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The Pacific environment, sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.

Twenty Fourth SPREP Meeting of Officials

17th – 19th September 2013
Apia, Samoa

AGENDA ITEM 6.1: Strengthening Regional Linkages Update

Purpose of the Paper

1. The purpose of the paper is to update Members on the progress on Strengthening Regional Linkages, following the decision by Members at the 23rd SPREP Meeting in 2012.

Background

2. The 2010 SPREP Meeting endorsed the concept of establishing a sub-regional presence for SPREP in the Pacific region and requested the Secretariat to investigate appropriate options. In order to facilitate this, the Secretariat engaged David Gowty and Associates to prepare a report on available options to be presented to the 2011 SPREP Meeting.
3. The 2011 SPREP Meeting considered the consultant's report and a Friends of the Chair Group was established to identify elements of the report which required elaboration, including the possible modality of service delivery and other issues.
4. Following this direction the Secretariat drafted Terms of Reference (TOR) for another consultant to be engaged in preparing a cost benefit analysis of the options for establishing a sub-regional presence. KVA Consult Limited were engaged and presented a report to the 2012 SPREP Meeting.
5. The 2012 SPREP Meeting considered this report and recommended the placement of SPREP contracted Desk Officers in Federated States of Micronesia and Marshall Islands as a trial and subject to funding. The Meeting also recommended that the Secretariat explore partnership mechanisms with the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) Secretariat to enhance coordination and delivery of services to South West Pacific Members.

Desk Officers- Terms of Reference

6. As at July, 2013, Terms of Reference are under development with the governments of FSM and RMI based on thematic areas defined by the host governments. These will form the basis for the positions which will be recruited according to local employment terms and conditions and will be advertised and recruited by the Secretariat's Human Resources Division.

Host Country Agreements

7. As at July, 2013,, the host country agreements are also under development with the respective governments. These will be operational in due course.

Partnership Mechanisms for South West Pacific Members

8. The SPREP Director General met with the MSG Director General and his team in March, 2013 and it was agreed to strengthen linkages between SPREP and MSG particularly focused on climate change and environment in Melanesian countries. It was also agreed to develop a MoU between SPREP and MSG in due course.

Recommendations

9. The Meeting is invited to:

- **note** the developments in relation to the placement of technical officers in FSM and RMI, and the respective host agreements to be finalized with the two Member governments;
- **direct** the Secretariat to continue strengthening its partnership mechanisms with the MSG to enhance coordination and delivery of services; and
- **direct** the Secretariat to review the effectiveness of the Desk Officers arrangement, including a cost benefit analysis for consideration by the 2014 SPREP Meeting.

29 July 2013