

31st SPREP MEETING OF OFFICIALS

5, 6, and 7 September 2023, Apia, Samoa

Agenda item 9.1.1: Climate and Oceans (TK/PIGOOS/COSPPAC)

Purpose of paper:

1. To update Members on the progress of the work on Traditional Knowledge in Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation SPREP's strategic Plan 2017-2026 recognises Traditional knowledge as one of its key pillars to support its members; and
2. To invite comments and endorsement of the proposals and recommendations.

Background:

3. Traditional knowledge is used by many of our communities in the Pacific. Over thousands of years, our Pacific communities through repeated observations and engagement with their environment have developed knowledge on how to manage the interactions and relationships between weather, climate and ocean elements with their specific location. Most of our Pacific communities developed traditional communications and knowledge systems, adaptive solutions, coping strategies and methodologies to cope and as a response to a changing environment and climate variability.
4. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change recognises the need to strengthen knowledge, technologies, practices and efforts of local communities and indigenous peoples related to addressing and responding to climate change.
5. The Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its recent report recognises the value of traditional knowledge as a vital tool in the fight to mitigate growing climate crisis.
6. SPREP has been involved with work on traditional knowledge and biodiversity and leading in the work on traditional knowledge of weather, climate, oceans, and disaster resilience space through projects such as the Climate and Oceans Support Program in the Pacific (COSPPac), the Climate Resilience and Early Warning Project (WMO CREWS) and the Vanuatu Climate Information Services for Resilience Development (VanKIRAP) consistently since 2016.
7. SPREP has also made efforts to document traditional ecological knowledge and genetic resources with a focus on intellectual property rights recognising traditional knowledge sensitivity and access and benefit sharing.

8. A methodology and database have been developed to document, store and identify opportunities to apply and incorporate traditional knowledge for climate change, disaster management and other meaningful incorporation across other sectors.
9. SPREP is working on the integration of weather, climate and oceans traditional knowledge into climate and weather warnings. Traditional knowledge underpins and bridges the science information gap between science and community understanding.
10. Over the years, while there has been a lot of achievements, there is no regional strategic framework to guide and coordinate the work on traditional knowledge in the region.

Recommendation:

11. The Meeting is invited to:

- 1) **Note** the progress on traditional knowledge by SPREP and partners; and
 - 2) **Endorse** and **direct** the Secretariat to establish a traditional knowledge working group under the auspices of the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable.
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13 March 2023