 work programme and budget to reflect the new Action Plan and Strategic Programmes. In approving its proposed work programme and budget, the Meeting had the agreement of the Secretariat that where possible, it would make additional improvements on the clarity and specificity of its activities and verifiable indicators and make any appropriate adjustments to donor funding allocations when the approved budget is circulated within one month.

The Meeting also noted the continuing difficulty with unpaid contributions that negatively affects the Secretariat's ability to operate effectively and deliver services. The Meeting again committed itself to paying current and outstanding contributions in full as soon as possible in 2004.

Jacqui Drollet
Chairman
15th SPREP Meeting of Officials