



“Accelerating actions for a resilient Blue Pacific”

7th, 8th, 9th September 2021, Virtual Platforms
12:00pm – 5:00pm Samoa Standard Time

Agenda Item 8.4.2: State of Environment and Conservation in the Pacific Islands: 2020 Regional Report and process for developing future SOEC Regional Reports

Purpose of paper

1. To approve the first regional State of Environment and Conservation (SOEC) report which was adopted at the 10th Pacific Nature Conference; and
2. To seek endorsement of the process to guide the development of the next SOEC report.

Background

3. Pacific islands are hotspots of unique biodiversity, and these are threatened by changing global and regional environmental pressures, ecological degradation, growing human populations, changing demands of our societies, and the impacts of climate change and sea level rise.
4. The State of Environment and Conservation in the Pacific Islands: 2020 Regional Report reflects an indicator-based reporting process for 31 conservation and environment indicators. The SOEC 2020 Regional Report was developed to inform planning and decision-making actions addressing environmental issues prioritized by SPREP members. The report can be accessed via <https://soec.sprep.org/>
5. The SOEC 2020 Regional Report uses endorsed indicators to assess the status, trends, and data quality and availability for the Pacific environmental priorities.
6. It enhances SPREP Members and Partners in their efforts in achieving sustainable development and a healthy environment.
7. The 2020 SOEC Regional Report identified key findings from the 31 regional indicators including notable results:
 - a. A significant increase in Marine protection over the past decade from less than 500,000 square Kilometers in 2009 to well over 5.5 million square kilometers in 2020 under protection to
 - b. the massive challenges Pacific nations face from an ever-increasing waste stream both on land and in the water, with only 5 of the 21 PICTs under the global average of waste production per capita.
 - c. The innovative mechanisms PICTs have put in place to support enhanced environmental management including the 10,000 datasets now available on the Pacific Data Portal network.

8. The 2020 SOEC Regional Report was launched and adopted at the 10th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation as a foundational document and a guide on regional environmental issues and conditions.
9. It provides key information for the development of regional policies and gives guidance to the Pacific 2050 Strategy and other regional frameworks.
10. It also supports SPREP and Member countries and Partners on periodic monitoring and reporting to international and regional Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs), the Sustainable Development Goals, and can also be used to address today's environment challenges.

The Process for developing the SOEC Regional Report

11. The 2020 SOEC Regional Report was developed through a year-long process including consultations, extensive review of material and standardization of data to apply it to the SRPEP meeting endorsed core regional indicators.
12. The experience and lessons learnt from the development of the 2020 SOEC Regional Report has allowed SPREP to refine the process, timelines, and resources required to undertake future regional SOEC Regional Reports.
13. For the next SOEC Report, and in response to the second Executive Board's decision, the Secretariat has documented the process for the development of future SOEC regional reports contained in WP.8.4.2/Att.1.

Recommendation

14. The Meeting is invited to:
 - 1) **approve** the State of Environment and Conservation in the Pacific Islands: 2020 Regional Report; and
 - 2) **approve** the process and timeline for reporting on the next State of Environment and Conservation Regional Report.

18 June 2021