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The Pacific environment, sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.

2019 Pacific Environment Forum

Circling away from non-essential single-use plastics

Monday 2nd September, 2019 @6:30am – 4:30pm
 Venue: Tanoa Tusitala Hotel

Provisional Agenda

Background

The Pacific Environment Forum (PEF) is an initiative by the Secretariat to meet long standing member requests for a more informal setting to facilitate discussion amongst officials and other stakeholders on key environmental, technical and institutional issues. The PEF is held prior to the SPREP Meeting (SM) allowing for the outcomes to be tabled at the SM for its consideration. The PEF was held for the first time in 2011.

The 2019 PEF will focus on plastic pollution, which has become a critical concern globally. It threatens our livelihoods, food security, biosecurity, customs, biodiversity, human health, and contributes to climate change. It is essential that, as a region, we take stock of the amount of plastic entering the Pacific, and determine appropriate techniques to address this growing challenge to not only reduce the impacts from these products, but find innovative solutions that enhances the prosperity of the region.

The theme for the 2019 PER is “**Circling away from non-essential single-use plastics**”. The theme is intended to remind us of the waste hierarchy – refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle, treat and dispose and to apply these principles to addressing plastic waste. It also highlights the need for new business models, transitioning from a linear to a circular economy, development and adoption of alternative materials to non-recyclable plastics and changes in behaviours to reduce the plastic waste burden.

It is expected that the PEF will build on the growing awareness of plastic pollution and its adverse effects on the environment and the Pacific way of life through the sharing of experiences, case studies, achievements, tools and lessons learnt. In doing so, it is expected that will generated interest, commitment, partnership opportunities and resources to combat this serious problem in the Pacific region.

The PEF Structure and format will include a mix of presentations, panel and talanoa discussions, and interactive dialogue amongst participants. Session facilitators will provide an overview of the issues discussed to set the scene which will be followed by presentations and sharing of experiences by the invited speakers/presenters. There will be a mix of speakers from governments, NGOs, regional organisations and the private sector. This will allow for different perspectives to be shared and generate a healthy and constructive discussion.

An early morning clean-up is organised at the beginning of the forum for participants to experience first-hand the amount of plastic in the environment and how to record the findings so that they can be used for decision-making purposes.

Key outcomes and messages from the PEF will be reported back to the 29th SPREP Meeting under Agenda Item 14.1.

The 2019 PEF is being organised by the Waste Management and Pollution Control Program. Email Davina Tiitii at davinat@sprep.org for more information.

