

THIRD MULTIPARTITE REVIEW
Central Bank Building, Apia, Samoa
8 July, 2004

Government of Tonga Statement

Director of SPREP, UNDP Resident Representative, Official Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a pleasure to present this statement to the third multipartite review of the International Waters Program on behalf of the Government of Tonga.

First of all, let me convey my sincere thanks to the Government of Samoa for hosting the 2004 multipartite review. Also to UNDP and SPREP for organizing this annual gathering as a platform to collectively assess the progress of the IWP. It is unfortunate that Niue's hope to host the meeting was interrupted by the mighty cyclone Heta. However, we joined the others in wishing Niue (extended to Yap and Samoa which were also affected by natural disasters early this year) a full recovery in the near future.

The second multipartite review in Tonga endorsed some recommendations with regard to the focus of the project within the remaining timeframe. It is one year from the Tonga meeting and we take this opportunity to reflect on our performance as individual countries and as a region.

For Tonga during the second multipartite review, the national concern and pilot community were known. Administrative mechanism, such as the Nukuhetulu Project Development Team was also in place to facilitate the next phase, which is strategic planning and designing of a pilot project.

In order to effectively engage pilot community in project design, the project development team carried out community meetings to raise their awareness of IWP. A community workshop was followed to engage them in stakeholder analysis and participatory problem analysis. The lack of information regarding factors contributed to the root causes of the problem led to the collection of baseline information. A household socio-economic survey was combined with a waste characterization study at the pilot community. A review of institutional arrangement relevant to the implementation of the IWP in Tonga has also been completed.

The availability of baseline information has better equipped Tonga IWP to assess and select viable solutions that will address our priority concern. It is understood from the root causes analysis that some of the problem and solution are beyond the capacity of the pilot community, therefore have to be addressed at the national level. However, time constraint and limited financial resource posed challenges for all of us. We are very hopeful that in our next multipartite review meeting, we will be at a stage to show some results from actually implementing and monitoring of pilot activities.

I would like to conclude this short statement by wishing all the participating countries and agencies a more fruitful and productive meeting.

Malo 'aupito