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Sent: 07 September 2017 20:02
To: Joseph Brider
Cc: McNee, Andrew; Fieg, Sarah; Pentony, Alannah; Broomhall, Sara; Callister, Deb; Sandra I'Anson (DFAT); Tandy, Amelia; Wolnicki, Mat; Richard Bontjer (richard.bontjer@dfat.gov.au); Ray Bojczuk (Fiji post); Callister, Deb; Heaton, Suzi
Subject: FW: SPREP Meeting 2017 - Proposed Member Paper on Pacific Wide Ban on Asbestos [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Kia Orana Joseph

Apologies for the delayed response. I am pleased to advise that:

- Australia supports and is willing to sponsor the Cook Islands' proposal for a Pacific wide ban on asbestos.
- The proposal is consistent with Australia's strong domestic ban on asbestos.
- Australia would be happy to share its experience with banning asbestos with Pacific countries.

Unfortunately we are not in a position to provide direct funding for implementation of a ban at this point in time. We are however, committed to continuing to support SPREP with funding to assist Pacific Island countries with improving standards of environmental management throughout the Pacific, including waste management and pollution control.

We have no comments on the draft paper.

Kind regards, Sharon

Sharon Lane

Acting Director

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Subject: SPREP Meeting 2017 - Proposed Member Paper on Pacific Wide Ban on Asbestos

Kia Orana SPREP Colleagues

As the SPREP Focal Point for Cook Islands and in anticipation of the upcoming SPREP meeting in Samoa, I would like provide a proposed advanced draft paper for pre-consideration and discussion at the upcoming SPREP meeting. The paper is for a Proposed Pacific Wide Ban on Asbestos, and follows on from discussions held at the SPREP Meeting in Niue on such a ban. AS you may recall from the Niue meeting that there were questions raised on the provision of capacity to enforce such a ban and possible trade implications of such as ban. The Cook Islands believes that following successful discussions around the PacWaste 2 and EU funding and a review of WTO and WHO policies and discussions on asbestos, that the time is right to continue dialogue on this matter.

Accordingly, I would like to provide this opportunity for SPREP members to review the advanced draft and provide comment or guidance on improvements or areas requiring further discussion.

We have provided some supporting documentation on types of products in the region (through the NZ Asbestos survey), a summary of public statements made by SPREP members in support of such a ban and case studies on the WTO negotiations and challenges to a ban (page 84 of the WHO and WTO Report).

It is anticipated that such a ban would provide the foundation to regulate the importation of asbestos and asbestos products into the SPREP Pacific countries and territories. It is proposed that the PacWaste 2 project being negotiated by SPREP would provide the capacity to put in place national level monitoring regimes to manage new imports and the ban would provide a basis to support the disposal of existing stockpiles within countries. The ban would be a statement from SPREP members that the impacts of asbestos on the health of small islands and small communities are too great and in order for us to manage it, we need to exclude it altogether.

I look forward to your comments to improve, adapt and if you are in a position to do, letters of support.

Kind Regards and Kia Manuia



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