



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Executive Board Meeting

2 – 4 September 2020

### Agenda Item 6.1: Blue Pacific vision and the 2050 Strategy

#### Purpose of paper

1. To provide a brief synthesis of the Blue Pacific vision and development of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent including strengthening the regional architecture.
2. To update Members on the involvement of SPREP in these processes.

#### Background:

3. At the 2019 Forum Leaders Meeting in Tuvalu, Leaders noted that securing the future of the Blue Pacific requires a long-term vision and a carefully considered strategy for regionalism, along with a collective commitment to achieve it. Leaders endorsed the development of a 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and tasked the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat to work closely with Members to prepare a draft strategy for Leaders' consideration with the technical support of CROP.
4. Leaders identified cornerstone priorities of the 2050 Strategy comprising:
  - climate change action;
  - protecting our Ocean's health and integrity;
  - sustainably managing our island and ocean resources;
  - connecting our oceanic continent including through air, sea and ICT;
  - ensuring healthy people; and for all priority areas:
  - ensuring all action is informed by science
5. The impacts of COVID-19 and Tropical Cyclone Harold have significantly delayed inputs to, and the development of the 2050 Strategy as initially envisaged in 2019, in particular, the 51st Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting which was to consider the draft 2050 Strategy has been postponed by the Government of Vanuatu to 2021 at a date yet to be confirmed.

#### Approach to the development of the 2050 Strategy:

##### FOC Sub-Committee

6. A sub-committee of the Forum Officials Committee (FOC) has been established to oversee the process. It will guide the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat process and report on progress to the FOC.

## Regional Register of Experts

7. A standing register of experts has been established to provide technical and strategic advice to the FOC Sub-Committee, particularly in the development of an evidence base for the Strategy. SPREP nominated two experts: Mr Espen Ronneberg, Climate Change Adviser and Dr Peter Davies, Coastal Marine Adviser.

## Role of CROP and SPREP

8. The 2020 CROP work agenda approved by the CROP Heads and Governing Council Chairs in November 2019, prioritised CROP technical support to the development of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and strengthening the regional architecture. SPREP's two technical experts have been actively involved in all work to date.
9. **Resourcing:** While PIFS is expected to bear the financial burden of coordinating the delivery of the development of the 2050 Strategy and the Review of the Regional Architecture, CROP agencies are requested to provide assistance in the following ways:
  - Contribution of technical/expert advisory support
  - Support to convene consultation meetings at respective CROP agencies, as required
  - Support to convene technical workshops at their agencies as required
10. Other forms of cost/resource sharing may be requested as the process gets underway.

## Content of the 2050 Strategy

11. The process to date has focused on identifying theme-driven, future-focused scenarios along with possible strategies for achieving them. The scenarios and strategies are intended to be the basis of regional consultations and confirm the evidence base for the scenarios to be provided to Leaders.
12. Following Leaders consideration, it is intended that expert groups/panels will be convened to develop issues papers around each thematic area and the identification of thematic priorities for the 2050 Strategy.
13. The Forum Secretariat will provide members with the relevant background information and consultation questions to assist nationally-managed public consultations.

## Scenarios

14. The following Scenarios have been used to develop possible, probable and preferable futures to help understand assumptions about the future in the present and develop better present-day actions to move toward the preferred future.
  - **Scenario 1: A Region of regions** - Different spheres of influence within the Pacific emerge along sub-regional lines, reinforced by relationships with different external powers.
  - **Scenario 2: Autonomy without Solidarity** - National interest takes precedent. Bilateral arrangements with partners are driven by optimising ODA or resource extraction arrangements.

- **Scenario 3: The Pacific Commodity** - The Pacific negotiates a collective relationship with a single global power. Climate resilience and other development objectives exchanged for access to resources and territory.
- **Scenario 4: The Blue Pacific Continent** - Pacific uses the metaphor of the Blue Pacific Continent to drive deepened collective action, based on common stewardship of the ocean and united responses to climate change. The Pacific remains unified in its engagement with the external world.

### Wild cards

15. Events or issues that might have a low likelihood of occurring, but a high potential impact, should they eventuate may also be considered alongside the scenarios noted.
- Significant Proportion of Pacific Population Impacted by Global Pandemic
  - Synthetic Fish Meat Developed
  - Collapse of Tuna Fisheries in the Pacific
  - Rare Genetic Material Identified in Pacific Ocean
  - Small Scale Desalination Plants Developed
  - Fisheries-Related War
  - War between Global Superpowers
  - Strategic Interest in the Pacific Diminishes

### SPREP Progress to date

16. SPREP has supported the development of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent through the involvement of both of the Secretariat's technical experts in the meetings of the FOC sub-committee including up to five meetings examining various scenarios to be considered in the formulation of the strategy.
17. The development of the Scenarios is on-going. At the request of Members, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat is reviewing the methodology and evidence base used in development of the scenarios. CROP agencies have requested engagement in this process.
18. On 8 July 2020 the Draft Terms of Reference (TORs) for a CROP Taskforce for the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent was shared by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat with CROP Heads and on 16 July 2020 with Members. SPREP will be part of the Taskforce and continue to participate and support the process.

### Recommendation

19. The Executive Board Meeting is invited to:
1. **Note** the limited progress to date and **request** that SPREP remains engaged in the development of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.