

Agenda Item 9.4.1: Draft Guidance Note for Coastal Engineering Good Practice in Environmental Impact Assessment for Pacific Island Countries and Territories

Purpose of paper

1. To seek Members' endorsement of the Guidance note for Coastal Engineering Good Practice in Environmental Impact Assessment for Pacific Island Countries and Territories and its use as a planning tool to systematically evaluate the environmental coastal engineering projects.

Background

2. The SPREP Regional EIA Guidelines for Pacific island Countries and Territories provide a detailed overview of EIA and offer practical tips and tools to support PICT government officers with managing the EIA process. However, they do not provide details on how to assess and mitigate impacts from specific developments in coastal areas that entails coastal engineering.
3. Coastal environments are biologically productive and ecologically diverse; they supply valuable resources to support Pacific island lifestyles, livelihoods and cultural practices; and they provide critical natural defences against storms, cyclones, tsunamis, flooding and erosion, the frequency of which is expected to increase with climate change. Coastal engineering projects can make a positive contribution to Pacific island countries and territories as long as they are designed to ensure that important coastal areas are not degraded and EIA can play an important role in ensuring this.
4. In line with Objective 4.1 of the SPREP Strategic Plan 2017–2026, the Guidance Note for Coastal Engineering Good Practice in Environmental Impact Assessment for Pacific Island Countries and Territories was developed detailing good practice in EIA – scoping, data collection, impact assessment, mitigation, and monitoring and management – for coastal development, adaptation and engineering projects.
5. The Guidance Note provides specific details on coastal engineering impact mitigation and monitoring. It will be annexed as an Addendum to the Regional EIA Guidelines.
6. The Guidance Note is designed to support PICT governments in meeting their obligations to undertake, require and review EIAs for coastal development, in line with the regional and international multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) which they are party to which leads to strengthening national sustainable development planning and implementation systems

7. The Guidance Note was developed as an activity under the SPREP Component of the ACP/MEA Phase 3 - Develop and implement regional EIA guidelines for sand mining, dredging, land reclamation and other coastal engineering activities.
8. Draft Regional Guidance Note on Coastal Engineering Good Practice in Environmental Impact Assessment for Pacific Island Countries and Territories is attached as WP.9.4.1/Att1.

Recommendation

9. The Executive Board Meeting is invited to:
 - 1) **Approve** the Regional Guidance Note on Coastal Engineering Good Practice in Environmental Impact Assessment for Pacific Island Countries and Territories; and
 - 2) **Urge** Members to promote and use the approved Guidance note as a planning tool to systematically evaluate the environmental coastal engineering projects.

22 June 2022