



SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Twenty-Second SPREP Meeting

Apia, Samoa
13 – 15 September 2011



Agenda Item 8.1.4:

Pacific Mangroves Initiatives (SPREP/IUCN)

Purpose

1. To seek endorsement of the Pacific Mangrove Initiative (PMI) and to inform the Meeting on efforts so far by SPREP and IUCN Oceania with regional partners to establish and move this initiative forward.

Background

2. The Pacific Mangrove Initiative (PMI) was developed in 2007 by SPREP, the International Union for Conservation of Nature Oceania Regional Office (IUCN-ORO) and regional partners working on coastal management as a response to the recognition by governments of the region of the importance of sustainable mangrove management and the need for a regional approach to sustainable management at the national level.

3. The PMI is an umbrella initiative designed to build regional partnerships that support sustainable mangrove management across the region, and to streamline the activities of multiple partners across the Pacific. The partnership includes regional organisations, experts and stakeholders that support the sustainable use and conservation of mangroves and associated coastal ecosystems for improved livelihoods, biodiversity conservation and adaptation to climate change.

4. The purpose of the PMI is to support coordinated and cost effective investments in the use and conservation of mangroves as a 'flagship' ecosystem, as well as associated coastal ecosystems, for improved and sustainable livelihoods, biodiversity conservation and adaptation to climate change in the Pacific Island Countries and Territories, by:

- Accessing and managing financial and other resources to support in-country activities and programs that meet their priority needs;
- Coordinating, collaborating and, where appropriate, joint programming on mangrove-related activities targeting country prioritized programmes of work;

- Assisting countries to systematically develop national programmes of work on mangroves and coastal ecosystem management consistent with their national development goals articulated in national sustainable development strategies (NSDs) or their equivalent; and
- Providing technical backstopping to PICs in their effort to conserve and manage mangroves and other coastal ecosystems for biodiversity, livelihoods and as a front-line defence in ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change.

5. The first operational regional project of the PMI is the Mangroves Ecosystem for Climate Change and Livelihoods (MESCAL) project funded by the Government of Germany through the Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU). The MESCAL project engages five Pacific Island Countries (Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Samoa and Tonga).

6. The SPREP Secretariat and IUCN-ORO signed a PMI partnership agreement in July 2010 under which they are co-chairs of the PMI.

1. Inaugural Meeting of the PMI Steering Committee

7. The inaugural meeting of the PMI Steering Committee was held on June 9 2011 at the IUCN-ORO Offices in Suva, Fiji. This first meeting was attended by country representatives from Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Samoa and Tonga. Although not present at the meeting Papua New Guinea also confirmed their willingness to be involved in the PMI and will be the sixth Pacific country to participate. Other organizations that were represented included the University of the South Pacific, WWF, UNDP and WorldFish.

8. A number of issues were discussed at this meeting, including the following:

- funding opportunities for the initiative;
- need for institutional focal points for the PMI at both the regional and national levels;
- need to widen the PMI partnership to include the active participation of all relevant organisations and Pacific Islands that have mangroves;
- need for an experts database;
- links to the green economy issue;
- need for an effective regional mangrove database;
- a similar initiative dealing with seagrasses; and
- need to include atoll islands such Kiribati due to the critical role and function of mangroves.

9. The meeting agreed that wider country endorsement of the PMI would strengthen current efforts to conserve mangroves in our region, demonstrate ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change and may assist in securing funding for ongoing work.

10. The meeting concluded that given the ecological, economic and social importance of mangroves to our islands and region, significant effort and commitment by all partners must be made in order for the PMI to be successful in the long term.

Recommendations

11. The Meeting is invited to:

- **endorse** the Pacific Mangrove Initiative;
 - **encourage** SPREP members with mangroves to formally join the Initiative;
 - **call** on partners and donor agencies to provide assistance and support where possible for the Initiative; and
 - **direct** the Secretariat to provide assistance to Members, where needed, in the implementation of the Pacific Mangrove Initiative and its associated activities.
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16 July 2011