

Report of the 19th SPREP Meeting of Officials and Meeting of Environmental Ministers

8–12 September 2008
Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia



SPREP IRC Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

SPREP Meeting (19th : 2008 : Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia)

Report of the Nineteenth SPREP Meeting of Officials and Meeting of Environmental Ministers, 8 – 12 September 2008, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia. – Apia, Samoa : SPREP, 2008.

77 p. ; 29 cm

ISBN: 978-982-04-0384-0

1. Environmental policy – Oceania – Congresses.
2. Conservation of natural resources – Oceania – Congresses.
3. Environmental protection – Oceania – Congresses. I. Pacific Regional Environment Programme. II. Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). III. Title.

363.7099

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and

Meeting of Environmental Ministers

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Agenda Item 1: Official Opening

1. The 19th SPREP Meeting (19SM) was convened in Palikir, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia from 8 to 12 September 2008. Representatives of the following SPREP countries and territories attended: American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, France, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, United States of America, and Wallis and Futuna. Observers from regional, international and non-governmental organizations were present. A list of participants is attached as Annex 1.

2. The Master of Ceremonies (MC), Mr Kosi Latu, called the meeting to order. At the invitation of the MC, Father John Curran offered a prayer for the meeting. The prayer was followed by a hymn performed by the PWIHNO group from Kitti Municipality.

3. The Director of SPREP, Mr Asterio Takesy welcomed all delegates to the meeting. As this was his last address to a SPREP meeting as Director, he thanked Members and the Secretariat for the assistance afforded to him during the past six years. The Director stated that while he was proud of the accomplishments of SPREP during his tenure, he expressed regret that he could not achieve more. He stressed the importance of the organisation to the region and the need for its continued strengthening. His full address is attached as Annex 2.

4. The Vice President of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Hon. Alik Alik, delivered the opening address. He welcomed delegates to the country and encouraged all to sample and enjoy what Pohnpei has to offer. He then spoke about the environmental challenges that confront his country, in particular the concern of climate change. In this respect he endorsed the Niue Forum Leaders Meeting Declaration on Climate Change, and expressed his desire to see this translated into action. His full address is attached as Annex 3.

Agenda Item 2: Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

5. The Chair of the 18th SPREP Meeting, the Representative of Guam, Mr Mike Gawel, expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to serve SPREP as Chair over the course of the last year. A copy of his statement is attached as Annex 4.

6. With regard to electing the Chair for the 19th SPREP Meeting, at the request of the Representative

of Guam, the Director explained that traditionally the host country serves as Chair of the SPREP Meeting.

7. The Meeting **elected** the Federated States of Micronesia as Chair of the 19th SPREP meeting; and the Solomon Islands as Vice-Chair of the 19th SPREP Meeting.

8. All representatives thanked the outgoing Chair for their leadership, congratulated the new Chair, and thanked the Federated States of Micronesia for its support of the Meeting.

Agenda Item 3: Adoption of the Agenda and Working Procedures

9. The Chair proposed adoption of the Draft Agenda for the 19th SPREP Meeting as contained in document 19SM/Officials/Provisional Agenda/Rev.1. This is attached as Annex 5.

10. The Representative of Niue highlighted that the two most important issues to be discussed during the meeting were the Independent Corporate Review and the Regional Institutional Framework Review. He requested that they be discussed back to back, and that the RIF Review be discussed earlier than previously scheduled.

11. The Representative of New Zealand cautioned that a revised paper was being prepared on the RIF and that Members would need time to consider that paper. The Secretariat clarified that the new RIF paper would be circulated on the first day of the meeting. Australia supported the Representative of Niue and stated that the meeting would benefit from extended discussion of these two issues.

12. The Meeting **adopted** the Agenda, including the modifications suggested by Niue, that the Independent Corporate Review and the Regional Institutional Framework be considered together.

13. The Chair called for an open-ended drafting committee to be formed. The Committee consisted of the following Member countries: Australia, Federated States of Micronesia, French Polynesia, Kiribati, New Zealand, Solomon Islands, and the United States of America. The Solomon Islands was appointed chair of the Committee.

Agenda Item 4: Action Taken on Matters Arising from Eighteenth SPREP Meeting

14. The Chair requested the Meeting to take note of the Secretariat reports on actions taken since the 18th SPREP Meeting, as outlined in 19SM/Officials/WP.4.

15. The Meeting **noted** the report.

Agenda Item 5: Performance Review/Overview of Developments in 2007

Agenda Item 5.1: Presentation of Annual Report for 2007 and Director's Overview of Progress since the 18th SPREP Meeting

16. The Director introduced the Annual Report of activities of the organization during 2007 and highlighted elements of the Secretariat's work during the period. He stressed the inter-relationships between all SPREP work areas, as well as on the growing urgency for action in many fields.

17. He noted the work done to strengthen the links with international financial institutions relevant to the financing of environmental activities in the region. He also addressed the enhancement of cooperation between the regional organizations in the Pacific and the interest expressed by new donors to the region. The Director's full statement is attached as Annex 6.

18. The Representative of France thanked the Director for his presentation and asked the Secretariat to provide further details on the linkages between the GEF PAS and the regional adaptation to climate change project. He stated that last year, in Apia, the GEF Chairperson, his fellow French citizen Monique Barbut, introduced the GEF PAS as a GEF action framework for the Pacific. He asked whether the regional adaptation to climate change project was an outcome of the GEF PAS.

19. The Representative of New Zealand thanked the Director for his presentation and highlighted the GEF workshop in Auckland in the coming weeks, as an opportunity to broaden the information on GEF activities and opportunities. He also thanked the Secretariat for an excellent annual report.

20. The Representative of Australia suggested that elements of the annual report might serve as a model for producing fact sheets for dissemination in the region to highlight some of the achievements and good work and being done by SPREP.

21. The Meeting:

* **adopted** the 2007 Annual Report, and

* **requested** the Secretariat to take note of comments and suggestions.

Agenda Item 5.2: Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report on the 2007 Annual Work Programme and Budget

22. In accordance with the SPREP Meeting Rules of Procedure, the Secretariat presented its internal Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report (PMER) for 2007 as contained in 19SM/Officials/WP.5.2.

23. The PMER complemented the Director's Overview and separate reports on the financial performance and accounts for the 2007 financial year. It detailed the achievements under each programme, output and performance indicator established for approved activities for 2007.

24. In response to Member's wishes to hear from staff in greater detail and to illustrate work programme performance, the Secretariat presented a PowerPoint presentation highlighting Island Ecosystems Programme accomplishments during the year.

25. Similarly, the Secretariat presented a PowerPoint presentation on Pacific Futures Programme achievements for 2007 to supplement the detailed information contained in WP.5.2/Att. 1.

26. The Secretariat presented information on SPREP assistance to the Federated States of Micronesia as an illustration of the nature of SPREP support services and also the challenges and opportunities that face the organization.

27. The Representative of Niue thanked the Secretariat for assistance provided to his country in areas such as waste management advice, oil spill training, and the PEIN and PACC projects, and expressed his gratitude to SPREP, along with SOPAC, for provision of EIA training. He requested assistance from the Secretariat and Member countries in addressing issues related to the absorptive capacity of the small island states, and added that he hoped the organization might increase its focus on renewable sources of energy.

28. The Representative of the Cook Islands thanked the Secretariat for its presentations and provision of programme support, but expressed concern over as-

sistance on the issue of asbestos for his country. He stated that the Cook Islands had not received support in this area, despite having raised the matter at a number of SPREP Meetings. He reiterated his inquiry as to whether the Secretariat and Members could improve their assistance in developing plans for disposal of these materials.

29. The Representative of the Solomon Islands thanked the Secretariat for its support of marine resource initiatives, but was concerned that the level of terrestrial resource management assistance has been minimal in much of the region. He urged SPREP to increase its community-based activities, and to ensure participation by local NGOs. He requested additional information from the Secretariat on the PACC project and called on the Secretariat to increase its adaptation-related activities in general. He thanked the Secretariat for its assistance in several areas, including preparing a draft national waste management strategy. In this regard, he stated that his country would endeavour to approve and implement the strategy in the near future.

30. The Representative of Tuvalu thanked the Secretariat for the report, but stated that there needed to be better analysis of the gaps in services, particularly in small countries, and called on the Secretariat to lend assistance to Members in identifying these gaps and responding appropriately.

31. The Representative of Samoa requested an update on PACC funding, and expressed his disappointment that the report failed to detail how the Secretariat proposed to increase its support for Member access to resources under the GEF PAS project.

32. The Secretariat responded that it understood that the PACC documents should be signed by the GEF CEO shortly. It expressed regret at the delays, but stated that many of these were beyond its ability to control, particularly delays as a result of changes required by the initiation of the GEF PAS process, some of which have made direct participation of the Secretariat in that process more difficult. However, the Secretariat responded that it was actively working with national contacts to improve performance in these areas.

33. The Director further clarified the Secretariat's belief that the GEF PAS represents a unique opportunity for the region. He stated that the stage was now set for countries to develop their projects, and that the Secretariat would stand ready to render assistance in its areas of expertise. He added that while this might place the Secretariat in direct competition with others in the provision of these services, he believed that the terms of the Secretariat's services

would be extremely competitive. He added that the region stood to lose out if projects were not prepared by the 4 November deadline, and strongly urged Members to submit their projects by that time.

34. The Representative of Kiribati thanked the Secretariat for its preparation of documentation for the meeting, but expressed concerns over her country's timely receipt of these documents. She stated that this was particularly important for small island countries given the difficulties they face in accessing this information on the Internet. She asked that the Secretariat send all correspondence via email, as was currently done by other CROP agencies, and to transmit this information in hard copies to technical contact points in addition to national focal points. She also recommended the Secretariat to have a mechanism in place to double-check that its Members have received all posted communications within a week or two of dispatch. She stated that in many cases information requests made to the Secretariat had not been answered and that no major progress has been made on Kiribati's specific country submission. She also stated that it was discouraging that there were no progressive follow-ups communicated back to Kiribati. She further informed the meeting that the proposed country visits made by the Secretariat were not convenient for Kiribati due to pre-existing commitments at the country level. She conveyed to the Secretariat that Kiribati would not like to see this happen again in the future and invited the Secretariat to consider improvements in certain programme areas.

35. She thanked the Secretariat for its assistance with a number of recent initiatives such as development of an in-country marine turtle programme, Information Resource Centre development, Ramsar GPS training, legal enforcement training, to name a few, but called the meeting's attention to a number of areas for which Kiribati had sought additional SPREP assistance that had not been met. These included training for MEAs; handling of hazardous materials; EIA reporting; oil spill preparedness and environmental enforcement; in-country support for climate change initiatives; health care waste management; inventorying of hazardous materials, including mercury; holding of a regional initiative on waste; establishment of marine protected areas; assistance to establish a scrap metal recycling programme; and technical assistance for fertiliser management, the POPs-MIP process and hospital waste disposal.

36. With regard to SPREP assistance in the COP processes, she expressed a concern that some staff participated more as country delegates rather than as representatives of the Secretariat. She also ex-

pressed concern that her full comments were not adequately reflected in the record of the 18th SPREP Meeting report, as only issues that were raised in plenary were actually reflected while those that were not shared in plenary but were noted during relevant interventions to be given to Secretariat electronically, in the interest of time, were not captured. Because of this, Kiribati wrote to SPREP in early September 2007, submitting a list of needs that it would like to be considered in the concerned work programmes but stated that no response had been received to date.

37. The Representative of Kiribati added that she had not been updated by SPREP regarding her Government's request for assistance in the handling of asbestos. She stated that was an issue that was politically driven at the country level and she regretted that there hadn't been an update provided by SPREP regarding this request.

38. Specifically regarding the report of the Island Ecosystems Programme, the Representative of Kiribati invited the Secretariat to be innovative and proactive in its approaches in creating financed project based activities that allow countries like Kiribati, to participate in and implement at the country level. She stated that core activities of this Programme needed to focus on what the Secretariat can do to assist the countries implement both the NBSAP as well as the new five year Action Strategy for Nature Conservation at the country level. She further requested SPREP's assistance and the close involvement of concerned staff to assist Kiribati in the development and implementation of Phase II of PoWPA-funded activities that were made available to PICs through UNDP and GEF assistance. Furthermore, she also requested SPREP's assistance and close involvement in the development and establishment of community based conservation areas in Kiribati which could include exploring positive incentives appropriate for income generation to maximise participation and involvement of the grassroots in the establishment of these areas. She also requested SPREP's assistance to facilitate and assist Kiribati involvement and participation in the LMMAs network and operation in the region. She further stated her support for the PILN structure as a good model to be applied in the implementation of relevant components of this Programme at the country level.

39. The Representative of Fiji stated that his country often found itself continuing projects for which SPREP had provided assistance, and cited the POPs in PICs project as a particularly successful example. He also welcomed SPREP initiatives with regard to environmental mainstreaming. He stressed that it

was not a matter of how many projects were undertaken that was important, but rather the success of those projects.

40. The Representative of the Marshall Islands highlighted some successful examples where SPREP assistance complemented national programmes and strategies and therefore contributed to national and regional environmental goals. She added that it makes more sense to raise the profile of priority issues as identified by the region, such as climate change, that are connected to national priorities and regional goals. By doing so, the profile of an organization also is raised. She cited the DRM program of SOPAC as an example.

41. The Representative of Papua New Guinea thanked SPREP for the decision to hold the 8th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in his country, and looked forward to supporting similar events in the future.

42. The Representative of Nauru stated that the report demonstrated that SPREP had undertaken considerable work in the region, with limited resources, but that he felt that there could be greater interaction between the Secretariat and Nauru, and in this regard stated that SPREP had not been active enough in his country. He requested SPREP assistance in a number of issues, such as customs training and strengthening environmental management legislation.

43. He added that the country was currently facing considerable challenges in their economic development but that he would raise the issue of his country's unpaid member contributions with his Government upon his return.

44. The Representative of New Zealand stated that the discussion highlighted both the need for Secretariat responsiveness to the needs of its Members and the high level of need among Members. He added that limited resources required often-difficult prioritisation of these needs. He asked the Secretariat to consider how best to evaluate its contribution to environmental progress in the region, and encouraged the Meeting to consider this in the context of the recommendations of the Report of the Independent Corporate Review, which could offer a pathway to resolve some of these issues.

45. The Representative of Australia highlighted the challenges posed by the reporting burden, but felt that this was a critical report and well worth the time. He recognised the continuous improvement in these reports over the past few years and referred to the development of the new programme log-frame,

to be discussed later in the meeting, as an important opportunity to further strengthen the report as a tool to be used for strategic planning and prioritising.

46. He stated that two issues of SPREP's work were worthy of special mention: development of invasive species guidelines, for which Australia would stand ready to lend assistance to implement, and SPREP's actions with regards to wetlands in connection with the Ramsar Convention.

47. The Representative of Tonga thanked the Secretariat and expressed his enthusiasm for working with a reformed Secretariat.

48. The Representative of Palau thanked SPREP for its involvement in the PILN project and its support for solid waste management in his country. He stated that Palau continued to require assistance with MEAs and reminded the Secretariat that it should serve the interest of its Members in international negotiations.

49. The Chair thanked the Members for their comments, and expressed the hope that the Secretariat would take these into account for future improvements in services.

50. The Meeting **noted** the report.

Agenda Item 5.3: Financial Reports

Agenda Item 5.3.1: Report on Members' Contributions

51. In accordance with Financial Regulation 13, the Secretariat reported on Members contributions received up to 30 June 2008 (19SM/Officials/WP.5.3.1 and summary). The Chair noted the report and the large amount of unpaid contributions outstanding.

52. The Secretariat provided an update as to the status of contributions as of 5 September 2008. A working paper was circulated, and the Secretariat noted that the FSM, Guam, and Samoa had since provided contributions, but that in some cases amounts still needed to be collected.

53. The Representative of American Samoa thanked the US representatives for their support in encouraging participation by his delegation. He added that his delegation hoped to settle its outstanding contributions at this meeting.

54. The Representative of the Federated States of Micronesia informed the meeting that FSM would

also seek to clear its unpaid contributions during the week of the meeting.

55. The Representative of Solomon Islands apologised for the high outstanding contributions of his country, which he stressed did not reflect a lack of his country's commitment to the work of SPREP. He explained that a contribution has been secured, that the issue of unpaid contributions had been raised with his Government and that a further contribution had been sent to the SPREP accounts. He stated that his Government is committed to clearing remaining unpaid contributions in the near future.

56. In response to the outstanding balance listed in the Secretariat paper for the United States, the Representative of the United States stated that its contribution had been submitted through an exchange of letters with the Secretariat in advance of the deadline and requested that this be reflected in the document.

57. The Representative of the Marshall Islands noted the document, stated that her country's unpaid contributions do not demonstrate or reflect a lack of her country's commitment to SPREP, and informed the meeting that she was seeking confirmation from her capital on their latest payment. She also informed the Meeting that the RMI had recently declared a state of economic emergency due to a lack of funds to cover the high cost of fuel to run the country, and that the rising cost of fuel and food was continuing to impact the lives of communities. She added that it was now FY09 for the Marshall Islands and that budgets were being cut in many places. Even still, she stated that the Marshall Islands understood its obligations to regional organizations and reported that initial discussions on payments to cover past due unpaid contributions had commenced.

58. The Chair noted that item 6.2 would bring the meeting back to the issue of unpaid contributions, and asked that Members note the report and request corrections in the figures where appropriate.

59. The Meeting:

* **noted** the status of debts relating to member contributions; and

* **committed** itself collectively and individually to paying current contributions and unpaid contributions in full in 2008

Agenda Item 5.3.2: Audited Annual Accounts for 2007

60. Consistent with Financial Regulations 27(e), and 30-33, the Secretariat presented the Audited Financial Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2007 (19SM/Officials/WP.5.3.2), noting that the auditors had again given a clean and unqualified opinion of the Secretariat's financial statements for 2007. The Secretariat outlined the components of the audited annual accounts.

61. The Meeting **adopted** the audited Financial Statements and Auditors' Report for 2007.

Agenda Item 6: Corporate Issues

Agenda Item 6.1: Report of the Independent Corporate Review

62. The Director of SPREP called on the Independent Corporate Review (ICR) Team Leader, Professor John Hay, and the Polynesian Sub-region Representative, Mr. Bruno Peaucellier, to present the report of the ICR as contained in 19SM/Officials/WP6.1/Att.1.

63. Professor Hay commended the meeting for their choice of review team and for the provision of resources to enable the team to complete its work. He also acknowledged the support of the Secretariat and Director to the review.

64. He outlined that the review team found that the need for a regional environmental organization was never questioned. He also highlighted that the Secretariat is providing an important service and substantive contribution to Member countries. He stated that this service was often provided under challenging circumstances, including rapid changes in external issues such as the nature of the pressures on the environment in the region, the small number of people that are available to work on these tasks, and the financial constraints under which they operate.

65. He further stated that despite the best efforts of the Secretariat, there is room for improvement in terms of communications between the Secretariat and the Member countries and within the Secretariat itself.

66. He stated that the Secretariat has already started acting on many of the recommendations outlined in the report.

67. The Deputy Director of the Secretariat made a presentation that highlighted the key points from

the Secretariat in response to the Independent Corporate Review.

68. Delegations taking the floor commended the work of the Review Team and thanked them for their report. Members also expressed appreciation for visits from the team.

69. The Representative of Niue stated his desire for a country support mechanism that would enhance delivery at the country level, in particular with regards to the focal point system.

70. The Representative of Samoa felt that the report could have highlighted more about the issues that concern Members given their primary role in the organization. He cautioned that the Secretariat should not try to improve SPREP on its own, as improvement of services to Members was an integral part of the process. He felt that the strength of the Secretariat was its broad nature but agreed that there was a need to prioritise activities as well as looking more closely at the issue of funding.

71. The Representative of American Samoa suggested looking for ways to reduce costs within the Secretariat, such as individual Members paying for services. He also urged the need for prioritization.

72. The Representative of Tonga noted with appreciation the focus in the report on the core functions of SPREP. He also reminded the Secretariat to consider equal opportunity in relation to employment.

73. The Representative of the Federated States of Micronesia requested clarification on the proposed governing board as contained in paragraph 79 of the ICR Report.

74. Professor Hay, on behalf of the review team, responded that many Members had expressed concern with relying on the annual meeting of the SPREP Meeting to provide guidance to the Secretariat as an effective means of communications. He suggested there was a need for a mechanism to provide policy advice and guidance to the Director and Secretariat on an ongoing basis. He further outlined a range of mechanisms that could be considered in addition to a board, such as adapting the current subcommittee formed for the consideration of appointment of a Director, a committee consisting of the previous chair of the SPREP Meeting, or one comprised of the current and incoming chairs of the SPREP Meeting.

75. The Representative of Kiribati reported that it was a privilege and honour for Kiribati to have served the Micronesian region on the review team, that she fully supported the report but that she had concerns

over some specific elements. She stated that Kiribati saw the need for a regional environmental agency and stressed that this was particularly important for small island states. In connection with paragraph 38, she called on Members to evaluate the relevance and quality of service provided by SPREP. Regarding paragraph 59(i) she felt that individual Members could inform SPREP if they required assistance with mainstreaming. On paragraph 59(ii) she stated Kiribati supported a regional donor and NGO coordination role for SPREP. For paragraph 59(iii) she stated that the assistance to be provided should be treated on a case-by-case basis, especially when more than five SPREP Members are Parties to a Convention and seek such assistance.

76. Regarding paragraph 61, she stated that it was difficult to strike the proper balance, and urged SPREP to be flexible and able to respond to Members' differing needs. She suggested that SPREP consider grouping countries according to their needs for assistance. Regarding paragraph 62, she stated the Secretariat should ensure equity in the selection criteria used to participate in a regional programme. She urged that special attention be given to particularly vulnerable Members with regard to issue areas, for example low-lying atoll nations should be given priority with regard to climate change. She stated that Kiribati should not be required to commit to more funding under paragraph 73.

77. Concerning the proposed Board in paragraph 79, the Representative of Kiribati stated that a smaller Board would be more effective in servicing the Secretariat, and suggested that membership might be rotated every two years to maintain a balance among Members. For paragraph 80 she urged the Secretariat to work with Members to develop strategies based on Member needs. With regard to paragraph 81, she stated that Members would need to advise the Secretariat concerning the timing of these visits and that communication via email or through teleconferencing should be employed where possible. On paragraph 98, she urged that lessons learned form the basis of good practices. She cautioned that delivery services referenced in paragraph 99 should not be compromised.

78. The Representative of Kiribati stated that there should be a follow-up contact point in addition to the main focal point, and that lists of both should be updated frequently. She highlighted past problems receiving SPREP circulars experienced by various Ministries in Kiribati. She further advised that MFAI is the political focal point for the country, MELAD is responsible for coordinating national inputs for responses to SPREP and that KANGO will serve as the NGO focal point. She added that the her govern-

ment had begun a practise where individuals were referred to by title rather than name to minimise changes in contact information.

79. She added that Kiribati supported the proposals in paragraphs 102, 103, 112 and 113, with qualifications in some cases. With regard to the RIF process, she expressed a view that there should be no diminution of SOPAC activities, particularly with respect to seabed mining, as a result of the RIF process.

80. Mr. Peaucellier, on behalf of the ICR team, thanked those countries that had hosted the team and that had provided written contributions. In response to Samoa's intervention, he stated the original mandate of the ICR was to focus on the Secretariat but that this was later extended to include Member countries and territories, as many of the Secretariat problems involved issues at this level. He stated that the recommendations contained in paragraphs 62, 100, and 101 involved issues where at least part of the solution rested with the Members and their sense of ownership of the organization. He urged that the Secretariat reflect the diversity of its Members whether it be of a linguistic, institutional or economic nature. He stated that there was consideration of whether the review team should handle issues related to the RIF, but it decided not to progress on that path so as to not to give the impression that they were revisiting decisions of the Forum Leaders. He stressed that one of the key difficulties facing the organisation was in the communications between the Secretariat and its Member countries and territories, and highlighted that the report provided some suggested steps that might be taken and asked the Secretariat to develop guidelines. In many cases the persons identified as contact points in Members were no longer in those positions. He also highlighted the financial implications of the report recommendations and clarified that if the report were adopted there would likely be greater financial commitment requested of Members.

81. The Representative of the Cook Islands stated that he viewed the report as a way forward for SPREP and Members. He stressed the role of Member countries as those who own the Secretariat, and provided background into the history of SPREP and the decisions that were taken early on in this process. He mentioned that the importance of the environment would only grow in the future, as would the importance of the SPREP to the region. He referred to the difficulties in raising the profile of the region in contexts such as the UNCCD negotiations.

82. He added that the report represented a "wake up call" to everyone involved with the organization. He agreed with the recommendations in paragraph

79, but remained concerned about the exact structure proposed and wondered whether other options could also be considered. He endorsed the report as well as the response of the Secretariat and reiterated that Members need to take a more active role in the organization.

83. The Representative of Papua New Guinea expressed concern that the creation of a SPREP Board might create a bottleneck for the organization as well as create a financial burden for its Members.

84. The Representative of the United States stated that the discussion demonstrated the value of the team's efforts as the start of a very important process. He added that the report represented a very substantial body of work and as such it would take delegations time to carefully consider. He stated that the recommendations in paragraphs 60 and 114, in particular, go to the heart of the issues before the organisation. He stated that some elements warranted further consideration, such as those contained in paragraph 79. He added that paragraph 59 (ii) in relation to coordinating the efforts of donors may not be an appropriate role for SPREP and that he was concerned over paragraph 73's reference to assessed contributions. He stated that some sweeping statements such as the reference to "winding down" were problematic for his delegation. He encouraged the meeting to welcome the report rather than endorse it, and to adopt the Secretariat's suggestion to create a working group to examine implementation issues.

85. The Representative of Fiji stated that SPREP faced a very difficult task in prioritising and addressing the often very different needs of its Member countries. He urged that the review process should be ongoing and continue to take into account the rapidly evolving nature of environmental issues.

86. The Representative of the Solomon Islands stated that the report recognised the changing nature of environmental issues in the Pacific and that it highlighted a very important consideration for Members - the issue of SPREP's mandate. He stated that many of the issues Members faced were broad, and commended the review team for recognizing this. He stated that SPREP's broad mandate has been very beneficial for the region by allowing a wide range of issues related to the environment to be addressed. He pointed to a growing number of agencies involved in some areas, and recommended that SPREP work with these agencies more closely. He suggested a joint implementation work plan between the Secretariat and Member countries. He stated that he fully supported the recommendations of the ICR report, but remained concerned about many of the issues related to some specific proposals, such as the

recommendation for a board, and requested further study. He concluded by expressing his gratitude for the opportunity that the report represents and suggested the development of a communications strategy for Members to raise their concerns.

87. The Representative of New Caledonia thanked the Secretariat for the excellent translation work that has been done in connection with the meeting. He stated that New Caledonia receives limited direct benefit from SPREP as they possess many of the skills and resources they need, but he believes that such an organization must exist at the regional level not only to provide direct assistance but also to coordinate other regional activities underway. He invited the Secretariat to visit New Caledonia since there was much work required to raise the profile of SPREP in his country. He supported approval of the report and suggested that implementation arrangements be subject to further discussion.

88. The Representative of the Marshall Islands saw the Report as a needs assessment with a view to improving the organization. She reaffirmed the Marshall Islands' commitment to a regional environment organization. She supported engaging higher-level officials such as Cabinet members who could help raise the profile of SPREP and assist in further fundraising to support programmes of the Organization. She supported exploring with the Secretariat the issue of cost-sharing between the Secretariat and Members in the implementation of national programmes that contribute to the work of the regional programme, for example in the payment by countries of per diems for participants to meetings. She agreed the mandate of SPREP needed to remain broad but that priorities needed to be identified from which programmes or strategies could emanate. At the national level, she stated that sectoral work needed to be harmonised with national priorities already contributing to the achievements of regional goals, thus, regional strategies needed to ensure support for implementation of national strategies in order to achieve their goals. She agreed that the issue of a Board required further consideration. She stated that Members needed to show ownership, which meant payment of contributions as they fell due. She concluded by stating that focal points and communication with the Secretariat needed to be improved.

89. The Representative of Guam stated his concern about the impact a Board might have in filtering the direct involvement of Members and that, particularly when considered in connection with recommendations to increase contributions, this may prove to be problematic for many. He supported the earlier suggestion by the Representative of American Samoa to increase technological adoption as way to reduce

costs and to improve transparency. He concluded by stating that the recommendation for decentralization of SPREP represented an opportunity to increase its representation in the Micronesian region, including possibly the designation of staff posted to the region.

90. The Representative of Tuvalu noted that small countries like his lack capacity at the national level and therefore rely on SPREP's assistance regarding implementation of activities. Tuvalu felt it highly desirable that SPREP not only facilitate and coordinate but take an active part in countries' environmental activities.

91. The Representative of Palau suggested undertaking a cost-benefit analysis particularly regarding recommendations in paragraphs 59 and 79 of the report in terms of funding and Member composition. He favoured keeping SPREP's role broad and dynamic. He welcomed the Report and suggested a working group be formed to look at implementation.

92. The Representative of New Zealand noted the Report's recommendations on enhancing the relationship between SPREP and its Members in areas such as focal points, country profiles, and pathways of correspondence. He suggested that the SPREP Meeting direct the Secretariat to proceed with these recommendations as a way to progress the rationale that underpins the Board idea, and that the Secretariat report back at 20SM on the recommendation concerning the Board.

93. The Representative of France congratulated the review team for its excellent work. He added that the ICR report was extremely clear and frank and presented a very broad analysis of the management, methods and work of SPREP. He also thanked the Secretariat for the quality of the information distributed to the meeting about the review.

94. He stated that the French Delegation generally supported the outcomes of the review but not all of its recommendations. He stated the position of France as follows: France concurred with the conclusion of the majority of SPREP Member states and territories to retain an environmental regional agency; France supported the recommendation of the reviewers to better define the respective roles of Member states and the Secretariat, and recommends that the mandate of the Secretariat be clearly redefined; France supported the proposition of the reviewers to focus the work of SPREP on strengthening the strategic capacity of countries to mainstream environmental concerns in planning processes and on supporting negotiations on existing and new multilateral environmental agreements; France did

not recommend that SPREP coordinate the efforts of donors and NGOs at the regional level; France approved the recommendation that SPREP intensify its efforts to raise funds from major donors within its fields of expertise; France had reservations about SPREP's capacity to act as a project implementation agency and recommended that the project portfolio directly implemented by SPREP not be increased and be limited to small pilot projects;

95. The Representative of France added that he was concerned about some practices observed by the reviewers in relation to SPREP staff management and notes with interest that the Secretariat took note of it. France supports the establishment of a board.

96. He stated that France had reservations about the decentralisation opportunities, which would in any case need to be supported by the conclusions of the upcoming reorganisation between SPC, SOPAC and SPREP.

97. The Representative of France concluded by highlighting the significance of the reforms proposed by the ICR but stated that Members must also take into account the reform opportunities stemming from the decisions of the Forum leaders on RIF. He stated that the French Delegation endorsed the conclusions of the ICR subject to the reservations expressed.

98. The Representative of Australia stressed the longstanding need for improved strategic planning in SPREP and that the problems rested with the organization's prioritisation of issues. He stated that the report provided a foundation to move this process forward. He stated that Australia supported the thrust of all report recommendations, including the role of SPREP in coordinating regional donor assistance.

99. He pointed to paragraph 79 as an example of where, while delegations may not agree on the specifics, the idea was put forward as a constructive suggestion for further consideration rather than a specific proposal for adoption. He called upon the meeting, during its current session, to act to give the Secretariat the mandate to move forward on these recommendations. He agreed that a number of elements would require additional consideration but urged Members not to leave fundamental decisions for a working group to decide. He agreed with the Representative of New Zealand that there should be an inter-sessional report.

100. The Representative of Tokelau stated that while she supported the report, she had reservations over paragraph 79. She was also concerned by consideration of the report at the same time similar steps may

be required by the RIF process. She expressed a desire that the Secretariat maintain its flexibility to address a wide range of issues. She recognised that her country needed to prioritise the requests made to the Secretariat and identify potential donors, however her country often does not have access to donors and partners in the region. She explained that since Tokelau does not have access to the GEF it is unable to benefit from the increased resources that will be made available through GEF PAS. She supported Australia's suggestion that the meeting make clear recommendations to the Secretariat during its current session.

101. The Representative of the Federated States of Micronesia supported Australia and Tokelau in adopting the Report, with the understanding that work would still be required on the more difficult items involving implementation. He explained that this was a reasonable process, particularly considering changes that may come about through the RIF process, the transition to new management within the Secretariat and other developments.

102. The Representative of the United States explained that he was prepared to join consensus on the report, but expressed reservations to a number of elements, including those in paragraph 59 (ii) regarding SPREP's role in coordinating donors; paragraph 73 regarding the term "assessed contributions" and the reference to "winding up the Organisation"; paragraph 79 for reasons similar to interventions by a number of Members; the reference in paragraph 80 to "island Members" which he believed should read "all Members."

103. With regard to paragraph 31, the Representative of the United States stated that the definition of "agency" should be interpreted to be one that includes a coordination and facilitation role. He suggested that the proposed working group should undertake an analysis of the question of SPREP's core functions contained in paragraph 60 as well as recommending a way forward.

104. The Representative of Nauru stated that he would also like to adopt the report, but would like to see additional time and resources devoted to the undertaking to make it more comprehensive. He supported the broad focus of SPREP as it is in keeping with the broad nature of environmental issues, and added that the number of staff should be expanded to better address these issues.

105. The Chair thanked Members for their constructive views and comments, and he stated that it was the sense of the Chair that the meeting was nearing a point where it could consider adopting the report

with certain conditions, provided that work could continue on fine-tuning of certain elements. He then invited the members of the ICR team to respond to some of the concerns raised.

106. Professor Hay expressed his pleasure with the discussion today and that he viewed the proposal by Australia and Tokelau as advancing the process further than the team would have thought possible.

107. Concerning the coordination of donors role, Professor Hay reminded that this should always be read in connection with "at the regional level" and that nothing was designed to impinge on the responsibility of states in managing their resources. He also stressed that distinction should be made between short and long-term SPREP activities.

108. Mr. Peaucellier wished to clarify that the terms of reference of the group mandated that the team operated within the terms of the SPREP Agreement and there was no intent to call these into question. He thanked Members again for their kind attention to these matters and for their continued support of the process.

109. The Chair then called for motions to carry the process forward. Australia volunteered to work with the Secretariat and interested Members on Attachment 2 with a view to developing a paper for circulation to the meeting by the following day.

110. The Chair proposed formation of a committee to meet as Friends of the Chair in connection with Australia's suggestion regarding Attachment 2. He appointed Australia as Chair, and the Federated States of Micronesia, France, New Zealand, Samoa and the United States as Members.

Report of the Friends of the Chair

111. Australia introduced the outcome of the Friends of the Chair Group and highlighted the main changes to the recommendations of the Independent Corporate Review, considered under Agenda Item 6.1.

112. The Representative of the Cook Islands noted his support for the revised recommendations.

113. The Representative of the Federated States of Micronesia reiterated his offer that the FSM would like to be considered as a possible host of a sub-regional office as part of the recommendation relating to the decentralization and outreach of SPREP services in the region.

114. The Representative of the United States expressed his appreciation to Australia for the revised recommendations. He reaffirmed the importance of the earlier proposal tabled by the Secretariat in reference to establishing a committee comprising Members and Secretariat staff to work on these issues and develop a detailed implementation plan responding to the ICR recommendations. He referred in particular to recommendations that deal with defining the core business of the Secretariat, as it was his delegation's view that such issues should necessitate the involvement of Members in determining those important matters. He encouraged that there be a sustained and iterative engagement of Members in the process of defining the core business of SPREP. He also suggested that the reference to the regional environment "agency" be replaced by "organization."

115. The Representative of the Marshall Islands noted the importance of distinguishing between recommendations affecting the Secretariat alone and those that directly relate to Members. For instance, she stated that the recommendation relating to strengthening national focal points was an issue that Members would need to address rather than the Secretariat alone, as national structures and policies were already in place at the national level.

116. The Representative of Nauru asked whether the revisions would diminish the strength of the ICR recommendations. In response, the Representative of Australia stated his belief that the revised recommendations were more expansive and, as such, would serve to strengthen the ICR recommendations.

Recommendations

117. The Representative of Australia, as Chair of the Group, presented the recommendations of the group.

118. The Meeting:

- [Rec. 31] **reaffirmed** the need for a regional environmental organisation and also their commitment to adequately manage and fund the agency, consistent with their common but differentiated responsibilities and capacities;
- [Rec. 38] **committed** Members and the Secretariat to working together to address the fundamental causes of low morale of Secretariat staff, the associated problems of staff recruitment and retention, and the overall decline in the quality and relevance of services provided to SPREP's Members, relative to their needs;

· [Rec. 59] **directed** the Secretariat to focus its core business to Members primarily on:

- enhancing the strategic capacity of its Members to include mainstream environmental considerations in their development planning and processes;
- facilitating the coordination of regional environment-related assistance from donors and NGOs where appropriate;
- supporting compliance, negotiations and advocacy in relation to existing and emerging multilateral environmental agreements and other modalities; and
- promoting cooperation among Members in addressing the region's environmental challenges and opportunities

· [Rec. 60] **directed** the Secretariat to separate its roles and related activities into:

- core business activities which are fully costed; and
- project-related activities that contribute to the core by way of both a project management fee and the growth of knowledge and expertise within the Secretariat and its Members.

· [Rec. 61] **directed** the Secretariat to increase its effectiveness and efficiency by:

- giving more attention to facilitating, advising on and coordinating technical and policy advice and assistance;
- facilitating and coordinating training, institutional strengthening and information sharing;
- showing leadership by playing a coordination role and working collaboratively and cooperatively with relevant partners;
- improving organizational management in such areas as performance management, strategic planning, prioritizing and evaluation in order to allow the Organization to learn and build capacity across the entire Organization, including but not limited to individual staff, senior management, programmes and projects, the annual work programme and the SPREP Meeting; and

- maintaining flexibility to respond to Member-specific priorities.
- [Rec. 62] **agreed** that SPREP give more consideration to the diversity amongst the SPREP membership and be proactive in ensuring how it operates and promotes greater equity in the way the Secretariat interacts with, and provides services to, the Member countries and territories;
- [Rec. 73] in order to increase ownership of SPREP by its Members and enhance accountability to them, **directed** SPREP to prepare and implement a strategy for all its core business activities to be funded by Member contributions as well as by programmatic funding from some Members and other donor partners;
- [Rec. 74] **directed** the Secretariat to make a more targeted effort to engage with SPREP's large (both current and potential) donor countries and organizations, to explore ways to achieve longer-term programmatic funding to address any gap between Member contributions and the cost of the Secretariat's agreed core business;
- [Rec. 79] **directed** the Secretariat to explore further options for strengthening the engagement between the Secretariat and Members, for consideration at SM20, noting the intent of recommendation 79 in the Independent Corporate Review report of 2008;
- [Rec. 80] **encouraged** the ongoing interaction between Secretariat staff and representatives of all Members so that the draft strategic plan and work programme adopted at SPREP Meetings are based on a clear understanding of Members' needs and priority areas for assistance, as well as on the capacity of the Secretariat to address them;
- [Rec. 81] **encouraged** more technical and policy-focused discussions between individual Members and the Secretariat at the SPREP meeting;
- [Rec. 98] **directed** the Secretariat to strengthen its systems for learning from its experiences and sharing lessons and best practices within the Secretariat as well as with its Members and other stakeholders, including establishing more effective person-to-person interactions with environmental stakeholders in the region;
- [Rec. 99] as a learning organisation, **agreed** that the Secretariat should ensure that all of its staff have opportunities to enhance their performance through professional development and related activities;
- [Rec. 100] **directed** the Secretariat to appoint designated staff to be responsible for preparing and updating a revised form of the country profile and acting as a focal point for a PICT or for a small group of PICTs;
- [Rec. 101] **encouraged** Members to consider, agree on and implement a relationships management system that addresses the challenges in the current system of Focal Points and allows for more flexibility, diversity, and effectiveness in the interactions between the Secretariat and its national stakeholders. In addition, and primarily because in many cases NGOs are not receiving information via the SPREP Focal Point, SPREP's focal point list should be re-established and include an additional point of contact;
- [Rec. 102] **directed** the Secretariat to ensure greater transparency, accountability and sensitivity, including to gender equity, are required in Secretariat processes such as recruitment, contract renewal or termination, awarding salary increments to individual staff and funding/support decisions, and to ensure that all recruitment within SPREP is merit based, including appointment of individuals to Executive positions within the Secretariat. As a technically-based organisation, it is important that future appointees to SPREP's executive positions have technical competence relevant to the work of the Organisation, in addition to strong managerial skills. The Review recommends that all recruitment within SPREP is merit based, including appointment of individuals to Executive positions within the Secretariat.
- [Rec. 103] **agreed**, that within the limits imposed by logistical, space and other constraints, the Secretariat should actively encourage relevant organizations and initiatives to locate within the Secretariat's facilities, while at the same time ensuring that the functions and operations of the agencies are readily distinguished from SPREP's core business activities and are not part of the Secretariat's organizational structure.
- [Rec. 112] **agreed** the Secretariat should place greater emphasis on developing and implementing joint programming with other PROs, at both regional and country/territory levels.
- [Rec. 113] **agreed** that SPREP should consider the feasibility of decentralising some Secretariat activities by locating selected staff at strategic lo-

cations, in order to service a group of PICTs that require extensive support;

- [Rec. 114] **agreed** that before the RIF-related decisions are implemented, SPREP Members should clearly redefine the role of the region's environmental organisation, and commit to funding and governing it effectively; and
- **directed** the Secretariat to develop a detailed implementation plan responding to ICR recommendations and provide this together with a report on progress for consideration of Members intersessionally after six months and annually to the SPREP Meeting, noting, in particular, that the Secretariat consult with Members as required to address recommendations 59, 60 and 61.

Agenda Item 6.2: Options of following up and Collecting Unpaid Membership Contributions

119. The Chair invited the Secretariat to introduce its paper (19SM/Officials/WP.6.2). The Secretariat noted with appreciation the receipt of contribution payments from the Solomon Islands and American Samoa. The Secretariat advised that the collection of unpaid membership contributions had been a perennial problem for the Secretariat over the years. It stated that the paper outlined several options for addressing the matter, including writing off bad debts, taking a proactive consultative approach with affected Members, applying sanctions or penalties, or revising the formula for membership contributions.

120. The Representative of American Samoa noted that, due to a misunderstanding, it owed \$275 in unpaid contributions but he assured the meeting that his Government would clear this amount upon his return home after the meeting. In terms of the proposed options for collecting unpaid contributions, he did not believe that unpaid contributions should be reduced or written off since Members had already received the services provided by the Secretariat. He offered an alternative option for those Members in arrears whereby services of the Secretariat would be suspended until such time as their unpaid contributions have been paid. He encouraged those Members who have not yet paid their contributions to take steps to do so before the end of the year.

121. The Representative of New Caledonia noted he did not support writing off debts even though he recognised there are countries that may be facing financial difficulties. He proposed that the Secretariat should contact Members with unpaid contributions and agree to a rescheduled payment plan with the

concerned country or territory, taking into account particular situations.

122. The Representative of French Polynesia noted that the issue of unpaid contributions had always been difficult. He supported the interventions made by American Samoa and New Caledonia in calling for a proactive approach to be taken with the affected countries. He noted that, although this had already been done by the Secretariat, it should be given another attempt. He expressed the view that SPREP should only consider suspending services as a last resort if discussions with debtor countries fail. Ultimately, affected Members should take their responsibilities seriously and consider the value of their continued participation in the organization. He suggested that the Secretariat should report to the next SPREP Meeting on the reasons for the failure of those Members who have not paid for more than five years to meet their obligations, in particular those who have not been attending the meetings for some time.

123. The Representative of Papua New Guinea stated that some of the options in the paper were worthy of further consideration as he was of the view that individual countries have the obligation to meet their financial contributions and, in this regard, he encouraged those affected Members to pay their unpaid member contributions.

124. The Representative of Fiji supported the suggestion by French Polynesia for the Secretariat to adopt a more proactive consultation approach with affected Members. He suggested that communications in this regard should include the benefits the country was receiving from the services of SPREP as this might serve as an added incentive for the concerned country to facilitate their payments

125. The Representative of Samoa noted this was a difficult issue given the financial situation some Members are experiencing. He encouraged taking a proactive approach with affected Members, rather than the method of instituting penalties, as he did not want to see some Members exit the organization simply because of their inability to meet their outstanding contribution payments. He was confident that, in light of the new developments and planned changes brought about in terms of the findings of the ICR and RIF, that countries should more clearly see the value of their membership in the organization and that this should positively affect their payments.

126. The Representative of the Cook Islands noted that his country's payment should be made before the end of the first week of the meeting. He stat-

ed that he could not agree with any proposal that would penalise Members for unpaid contributions, but supported a proactive approach. He supported the comments by Samoa that the new developments taking place within the Secretariat presented an opportunity for Members to positively evaluate their contribution to the organization.

127. The Representative of the Solomon Islands noted with appreciation the understanding of Members on settling his country's unpaid contributions given the situation it had faced in recent years. He supported the New Caledonia proposal on scheduling the payments over time based on the circumstances of the concerned countries. He added that Solomon Islands had also been unable to meet its outstanding payments to other Conventions, and he was confident that by taking this proactive approach that it would assist Members to settle their arrears consistent with the particular circumstances of the concerned country. He also supported the Samoa proposal not to penalise Members and stressed that imposition of penalties would be inconsistent with the Pacific Way.

128. The Representative of the United States noted that Article 8 of the financial regulations of SPREP states that all funds should be provided by voluntary contributions and that as such the United States does not recognise that unpaid contributions represent a debt to the organization. Therefore, he stated that sanctions in cases of unpaid contributions would not be appropriate. He stated, however, that his delegation would support efforts by the Secretariat to collect overdue contributions. In this connection, he called on the meeting to use the term "unpaid member contributions" rather than "arrears."

129. The Representative of Tonga noted that his government had accumulated unpaid member contributions for one year, but that this was due mainly to their internal financial procedures and the fact that their fiscal year ends in June, which means that they would normally pay their contribution after the SPREP Meeting each year. He also supported taking a proactive approach with the affected Members.

130. The Representative of Nauru stated that he fully recognises Nauru's levels of unpaid contributions and that his country agreed that accumulated unpaid member contributions should not be written off as bad debts. He added that Nauru's internal circumstances also contributed, as there was difficulty determining whether it was Foreign Affairs, Environment or Finance that included these expenditures in their budgets. He regretted to inform the SPREP Meeting that the national budget for 2008-

2009 had been passed by Parliament and the contribution fees were not budgeted for.

131. However, he stated that since this is the first time that a representative from one of the concerned agencies has attended a SPREP Meeting and heard the views of other member countries, he recognises that the issue is actually very serious. He stated that it was the first time a representative from his country's environment agency had seen the large figures that have accumulated over a long period. As such, he stated he would raise this very important issue in his country. He stressed that it is each member country's full responsibility to be able to meet the costs and obligations as a Member and a sovereign state.

132. He sought the SPREP Meeting's patience and understanding as his government considered a number of options for how to approach this issue. He concluded by seeking the meeting's consideration of a revision of the formula for member contributions, as he believed it would positively reflect on Nauru's small economy and the difficulties it faced in attempting to be a viable sovereign country.

133. The Representative of the Federated States of Micronesia stated his regret at his delegation's overdue contributions but stated that measures were currently being taken to address. He agreed with earlier interventions that writing off these obligations or imposing sanctions should not be pursued, but supported efforts by the Secretariat to persuade delegations to work out payment schedules.

134. The Representative of American Samoa suggested setting a deadline in 2008 for countries to make their payments.

135. The Representative of Nauru requested that consideration be given to tying the amount of contributions from Members more closely to their economic conditions.

136. The Meeting:

* **Encouraged** the Secretariat to work individually with affected Members on agreeing to schedule their payments of their unpaid member contributions over a feasible time period; and

* **Requested** the Secretariat to provide an update to the next SPREP Meeting of those Members with unpaid contributions as well as practical options for the SPREP Meeting to consider in its handling of the issue.

Agenda Item 6.3: Sustainable Financing for the Work and Operations of the Organisation

137. The Secretariat introduced its paper (19SM/Officials/WP.6.3) and indicated the range of ways that it had tried to reduce costs.

138. The Secretariat recommended that the SPC formula be utilised since membership in the two organisations was similar, the Secretariat was formerly part of SPC and since many Pacific island countries were finding it increasingly difficult to pay their membership contributions.

139. The Representative of Australia recognised inflationary pressures faced by the Secretariat and proposed a membership increase based on the current SPREP formula rather than the SPC formula.

140. The Representative of French Polynesia commended the efforts made by the Secretariat to contain operating costs and stated that his delegation was willing to accept an increase in basic contributions of member countries, as it is important for Members to ensure the long-term viability of funding for the Secretariat, as recommended by the ICR. He added however that his delegation questioned the appropriateness of approving an increase when 73% of it would go to salaries rather than to services to Members.

141. The Representatives of France stated that the revised scale and the propositions made by the Secretariat would increase contributions of metropolitan Members by 63–65%, and that this would represent a very substantial change. France believed that the proposed increase was premature. Such an increase should only be determined when the SPREP management will have assessed all the impacts from the ICR report and proposed a plan of reforms. He added that the linkage between SPREP and SOPAC should also be taken into account and that the new SPREP Director and his or her team should then set the level of contributions accordingly. In the meantime, he stated that the 2009 budget should be a transitional budget and that any increase in member contributions should be modest. France was therefore opposed to the revised scale and to a substantial increase in member contributions.

142. The Representative of Samoa stated that he would like to see a balanced budget, but asked why Samoa needed to pay 1% to the Secretariat as the host country. He outlined the range of benefits that Samoa already provides to the Secretariat. He requested that SPREP needed to be innovative in its approach to contributions to the institution and sug-

gested that SPREP consider project funding and in-kind contributions.

143. The Representative of New Zealand sought clarification of what the figure of \$448,141 represented. The Secretariat clarified that this amount would be required to balance the budget for 2009 alone, and did not include a salary increase. It clarified that the request was made because the operating expenses for the Secretariat have remained the same for the past four years and that all remaining surpluses had been depleted.

144. The Representative of New Zealand thanked the Secretariat for the clarification, but noted that the period of transition the organisation was now entering meant that it was not the appropriate time to consider any change in the contribution formula. He added that an increase in the metropolitan Members' share of contributions did not seem consistent with enhancing ownership of the organisation by Pacific Island countries and territories.

145. The Representative of Niue asked Members to look at innovative ways to assist the Secretariat in terms of paying for some of the services made available to countries, as it would be premature to increase member contributions. He outlined some additional possibilities such as paying for Secretariat's time and travel costs for assistance in-country.

146. The Representative of the United States corrected paragraph 4 of the paper and referred to differences between the working paper and the 18th SPREP Meeting record. He stated that he could not support the proposal to have planned regular increases. For the present budget cycle he felt that core budget should be based on determining core functions. He stated his delegation would prefer to defer any consideration of budget increases at this time.

147. The Representative of the Marshall Islands informed the Meeting that the RMI has declared a state of emergency and had frozen all hiring and travels affecting the general fund and thus is not in a position to support increases in its member contribution as proposed, but that it supported a balancing of the budget and could explore opportunities for in-kind contributions to the Secretariat's programme of actions relating to RMI priorities.

148. The Representative of New Caledonia commended the efforts of containing Secretariat costs and was not against an increase in contributions on the basis of the SPC system. He explained that his country was trying to keep salary increases at the lowest possible level. He also supported Niue and

Samoa on their proposal to make in-kind contributions to the Secretariat.

149. The Representative of Papua New Guinea requested critical analysis of the options on increases and noted that these needed to be considered together in the context of the ICR and RIF reports.

150. The Representative of Fiji supported the increase in contributions subject to further work being done on the feasibility of some of the cost cutting measures that had been undertaken by the Secretariat, taking into consideration the benefits that are received by Members and the results of the RIF discussion.

151. The Representative of American Samoa stated he was in support of the increase because he would like to see a balanced budget. He asked Members to compromise on contributions that could be made available to balance the 2009 budget. He asked Members to consider reallocation and prioritisation of these funds within the budget.

152. The Representative of Guam requested delegates to note the paper's mention of operational cost savings including, video conferencing, and the ability to increase interaction and networking with those who are working with SPREP.

153. The Secretariat clarified that it was asking Members to balance the budget, as there were no further surpluses left to enable the budget to balance. It explained that provision of services would be jeopardised next year because of the uncertainties about the source of funding. It further clarified that an increase in contributions was called for in order to balance the budget and that it was not designed to fund salary increases. The Secretariat further explained that the 1% levy for the host country is the same as currently exists for the SPC.

154. The Representative of French Polynesia questioned whether the Secretariat's statements were in contradiction with the third recommendation of WP.6.5 which proposed to, "approve that the adjustments be passed on to Members via additional membership contributions as addressed in WP". To this the Secretariat responded that the meeting had not reached the point in the agenda for the decision on salary increases.

155. The Representative of New Zealand stated that his delegation was amenable to an increase in contributions relating to the costs of inflation. However, he requested the removal or amendment of the recommendation relating to periodic increases in members' contributions, as it was clear that no consensus

existed on this issue, and such increases would in any event need to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

156. The Chair proposed a possible revision of the relevant recommendation for consideration by the meeting.

157. The Representative of American Samoa commended the effort of the Secretariat to cut costs and in utilising the surpluses. He further noted that no increase had been given in several years. He asked the meeting if it was ready to jeopardise the activities of the organisation considering that there is no other contributor.

158. The Representative of Kiribati stated she could not agree to the fee-for-service and cost recovery approach but that she could support the periodic increases and reduced headquarter costs. She requested that a feasibility assessment be prepared for the 20th SPREP meeting.

159. The Representative of France stated that his country could accept a modest increase in contributions but not a systematic increase.

160. The Republic of the Marshall Islands suggested that the meeting consider exploring in-kind contributions where appropriate and necessary for balancing the budget.

161. The Representative from Nauru reminded the meeting of the current difficulty Nauru faced in paying its contribution and noted that his delegation found the SPC formula to represent a way to ease these difficulties.

162. The Chair noted that there was no consensus on the SPC formula proposed in the paper and declared it was his sense of the meeting that it wished to see SPREP continue under its current scale.

163. On the issue of reducing headquarters costs, the Representative of the United States proposed that an inter-sessional report on the feasibility assessment be presented to Members before the 20th SPREP Meeting.

164. The Meeting:

* **Agreed** to consider well-justified periodic increases in contributions as the need arises;

* **Approved** that the Secretariat develop a fee-for-service and cost recovery approach proposal that supports Members priorities; and

* **Endorsed** Secretariat options for reducing headquarters costs subject to presentation of detailed feasibility assessments as an inter-sessional item before the 20th SPREP Meeting.

Agenda Item 6.4: Review of Support Staff local salary movement

Note: the Meeting considered this Agenda Item together with other budgetary items. Please refer to Agenda Item 9 for the complete discussion of these issues.

Agenda Item 6.5: Annual Reference Market Data Review (Professional Staff)

Note: the Meeting considered this Agenda Item together with other budgetary items. Please refer to Agenda Item 9 for the complete discussion of these issues.

Agenda Item 6.6: Outcomes of Mid-term Review of the SPREP Secretariat Strategic Programmes

165. The Secretariat introduced its papers (19SM/Officials/W.P.6.6 and 19SM/Officials/W.P.6.6/Att.1) and thanked Australia for the funding enabling an improved Strategic Programmes logical framework (log frame) to be designed. It explained that the new log frame made a number of changes to ensure better alignment with the Work Programme and Budget (WP&B) as well as Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Reports (PMER).

166. The Representative of Australia supported and encouraged the use of the log frame and this was echoed by American Samoa, Niue and the Cook Islands, which all endorsed the recommendation.

167. The Representative of New Zealand echoed the support of other Members, commenting that the report constituted a step forward for the Secretariat. He noted that certain challenges remained, however, such as the need for prioritisation of work, and the use of indicators as a benchmark for measuring outputs and the achievement of higher-level goals.

168. The Meeting:

* **noted** the improvements made to the Strategic Programmes document, particularly relating to the log-frame; and

* **adopted** the revised Strategic Programmes document that will be used as a basis for annual work programming and reporting from 2009.

Agenda Item 6.7: Core Budget Comparison between SPREP and other CROP Agencies

169. As requested by the 18th SPREP Meeting, the Secretariat presented its papers (19SM/Officials/W.P.6.7 and 19SM/Officials/W.P.6.7/Att.1) on Core Budget comparisons among the main CROP Agencies.

170. The Meeting **noted** the reports.

Agenda Item 6.8: Collaboration with the Private Sector

171. The Chair invited Australia to present the paper contained in 19SM/Officials/W.P.6.8.

172. The Representative from Australia presented the paper and provided a brief background on the issues behind its development. He thanked the Secretariat for preparing the useful background paper on this matter and encouraged PICs to include the private sector in addressing environmental issues, adding that Australia has some experience in this area. He further added that Australia also had experience with using economic instruments to address its environmental issues and would be happy to share this knowledge with the region.

173. The Representative from Cook Islands informed the meeting that his Government was working collaboratively with the private sector in his country regarding recycling waste.

174. The Meeting:

* **acknowledged** the role and potential benefits of engaging the private sector in the work of SPREP and its Members, including the adoption of economic instruments in achieving environmental goals; and

* **directed** the Secretariat to intensify efforts to assist Members in promoting private sector engagement and the use of economic instruments in achieving environmental goals.

Agenda Item 7: Regional Conventions

Agenda Item 7.1: Report on the Conference of the Parties of the Noumea Convention

175. The Secretariat presented the report of the Noumea Convention meeting.

176. The Representative of the Solomon Islands stated that they had suggestions for the record, and the Chair asked that his delegation work with the Secretariat to reflect.

177. The Representative of the Marshall Islands informed the Meeting that adoption of the Noumea Report included minor changes from the RMI that had been submitted to the Secretariat for incorporation.

178. The Meeting **noted** the report.

Agenda Item 7.2: Report on the Conference of the Parties of the Waigani Convention

179. The Secretariat presented the report of the Waigani Convention to the Meeting.

180. The Representatives of Tuvalu and Fiji requested their apologies be reflected in the record, and the Chair asked that the Secretariat reflect accordingly.

181. The Meeting **noted** the report.

Agenda Item 8: Member Issues

Agenda Item 8.1: Streamlined Reporting by Pacific Island Countries to Multilateral Environmental Agreements

182. Australia introduced their paper (19SM/Officials/W.P.8.1). The Representative of Australia noted that at the 18th SPREP Meeting (SM) Australia put forward a proposal to trial a single template for reporting on the biodiversity-related MEAs. The 18th SM agreed that Australia would report back to the 19th SM on the outcome. She noted that the template had been successfully undertaken as a trial in the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati and Samoa in July 2008 and she stated that the report and template had been provided to Members. She added that during the trial Australia consulted with focal points and other stakeholders, and received favourable feedback and support.

183. She explained that the template would enable the production of one report every three years instead of multiple reports. If successfully adopted, she hoped that the template would serve as a model for other regions, such as Africa and the Caribbean. She concluded by stating that Australia is seeking endorsement of the Meeting for implementation in 14 PICs, and she invited the participating countries to provide views on the process.

184. The Representative of Samoa congratulated Australia for the initiative and thanked AusAID for financing the project. He stated that while the project seemed a daunting task at the outset, he viewed it as a great success by reducing the amount of text that would need to be produced for the reports.

185. The Representative of Cook Islands concurred with Australia, noting that this was a trial that has shown good results. He endorsed the recommendations.

186. The Representative of Tonga agreed with previous speakers given the burden of reporting. He proposed an amendment to the recommendation to say "support implementation of the template pending its endorsement by MEA secretariats or Convention bodies."

187. The Representative of Niue noted that some countries were now working on their national communications to the CBD, and asked if there could be expedited agreement from the CBD to allow the streamlined template to be used for that national communication. He requested that Australia consider a similar approach to the chemical conventions. The Representative of the Federated States of Micronesia also supported this recommendation.

188. The Representative of Fiji welcomed the initiative given the lack of research capacity or capacity to handle complex MEA reporting requirements and called for its widest implementation in the region.

189. The Representative of the United States asked for clarification on the ability of the meeting to endorse an approach that had yet to receive endorsement by convention bodies. He expressed concern that endorsement by this meeting might pre-empt consideration of the proposed template by the associated MEA COPs.

190. The Representative of Australia noted that Australia had held consultations with the relevant convention secretariats, and stated that the secretariats were all interested in the outcomes from a wider trial period in the region. She noted that reporting is at the discretion of the contracting parties,

so the manner in which the parties report cannot be blocked by the secretariats, provided it is supported by all contracting parties. Australia would support further implementation, and she added that the numbers that make up the region would make for a powerful lobby group.

191. The Representative of the United States explained that there might be an issue if the convention bodies considered the streamlined reporting inadequate.

192. The Representative of Solomon Islands requested clarification as to whether agreement would oblige his country to only use this template.

193. The Representative of Australia clarified that the request was to utilise the template as a pilot, while at the same time her delegation would request the various convention bodies to accept the template as a more effective reporting tool and endorsed for use by Pacific island countries. Australia would assist countries in using this approach as an additional service, which would provide the background for rationalising national reporting.

194. The Representative of Solomon Islands supported the initiative, but asked whether a reduction in the number of pages could adequately convey the state of his country's biodiversity.

195. The Representative of Kiribati noted that many reporting guidelines from conventions asked questions that were not relevant to national situations of Members, especially for atolls, and that the template seemed to provide a better fit. As such, Kiribati supported the recommendation.

196. The Representative of Papua New Guinea asked if the template would be accepted in the near future, given the reporting timelines for different conventions.

197. The Representative of Australia clarified that she would continue to promote the template to the respective secretariats, which have all expressed great interest in the model, but that they would also require examples of outcomes from its practical usage. She stated that there would likely be some time requirements from these secretariats to consider the outcomes, but that it was expected that the template would be reviewed by MEA secretariats in the next six months.

198. The Representative of Nauru supported the recommendation.

199. The Representative of the United States requested a change in the wording of the Australian proposal to reflect a need for endorsement of the templates by the secretariats.

200. The Representative of Nauru stated that the decision should note that the region supported this template.

201. The Chair suggested that the region would support the template and encouraged Australia to secure approval from the secretariats.

202. The Meeting:

* **reviewed** the report on outcomes of the trial of the consolidated reporting template;

* **agreed**, pending formal consultation with the MEA Secretariats and with their support, to commence implementation of the consolidated reporting template by self-governing PICs in 2009.

Agenda Item 8.2: Licensing Systems for Ozone-Depleting Substances in the Pacific

Note: the Meeting considered this Agenda Item together with Agenda Item 9.2.4 - discussions of both are included below.

203. Australia presented its paper (19SM/Officials/W.P.8.1), and suggested that this and Agenda Item 9.2.4 be presented together as they address largely the same issues. The meeting agreed to this suggestion.

204. The Representative of Australia noted that there are a number of countries that still lack licensing systems, but that the Secretariat does not have dedicated staff to assist in this area. He urged those without regulatory controls to put these in place as soon as possible.

205. The Deputy Director stated there have been many successes in the implementation of the regional strategy, but that funds for the implementation had now come to an end. He stated that the Secretariat's Associate ODS Officer completed her term in January 2008, and that the Secretariat has been seeking to formally complete the project since that time. He stated that there are outstanding reporting requirements pending from a number of countries participating in the strategy and noted that these are required in order to release the remaining funds to those countries.

206. He also noted that the Secretariat will continue to assist with legal and technical advice on a limited basis and that institutional strengthening funds will be disbursed directly by UNEP. He added that there is the possibility that further funds will be available for a regional network among ODS professionals subject to compliance with the requirements of the funding under the regional strategy agreements.

207. The Representative of the Cook Islands commended the reports and informed the meeting that regulations have now been adopted by his country and are to be used under the Environment Act of the Cook Islands. He endorsed the recommendation and added that the Cook Islands is now ready for customs training.

208. The Representative of Niue recognised the assistance provided by the Secretariat and thanked Fiji for seconding a customs officer to help with the training. He also supported the endorsement of the recommendation.

209. The Secretariat clarified that funds have been allocated to each office in each participating country but that disbursement of funds is contingent on provision of certain reports. As soon as the necessary documentation is provided, the funding can be utilised for customs training.

210. The Representatives of Nauru and Palau thanked the Secretariat for the assistance provided.

211. The Representative of Samoa encouraged the other PICs to have national instruments in place in order to access funds under the ODS.

212. The Representative of the United States thanked Australia for helping the region with this initiative. He sought clarification on the usage of the word “urge” in the paper. To this Australia advised that they would be happy to drop the word “urge” from the recommendations.

213. The Secretariat clarified the process on how the country becomes eligible to access funds from the global mechanism.

214. The Representative of Fiji noted there were two similar projects in the region and wished to clarify that Fiji was a participant in the project undertaken by UNEP.

215. The Representative of the Federated States of Micronesia sought clarification on the issue of training of customs officers. He stated that the country was currently in the process of considering draft leg-

islation and asked whether this needed to be passed before the training is provided.

216. The Secretariat advised that it required a formal mechanism of acceptance before any training could be provided.

217. The Meeting:

- * **noted** that five Pacific Island countries now have appropriate ODS control systems and regulations in place as required by the Montreal Protocol;

- * **noted** that some Pacific Island countries are yet to put in place licensing systems for CFCs, and therefore are jeopardising their compliance with the Montreal Protocol and limiting the resources available to them from the Multilateral Fund;

- * **encouraged** countries that have not yet done so to implement a licensing system for CFCs as soon as practicable, and complete their reporting requirements under the Montreal Protocol;

- * **noted** that SPREP now only has limited resources available to provide technical support and advice to countries on Montreal Protocol matters; and

- * **encouraged** all countries to implement a licensing system for HCFCs as soon as practicable.

Agenda Item 8.3: Directionary Funding for Chemicals and Waste Multilateral Environment Agreements

218. Australia was invited to present their paper.

219. The Representative of Australia tabled their paper (19SM/Officials/WP.8.3) and noted that there was an ever-growing need for financing in these areas. He announced that Australia was donating over \$700,000 through multilateral environmental agreement secretariats and invited the meeting to note these contributions.

220. The Meeting **noted** Australia’s funding contributions towards addressing chemicals and waste issues in the Pacific region.

Agenda Item 8.4: Genetic Resources in the Pacific Region

221. Australia was invited to present their paper. The Representative of Australia tabled the paper (19SM/Officials/WP.8.4), explaining that it originated from

a longer discussion of the topic at the 18th SPREP meeting, that it takes note of the state of international negotiations on the issue, and requests the meeting to take note of these issues.

222. The Meeting:

- * **noted** the ongoing international negotiations; and

- * **encouraged** SPREP Members to consider engaging with Australia on these issues.

Agenda Item 8.5: Meteorology and Climatology support by SPREP

Note: the Meeting considered this Agenda Item together with Agenda Item 9.2.5. Please refer also to that portion of the record.

223. The United States was invited to present their paper (19SM/Officials/W.P.8.5). The Representative of the United States suggested that the meeting consider this issue in conjunction with Agenda Item 9.2.5. The Meeting agreed.

224. The Representative of the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) gave a presentation on the issues of Secretariat support for meteorology and climatology programmes. He presented the background on the issues involved, looking at the historical development of this work at SPREP. He noted the importance of long-term monitoring of climate systems as being essential to a number of international processes as well as for practical implementation of applications in the region. He outlined the history of meteorology and climatology post at SPREP, and the need to now clarify the situation between the WMO and SPREP and between the MCO and PI-GCOS posts. The situation is now such that the two areas of meteorology and climatology compared to PI-GCOS are now underserved. He outlined the current issues that required clarification on whether SPREP wished to prioritise the meteorology and climatology work at the Secretariat, in line with the outcome on this issue from the PIFL meeting in Niue. He therefore outlined the options presented by PIFL and requested Members to determine whether this should be reaffirmed and presented his recommendations.

225. The Representative of French Polynesia thanked the US for its interest and the quality of the information paper presented, and noted that French Polynesia attaches great importance to meteorological and climatological issues and therefore fully supported the recommendations.

226. The Representative of American Samoa sought clarification as to who would fund the MCO position.

227. The Representative of the United States noted that it is a matter of prioritisation by the organisation.

228. The Representative of American Samoa supported the endorsement of the recommendation provided it did not conflict with the island Members' meteorology work.

229. The Representative of Cook Islands supported the recommendation and reminded the meeting of the support it pledged to the US presentation on the same matter at last year's meeting.

230. The Representative of Nauru sought clarification on the work of SOPAC and whether it would have resources to assist here.

231. The Director of SOPAC noted that there are major links between disaster risk management and this type of assistance. She stated that SOPAC also hosts the PI-GCOS project and looked forward to working closely with SPREP and NOAA on having an integrated project. Regarding resources, she stated that this should be discussed in the context of the current RIF process.

232. The Representative of Samoa commended the United States for funding the current PI-GCOS officer at SPREP. He then commented on the ad-hoc approach of dealing with this issue, in that it is dealt with under the Disaster Risk Management programme at SOPAC and the Climate Change programme at SPREP. He called for an extension to the current recommendation to strengthen the MCO to make it a core function including in relation to PACC and sustainable development.

233. The Representative of New Zealand strongly supported the recommendations in the US paper. He noted that meteorology was critical to the region's response to climate change adaptation, among other things, and needed to be addressed with urgency.

234. The Representative of France welcomed the initiative and informed the meeting that France funded certain activities in the region through the Fund for Economic, Social and Cultural Cooperation for the Pacific, and also inquired as to how the MCO post would be funded.

235. The Representative of the United States explained that it is not seeking to create a new position, as it is an existing post and is funded through

the current arrangement, but that this post needs to be strengthened. Once the reports are completed and presented to the next SPREP Meeting then the funding issues can be discussed.

236. The Representative of the Marshall Islands sought clarification on the link between this post and the WMO as it was the organisation that had been working with their meteorological services.

237. The Representative of the United States noted that there were linkages with the WMO operation through the regional office hosted by SPREP, and that the MCO post would look at cooperation with WMO and the climate change and met-related policy level work. He stated that the linkage between WMO and SPREP was not very effective in this work and that this needed to be examined.

238. The Representative of Australia supported the issue and linked it to the ICR recommendations relating to the definition of the core functions of SPREP. The Secretariat noted that this was covered under Agenda 9.2.5.

239. The Meeting:

- * **noted** the role of the Secretariat in providing support to the MCO position and RMSD Meetings;

- * **reaffirmed** its commitment to support an MCO position and to investigate the creation of a PMC to aid in supporting the critical meteorological and climatological needs of the region; and

- * **requested** the Secretariat to prepare a paper for consideration by the next SPREP Annual Meeting proposing a transition in function and design toward the development of a Pacific Meteorology Committee.

Agenda Item 8.6: Country Profiles - exchange of information by Members on national developments related to Pollution Prevention priority of the SPREP Action Plan

240. The Meeting noted the verbal presentations made by Members on progress of national actions in regard to the priority area under the SPREP Action Plan relating to waste and pollution, and noted the written reports already submitted or to be submitted by Members to the Secretariat regarding their country profiles.

241. Submitted country profiles can be accessed from the SPREP web site at <http://www.sprep.org>.

Agenda Item 9: 2009 Work Programme and Budget

Agenda Item 9.1: Island Ecosystems Programme Issues

242. The Chair noted that the meeting was behind schedule and as such he made the proposal that the remaining papers would be simply tabled, presentation on their contents would be noted, and that he would draw the attention of the meeting to the recommendations and, unless Members have any objection to them, that they be adopted. The Meeting agreed to proceed as suggested by the Chair.

Agenda Item 9.1.1: Guidelines for Invasive Species Management in the Pacific

243. The Secretariat tabled the proposed Guidelines for Invasive Species in the Pacific (19SM/Officials/WP9.1.1/Att.1)

244. The Representative of Australia informed that his delegation wished to table a companion paper to that of the Secretariat.

245. The Meeting:

- * **considered** and **approved** the draft Guidelines for Invasive Species Management in the Pacific; and

- * **agreed** to support and participate in implementing the Guidelines.

Agenda Item 9.1.2: PILN Pilot Phase Review Report

246. The Secretariat tabled its paper (19SM/Officials/WP9.1.2/Att.1).

247. The Meeting:

- * **considered** the results and recommendations of the External Review of PILN;

- * **noted** with appreciation the excellent support provided by the PILN partnership and team to invasive species action in the Pacific;

- * **requested** the Secretariat to institutionalise the PILN Coordinator function, subject to available funding;

- * **encouraged** the Secretariat to develop capacity building activities in other areas based on the lessons learnt from the PILN model; and
- * **invited** the Secretariat and SPC to strengthen their collaboration on invasive species issues, particularly in relation to the coordination of relevant initiatives such as PILN and the Pacific Invasives Initiative.

Agenda Item 9.1.3: New Action Strategy for Nature Conservation

248. The Secretariat tabled its paper (19SM/Officials/WP9.1.3).

249. The Chair drew the attention of the Meeting to a set of revisions to the working paper recommendations that had been circulated by the Secretariat.

250. The Representative of Australia expressed Australia's appreciation to Papua New Guinea for hosting the successful Alotau Conference on Nature Conservation last year.

251. The Meeting:

- * **endorsed** the Action Strategy for Nature Conservation (2008 - 2012) as a document to inform the development of the SPREP Action Plan in 2009;
- * **supported** the development of a framework for monitoring progress on the Action Strategy to enable better identification of gaps and needs; and
- * **congratulated** the Government of Papua New Guinea on the hosting of the 8th Pacific Island Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas.

Agenda Item 9.1.4: Pacific Framework for Education for Sustainable Development and Regional Education for Sustainable Development Action Plan

252. The Secretariat tabled its papers (19SM/Officials/WP9.1.4) and (19SM/Officials/WP9.1.4/Att.1).

253. The Meeting:

- * **considered** and **endorsed** the Framework and Action Plan for ESD;

- * **noted** the importance of working within a collaborative, partner-driven, cross-sectoral regional Framework and Action Plan;

- * **highlighted** their commitment to work with SPREP to achieve goals under the relevant component of the Action Plan (6.5 'Public Awareness and Education');

- * **endorsed** the need for ongoing support in education and communications including, the integration of behaviour change tools and approaches into existing and future initiatives;

- * **endorsed** and **supported** SPREP's intention to develop Framework for Action to guide SPREP's work in this area.

Agenda Item 9.2: Pacific Futures Programme Issues

Agenda Item 9.2.1: Climate Change Action Plan

254. The Secretariat tabled its papers (19SM/Officials/WP9.2.1) and (19SM/Officials/WP9.2.1/Att.1).

255. The Representative of American Samoa sought clarification on financing of the Action Plan. The Secretariat stated that the Action Plan contained a number of short and long term issues and the Secretariat has identified resources for the short term activities, but for the long term actions the Secretariat would seek and mobilise donor resources for implementation.

256. The Meeting:

- * **endorsed** the Action Plan for PIFACC;
- * **considered** and **endorsed** the Secretariat plans for the PCCR;
- * **welcomed** the financial contribution from the Government of Switzerland; and
- * **encouraged** Members to fully participate in the PCCR.

Agenda Item 9.2.2: Pacific Year of Climate Change 2009: A Plan for Action

257. The Secretariat tabled its paper (19SM/Officials/WP9.1.1/Att.1).

258. The Representative of Kiribati, supported by Nauru, asked that the plan be communicated to climate change contact points and that funding to implement any proposed activities at the country level be made available.

259. The Representative of the Marshall Islands sought clarification regarding the paper's references to changing behaviour. In response, the Secretariat clarified that it referred to unsustainable practices such as sand mining that would have an impact on climate change, but also includes positive aspects such as the energy conservation campaign in Fiji. The Representative of the Marshall Islands thanked the Secretariat for the clarification but requested a document clarifying the matter further.

260. The Representative of the Solomon Islands noted that the World Meteorological Day is on 23 March.

261. The Meeting:

* **endorsed** the Secretariat proposal for 2009 to be the Pacific Year of Climate Change;

* **considered** and **endorsed** the Secretariat proposals for the proposed campaign plan;

* **noted** the date of the Launch of the PYCC 2009 at the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable in October 2008; and

* **encouraged** Members to fully participate in the PYCC 2009 and nominate a contact point for the campaign.

Agenda Item 9.2.3: Revised Regional Waste Management Action Plan

262. The Secretariat tabled its proposed paper (19SM/Officials/WP9.2.3)

263. The Representative of France advised that the French Development Agency (AFD) has made available funding of 5 million euro to the Pacific for solid waste activities. He noted, however, that the AFD requires countries to have their national solid waste management plans in place as a condition for receiving AFD funds. He noted that his government was willing to assist countries to develop project proposals, and that these requests should be channelled through SPREP where they will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis. He also notified the SPREP Meeting that a scoping technical mission would visit the region in October 2008 to hold con-

sultations on potential proposals for consideration under the AFD funding window.

264. The Representative of the Marshall Islands sought clarification on the reference in the paper to GEF, as it was her understanding that GEF does not directly fund solid waste initiatives except as they relate to land management, biodiversity or climate change. The Secretariat advised that whilst the waste sector is not featured as a separate window under GEF, provisions for funding now exist under GEF PAS.

265. The Meeting:

* **endorsed** the priorities as outlined in the revised Action Plan for the RSWM Strategy; and

* **urged** Members to commit themselves to the implementation of the activities contained in the Action Plan

Agenda Item 9.2.4: Ozone Depleting Substances Project and Compliance Implications

Note: the Meeting considered this Agenda Item together with Agenda Item 8.24. Please refer also to that section for discussion of these issues.

Agenda Item 9.2.5: Regional Meteorological Services Directors (RMSD)

Note: this Agenda Item was considered by the meeting together with Agenda Item 8.5. Please refer also to that portion of the record.

266. The Secretariat introduced Agenda Item 9.2.5 and outlined its support to the region through the RMSD. It directed the meeting's attention of the four outcomes of the last RMSD meeting in the Cook Island as contained in the paper presented. The Chair then invited comments from the Members.

267. The Representative of New Zealand thanked the Secretariat for the useful information and welcomed the move to clarify the respective roles of the WMO and SPREP in this area of work. He stated that New Zealand supported the decision of Forum Leaders in Niue regarding regional meteorological services, and had agreed to fund the completion of the review of met services in the region. The New Zealand Representative noted that this review was now urgent and needed to be undertaken forthwith, and not tied to the broader review described in item 4 of the Secretariat paper. He informed the meeting that New Zealand has primary back-up responsibil-

ity in the event that the Fiji Met Service becomes unable to carry out its services to recipients in the region.

268. He requested that the Secretariat move immediately to work with interested parties to develop terms of reference for this review, including policy oversight, funding, methodology and scope. In that regard, the Representative of New Zealand proposed additions to the recommendations in working paper 9.2.5 that were subsequently adopted by the Meeting.

269. The Secretariat noted that it had already commenced work on this review.

270. The Representative of Australia supported New Zealand's calls for urgency and informed the meeting that it too stood ready to support the review financially and supported New Zealand's call to strengthen the recommendation.

271. The Representative of the United States advised that his delegation would also like to second the call for strengthening of the recommendation but pointed to the possible difficulty that the Secretariat might face since the current officer supporting these activities is only part time.

272. He noted that the paper outlined generic recommendations and proposed that these be adopted as action items.

273. The Meeting:

- * **noted** and **endorsed** the 12RMSD recommendations, in particular those directed to SPREP Members via the Directors of their National Meteorological Services, as well as those directly involving the Secretariat;

- * **noted** and **supported** the RMSD and its processes and welcome the new linkage between the WMO and the SPREP Secretariat in future agreement on joint activities and programmes in support of meteorological work in the PICTs;

- * **noted** and **endorsed** the findings of the WMO-led mission to Fiji, in particular the noted concern of the urgent situation regarding recruitment of meteorologists for the upcoming 2008/9 tropical cyclone season, and proposed solutions involving the seconding of SPREP/WMO Member meteorologists from their NMS to assist the FMS;

- * **noted** the decision(s) of the SIS Leaders on regional Met services, and that SPREP had been asked to continue to take the lead on this issue;

- * **endorsed** the proposed review of the Strategic Action Plan for the development of meteorology in the Pacific Region (SDMP) 2000-2009 and the relevant activities as entered into the Secretariat's Work Programme and Budget 2009;

- * **noted** the decision of Pacific Island Forum Leaders in their 2008 Communiqué, in which they "call on SPREP to urgently carry out a comprehensive review of regional meteorological services, reporting intersessionally to Leaders as soon as practicable on all options, including building on existing arrangements and consideration of other service providers"; and

- * **directed** the Secretariat to immediately commence planning for this urgent review, and as a first step to bring together representatives of interested Members to provide policy oversight including the development of terms of reference for the review.

Agenda Item 9.3: Consideration and Approval of the Proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2009 and Indicative Budgets for 2010 and 2011)

Note: the Meeting considered this Agenda Item together with Agenda Items 6.4 and 6.5.

274. The Secretariat presented the Proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2009 and the Indicative Budgets for 2010 and 2011 for the Meeting's consideration and approval.

275. The Director explained the rationale behind the proposals contained in the document pertaining to balancing the budget and salary scales.

276. The Secretariat referred to working paper 6.4 relating to support staff salaries and to working paper 6.5 referring to professional staff. The Secretariat explained that the presentation had taken into account the required increases and the requisite increase in member contributions.

277. The Representative of Nauru requested the review take into account any implications the RIF might have on the budget.

278. The Director explained that the RIF was still ongoing and the Secretariat could not take into account what can only be anticipated, and there was there-

fore a need to exclude such considerations from the current budget.

279. The Representative of French Polynesia stated that, while willing to discuss an increase in contributions for improved services, his delegation could not agree to an increase only for salary increases. He stated that the situation in his own country did not reflect the increases in salary in this manner and that one might question the desirability of maintaining a system of harmonised salaries within CROP.

280. The Representative of Samoa stated that the harmonisation concept would be very different for support staff and noted that Samoan salaries have increased considerably. He stressed there was a need to maintain quality support staff in the Secretariat.

281. The Representative of American Samoa asked for clarification on the actual amounts required for increases in salaries. The Secretariat confirmed that the figures noted by American Samoa were correct.

282. The Representative of American Samoa noted the budget for 2009 outlining the salaries of the employees of the Secretariat and the vacant positions listed, and requested information on whether those vacancies would be filled.

283. The Director explained that the vacancies were a normal issue for the Secretariat, and that these core staff functions would be filled through the recruitment process.

284. The Representative of American Samoa stated that the positions may go unfilled, and that the meeting should also look to, for example, the allowances listed in terms of finding ways and means of reducing the budget. He asked whether some of those allowances were actually required.

285. The Director stated that the total remuneration package was a contractual agreement based on the staff regulations approved by the SPREP Meeting, and as such form a basic part of the staff contracts.

286. The Representative of American Samoa asked the Secretariat to provide the salary schedule for SPREP. He noted that all countries experienced inflationary pressures and asked delegations to carefully consider this budget. He agreed to the increase in salary, but requested that the Secretariat carefully look at the vacancies and whether they would need to be filled or if they duplicated other areas of work.

287. The Representative of France concurred with American Samoa on the issue of vacancies. Based on the response by the Secretariat regarding the

recruitment process, he stated that the blocking of resources for vacant posts should not be used as a reason for increasing the budget.

288. The Representative of the Marshall Islands noted the need to harmonise salaries for the support staff with salaries of the public sector in Samoa, and stated that the issue was how to do that in light of views expressed on the increase in member contributions. She expressed her support for the increase, but asked how this might be done given the divergent views.

289. The Representative of the Cook Islands stated that American Samoa had clarified the situation for Members. He noted that there were currently 13 posts vacant and that this would be 14 if the Pacific Futures Manager were included. In previous discussions he reminded that he had noted that the Members owned the Secretariat and that Members should make their contributions to ensure its smooth functioning. He stated that many of the vacant posts needed to be urgently filled and therefore supported the increase and the comments by American Samoa.

290. The Representative of New Zealand noted that he had no objection to a fully-justified membership contribution increase based on inflation-related cost increases, but that there was no consensus on this in the earlier discussion on sustainable financing. He stated that the salary issue before the SPREP Meeting would have impacts on Member contributions and therefore the two matters needed to be considered together.

291. The Director informed that the proposed increases were based on the current formula. The Representative of the United States asked for clarification, to which the Director explained that the increases included the core posts and the need to balance the budget.

292. The Representative of Papua New Guinea asked whether the salary increases were across the board and whether they were linked to performance. He noted that there had been no salary increases for the last few years. He stated that his country based increases on various indexes, and that while some countries were having difficulty in paying their contributions, he supported the need for salary increases.

293. The Director stated that the CROP agencies all took note of the situation in Members economies, but that the proposed increase was not arbitrary but rather based on the agreement to review the issue every three years. He clarified that the salary levels

in Samoa have to be considered, as that is the market within which the Secretariat competes for support staff. Salaries in Samoa had been reviewed and they had increased by several percentage points. For professional staff he explained that there also needed to be adjustments based on the agreed methodology of comparison with Fiji, Australia and New Zealand. The issue was based on the decision of the Members and reflected in rules adopted many years ago. He explained that annual increases were part of the management system agreed to under the rules and regulations, and the increase was entirely based on performance.

294. The Representative of Niue supported the recommendations in both papers, but indicated his reservation on the matter of the increase in contributions. He called on Members to deal with the increase and arrears in innovative ways and noted the efforts by the Secretariat in this regard.

295. The Representative of Nauru agreed to the increase in salaries but asked that the SPC contribution scale be revisited. He stated that he would need to discuss this further with his capital.

296. The Representative of Palau noted that there would soon be an election in his country and a transitional budget until the first quarter of next year. As such, he stated it was difficult to commit to this increase, noted the need to restructure of the nature of Member contribution payments, and called for options to be presented. He noted existing arrears and acknowledged the importance of maintaining the quality of the staffing at the Secretariat. Nevertheless, he stated that he needed to take the issue to his Government for further consideration.

297. The Representative of the Solomon Islands acknowledged that the documents justified the increase and the recommendations of the ICR had borne this out further. However, he was concerned about a 50% increase in contributions, particularly given his country's difficulties under the existing scale.

298. The Representative of American Samoa agreed that there was a need to revisit the percentage of the contributions. He requested the Secretariat to provide the percentage of total increase needed. He noted that the formula used by the SPC would result in different levels of contributions, and that all the States should have equal contributions based on their receipt of services from the Secretariat.

299. The Representative of Australia noted that the core work, balancing the budget and retaining staff were the essential issues. She noted also that the in-

creases were being presented under different agenda items and suggested that in the future these issues should be included as a single item and circulated in advance.

300. The Representative of Samoa noted the importance of this issue and the need to resolve the matters before the meeting. He also noted that there was agreement on the need to balance the budget, but that there were different opinions on how to actually carry this out in practice. He agreed that the budgetary issues arose from the regulations approved by the Members, and that the vacancies did need to be filled, so there was a dilemma and that compromises needed to be considered. He stated that the meeting needed to make a decision, and that he supported increases in salaries and contributions with the proviso that the Secretariat consult with Members on meeting the increases in innovative ways.

301. The Chair stated that there was a motion to adopt the salary increases and to adopt the budget with the proviso that the Secretariat consult with Members.

302. The Representative of France asked if the increases would be announced to the staff before the end of this budgetary period.

303. The Director stated that there are a number of interrelated issues that require clarification, including the issue of shifting of the formula, as there was opposition to the SPC formula given the state of flux created by the RIE. He explained that donors were also looking to review their assistance to CROP agencies. He asked the meeting to consider both whether it approved the increases in salary and whether it approved the contribution increases.

304. The Representative of French Polynesia asked for clarification. He stated that his delegation was not in a position to approve wage increases, as it would have implications on contributions, and that there needed to be absolute clarity in the implications to the contributions. He therefore requested a table that showed the increases in contributions based on the salary increase alone. He stated that he had no mandate from his government to accept an increase of 60%, and felt that there may be a need for an inter-sessional meeting dedicated to the budget, as was the case for the Forum. He called for a clearer view of the systemic issues pertaining to these increases and the formulas that are applied, and that for an extraordinary session there would need to be such a document provided.

305. The Representative of New Caledonia noted that several proposals were put on the table and that

above and beyond these issues there was a need to give a positive signal to the staff, as if there were to be improvements in the services rendered by the Secretariat there needed to be an attractive package for the staff. He acknowledged that some Members do not have a mandate to accept a contribution increase, but stressed that a positive signal needed to be given.

306. The Representative of Nauru stated that he endorsed the increase in budget but sought clarification as to how the shares of contributions would be distributed. He posed the question of whether Members could continue to pay these increases, while seeking to address these issues there should be consideration to the economy and size of all countries. He stated that there should be a better formula to better reflect Members' ability to pay. He added that he would follow consensus but called for a discussion to consider the size of economies and the ability to pay.

307. The Chair noted that there was wide support for the recommendations but reservations on how to fund the increases. He noted that the Representative of New Caledonia had stated that this SPREP Meeting should send a positive signal to the staff and the Secretariat and called for a compromise to move the issue forward.

308. The Representative of the United States spoke in favour of improving the morale of staff by improving remuneration, but noted that the US was not in a position to increase its contribution for 2009 and that this would have an impact on overall calculations.

309. The Representative of Tonga stated that there are budgetary implications of the salary increases, and noted that for the last four years the Secretariat had been directed to utilise its reserves to balance its budget. He observed that there are conflicting issues in that Members endorsed the ICR and yet had not agreed to the proposed increase in contributions. He also clarified that 80% of the proposed increase in contribution would go towards balancing the 2009 budget and 20% to salary increases. He stated that there will be issues in raising the contribution increase from Tonga, but he endorsed the recommendation.

310. The Representative of Tokelau recalled the need for greater support to her country from the Secretariat, and supported the recommendations.

311. The Chair stated that there was support for the recommendations, and asked if there was a need for a show of hands or if there was consensus. He out-

lined the two proposals for increases in salary for support and professional staff.

312. The Representative of France stated that he could not agree with such a proposal, even if he was in favour in principle of the salary increases.

313. The Representative of French Polynesia agreed with the fact that the salary increase would attract the best staff to the Secretariat, and asked whether a table could be drawn up for only the salary increases and their implications on contributions.

314. The Representative of the United States proposed a procedural solution on the issue in which Members could see how the costs would be shared, and the Secretariat would provide the calculation representing the increase.

315. The Secretariat referred to Appendix 3 in the budget, which showed the implications of balancing the budget. It also referred to the revised paper circulated.

316. The Representative of American Samoa asked whether the increase would be only for the current year or whether this increase would continue in the future.

317. The Secretariat stated that this contribution would be indicative of future budgets. It added there could be savings if unpaid contributions were collected as they could become reserves to be used for future balancing of the budget. It stated that future increases would be up to Members.

318. The Chair noted the different views, and proposed that since few would have budgeted for the increased amounts in their national budgets, he asked whether the meeting might approve the budget but that it would only become effective once the Members could approve their contributions or if the Secretariat could find cost-saving measures.

319. The Director noted that the increase for salaries represented 13.5% of the increase in the contributions.

320. The Representative of Tuvalu asked about the possible increase in membership contributions and implications under the RIF process, and whether a new budget in future years would be higher or lower.

321. The Representative of New Zealand again noted his delegation's agreement with the increase while proposing that in his view there were three options: option 1 was to approve the increase, option 2 was

to only approve the salary increase, and option 3 was that the SPREP Meeting agree on a budget inter-sessionally.

322. The Chair noted that there were other options proposed.

323. The Representative of France noted the acceptance of the principle of a salary increase with a need for an inter-sessional meeting next year, not to look at all the financial issues but rather to look at the financing required to provide a balanced budget. He suggested this be held in February or March 2009.

324. The Representative of Kiribati stated she could agree to the proposed budget.

325. The Representative of the Cook Islands noted the reservations around the table, and stated that he saw the option put forward by France as a good solution. While supporting all of the recommendations, he stated that the reservations need to be addressed and supported the suggestion by France.

326. The Representative of Papua New Guinea suggested that the recommendations be agreed to in principle and that further work be undertaken, according to the proposal by France.

327. The Representative of Palau agreed to the proposal by France.

328. The Representative of Australia sought clarification as to whether the costs of having a meeting would outweigh the budget increase.

329. The Chair noted that such a meeting would have to be at the cost of the Members.

330. The Representative of the United States sought clarification on the provisions regarding the Secretariat working without a budget.

331. The Representative of France proposed that the meeting agree to consensus on the agreement to increase the salary, and that all remaining issues would to be considered at the proposed inter-sessional meeting. He added that the transitional budget adopted now would contain little or no increase.

332. The Representative of the United States stated that he did not think such a transitional budget would be outside the regulations, but that a budget with expenditures and no income would not be within the regulations. He also noted that the source of confusion might be related to the issues first being presented separately.

333. The Chair asked the meeting if the salary increases would be acceptable based on non-implementation until the inter-sessional meeting proposed by France and whether the meeting was ready to approve a proposal that balances the budget.

334. The Representative of the United States stated that he could join consensus on the increase in salary in principle only.

335. The Representative of Samoa stated that his understanding was that both the budget and the increases would have to be agreed in principle and that the SPREP Meeting come back early next year to see how the contributions will be allocated in order to give the Secretariat time for the collection of arrears and to prepare a supplementary budget.

336. The Representative of France agreed with the proposal from Samoa, and asked if the SPREP Meeting could agree on the salaries issue, and then examine the 2009 budget to see if the proposals can be funded. He stated that France could not agree to a 60% increase.

337. The Representative of French Polynesia stated that his delegation was prepared to cover the salary increase costs, but that the balancing of the budget can only be done through savings.

338. The Chair asked if a decision could be reached on the French proposal.

339. The Representative of Australia sought clarification on an extraordinary meeting and the cost implications, and asked if the matter could be considered without a physical meeting.

340. The Director noted that a meeting in Samoa would cost at least US \$160,000

341. The Representative of American Samoa reiterated that there is a need for a balanced budget and a salary increase for 2009 only, and that other matters need to be considered at the next meeting, including the collection of any unpaid member contributions in the interim.

342. The Representative of New Zealand asked for the proposals to be clarified. The Secretariat clarified that the proposal is to agree to the salary increase, and to have an inter-sessional process to clear the other budgetary issues.

343. The Representative of France proposed that the salary increase be accepted conditional on finding the funding needed and that there should be an inter-sessional meeting arranged for this purpose.

344. The Representative of the United States stated that joining the consensus on this proposal did not mean that the US would provide additional funds in 2009. He stated that he could agree to this in principle, but was deeply concerned that this may not be funded.

345. The Director stated that there seemed to be consensus on approving the increase in salary, that the implementation would be dependent on the availability of funds, and that Members would need to consult with capitals. On the issue of balancing the budget, he stated that if this were not done, then only half of what was needed for the budget would be approved. He further stated that the organisation had contractual obligations that could not be paid in half. He added that there was a need for a serious curtailment of the Secretariat's work if only half of the budget presented was adopted, as this could mean that travel would stop and that communications would be cut back. He stated that the balancing of the budget during the past four years had been done through savings but could not be done again as those savings had been depleted. He stated that this would be deficit spending, that some obligations will be affected, and that balancing was necessary. He reminded that this was for 2009 only. He stated that in order for SPREP to move forward it needed the necessary funds. He added that SPREP needed funds to engage with SPC and SOPAC, and that there was no authority to extend the budget without funds.

346. The Representative of the United States asked what the provisions would be for operating without budget.

347. In response, the Director read out Article 10 of the Secretariat's Financial Regulations, which deals with the Director's authority to incur obligations and meet expenditures if the annual budget is not adopted.

348. The Representative of France suggested that the deficit should be examined in view of savings that could be considered and then look at the budget.

349. The Representative of French Polynesia asked whether the Secretariat could inform Members of areas in which savings might be identified.

350. The Director stated that, with all due respect, that this would be hasty and risky without jeopardising the services of the Secretariat. He stated that savings would be achieved, as demonstrated in past years. He added that the Secretariat needed the budget before the SPREP Meeting, that debt collection was still an issue to be considered and that there were positive movements and the Secretariat would

continue on that path. He added that the Secretariat was unable to demonstrate specifics where savings can be made at that point in time, but would do its best to provide savings in the future.

351. The Representative of the United States asked whether the SPREP Meeting was looking at a budget that was funded only by core contributions. He stated that this could be a way to determine what are the core services of the organisation.

352. The Secretariat referred to page 53 of the budget, and noted that this represented the total capital expenses for the whole of the Secretariat that were covered by the core budget.

353. The Representative of the United States asked if all of the expenses on page 53 were funded by the core budget and inquired as to which remaining expenses were also funded by contributions.

354. In response, the Secretariat referred to items on page 54, and explained that this related to salaries, operating costs and related matters. It explained that this is the sum total funded by contributions.

355. The Representative of the United States expressed a desire to discuss the core budget in detail. He stated that since this is where savings that would impact the deficit could be found, perhaps some reductions in expenditures could be explored, as the SPREP Meeting needed better options. He asked whether it could be agreed that the vacant positions should not be filled in 2009.

356. The Director stated that some of these positions were in the process of being filled, and if this was the instruction he could not say precisely what effect it would have on the work of the organisation. He stated that some posts listed, like the Pacific Futures Manager, were very important to fill, while others, like that of a cleaner, might not be as critical, but that the costs of the latter would be insignificant. He stated that operational expenses were fairly fixed except for maintenance and that there were already restrictions on communications and transportation, so further cuts would have a direct impact on the provision of services by the Secretariat.

357. The Representative of New Zealand agreed that there needed to be options for the SPREP Meeting to consider, that these needed to be accompanied by costs against contributions, and that they would need to be considered carefully. He encouraged the SPREP Meeting to look at the way forward, and suggested that a small group might meet with the Secretariat to see if some clarity could be achieved and an agreement in writing be produced.

358. The Chair agreed to break to allow the informal group to meet to seek a way forward on the matter.

359. The Chair resumed the session on this item. He thanked the small group for their work on seeking a compromise acceptable to all. He stated that a revised version was being circulated, and requested the Secretariat to brief the SPREP Meeting.

360. The Director commended the informal group for its work under the leadership of New Zealand and stated that he believed a way forward had been found. He advised the meeting that this proposed budget included a salary increase for support staff. He stated that consideration of the professional staff increases would be presented in the budget for 2010. Additional voluntary contributions would be sought on the basis of the current formula. The proposed additional voluntary contributions would be considered a one-off contribution, recognising the 2009 budget was a transitional budget, given the number of issues that will be considered next year such as the ICR and RIF. As such, the formula of contributions would need to be reconsidered at next year's meeting. He stated that the proposed budget had been achieved on the basis of a realistic view of expected income, for example by working together on collecting unpaid contributions and by achieving some cost savings. Emphasis would be placed on the recognition that some Members are unable to contribute, so the SPREP Meeting should call on those in a position to do so to contribute on a voluntary basis.

361. The Representative of the United States noted that the column of voluntary contributions should not later be shown as arrears but rather that there will be a goodwill effort to raise those funds.

362. The Representative of the Marshall Islands thanked the committee, and recognised the difficulties of the issue. She associated herself with the comments by the Representative of the US and asked that "needed" be added after the phrase "additional voluntary contributions" in the document.

363. The Representative of Tonga encouraged Members to address their unpaid member contributions.

364. The Meeting:

- * **adopted** the revised budget, as amended;
- * **approved** the revised Work Programme and Budget for 2009;
- * **noted** the indicative budgets for 2010 and 2011;

* **indicated** that budget shortfalls for 2009 only would be covered by voluntary contributions;

* **adopted** the support staff salary increase as proposed by the Secretariat;

* **deferred** consideration of professional staff salary increases to the 20th SPREP Meeting.

Agenda Item 10: Institutional Matters

Agenda Item 10.1: Proposed procedures for reappointment of incumbent Director

365. The Secretariat presented its paper contained in 19SM/Officials/WP.10.1.

366. The Meeting:

* **agreed** that after the new Director is appointed and takes up office, he/she assisted by the management team propose to the Chair of the SM for approval, cumulative objectives based on the SPREP Strategic Programmes for achievement over the 3 years of the first term;

* **agreed** that in the first year at the 2009 SPREP Meeting, the Members meet in closed session to evaluate the performance of the Director to decide on performance and any issues to be taken up with the Director as well as on the award of a performance increment;

* **agreed** that in the second year (2010 SM) the Members meet in closed session to again evaluate the performance of the Director based on his/her report on set objectives as well as other reports from his/her first term in office (eg. Annual Report, PMER, Auditors Report etc) and decide firstly, on whether the Director be offered a second term or the post be advertised and secondly on whether to be awarded a performance increment;

* **agreed** that if offered a second term, the Director should continue to set with the Chair of the SM Strategic Programme objectives to be achieved and assessed annually for the rest of his/her tenure both as a means of dialoguing with the membership of achieving organisational objectives as well as awarding annual performance increments.

Agenda Item 10.2: Appointment of Director (Closed Session)

367. The Meeting met in closed session concerning the appointment of a Director.

368. Upon resuming open session, the Chair informed the meeting that the SPREP Meeting had adopted the recommendation of the Selection Advisory Committee on the selection of a new Director, and that Ms. Cristelle Pratt had been **appointed** as the new Director of SPREP.

369. The Representative of Tuvalu reserved the right to speak on this item at the Ministerial Meeting.

Agenda Item 10.3: Regional Institutional Framework (RIF) Review

370. In introducing this agenda item, the Chair referred the meeting to a revised paper on the RIF that had been circulated by the Secretariat containing revised and updated recommendations reflecting the related decisions of the recently concluded Pacific Forum Leaders meeting in August 2008. Following the introduction of the paper, the Secretariat noted that the meeting was invited to endorse the 2007 and 2008 Forum Leaders decisions related to the RIF and to provide clear guidance on how to move the process forward.

371. At the invitation of the Chair, the SOPAC Director provided background on the decisions taken by the SOPAC Governing Council following the Forum decisions in 2007 and progress of the work of the Committee of the Whole of the SOPAC Governing Council and the two trilateral meetings held between the CEOs of SOPAC, SPC and SPREP as well as at the programme manager level. Her statement is attached as Annex 7. In terms of next steps, the SOPAC Director noted that the SOPAC Committee of the Whole would meet the week following the SPREP Meeting to consider progress and make recommendations to the SOPAC Council in October 2008.

372. The SPC Representative made a statement, attached as Annex 8. He suggested that one way forward might be the formation of a joint committee of the three governing councils to oversee the finalisation of the new institutional arrangements, with their recommendations to be presented to the 2009 meetings of the respective governing councils of SOPAC, SPC and SPREP, and to the 2009 Forum Leaders meeting. The joint committee would also provide guidance for the work of the three CEOs as well as other work that may be commissioned as necessary

to take into account the decision by Forum Leaders and the respective decisions by the three governing councils. He noted that this new committee would not replace the SOPAC SCW, but rather serve as a complement. Membership would have a terms of reference to be developed and approved out of session and could comprise four members each of the three councils, and supported by the three CEOs.

373. The Forum Secretariat Representative provided some background to the Leaders decisions and its role in support of implementing these decisions. Additionally, she pointed out that the PIFS had revised their Corporate Plan to be consistent with the changes brought about by the Leaders' decisions related to the RIF. She also noted that some technical functions had already been transferred from the Forum Secretariat to the SPC.

374. The SPREP Director also updated the meeting on its involvement in the trilateral meetings both at the CEO and programme manager level. He sought clear guidance from the meeting on how Members would like to proceed with the RIF.

375. The Representative of Niue noted that, in terms of timing, he recalled that in last year's SPREP Meeting Niue had asked the SPREP Meeting to consider the issue but was not successful. He welcomed views from other Members on possible way forward on this issue.

376. The Representative of Guam noted that, since Guam is not a member of the Pacific Islands Forum, that it felt SPREP should not necessarily be constrained by a decision made by another authority.

377. The Representative of Samoa reaffirmed her support for the efficient and effective delivery of services of both SPREP and SOPAC. In line with the mandate given by the Leaders, she suggested that there were obvious SOPAC work areas such as in water and disaster risk management that could be merged with SPREP. She was of the view that the Director should be mandated to proceed with progressing the RIF recommendations as noted in the paper, taking into account the common synergies existing between SOPAC and SPREP.

378. The Representative of Fiji noted that, since Fiji did not attend the 2008 Forum meeting in Niue, it was not party to the Leaders decision related to the RIF. As such, he noted that Fiji does not support the SOPAC rationalisation decision. He therefore did not endorse paragraph 2, bullet point 4 of the recommendations in the paper relating to endorsing the Forum Leaders decision. He noted the concerns the Government of Fiji had with the RIF, in-

cluding the fact that this review process had been undertaken largely outside the realm of the respective governing councils. In finding a compromised solution to the RIF, Fiji noted it was important that there be a cautious approach taken on this issue, and that Members be reassured that they would take full ownership of the process.

379. The Representative of American Samoa reminded the meeting that American Samoa was not a member of the Forum, and that he was thus concerned about how differences in the missions and objectives of the two organisations might compromise the functions and service delivery of SPREP, and how the merger might impact on the funding capacity of SPREP. He suggested that a special committee might be established to look into these issues and their implications and report back to the SPREP SPREP Meeting for further consideration before any decision is taken.

380. The Representative of French Polynesia commended the Secretariat for the revised paper, and noted that his government had approved the Forum Leaders decisions in 2007. In terms of implementation, he wondered whether the transfer of all the SOPAC functions to SPREP was already the preferred option by the Secretariat and the trilateral group, as the documents suggest, or whether this issue was still pending.

381. In response, the Secretariat noted that the rationalisation involved three options: 1) a full merger into SPREP, 2) a partial merger or 3) no merger. He explained that these options were still in draft form and that no decision had been taken as of yet.

382. The Representative of the United States noted that, as stated previously, the United States is not a member of the Forum. He reminded the meeting that SPREP had its own governing body, the SPREP Meeting, which provides direction to the Secretariat. He noted that it was premature of SPREP to make a decision on the RIF proposal or to authorise the Secretariat to move ahead. He stated that the Director could consult with other CEOs and undertake an analysis of the issues but should not be authorised to participate in the formulation of a plan to absorb SOPAC functions without further action by the SPREP Meeting.

383. In response to a question by the Representative of American Samoa, the Secretariat advised that it had not undertaken a cost analysis since it had not received a mandate from the SPREP Meeting. This cost analysis and due diligence would only proceed once the SPREP Meeting had given a clear mandate to the Secretariat on the issue.

384. The Representative of Nauru stated that, consistent with the mandate provided by the Forum leaders, Nauru would support continuing the work by the Director and the CEOs of the other two organisations with recommendations to be formulated on this issue in time for the next Forum Leaders meeting.

385. The Cook Islands, while supporting the Forum Leaders decision, noted that the Cook Islands felt strongly about the need for SPREP to remain a stand-alone entity. He stated that there were some common synergies between SOPAC and SPREP that could be brought together. He supported the proposal made by American Samoa to establish a special committee to look into the technical details of the RIF.

386. The Representative of Australia noted Australia's endorsement of the Forum Leaders decisions in 2007 and 2008. He provided examples of the possible benefits of a strengthened regional environmental agency accrued from a merger of some of the functions of SOPAC into SPREP. He also alluded to the importance of sequencing the decisions and work of the respective organisations in line with the Forum timeframe and ensuring that the analysis and implications of the SOPAC rationalisation were carefully worked out. He suggested that wordings of the recommendations should reflect the concerns expressed around the table, including the preparatory work on due diligence.

387. The Representative of Tokelau noted its support for the Leaders decisions and for providing the Director a clear mandate on a way forward, as proposed in the paper's recommendations.

388. The Representative of New Zealand stated that she had received clear direction from the Leaders' decisions in 2007 and 2008 and supported the recommendations made in the paper. She agreed with other delegations on the need for the SPREP Meeting to be made aware of all the ramifications of the rationalisation exercise before a decision is made. The preparatory work and analysis would need to address issues including the synergies among the three agencies and their programmes and the absorptive capacity, mandates and activities of the respective organisations. She noted that New Zealand was very keen for the process to move forward and to give the Director the mandate to work on these issues before the SPREP Meeting makes a final decision. She supported the proposal by the SPC to form a joint committee of the respective councils to oversee this preparatory work.

389. The Representative of France, while noting that France was not a member of the Forum, stated that

France respected the Leaders' decision. He supported the continuation of the trilateral meeting of CEOs process to develop the necessary preparations and analysis. He understood that the rationale for the RIF was to increase the synergies and efficiency of service delivery, and thus supported the SOPAC rationalisation.

390. The Representative of New Caledonia noted that his delegation did not want to re-open discussion on the decisions already taken by the Forum Leaders, which New Caledonia fully supported. He believed that the merger should be implemented under the best possible conditions so that it ultimately translates into better services to the people of the region. He expressed his delegation's full support for a special committee to look further into these issues.

391. The Representative of the Solomon Islands endorsed the Forum's decisions in Niue as well as the establishment of a special committee to look into the institutional arrangements. He noted that the rationalisation of SOPAC might also present an opportunity to establish a branch of SPREP in Fiji.

392. The Representatives of Papua New Guinea, Tonga and Tuvalu noted their governments' endorsements of the 2007 and 2008 Leaders decision.

393. The Representative of the Marshall Islands stated that, as a member of both SOPAC and SPREP, her delegation supported the decisions made by the Forum Leaders as well as the proposal establishing a special committee to examine these issues further. She also supported the Director continuing to work with the other CEOs to move the process forward.

394. The Representative of the Federated States of Micronesia noted his support of the Leaders' decisions as well as on the establishment of a special committee. In terms of timing, he expressed support for holding the next SPREP Meeting prior to the Forum meeting. He noted the importance of maintaining the integrity of SOPAC functions in this rationalisation process. He noted that FSM would support the merger of SOPAC into SPREP, and that this represented an opportunity for SPREP to strengthen its role as a regional environmental agency.

395. The Representative of Niue noted its support for the Leaders decisions, and endorsed the proposal by the Federated States of Micronesia that the 2009 SPREP Meeting be held prior to that of the Forum.

396. The Representative of Kiribati stated that the RIF decisions must be implemented but stressed that SOPAC activities relating to seabed mining should not be affected by any decision taken. She stated that

she shared the concerns about the RIF as described by the Representative of Fiji. She highlighted the Leaders decision that SOPAC rationalisation should not diminish the functions of SOPAC, and expressed the view that if the RIF process diminished SOPAC functions in any way that the process would need to be reviewed.

397. The Representative of the United States reiterated his government's position on the RIF. He noted his delegation could support a process similar to that suggested by American Samoa for establishing a special committee to undertake due diligence and report back to the next SPREP Meeting. He noted that this offered an opportunity to also address the ICR recommendations relating to defining the core business of SPREP. He offered a resolution for consideration by the meeting as a way forward, which was read by the Secretariat during the meeting.

398. The Representative of Australia noted that there were elements of the proposal by the United States which he could support that were consistent with the Leaders' decisions and the views already expressed by other Members. He noted that the CEOs should continue to work and report back to the SPREP Meeting. However, he stated that there were aspects of the US proposal that his delegation was not able to support, such as the linkages proposed to the ICR that he felt would overly complicate the issue.

399. The Representative of American Samoa supported the proposal by the United States, but also recognised the concerns raised by Australia. He reiterated his earlier proposal for a special committee to be established to evaluate all these related issues and report back to the SPREP Meeting. He noted the importance for his delegation to be made aware of the full ramifications of any absorption before clear decisions are taken.

400. The Representative of Samoa sought clarification on the time frame for the decisions, particularly on how this proposed work and process would fit into the mandate and time frame provided by the Leaders.

401. The Secretariat noted that there was now an emerging consensus on the Leaders' decisions. In response to concerns of some Members relating to legal, financial, and mandate issues, he stated that the SPREP Director would continue to work within the trilateral process on these issues and report back to the next SPREP Meeting. The timing of the next SPREP meeting would also need to be brought forward to allow time for the SPREP Meeting to make decisions before the next Forum meeting.

402. The Representative of the United States stated that he took exception to the assertion that the meeting had an emerging consensus regarding the Forum decisions, considering that the Forum decisions are not binding on SPREP. However, he noted the need for the Meeting to move forward on this issue.

403. The Representative of Palau noted his support for the proposal and for a special committee, and stated that any such committee should include participation by non-Forum Members.

404. The Representative of the Cook Islands asked the United States whether it would be able to work with the Forum members of SPREP on a way forward if these Members agreed to the revised recommendations whether.

405. In response, the Representative of the United States stated that his delegation would welcome the opportunity to work with Members in a properly constituted forum to consider options for rationalisation, such as looking at what functions would best fit with SPREP. Based on that analysis, he stated the United States would be in a position to authorise the Director to work with other CEOs within the trilateral process.

406. The Representative of New Zealand noted that there appeared to be language that could be used as a starting point on this issue and proposed that a working group be formed to develop agreed language on the issue and report back to plenary the next day. The proposal was also supported by the Representative of Australia.

407. The Chair concluded by noting that it was the meeting's agreement to proceed as proposed by New Zealand and requested that members of the Friends of the Chair working group appointed under Agenda Item 6.1 also consider the RIF issue.

Report of the Friends of the Chair

408. The Representative of Australia introduced the revised recommendations and stated that there had been two more substantive issues added to the document circulated relating to maintenance of the SOPAC services without any diminution and a reporting and oversight mechanism.

409. The Representative of the United States commended the Friends Group for their work on this matter, and welcomed the additional change noted by Australia with regard to the reporting and oversight mechanism. He also noted with appreciation the value of SOPAC services to the region. However,

he noted his delegation's reservation with respect to the language regarding maintaining the integrity of the applied science and technical services of SOPAC, as it was his delegation's view that this might prejudice the outcome of the preparatory work and the due diligence that was required to be undertaken before any decisions are taken on the institutional arrangements related to the SOPAC rationalisation

410. The Representative of Australia noted that the revised version sought to reflect the views of the Friends Group reflecting the specific language in the Forum Communiqué.

411. The Representative of the Federated States of Micronesia supported the current language in the document and stated that it did not wish to see diminution of the services of SOPAC, including its STAR mechanism, consistent with the Forum Leaders decision.

412. The Representative of Fiji acknowledged the work by the Group and stated that he was happy with the recommendations in the revised version. He was however concerned about the lack of reference to the ownership issue. He suggested that the reporting and oversight mechanism for the RIF process needed to ensure that there was closer engagement of the Members of the SPREP Meeting in providing oversight and guidance to the CEO and the RIF process. He proposed language to this effect.

413. The Representative of the Cook Islands suggested that the meeting endorse the revised document along with the amendment proposed by Fiji. Australia also proposed an amendment to the current language in the document.

Recommendations

414. In view of the 2008 Pacific Island Forums Leaders' communiqué, paragraph 20 (a), (b) and (c) (circulated separately), and discussions at the 19SM Informal Session on 7 September, the Secretariat revised its recommendations for Agenda Item 10.3 as follows:

415. The Meeting:

- **considered** the information provided on the RIF review and its reports;
- **took into account** the 2007 and 2008 Forum Leaders' decisions on the RIF review (attached);
- **considered** the opportunities to strengthen the region's environment organisation that would be

provided by rationalisation of SOPAC functions, in whole or part, into SPREP;

- **recognised** the need to consider the legal, financial, administrative, and programmatic implications for absorbing SOPAC and/or its functions, in whole or in part, within SPREP,
- **directed** the Director of SPREP to engage collaboratively with the CEOs of SOPAC and SPC immediately following the 2008 SOPAC Council Meeting to determine and jointly identify proposed institutional arrangements based on an analysis of:
 - a. synergies and linkages between programs
 - b. optimising service delivery
 - c. organisational capacities
 - d. maintaining the integrity of the applied science and technical services
- **directed** that the Director of SPREP, in collaboration with the CEOs of SOPAC and SPC, jointly commission an independent analysis of the legal, financial, administrative, and programmatic implications of their proposed institutional arrangements;
- **directed** the Director of SPREP to propose to the other CEOs that the proposed institutional arrangements and analysis of implications are circulated to all Member focal points of SPREP, SPC and SOPAC with an invitation for a representative from each Member country to attend a meeting of all countries and territories for consideration by May 2009;
- **directed**, subject to the guidance of the above-referenced meeting, the Director of SPREP to work collaboratively with the CEOs of SOPAC and SPC to finalise and jointly recommend new institutional arrangements and implementation plans, to be provided to Members by July 2009, for consideration and decision by their respective Governing Bodies in 2009;
- **agreed** that the SPREP Meeting meet to consider the institutional arrangements and implementation plan recommended by three CEOs before the next Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' meeting in 2009;
- **directed** the Director of SPREP in his deliberations on new institutional arrangements to take account of the ICR recommendations and implementation;

- **directed** the Director of SPREP to propose to the other CEOs to provide a joint quarterly update on progress and to seek and share the views of, and give due consideration to, all members of SPREP, SPC and SOPAC.

Agenda Item 10.4: Appointment of Auditors

416. The Secretariat tabled its paper (19SM/Officials/WP10.4).

417. The Meeting **endorsed** the appointment of Lesama Penn to audit SPREP's 2008 and 2009 financial accounts.

Agenda Item 10.5: Report by the Director on Staff Appointments Beyond 6 Years

418. In presenting the paper (19SM/Officials/WP10.5), the Secretariat clarified that only the incumbent Finance Manager was affected by the recommendations.

419. The Representative of the Cook Islands congratulated the Finance Manager, Ms Alofa Tu'uau, on her reappointment.

420. The Meeting **noted** the reappointment of Mrs Alofa Salima Tuuau to the position of Finance Manager for a final 3 year term.

Agenda Item 11: Regional Cooperation

Agenda Item 11.1: CROP Executives Meeting Report

421. The Secretariat tabled its report (19SM/Officials/WP11.1).

422. The Meeting **noted** the report.

Agenda Item 12: Items Proposed by Members

423. No additional items were proposed by Members.

Agenda Item 13: Statement by Observers

424. Representatives from the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP-ROAP) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) presented statements on behalf

of their organisations. These statements are included as Annex 9 and Annex 10, respectively.

Agenda Item 14: Other Business

425. The Representative from New Caledonia informed the meeting that part of the New Caledonia Lagoon has been listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site and he thanked the Members for their support.

Agenda Item 15: Date and Venue of the Next Meeting

426. The Chair advised that, in accordance with the SPREP policy of alternating venues between Members and Headquarters for cost reasons, the next meeting will be held in Samoa. He added that the dates remained to be determined and that the Members would be notified accordingly.

427. The Representative of Papua New Guinea advised the meeting of his country's intention to host the 21st SPREP Meeting, supported by the Federated States of Micronesia.

Agenda Item 16: Adoption of Report and Chair's Letter to the SPREP Ministerial Session

428. The Meeting reviewed the draft text of a Chair's letter to the Ministerial Meeting.

429. The Meeting **adopted** the Chair's letter.

430. The Meeting reviewed the draft record and provided comments to the Secretariat.

431. The Meeting **adopted** the record, and requested Members wishing to offer further clarifications to work with the Secretariat to reflect these in the final document.

Agenda Item 17: Close

432. The Representative of the Federated States of Micronesia thanked delegates for choosing the FSM as host of the 19th SPREP Meeting and expressed a hope that delegates enjoyed their stay in his country.

433. The Representative of Tonga conveyed his delegation's regret at being unable to attend the Ministerial Meeting.

434. The Representative of New Caledonia also expressed regret at being unable to attend the Ministerial segment, but expressed his thanks to the FSM for its hospitality as host; to the translators and the interpreters for their excellent work; to the Chair for his leadership of the meeting under difficult circumstances; and to the outgoing Director for his six years of service to the organisation.

435. The Representative of the United States thanked the Federated States of Micronesia for their organisation of the meeting and for the warm hospitality extended to his delegation.

436. The Representative of Palau thanked the Chair for his leadership of the meeting.

437. The SPREP Director delivered a closing remark, thanking Members for the opportunity to serve the organisation and for their hard work during the Meeting. The text of his statement is included in Annex 11.

438. The Chair **declared** the Meeting closed.

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Mr. Asterio Takesy
Director

Annex 2: Opening Statement by SPREP Director

Opening Statement By
Asterio Takesy, Director, SPREP
19th SPREP Meeting
Pohnpei, FSM
8 September 2008

Rev. Father Curren, Mr. Chairman, H.E. Mr. Vice President, honourable Members of the FSM Congress, honourable Members of the FSM Cabinet, distinguished delegates, my fellow CROP representatives, distinguished Observers, SPREP staff colleagues, ladies and gentlemen.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to the 19th SPREP Meeting. I am especially pleased to welcome to Pohnpei those of you who have travelled vast distances to be here.

At the outset, on behalf of the other Members and Secretariat I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Government of the FSM for hosting this SPREP Meeting. The hospitality and warm welcome extended to us since our arrival has been overwhelming and we feel at home indeed.

On a personal note, I am honoured to have received the support of my government and the vote of confidence of members of this organisation for the rare privilege to lead the Secretariat as Director for two terms. I am most grateful for the privileges and recognition accorded to me and my family. The government and people of Samoa received us with open arms and hearts, for which I express my profound gratitude.

Mr. Chairman, this is a bittersweet address for me. While I am sad that this will be my final address as SPREP Director, it is particularly gratifying to me to have my last meeting as Director held in my home country. I am sad that only a handful of my staff could be here at Palikir due to escalating travel costs. These are dedicated, hardworking true professional men and women of SPREP that have made a decided difference for the better in our regional environment. Ladies and gentlemen, please join me with a round of applause for my staff, including those who are not with us today.

That said, my fond memories with SPREP are tinged with regret at not being able to do more. I can safely say that this has been true for past directors and, to a person, its staff. After all, as I have stated earlier the SPREP Secretariat has been blessed with some of the most capable staff in the region with an unwavering level of commitment to environmental protection and sustainable development. We set high stand-

ards, and when we fail to meet these standards no one is harder on us than ourselves.

While I may understandably be accused of favouritism in the selection of the venue, I believe you will find that there are few places in our region that provide such a rich backdrop for our deliberations. The FSM is blessed with some of the most diverse, beautiful and pristine natural environments anywhere in the region. At the same time the country must address issues common to all SPREP Members.

It is fitting, therefore, that we are gathered here at this time. While every SPREP meeting is important, I can't help but think that this year may be more so than ever. Each SPREP meeting offers a valuable opportunity for us to hear from our constituents as to what we are doing right, doing wrong, and what we need to improve in the future. The week before us will likely mark a watershed for the organisation as we consider a full slate of critical issues with a greater sense of urgency than ever before.

As you may know, SPREP is an organisation with a rich history, one that began long before my six-year term and one that will continue long after I am gone. I am deeply proud to have played a small part in SPREP's legacy of fostering sustainable development and environmental protection throughout the Pacific islands region.

However, I must confess that SPREP also suffers from a bit of an image problem. The Secretariat has traditionally focused on its substantive work while neglecting clear communication of what it does and what it can offer to Members. This was recently manifested during the recently concluded FSM National Environment Conference. Both national and state agencies were unaware that two years ago SPREP assisted the FSM in putting together its National Environment Strategy during its first National Environment Conference here in Palikir. We clearly need to do a better job of selling ourselves to our Members, and we are working to improve our efforts in this area.

In addition, organisational and resource constraints have challenged us in reaching our full potential in the past, and these are quite rightly highlighted in the report of the Independent Corporate Review Team that we will discuss in the days ahead.

Mr. Chair, clearly, we have a good deal of work ahead of us.

And if I can be allowed to be blunt: SPREP simply cannot fail. The stakes are much too high for all of us to let this happen. Many of you will recall the time

before there was a regional environmental organisation. I'm sure those of you who do remember that time agree that returning to that condition is not an option. SPREP, warts and all, has had a profound effect on the environment of the Pacific islands. In my humble opinion our organisation is critical to the sustainable development of our Pacific region, and therefore deserves greater support.

In our field of work as perhaps in no other, the issues are complex, intertwined and rapidly evolving. I would like this, more than anything else, to underpin this year's SPREP Meeting. This interdependence often leads to complexity. Therefore, while many may look for simple solutions to SPREP's place in the sun, I would caution taking an overly simplistic approach to the work we do.

Consequently the Secretariat needs reform to streamline its operations. Any organisation that wishes to be effective and efficient in the way it operates must have a reform mindset. We accept that this is the way in which we must operate. However, we cannot ignore the most pressing challenge facing the organisation - a lack of sustained financial resources. We are most grateful to Members and our partners who have supported SPREP programs so generously in the past. However, the burden on the environment continues to grow and our resources haven't been able to keep pace. We are hopeful and optimistic that our Members and partners will respond to the new challenges and opportunities as they have in the past.

This chronic shortage of resources has required SPREP to operate largely on a project-based system at the expense of a coherent and sustained long-term strategy. Without sustained funding, much of the Secretariat's work involves fundraising for programme initiatives. At a time when our talented staff should be focusing on Members' priorities and collaborating on cross-cutting environmental issues, too often they end up competing with one another to gain funding for their work. This situation clearly cannot continue.

This is one of the key findings of the Independent Corporate Review Team that you will consider during this meeting. It calls for a renewed sense of ownership of SPREP by its Members, as well as sweeping changes in the way the Secretariat approaches its work. While I may not agree entirely with each specific finding of the ICRT, I whole-heartedly welcome and accept the report. I am in full agreement with their overall conclusions and in a broad sense with their recommendations. In this connection, I would like to commend Dr. John Hay and his Team who in the face of tight timeframe were able to cover most

Member countries and territory and produce such an excellent report. Additionally, on behalf of the other Members and Secretariat I thank the governments of Australia, France, French Polynesia, New Caledonia and New Zealand for their generous and voluntary contributions that enabled the review to be carried out.

There are other broad developments in addition to the Independent Corporate Review that raise critical issues for urgent consideration by Members and the Secretariat. These include the Institutional Review Framework (RIF), and the SPREP Action Plan 2004-2009. Leaders in their recent meeting in Niue through the Forum Communiqué have laid down a clear path for the RIF process to take place. The SPREP Action Plan is nearing its end date of 2009 and will require a revision.

All of these developments pose challenges but also important opportunities for SPREP to become a stronger and more efficient organisation. In other words - SPREP today is at a crossroads.

Similarly, we must not allow these organisational issues to distract us from clear and important policy initiatives ahead. More than any other, SPREP must assume a greater role in preparing the region for the adverse impacts of climate change. The issue has been debated and negotiated for as long as the organisation has been in existence. Finally, we can all agree that the time for debate is over - we must take steps now to save our lands and people. SPREP has an important role to play in this enormous challenge.

It is for these reasons that the Secretariat has proposed 2009 as the Pacific Year of Climate Change. Unlike some past years, this is designed not just to raise awareness of the problem, but to herald the dawn of a new era of what, for some of our Members, represents the most significant threat in our histories.

Undoubtedly, the path ahead will be difficult. To be sure there will be setbacks and frustrations, as there have been in the first 19 years of our comparatively young organisation. Still, we must not lose sight of our accomplishments, which are many and significant. We must build upon them.

When SPREP was formed, depletion of the ozone layer loomed as a grave and daunting threat. Yet, within just twenty years, through strong international action and SPREP's coordination at the regional level, we have managed to turn the corner. While we cannot yet rest on our laurels - some nations urgently need to take more rigorous steps - we can say

that today the worst of the crisis has been averted. It wasn't easy - indeed it required retooling a number of important industries and the development of substitutes for entire classes of goods - but it shows what we are all capable of achieving. I hold great hope that we will ultimately bring the same diligence and determination to bear on the climate issue.

There are many more SPREP success stories that could be mentioned, however, we must also not allow ourselves to become complacent.

As many of you know, I come from a small, remote outer atoll in Chuuk State, FSM. I am fortunate to be able to visit my homeland once every several years. Every time I visit the people of my island have become more and more concerned with the rising seas. As SPREP Director, it is particularly difficult for me to return and tell my neighbours and relatives that SPREP is doing all it can to stem the rising tides. It is much the same when I am called upon to appear before SPREP Members and tell you that I am doing all I can to lead an effective organisation. While I can take comfort in knowing I've done my best, somehow I know that it is not enough.

In SPREP's area of work, we must do better than the best we can. We must not just do our best, we must shatter existing notions of the best we can do. The old sports cliché about the need to give it 120 percent certainly applies to our work.

A number of individuals spring to mind as embodying that work ethic, but one that I wish to single out for mention is our recently retired Deputy Director, Vito Lui. His hard work was not always appreciated but his passion for his job and his commitment to the organisation were beyond question.

As we both bow out, I am conscious that the old guard will be making way for a much younger team (I don't know who my replacement will be, but it's a safe bet that that person will be younger than I am). They will grow in their roles and have the energy to grapple with and overcome the challenges ahead.

In my time remaining I look forward to laying the groundwork for a dynamic and thriving SPREP to guide the environmental work of the region for years to come.

In closing, I wish to thank each and every one of you for your cooperation and assistance during the past six years. It has been an honour and a privilege to serve as Director of this distinguished institution.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Annex 3: Opening Statement by FSM Vice President

Statement

by

Honorable Alik L. Alik

Vice President/Chairman of FSM Sustainable Development Council

at

SPREP Officials Meeting

Mr Asterio Takesy
Distinguished Delegates,
Father John Curran
Heads of Regional Organizations
Ladies and gentlemen

I know that many of you have journeyed from long distances to attend this year's meeting of SPREP, a meeting of historic significance to the FSM being our first since we became a member of this important organization in 1995. I thank you on behalf of President Mori, FSM Government and its people for making this officials meeting a reality. For that purpose, I am delighted to welcome you all to Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia's Capital Seat.

If it is your first visit, I hope you satisfy your curiosity by taking some spare time from your busy work this week to look around and enjoy what Pohnpei offers in real life. For those who have been here before, welcome back.

The importance of the environment to our region as well as beyond cannot be overemphasized. And it is the distinctive mandate of SPREP to make sure that our island environment does not get unduly compromised with the growing aspirations of our citizens for better economic and social life. Indeed, it is incumbent upon us to ensure a harmonious balance between our economic and social needs and aspirations and the capacity of our natural surroundings to sustain those needs. This is what sustainable development is all about and it presents a formidable challenge for islands like ours with small economies of scale, meager resource base and limited capacity. In view of these shortcomings, many of us resort to the need for prioritization of competing interests and needs, with the support and generosity of our donor partners to lend a helping hand.

As Chairman of the Sustainable Development Council of my country, I am fully cognizant of the environmental challenges that confront my people and for which the council is tasked to prioritize them and to coordinate national efforts. Most notable is the concern for Climate Change and its related consequences of rising sea-level, extreme weather

events, collapsing ecosystems and freshwater contamination. Much has been said on this critical issue for small island states at the international level, including at the United Nations both individually and collectively. Suffice it to say that climate change remains the number one security and existential threat to our small vulnerable islands. More effort is needed in the region and the global level to raise recognition of climate change as a threat to our existence, and to global peace and security.

I hope, therefore, that SPREP and its Members endeavor to continually impress upon the international community the need to declare climate change as a security issue, involving sufficient coordination of efforts and positions in terms of what we do in the region and at the global front.

In raising this important issue, I am pleased to be part of the decision to endorse the Niue Declaration on Climate Change in representing my government in the Niue Forum. No doubt it was an important outcome for an issue of specific importance to the smaller countries like any of us, but what would matter most is in translating these noble words into enhanced actions, as agreed to in the Bali Action Plan, stressing assistance in the areas of adaptation, mitigation and clean energy. Other options need to be considered when necessary. But, key environmental issues such as climate change will pose a tremendous challenge for SPREP and its Secretariat to guide and assist member countries and territories.

One such challenge is relocation of island or coastal populations from their ancestral home, which is already happening in the region in at least two instances, as a consequence of sea-level rise. Pre-Kyoto emissions have rendered such relocations unavoidable, for which the major emitters should accept responsibility. But, with the world agreeing to combat climate change pursuant to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol, relocating is not a future option, as it violates the very objectives of the convention, as spelled out in its Article 2. A Post-Kyoto arrangement should therefore ensure that such forced relocations not happen again.

Distinguished delegates, SPREP has never before been as stretched and challenged in terms of providing available resources to deliver needed services to its membership. The environmental problems confronting our island and peoples are growing not only in breadth but in depth as well in terms of urgency and severity. In a way, SPREP has been asked to do more with less. Hence, there is a need for its membership to commit ourselves to SPREP and its Secretariat if we think that SPREP and its special

mandate is important enough - which we do - to preserve and strengthen.

Your agenda contains a gamut of issues, old and new, ranging from corporate and administrative issues, to institutional and structural issues to work program and budget. These are aimed at making SPREP and its Secretariat more robust, focused and relevant given changing expectations of our people and the proliferating nature or environmental problems afflicting its members like FSM. I note with appreciation the Secretariat's paper on Climate Change Action Plan to implement the Pacific Island Framework Action on Climate Change endorsed by Forum Leaders in 2005. It is important that we mobilize regional efforts in addressing the impacts of Climate Change while seeking the support and assistance of the global community as agreed under relevant international treaties and conventions like the United Nations Framework convention on climate change and its Kyoto Protocol.

The proposal by the Secretariat to declare next year as the Year of Climate Change is most welcome and a timely one following this year's Pacific Year of the Reef, an issue closely related to climate change.

For any organization to survive and respond well to its mission, it has to periodically monitor its performance, its work programs and stated objectives. I note that your Secretariat has seriously heeded your decisions by providing reports of various natures as outlined in your meeting's agenda. A thoughtful idea ever attempted towards this purpose of revitalizing SPREP and its Secretariat is the Independent Corporate Review whose report provides interesting and useful recommendations for you to consider. This is a commendable exercise on behalf of the six-member team that undertook it and delivered a product within a limited time frame.

Your decisions on the recommendations provided by your Secretariat will no doubt have deep and far reaching consequences on the performance and integrity of the organization, whose fate is subjected to the regional institutional framework review (or RIF in short) endorsed by our Leaders. I understand there is also a working paper dealing with the latest development on RIF on your agenda.

I also note with appreciation the variety of topical issues suggested by Members on licensing requirements under the Montreal Protocol, which some Members like FSM are yet to realize; genetic resources in terms of access-and-benefit sharing; support for meteorology and climatology; streamlining of reports under international environment instruments which has been a concern for small island

states; and sharing of information on pollution prevention by way of the country profiles.

Another important topic on agenda before you that I wish to point out is the nomination of the Director of SPREP Secretariat to succeed Mr Asterio Takesy, whose term will come to an end early next year. No doubt it is an important decision for you Members to make and we are confident of a wise choice. I should add that it has been an honor and privilege for the FSM through Director Takesy to be of regional service as I am sure it is for Asterio himself, and we hope that he has met in some modest ways your expectations.

Distinguished delegates, there is no question you have much on your plate to deliberate on today and in the next few days. There are key seminal decisions that have to be made on some of these issues including the nomination of a Director of SPREP to lead us into the next several years. I am confident that, having followed these issues closely, you are more than ready to tackle them individually and collectively as necessary.

Needless to say, my government is pleased to welcome you to the meeting. We look forward to learn of your successful work and if there is anything we can do to make your stay enjoyable and memorable, please don't hesitate to inform us. For me personally, it has been a pleasure to share this morning with you. As your host, you have all our best wishes for fruitful and successful deliberations. Towards that end, I am pleased to declare the 19th SPREP Officials Meeting open.

Thank you.

Annex 4: Statement of Guam, Chair of the 18th SPREP Meeting

19th SPREP Annual Session

Welcome from Outgoing Chairperson, Guam
8 September, 2008

Mr. Vice-President, SPREP Members' Representatives, Representatives of Agencies and Institutions supporting SPREP, Director, Deputy Director and Staff of the Secretariat, Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the Government of Guam, I wish to express our gratitude to our neighbors, the Federated States of Micronesia, for hosting this 19th SPREP Meeting. I personally am very honored to again represent Guam at this annual session and convey the regrets of Ms. Lorilee T. Crisostomo, the Administrator of the Guam Environmental Protection Agency and our outgoing Chairperson, who is unable to join us.

Our Pacific Islands environment is challenged today, as never before. Global climate change, increased solid waste, marine pollution, loss of ecosystems and biodiversity, fisheries depletion, invasive species, and other problems continue. These are problems that recognize no boundaries. They are as much a concern to us in Guam as they are to our friends in Tonga, nearly 6,000 km to the south. It is critical, therefore, that the countries and territories of our region work together to arrive at common solutions to these common problems. SPREP provides the primary forum for us to do so.

Without SPREP it is hard to imagine how we could maintain a regular dialogue with our friends throughout the region, who may be geographically-distant yet are similar in most other respects, particularly when it comes to environmental issues.

The benefits of this cooperation are clear. For example, as you probably know we in Guam have quite a bit of experience in the area of invasive species. Through SPREP we can share the knowledge acquired in our attempts at brown tree snake control with, for example, the government of Samoa as they attempt to control the spread of the myna bird. Similarly, we stand to learn invaluable lessons from SPREP Members on the front lines of global climate change, such as Tuvalu, in how they adapt to the rising seas.

We clearly have a common interest in developing solutions to our shared problems, whether they are climate change, marine pollution, or others. By joining our voices we can ensure we are heard in the global debate on these issues -issues where the solutions

are well beyond our abilities individually to control. Alone, the rest of the world may view us each as insignificant, but beautiful, specks in the Pacific. Together, we can be very influential in the global debate.

The need for a strong regional organization is self-evident. Yet, contributions of SPREP Members represent only a fraction of not only our respective overall budgets, but also of our expenditure on environmental protection. We must do more to enable SPREP to assume a greater role in its area of work. At the same time, SPREP must continue to take stock of how it can make the most of the limited resources at its disposal and ensure that it adapts to best meet the needs of its Members.

We are deeply proud of Guam's membership and participation in SPREP and Guam is honored to have served as chairperson for the last year. We look forward to working with our colleagues throughout the region to ensure that the Organization adapts and is strengthened to lead us in addressing the rapidly-evolving slate of environmental issues we all face.

Finally, on behalf of the Government of Guam, Ms. Lorilee T. Crisostomo sends her sincere wishes for success to this annual meeting of SPREP and invites suggestions on how to strengthen Guam's involvement in SPREP's and other regional organizations' activities.

Annex 5: Agenda of the 19th SPREP Meeting

Agenda Item 1: Official Opening

Agenda Item 2: Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

Agenda Item 3: Adoption of Agenda and Working Procedures

Agenda Item 4: Action Taken on Matters Arising from Eighteenth SPREP Meeting

Agenda Item 5: Performance Review/Overview of Developments in 2007

5.1 Presentation of Annual Report for 2007 and Director's Overview of Progress since the Eighteenth SPREP Meeting

5.2 Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report on the 2007 Annual Work Programme and Budget

5.3 Financial Reports

5.3.1 *Report on Members' Contributions*

5.3.2 *Audited Annual Accounts for 2007*

Agenda Item 6: Corporate Issues

6.1 Report of the Independent Corporate Review

6.2 Options for following up and Collecting Unpaid Membership Contribution

6.3 Sustainable Financing for the Work and Operations of the organisation

6.4 Review on Support Staff local salary movement

6.5 Annual Reference Market Data Review (Professional Staff)

6.6 Outcomes of mid-term Review of the SPREP Secretariat Strategic Programmes

6.7 Core budget comparison between SPREP and other CROP agencies

6.8 Collaboration with the Private Sector

Agenda Item 7: Regional Conventions

7.1 Report on the Conference of the Parties of the Noumea Convention

7.2 Report on the Conference of the Parties of the Waigani Convention

Agenda Item 8: Members Issues

8.1 Streamlined Reporting by Pacific Island Countries to Multilateral Environment Agreements (A paper by Australia)

8.2 Licensing Systems for Ozone-depleting Substances in the Pacific (A paper by Australia)

8.3 Discretionary Funding for Chemicals and Waste Multilateral Environment Agreements (A paper by Australia)

8.4 Genetic Resources in the Pacific Region (A paper by Australia)

8.5 Meteorology and Climatology support by SPREP (A paper by the United States of America)

8.6 Country Profiles – exchange of information by Members on national developments related to the Pollution Prevention priority of the SPREP Action Plan

Agenda Item 9: 2009 Work Programme and Budget

9.1 Island Ecosystems Programme Issues

9.1.1 *Guidelines for Invasive Species Management in the Pacific*

9.1.2 *PILN Pilot Phase Review Report*

9.1.3 *New Action Strategy for Nature Conservation*

9.1.4 *Pacific Framework for Education for Sustainable Development and Regional Education for Sustainable*

Development Action Plan

** Discussion to follow immediately after that under Agenda Item 6.1: Report of the Independent Corporate Review Committee*

- 9.2 Pacific Futures Programme Issues
 - 9.2.1 *Climate Change Action Plan*
 - 9.2.2 *Pacific Year of Climate Change 2009: a plan for action*
 - 9.2.3 *Revised Regional Waste Management Action Plan*
 - 9.2.4 *Ozone Depleting Substances Project and Compliance Implications*
 - 9.2.5 *Regional Meteorological Services Directors (RMSD)*
- 9.3 Consideration and Approval of Proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2009 and Indicative Budgets for 2010 and 2011

Agenda Item 10: Institutional Matters

- 10.1 Proposed procedures for reappointment of incumbent Director
- 10.2 Appointment of Director (Closed Session)
- 10.3 Regional Institutional Framework Review*
- 10.4 Appointment of Auditors
- 10.5 Report by the Director on Staff Appointment Beyond 6 years

Agenda Item 11: Regional Cooperation

- 11.1 CROP Executives Meeting Report

Agenda Item 12: Items Proposed by Members

Agenda Item 13: Statements by Observers

Agenda Item 14: Other Business

Agenda Item 15: Date and Venue of Twentieth SPREP Meeting

Agenda Item 16: Adoption of Report and Chair's Letter to the SPREP Minister's Session

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Annex 6: Overview of SPREP Activities during 2007 by SPREP Director

Statement By
Asterio Takesy, Director, SPREP
19th SPREP Meeting
Pohnpei, FSM
8 September 2008

on

Agenda Item 5.1: Presentation of Annual Report for 2007 and Director's Overview of Progress since the 18th SPREP Meeting

Mr. Chairman,

It gives me great pleasure to present Members with the annual report on activities of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme during 2007. In the past year SPREP continued to focus its work on our key responsibilities of protecting and conserving the Pacific environment for present and future generations.

We were reminded in 2007, as never before, that all environmental issues are interconnected and inter-related. The state of our region's coral reefs provides a potent example. The rapid decline in the Pacific's reefs, and indeed those throughout the world, can be traced to a combination of virtually all environmental factors, from climate change to unsustainable land-based activities. In many issue areas, such as protection of reefs, progress in addressing one cause is tempered by setbacks in our efforts to address another. The need for a holistic approach to environmental protection is clear.

The issues also have a new sense of urgency. The planet offered dramatic evidence in 2007 that we have little time to spare in our efforts to combat threats such as climate change, pollution and loss of ecosystems. As with our reefs, we were also reminded that virtually all aspects of environment and development are inextricably linked. We continued to refine SPREP's organisational structure during the year to better adapt to these new realities.

It is a time of great change for the organisation, and given the realities of today's environmental challenges, we must ensure that we properly integrate our organisational approach to reflect the cross-cutting nature of most environmental issues.

In 2007, SPREP strengthened its bonds with the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the primary international financing mechanism for the climate convention and the environment as a whole. The

presence of the GEF CEO and Chairperson at the SPREP annual meeting is indicative of the GEF's commitment to the work of SPREP and its need to stay engaged with the Pacific.

While international developments such as this were encouraging, so too were key regional initiatives, such as the results of the 8th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas held in Alotau, Milne Bay, Papua New Guinea. The major outcome of the meeting was a revised Action Strategy for Nature Conservation 2008-2012: Empowering local people, communities and Pacific institutions. In addition to the substantive outcomes, it was instrumental in enhancing the region's networking capability by bringing together those with common interests, especially communities, in protecting the region's rich, yet fragile, biodiversity.

In addition to regional meetings, SPREP continued its work within Member countries. A notable example was the collaborative team visit to Tokelau with SPC and several UN agencies that addressed comprehensive environmental, economic and social issues. Donors, environmental workers, government officials and members of the community came together to share ideas and express their concerns. It was an extremely productive method of work that resulted in new understandings by everyone involved of the full range of issues they face.

SPREP continued to forge bonds of close cooperation and collaboration with its partner agencies in the region through the CROP process through meetings of CEOs, CROP working groups and joint project development. The meeting of the heads of CROP agencies held during 2007 resulted in our organisations working more closely together whilst reducing duplication of effort.

The past year saw the successful conclusion of SPREP's participation in the International Waters Project. The six-year project stands as a monument to what can be achieved in our region through constructive engagement of SPREP, Member governments and the international community. With active components in waste, fisheries and freshwater, the IWP also demonstrated a new approach to addressing interconnectivity.

While the year marked the end of one landmark initiative, it saw the formation of another with many of the same Pacific island country participants - the Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project (PIGGAREP). The dramatic rise in global fossil fuel prices has reinvigorated interest in renewable energy, and PIGGAREP will serve as the centrepiece of our future work to not

only protect our environment but move to a more sustainable energy future.

The year was a watershed for climate policy, not only in the Pacific but also worldwide. The historic agreement reached by the 13th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in December in Bali signalled a new global commitment to address climate change. I am delighted with the outcome of this meeting and with the constructive role SPREP played in facilitating and supporting Pacific island delegations' participation at the COP.

The strong bonds of cooperation established earlier with the People's Republic of China continued in 2007 and a number of new donors sponsored SPREP programmes. These included the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Packard Foundation, Christensen Foundation, United Nations Institute for Training and Research, US Forest Service, World Conservation Union - Oceania Office and the World Health Organisation.

The issues facing the Pacific are changing as never before. SPREP needs to be nimble in order to best orient itself to address new challenges. In particular, as our understanding of climate change matters improves we must ensure this is reflected in all affected program areas.

In 2007, we embarked on a landmark independent review process designed to ensure that we are helping our Members in the most appropriate manner so that they can address the critical issues they will face in coming years. This exercise was carried out by the Independent Review Team with its final report before you for consideration at this meeting.

Mr. Chairman, I wish to state clearly that the shortcomings, missteps and failings of the Secretariat the Team has documented in the report and the Secretariat accepts its recommendations. Although there is wisdom in the saying "old dogs can't learn new tricks," I believe I am still capable of learning new tricks. Therefore I shall do all that I can to learn from such mistakes and work with Kosi and the Secretariat to take appropriate interim remedial measures. As my time remaining with SPREP is short, I will defer to the incoming Director and to Kosi to steer the Secretariat as they embark on implementing the adopted recommendations of the report while facilitating interim steps toward that end.

Mr. Chairman, in my previous overview statements I have laid out my vision for the coming year. As you can appreciate, I am in no position to do that any more. I wish to advance the following as fruit for

thought: criticism. It is a word with a lot of negative connotations. Listening to criticism and putting it into perspective is hard for most of us, so I am reminded of a quote that might be helpful: "I do the very best I can. I mean to keep going. If the end brings me out all right, then what is said against me won't matter. If I'm wrong, ten angels swearing I was right won't make a difference." That piece of wisdom was uttered by President Abraham Lincoln and framed on the office wall of British statesman and former Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Mr. Chairman, I believe that life is not meant to be lived in isolation. We need mutual support and example.

In closing, I would like to thank the Chair of the 18th SPREP Meeting, Ms. Chrisostomo of Guam, SPREP Members and Secretariat staff for their contributions to and assistance in the production of the report before you.

I am confident that the organisation is in a better position to serve its Members today than ever before. That is, of course, our primary responsibility, and we owe you nothing less.

With this I present to you the report of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme for 2007.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Annex 7: Statement by SOPAC Director

Thank you Chair for allowing SOPAC this opportunity to outline to the SPREP Council the actions taken and work completed, to date, by the SOPAC Council with respect to paragraph 19(b) of the 2007 Communique which is articulated verbatim in 2 part (iii) of the revised recommendations of the paper before you.

Paragraph 14 of your paper 10.3 includes the operative part of the decision of the SOPAC Council taken at their last meeting held in Tonga last November wherein they agreed to:

Accept the challenge offered up in paragraph 19(b) through the establishment of a Committee of the SOPAC Council as a Whole to guide and advise me during the consultative process with your Director and the Director General of SPC.

During the SOPAC Council debate on this issue Members generally agreed that the processes for rationalisation neither disrupt service delivery; nor subject SOPAC's current work programmes to fragmentation; and that the excellent science being mobilised through the STAR network must be retained as a highly valued resource for the region.

The Committee had its first meeting in March 2008 and at that meeting agreed its ToR (again outlined in your paper 10.3) and a work programme. It also agreed to invite the Chairs and CEOs of SPREP and SPC, as well as France and USA to attend and participate in all of its future meetings.

Two further meetings have been held and I am pleased that CEOs of both agencies, the PIFS and the USA and France attended and participated fully in the discussions of both meetings.

On the matter of the consultative process between SOPAC-SPREP and SPC this has occurred at two levels. At the CEO level we have had an opportunity to have two trilaterals. At the senior programme level we have had an opportunity for our senior staff to meet twice to discuss and share, in some detail, the various programmes and services that are being delivered by the respective agencies; the areas for potential synergy and start to examine what arrangements could improve service delivery as a result of rationalisation and based on the institutional arrangement options (as outlined in para 22 of your paper). The programme trilaterals were independently facilitated by Gary Wiseman of the UNDP Pacific Resources Centre and he attended the third Committee meeting to brief them on the conclusions of the two trilaterals. The SOPAC Chair (who

also presides as Chair of the Committee) transmitted a letter with the Committee's Progress Report to the Forum Chair in advance of the Niue Meeting held just last month and this I understand is also annexed to your paper.

The Progress Report amongst other information includes The Road Map for a Way Forward and Possible Timelines to progress the SOPAC Council decision on this matter and includes the necessary steps to be taken. This includes the first step of Rationalisation (which has commenced through trilateral meetings). Key to this step is addressing the applied technical and scientific aspects of SOPAC's work programme, as these are considered excellent and must not be allowed to be put at risk or compromised. It must be demonstrable and not intuitive that: (i) the integrity of the applied science and technical services are maintained; (ii) linkages, and synergies exist; and (ii) improved service delivery will result.

It has been agreed at various levels (Council, Committee, CEO and Programmes) that that SOPAC's work programme should as far as necessary be kept "together" in one institution and thus not jeopardise the established practice in SOPAC of the production of "integrated solutions" across the programme of work. Indeed, the linkages and synergies should demonstrate new and a broader range of integrated solutions. Independent advice to examine and recommend optimum Institutional Arrangement Options for Rationalisation is being sought, with a TOR for this initiative under development for both rationalisation and then absorption plans to be realised.

The second step being Institutional Arrangements (five potential options are outlined in para 22 of your paper) and ongoing trilateral discussions will be required to determine the preferred institutional arrangements.

Following consideration and agreement of these there will be a need to Develop Plans for Absorption by SPREP and SPC and these be agreed by SPREP and SPC before a decision can be made by SOPAC Council, as the handover organisation, to the governing body of the receiving organisation(s).

The CEO trilaterals has outlined their preference that the plans for absorption be non-competitive and currently a Terms of Reference framework is being developed.

With respect to the development of absorption plans the SOPAC Committee acknowledged that it can only encourage the CEOs of SPREP and SPC to carry out this work (with support from myself). However

in realising this, the SCW hoped that the relevant governing bodies appreciate the need to sanction this work.

Following completion of the absorption plans Due Diligence checks will need to be completed to give a level of comfort and confidence to the SOPAC Council that the services currently provided under SOPAC will indeed endure and in will indeed improve once they are absorbed into the receiving organisations of SPREP and SPC.

The Roadmap articulates that the SOPAC Committee could finalise its Work by July/August 2009 and be able to prepare recommendations to SOPAC Council, with a view to Absorption occurring as soon as all relevant governing bodies have completed their consideration of this matter.

Therefore implementation (absorption) could commence by 1 January 2010, which resonates with the timeline outlined in the 2008 Forum Communiqué Paragraph 20. However, in this respect the various agencies will need to ensure proper sequencing of their Governing Council meetings for 2009 in advance of the Forum to be held in Australia next year.

In terms of immediate next steps for the SOPAC Committee - it intends to convene a 4th meeting on 16 September 2008 to consider the Forum Communiqué and the decision taken by this Council and to prepare its progress report and recommendations to the SOPAC Council due to meet at the end of October in Tuvalu.

Thank you Chair.

Annex 8: Statement by SPC Representative

SPC Intervention at the SPREP Council meeting on RIF Dr. Jimmie Rodgers, Director General

Purpose

1. This discussion paper provides an update for the SPREP Council on SPC's involvement in the implementation of the Forum Leaders decisions on RIF (38th Forum and 39th Forum) and proposes a way forward for the three Governing Councils of the three organisations affected in this process to consider.

Background

2. At the 2007 Forum meeting held in Tonga, Pacific Forum Leaders in paragraph 19 (a-d) of their Communiqué in relation to the Regional Institutional Framework agreed as follows:
"19. Leaders agreed to:
 - (a) the inclusion of the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) into Pillar 1, in order to recognise the Agency's central regional role and to provide fisheries issues with the political profile they require
 - (b) the need to rationalise the functions of the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) with the work programmes of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) with the view to absorbing those functions of SOPAC into SPC and SPREP
 - (c) the South Pacific Bureau for Education Assessment (SPBEA) merging into SPC; and
 - (d) the University of the South Pacific (USP) and the Fiji School of Medicine forming part of Pillar 3 (education)"
3. The Pacific Forum Leaders requested updates on the roadmap to implement their decisions at the thirty-ninth Forum meeting in Niue in 2008.
4. The SPC-SOPAC-SPREP rationalisation process was complicated by a number of factors as follows:

- a. there were three organisations and governing bodies involved;
 - b. two of the governing bodies had made their respective decisions with SPC endorsing the PIF Leaders decision and requesting its CEO to work with the other CEOs to develop a roadmap for further discussion during CRGA 38, and SOPAC agreeing to accept the challenge offered by the Leaders' communiqué and established a formal committee process to guide and advise its CEO during the consultation process;
 - c. the third governing body (SPREP) having already met prior to the promulgation of the Forum Leaders' decision did not have the opportunity to make a position on the PIF Leaders decision until this meeting.
 - d. The three organisations affected by the decision were not even on the same page from the very beginning of the process.
5. The SOPAC Council established a formal process to take through the Leaders decision during 2008. SPC Director General made the conscious decision to engage with the SOPAC process so as not to duplicate another process. Director of SPREP also decided to engage with the 'SOPAC Council established process' making it clear however that his participation was to assist the other CEOs as his governing body had not yet adopted a position on the subject.
 6. The three CEOs met three times between April and July. The starting point for the discussions on rationalisation centred around the five options presented by Director of SOPAC to the first meeting of the SCW as follows; (i) Fragmentation; (ii) SOPAC work programme absorbed fully into SPC; (iii) SOPAC work programme absorbed fully into SPREP; (iv) SOPAC work programme absorbed substantially into SPC or SPREP with the balance into the other, and (v) SOPAC work programmes remains stand alone.
 7. An important outcome of the CEO consultation was the convening of the programme trilateral consultations between senior programme managers of the three agencies to explore and establish areas of synergies between the programmes in SOPAC and those of SPC and SPREP. The programme trilateral met twice under an independent facilitator – Mr Garry Wiseman, head of the UNDP Pacific Centre. It however became clear at the end of the second consultation that an independent and objective analysis would provide the best way forward to determine which of SOPAC's programmes would go to SPC and to SPREP.
 8. It was agreed between the CEOs and at the SCW that absorption plans can only be developed after it is established which of the SOPAC programmes would go to either of the receiving organisations. Once the absorption plans are developed by both agencies, they would undergo due diligence assessment following which the actual absorption would occur.
 9. To date much of the analysis has gone into identifying synergies between the programmes of the three organisations. The next step is to decide which SOPAC programmes go to SPC and which ones go to SPREP, noting the need to (i) maintain the integrity of the applied science and technical services; (ii) ensure linkages and synergies exist and (iii) improved service delivery will be the ultimate result. Once this is completed then absorption plans can be developed.
 10. To move the process forward the three CEOs and their respective governing bodies now need to agree on the parameters that would be used to decide on the rationalisation of SOPAC programmes into SPC and SPREP.
- New call by Forum leaders
11. At the 2008 Forum meeting held in Niue, Pacific Forum Leaders in paragraph 20 (a-c) of their Communiqué in relation to the Regional Institutional Framework agreed as follows:

“20. Leaders:

 - (a) recalled their 2007 decision on the rationalisation of SOPAC functions into SPC and SPREP, without any substantive diminution in SOPAC functions, and the merger of South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA) with SPC;
 - (b) expected that all work to define the new institutional arrangements, as well as plans for implementing those arrangements, will be finalised and jointly agreed by the CEOs of the

relevant agencies for presentation to Leaders at the 2009 Leaders' meeting; and

(c) directed their representatives on the Governing Councils of the SPC, SOPAC, SPREP and SPBEA in 2009 (and prior to the Leaders' meeting) to take all the final decisions on the new institutional arrangements and implementation plans, with implementation to commence immediately after the Governing council meetings and no later than 1 January 2010"

12. Paragraph 20 (b) and (c) of the Forum Communiqué from the Thirty-Ninth Pacific Islands Forum puts the responsibility to 'define the new institutional arrangements, as well as plans for implementing those arrangements' to the CEOs and the representatives of Forum Island countries in the respective Governing Councils of SPC, SOPAC, SPREP and SPBEA during 2009.

Proposed way forward

13. Up until now the CEOs of SPC and SPREP had worked with the process established by the SOPAC Governing Council. It is SPC's view that this process has worked well and has provided useful information relating to synergies and typifying the various options of possible rationalisation that could be considered. It is also important to note that the CEO of SPREP could not participate on an equal footing during the year because the SPREP Governing Council had not yet met to establish the Council's formal position on the Leaders' decision from the 38th Pacific Islands Forum in 2007.

14. To take this process further it is SPC's view that the governing bodies of the three organisations have now reached a point where they need to agree on a single mechanism that ensures equal buy-in from the three CEOs and the three Governing Councils to oversee the process from here-on.

15. SPC recommends this new process comprise the agreement by the three governing councils to establish a 'Joint Committee of the three governing Councils'[JC3GC] to oversee the finalisation of the new institutional arrangements to be presented to the 2009 meetings of the respective Governing Councils of SPC, SOPAC and SPREP and the 2009 Leaders' meeting. It would guide the

work of the three CEOs as well as other work that maybe commissioned as necessary to take the decision by Forum Leaders and the respective decisions by the three Governing councils forward.

16. This proposed new process does not replace the SOPAC SCW. It complements it. The new process is representative of all three Governing councils. The SCW will still look at issues of due diligence etc. as it relates specifically to SOPAC.

Membership to and TORs for the JC3GC

17. We propose that the membership of the Joint committee be **twelve**, four from each Governing Council. The JC3GC would have a 'Terms of Reference' [will need to be developed and agreed by all three governing Councils – For SPREP, the TORs could be 'circulated for approval out of session']. The JC3GC will meet at least twice during 2009. The Joint Committee will report to the 2009 meetings of the respective Governing Councils of SPC, SOPAC and SPREP and the 2009 Leaders' meeting on the new institutional arrangements and implementation plans. The CEOs of the three organisations will provide the secretariat of the Joint Committee.

18. The JC3GC would need to be supported financially to ensure it accomplish its work. A budget would be prepared.

Recommendation

19. The Governing Councils of SPREP, SOPAC and SPC agree individually and collectively to use one single mechanism with equal buy-in from each Governing Council, and

20. They further agree to establish a 'Joint Committee of the three Governing Councils' to oversee the implementation of the Forum Leaders' decision on RIF.

Annex 9: Statement by the Representative of the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Asia-Pacific (UNEP-ROAR)

UNEP Observer Statement
19th SPREP Meeting
12 September 2008
Ponhpei, FSM

Opening

- Greetings from UNEP's Executive Director Dr Achim Steiner. UNEP's new Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, Dr Youn-Woo Park is expected to start in Bangkok in the first week of October 2008;
- UNEP is pleased to participate in the 19th SPREP Meeting to reiterate UNEP's commitment and partnership in the South Pacific;
- UNEP takes this opportunity to congratulate the Secretariat on the successful organization of the 19th SPREP Meeting, and the formulation of a challenging workplan and budget for 2009 and indicative budget for 2009-10, and follow-up to the corporate review exercise;
- Under the Framework Agreement between UNEP and SPREP signed in 2005, the level of collaboration between SPREP and UNEP has been significantly enhanced with the presence of UNEP colleagues in Apia. The Agreement is in the process of being updated;

UNEP PoW 2010-2011 and Medium Term Plan

- UNEP is currently finalizing its Programme of Work 2010-11 in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) in Nairobi, for presentation to the next special session of UNEP's Governing Council in Nairobi in February 2009;
- The PoW is based around 6 priority areas under UNEP's Medium Term Strategy 2010-13, which was endorsed the Special Session of UNEP's Governing Council in Monaco earlier this February:
 - Climate Change: Facilitate transition to low carbon society; strengthen vulnerable states resilience to deal with climate change. UNEP's work on adaptation and mitigation
 - Ecosystem Management: Manage ecosystems to enhance well-being - UNEP's work on ecosystem management regarding biodiversi-

ty, desertification, forests, water, poverty and environment, environmental health etc.

- Natural Disasters and post conflict response: UNEP's work in preparing for, and responding to, the environmental impacts of natural disasters, industrial accidents and conflict.
- Environmental Governance: States increasingly implement their environmental obligations and achieve their environmental priority goals, targets and objectives through strengthened laws and institutions; National development processes and United Nations common country programming processes increasingly mainstream environmental sustainability in their implementation.
- Environmentally hazardous wastes: Minimize the environmental impact of harmful substances, including UNEP's work on chemicals;
- Resource efficiency including sustainable consumption and production: UNEP's work on resource efficiency, transport, waste management and life cycle analysis as well as urban issues;
- In addition to Medium Term Strategy, UNEP is also finalizing options under a Strategic Presence Model, as well as further implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan on Technology Support and Capacity Building (BSP);
- At the regional level, the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific located in Bangkok has been operating through four strategic objectives:
 - Promoting regional and sub-regional co-operation;
 - Strengthening the environmental community;
 - Identifying and addressing emerging environmental issues; and
 - Leading by example, through pilot demonstration activities.
- Earlier this year, New Zealand successfully hosted global celebrations for the World Environment Day 2008, which provided an opportunity to showcase and highlight Pacific leadership and innovations towards a low carbon economy.

Some examples and opportunities of/for partnerships as related to UNEP's MTS areas:

- Climate Change:
 - Training Workshop for AOSIS negotiators in Singapore, November 2008;
 - Media Training Workshop on Climate Change, on the margins of the 2008 Pacific Climate Change Roundtable in Apia, Samoa, October 2008;
 - Inter-Agency Climate Change Centre for coordinated UN support to Pacific Island Countries and regional organizations,
 - Joint Meeting of the Intergovernmental Networks on Regional Air Pollution in Asia and the Pacific Region, Bangkok, December 2008
- Ecosystems Management:
 - Invasive Species: UNEP is the implementing agency for the GEF project 'Development of Best Practices and Dissemination of Lessons Learned for Dealing with the Global Problem of Alien Species that Threaten Biological Diversity.'
 - Micronesia Challenge: Sustainable Finance Systems for Island Protected Area Management, supported under GEF-PAS;
 - National Biosafety Frameworks (NBFs): UNEP is assisting 14 PICs in the development of their NBFs to fulfill obligations under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and address national priorities relating to biosafety and biotechnology;
 - Development of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs) for Vanuatu;
 - South Pacific Biodiversity Outlook 2010 suggested as an activity related to MEAs (CBD mainly);
 - Intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services: ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholders meeting, Kuala Lumpur, November 2008.
- Environmental Governance:
 - Following the consultative stakeholder meeting in February 2009, further implementation of the EU supported project on Capacity Building related to MEAs, for which SPREP hosts the Pacific regional hub (side event on this convened earlier this week);
- Proposed pilot project on options for streamlining reporting to MEAs, through synergies with ongoing activities at WCMC;
- Partnership on the Global Environment Outlook and State of the Environment reports – SPREP participating in an ongoing regional Workshop on GEO/IEA Methodologies being held in Thailand, 8-11 September 2008;
- Capacity Building on Integrated Environmental Assessments, including Training to build capacity in mapping vulnerability to climate change and ecosystem change, and risk reduction at national and regional levels, as a basis for adaptation planning, financing and cost effective preventive actions. targeting SIDS of the South Pacific and Indian Ocean;
- National Sustainable Development Strategies;
 - Collaborative Action Network at UNEP's Regional Resource Centre for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, December 2008;
 - Pacific Action Plan for the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, in partnership with UNESCO;
 - Organisation of the Asia Pacific Civil Society Meeting on International Environmental Governance at the University of New South Wales, Sydney at the end of November 2008;
 - Support for the Pacific Youth and Environment Network (PYEN), in partnership with USP, SPREP and UNSW.
- Hazardous Wastes:
 - Development of National Implementation Plans (NIPs): In partnership with SPREP, UNEP is assisting several Pacific SIDS to develop their NIPs for the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POPs.
 - UNEP in collaboration with the French Development Agency (AFD), are currently developing a project on "Moving towards a life cycle/circular economy in the Pacific Island States, with particular emphasis on addressing the waste problem";

- Global Programme of Action (GPA) activities, such as National Programme of Action (NPAs), training courses on sanitation and municipal waste management
- Implementation of the project "Improving Municipal Wastewater Management in Coastal Cities in ACP Countries with a focus on SIDS
- Implementing Sustainable Integrated Water Resource and Wastewater Management in the Pacific Island Countries, under GEF-PAS;
- POPS Monitoring and DDT Alternatives, through GEF-PAS;
- Continued partnership on Ozone Depleting Substances, which includes licencing systems, and potentially four customs trainings: Tuvalu, Cooks Islands, Nauru and FSM, as well as the closure of the regional project to implement the Montreal Protocol in Pacific island countries.

Conclusion and way forward:

- UNEP stands ready to assist the SPREP Members Countries with a range of relevant experiences, proof of concept, practical testing of ideas, and the best available science and knowledge, particularly in the implementation of GEF-PAS;
- UNEP looks forward to supporting SPREP in the implementation of the Programme of Work for 2009, especially as the Pacific year of Climate Change, and in relation to UNEP's MTS priority areas;
- UNEP will liaise closely with SPREP during implementation of the UNEP's strategic presence model in the Pacific, and looks forward to updating the existing Framework Agreement for enhanced partnership and collaboration;
- UNEP places on record sincere appreciation to Mr Asterio Takesy for his contribution and leadership to SPREP, and congratulates Ms Cristelle Pratt on her appointment as the new Director of SPREP;

Thank you for your attention.

Annex 10: Statement by the Representative of The Nature Conservancy (TNC)

Director of SPREP and Staff

Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen

The Nature Conservancy would like to congratulate SPREP and its members, in particular Papua New Guinea, on the success of the Alotau Conservation Conference in October 2007, and the subsequent adoption by this 19th SPREP meeting of the Action Strategy for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Island Region 2008-2012. As has been the case since TNC began working in the region in 1991, SPREP can count on TNC's full support for the achievement of this strategy, and we fully endorse the code of conduct it promotes.

The Action Strategy will be a guiding force for conservation in the region and is already repeatedly referenced by our partners, for example in the development of the Pacific component of the Coral Triangle Initiative, including by USAID's Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDMA).

As the Alotau meeting header proclaimed, we are in a rapidly changing world, and there is a great need to help Pacific communities to adapt. The 4th International Panel on Climate Change report identifies the risks posed to island states with a high degree of confidence and assesses the severity of the impacts of climate change. Four key issues have been raised specifically for island states, such as those of the Pacific:

1. Sea level rise is expected to exacerbate inundation, storm surge, erosion and other coastal hazards, thus threatening vital infrastructure, settlements and facilities that support the livelihood of island communities.
2. Deterioration in coastal conditions, e.g. through erosion of beaches and coral bleaching, is expected to affect local resources, infrastructure, villages and livelihoods.
3. By mid-century, climate change is expected to reduce water resources in many small islands to the point where they become insufficient to meet demand during low-rainfall periods.
4. With higher temperatures, increased invasion by non-native species is expected to occur, particularly on mid- and high-latitude islands.

Whilst this is not news to those working in the Pacific, it is clear that we have a monumental task ahead of us to counter these threats.

In the spirit of ‘conservation serving communities,’ we need to better understand how natural systems and ecosystem services can be preserved, restored and strengthened to help us adapt to climate change impacts. We are fortunate in the Pacific recognize that ecosystem-based management approaches have long been an essential part of our life, economy and culture. But we need to better prioritize and strengthen nature-based adaptation solutions where such strategies will also better serve coastal village communities to maintain livelihoods.

To do this, we need to place nature-based adaptation in its rightful context. We must consider infrastructural responses, such as canals, groins, sea-walls and levees, as ‘last-ditch’ measures and unavoidable investments. It has been proven many times over that once we actively engineer man-made solutions, we cannot pull our finger out of the dyke. Then we have to keep investing, dealing with escalating cost and exacerbating impacts on the already beleaguered natural systems that we aimed to bolster in the first instance. The alternative way is to look to our natural systems for the protection they provide, and through careful conservation, ensure that our watersheds, mangroves and reefs are healthy and robust and continue to provide the protection they have afforded our Pacific communities for centuries past.

As our Pacific program evolves, TNC is looking to strengthen partnerships with like-minded countries, institutions and agencies who want to further explore cost effective, sustainable, and conservation-based strategies to cope with the rising tide of threats posed by climate change.

Importantly, as the 4th IPCC report highlights, the battle against invasive species is far from won. In fact, our defenses are being pushed back as an increasing number and abundance of species, both marine and terrestrial, are identified every year in our vulnerable islands and our waters. As climate patterns shift, so do the battle-lines. As we connect our islands and their vulnerable biodiversity more and more with the global village, the pathways and vectors for alien species colonization also multiply. This is not science fiction but reality.

Mr. Chairman, the Pacific Island Learning Network (PILN), in which TNC and SPREP are founding partners, has provided a consistent and outstanding platform to raise the standard of invasive species work in the region and to fly that standard internationally. It provides a rallying call, one that should be

heard repeatedly where practitioners and decision-makers need advice, information, and pragmatic solutions to an invasive problem, both immediate and in the future.

PILN has demonstrated great success in strengthening national invasive species efforts, from assistance with broad-scale strategies, to direct action such as weed control and rat eradications. A clear example comes from the experience and exchange shared between Palau and American Samoa. We should reflect - as PILN allows us to - on the successes over the past few years of member countries in their efforts to combat invasive species. All of this success has either been supported by PILN, or been made public and broadcast by these networks. We should make every attempt to consolidate PILN and build on the excellent foundations that it provides.

TNC has been proud to provide more than \$250,000 and significant in-kind support for PILN’s design, start-up and transition. TNC worked with the US State Department on the first planning phase for a Pacific network and US agencies have continued to support PILN in many ways since. TNC admires the very high return on investment that this position has achieved in terms of tangible results and outcomes. And, as our Hawaii team, Pacific program and Global Invasive Species program are all members, we are able to contribute and to benefit first-hand from the networks activities.

As such, TNC would like to fully congratulate the delegates for adopting the recommendations under item 9.1.2, especially for to institutionalize PILN within SPREP. TNC will continue to assist invasive species work across the Pacific through PILN, and we hope to further contribute to sustainability of the network. The success and model of PILN is mirrored, but as yet not paralleled, elsewhere in the world, and we should take pride in supporting a Pacific regional initiative that is a leading effort on the global stage in its contribution to invasive species control.

Thank you for this opportunity to address the meeting

Yours faithfully

Peter Thomas
Director, TNC Pacific Program

Annex 11: Closing Statement by SPREP Director

Closing Statement By
Asterio Takesy, Director, SPREP
19th SPREP Meeting
Pohnpei, FSM
12 September 2008

Chairman,

Distinguished Delegates

As the curtain closes on this 19SM, I would like to sincerely thank you, distinguished delegates, for your direction and guidance at this 19th Meeting of the SPREP Council. Mr. Chair, you deserve a vote of thanks for your able leadership in leading this meeting to a successful close.

I would particularly like to extend my appreciation to the distinguished representatives of Nauru and the Solomon Islands for attending the meeting. I am pleased that in my last SPREP meeting we have had almost complete representation from the membership.

This week, distinguished delegates, you have dealt with a conjunction of critical issues: the ICR and the RIF. The outcome of these two issues, depending on their resolution and implementation, will potentially change the direction, structure and strategy of SPREP in the coming years. This will present challenges and tremendous opportunities for the organization and the region. The intense debate that you have engaged in on these two issues reflects your understanding of the huge implications of the ICR and RIF for the future of SPREP.

As this is my last meeting I am pleased that you, as Members, have taken up the challenge and set a clear course of action to address how SPREP - both Members and Secretariat - can work together to implement the ICR and resolve the RIF challenge over the coming year.

It is gratifying to note that in endorsing the ICR recommendations Members had taken to heart the ICR recommendation that they must commit to ownership of the organisation and therefore to sustainable financial support of SPREP.

Having said that, 2009 will be a year of great change for SPREP and I hope resolution for dealing with the sustainability and scope of SPREP.

You have appointed a new Director - and I warmly congratulate Cristelle and wish her the very best in

carrying forward the challenges and opportunities that come with this important position.

SPREP is the most important intergovernmental organization in the Pacific, with a vital mission.

It has been a singular honour and privilege for me to have served as SPREP's Director for the past 6 years and I hope that you consider that I have served you well.

Mr Chairman and Distinguished Delegates, on our collective behalf I would like to thank the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia for hosting the 19th SPREP meeting here in Pohnpei. As you will appreciate, this has presented its own challenges to the government but they have more than risen to the occasion. The FSM Government has done an outstanding job in making this meeting a success.

In particular I would like to thank the government staff and local volunteers for helping us this week with the sometimes difficult meeting logistics. We have been well fed and well looked after in every respect. I now need larger sized pants.

Once again, our translators and technicians have worked long hard hours to ensure that communications are maintained and I extend our deep appreciation for their efforts. My thanks also to Ricky Cantero and his team of magic workers for the outstanding arrangements and preparations for this meeting.

I must thank my own SPREP staff who have worked tirelessly this week to support the 19SM. Given the complexity of this week's discussions the task of rap-portreuring has not been easy.

I also want to thank the Chairman and the drafting committee for working long hours in ensuring that we have an accurate record of proceedings. I congratulate the Deputy Director, Kosi Latu, for surviving his baptismal by fire. I know you agree with me that Kosi has brought immense value and vision to the Secretariat and strengthens management.

To you distinguished delegates and my fellow SPREP staff, my profound apologies to all if I have inadvertently offended you in any way. I am grateful for the courtesy, support and consideration you have accorded me. Distinguished delegates, the difficulty you encountered in balancing the 2009 budget deficit pales in comparison to the tough job Pohnpei will face in balancing the mangrove crab deficit my dear staff have single-handedly caused.

Finally, Mr Chairman and Distinguished Delegates, I wish you all a safe journey back to your home countries and islands.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Meeting of Environmental Ministers

12 September 2008
Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia



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Letter from Chair of 19th SPREP Meeting

19th Annual Meeting of SPREP
Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia
8 - 11 September 2008

11th September 2008

The Chairman
SPREP Environment Ministers Meeting
Pohnpei
Federated States of Micronesia

Dear Sir

Key outcomes and recommendations made by the officials meeting for consideration by Ministers

Introduction

1. It is my honor to present for consideration and endorsement by SPREP Environment Ministers, the matters of significance addressed by the SPREP Meeting of Officials that met at Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia from 8th to 11th September 2008. A full report is attached.

Independent Corporate Review

2. The Meeting spent considerable time discussing the recent Independent Corporate Review of SPREP. The meeting approved the recommendations of the Independent Corporate Review as amended.

3. The major recommendations arising out of this report include:

a. Reaffirming the need for a regional environmental organization,

b. Directing the Secretariat to focus its core business to Members primarily on:

- Strategic capacity development
- Facilitating coordination of regional environment related assistance from donors and NGOs
- Supporting compliance, negotiations and advocacy in relation to Multilateral Environmental Agreements
- Promoting cooperation among Members

c. Directing the Secretariat to separate its roles and related activities into core business activities that are fully costed and project related activities that contribute to the core.

d. Directing the Secretariat to increase its effectiveness and efficiency by: facilitating, advising on and coordinating technical and policy advice and assistance, facilitating and coordinating training, institutional strengthening and information sharing; showing leadership through coordination and collaboration; improving organizational management and maintaining flexibility to respond to member specific priorities.

e. Directing the Secretariat to explore options for strengthening the engagement between the Secretariat and Members.

f. Directing the Secretariat to develop a detailed implementation plan responding to the ICR recommendations and provide progress reports to Council on a regular basis.

Regional Implementation Framework (RIF)

4. The Meeting considered the opportunities to strengthen SPREP through the rationalization of SOPAC functions into SPREP. In doing so they directed the SPREP Director to engage with the CEOs of SOPAC and SPC after the 2008 SOPAC Council Meeting to determine and identify proposed institutional arrangements based on analysis of key issues, to commission an independent analysis of all of the implications of such institutional arrangements and to communicate this through focal points of SOPAC, SPC and SPREP.

5. The Meeting also requested that the 20SM consider institutional arrangements and an implementation plan recommended by the three CEOs before the next leaders meeting. It also requested the Director of SPREP to consider the Independent Corporate Review recommendations and implementation in these deliberations.

Sustainable Financing for the Secretariat

6. The Meeting agreed to consider well-justified periodic increases in contributions as the need arises, requested the Secretariat to develop a fee-for-service and cost recovery approach proposal that supports Members priorities and asked for a feasibility assessment of options for reducing headquarters costs to be presented before 20SM.

Secretariat's Reports and Work Programme and Financial Performance for 2007

7. The Secretariat presented detailed reports on its work programme and financial performance for 2007. Members took the opportunity to comment on aspects of the 2007 work programme and expressed approval and support for many of the activities undertaken.

8. In relation to financial matters, the Meeting discussed the continuing unsatisfactory situation with the non-payment of membership contributions to the extent of USD \$399,551 of total annual contributions and requested the Secretariat to work with affected Members on resolving this issue.

2009 Work Programme

Guidelines for Invasive Species Management in the Pacific

9. The Meeting approved draft guidelines for invasive species management in the Pacific and committed to support and participate in implementing the guidelines.

Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN) Pilot Phase Review Report

10. The Meeting requested the Secretariat to institutionalise the PILN Coordinator function into the Secretariat, asked for the Secretariat and request SPC to strengthen collaboration on invasive issues and to look at using the PILN Model as a model for developing future capacity building activities.

Action Strategy for Nature Conservation

11. The Meeting congratulated the Government of Papua New Guinea on hosting the 8th Pacific Island Conference on Nature Conservation and endorsed the Action Strategy for Nature Conservation as a document to inform the development of the SPREP Action Plan in 2009.

Pacific Framework for Education for Sustainable Development and Regional Education for Sustainable Development Action Plan

12. The Meeting endorsed the need for ongoing support in education and communications and supported SPREP's intention to develop a Framework for Action to guide SPREP's work in this area.

Climate Change Action Plan

13. The Meeting endorsed the Action Plan for the Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change, endorsed plans for the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable and encouraged Members to participate in the Roundtable.

Pacific Year of Climate Change 2009

14. The Meeting declared 2009 to be the Pacific Year of Climate Change and endorsed proposals for a campaign plan. It also encouraged Members to fully participate in the Pacific Year of Climate Change 2009 and to nominate a contact point for the campaign.

Regional Waste Management Action Plan

15. The Meeting endorsed the priorities as outlined in the Action Plan for the Regional Solid Waste Management Strategy and asked Members to commit themselves to the implementation of the activities contained in the Action Plan.

Capacity Building for Multilateral Environmental Agreements

16. The Meeting welcomed the European Commission's Capacity Building project for Multilateral Environmental Agreements and the strengthening of SPREP as a regional hub for MEAs.

Issues Presented by Members

Streamlined reporting by Pacific island countries to Multilateral Environment Agreements (a paper by Australia)

17. The Meeting welcomed the implementation of the consolidated reporting template for the biodiversity related multilateral environment agreements by self-governing Members in 2009, and requested Australia to work with the relevant convention secretariats.

Licensing systems for ozone-depleting substance in the Pacific (a paper by Australia)

18. The Meeting requested countries to implement a licensing system for Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) for those who have yet to do so and to complete their reporting requirements under the Montreal Protocol. It also requested countries to implement a licensing system for Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) as soon as practicable.

Genetic resources in the Pacific Region (A paper by Australia)

19. The Meeting agreed to consider engaging with Australia on issues to do with genetic resources in the region.

Meteorology and Climatology support to the Pacific region

20. The Meeting reaffirmed its commitment to supporting a Meteorology and Climate Position and asked the Secretariat to put a paper to the next SPREP meeting on the creation of a Pacific Meteorological Committee (PMC).

21. The Meeting endorsed the 12th Regional Meteorological Services Directors meeting recommendations, including the proposed review of the Strategic Action Plan for the Development of Meteorology in the region.

22. The Meeting also endorsed the lead role of SPREP in developing an institutional framework to support the management of the provision of sustainable regional meteorological services as agreed to by the Forum Leaders Meeting in August 2008. The Meeting endorsed the need for SPREP to immediately commence planning for an urgent review, and as a first step bring together representatives of interested Members to provide policy oversight including the development of terms of reference for work on ways and means to strengthen the delivery of regional meteorological services from the Fiji Meteorological Service. It welcomed the financial support offered by Australia and New Zealand to progress this initiative.

Country Profiles

23. A summary of achievements was presented to the meeting in relation to pollution prevention in Member countries.

2009 Work Programme and Budget

24. The meeting adopted the Secretariat's proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2009.

25. I would, with the support of my colleagues and the Secretariat, stand ready to provide further clarification if required.

Sincerely,

Andrew Yatilman
Chairman
19th SPREP Meeting (Officials)

Agenda of the Ministerial Meeting

1. Official Opening
2. Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair
3. Adoption of Agenda and Working Procedures
4. Opening Statements and Address by Special Guest - Chair of the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting (FEMM)
5. Director's Overview
6. Matters for Discussion and Decision
 - Financial Matters
 - Report of the Independent Corporate Review (ICR)
 - Options for following up and Collecting Unpaid Membership Contribution
 - Reports of the Conferences of the Parties to the Noumea and Waigani Conventions
 - Work Programme Issues
 - Outcomes of mid-term Review of the SPREP Secretariat Strategic Programmes
 - Country Profiles as a means of National Reporting under the SPREP Action Plan
 - Regional Institutional Framework Review (RIF)
 - Process for Appointment of Director
7. Theme Issue: "Taking action on climate change in the Pacific - regional Action Plan to implement the Pacific Framework for Action on Climate Change 2006-2015"
8. Other Business
9. Next Ministerial Meeting
10. Adoption of Ministerial Statement
11. Close

Statement of the UNFCCC Executive Director to Ministerial Segment

Statement of

Mr. Yvo de Boer
Executive Secretary
Secretariat of the United Nations Framework
Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

Honourable Ministers, distinguished guests,

I thank you for the opportunity to address you on climate change.

It was the honourable President of Palau, Mr. Remengesau, who recently said: "We are the window of what will eventually be happening to the rest of the world."

Indeed, as the nations living on the front line of climate change, I do not need to dwell on impacts such as sea-level rise, coral bleaching, salt water intrusion or shrinking fresh water supplies. You are experiencing them every day and the need for significantly scaled-up adaptation is glaringly obvious.

You have taken a range of very good climate change initiatives. This includes mitigation activities in the current energy mix, the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change Project, regional climate change science activities and the Pacific Islands Framework for Action 2006-2015.

Encouraging and important as these initiatives certainly are, it is clear to everyone that there is only so much you can do on your own. Climate change is a global problem, in need of a global solution, to reduce the cost of mitigation and to secure funding for adaptation.

The two-year negotiating process under the Bali Road Map is offering Governments around the world a window of opportunity to craft an economically viable solution to a huge problem. And a solution that responds to the adaptation challenge in an appropriate way.

The agreed outcome in Copenhagen 2009 needs to be ambitious on all fronts of climate change abatement.

In terms of mitigation, a quick look at anticipated energy investments illustrates this window of opportunity. According to the IEA, global energy demand will grow by 55% by 2030. In the period up to 2030, the energy supply infrastructure world-wide will re-

quire a total investment of \$22 trillion, with about half of that in developing countries.

If we do not manage to green these investments, to direct them into climate-friendly technologies, emissions will go up by 50%, instead of down by 50%, as science tells us they should.

We all know that mitigation efforts over the next two to three decades will determine to a large extent the long-term global mean temperature increase and the corresponding climate change impacts that can be avoided.

As part of the Bali Road Map, all countries agreed to stronger action on mitigation, adaptation, technology and finance.

With respect to stronger mitigation, developed countries would do this through quantified targets.

Developing countries would contribute through measurable, reportable and verifiable mitigation actions in the context of sustainable development and supported by measurable, reportable and verifiable financial and technological support.

The negotiating process needs to ring in a global green economic revolution. It needs to put policies in place that introduce real economic opportunity to mitigation measures. The carbon market is an indication that this can be done successfully.

In terms of adaptation, the window of opportunity lies in creating funding mechanisms that would boost the swift implementation of adaptation activities, especially in the most vulnerable countries.

Copenhagen 2009 needs to include ways of generating new, additional, predictable and sufficient funding for adaptation.

We all know that the most vulnerable countries cannot afford a situation of piecemeal, reactive funding or funding that has been diverted from ODA. The situation is simply too serious.

So, to make real progress, we need to develop a clever financial architecture that will generate significant financial and technological support for both adaptation and mitigation, especially for developing countries.

The Adaptation Fund under the Kyoto Protocol, funded by a two per cent levy on Clean Development Mechanism projects, is a promising step in that direction. The higher the level of ambition of indus-

trialised countries, the higher the amount of funds likely to be generated in this way.

However, adaptation costs are likely to run at billions of dollars annually. So, the question is: how could a funding mechanism through the carbon market be expanded? And: are there other types of mechanisms that could be established within the Convention to generate solid adaptation funding?

It is very likely that adaptation will need funding from different sources. Another option would be mechanisms enabled through the rules of the Convention.

An interesting example in this respect is the idea of auctioning emission rights to use the money to support adaptation activities in developing countries. Likewise, the EU has proposed auctioning off emissions permits for aviation and using the funds for the same purpose.

There may also be mechanisms outside the Convention that are nonetheless linked to it.

The UN Climate Change Conference to be held in Poznan in December is just around the corner.

One of the issues to be taken up by Ministers at Poznan will be the shared vision for long-term co-operation.

Poznan will also see a first version of a negotiating text on the table, based on ideas by governments on what has been negotiated in 2008. While this translates into good progress, there are numerous key issues that have not nearly progressed to such a stage.

Poznan represents the half-way mark for the Bali Road Map negotiations. So, for the political process, the clock is ticking.

As per the Bali Road Map, Copenhagen 2009 will be a long-term response to climate change. At the same time, as you know all too well, climate change impacts are already affecting livelihoods and lives, and this is very likely to increase.

Seneca said: "It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare, it is because we do not dare that things are difficult."

Poznan and the coming year represent your last chance to be more vocal about your needs and to table the cooperative solutions to the problem that you see. Being amongst the first nations on the front line of climate change, in the knowledge that impacts will increase, you are well positioned to push for ambitious long-term solutions.

The process needs creative and bold ideas that match up to the challenge and lead to an effective, efficient and equitable agreed outcome in 2009. And so, looking to Seneca: I ask you to dare!

You have done so in the past. One of the reasons why the negotiations on the Kyoto Protocol were moved forward so effectively is because the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) came to the negotiations with a solid, well elaborated text proposal for the Protocol. This is the type of contribution that the process needs.

The fact that I have the honour of addressing so many Heads of State and Government at this meeting is a sign not only of the increasing magnitude of the problem, but also of the political commitment - at the highest level - to finding viable solutions.

My hope is that this high-level political commitment will act as an example to be followed by leaders across the globe to give the negotiating process the political momentum it needs to conclude ambitiously.

To sum up, this negotiating process represents a unique opportunity to ensure that the interests of Small Island Developing States - both in terms of economic development and adaptation - are safeguarded in a Copenhagen outcome.

Opportunities are often the beginning of great enterprises and should not be missed.

Thank you

Ministerial Outcome Statement

19th Annual Meeting of SPREP
Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia
8 – 12 September 2008

Outcome Statement of the 2008 SPREP Environment Ministers' Meeting

Ministers of Federated States of Micronesia, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu, and Government Representatives of Australia, American Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, France, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Tokelau, and United States of America meeting in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia on 12th September 2008 on the occasion of the Nineteenth SPREP Meeting:

Affirmed the role of SPREP as the region's environmental organization.

Welcomed the recommendations of the Independent Corporate Review of SPREP and looked forward to its implementation as agreed to by the SPREP Meeting of Officials.

Urged the Secretariat to explore options for strengthening the engagement between the Secretariat and its Members.

Agreed that the Secretariat focus on facilitating, advising on and coordinating technical and policy advice and assistance; facilitating and coordinating training, institutional strengthening and information sharing; showing leadership through coordination and collaboration; improving organization management and maintaining flexibility to respond to Member specific priorities.

Welcomed the commitment to clarify and consider institutional arrangements and an implementation plan, including the commissioning of an independent analysis of the implications of the rationalization of SOPAC functions into SPREP and SPC in response to the decisions by Pacific Island Forum Leaders on the Regional Institutional Framework.

Endorsed efforts to improve the financial sustainability of the Secretariat including the development of a proposal to examine fee-for-service and cost recovery approaches that support Member priorities and assessment of options for reducing costs at Headquarters.

Congratulated the Government of Papua New Guinea for its successful hosting of the 8th Pacific

Islands Conference on Nature Conservation in Alotau, Papua New Guinea last year.

Endorsed the new Action Strategy for Nature Conservation, Guidelines for Invasive Species Management in the Pacific, Regional Waste Management Action Plan and the Pacific Framework for Education for Sustainable Development and its associated Action Plan.

Welcomed the External Review of the Pacific Invasives Learning Network and requested the Secretariat to institutionalise the coordination function as well as to use this as a model for capacity building.

Welcomed the streamlined reporting initiative by Australia as an excellent effort to reduce the burden of reporting at country level.

Requested countries to implement licensing systems for Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) to complete their reporting requirements under the Montreal Protocol. It further requested countries to implement a licensing system for Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) as soon as practicable.

Welcomed the European Commission's Multilateral Environmental Agreement Capacity Building Project in collaboration with UNEP to start in 2009.

Recognised climate change as a major threat to the environment and sustainable development of Pacific islands.

Endorsed the Action Plan for the Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change and its call for a Pacific Climate Change Roundtable to be convened in Apia in October 2008.

Urged countries to intensify efforts to address climate change issues through the development and implementation of comprehensive national programs of adaptation and mitigation.

Declared 2009 as the Pacific Year of Climate Change, endorsed its campaign plan and requested Member countries to fully participate.

Agreed to increasing emphasis on Meteorology and Climatology in the region, including the proposed review of the Strategic Action Plan for the Development of Meteorology in the region, and the urgent comprehensive review of regional meteorological service provision, and endorsed the lead role of SPREP in developing an institutional framework to support the management of sustainable regional meteorological services.

Welcomed the attendance and statement of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Mr Yvo de Boer.

Welcomed the appointment of Ms Cristelle Pratt as the new Director of SPREP.

Congratulated the outstanding contribution and service of the outgoing Director of SPREP, Mr Asterio Takesy, and wished him well in his future endeavors.

Welcomed the offer by Papua New Guinea to host the 21st SPREP Meeting and associated ministerial meeting in 2010.

Commended and **acknowledged** the Government of Federated States of Micronesia for hosting the 19th SPREP Meeting.

Acronyms Used			
		MELAD	Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development (Kiribati)
AFD	[French Development Agency]	MFAI	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration (Kiribati)
AOSIS	Alliance of Small Island States	NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development (formerly AIDAB)	NGO	Non-governmental organisation
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity	NMS	National Meteorological Service
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (USA)
CFCs	chlorofluorocarbons	ODA	Official development assistance
COP	Conference of the Parties	ODS	Ozone depleting substances
CRGA	Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (SPC)	PACC	Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change
CROP	Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific	PCCR	Pacific Climate Change Roundtable
DRM	Disaster risk management	PEIN	Pacific Environmental Information Network
EIA	Environmental impact assessment	PIC	Pacific island country
ESD	Education for sustainable development	PICTs	Pacific island countries and territories
EU	European Union	PIFACC	Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change
FFA	Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency	PIFL	Pacific Islands Forum Leaders
FMS	Flexible modeling system	PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia	PI-GCOS	Pacific Islands-Global Climate Observing System
FY	Fiscal year	PIGGAREP	Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project
GEF	Global Environment Facility	PI-GOOS	Pacific Island Global Ocean Observing System
GEF PAS	Global Environment Facility Pacific Alliance for Sustainability	PILN	Pacific Invasives Learning Network
GPS	Global positioning system	PMC	Pacific Meteorological Committee
HCFCs	hydrochloroflourocarbons	PMER	Performance monitoring and evaluation report
ICR	Independent Corporate Review	POPs	Persistent organic pollutants
ICRT	Independent Corporate Review Team	PoWPA	Programme of Work on Protected Areas
JC3GC	Joint Committee of the three governing Councils (SPC, SOPAC and SPREP)	PYCC	Pacific Year of Climate Change
IEA	International Energy Agency	RDMA	Regional Development Mission for Asia (USAID)
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change	RIF	Regional Institutional Framework
KANGO	Association of Non-Governmental Organisations in Kiribati	RMI	Republic of the Marshall Islands
LMMA	Locally Managed Marine Area Network	RMSD	Regional Meteorological Service Directors
MC	Master of Ceremonies	RSWM	Regional Solid Waste Management
MCO	Meteorology and Climate Officer (SPREP)	SCW	Standing Committee of the Whole (SOPAC)
MEA	Multilateral environmental agreement	SIS	Small island state

SM	SPREP Meeting
SOPAC	South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission
SPBEA	South Pacific Bureau [or Board] for Education Assessment
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
STAR	Science, Technology and Resources Network (SOPAC)
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TOR	Terms of reference
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP-ROAP	United Nations Environment Programme - Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USP	University of the South Pacific
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WP	Working paper
WP&B	Work programme and budget