

SPREP Highlights are the monthly electronic briefs of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme. Through SPREP Highlights we aim to keep you in the loop with some of the events that the Samoa-based regional Secretariat was involved in a given month.

2010 Pacific Year of Biodiversity

The 2010 International Year of Biodiversity received an additional boost as the Pacific islands region formally launched its efforts for the campaign during a function at SPREP Headquarters.

Speaking during the launch and unveiling of the Pacific Biodiversity logo, Acting Director for SPREP, Mr Kosi Latu, stated that celebrating the Year was a way of recognising the value of biodiversity to us as island dwelling people.

“The slogan, Value Island Biodiversity, It’s Our Life says it all,” he said. “All humans, no matter where we live, are totally dependent on biodiversity – on nature and natural systems.”

“We rely on nature for food, clothing, pharmaceuticals and for our overall well-being,” said Mr Latu. “Even though we might be able to purchase many things from overseas, we are still reliant on fuel and money, which we can only derive from our natural resources.”

Biodiversity is a term used to refer to all living things and living systems on the planet. The diverse range of plants, animals and micro-organisms forms the basis for human survival and well-being. Not only do humans rely on biodiversity for our food and basic needs, but we also derive our cultural identities and traditions from our biodiversity.

“What we eat and how we live have been determined by what is available in our environment. Our traditional medicines have been derived directly from nature; and our songs and dances have been fashioned by our natural surroundings,” said Mr Latu.

You can read the full news article at:
http://www.sprep.org/article/news_detail.asp?id=747

Let SPREP know what you are doing as part of the Pacific Year of Biodiversity so we can share that throughout the region! (email nanettew@sprep.org or seemad@sprep.org) Watch this space for more news on the Pacific Year of Biodiversity.



World Wetlands Day Statement by SPREP Director, Mr David Sheppard: 2 February

World Wetlands Day, on the second day of February each year, marks the day the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands was signed in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971. This annual event provides us with an opportunity to raise and strengthen awareness of the importance of wetlands throughout the world and in our region.

For all of us who call the Pacific islands our home, the 2nd of February is a time to celebrate a very special part of our natural environment – the “wetlands”.

Wetlands include our rivers, coral reefs, mangroves, mudflats, marshes and seagrass beds. As we reflect on the immense economic, social and ecological value of our wetlands, we are also painfully aware of the rapid rate at which many of our wetlands are being degraded and disappearing. Losing our wetlands means losing the valuable services they provide and this almost always impacts negatively on humans. In small islands, the poorest people, often live very near to and depend directly on wetland ecosystems for their livelihood. They are also the least able to cope with the impacts of wetland loss.

Climate change adds another dimension to the continuing destruction of our wetlands but it brings a greater imperative for their preservation. Across the Pacific, there is growing evidence that climate change is resulting in more frequent cyclones and storm surges, coastal erosion, loss of fish breeding grounds and reduced water quality on many small islands.

However, it is also becoming clear that better management and protection of our wetland ecosystems could help islands build resilience and adapt better to the impacts of our changing climate. This year’s theme for World Wetlands Day is “Caring for Wetlands – An answer to climate change”.

For SPREP this could not be more appropriate. Protecting and conserving the diversity of life, including conserving our valuable wetlands and adapting to and building resilience to climate change impacts are inextricably interlinked.

This year, the International Year of Biodiversity, presents us with an opportunity to take stock of our ongoing contribution to nature conservation and work towards building island resilience to the ever-increasing impacts of climate change. It may seem all too simple, but if we strengthen our commitment to conserving mangroves, coral reefs and seagrass beds; improving waste management and preventing marine pollution; and to reducing our consumption of fossil fuels, we have hope that we can save our wetlands and possibly set our islands in good stead to withstand the impacts of climate change.

This World Wetlands Day, I challenge every person living in our islands, no matter who you are or what you do, to step up and make one change in your life for the well-being of the unique water-based environments in which we live.

To read the full statement please visit: http://www.sprep.org/article/news_detail.asp?id=739

Turtle time starts off 2010

2010 started off with a focus on turtles for the Marine Species Officer, Lui Bell. SPREP led several turtle events that will help conserve and track the marine turtles through satellite tagging and community involvement. At the end of January SPREP, in partnership with WWF South Pacific Programme Office in Fiji, held a one day “train the trainers” partners workshop followed by four day community workshop to encourage Fijian Communities to assist with turtle monitoring.

Train the Trainers partners and community workshop

It's an expansion of the Wan Smol Bag turtle monitors programme in Vanuatu which now covers 80% of all islands in Vanuatu, involving approximately 400 community volunteer turtle monitors.

The workshop and training involving 25 participants from 11 different villages within Fijii took place in Nakalou Village, Macuata in Vanua Levu. It involved presentations from a consultant from Wan Smol Bag, SPREP and WWF SPPO as well as a full day of training on turtle flipper tagging and tissue collection.

“Sometimes local communities are the best conservationists. The regional marine turtle action plan recognizes the fundamental role that traditional knowledge and customs play in turtle conservation, and aims to address the issue of community-based management. The action plan also encourages community awareness using successful models such as Wan Smolbag's Vanua-tai monitors network. This project is an effort towards that.” Said SPREP's Marine Species Officer, Lui Bell.

This community awareness workshop and training was part of the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund funded project which hopes to improve information on turtle nesting populations and improve their protection through community involvement.

Sub Regional Satellite tagging training

Following this community training, a two day sub regional Turtle Satellite tagging training was held in Nadi, Fiji with participants from Fiji, Tonga, Tuvalu and Kiribati.

The training will allow for national officers to carry out turtle satellite tagging, helping to build national capacity under this umbrella programme – “regional satellite tagging project” which is conducted in collaboration with National Oceanic

and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The project will assist with providing information on turtle movement once turtles have nested where very little of no information exists.

“The SPREP satellite tagging was initiated as part of the Year of the Sea Turtle campaign in 2006, to emphasize the shared nature of these endangered species. The success of that initiative has prompted the continuation of the activity as highlighted in the regional marine turtle action plan 2008-2012. The training is the first of its kind, involving several countries in the Pacific Islands region,” said Bell.

Each participating SPREP country was presented with a satellite tag and sufficient attachment material to enable them to conduct the tagging in their own countries.

For further details contact Lui Bell luib@sprep.org



Review of regional waste strategy shows good results

17 february 2010

A four year regional waste management project funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) comes to an end in May this year, for which a terminal evaluation review was recently completed. It found that the purpose of the project has been significantly achieved.

The Solid Waste Management Project in Oceania Region (SWMPOR) began in June 2006 and involves three partners, namely SPREP, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Government of Samoa and JICA.

The purpose of the project is to strengthen the implementation of the Pacific Regional Solid Waste Management Strategy.

During a meeting of the Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) comprising representatives from the three partners, the findings of the terminal evaluation team were submitted and accepted by the JCC meeting. The review exercise was conducted from 2 – 16 February as part of the project monitoring and evaluation.

“This is very pleasing that the evaluation report shows the project purpose was achieved but much more work remains

to be done in the Pacific in relation to waste management”, said SPREP Director, Mr. David Sheppard at the meeting of the JCC.

The project has four main elements; the environmental monitoring of the semi aerobic landfill in Samoa, the development of national solid waste management strategies within Pacific islands Forum countries, the development of a waste information network and the fourth element relates to the examination of the bulky waste issue within our region. Another significant output of this project has been the Solid Waste Management Strategy for the Pacific Islands Region for 2010-2015 (RS2010), developed in 2009 in consultation with SPREP member countries, it was endorsed at the 20th SPREP meeting in November 2009.

In acknowledging the financial support and partnership from JICA with this joint initiative, David Sheppard echoed the need for this regional waste project to continue after May 2010, reflecting the progress made with regional waste issues in the Pacific.

For the full story please visit:

http://www.sprep.org/article/news_detail.asp?id=741

Pacific meeting to discuss outcomes of regional waste project: 17 February 2010

Pacific waste representatives came together for a two day regional meeting in Samoa to focus on the outcomes of the four year regional waste project funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

Ending in May this year, the outcomes from solid waste management project and the evaluation report, were the focus of discussions for the gathering, along with a stock take of needs for the next possible regional waste project.

At the 20th SPREP Annual Meeting held in Apia last year, a clear message from members indicated that solid waste management is an important priority for Pacific countries and that this priority area within SPREP should increase.

"We would urge you to be as clear and specific as possible in outlining your needs and priorities when you give your national reports," said SPREP Director, David Sheppard during his address to the Pacific representatives at the opening of the two day meeting today.

"Your guidance over the next few days will play a critical role in the shaping of follow up to this project and, in particular, how this project will be designed and implemented."

"We'd like to discuss about the future project of the solid waste management improvement in this region, this is an important field to improve among all Pacific islands countries," said Mr. Kazuya Suzuki, a Director of JICA's Global Environment Department which covers the Pacific region.

The workshop ended on Thursday, 18 February and had country participants from the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. **For the full story please visit:**

http://www.sprep.org/article/news_detail.asp?id=742

For further details please contact SPREP's Solid Waste Officer, Esther Richards esterr@sprep.org



SPREP Director Pays Courtesy Visit to Vice-Chancellor: 28 January

The Director of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional and Environment Programme (SPREP), Mr David Sheppard, paid a courtesy visit to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of the South Pacific, Professor Rajesh Chandra, on the 25th of January 2010.

SPREP is the leading regional agency for Environment Management and Climate Change, and is a collaborative partner of USP. The key areas that SPREP and the University will work in partnership in are : • Building capacity • Bio-diversity opportunities • Waste Management • Work on climate change • Work on Communication

The Vice-Chancellor expressed his gratitude to the Director of SPREP and thanked him for his support. He said, "This is an opportunity to work together with an institution and build on shared resources and securing resources."

Also present at the meeting was the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research and International Affairs Professor Patrick Nunn, and the Dean of the Faculty of Science, Technology and Environment Dr Angeela Jokhan.

Note: Image and story courtesy of the USP

(As taken from the website of The University of the South Pacific) <http://www.usp.ac.fj/news/story.php?id=546>

Trapped mongoose in Samoa: 18 February 2010

In less than 24 hours after traps were laid in Samoa a male mongoose was caught, however the island nation is not relaxing the effort yet, as this may not be the only one.

Samoa has no known established population of the mongoose. The first report of a mongoose was in December last year, after much consultation with surrounding villages it appeared that the mongoose had been sighted as far back as 2008. This prompted the Samoa National Invasives

Task Team (SNITT), the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) and partners to establish an eradication project for the mongoose.

A proposal for funding was presented to buy DOC250 traps that were designed in New Zealand for stoats, ferrets and similar animals.

"Initially we ordered 30 of these traps via the Pacific Invasives Initiative (PII) in New Zealand. The first night we laid out 10 traps," said Mark Bonin the Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN) Coordinator, "and although a mongoose was caught within the first 24 hours, we plan on continuing to trap in the area for at least a year."

The male mongoose appeared to be sexually mature and weighed 750 grams and had a head-body length (HBL) of 36.8cms.

For further details please contact Mark Bonin - markb@sprep.org or Alan Tye the SPREP invasive species officer at alant@sprep.org For the full story, please visit: http://www.sprep.org/article/news_detail.asp?id=740



Learning a new approach for reviewing the State of the Environment in the face of long term climate change impacts

On 15-19 February, in Nadi Fiji, 22 representatives of Pacific countries and their regional inter-governmental organisations united in a regional partnership. They learnt a new approach for understanding and planning for enduring changes to the environment due to natural and human pressures, especially the growing pressures of climate change impacts.

Termed Integrated Environmental Assessment or IEA, this approach is about people and communities coming together to investigate long term trends and changes affecting them and their environment and how to address these in a more enduring and sustainable manner.

In addition to the training to learn about IEA, the regional partnership also created a plan for reviewing and preparing a report on the regional State of the Environment (SOE) in the Pacific that will be called the Pacific Environment and Climate Change Outlook (PECCO) report that focuses on the long term environment impacts of climate change and

policy options to address them.

Representatives who attended this IEA training and PECCO planning workshop includes those from 10 independent countries and one territory, three CROP organisations and institutions SOPAC, USP and SPREP, one national institution Landcare New Zealand and one international body the UNEP.

This event will be followed by in-country IEA trainings and SOE reviews, and the completion of the PECCO report by the regional partnership this year.

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Regional Meteorological Services Review near completion

The RMSR is nearing completion after the delivery of a draft of the report of the Review Team in late January. The draft report is currently under circulation to the SPREP members, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat Forum Officials Committee, and the Regional Meteorological Services Directors.

These groups will be providing comment on the draft report with the Review Team to produce their final report in mid-March.

In February, the Review Team assembled in Suva to undertake one final consultation with the Fiji Government to gain some initial feedback and view and to ascertain confirmation and view on certain parts of their findings. The meeting went well and the Review Team is each in their various home bases working on feedback received and preparing the final report.

SPREP is currently receiving feedback with the closure of feedback dates being the 12th of March, 2010. The next steps from there is for the Secretariat to coordinate the recommendations of the final Report with the members of the Policy Oversight Group (the Forum Officials Committee) and to facilitate the drafting of a policy paper that will be moved to the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat series of meetings in mid-2010 for endorsement and porting to the Pacific Forum Islands Leaders meeting later this year for final decisions and endorsement.

Dean Solofa, PI-GCOS Officer at SPREP
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Donation to Samoa Red Cross

A second donation of funds was presented to the Samoa Red Cross from SPREP to support the victims of the tsunami and to generally assist in the post tsunami phase. This presentation was made by SPREP Director, David Sheppard to the Secretary General of the Samoa Red Cross, Ms. Namulauulu Tautala Mauala in February.



The 6,437 tala in funds were from a Natural Disaster Fund established at SPREP to raise funds for the victims of the tsunami and also other victims affected by natural disasters in the Pacific. Since October last year fundraising has taken place in the Pacific, Australia and Europe.

"We are proud to be based in Samoa and are deeply appreciative of the Government of Samoa for hosting SPREP. Our staffs were all saddened by the tragic tsunami last year and a number of our staff was directly affected," said Sheppard during the handover.

"SPREP stands in solidarity with the victims of the tsunami and their families. We provided donations both cash as well as food and other items immediately after the tsunami. Many SPREP staff volunteered to help support on ground recovery efforts after the tsunami."

The first donation from SPREP to the Samoa Red Cross was 3,737.00 tala, along with sacks of rice and sugar, clothing and linen, boxes of tinned foods and crockery amongst other goods.

Photo L - R SPREP's Property Services Officer Petaia l'amafana who was dispatched to the Red Cross to assist with post tsunami efforts, David Sheppard, Ms. Namulauulu Tautala

SPREP Feature

The Pacific commits 100million USD for environment projects: 25 February 2010

One hundred million US dollars in Environment funding has been committed for projects in the Pacific region through the fourth cycle of the Global Environment Facility (GEF). This is a vast difference from the pilot phase and first three rounds which saw the Pacific region receive much less than what is considered proportionate with its environmental resources and potential contributions to global and national environmental benefits.

For the first three cycles plus the pilot phase since GEF was formed in 1991, 8.2 billion dollars was made available worldwide. However over this period the Pacific region was only allocated 84 million dollars for projects targeting 14 different countries. This is despite the fact that the Pacific is one of the most environmentally vulnerable regions of the World.

The fourth cycle, or GEF-4, has provided funding for the GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability umbrella programme (GEF-PAS) through which the 100 million has been channeled. This was a novel approach by not only the Pacific but also the GEF itself, allowing for a programmatic approach to the application of funds. It also meant a lot of work for Pacific countries to ensure that quality environmental projects are developed in time to meet GEF-4 deadlines. The 4 year cycle ends in June this year.

This is good that we have the funding locked in because that was the problem we had in the past, when GEF allocations were given on a 'first come, first served' basis," said Joe Stanley the Global Environment Facility Support Adviser for the Pacific based at SPREP.

"The Pacific has come up with good project ideas and proposals, put them into the GEF Project Identification Form format and had approval, so the funding was secured. That's the good part about the programmatic approach we have taken and in that regard the GEF-PAS approach has benefited the Pacific."

GEF unites 180 member governments to address global environment issues. It is an independent financial organisation that acts as the financial mechanism for various international environment conventions, and provides grants to countries to help benefit the global environment and promote sustainable livelihoods. It works in partnership with international institutions, non governmental organizations and the private sector.

"One of the main objectives of the GEF is to leverage co-financing with financing from other sources for projects that will achieve global or national environmental benefits. So for every dollar on average that GEF spends on a project, globally it attracts three or four other dollars from partners. But GEF doesn't execute projects – it works through implementing agencies."

While the funding for GEF-PAS has been committed, the work to implement many of these projects now begins. Countries and implementing agencies have up to 22 months to complete project definition, development and documentation, after that follows implementation which could take four years or longer.

The next cycle of funding, the 5th replenishment of the GEF, begins in July this year. Negotiations are ongoing among the GEF Secretariat and its donor partners. The lowest scenario sees the possibility of around 4.5 billion dollars being available globally in comparison to the 3.1 billion for GEF4, and this could mean at least a 40% increase in funding available compared to GEF PAS. The final figure is hoped to be much higher.

"Part of the concern for us is to have in place the absorptive capacity for these funding and related projects, and if we don't then we should build it," believes Stanley.

"While we had capacity building activities for the first 3 cycle replenishments, maybe we need to further increase the level of capacity enhancement in order to cope with the impacts on our environmental resources and sustainable development capacities due to the effects of climate change and through other causes."

The question now before Pacific countries, is whether the GEF-PAS approach be maintained for the GEF-5 cycle, or whether to adopt some other programme approach. Stanley believes that this should be a matter Pacific island countries need consider now before GEF-5 commences in July, and so that sufficient time is given to national needs identification and prioritization.

He noted some imminent milestones in this process: the final meeting of the group on the 5th Replenishment will be held in March; the GEF Assembly, which only meets every four years, will meet in May; followed by a GEF Council meeting in June that will finalise details of the 5th Replenishment and GEF-5 programme strategies; and the GEF Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson will attend the 21st SPREP Meeting and Ministerial Sessions in September to be held in Papua New Guinea.

For more details please contact Joe Stanley at jos@sprep.org



Climate Change; Reflections and future directions

In December 2009 the United Nations Framework for the Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) was held in Copenhagen. After an intense two weeks of negotiations and meetings, the meeting took note of the Copenhagen Accord (CA). Several months on from then, countries have been given the opportunity to outline their 'association' with the CA, or otherwise. For the Pacific who as part of the Alliance of Small Islands States touting the 1.5 degrees platform, both COP 15 and the Copenhagen Accord fell short of Pacific islands expectations however its now time to regroup and move forward from here.

"I don't think it will gain universal acceptance, we've seen a number of fairly strongly worded responses from countries both within our region and throughout the world so it's unlikely that it will receive universal adherence. That being said even those countries within our region who have associated themselves with the accord have done so with a number of caveats and have all recognized the Copenhagen Accord to be a first step to a legally binding agreement. Hopefully that can be negotiated and completed at the next UNFCCC Conference of the Parties in Mexico, in December," said SPREP's Climate Change Adviser, Espen Ronneberg.

For the Pacific, the strong commitment to a good outcome for our region at COP15 was evident in the large delegations as well as 11 Pacific Leaders attending to show support. This meeting saw the strong support of partnerships as the Pacific region worked to raise their profile and become a firm negotiating block within the Alliance of Small Islands States (AOSIS).

SPREP held a High Level Briefing for the heads of delegations and Pacific leaders during the COP15, the event was coordinated in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), for which the head of the UNDP and former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark was the keynote speaker. This event was held after requested by SPREP member countries, in order to help prepare and brief the Pacific Leaders on the World's biggest climate change conference.

"The briefing was intended to recap on some of the key issues in the negotiations and to highlight the status of these issues at that time. We were asked to keep the briefing as non-technical and informative as possible, and this allowed for good interactive discussions with the Leaders. This is perhaps one indication of success, but reading the interventions of the Leaders in the meeting and in their press statements, it was clear that the Leaders had been well prepared for the conference by their delegations, perhaps aided in a small way by the SPREP briefing."

Media and Communications of the COP 15 and the Pacific and AOSIS delegations was strong with a climate pasifika media team led by SPREP, that provided awareness for the region and internationally, technical support

and advice to the delegations as well as the formation of a blogsite – www.climatepasifika.blogspot.com.

The Pacific region staged several Pacific press conferences during COP15, as well as the launch of the SIDS dock and an impromptu AOSIS press conference which led to numerous international reports with world wide media. Pacific islands countries also played major roles in raising awareness with Kiribati having a side event which helped share the impacts of climate change upon their island nation and their people. Tuvalu had an exhibition booth at COP 15 and Pacific islands youth also featured strongly in sharing our voices as several delegations included young Pacific islanders as well as those that were part of the Project Survival Pacific.

"I think from a public relations point of view there was a growing media awareness - a lot more information about the impacts from the Pacific have been shared with a much wider audience. The presentation that Kiribati made from their side event was really compelling and was a real eye opener for a number of people who just don't understand the realities of atolls countries facing climate change. So, from several perspectives I think that that Pacific did get their message out in the Copenhagen conference. We haven't as yet been able to get the world to act on those problems but I think we have to take this a step at a time so from the point of view of that the awareness of Pacific climate change problems – it was a really good effort by the Pacific Islands countries."

During the first week of March, in Samoa, the Technical workshop on collaboration among regional centres and networks under the Nairobi work programme will be the first opportunity for the Pacific to meet after COP15 and the Copenhagen Accord. It will also be the start of a continued approach to strengthen the Pacific islands countries with the assistance they need to ensure a strong outcome in favour of our region at the next Climate Change Conference of the Parties in Mexico.

"At COP15, I think that having so many dedicated people from the Pacific working together with the other island countries enhanced the negotiating abilities of the region and put the Pacific more in the drivers seat of many of the work streams under AOSIS. The groundwork has been laid by these skilled negotiators and can be used to build a stronger final agreement in Mexico."

For further details please contact Espen at espenr@sprep.org



GEF-PAS Invasive Species Project on the move

Over the past few years the GEF-eligible Pacific countries have been working on a proposal for an invasive species project. In the current round of GEF, 10 countries (Cook Islands, FSM, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Niue, Palau, PNG, Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu) have participated in putting together an invasive species proposal, with SPREP and UNEP as overall managing/coordinating agencies for the project. The concept document for this project was approved by GEF last year and the project has now reached the stage of developing a full Project Document, which has to be submitted to GEF by 31 March. During February and March consultations with the 10 participating countries are being held, including a workshop in Nadi in the last week of February. The project is scheduled to run for 4 years, and we hope to have it under way by the end of this year.

Dr Alan Tye, Invasive Species Officer at SPREP
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New Manager for Pacific Futures programme at SPREP

The Pacific Futures programme at the SPREP has a new manager. The organisation welcomed Dr. Netatua Pelesikoti to Samoa when she began her three year contract in December last year.

Having already had a strong relationship with SPREP, she is no stranger to the organisation and its work. For many years Dr. Pelesikoti was the SPREP focal point from Tonga, she also worked as the Sustainable Development and Disaster Risk Management Adviser for Secretariat of the Pacific Applied GeoScience Commission (SOPAC) for five and a half years before coming to SPREP. Working in the typical small island atmosphere, Dr. Pelesikoti has worn many different hats during her career.

“I worked right up from being an environmental technical officer to working on policy and management at the national level. During my time in the environmental field I have worked on issues of waste management, climate change, biodiversity and conservation areas to environmental planning and policy, being involved in the Environmental Impact Assessment policy and legislation work in Tonga – there is a bit of everything in my background.”

Dr Pelesikoti is a coastal ecologist by profession. She did her first degree at the University of the South Pacific in geography and economics she completed her Masters in Coastal Management in the Netherlands and finished her Phd in Australia in coastal monitoring focusing on the coastal water quality, coral reef and seagrass.

Now the Programme Manager of Pacific Futures, Dr. Pelesikoti has settled in with her team and prepared the year ahead with a retreat at the start of this year which will help work towards the vision of Pacific Futures.

“Pacific Futures covers a wide range of areas from pollution and waste management to climate change, as well as environmental planning and governance. We plan to strengthen our support to the countries in national activities and support through relevant regional and international initiatives and processes especially with climate change as one of the important issues in the region at the moment.”

It will be a busy year for Pacific Futures with the review of Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change (PIFACC), Implementation of the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) and the Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement Project (PIGGAREP), as well as preparations for the Mauritius +5 review and supporting countries in the development of National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDS), support in the areas of pollution and waste management, the Pacific report to the Global State of Environment report, amongst other work covered by Pacific Futures.

Note: The Pacific Futures programme encompasses multilateral environmental agreements, environment monitoring and reporting, climate change and atmosphere, waste management and pollution control and environment planning. For more information on Pacific futures please visit <http://www.sprep.org/programme/programme.htm>.



Welcome:

Mr. William Thorp an intern and contractor joined SPREP at the end of January, he will be based with the Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project (PIGGAREP) to help implement national and regional project activities.

Farewells:

Mr Frank Wickham (pictured left) the Capacity Development Adviser at SPREP has left and is returning back to the Solomon Islands. He first joined SPREP in 2001.



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