



2nd Executive Board Meeting

2 – 4 September 2020

Agenda Item 6.3: SPREP Sub-regional presence

Purpose of paper

- 1 To update Members on the status and operations of SPREP sub-regional presence comprising project and representative offices.
- 2 To report to the Executive Board on progress in the establishment of the SPREP Northern Sub-regional office as directed by 29SM.

Background

1. In Melanesia SPREP has project-supported offices in Fiji and Vanuatu and is provided with office space in the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM) in the Solomon Islands. SPREP presence in these countries is supported by host country agreements that set out the organisation's rights and modalities of operation.
2. In Micronesia SPREP is supporting a largely core-funded office in Majuro in the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

Update

Melanesia Sub-region

3. The SPREP office in Fiji, was established in 2016 to support the sub-regional project Pacific Ecosystem-based Adaptation to Climate Change (PEBACC) project funded by the German Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety International Climate Initiative. The project rented an office in Suva, subsequently shared in 2020 with EU EDF-11 funded PacWaste Plus. Another project, the sub-regional EU EDF-11 funded PEUMP SPREP implemented By-catch and Integrated Ecosystem Management (BIEM) component is also based in Fiji and was sharing an office with German GIZ. PEBACC came to an end in July 2020 but a SPREP country office will be maintained through the implementation of BIEM, PacWaste Plus and commencement by early 2021 of PEBACC Phase 2 by the AFD-EU-Australia-Canada-New Zealand funded Kiwa Initiative – Nature-based solutions for climate resilience (see Agenda Item 8.3) and the EU ACP SIDS Support Programme for Biodiversity and Climate Change.

4. In Vanuatu a country office will be maintained through ongoing implementation of the GCF funded Climate Information Services for Resilient Development Project (Van-KIRAP), PEUMP BIEM component, PacWaste Plus, and subsequent implementation of PEBACC Phase 2.
5. In the Solomon Islands SPREP will maintain office space provided by MECDM for the implementation of the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change and Resilience Building (PACRES) project and PEBACC Phase 2 once it commences implementation in early 2021.

Micronesia Sub-region

6. The SPREP Northern Sub-regional Office was established as approved by 29SM and formally opened in Majuro on 2 November 2019. The transitional budget endorsed by 29SM comprising the agreed allocation from the SPREP core budget of US\$105,000 and the RMI Host country agreement of US\$20,000 has enabled activities to begin. However, delays in the recruitment of the RMI national GEF Invasive Species project officer and PacWaste Plus officer, exacerbated by COVID-19-19 circumstances has not yet brought direct project funding to the operations of the Office.
7. As directed by 29SM, the Transitional Office Manager has led work with a working group of his Northern colleagues to develop a costed draft operating model for the Office, and to seek new and additional sources of finance to enable implementation of the draft operating model. At the time of drafting, development of the draft operating model and its budget is on-going. Northern Members continue to work internally to source financial contributions to the operating costs of the office.
8. COVID-19 restrictions on travel to and between Micronesian countries has both complicated the task of the working group and delayed any physical work being undertaken by the Office across the Sub-region. This has meant that only establishment costs for the new office and the salary of the interim Manager are being expended, and the Office continues to operate within its approved transitional budget for 2020 and 2021.

Recommendations

9. The Executive Board meeting is invited to:
 1. **welcome** the formal opening of the SPREP Northern Sub-regional Office; and
 2. **note** the on-going work by the Micronesian Members' Working Group to develop the operating model and budget including identification of new sources of finance for a fully funded SPREP Northern Sub-regional Office;
 3. **note** that the interim budget will support the work of the Northern Sub-regional Office as currently structured for the remainder of 2020.
 4. **request** the Secretariat to report to Members with a budget that can support the proposed operating model for the Northern Sub-regional Office when that has been achieved.