



**Thirty Second SPREP Meeting of Officials**  
**Sheraton Aggie Greys Hotel & Bungalows**  
**2-4 September 2025**  
**Apia, Samoa**

**Agenda Item 7.1 : Implementing the Pacific Leaders Agenda Update on the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent implementation**

**Purpose:**

1. To provide an update on the 2050 Strategy implementation, with reference to CROP strategic priorities and coordination, and the review of the regional architecture.

**Background:**

2. To support implementation of the 2050 Strategy, the Leaders requested a review of the regional architecture (RRA) in 2019 to ensure that it was fit for purpose. During the development of the 2050 Strategy in 2022, the Leaders expanded the scope and provided further guidance on what the RRA must consider that included political settings; institutional processes, systems and mechanisms; governance mechanisms; and engagements and partnerships.
3. Recalling the key decisions of the 4<sup>th</sup> SPREP Executive Board Meeting in 2024 on Implementing the Leaders Agenda, which:
  - I. Confirmed that SPREP is an independent intergovernmental organisation established under the SPREP Agreement and the SPREP Meeting is the plenary body responsible for its governance; and
  - II. Approved in principle, SPREP convening an annual Pacific Climate Change Ministers Meeting subject to Pacific Island Forum Leaders approval and finalisation of the Review of Regional Architecture.
4. Recalling the key RRA decisions of the 53<sup>rd</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting Communique in Tonga:
  - I. Leaders reaffirmed the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent as the region's collective commitment to a resilient Pacific, thereby elevating the importance of resilience in framing and shaping how Members develop and monitor regional policy priorities.
  - II. Leaders welcomed the progress on the implementation of the 2050 Strategy and reaffirmed the value of working together to ensure that the region's interest and priorities are progressed. Leaders emphasised the importance of the integration of Smaller Island States priorities in the implementation of the 2050 Strategy.
  - III. Leaders discussed the progress on the Review of the Regional Architecture (RRA) and emphasised the importance of the RRA work in the implementation of the 2050 Strategy. Leaders highlighted the need for continued strengthened CROP collaboration to support effective delivery for Members and a more strategic and rationalised partnership mechanism as well as the importance of giving due consideration to the issue of sovereignty.

- IV. Leaders further reiterated the need for the RRA to take into account the decisions outlined in the Suva Agreement and to ensure that the RRA is relevant, practical, fit-for purpose and aligned to Members' needs.
- V. Leaders endorsed the recommendations of Phase 2 of the RRA (Annex A) and discussed the key issues requiring political guidance as it relates to: political leadership and unity; Forum Membership and Criteria; Strengthened Regionalism; and rationalising the regional architecture to foster increased effectiveness and efficiency.
- VI. Leaders endorsed the framing of Phase 3 (Annex B) and tasked the Secretariat to progress Phase 3 in consultation with Senior Forum Officials and provide an update to Leaders in 2025. Leaders tasked the Secretariat to undertake a review of Forum-related treaties and respective synergies therein.

### **2050 Strategy Implementation Plan 2023 - 2030**

5. The Secretariat supports implementation of the 2050 Strategy through its core work across its strategic priorities, as demonstrated across the SPREP Meeting agenda items. It also plays a key role in the respective CROP mechanisms that includes but is not limited to the: CROP Heads; CROP Deputies Working Group; CROP Harmonisation Working Group; CROP Monitoring, Evaluation and learning (MEL) Working Group; Sustainable Development Working Group; and One CROP, which provides coordinated technical support to PSIDS for the UNFCCC negotiations.
6. The Secretariat contributed to the 'Baseline Report for the 2050 Strategy' (2024) and the 'Regional Collective Action (RCA) Report'. The RCA Report will be presented to the 54th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in Honiara, Solomon Islands immediately after the 32<sup>nd</sup> SPREP Meeting.
7. Thematic Advisory Groups (TAGs) for each of the 2050 Strategy themes have been established to support 2050 Strategy implementation. SPREP is the designated Lead and Chair for Climate Change and Disasters and Co-Lead and Vice-Chair for Ocean and Environment. The Terms of Reference for the TAGs was endorsed by the 2050 Forum Officials Subcommittee on 2 February 2025 and will be revised in 2026 upon the conclusion of the RRA.
8. The membership and work of the respective TAGs be led by and confined to the CROP agencies, with expertise from Non-CROP brought in as needed through existing mechanisms. For SPREP this includes the Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation (PIRT), Pacific Climate Change Roundtable (PCCR), Pacific Meteorological Council (PMC) and Clean Pacific Roundtable (CPRT). These existing SPREP mechanisms already include Members, NGOs, research agencies and universities as well as the private sector. Refer details in WP 7.1/Att.1.

## Review of the Regional Architecture

9. The endorsement of the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan in 2023 informed the approach to the RRA. The phased approach outlined as follows:

**a. Phase 1: Understanding the current regional environment and architecture (completed)**

Articulate and consolidate an understanding of existing regional organisations, institutions, governance mechanisms and mandates, initiatives in place under each thematic area of the 2050 Strategy.

**b. Phase 2: Analysis (completed)**

Focus on the regional architecture needed to ensure the realisation of the vision of the 2050 Strategy, including the governance mechanisms needed to ensure continued political leadership and ownership of the 2050 Implementation Plan, and strengthening CROP coordination and collaboration across the thematic areas of the 2050 Strategy. *Refer to Annexes A and B on the endorsed recommendations from the 53<sup>rd</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in 2024.*

**c. Phase 3: Rationalisation of the Regional Architecture (in progress)**

Phase 3 is informed by the outcomes of Phase 2 and considers rationalisation of the regional architecture. Led by the High-Level Persons Group (HLPG) that consists of Pacific Island Forum Members from each of the sub-regions of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia of the Honourable Gerald Zackios (Republic of Marshall Islands), Sir Dr. Jimmie Rodgers (Solomon Islands), and Ms. Peseta Noumea Simi (Samoa). The HLPG Report will be presented to the Leaders in Honiara.

**d. Phase 4: Transition of the Regional Architecture**

This will focus on the transition of the regional architecture in line with the decision of Leaders on the options presented under Phase 3. *Phase 4 will be reported to the 55<sup>th</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in 2026.*

### Meeting with the High-Level Persons Group:

10. The Secretariat met with the HLPG on 15 May 2025 at the Pacific Climate Change Centre. In the Talanoa the Secretariat expressed the importance of retaining SPREP as a regional organisation focused on the Environment, established by Members through the SPREP Agreement in 1993 to *“promote cooperation in the South Pacific region and to provide assistance in order to protect and improve its environment and to ensure sustainable development for present and future generations.”* The need and vision of Members for SPREP as a regional environmental organisation remains true now as it was then.
11. The Secretariat reiterated that we need to learn from the lessons of earlier reviews conducted by request of Leaders including the Regional Integration Framework (RIF) which saw the incorporation of SOPAC and SPBEA under SPC which came into effect in 2010. It has been argued that as a region we have lost capacity and focus in these specific technical areas of work, in particular the provision of technical advice and services to Members.

12. The hypothetical scenarios put forward by the HLPG for discussion with the Secretariat were the merger of SPREP and all CROP agencies under one technical organisation namely SPC and while the political functions fall under the Pacific Islands Forum. The Secretariat reiterated that such a consideration will cause harm to the urgent Environmental needs and challenges of the Pacific island region, having to compete for visibility and resources in an environment that is already resource-constrained, without a dedicated organisation to serve its Members as envisaged by Pacific Leaders in 1993. The Secretariat also raised the view that if the intent was to have one technical organisation then it would be better not to base it around SPC or any existing regional agency but rather design a new technical organisation that would meet the region's current needs.
13. As noted in the key Executive Board meeting decisions of 2024 that the RRA outcomes will have to also be considered by the SPREP Meeting, the Secretariat also highlighted the difference in the Forum membership with SPREP, which has 26 Members of metropolitan countries and territories that also include American Samoa, France, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Tokelau, United Kingdom, United States of America, and Wallis and Futuna.
14. It was noted that SPREP is responsible for two regional Conventions for which it has obligations as the Secretariat:
  - a. Noumea Convention - Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region, Noumea (1986); and
  - b. Waigani Convention - Convention to Ban the Importation into Forum Island Countries of Hazardous and Radio Active Wastes and to Control the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Waste within the South Pacific Region, Waigani (1995)
15. It was further emphasised that CROP agencies work collaboratively together from the lens of their respective mandates and expertise to support Pacific island Members on addressing the challenges of climate change and ocean.

## Recommendations

16. The Meeting is invited to:
    - 1) **Note** the progress on the 2050 Strategy implementation;
    - 2) **Note** the update on the Review of the Regional Architecture;
    - 3) **Note** the Secretariat's designated roles and continued engagement in the 2050 Strategy implementation and the Review of the Regional Architecture;
    - 4) **Affirm** the decision of the 4<sup>th</sup> SPREP Executive Board Meeting in 2024 on Implementing the Leaders Agenda, which: "Confirmed that SPREP is an independent intergovernmental organisation established under the SPREP Agreement and the SPREP Meeting is the plenary body responsible for its governance;"
    - 5) **Request Leaders** that any decision that affects the functions and governance of SPREP be first discussed and approved by the SPREP Meeting; and
    - 6) **Request** Troika and the Director General work closely together on any issues concerning the Review of the Regional Architecture.
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