

A monthly e-bulletin from the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

## MESSAGE FROM MR. KOSI LATU, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF SPREP

Talofa from the SPREP campus,

This month, we hosted what was to be the last annual SPREP meeting of officials in Apia, and the first meeting under the new SPREP Strategic Plan 2017–2026. The SPREP meeting will henceforth be a biannual event which will be hosted in Apia. Some of the more notable outcomes from this year's SPREP meeting was the proposal to ban the importation of microbeads, which can be found in most household and cosmetic products and is a common pollutant, into the Pacific.

A proposal to advance work on banning or restricting the importation, re-use and re-sale of products and wastes containing asbestos in the Pacific islands was also agreed to by the representatives of the 21 Pacific island and five metropolitan members of SPREP at the 28th SPREP Meeting.

I congratulate all our SPREP members and our SPREP staff for what was a very successful meeting, and I hope you all enjoy reading some of the outcomes in this issue of the SPREP-Tok.

Soifua,



Mr. Kosi Latu, Director General of SPREP.

## SPREP-Tok LATEST NEWS



### TWENTY-EIGHTH SPREP MEETING OF OFFICIALS OPENS

The Twenty-Eighth SPREP Meeting opened in Samoa marking a new era for the premiere regional environment organisation and its Members. This is the first SPREP Meeting to be held under the new SPREP Strategic Plan 2017–2026, and the last annual meeting as the SPREP meeting transitions to a biannual event.

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SPREP Director General, Mr Kosi Latu, speaking at the opening of the Twenty Eighth SPREP Meeting of Officials. Photo: SPREP



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**Our vision:** A resilient Pacific environment sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.



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## HELPING THE PACIFIC MAKE OUR OCEAN SAFER AND HEALTHIER FOR ALL: SUPPORT PROVIDED FOR THE CAPE TOWN AGREEMENT ON THE SAFETY OF FISHING VESSELS



Apia Port and Palolo Deep, Upolu, Samoa. Photo: Stuart Chape

It's literally in the hands of countries including the Pacific islands that a combined effort can help make a global difference to the lives of fishermen at sea and the health of our oceans. Studies by the International Labour Organization point to at least 24,000 deaths of fishermen at sea each year

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## OCEANIA RALLIES TOGETHER FOR MIGRATORY SPECIES CONSERVATION



Blue shark. Photo: Jim Abernethy

Amplifying the Pacific Voice as Oceania countries endeavour to protect migratory species on the global stage was at the core of a three day meeting in August. Australia, Cook Islands, New Zealand, Philippines and Samoa came together to strategically prepare for the next Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) to take place in October.

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## PACIFIC COLOUR AT ASIA-PACIFIC MINISTERIAL FORUM ON THE ENVIRONMENT



Delegates wearing the flowers created by the students of A'oga Fiamalamalama in Samoa.

Delegates from 56 countries at the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Forum on the Environment saw Pacific colour and ingenuity on display in Bangkok this week. Upcycled fabric and paper flowers, made using secondhand materials by students at Aoga Fiamalamalama, a school based in Samoa, were used as part of the UN Environment Pacific booth at the Forum showcasing Pacific solutions to pollution and environmental management.

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## MEETING OF THE NOUMEA CONVENTION, AN INSTRUMENT FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE PACIFIC'S NATURAL RESOURCES, TAKES PLACE IN APIA



Participants of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Noumea Convention held in Apia, Samoa. Photo: SPREP

The Fourteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Noumea Convention, for which SPREP is the Secretariat, held its meeting in September with the presence of nine of its members – Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, France, Republic of the Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and the United States of America.

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## EQUIPPING NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT MONITORING



Director of the Cook Islands National Environment Service, Mr Joseph Brider. Photo: SPREP

Four countries launched national publications today at the Pacific Environment Forum, detailing the state of environment and national strategies for environmental management. The importance of periodic stocktaking exercises for Pacific islands, such as State of Environment (SOE) reports and National Environment Management Strategies (NEMS), was highlighted during the launching of national environmental planning and monitoring tools at a side event at the Pacific Environment Forum in Apia, Samoa in September.

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## NEW REGIONAL NODE FOR MARINE LITTER PREVENTION



SPREP Director General, Mr Kosi Latu. Photo: SPREP

SPREP has been recognised as the Pacific regional node for the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML). The GPML is a global partnership gathering international agencies, Governments, NGOs, academia, private sector, civil society and individuals.

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## SPREP LAUNCHES 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

SPREP has launched its 2016 Annual Report, which was tabled at the recently completed Twenty-Eighth SPREP Meeting of Officials held in Apia, Samoa. The Report, available in both English and French outlines the activities and projects implemented with members and partners in 2016 as the region strives to achieve the SPREP vision – *A resilient Pacific environment that sustains our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.*

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## PACIFIC PROPOSES MICROBEADS BAN



Mr. Jean-Luc Fauré-Tournaire, Deputy Permanent Representative of France to SPREP and Pacific Community (SPC). Photo: SPREP

France proposed a ban on plastic microbeads at the 28th annual meeting of SPREP members in Samoa in September. Microbeads are commonly used and shipped as a starting material used to remelt and form larger plastic objects, but the microbeads are easily lost and are a common pollutant.

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## EMPOWERING EQUALITY IN ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Success in building healthy ecosystems relies on the



Hon. Taefu Lemi Taefu, Associate Minister for the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Samoa. Photo: SPREP

whole society, including women, children and other groups vulnerable to climate change, disaster and environmental degradation. The UN Environment and SPREP hosted a high-level dialogue on gender and environment as part of a training for equality-driven project development from 26–29 September in Apia.

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