

Thirty Second SPREP Meeting of Officials

2-4 September 2025

Sheraton Aggie Greys Hotel & Bungalows
Apia, Samoa

“Sustaining our Pacific Environment in Harmony with our Cultures”

Agenda item 6.6: Report on the review of the 2012 Staff Regulations

Purpose:

1. To advise the SPREP Meeting of the status of the Review of the 2012 Staff Regulations.

Background:

2. The Secretariat presented an update on the progress of the review of the 2012 Staff Regulations to the Executive Boards in September 2022 and to the SPREP Meeting in September 2023. Both Meetings:
 - a) **Noted** the progress report of the 2012 Staff Regulations Review (*that the substantive overarching principles that govern staff terms and conditions remained outstanding pending the outcomes of the Remuneration Review submitted to the 30th SPREP Meeting in September 2021*); and,
 - b) **Decided** on a firm way forward for the 2021 Remuneration Review in the absence of any progress from the Members Working Group.
3. A further update was provided to the Executive Board in September 2024. The Meeting
 - a) **Noted** that the substantive overarching principles that govern staff terms and conditions remain outstanding pending the outcomes of the Remuneration Review.
 - b) **Noted** that the Members Working Group will provide a report on the Remuneration Review under Agenda Item 6.4; and
 - c) **Approved** that a Report on the Staff Regulations Review and Update be presented to the 32nd SPREP Meeting, subject to the completion of the Remuneration Review.
4. The Members Working Group on the Remuneration Review will submit a report under Agenda Item 6.5.
5. In brief, the Remuneration Review has not been completed therefore the Staff Regulations Review remains outstanding pending the outcome of this review.
6. In the absence of any firm position of the CROP participating agencies on remuneration matters for a number of years prior to 2018, and given that the SPREP Remuneration Review which was approved by the SPREP Meeting in 2019 remains outstanding to date, the Secretariat has not been able to fulfill its obligations as an employer, to ensure that the existing governing remuneration principles including staff terms and conditions are reviewed every three years. These outdated remuneration

principles, terms and conditions have adverse impacts on the implementation of the Secretariat's People Strategy and its outcomes so that it serves its purpose on valuing its people as its most important resource. There are also funding considerations that the Secretariat needs to include in its strategic planning and budgeting which requires the Remuneration Review and Members consideration for guidance.

7. Whilst the Secretariat, similar to other CROP agencies, has not been able to afford the market conditions as a result of remuneration reviews in the past, it has continued to adopt the Reference Markets as established in the Staff Regulations i.e. the median of the Australian Public Service Sector, the median of the New Zealand Public Service Sector and the upper quartile of the Fiji All Organisations market. The Remuneration Review therefore is critical to the review of the Staff Regulations. It is an opportunity for the Members to consider if this reference market remains relevant or whether there could be a more suitable and affordable market that could be considered for benchmarking the Secretariat remuneration including all other terms and conditions. The Secretariat has operated for a long time under outdated terms and conditions which follow this reference market. Perhaps consideration of a more relevant and affordable reference market would enable the Secretariat to meet its obligations as an employer to its staff and enables it to review and update terms and conditions every three years as required under the Staff Regulations, without being perceived as avoiding these obligations due to insufficient resources to meet these reference market conditions.
8. The Secretariat proposes that this update is noted but to seek the kind consideration of Members for prioritisation of the Remuneration Review, in order to be able to complete the review and update of the Staff Regulations.
9. There are matters in the Staff Regulations that are within the discretion of the Director General to approve, particularly those with no substantive financial implications. The Secretariat has taken note of these matters to be included in the overall review and update of the Staff Regulations once the Remuneration Review is finalised.

Recommendations:

10. The Meeting is invited to:
 - 1) **Note** that substantive overarching principles that govern staff terms and conditions remain outstanding pending the outcomes of the Remuneration Review;
 - 2) **Note** the need for Members to prioritise finalisation of the Remuneration Review;
 - 3) **Note** that a report on the Remuneration Review will be submitted by the Members Working Group under Agenda Item 6.5; and
 - 4) **Approve** that a report on the Staff Regulations Review and Update be presented to the Members once the Remuneration Review is completed.
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