



PO Box 240, Apia, Samoa
E: sprep@sprep.org
T: +685 21929
F: +685 20231
W: www.sprep.org



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

Eighth Meeting of The Waigani Convention

Eighth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention to Ban the Importation into Forum Island Countries of Hazardous and Radioactive Wastes and to Control the Transboundary Movement and the Management of Hazardous Wastes within the South Pacific Region (Waigani Convention)

Apia, Samoa
18th September 2015

Agenda item 4.2: SCPRC-4 Meeting Report

Agenda item 1: Official Opening

1. The Fourth Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Pacific Regional Centre (SCPRC 4) for the joint implementation of the Basel and Waigani Conventions met in Apia, Samoa on 1st April 2015.
2. The Meeting was attended by the current members of the Steering Committee namely Fiji (Chair and Melanesian sub-regional representative), Kiribati (Deputy Chair and Micronesian sub-regional representative), and Cook Islands (Polynesian sub-regional representative). Both PNG and FSM served as invitees of the committee from the last meeting while Australia and New Zealand were absent. A list of participants is attached as Annex 1.
3. The Chair in opening the meeting welcomed the members to the meeting and informed the members that since the same issues had already been discussed in the STAC meeting, and if there were no new interventions, the recommendations of the agenda items should be endorsed.
4. The Secretariat welcomed the other observer countries to contribute through their sub-regional representatives.

Agenda item 2: Organisational Matters

5. The Secretariat introduced the rules of procedure for the SCPRC.
 - (a) *Rules of Procedure*
6. The Rules of Procedure for the meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Waigani Convention adopted at the First Conference of the Parties (COP1) apply *mutatis mutandis* to any subsidiary bodies to the Conference of the Parties (Rule 1) [refer to SCPRC4.WP.2]

(b) Organisation of work

7. English was the working language of the meeting and working documents were available only in English. The Secretariat tabled the agenda and reminded the meeting that the SCPRC was established to provide oversight to the running of the Pacific Regional Centre.

8. The Secretariat advised that a draft summary report would be prepared by the Secretariat for the approval of the Rapporteur and subsequent endorsement by the Meeting. The Committee also approved its working hours and programme of work.

(c) Election of Officers

9. The Secretariat drew the attention of the Meeting to the Rules of Procedure (Rule 22.3) on the selection of the Chair and pointed to the decision of COP 1 that authorized the SCPRC to elect its own Chairperson, Vice Chair and Rapporteur.

10. However as the current membership to the committee have not served out their two year term, there was no need to elect a new chair.

11. The Chairperson confirmed that the committee would continue with current Steering Committee members.

Agenda item 3: Adoption of the Agenda

12. The Secretariat in introducing the provisional meeting agenda informed the meeting that the agenda presented issues that had been highlighted as requiring noting and discussion by this meeting. It further informed the meeting that Parties were invited through the SPREP Circular 03/15 to provide any items that they wished to be included in the agenda for the meeting but none was received.

13. The Secretariat advised that if there was no additional new information on the agenda items from the prior day's meetings, then the meeting could be progressed in a more expedient fashion.

14. The sub-regional representative of Polynesia supported review of the agenda items from the previous day and agreed to move forward with the meeting and current agenda.

15. As there were no interventions, the meeting adopted the Agenda as presented.

Agenda item 4: Report on work done since COP-7

16. The Secretariat introduced the Reports on the status of decisions taken since COP-7 (SCPRC-5 - WP.04).

17. The Secretariat outlined the working relationship with the interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention which resulted in the hosting the first Pacific sub-regional workshop of the Minamata Convention. The meeting was successful in that the countries in the region were more aware of what they needed to do to become Parties to the convention and what type of assistance they could receive from the Convention in the management of mercury and mercury containing equipment. The deliberations during the workshop highlighted that mercury management is an important regional issue. The Secretariat further advised that only two countries in the region were signatories to the Convention and this allowed them to enjoy privileges including accessing the enabling activities funds more quickly than the non-signatories.

18. The Secretariat also advised that as part of the working relationship with the interim Secretariat, a regional project was now under development. The implementing agency will be UNEP while SPREP will be the Executing Agency. It further informed the meeting that Samoa had already signed its project document with UNDP and was about to commence the Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA) project.

19. The Parties were then encouraged to send their endorsement letters from the National GEF Focal Points and the commitment letters from the appropriate State Minister to the GEF CEO and the UNEP Executive Director to allow them to be part of the regional project. The Secretariat further added that in addition to the letters, Parties should complete the requested country information in the GEF Project Identification Form (PIF) and submit it to the interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention.

20. The Chair then requested the Secretariat to assist in following up with these letters to which the Secretariat advised that it was already doing this and will continue in the future.

21. The Secretariat strengthened its cooperation with the BCRC-China through the placement of two graduate students here at SPREP working with the Waste Management Division. The current plan now is to work on the placement of Pacific islanders on internships or training within the BCRC-China.

22. The Meeting was then invited to note the reports of the Secretariat and to provide feedback where necessary.

23. The representative of Papua New Guinea informed the meeting that it is his first time to attend the meeting and expressed regret toward not having fulfilled prior commitments and further expressed his willingness to actively participate in regional programmes in the future.

24. The Secretariat reviewed the lack of participation by many member countries in the STAC and SCPRC in the past, and reminded countries that participation from countries resulted in recommendations from the STAC and SCPRC meetings that are then forwarded to the Waigani Convention COP for approval to become part of the activities for the region. The Secretariat welcomed further participation from Papua New Guinea in the future.

25. The sub-regional representative of Polynesian reminded the Steering Committee that the report was reviewed yesterday and no further comments were given.

26. The sub-regional representative of Micronesia acknowledged and thanked the Secretariat for the report. He requested further information from the Chair and Secretariat on information in regards to the Minamata Convention.

27. The Secretariat confirmed that if the project was approved and implemented, it would be the executing agency with UNEP as the implementing agency. The Secretariat confirmed that it would assist countries with inventory development of mercury within countries, in addition to activities such as awareness raising, and infrastructure assessment reporting for mercury and wastes.

28. The sub-regional representative of Micronesia followed up with questions regarding the lack of prioritization of the Minamata Convention, and was interested in greater participation from other countries in the region to set the Minamata Convention as a priority.

29. The Secretariat reiterated that countries would need to submit ministerial letters to the GEF Secretariat and UNEP Secretariat if they wanted to be part of the regional project. The Secretariat also reminded countries that the PIF had been sent to all countries for country information insertion and

encouraged the Parties for this form to be returned to the interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention as quickly as possible.

30. The Chair further encouraged members to quickly submit their endorsement letters from the National GEF Focal Points and the commitment letters from the minister as soon as possible.

31. The representative of Papua New Guinea inquired about the timeframe for reporting for the Waigani Convention.

32. The Secretariat confirmed that reports are due by December of the end of the year but encouraged all Parties to complete them as quickly as possible. It further advised that USD\$50,000 was set aside for in-country assistance, and the Secretariat was prepared to assist countries on the national level. The 2014 reports can also be submitted now if they were completed.

33. The Chair requested Members to lodge these reports with the Secretariat.

34. The Chair noted that the rapporteur had not been nominated for the meeting.

35. The sub-regional representative of Polynesia, seconded by the sub-regional representative of Micronesia nominated FSM which was approved by the steering committee

Agenda item 5: GEF-PAS project

36. The Secretariat introduced the background on the GEF-PAS uPOPs project (SCPRC - WP.05) and advised that the information was as presented in the powerpoint presentation in the STAC meeting. It then made a presentation on the Used Oil Management component of the project.

37. The Secretariat informed the meeting that Fiji, Samoa and Vanuatu had completed pilot projects in auditing used oil management. Based on the audits, legislation and institutional reforms were developed in addition to the establishment of steering committees and management systems for used oil. Part of this work included cost-benefit analysis (CBA) for used oil and country specific management plans.

38. The Secretariat also provided technical assistance to Vanuatu, Samoa and Fiji to verify audit findings, and move forward with management. With the GEF-PAS project the Secretariat will carry out audits for 10 of the 11 remaining countries, with the exception of Papua New Guinea, to determine importation of used oil, disposal, and collection and reuse options, and what is occurring for used oil within countries. It further advised that the best option for used oil was for reuse within countries either voluntarily or by legislation. There were large amounts of used oil imported to countries and stored within countries. Melanesia alone has over 85% imported used oil, and Micronesia has the greatest amount of stored used oil. An option would thus be for the Micronesia region to send their used oil to the Melanesia region for reusing.

39. The Secretariat advised that it would like to establish used oil programmes in all the Pacific island countries. The Secretariat highlighted that it would like to see a unified stance from countries in moving forward with disposal of used oil within the region. One option is use of used oil as a diesel extender. A levy could be necessary for a system to work, which would lead to Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). The Secretariat requested feedback for used oil programmes by 17 April. Other activities include guidelines for training and management of used oil, which will be incorporated into Waigani Convention training.

40. The Chair thanked the Secretariat for the presentation on the project component for used oil, and then invited the meeting to note the project brief of the Secretariat and to provide feedback on what their specific national priorities are with respect to the GEF-PAS uPOPs project

41. The sub-regional representative of Micronesia expressed interest in the used oil programme, and expressed regret at not having been a part of the pilot programme, and requested more information on how the three countries were selected and how Kiribati could become more involved.

42. The Secretariat clarified that the selection of pilot countries was based upon ongoing progress of used oil, need for assistance, existing imports of used oil, and representation of different countries. The Secretariat confirmed that the same benefits afforded to the three pilot countries would be shared with other member countries. The Secretariat stated that it experienced challenges in clarifying actual imports of used oil, through customs, clearance data, and companies and reviewed some methodologies.

43. The representative of Papua New Guinea communicated a lack of data on used oil in his country and expressed interest in further country participation in this programme.

44. The Chair asked the Secretariat to share some of the challenges faced by the countries in the pilot programme.

45. The Secretariat stated that the key was institutional reform, and ensuring solutions were in place.

46. The representative of Papua New Guinea agreed with the Secretariat on the challenges including communication. PNG is willing to assist in the data processing and was looking at ways to become more actively engaged.

47. The representative of FSM requested more information on shipping, and who would handle the costs.

48. The Secretariat stated that it currently didn't know what the mechanism would be, but would explore options for a combined shipment for the North Pacific due to proximities between member countries and Asia where used oil had been shipped in the past.

49. The sub-regional representative of Micronesia stated that his country was currently exporting their used oil to India with the observation of using Basel Convention process.

Agenda item 6: PacWaste Project

50. The Secretariat introduced a description of the PacWaste project (SCPRC-4 - WP.06) and advised that the details of the project had been presented to the STAC meeting the day before. The Secretariat advised that the project was funded by the European Union and commenced in 2013 with a 4 year life span and was administered by SPREP in up to 14 Pacific Island countries plus Timor Leste. The project targeted improved management of hazardous wastes (asbestos, healthcare waste and E-waste) and an atoll solid waste management pilot (RMI)

51. The Meeting was then invited to discuss the project brief of the Secretariat and to provide feedback on what their specific national priorities were with respect to the PacWaste project

52. The sub-regional representative of Micronesia requested more information toward e-waste training and assistance under the PacWaste project.

53. The Secretariat responded that the interventions under this project were varied. The countries involved in this component would receive more support and assistance including the development of inventories at the national level. The Secretariat commended Kiribati on its handling of e-waste. It added that training will be conducted as part of the project, but the project will primarily focus on establishment of a system for hazardous waste management.

54. The representative of Papua New Guinea requested assistance for specific national policy development on e-waste as all that is currently available is the Environment Act which was very general. In terms of asbestos, he emphasized interest and other components particularly training, information sharing and capacity building within the country. Similarly for healthcare waste, there was interest in an environment permit system. He further shared his interest in the establishment of a management system where guidelines will be developed.

55. The Secretariat noted the issues raised by the representative of PNG and encouraged him to liaise further with the project management on specific assistance.

56. The Chair recommended countries to submit their national priorities for PacWaste to the Secretariat as agreed previously.

Agenda 7: New Terms of Reference for the Steering Committee and improving the functions of the SCPRC

57. The Secretariat presented a new TOR to improve the functions of SPCRC.

58. The Chair requested discussions on the new TOR and how the functions of the Committee could be improved.

59. The representative of from Papua New Guinea asked about the outcomes of the steering committee and where they were going in its reporting.

60. The Secretariat clarified that the outcomes of the steering committee were forwarded to the Waigani Convention COP where a formal decision was made on the endorsed recommendations.

61. The representative of Papua New Guinea then requested if this could be shown in the form of a structure or flow-chart clearly outlining how the reporting structures worked for him to understand

62. The Secretariat advised that it could be done but asked for guidance by countries for assistance in order to improve Waigani and Basel conventions at the national level.

63. The Chair asked for agreement on sharing the reporting structure which was approved.

64. The Chair and the sub-regional representative for Polynesia then asked the Secretariat on how participation could be improved in the future to include Australia and New Zealand.

65. The Secretariat advised that the Chairpersons of the committees (of STAC, SCPRC and COP) would need to write to Australia and New Zealand, with the Secretariat assisting in providing technical advice. Communication is needed between the Parties, but the Secretariat is available for assistance.

66. The sub-regional representative of Polynesia restated the importance to follow up on this, as well as the importance of assistance from the Secretariat.

67. The Secretariat advised that the concerns by the countries about the absence of Australia and New Zealand from two consecutive meetings to be highlighted in the reports which will go to the COP. As done in the last COP meeting, the chairperson of the STAC or the SCPRC would then talk to this agenda item at the COP level. In addition, major regional recommendations as endorsed by the STAC and SCPRC need to be covered effectively in terms of progress at the COP meeting.

68. The Secretariat called the meeting's attention to bullet point 8 of the TOR regarding yearly meetings of the SCPRC. That would be a change from the tradition of having it every two years but held back to back with the STAC meeting. If this was agreed to, then a mechanism needed to be agreed to for such meetings including virtual or electronic meeting.

69. The representative of FSM supported a meeting by the steering committee the same year as the STAC and the COP highlighting the importance to align all three meetings.

70. The Chair asked the Steering Committee whether the preference was for annual meetings or every two years.

71. The sub-regional representative of Polynesia suggested that the issue is not so much annual meetings but the importance of holding meetings when, where and as when needed. This was agreed to by the representative of Papua New Guinea.

72. The Chair confirmed that meetings would be held back to back with the STAC and other meetings in alternate years - which could be conducted virtually.

73. The Secretariat stated that a reason for yearly meetings was to have a continuous dialogue with the Secretariat in terms of how the business plan was being implemented. The Secretariat highlighted the importance of more regular communication between the committee members and the Secretariat. Such a regular update needed to be demanded by member countries.

74. The representative of FSM thanked the Secretariat for a well-informed statement on the Convention and requested consideration of a portal on the Waigani Convention for both updates and notifications for all member countries.

75. The Chair then suggested that quarterly updates on the implementation of the Business Plan from the Secretariat be prepared and sent out to inform all of the members.

76. The Secretariat asked for greater participation from both chairpersons of the STAC and Steering Committee in the overseeing of the activities of the Centre.

77. The representative of FSM advised that it would be beneficial for countries to receive quarterly report updates.

78. The Secretariat advised that it would be happy to provide these regular updated but further requested assistance for information from countries to assist with the development of the next business plan. The Secretariat wanted to be directed by countries on what they would like to see go into the business plan. No input would indicate to the global and regional community that everything was fine when in fact some of the countries were struggling with the implementation of the Waigani and Basel Conventions.

79. The sub-regional representative of Micronesia recognized that each country has its own waste management strategy and asked if they could share their own waste management strategy as part of the submission of national priority issues as requested by the Secretariat.

80. The Secretariat informed the steering Committee that the regional plan was in alignment with national plans and that these can be submitted. However it advised that the Pacific regional center focused on hazardous and chemical waste and not general waste management which was broader. Hazardous waste management however can be extracted from national plans and submitted to the Secretariat.

81. The new TOR and actions to be taken are noted.

Agenda 8: National Priorities

82. The Chair stated that member country national priorities should be submitted by 30th of April and members were requested to take note of this. The Steering Committee adopted national priorities and agreed to move on to next agenda item.

83. The Secretariat shared that assistance is needed from member countries to share information from STAC chair and Steering Committee to respective sub-regional member countries.

Agenda 9: Cooperation with other institutions

84. The Secretariat met with Dr. Rolph Payet, Executive Director of the BRS Secretariat and noted he is well aware of the Waigani Convention Secretariat's work and the relationship between SPREP and the BRS Secretariat. The Secretariat alluded to the strengthened BRC/China relationship and noted further opportunities for more collaboration with internships in China for the Pacific region. There is also an opportunity for countries to participate in the 10th ICWMT meeting with an invitation anticipated for the region shortly.

85. The Secretariat further advised that other cooperation involved work with other regional organizations such as SPC and FNU, the SAICM Secretariat, UNEP on the ODS project and the opening of the regional UNEP office, which had much potential for future cooperation and work.

86. The Chair asked the Secretariat about the one day regional workshop in November 2013 within the report agenda, as not coinciding with last year. This was noted for correction in the report as this was the inception of the GEF-PAS project and STAC working papers.

87. The meeting then noted the report

Agenda 10: 2016-17 Business Plan BRC

88. The Secretariat outlined the work of the STAC meeting under this Agenda item, including discussion of the budget. It was noted again that only 2% budget that is currently unsecured involves the mercury work which is under development. Last year was the first year that the Regional Center presented a business plan where funds was fully secured.

89. The Chair asked members to consider and endorse the business plan.

90. The sub-regional representative of Micronesia sought clarification in regards to the budget. He asked about whether these figures were confirmed, which the Secretariat confirmed, in addition to whether some figures are still under development. He further enquired why there was no figures in the "CORE" section of the budget.

91. The Secretariat stated that the core services that the Center provides for the parties are all paid for by SPREP, and this was reflected in the budget.

92. The sub-regional representative of Micronesia asked what specific assistance could be provided by the Secretariat under the various projects as outlined in the budget.

93. The Secretariat responded that the projects were all covered by GEF-PAS and PacWaste. The work on mercury management was still being developed and offered to provide the delegates with the outcomes of the projects if interested.

94. The representative of FSM asked about donors who provide technical assistance apart from funding services.

95. The Secretariat confirmed that technical assistance is typically handled more by institutions like UNEP; they could bring experts on the ground as part of project implementation. The Secretariat used an example of Australian government support of the POPs and PICs project and suggested that FSM could negotiate with donors as to financial or technical assistance where appropriate and needed.

96. The sub-regional representative of Micronesia asked about mercury management, and the \$100,000USD allocation under UNEP.

97. The Secretariat confirmed that this was not under UNEP but under JICA negotiations for a mercury management project, and but there may be potential UNEP money.

98. The meeting then endorsed the Business Plan for the Pacific Regional Centre.

Agenda 11: Other Business

99. The Secretariat reiterated the importance for member countries to share where and what type of assistance is needed from the Secretariat. The Secretariat already has identified potential areas for assistance and encouraged Parties to submit their priorities and problems to the Secretariat in order to identify areas for assistance.

100. The representative of FSM noted the timeframe of their Compact Agreement with the U.S., which will come to an end in 2023. The representative was interested in a shift from education of people within country to programs that focus on economic incentives within the context of sustainable development and how this can be applied for FSM.

Agenda 12: Date and venue of next meeting

101. The Chair invited members for recommendations of date and venue of the next meeting. The Steering Committee agreed on holding a meeting which is back to back with the next STAC. The venue is in Kingdom of Tonga and the date will be confirmed for the next meeting.

Agenda 13: Adoption of the Meeting Record

102. The meeting adopted the record of meeting as a true record of the meeting.

Agenda 14: Closure of the meeting

103. The Secretariat thanked all the members and encouraged all Parties to take the time to prepare their national priorities and submit them to the Secretariat in a timely manner.

104. The Deputy Chair in his closing remarks requested if the working papers for future meetings be sent out earlier to allow for discussion at the national levels before the meeting.

105. The Chair in her closing remarks thanked everyone for the contribution and thanked the Secretariat for organising the meeting and wished everyone and safe journey home.

Annex 1 – List of participants

Country	Name and details of participants
Cook Islands (Sub-regional representative of Polynesia)	<p>Mr. Vavia Tangatataia Manager - Advisory & Compliance Division National Environment Service (Tu'anga Taporoporo) PO Box 371, Rarotonga COOK ISLANDS T: (682) 21256 M: (682) 55500 F: (682) 22256 E: vavia.tangatatai@cookislands.gov.ck</p>
Federated States of Micronesia	<p>Mr. Pattie Pedrus Sustainable Development Planner Office of Environment and Emergency Management (OEEM) Palikir, Pohnpei FSM 96941 FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA P: (691) 320 8814/8815 M: (691) 320 2289 F: (691) 320 8536 E: pattiwarm@gmail.com</p>
Fiji (Sub-regional representative of Melanesia)	<p>Ms. Laisani Lewanavanua Senior Environment Officer Waste Management and Pollution Control Unit Department of Environment PO Box 2109 Suva, FIJI ISLANDS T: (679) 311699 M: (679) 8640152 F: (679) 3312879 E: laisani.lewanavanua@govnet.gov.fj</p>
Kiribati (Sub-regional representative of Micronesia)	<p>Mr. Taulehia Pulefou Senior Environment Officer Environment and Conservation Division Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agriculture Development PO Box 234, Beikenibeu Tarawa, KIRIBATI P: (686) 284 25/280 00 F: (686) 283 34 E: taulehiap@environment.gov.ki</p>
Papua New Guinea	<p>Mr. Brendan Balthazaar Trawen Senior Scientific Officer Environment Permit, Regulatory Services, Environment Protection Wing Department of Environment & Conservation PO Box 6601 Boroko, National Capital District PAPUA NEW GUINEA P: (675) 301 4543 F: (675) 320 0182 E: btrawen@dec.gov.pg</p>

Observers:

Country	Name and details of participants
Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI)	<p>Ms. Morina Mook Chief of Waste and Pollutants Republic of Marshall Islands Environment Protection Authority PO Box 1322 Majuro, MH 96960 REPUBLIC OF MARSHALL ISLANDS P: (692) 625 3035/5203 F: (692) 625 5202 E: mookey15@gmail.com; morinamook@rmiepa.com</p>
Nauru	<p>Mr. Creiden Paul Fritz Director Department of Commerce, Industry and Environment NAURU P: M: F: E: creiden.fritz@gmail.com</p>
Niue	<p>Ms. Trinya Luina Enamoe Vilila Waste Management Officer Department of Environment Ministry of Natural Resources Fonuakula, Alofi NIUE ISLAND P: (683) 4021 E: luina.vilila@mail.gov.nu</p>
Samoa	<p>Mr. Lucie Isaia Senior Officer Chemicals & Hazardous Waste Management Divisions Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) Private Bag Apia SAMOA T: +685 27200 F: +685 23 176 E: lucie.isaia@mnre.gov.ws</p> <p>Mr. Seumanu Mikaele Teofilo Senior Landfill Officer Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Apia SAMOA P: (685) 222 67/222 81/672 00 F: (685) 23176 E: mikaeleteofilo@gmail.com</p>
Solomon Islands	<p>Mr. Joe Horokou Director - Environment and Conservation Division Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology PO Box 21 Honiara SOLOMON ISLANDS P: (677) 230 31/230 32 F: (677) 28054 E: horokoujoe@gmail.com</p>

Tonga	<p>Ms. Mafile'o Masi Senior Environmentalist Head of Waste Management and Pollution Control Section Ministry of Lands, Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources PO Box 5, Vuna Road Nuku'alofa TONGA T: (676) 25050 F: (676) 23216 E: mafileo.masi@gmail.com</p>
Tuvalu	<p>Ms. Tavau Vaaiia Simeona Information and Knowledge Management Officer Department of Environment Vaiaku, Funafuti TUVALU P: (688) 20179 E: tavau.simeona@giz.de; tvaaia@gov.tv</p>

Secretariat:

Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP)	<p>Dr. David Haynes Director – Waste Management and Pollution Control E: davidh@sprep.org</p> <p>Dr. Frank Griffin Hazardous Waste Management Adviser E: frankg@sprep.org</p> <p>Mr. Anthony Talouli Pollution Control Adviser E: anthonyt@sprep.org</p> <p>Ms. Kelsey Richardson Marine Pollution Assistant/Intern E: kelseyr@sprep.org</p> <p>Ms. Lusiana Ralogaivau GEF-PAS uPOPs Project Coordinator E: lusianar@sprep.org</p> <p>Ms. Qiyang Kuang BCRC-China student/intern E: kuangqiyang@gmail.com</p> <p>Ms. Wang Chang BCRC-China student/intern E: wangchang2015@gmail.com</p> <p>Mrs. Pulemalie Habiri Divisional Assistant E: pulemalieh@gmail.com</p> <p>Address: PO Box 240 Apia Samoa P: +685 21929 Fax: +685 20231</p>
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