**ITEM 5 – IMPLEMENTATION REPORTS**

**SPREP ABS Regional Project Implementation Report, January – December 2019**

---This is an information paper, does not require a decision, submitted for noting----

***Project Major Updates for 2019***

1. The Project successfully developed the ABS Roster of Experts and Regional Technical Assistance. The project has developed a web page layout for the ABS Project’s dedicated page on the SPREP website where the ABS Roster and regional technical assistance will be hosted. A guidance policy on the use and accessibility of the ABS Roster of Experts is in place and has been shared with countries. Roster of expert is made available online at [www.sprep.org/abs](http://www.sprep.org/abs)
2. The project supported the capacity assistance for fourteen countries with a total of sixteen national capacity buildings undertaken for fourteen countries. As part of the country assistance, the project also facilitated one-to-one intensive discussions and in-house trainings. The last workshop was carried out in December 2019 for Papua New Guinea.
3. The Project supported the legal and capacity assistance to the Republic of Palau by redrafting of the ABS Bill. The Bill was passed into a law in August 2018. The project also assisted in the drafting the full ABS regulations, which is still in draft.
4. The Project has identified future directions of policy development for the region are identified. ABS policies reviewed or developed for Samoa, Cook Islands, Marshall Islands, Fiji and the Federated States of Micronesia.
5. The Project has drafted instructions for the development of ABS laws in Cook Islands, Tonga, Fiji, Palau, Marshall Islands. A common regional drafting instruction was also developed.
6. The project assisted with drafting of the ABS policy for the Republic of the Marshall Islands through a consultative process. The project ran the final validation for the public in August 2019.
7. The Project undertook scoping studies to identify existing gaps undertaken for eleven countries- Cook Islands, Marshall Islands, Fiji, Palau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Samoa, Niue, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands.
8. The Project undertook analysis on the implications of ratification for all fourteen countries.
9. There were sixteen national workshops including high level workshops and dialogue in all the fourteen countries.
10. There were four regional workshops jointly facilitated by the Secretariat , United Nations Development Programme, International Development Law Organisation, University of New South Wales, ABS Initiative, Japan Biodiversity Fund and Convention of Biological Diversity. Capacity-building workshops to identify shared key problems, analyze capacity assets as well as needs at regional level, prioritize issues, development of legal frameworks and the use of the ABSCH.
11. Three (3) new countries from the region- Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Palau ratified the Protocol. Tonga has secured Cabinet endorsement to ratify the Protocol, hopefully in 2020. A total of eight countries to date have ratified the protocol (Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Palau, Samoa, Vanuatu, FSM, Marshall Islands and Fiji.

***Planned contribution to strategic priorities/targets***

3.1 The project is in full alignment with Articles 5, 6, 8, 9 and 15 of the Nagoya Protocol and the GEF Strategic Goal #3: Sustainable Use of Biodiversity and Strategic Objective #8: Implementing the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing.

3.2 Based on the scope and objectives of the project, progress is provided below of the following indicators.

**Indicator: Number of countries that support a draft regional position on future policy development.**

*At least five policies have been developed for Cook Islands, Fiji, Samoa, Marshall Islands and Palau*

**Indicator: Number of countries that have ratified the Protocol**

*At least three countries successfully ratified the Nagoya Protocol.*

**Indicator: Number of awareness raising activities and stakeholders reach by awareness raising activities.**

The project held sixteen national workshops and stakeholder meetings with CEOs both in governments and NGOs in fourteen countries during the country visits.