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

## Twelfth meeting of the Noumea Convention

**Twelfth ordinary meeting of the contracting parties to the convention for the protection of the natural resources and environment of the South Pacific Region and related protocols (Noumea Convention)**

Majuro, Marshall Islands  
 26 September 2014

### Agenda item 7.7: Marine plastic litter

#### Purpose

1. To seek endorsement of the completed *Literature Review on Marine Debris Pollution in the Pacific*.

#### Background

2. Discarded plastic and other waste is considered one of the priority marine pollution issues facing the Pacific region. This view was reinforced by the 23rd SPREP Meeting in Noumea, New Caledonia, which called on SPREP to increase its management efforts in the area of marine plastic and litter. Discarded plastic materials are particularly harmful to the marine environment due to their exceptional durability and consequent accumulation, their ability to absorb toxic chemicals from the surrounding water and to subsequently leach toxic additives, and their potential to entangle or be ingested by marine fauna.
3. At the 11th Conference of the Parties for the Noumea Convention, held in Noumea, New Caledonia, 2012, a process was begun for identifying and prioritising activities to be undertaken for the region for that biennium using operational funds.

#### Funding availability

4. Marine litter pollution was prioritised by Members for intervention; with \$UD45,000.00 allocated from the Noumea Convention Operating Fund for this purpose to implement the following actions:
  - Action I: Completion of a background position paper on marine plastic litter, its status and priority recommendations for the Pacific region for consideration by the 2014 Noumea COP.
  - Action II: Further subsequent refinement of selected priority actions and implementation of at least two priority strategies that will result in improvements in information about, and management of marine litter in the Pacific region between 2014 and 2016.

## Current Status

5. SPREP has entered into a contract with the University of Auckland to develop a regional marine litter research programme and management intervention outline. A literature review describing the issues for the Pacific has been completed. Two sequential grants of \$US20K (total \$US40K) will support two areas of work that have management benefits for the Pacific. The first regional research project outline will be completed in December 2014 with implementation projected for completion in January 2016. The second regional project outline will be completed in February 2015 with implementation for completion in February 2017. The following work timetable outlines the status of progress.

### Work timetable

Date	Critical action	Responsible
Completed	Pacific litter action strategy development contract signed	SPREP/Auckland University
Completed partially	Regional status report and research programme outline completed	Auckland University
September 2014	Noumea COP	SPREP
December 2014	Regional research project outlines completed – Part 1	Auckland University
February 2015	Regional research project outlines completed – Part 2	Auckland University
January 2016	Research Project 1 completed	Auckland University
February 2017	Research Project 2 completed	Auckland University

## Recommendations

6. The Meeting is invited to:

- **endorse** the *Literature Review of Marine Debris Pollution Report in the Pacific* compiled by the Secretariat; and
- **note** the current status of implementation and **commit** to providing future assistance, resources and information as required.

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19 August, 2014

Annex 1: Literature Review Marine Debris Pollution in the Pacific