
AGENDA ITEM 7.2:

10th Pacific Islands Nature Conservation and Protected Areas Conference

Purpose of Paper

1. To update Members on preparations for the 10th Nature Conservation and Protected Areas Conference in 2020.
2. To seek endorsement of the conference as an important process in providing regional input into the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework
3. To seek endorsement for national support of the conference through sponsoring participation of key national stakeholders to attend, or other contributions.

Background

4. Nature conservation programmes in the Pacific are guided by the regional conservation conference that has met on average every 5 years since 1975. The Nature Conservation and Protected Areas Conference has become the principal forum for government agencies, NGOs, community-based organisations, donor agencies and individual experts concerned with conservation science and practice in the Pacific Islands region. Its importance is reflected in the increasing participation by stakeholders at each event over the past decade. The last conference in Fiji in 2013 had around 800 participants.
5. The conference is the key opportunity to set a Pacific based and initiated agenda for Pacific conservation beyond 2020. This agenda must align with National Biodiversity Strategies, other regional commitments and with Members' global conservation commitments, particularly through implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Historically a guiding regional conservation commitment has been prepared and adopted at the Conference. The 9th Conference in 2013 adopted the *Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas 2014-2020*.
6. The 10th Conference is to be held 20- 24th April 2020, prior to the end of the United Nations Decade for Biodiversity (2011-2020), giving the Pacific an important opportunity to review progress on the achievement of global conservation targets (Aichi targets) and to influence the global vision for conservation beyond 2020.
7. SPREP is grateful to the Government of New Caledonia for offering to host the 10th Conference. The government and SPREP signed a Memorandum of Understanding in October 2018, which provides a framework of co-operation between SPREP and the government for organising the conference.

8. A conference planning committee is leading the development of the agenda and the outcomes for the conference. However, there are a few key standard outcomes that the conference addresses:
 - Review the current Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas and formulate a new Framework for the next inter-conference period. A draft is prepared in advance of the conference for review and finalisation by participants.
 - Launch the second regional State of Conservation in Oceania (SOCO) report to update the 2013 version.
 - Capacity building, knowledge management and learning related to biodiversity conservation.
 - Investigate and secure sustainable funding initiatives and create a framework for robust governance around nature conservation work.
9. The 10th conference is to be the first conservation related event in 2020 within the Pacific and will set the direction for conservation into the next decade for the region.
10. The Conference may include a High Level Session hosted by the Government of New Caledonia, focussed on endorsing key targets for the region post-2020 but this has not been confirmed at the time of working paper preparation.
11. The event will define key messages and commitments for providing input into the Global post-2020 Framework of the CBD, and to the suite of important regional and global events occurring in 2020.
12. The conference costs more than US\$1M including conference preparation, venue hire, translation and interpreter services, Ministerial high-level segment, transportation, catering, opening and closing events, flights and accommodation for many participants and guest speakers, and the preparation of supporting reports and publications. The conference is normally funded through contributions and grants from a wide range of sources including existing projects, grant applications, partner contributions, SPREP operating budgets, sponsorships, in-kind support as well from the host country which meets a number of costs.
13. In this regard, funding contributions are now being sought from interested donors and development partners to support the conference.

Recommendation

14. The Meeting is invited to:
 1. **endorse** the conference as an important process for providing regional input into the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework; and
 2. **endorse** supporting the conference through sponsoring participation of key national stakeholders to attend, or other financial contributions needed for conference implementation.

