

Twenty Fourth SPREP Meeting

17-19 September 2013
Apia, Samoa

AGENDA ITEM 9.4.2: Update on State of Environment (SoE) Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting in the Pacific

Purpose of Paper

1. To inform the Meeting of the activities carried out by SPREP (Environmental Monitoring and Governance Division) to improve SoE monitoring, assessment and reporting;
2. To seek guidance on the work to date and proposed future work.

Background

3. The 23rd SPREP meeting held in Noumea, 2012 endorsed a SoE framework for the Pacific and noted:
 - a) that the SoE should use the well- developed Driver, Pressure, State, Impact and Response (DPSIR) model as the basis for future SoE work;
 - b) that the indicator framework used in SoEs should integrate and streamline MEA and national reporting requirements; and
 - c) that a common database be developed on these indicators.
4. The Meeting also requested SPREP to seek funds to implement these activities. In addition, the Pacific Forum leaders' and Forum Economic Ministers' directive on reporting acknowledged the need to streamline global, regional, and national reporting to reduce the reporting burden at the national levels. In 2012, CROP agencies and other partners proposed a streamlined reporting framework that could be used within the region not only for Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs) but also for other multilateral agreements such as the MDGs and for women and gender.

SOE Reporting:

5. The Secretariat has invested significant efforts into building its capacity to develop the regional SoE framework, through the formation within the Environmental Monitoring and Governance (EMG) Division of a 2- person Monitoring and Reporting Unit. An officer was transferred from the Biodiversity and Ecosystems Management Division to become the Monitoring Analyst within the unit and through Australian funding support an Environmental Monitoring and Reporting Adviser (EMRA) was engaged in January 2013 to lead the unit.

6. In 2012 and early 2013, EMG assisted Samoa with the formulation of their SoE report. This experience was used to develop a regional template for SoE, which was supported through a two month volunteer attachment by Aileen Power, who managed the SoE development for the Australian Capital Territory. This template is currently being piloted in Fiji and the Cook Islands. In each country we have engaged a local consultant and work closely with the respective Environment agency to build local capacity. The Fiji SoE is targeted for launching in December 2013 while the Cook Islands SoE will be completed in 2014.

Indicator and Database Development:

7. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) has developed a National Minimum Development Indicators (NMDI) database, which focuses on the “social and economic pillars” of sustainable development. In partnership with SPC, SPREP is developing a database of National Minimum Development Indicators (Environment) database (NMDI Env) to focus on the “environment pillar”. The indicators will cover our thematic areas of biodiversity and ecosystem management, climate change, waste management and pollution control and environmental monitoring and governance. These databases will identify national level indicators useful for national and regional SOE reporting, MEAs reporting and will provide Pacific decision-makers with accurate environmental data to support their work and contribute to sustainable development.

8. These indicators are being collected primarily from national and sub-national data sources, and will be presented in a fully customized online database. Thematic subsets will be available for download, including all indicators pertaining to each specific multilateral environmental agreements and indicators that relate to national SOE reporting. Reports will be available in both Excel and PDF formats and can be easily customised for country based queries or indicator based exports. This will permit users to track developments in particular sectors as well as assisting national governments and development partners to identify where data gaps need to be addressed to further improve state of environment reporting and also to streamline and reduce the burden of reporting.

Future work:

9. Current funding through Australia and New Zealand and also the EU’s ACP MEAs Project Phase 2 allows EMG to work on three national SoE’s per year for the next two years and also to further develop and populate the NMDI environment database. EMG will continue to carry out the SoE assessments as a capacity building exercise with local consultants and national agencies. EMG also aims to complete a regional SoE by 2015.

10. To increase our assistance and recognizing the SM23 request to seek funding, SPREP in partnership with UNEP submitted a Project Identification Form (PIF) to GEF through their global capacity building set-aside funding. GEF has approved the PIF of US\$4.73 Million for the building of national and regional capacity for environmental monitoring, assessment and reporting, including a Project Preparation Grant (PPG) to develop of a detailed project work plan and budget. EMG is currently in consultation with UNEP as the Implementing Agency for the process of country consultations to draw up the detailed project documents.

Recommendation

11. The Meeting is invited to:

- **note** the progress with SoE activities
- **provide guidance** on future work of the EMG Division regarding SoE and related activities