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## **AGENDA ITEM 6.1:**

### **Framework for Pacific Regionalism**

#### **Purpose:**

1. To provide an update on the 'review of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism and other Council of the Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) prioritisation initiatives.

#### **Background:**

2. The Framework for Pacific Regionalism (FRP) was endorsed by Forum Leaders in 2014, following the 2013 Pacific Plan Review. Its implementation has been led by the Secretary General and coordinated by the Forum Secretariat. A number of processes have been established to support the delivery of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, including the establishment of the FOC Specialist Sub-Committee on Regionalism (SSCR), and the Regional Priority Setting Process, as set out in the FPR.
3. The Forum Officials Committee endorsed a recommendation of the Secretary General, that the FPR be reviewed in 2018, and agreed that a review of the Framework of Pacific Regionalism should ensure that regional prioritisation processes are aligned to national level priorities and processes to ensure its continued relevance, efficiency and effectiveness. The Intermim Review of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism has been conducted to ensure that:
  - a. the arrangements and processes that have been put in place to support its delivery and implementation are aligned to the underlying principles of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism; and
  - b. the arrangements and processes put in place deliver on Members' expectations for the Framework for Pacific Regionalism.

#### **SPREP Engagement**

4. The revised CROP Charter which was endorsed by the 28<sup>th</sup> SPREP Meeting in 2017 and subsequently endorsed by the 49<sup>th</sup> Forum Leaders Meeting in 2018 supports a number of CROP initiatives including:
  - Joint Meeting of the CROP Governing Council Chairs and CEOs annual meetings
  - Regular meetings of CROP CEOs
  - Regular meetings of CROP DDGs
5. The CROP Heads and Council Chairs<sup>1</sup> Meeting was held in Fiji on 22 November 2018. This was a fruitful meeting to discuss and consider areas of collaboration and cooperation including the CROP Strategic Work Agenda since the Forum Leaders Meeting in Nauru. The Outcomes Summary and CROP Strategic Work Agenda are available in Attachments 1 and 2 respectively.

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<sup>1</sup> The list of participants of the CROP Heads and Council Chairs' Meeting included: Dame Meg Taylor, Secretary General, PIFS and Chair, CROP; Cristelle Pratt, Deputy Secretary General, PIFS; Manu Tupou Roosen, Director General, FFA; Professor Rajesh Chandra, Vice Chancellor and President, USP; Kosi Latu, Director General, SPREP; Andrew Valentine, General Manager, PASO; Patricia Sachs-Cornish, Chief Adviser of Director General, SPC; Governing Chairs; Tapaeru Herrmann, Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration, Cook Islands (PIFS); Peleni Talagi, Secretary to Government, Niue (SPC); Aloma Johansson, Deputy Pro-Chancellor and Deputy Chair of Council (USP); Jim Armistead, Director, Pacific Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration, Cook Islands (FFA); Senimili Bulai, Department of Environment, Government of Fiji (SPREP).

6. The key decisions from the CROP Heads and Council Chairs' Meeting are as follows:
  - a. Approved the development of a set of common principles/standards for CROP corporate harmonisation, drawing on the 2008 CROP Harmonisation and Remuneration Guiding Principles and Strategies, and aligning with the new CROP Charter; and, tasked the CROP Directors of Corporate Services/Finance to lead the development of these principles/standards for eventual adoption by all CROP Governing Councils.
  - b. Agreed to prioritise a select number of areas to explore for CROP harmonisation/coordination, focused on 'low hanging fruit' and 'early wins' including joint purchasing (travel, insurance, 'back office' business systems); common corporate procedures; and joint communications and information sharing; and, tasked the CROP Directors of Corporate Services/Finance to progress opportunities.
  - c. Agreed that the annual meeting of CROP Heads and Governing Council Chairs be used to provide strategic oversight and guidance on the CROP harmonisation and coordination of the joint CROP strategic work programme and agenda.
7. The next CROP Heads and Governing Council Chairs' Meeting is set for October, 22 2019.

### **CROP Heads Meetings**

8. Since the SPREP Executive Board Meeting in 2018 the CROP Heads have met on October 22, 2018, 18 February, and 10 June 2019. Refer to Annexes for Meeting Outcomes.
9. Key issues that have been discussed include CROP Harmonisation (Refer to Agenda Item 9.3) and the future of CROP Working Groups.

### CROP Working Groups

10. SPREP is committed to implementing the CROP Charter and to upholding the values of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. The Secretariat considers that Working Groups should be assessed for effectiveness, accountability and whether they have reporting mechanisms that are effective within agencies, as well as externally to the CROP Heads and to Members. Working Groups that meet these criteria should in our view continue to operate.
11. The Secretariat considers that the Marine Sector Working Group these criteria and should remain as a model for CROP collaboration, one which is inclusive of CROP and other partners.
12. The Secretariat notes there is a shift to establish new CROP Taskforces for the 2020 CROP work agenda, and that in parallel there is a proliferation of regional meetings which is placing a capacity and resource constraint not only on CROP organisations, but also Members, often creating new sub-committees without additional resources. Ensuring efficiencies and effectiveness with staff time is paramount for effective SPREP engagement in CROP Working Groups and other regional mechanisms.

### Regional prioritisation mechanisms

13. SPREP is committed to CROP work and to implementing the Leaders decisions. However, new regional processes that overlap or compete with Member-driven priorities in SPREP's Programme of Work and Budget but which do not come with additional resources will continue to be a challenge for the Secretariat's budget.

### **Interim Review of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism**

14. The findings of the Interim Review of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism (November, 2018) will be presented to the Forum Officials Committee in July, 2019. The Interim Review will be considered by the FOC including the report and recommendations of the FOC Sub-Committee that was established to provide advice to FOC on the matter. FOC will make its recommendations on the Interim Review to Forum Leaders at the 50<sup>th</sup> PIF in August this year, for decisions by Leaders Attachment 3 lists the recommendations of the Interim Review, including the position of SPREP.

### **Recommendations:**

15. The meeting is invited to:
  1. **note** the update on SPREP engagement for implementation of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism
  2. **note** the recommendations of the Interim Review of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism (November 2018).

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8 August, 2019