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**AGENDA ITEM 12.2.2:**

**Beyond the Ratification of the Nagoya Protocol:  
Proposed Phase 2 for Pacific ABS Project**

**Purpose of Paper**

1. To seek approval for the development of a second phase of the current GEF funded SPREP executed Regional ABS Project (Regional ABS Project) to be financed from the GEF 7 STAR allocations of the 14<sup>1</sup> Pacific Islands countries who are currently participating in the Regional ABS Project.

**Background**

2. The current ABS Regional Project is being implemented by UN Environment and executed by SPREP in 14 PICs. The duration of the second phase is proposed for 2021-2024.
3. The following progress has been made towards meeting the current project objectives:
  - Ratification of the Nagoya Protocol by Palau, Tuvalu, and the Solomon Islands, bringing the total of Pacific island country Parties to the Nagoya Protocol to eight<sup>2</sup>.
  - Development of ABS regulations (first in the Pacific) for Palau, and the formulation and review of ABS policies for Fiji, Marshall Islands, Samoa, Kiribati, Vanuatu and Cook Islands.
  - Development of roadmaps for ABS implementation for Palau, Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Cook Islands and Vanuatu through capacity building workshops and one-to-one meetings conducted during the country visits.
  - Preparing a general drafting instruction on how countries can develop ABS Laws and specific instructions for Fiji, Cook Islands, Palau and Tonga.
  - Partnerships fostered with organisations and initiatives including the GIZ ABS Initiative, Japan Biodiversity Fund, International Law Development Organisation, UNDP, IUCN, USP, SPC, University of NSW and governments through two specialised regional training workshops on capacity building in specific areas of implementing the Nagoya Protocol.
4. Capacity building training was undertaken in 11<sup>3</sup> countries attended by approximately 350 government, NGO staff and community representatives with more than 55% of participants being women. SPREP conducted assessments on the current and future capacity building needs and support towards information sharing, reporting and monitoring of ABS issues including the ABS Clearing House (ABS-CH). Part of the capacity building work is also aimed at strengthening regional collaboration such as south-south exchanges, academic institutions and research organisations based within PICs and working with indigenous and local communities especially those involved with traditional knowledge, innovation and practices.

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<sup>1</sup> Cook Islands, FSM, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

<sup>2</sup> FSM, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

<sup>3</sup> Cook Islands, FSM, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

5. Consistent with the outcomes of the COP-MOP 3 which was held in Egypt in 2018 and the Decision NP-3/8 endorsed by the Parties regarding the financial mechanism for the Nagoya Protocol, SPREP encourages PICs to prioritize another access and benefit-sharing project from the seventh-replenishment of the GEF national allocations under the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) as a Phase II of the ABS Regional Project.
6. The proposed Phase II of the Regional ABS Project will highlight activities that are drawn from the consultations and capacity building needs assessment conducted by the SPREP ABS Team during country visits in 2018-19. There are various activities that have been identified as part of the full implementation of ABS from 2018-2020 periods. However, the need to acquire financial resources and a financial resources-mobilisation plan must be adopted as early as possible. Early engagement with SPREP in ensuring some funds are reserved for ABS work is one of the strategies to ensure Nagoya Protocol related activities will be sustained and the momentum established in the current GEF-6 project is maintained. While the current project is being successfully implemented, the scale of what is required to address ABS issues in the region will benefit from a second phase of the project.
7. Some areas highlighted for the second phase of the project are:
  - Building the capacity of indigenous and local communities (ILCs), and relevant stakeholders, including the business sector and the research community to negotiate for equitable sharing of benefits from the utilisation of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge.
  - Development (or revision) of national measures to implement and comply with the obligations of the Protocol.
  - Establishment of trust funds (from the monetary benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources and traditional knowledge) for the purpose of conservation and sustainable development.
    1. To develop a Strategy and Action Plan for Implementation of ABS within each PIC within each PIC either by incorporating in the existing NBSAP's or standalone as per the needs and position of the countries.

## Recommendation

8. The Meeting is invited to:
  1. **approve** the development of a second phase of the current GEF funded SPREP executed Regional ABS Project; and
  2. **agree** in line with the Decision NP-3/8 of the Nagoya COP MOP for Pacific Island Countries to each contribute from within their national STAR allocations of the 7<sup>th</sup> replenishment of GEF at least US\$300,000 for a second phase of the regional ABS Project.

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26 July, 2019