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

CIRCULAR

FILE: AP 4/2/13/1

TO: SPREP National Focal Points

DATE: 19 April 2012

CIRCULAR: 12/31

SUBJECT: Access and Benefit Sharing Meeting (ABS), 22 – 24 May 2012, Apia, Samoa

SPREP in partnership with the ABS Capacity Development Initiative and the Australian Government wishes to invite your ABS focal point to the above-captioned meeting. This meeting follows on from the first meeting held in March this year. **It would be beneficial if the same person attended.**

Background

The ABS Capacity Development Initiative – a multi-donor initiative hosted by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) – has been implemented by GIZ (German Development Cooperation) since 2006. Following the adoption of the Nagoya Protocol in 2010, the European Union tasked and funded GIZ to expand the ABS Initiative beyond its focus on Africa to include the Caribbean and the Pacific countries of ACP Group of States. The Australian Government has generously agreed to provide parallel funding in 2012 to the activities of the ABS Initiative in the Pacific region.

An initial assessment of ABS implementation and related capacity development needs in the Pacific region highlighted the important role of the regional organisations in providing support to national implementation of international treaties and agreements. Marine bioprospecting and cutting edge research on marine genetic resources are highly relevant for the region. Food security depends on safeguarding the genetic diversity of relevant crops such as taro in gene banks as well as in situ. Coherent implementation of the Nagoya Protocol and the International Treaty for Plant Genetic resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) at the national and regional level is therefore of importance to ensure on the one side the sharing of benefits from the utilization of genetic resources and on the other side allow for the exchange of germplasm in the case of emergencies as well as for the adaptation of varieties/breeds in light of climate change induced environmental changes, such as salinity, heat, droughts and floods.



Objectives of the workshop

- To provide a briefing on the international process
- To assess the status of ratification/accession in the region
- To share case studies
- To discuss obligations under the Protocol and sources of assistance
- To discuss collaborative arrangements within the region

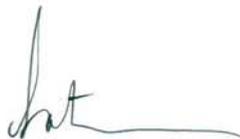
Participants should come prepared to discuss their local situation. A meeting Agenda will follow shortly.

Logistical arrangements

Funding will be provided for the attendance of one representative per country. Limited funding is available to sponsor travel costs of delegates from Pacific Island Territories. Please indicate to us whether you require such support.

Countries are kindly requested to fill in the attached nomination form with official letter and send to Theresa Fruean-Afa (theresaf@sprep.org) no later than 30 April 2012 in order for travel to be arranged. For enquiries please contact Clark Peteru (clarkp@sprep.org).

Yours sincerely



Kosi Latu
Deputy Director General

Attach:

KL/cp/tf