



SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Second Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC 2) of the Convention to Ban the Importation into Forum Islands Countries of Hazardous and Radioactive Wastes and to Control the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and the Management of Hazardous Wastes within the South Pacific Region (Waigani Convention)

Apia, Samoa
28-29 April 2008

Agenda Item 1: Official Opening

1. The Second Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC 2) of the Convention to Ban the Importation into Forum Island Countries of Hazardous and Radioactive Wastes and to Control the Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within the South Pacific Region (Waigani Convention) met in Apia, Samoa on 28 and 29 April, 2008.
2. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following Parties: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Kiribati, Papua New Guinea (PNG), Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Also at attendance as observers were representatives of Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI), and Palau. A full list of participants is attached as Annex 1.
3. The Secretariat opened the Meeting with a prayer. The Director of SPREP, Mr Asterio Takesy then made his opening remarks. He welcomed the delegates to the SPREP Headquarters and made special mention of Vanuatu being the newest member in joining the Convention on the 17th February, 2008. He encouraged the participants to utilize STAC as an avenue to address issues that are of importance to member countries, most specifically in the area of toxic chemicals. He stressed the importance of the Waigani Convention to the region as a mechanism to prevent hazardous and radioactive waste entering or being dumped in the region and urged countries to provide the Secretariat a road map on how they wanted to be served.

4. He urged the Parties to utilize partnership or synergistic approaches to tackle and manage hazardous chemicals and wastes. He stated that all sectors were inter-linked and therefore synergies were important to ensure all major stakeholders were involved. He pointed to the collaborative initiatives currently underway with institutions such as the Secretariats of the Basel and Stockholm Conventions. He stated that the SPREP as the host of the Pacific Regional Centre for the Training and Technology Transfer (PRC) has been approached by the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention to be the Pacific Regional Centre for that Convention. He acknowledged the financial assistance by Australia to the practical and successful the POPs in PICs Project. The Director reiterated that synergistic approaches ensured that addressing hazardous waste was done in a holistic manner as opposed to the current ad hoc approach.

5. He urged the Meeting to make sure that issues that affected their countries be reflected in the meeting outcomes and recommendations. The Director wished the participants a fruitful week and then declared the Meeting open. The Director's speech is at Annex 2.

Agenda Item 2: Organisational Matters

(a) Rules of Procedure

6. The Rules of Procedure for the meeting of the Conference of the Parties to Waigani Convention adopted at the First Conference of the Parties (COP1) apply *mutatis mutandis* to any subsidiary bodies to the Conference of the Parties (Rule 1). [refer to STAC2.WP.2]

7. The Secretariat drew the attention of the Meeting to the Rules of Procedure (Rule 22.3) on the selection of the Chair and pointed to the decision of COP1 that authorised the STAC to elect its own Chairperson and called for nominations. The rules dictate that there should be three officers elected by the Meeting:- Chair, Vice Chair and Rapporteur.

(b) Election of Officers

8. PNG nominated by FSM and seconded by Australia and Cook Islands was duly elected as Chair. FSM was elected Vice Chair whilst the Rapporteur whom PNG nominated and seconded by Kiribati, was Australia.

9. The Chair thanked the Secretariat for the arrangements and in selecting PNG to be the Chair. She stated that whilst she hoped the meeting was successful she also hoped that participants achieve this through working in the spirit of understanding and friendship. She acknowledged that the majority of the participants were experienced in the workings of the STAC. She also acknowledged both the Vice Chair and Rapporteur and looked forward to receiving a comprehensive report at the end of the Meeting.

(c) Organisation of work

10. English was the working language of the meeting and working documents were available only in English. The Secretariat tabled the agenda and reminded the meeting that they were the technical advisory group who were to make recommendations that goes to the Conference of the Parties (COP) for a decision. Recommendations specifically under agenda item 9 were considered important for forwarding to the COP4 which is scheduled to be held in FSM in September 2008.

11. A draft summary report would be prepared by the Secretariat for the perusal and consideration of the Rapporteur and approval of the Meeting. The Chair requested that she preferred the meeting be conducted in a semi-formal approach so anyone (including observers) were permitted to ask questions during the meeting. The Committee also approved its working hours and programme of work.

Agenda Item 3: Adoption of the Agenda

12. The proposed agenda adopted by the Meeting is attached as Annex ? of the report.

Agenda Item 4: Status of STAC 1 Decisions

13. The Secretariat introduced paper STAC2.WP.04/Atts.1 and 2 which detailed the status of decisions taken by STAC 1 and as well, reported on the status of decisions taken since COP2. The Secretariat stated that the last time the STAC met was in 2004 and the Secretariat suggested that if the Parties wanted, they could actually meet more regularly as the STAC was not tied to meeting on a particular time framework.

14. It was agreed that previous decisions noted in WP.04 be made available to all the participants for discussions on this agenda item. The Meeting was invited to note the report on the status of actions taken in relation to those items in WP.04 as well as the work undertaken with respect to these items by the Secretariat.

15. The Secretariat presented on the WP.04.Att.1 and stressed that a major issue that the Secretariat was faced with was a shortage of funding for the Waigani Convention's work programme.

16. Under WP.04.Att.1 Item 6(iv), the representative of PNG asked if there was currently a mechanism available for member Parties to provide financial assistance to the regional centre in order to implement activities under the Waigani Convention. The Secretariat stated that there was no obligation for Parties to fund PRC activities but the Secretariat re-confirmed each Parties contributions were important as they fund the activities associated with the COP. The Secretariat further stated that if the meeting felt it important to include a formal mechanism for funding assistance, then it could be included in the recommendations to take to COP4 in September 2008. FSM stated that they put in an annual contribution to the Waigani Convention but not the regional centre given that Parties were made to understand that there would be no financial obligation on them if the regional centre was brought in. The Secretariat confirmed that there was no financial obligation in relation to the regional centre but it only brought up the issue because of the suggestion by PNG.

17. FSM queried if there was a need for Parties to put in funding to run the centre. The Secretariat responded that if Parties deemed it important then it could make recommendations on this issue. The Secretariat talked about the in-kind assistance provided by SPREP (ie: building, existing staff, equipment etc) but to actually have funds to implement activities, the Secretariat had to actively seek funding from donors.

18. PNG asked whether the Secretariat had any success in gaining funds to implement the work. The Secretariat responded on the affirmative saying they had succeeded in getting the regional centre to operate successfully but will need financial assistance in order to get the actual work done.

19. Australia stated that there is already a process in place where the Secretariat actively seeks funding and stated that Australia had been approached in funding elements of the work programme. Australia stated that an additional formal mechanism may be seen as an extra burden to the Secretariat and suggested that the current practice/process appeared satisfactory to attract the necessary funding for the PRC.

20. The Secretariat stated that they had been working collaboratively with Basel Convention Secretariat (SBC) who had more opportunities with donors, on some other activities. Although SPREP had not been flooded with funding, they still have managed to complete some activities under the work programme in collaboration with the Basel Convention.

21. Under WP.04.Att.1 Item 7(vi), the Secretariat clarified that the reporting and inventory development workshop was actually funded by the EU and used this as an example of seeking funds for activities that were approved by STAC & COP.

22. PNG asked what criteria was used to select countries to participate in the pilot project on harmonized legislation. The Secretariat responded that they first considered whether a country was a member of certain Conventions and further clarified that at the time of this workshop, there was also time factor involved because there were only three Parties ready at the time.

23. PNG requested the Secretariat circulate further information to allow other Parties to participate in similar projects. The Secretariat pointed to the work done with Tonga as a potential model for future activities. The representative of PNG stated that this would not apply in PNG as they had a much bigger group of stakeholders and would require not just one but several activities.

24. PNG also stated that technical assistance would also be an issue in relation to conducting these in-country workshops and trainings. The Secretariat stated that the consultants available were excellent but it's a matter of cost that the Secretariat had to take into account.

25. PNG asked that where there would be training for PNG, that the Secretariat looked at conducting counterpart training as part of that assistance with the view that there would be adequate capacity on the ground after the assistance had been provided.

26. CI asked for clarification in relation to the ADB consultation and how it related to the harmonized legislation workshop in Tonga. The Secretariat explained that UNEP had preferred to keep their project separate from the ADB project. .

27. Under WP.04.Att.1 Item 7(v): SI stated that they had no NIP and asked if the Secretariat was still available to assist SI. The Secretariat pointed out that the country itself had to take the formal step to access funds through the Stockholm Convention (GEF funding) but in terms of regional assistance via the Secretariat that SPREP was always willing and available to help member Parties in completing NIPs.

28. Under WP.04.Att.1 Item 8 – The Secretariat stated that they would have to review the scale of contributions as Vanuatu was not on the existing list and that the 2% may probably decrease.

29. Under WP.04.Att.1 Item 10 – PNG stated that there is still a problem of information accessibility and it needs to be solved. She also said that in PNG Customs officials needed to be included in trainings or regional meetings on this issue as the data and forms currently utilized by Customs are not compatible with the forms used by the Environment (ie: Waigani/Basel Convention forms). The Secretariat informed STAC2 of the upcoming regional meeting for Customs officers. This would enable their participation but the Secretariat also noted that establishing relationships was quite difficult if there are no proper working relationship established in respective Parties. The PNG Delegate stated that PNG Customs deals with consignments and if they are not aware that some substances were banned, then hazardous material could actually get into countries. PNG stressed the importance of including Customs officials in any proposed regional training and workshops.

30. Samoa suggested that a regional network be established to share information. The Secretariat reiterated that the Secretariat has established mechanisms for information sharing but the onus is on Parties to actually share the information with the Secretariat. Samoa pointed to the lack of capacity as a reason for not completing reports and subsequent information sharing.

31. The Secretariat urged the Parties to bring these issues up during the work programme discussions.

32. The representative of Cook Islands (CI) asked if this issue could also be attributed to a lack of follow-up from SPREP.

33. Kiribati stated that they had been working with Basel on these types of reporting requirement and they haven't had any problems with this but under Waigani,– SPREP has never send them any guidelines on reporting requirements. The Secretariat pointed to the decision by COP that agreed to Basel & Waigani forms being utilized by one or the other Convention to lessen the burden on Parties.

34. PNG requested that perhaps copies of reminders be sent to all relevant stakeholders as opposed to just the Competent Authority. She further suggested that there needs to be a lot of awareness raising for stakeholders to understand the requirements under this programme.

35. Australia stated that they are willing, where required, to provide advice and assistance to Parties and stressed the importance of having access to the correct contact details in the relevant authorities so as to expedite the transmission of requested information. Australia stated that it was vital that as an outcome of this meeting that the list of competent authorities and focal points be updated accordingly.

36. PNG suggested that perhaps there could also be a 2nd person as a contact person in the case the first one is not available or un-contactable.

37. Australia stated they were fortunate that the Competent Authority was also the Focal Point and therefore their work on movement and tracking of, and transmission of information was actually quite efficient. He reiterated the importance of updating the contact list.

38. Vanuatu queried if their contact person was on the list and if the list could reflect their details as well.

39. Under WP.04/Att.2 Item 2: Australia again commented on the importance of having correct details to facilitate notification of CA & FPs and asked if the Secretariat had the details of all the Parties. The Secretariat pointed to the agenda item where it required Parties to revise and modify contact details as although the Secretariat knew there were changes they were legally bound to be formally advised by Focal Points. The Secretariat stated that the information should come from the Focal Point but if the participants could informally let the Secretariat know during the meeting then they would endeavour to update the list for internal consumption and only post it on the website after receipt of formal notice from the FPs. Kiribati asked if the information was required during the meeting or whether it could wait until formal notice came from the Parties. The Secretariat stated that they could make changes and not post on the website until formally informed by Parties.

40. WP.04/Att.2 Item 3: Kiribati stated that they understood the difference between the conventions (Basel & Waigani) but asked how they could be implemented on the national level. The Secretariat stated that the regimes for both conventions were the same. If transboundary movements was between two Waigani Conventions Parties, then the procedures under the Waigani Convention would be followed. But if Kiribati was dealing with countries in Asia who are Parties to the Basel Convention, then Kiribati would have to use the Basel Convention. The Secretariat added that they currently have a list of Kiribati requirements and one of their officers would travel to Kiribati at the end of May 2008 to tackle the issues identified by Kiribati.

41. WP.04/Att.2 Item 4 : The Secretariat clarified that under Agenda Item 6.1 has a much more elaborate information on this topic and perhaps for the Meeting to discuss this under that particular agenda.

42. WP.04/Att2 Item 5 : The Secretariat pointed to a point raised by PNG in relation to a new financial mechanism to be introduced in relation to administering of PRC. As far as the decision is concerned, there is no further action required by the Parties or the Secretariat.

43. FSM reiterated their point about whether the Secretariat really needed money to run the PRC and if yes, then the Secretariat should have clear indication detailing the need for a financial mechanism for the Parties to consider. Secretariat confirmed that there is no need for a mechanism but was just following up the point raised by PNG. They further stated that the Secretariat would welcome any financial assistance by Parties if they so offered, but were not pressing Parties to make any financial assistance. PNG asked if the Secretariat had the capacity to continue to seek funding from major donors. The Secretariat responded in the affirmative.

44. The Secretariat said they were not mandated to establish a financial mechanism if it was not needed but voluntary contributions from Parties would be welcomed.

45. WP.04/Att2 Item 6 would be discussed in detail under agenda item 9.

46. WP.04/Att2 Item 8: Secretariat stated that they receive anecdotal reports but no formal reports from partners. The Chair reminded that the meeting had asked SPREP to send out reminders about when reports were due. The Secretariat said that the Parties had agreed to send all information in by 2004, but only Cook Islands had sent in their complete report. Data in usable form has been noted as a problem in country and the Secretariat will look at how that could be improved. The Chair stated that there is a need for further work both on the part of the Sect and Parties.

47. The Secretariat pointed to requirements of the Convention where reports are due over a 12 month period which means that country reports for 2007 are due in Dec. 2008.

48. The Secretariat reminded that this issue could be discussed under the Work Programme agenda item so that the Secretariat could use it as a guide in the implementation of the work of the Secretariat

49. WP.04/Att2 Item 9: The Secretariat pointed out that some activities under this area were more in-country work. PNG asked if there was a hard copy of the manual available as there is a perception that all Parties have access to internet. Kiri agreed with PNG and suggested perhaps instead of hard copies that they be made available on CD. The Secretariat stated that all these documents were actually put on CDs and given out at all waste meetings but participants at these meetings do not share it once they get into countries. PNG stated that hard copies are important because they can be passed to the FPs and as well they use them to deposit in their libraries and requested both CD & hard copies be made available. The hard copy is usually accompanied by a covering letter from SPREP which makes it more formal.

50. Samoa asked if the Secretariat could work with members to undertake a research on the scope or nature of traffic and any illegal patterns in the region. This could ascertain the actual problem and thereby Parties would be able to improve upon reporting requirements. The Secretariat pointed to the obligation under the Convention that required nationals to establish mechanisms to record this type of data. The Chair stated that perhaps a way forward is for countries to seek technical assistance to identify illegal traffics.

51. Australia supported the point by the Secretariat and as well the idea posed by Samoa on asking the Secretariat for capacity building and support.

52. Samoa suggested that capacity building through research would be useful as they would know how to deal with the problem. This could also help the country identify illegal trafficking.

53. Solomon Islands suggested that the STAC should set a timeframe for Parties to hand in their outstanding reports. The Secretariat pointed out that reporting requirements are clearly articulated under the Convention and that the Secretariat welcomed the reports as soon as possible.

54. PNG asked if the reporting formats for Basel, Stockholm, Rotterdam & Waigani could all be harmonised as the different requirements puts a strain on member countries. The Secretariat stated that there is an initiative currently underway globally to synergise different Convention reports. For Waigani & Basel, the reporting requirements are the same but there is work at hand to try and harmonise all other convention reporting requirements. The Secretariat pointed out that Tonga has drafted an act on this issue but they have yet to see if it will be implemented.

55. RMI asked who in country compiled the actual report – Focal Point or the Ministry responsible. The Secretariat stated that the report should be sent by the FP but the compilation of the report is done by the ministry that is responsible for the technical implementation of the programme. In the case of RMI, OEPPC & RMI EPA would work together to compile the report then it would go to the Foreign Affairs to send to the Secretariat.

56. RMI stated that they were confused as every time they asked for information, they would always be referred to the Focal Point.

57. The Secretariat stated that in order to implement legal and technical assistance they required country reports whilst the implementation also relied heavily on the availability of funding to conduct these in-country reports. The Secretariat had noted the concern from member Parties in relation to data collecting systems and would endeavour to look at capacity building activities to solve these issues.

58. The representative of PNG requested the Secretariat to consult further with individual Parties to identify further areas that required assistance or strengthening in order to meet the reporting requirement and that these consultations be done on a country level to ensure individualities of Parties were addressed.

59. Australia stated that in respect to reporting requirements, they noted at the July 2006 SPREP workshop on waste management not all Parties had the capability to complete these reports. Australia also pointed out that although filling in the forms were easy, it was the gathering and recording of information in order to collate the final report that Parties found difficult. Australia agreed that human capacity building was an important factor in ensuring that the reporting requirements of Parties were fulfilled and perhaps this could also be supported bilaterally or some synergies with other institutions to help implement Parties meeting their reporting requirements.

60. Cook Islands wondered about the commitment of Parties in relation to obligations under the Conventions and stressed the importance of SPREP sending out constant reminders and follow ups. PNG suggested that Parties should put this in national work plans and programmes so that it becomes a national responsibility. The delegate from PNG pointed to PNG DEC having incorporated reporting timeframes into their national work plans but due to high staff turnover in-country and this may result in a gap in reports being sent to the Secretariat. She also made a point about the timing when sending out emails to member Parties.

61. Kiribati asked what sort of legal assistance Kiribati could receive from the Secretariat after all the assessments had been made and whether Kiribati could ask for capacity building on enforcement or legislation drafting.

62. Australia stated that they did not think it was the role of the Secretariat but rather by several other Convention partners and that Australia was happy to provide information where needed. National bodies were more attuned of the enabling legislations in existence and so the responsibility of establishing mechanisms was the responsibility of the country as opposed to the Secretariat.

63. Australia suggested that it would be useful for all Parties to hear about difficulties in areas of waste streams and that Parties could come up with 3 or 4 issues that the meeting could focus on and which would allow Parties to assist each other as well as identifying problems and areas that the Secretariat could assist with.

64. PNG also brought up the option of bilateral assistance available to Parties themselves and that perhaps on the national level, Parties could also look at that avenue as a way of getting the technical assistance needed.

65. The Secretariat invited the SDA to present on the EU initiated MEA Hub for the Pacific region and funding opportunities available for member Parties through the SAICM QSP fund and the FAO Pesticide Programme. His presentation is at Annex ???.

Agenda Item 5: Competent Authorities and Focal Points

66. The Secretariat drew the attention of the Meeting to STAC2.WP.05 Att.1 and requested the Meeting to review the list and if there were changes, to inform the Secretariat in accordance with agreed procedures.

67. The list was revised accordingly and is attached as Annex ??.

Agenda Item 6.1: Cooperation with other Institutions

68. The Secretariat introduced STAC2.WP.06 Att.1 which was produced in accordance with a request by COP1 to show the status of institutional cooperation on critical issues for the implementation of the Waigani Convention. The request was to ensure there was no duplication in between institutions and to promote synergies.

69. The Meeting was invited to note the Report of the Secretariat STAC2.WP.06.Att.1 is attached as Annex ?.

70. The PNG representative queried why there was little or no participation of NGOs at the country level. She then enquired what the Secretariat could do to engage more NGOs at the national level. The Secretariat responded that there has been work conducted under the Stockholm Convention where the Secretariat had done some work with NGOs. He further stated that the funding agencies usually are behind the push to include NGOs but assured the meeting that the Secretariat will look at engaging more NGOs in the future.

71. The Secretariat also stated that a lot of NGOs in the Pacific do a lot of awareness raising and campaigning but pointed to the Secretariat's mandate which would clash with some of the NGO mandates (eg: Green Peace). The Secretariat will look at utilizing international meetings where a lot of NGOs attend as another avenue of engaging NGOs to the work of the Waigani Convention.

72. Australia thanked the Secretariat for its work with the Stockholm Convention and encouraged the Secretariat to continue its collaboration with it and also looked forward to receiving more reports on their collaborative efforts.

73. Tonga stated that capacity building efforts at national level was not good and asked if GEF funding for POPs activities could also be utilized as it was related to the issue discussed. The Secretariat responded that there was funding available through the GEF process but countries had to be a party to be able to access funds. Tonga & Palau had not yet ratified the Stockholm Convention so the countries would find it hard to access the funds. The Secretariat added that Tonga was eligible for SAICM QSP project and stated that there were a lot of other opportunities for countries and that SPREP as an organization could not apply on behalf of the countries, that this was a responsibility of the country itself.

74. The rep of Tonga, pointed to a regional proposal that SPREP had sent GEF and stated Waigani as a Convention could tap into that funding opportunity. The Secretariat stated that countries are the ones eligible for GEF funding and not SPREP as an organization. SPREP would assist in putting together proposals for the national activities but won't be able to apply directly to GEF PAS. Secretariat also pointed to the MEA hub based in SPREP which could also assist countries.

75. The Meeting acknowledged the work of the Secretariat and encouraged countries to work closely with the Secretariat especially through projects like the GEF, SAICM QSP.

Agenda Item 6.2: Pacific Regional Centre for the Stockholm Convention

76. The Secretariat reported to the Meeting decisions reached by the Conference of Parties for the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions in relation to ensuring the enhancement of cooperation and coordination among the three conventions at the administrative and programmatic levels.

77. It further informed the Meeting of decision SC-2/9 of the Conference of the Parties for the Stockholm Convention which adopted terms of reference for regional and sub-regional centres for capacity-building and transfer of technology under the Stockholm Convention as well as criteria for evaluating their performance.

78. The Secretariat pointed to the COP-3 of the Stockholm Convention where it *invited* nomination by regions, through the regional representatives on the bureau, of institutions, including Basel Convention regional centres or other relevant existing institutions, to serve as Stockholm Convention regional centres or subregional centres.

79. In tabling STAC2.WP.06.2 and STAC2.WP.06.2/Atts.1 and 2, the Secretariat requested the Meeting to discuss and make a recommendation to the COP on the issue of the establishment of the Pacific Regional Centre for the Stockholm Convention within SPREP. This would involve extending the role of the Pacific Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the joint implementation of the Basel and Waigani Conventions, to also serve as the Pacific Regional Centre for the Stockholm Convention.

80. The Meeting thanked the Secretariat for the report and stated that the issue had been discussed heavily in meetings prior to STAC1. Countries had acknowledged that SPREP was the best placed organization to take on this role. The Chair acknowledged that not all countries attend the COPs so this Meeting would provide the opportunity to discuss the SPREP's nomination.

81. Tonga stated that STAC should also look at the AOSIS, SIDS and G77 and China and seek assistance from these groups to support the Pacific's proposal.

82. The Chair asked the Secretariat to explain the UN System of groupings and to explain why the Pacific was classified under the Asia-Pacific. The Secretariat stated that at the last Stockholm Convention COP, Aust & NZ argued that the Pacific should be seen as a separate entity from the Asian continent. The proposal did not get enough support from the plenary session so the Pacific region has to put formal nominations through the Bureau members which are Iran and China. But in doing so, the STAC can still seek the support of the groups mentioned by Tonga.

83. FSM queried whether there were existing statistics showing how the region would benefit from the establishment of such a centre. And if yes, if the Secretariat could provide supporting documents and annex it to the recommendation to the COP for the establishment of such a centre. The Secretariat pointed to the global level conventions and how they have already established an ad-hoc working group on synergies and that the centre will only extend its role to take on the responsibilities of the Stockholm Convention. Having a single mechanism to cover the three different conventions would be beneficial to the countries. If there was a combined agreed work programme for the 3 Conventions, then there was also a possibility of receiving programmatic funding. The Secretariat also asked that the meeting consider that the regional centre uses SPREP resources and so countries should also consider if this centre should have a designated director.

84. The Secretariat made reference to the movement of waste from countries to Australia under the POPs in PICs project as an example of these synergistic approaches to tackle this movement. Therefore, the establishment of this combined centre would help countries.

85. The PNG representative pointed to having one centre in one roof as an advantage as even if there are different questions, the one centre could provide information without having to go to another source. The POPs in PICs project was also acknowledged because of the one-stop-shop approach through having the center. Referring to the process of official nomination, this would have to be done at the country level by the Foreign Affairs Dept.

86. The Secretariat also pointed out that whatever the meeting decides, it would go to the Waigani COP in September and whatever it decides, the Secretariat will implement.

87. Australia supported making a recommendation for the Waigani COP's endorsement on this issue and pointed out that there appeared to be some benefits for the region should the centre be based in SPREP.

88. Solomon Islands suggested perhaps the STAC recommendations to the Waigani COP could also include a recommendation about allocating resources to allow someone to be hired to coordinate the work of the centre. The Secretariat responded that a recommendation could be made but the decision and endorsement would come from the COP.

89. Tonga suggested asking other donors for extra resources. Vanuatu supported SPREP hosting the centre but asked whether the centre could detail exactly the kind of assistance it could offer countries. The Secretariat responded that the centre would use what countries had put into the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention (NIPs) and part of the assistance would be to help countries finalise NIPs for forwarding to the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention. The Secretariat stated that its mandate was simply to work with countries and to provide technical advice and assistance where needed.

90. PNG stated that the Secretariat did not really know what the countries needed so the onus was on the country to make clear to the Secretariat what they needed done. It could be a request for a regional or national workshop and SPREP so far has been responsive to requests for technical assistance from PNG. She stated that PNG sometimes handled their own problems first before contacting the Secretariat for further assistance. She urged the members to do their part and utilize the personnel at the Secretariat when needed and not just wait for the Secretariat to contact them.

91. Tonga said they were not familiar with the Stockholm Convention grouping asking why the Pacific was under the Asia-Pacific given that other fora do not use the Asia-Pacific as a grouping. The Secretariat stated that the UN had 5 geographic regions but the groupings are based on specific interests, not on geography make up. For example, Chemicals, CBD and Waste conventions were grouped under similarity of issues and that countries usually try to band together with a cluster or group that the respective country thinks would be able to lobby their issues properly at the UN level.

92. Tonga reiterated that the STAC should look at the best group to contact for supporting their recommendations during the Stockholm Convention COP. The Secretariat stated that the COP had already agreed to the 5 groupings and its processes and so any nomination from the Pacific would have to go through the Asia-Pacific grouping but lobbying for support for the STAC recommendations will certainly be sought from other groups such as AOSIS, SIDS and G77 and China.

93. The Meeting agreed to the expansion of the existing Waigani/Basel regional centre role to encompass the Stockholm Convention as well as the inclusion of a request for additional resources to fund a person to coordinate the work of the centre on the basis that SPREP comes up with a detailed clarification on the benefits of the centre to the Parties. The technicalities of the position (eg: salary) would be left to the decision of the COP. These recommendations would be forwarded to the COP in September 2008.

Agenda Item 7: Reporting and Transmission of Information

94. In introducing STAC2.WP07, the Secretariat recalled that the COP2 had adopted Draft *Reporting and Transmission of Information* forms to be filled out annually by Parties and that the Parties were requested to meet their reporting obligations under the Waigani Convention beginning from the 2004 calendar year using the forms adopted.

95. Under an understanding with the Basel Convention Secretariat, the reporting information provided, whether under the Basel or under the Waigani Convention would be acceptable to both Secretariats.

96. The Secretariat further informed the Meeting that only Cook Islands had formally submitted a report to the Basel Secretariat whilst other countries had made only partial progress with their forms.

97. The Meeting was invited to discuss and review the status of Party reporting and to make recommendations on ways in which it could be improved.

98. Tonga said that the problem was networking and suggested the Secretariat look for resources to establish a clearinghouse network for all the Conventions. He further stated that capacity building was okay but there was a serious need for a database or network to centralize all information about the different Conventions that the countries are Party to. The Secretariat pointed to information available on the SPREP website but acknowledged the need raised by Tonga and Kiribati and the Secretariat will endeavour to set one up after the STAC2.

99. The Meeting recalling Day 1's discussion on STAC1 decisions, requested the need for capacity building, Secretariat to assist countries in tracking illegal traffic and to research why countries are not able to report their obligations.

Agenda Item 8: Illegal Traffic

100. In introducing STAC2.WP.08, the Secretariat recalled the importance of reporting by Parties of instances of illegal traffic and invited the Meeting to share with the Secretariat and other Parties their experiences with any instances of illegal traffic to enable the Secretariat to fulfill its obligations under Articles 9.6 and 14(j) of the Waigani Convention.

101. The Secretariat advised that this issue tied in with reporting and transmission of information and pointed to the case of Tonga sending batteries via NZ without realizing that it came under illegal trafficking.

102. The Meeting taking into account discussions undertaken in Agenda Item 1, passed Agenda Item 8 without comments.

Agenda Item 9: Consideration of Other Issues and Prioritisation

103. STAC2.WP.09 drew the attention of the Meeting to the difficulty faced by the Secretariat in implementing the Work Programme (STAC2.WP.09.Att.1) because of lack of funds. The Secretariat informed the Meeting that recent indication shows donors such as GEF and EU having large amounts of funding available commencing in 2008. It also asked the Meeting that when discussing this agenda item, to take into account discussions over the past day in order to draw up a comprehensive work programme in line with available resources.

104. The Meeting was invited to consider and prioritise, in addition to the foregoing agenda items, other issues such as Offshore disposal of waste such as in the POPs in PICs project; Legal and Technical Assistance; Attendance at International Meetings and Fund raising. The decision of the Meeting will guide the Secretariat in the implementation of the Work Programme.

105. The Meeting revised the Work Programme & Budget for 2009/2010 and is attached as Annex ?.

Agenda Item 10: Other Matters

106. No other matters were posed at the Meeting.

Agenda Item 11: Date and Venue of next Meeting

107. The Meeting agreed to hold the next STAC Meeting in Apia, Samoa in 2010. The exact date of the Meeting will be worked out by the Secretariat and Parties would be informed accordingly.

Agenda Item 12: Adoption of the Meeting Record

108. Australia and seconded by Vanuatu moved for the record of the meeting to be adopted. The Meeting adopted the record of the Meeting.

Agenda Item 13: Closure of Meeting

109. The Chair thanked the participants for their constructive comments and the work put in to make the meeting a success. The representative of Australia thanked the Chair as well as the Secretariat for all the arrangements in hosting the meeting.

110. The Secretariat thanked the participants for their input and also thanked Australia for assisting with funding two of the participants. Special thanks were also made to the Chair for her guidance and input in ensuring the success of the meeting.

111. The representative of Tonga said a prayer and the Chair then closed the Meeting.