

MESSAGE FROM MR. KOSI LATU, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF SPREP

Talofa and welcome to this very first issue of SPREP-*Tok* for 2018.

We have hit the ground running this year, with a lot of new developments happening at the Secretariat. Our new SPREP organisational structure under our new Strategic Plan has come into effect, which will ensure that we deliver effectively on our strategic priorities through support services to meet the priority needs of SPREP Members.

One notable event that took place in the Pacific this month was the Vanuatu plastic bag ban legislation coming into effect on the first week of February. Given the increased global interest on micro-plastics, SPREP members like Vanuatu are demonstrating the political will to take appropriate action in the right direction. I would like to congratulate and applaud the government and people of Vanuatu on this tremendous initiative.

The PacWaste Plus project was also signed in February in Suva, Fiji, and now becomes SPREP's biggest project to date, with the European Union committing €17 million in resources to the project, which will address hazardous waste management in the Pacific.

This year, SPREP is celebrating its 25th birthday, which we believe is a great cause for celebration as the organisation has surely come a long way since its establishment. We have a range of activities planned to commemorate this milestone, as we look back on our journey over the last 25 years, and look ahead with anticipation to the years to come.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the SPREP-Tok.

Until next month, soifua.



Mr. Kosi Latu, Director General of SPREP.

SPREP-Tok LATEST NEWS



NANIKAI VILLAGE TALKS RESILIENCE TO OCEAN ACIDIFICATION

The village of Nanikai in Kiribati have embarked on work to strengthen their resilience to the impacts of ocean acidification, with the first step being an inception workshop for the New Zealand Pacific Partnership on Ocean Acidification (NZPPOA) project.

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Workshop participants posing for a quick group photo.
Photo: S.Langton

NEW METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE ESTABLISHED IN TOKELAU



Tokelau Minister of Economic Development, Natural Resources and Environment, Hon. Kelisiano Kalolo, with SPREP Director General, Mr Kosi Latu during the handover of equipment for the Tokelau Meteorological Office. Photo: S.Seuseu/SPREP

The Pacific Meteorological Desk Partnership (PMDP) officially handed over Meteorological instruments to the newly established Met office of Tokelau, leading to the re-establishment of Meteorological monitoring programs for the island atoll.

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VANUATU PLASTIC BAG BAN NOW IN EFFECT



Tanna Island, Vanuatu. Photo: Stuart Chape

In a bid to protect its marine life and also manage the problem of plastic litter and pollution around its islands, the Vanuatu government passed a legislation to ban the use, manufacture and importation of single-use plastic bags in the country.

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PROTECTED AREAS IN THE PACIFIC BENEFIT FROM IUCN-SPREP PARTNERSHIP



Marine Protected Area, Chelbacheb, Palau. Photo: Stuart Chape

Pacific island countries are demonstrating global leadership in their actions to help halt the world's biodiversity loss through the establishment of Protected Areas.

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A RESILIENT ENVIRONMENT THROUGH ENHANCED DECISION MAKING IN NAURU



Mr Bryan Starr of Nauru at the workshop in Nauru. Photo: SPREP

Nauru's Department of Commerce, Industry and Environment along with other key stakeholders are taking steps to be more informed to support environmental planning, forecasting and reporting with the Inform project inception meeting taking place in February.

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NIUE GETS READY FOR ENHANCED ACCESS TO CLIMATE FINANCE



The Green Climate Fund (GCF) Niue Readiness Project has officially commenced, with the launch of the Project at an inception workshop held at the Matavai resort in Niue on 9 February 2018.

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SAMOA SHOWCASED AT PACIFIC OCEAN, PACIFIC CLIMATE CONFERENCE IN WELLINGTON



Hon Tuila'epa Dr Sa'ilele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister of Samoa.

The stark realities of climate change were laid bare at the opening of the Pacific Ocean, Pacific Climate Conference in Wellington in February. Calls from Prime Minister of Samoa for urgent action were made as climate change was put under the microscope during the conference.

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PALOLO UNDER THE MICROSCOPE AT PACIFIC OCEAN, PACIFIC CLIMATE CONFERENCE



Eunice (palolo) viridis.

Some know of it as *Eunice Viridis*, Samoans know of it as palolo. Either way it was this Samoan delicacy and the possibility of its extinction that found its way to centre stage at the Pacific Ocean, Pacific Climate Conference.

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Blue Shark. Photo courtesy of Jim Abernethy.

VANUATU DEVELOPMENT SECTORS AND COMMUNITY TO BENEFIT FROM \$20.5M GREEN CLIMATE FUND PROJECT



Emua Village, Efate Island, Vanuatu. Photo: Stuart Chape.

Key development and community sectors in Vanuatu are set to benefit from the USD 20.5 million Green Climate Fund (GCF) project, launched in Port Vila in February.

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SOLOMON ISLANDS NEW ENVIRONMENT PORTAL



Ms Debra Kereseka Potakana of MECDM receives training on the Inform project data portal in Solomon Islands from Mr Paul Anderson of SPREP. Photo: W.Isenhower/SPREP

A single portal, which can house all environmental information in Solomon Islands for better planning and reporting, was established as part of the Inform project with SPREP.

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ENFORCING SHARK AND RAY PROTECTION IN SAMOA

Between 63 to 273 million sharks are killed each year in commercial fisheries to meet the high demand for shark fins. In Samoa, sharks are protected under the implementation of Shark Sanctuary Provisions with the Marine Wildlife Protection Regulation 2018.

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