

## **SPREP PARTNERSHIP DIALOGUE REPORT**

Monday 4th September 2023  
Taumeasina Island Resort, Apia, Samoa

### **INTRODUCTION**

1. One of the strengths of SPREP is its network of partners and its ability to convene, coordinate and mobilise dialogue and support to address member and regional priorities. As part of the SPREP 30th Anniversary and in recognition of the key role Partners play in the life and work of SPREP, the Secretariat convened its first Partners Dialogue on 4 September 2023 prior to the SPREP Meeting at Taumeasina Island Resort in Samoa.
2. The SPREP Partnership Dialogue is not a formal part of the SPREP Meeting but intended as a forum where Partners who are non-members of SPREP can engage with SPREP Members and the Secretariat on issues related to SPREP's mandate, strategic plan, and programmes. The Outcomes of the Dialogue to be tabled at the SPREP Meeting for its consideration.
3. The SPREP Partnership Dialogue was structured through four panels which focused on the thematic partnership types of: 1) Donor Partners; 2) Technical, Scientific, and Research Partners; 3) Implementation Partners; and 4) Multilateral Financing Institutions and Philanthropies.
4. Partners represented on the respective panels included the: Agence Française de Développement (AFD); Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Birdlife International; Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO); Conservation International; European Union (EU); Global Environment Facility (GEF); Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA); New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Pacific Community (SPC); Pacific Regional Infrastructure Facility (PRIF); Research Institute for Development (IRD); the United Nations (UN); University of Newcastle (UoN); Samoa Chamber of Commerce; and World Bank.

### **SESSION 1: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

5. The Deputy Director General opened the Dialogue with a prayer, then introduced the Director General to set the scene for the SPREP Partnership Dialogue. It was noted by the Director General that the Partnership Dialogue is a forum that brings together SPREP Members, Secretariat and Partners to share information and discuss opportunities for strategic engagement, collaboration, cooperation, and partnership.
6. The Director General highlighted the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, which aligns to SPREP's Strategic Plan priorities. Noting that while it is SPREP's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, a time to reflect and foresee the vision of "*A resilient Pacific environment sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures*", that remains more relevant than ever, to address the environmental challenges of today and the future. SPREP's principal concern and strategic focus is climate change, where

SPREP has historically and currently holds regional leadership with a convening and coordination role. SPREP has three other strategic foci: Ecosystem and Biodiversity Protection; Waste Management and Pollution Control; and Environmental Governance. The ocean is a crosscutting theme across SPREP's four strategic foci.

7. It was noted that SPREP as a member of the Council of Regional Organisation of the Pacific (CROP) and as endorsed by the Third SPREP Executive Board Meeting, has a key role in the implementation of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. There are two thematic areas where SPREP has a lead role: i) Climate Change and Disasters; and ii) Oceans and Environment. The 2050 Strategy ensures that all CROP agencies in partnership with Members and partners work together to achieve the priority areas identified and agreed to by Members.
8. The Director General gave an overview of various projects and initiatives the Secretariat supports for Members' benefit. The example of Weather Ready Pacific highlighted, which is a Pacific led and Pacific owned initiative from the Pacific Meteorological Council, where SPREP serves as the Secretariat, and that was endorsed by Forum Leaders in 2021. The Weather Ready Pacific is a ten-year decadal programme of investment valued at USD 167 million, which aims to strengthen the Pacific region's ability to anticipate, plan for, and respond to high impact and extreme weather, water, and ocean events.
9. In 2023 Weather Ready Pacific has to date received AUD 30 million from Australia and the support of New Zealand. It has also been identified by the Pacific Islands Forum Chair, the Cook Islands, as one of nine Pacific Partnerships for Prosperity (PPfP), which is aimed at catalysing the implementation of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent by ensuring that its Implementation Plan is well supported politically and financially to deliver on its goals and outcomes. The process on Weather Ready Pacific's governance arrangements has also been endorsed at the sixth Pacific Meteorological Council Meeting, recently held in Nadi in August 2023.
10. The Director General encouraged all those present to use the Partnership Dialogue as an opportunity to engage with one another, noting the potential partnerships that it may lead to from today.

## **SESSION 2: FOCUS: DONOR PARTNERS**

### **Panellists:**

- **European Union (EU)** – Ms. Erja Askola, Charge d' Affaires, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the EU for the Pacific, Suva, Fiji
- **Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)** - Ms. Katherine Berryman, Assistant Director Pacific Climate Finance and Partnerships Section, New Zealand, Partnerships and Climate Change Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia
- **New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs Trade (MFAT)** - HE. Dr. Trevor Matheson, New Zealand High Commissioner to Samoa
- **Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)** - Ms. Yumiko Asakuma, Resident Representative, JICA Office, Apia, Samoa
- **Agence Française de Développement (AFD)** - Mr. Kim-Lou Cargnelli, Charge de mission, AFD (Pacifique), Noumea, New Caledonia

**Moderator:** Ms. Tagaloa Cooper, Director of Climate Change Resilience

## State of Partnerships

11. The SPREP Partnership Dialogue is an important start for Partners that should and must continue. All noted that the Partnership Dialogue is the first step in harmonising processes and formalising the arrangements between partners so that they can better link to SPREP and the region. All Partners noted enthusiasm for ongoing agency level discussions to ensure support to the Secretariat is appropriate, and outcomes for Members are achieved.
12. The 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent acknowledged as the guiding document on the priorities of the Pacific endorsed by Pacific Leaders in 2022. All Partners are supportive of the work of SPREP and committed to continuing to partner into the future under the 2050 Strategy. Importance of CROP agencies working together with Members and Partners to implement the 2050 priorities in a coordinated manner, was highlighted to better cover all gaps in the region.
13. It was acknowledged that SPREP plays an important role in amplifying the Pacific voice – which has led to many partners investing more in the region. Building awareness in the international arena and leveraging with Partners for support of Members to ensure the voice of the Pacific is heard.
14. The EU recognised SPREP as an important partner in the Pacific region especially regarding climate change, environment, oceans and island ecosystems, and waste and pollution. It was noted that the EU has invested close to 60 million Euro through the various programmes and projects of SPREP. The EU is pleased with the implementation of its programmes in the region, especially as they are based on areas of common priority.
15. New Zealand support to SPREP viewed as vital including through the various projects and as a key bilateral partner supporting the core budget of the Secretariat on a multi-year basis.
16. It was noted that JICA has focused a high degree of assistance to the Pacific in partnership with SPREP through the Project for Promotion of Regional Initiative Solid Waste Management (J-PRISM) for more than 20 years. More recently partnering with the Secretariat through the Pacific Climate Change Centre. The PCCC was constructed at SPREP in 2019 through Japanese bilateral grant aid to the Government of Samoa, a key outcome of the 7<sup>th</sup> Pacific Leaders Meeting (PALM7). Japan also highlighted its second phase of technical cooperation through the ‘Project for Capacity Building on Climate Resilience in the Pacific’, which continues its support of the Pacific Climate Change Centre.
17. AFD noted the new investment of 200 million Euro to the Pacific over the next four years. The value of SPREP leadership at COP meetings acknowledged and that future actions from AFD will potentially be viewed from a climate change perspective. SPREP is viewed as a good coordinating mechanism and platform for building synergies.

18. It was noted that Australia continues to advocate for SPREP regionally and globally. Under a Partnership Arrangement, Australia is a key bilateral partner with direct multiyear core budget support and through various projects across the strategic priorities of SPREP. It was highlighted that the partnership of Australia and the Secretariat is strong, noting the multiple Australian sectoral department representatives present at the Dialogue, and agencies currently working and collaborating with SPREP.
19. The EU shared that it is pleased with the way that the Secretariat is organised and has been managed in recent years. The decentralisation process with the relocation of Island and Ocean Ecosystems staff to Fiji including at the director level and strengthening of project offices throughout the region, viewed as beneficial to enhancing the profile and relationship of the Secretariat with Members and key partners, particularly those based in Suva, Fiji.

### **Areas to Strengthen Partnerships**

20. A key theme in the discussions was the reminder and importance of listening and talking to each other and the sovereign role of countries, to decide for themselves what is best for them. The triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution are large and complex problems, where all stakeholders need to work together to help address.
21. The importance of partnerships for SPREP recognised, however it must be mutually beneficial and not one sided. Partnerships must be driven by the original mandate of SPREP and targeted, so that the priorities of Members are being implemented and remain the focus.
22. Full time management of partnerships is important so that SPREP can manage and support the coordination of these partnerships to ensure the needs of the Secretariat are being met and that service to Members is in accordance with the mandate of SPREP. The Secretariat noted that a Strategic Planning Adviser position has been appointed that will address this area, with future plans for recruitment in strengthening this function on partnerships, resource, and mobilisation.
23. Coordination between the different CROP agencies needs to be done efficiently to avoid duplication and enable synergies. CROP role is to serve Members and help build their capacity and resilience. A good example is the EU funded Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change and Resilience (PACRES) which involves different CROP agencies and stakeholders working together. The second phase is greatly welcomed by SPREP and Members.
24. Projects are important but so are the mechanisms used in their delivery. Noting the small administrations across the Pacific, delivery should be designed to not overload and be absorbable by Pacific islands.
25. The EU noted the need for SPREP recruitment systems to be strengthened to reduce the inception period for partner funded projects.
26. Partners and Members recognised the importance of simplified, flexible, and predictable funding, which was viewed as critical in helping the Secretariat serve Members.

27. AFD noted that visibility is critical for advocacy of projects and programmes especially in respect of showcasing programme and project outcomes and outputs.

### **New Opportunities**

28. Partnership Dialogue is a great opportunity to leverage support. COP28 is an opportunity for a potential joint side event to demonstrate how partners work together to enable the best impact for Pacific islands.
29. On the matter of programme management fees, different partners charge different rates. Australia under its multiyear core funding support of SPREP has increased its programme management fees to 15 percent to help SPREP in the work it does. While a harmonised approach is preferred to assist with service delivery to Members, the EU noted its seven percent fees are set by regulation. The EU, however, noted there is scope in the direct costs that may be charged, which is over and above the programme management fees.
30. Role of Partners to advocate for SPREP and leverage support with existing and new partners, regionally and globally including in areas on gender equality, disability, and social inclusion (GEDSI).
31. Partners to use monitoring and evaluation frameworks and lessons learnt from the Secretariat to help inform project and programme designs, partnerships, and advocacy work.
32. The EU noted that the Samoa Agreement will be signed in Apia very soon. The new Agreement creates new opportunities on climate, environment and oceans. The EU current funding window closes in 2027. The Secretariat and EU need to engage on the completion of the Samoa Agreement (Post Cotonou Agreement) to maintain and extend partnership work.
33. Green Blue Alliance in the Pacific launched by the EU at COP26 in Glasgow, which includes a framework for cooperation. There will also be dedicated opportunities for the Secretariat and other regional agencies to input into the EU's role in climate change efforts in the region.
34. AFD is currently considering how to foster access to climate / green financing in the region, and how to implement innovative finance, other than grants and ensure it is sustainable.

### **SESSION 3: FOCUS: TECHNICAL, SCIENTIFIC, AND RESEARCH PARTNERS**

#### **Panellists:**

- 1. Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)** - Dr. Geoff Gooley, CSIRO Programme Manager, Climate Resilient Enterprise.
- 2. Research Institute for Development (IRD)** - Ms. France Bailly, Project Director, IRD
- 3. University of Newcastle** - Professor Alan Broadfoot, Executive Director, Newcastle Institute for Energy and Resources, Global Impact Cluster (Energy, Resources, Food & Water)

**Moderator:** Mr. Anthony Talouli, Director, Waste Management and Pollution Control

## **State of Partnerships**

35. CSIRO presented a chronology of climate change science/service programmes, projects and associated initiatives including a brief description of the Pacific Climate Change Science Program (PCCSP), Pacific-Australia Climate Change Science Adaptation Planning (PACCSAP), and the outreach project for PACCSAP, the main partnership projects with SPREP. National level achievements highlighted the implementation of the GCF funded VanKIRAP project, and the assistance to deploy the Vanuatu climate futures portal, which allows the spatial referencing of data and focusing on the end user's ability to tailor information to specific needs.
36. IRD partners with SPREP in several SPREP coordinated plans such as the implementation of the Regional Seabird Action Plan, Pacific Coral Reef Action Plan 2021-2030, Pacific climate, local knowledge, and adaptation strategies (CLIPSSA) and VanKIRAP. The IRD is a strong scientific research and development institution that has been operational in the Pacific since 1946.
37. The University of Newcastle established an MOU with SPREP in 2016 providing joint capacity building to support a resilient prosperous healthy and sustainable Pacific community. This partnership is about sustainability, translation, implementation and research, underpinned by a multidisciplinary approach in multiple institutions in multiple countries. Support provided focuses on environmental and economic benefits that are aligned to the SPREP strategic priorities, which includes doctoral scholarships offered across the Pacific. A Pacific Note Coordinator was established within SPREP in 2018 followed by a PhD programme aimed at Pacific leaders seeking to undertake doctoral studies throughout the region. Research highlights noted as:
  - a) Conservation of local mangrove and culture
  - b) Plastic pollution
  - c) Invasive species
  - d) Climate loss and damage
  - e) Coral restoration

## **Areas to Strengthen Partnerships**

38. There is a need to optimise the use of existing regional infrastructure and networks especially to deliver the services and products provided by IRD under the French objective of promoting science of sustainability in equal partnership through consortium Cresica, (Reef TEMPS) and ORS Net.
39. There is a need to collaborate better with local and regional universities, research groups and governments to contribute to enhancing technical capacities. The University of Newcastle highlighted the importance of diversity of collaboration and acting organically based on need. The IRD model for working in the Pacific islands region supports this model and is based on working with countries and not operating in isolation. The example was provided of the Vanuatu student graduating from IRD funded research and now working with the Vanuatu government.

40. CSIRO highlighted the need to optimise existing regional infrastructure to coordinate the many technical, scientific and research partners involved, notably the Pacific Meteorological Council and the PacMetDesk partnership. These partnerships have given CSIRO the opportunity to take part in the various events that partners are managing and delivering and enables discussions with other agencies. Additionally, the Asia-Pacific Adaptation Network (APAN) platform has also worked well for CSIRO to allow for networking and partnership building. CSIRO highly recommended the complementing of existing regional infrastructure.
41. In-country capacity development requires formal, structured, and informal, unstructured modes. CSIRO's support is an informal, unstructured approach, including mentoring attachments, and facilitating young professional events.
42. The Pacific climate science area is crowded, and it is imperative for the scientific delivery providers to be self-organised.
43. Climate change science is complex, and the user capacity is an ongoing constraint. Pacific climate change science needs better coordination, governance, and reporting. Mainstreaming science-based evidence and facilitating science policy interface is important for the Pacific.
44. Recognised the need for data collection and management to be innovative. There are roadmaps but there needs to be a clear goal post to enable evidence-based decisions. Pathways need to be flexible, and harmonised. The need to harmonise the availability of data – noting there are many portals, websites etc. in the region and often brought about by projects, as projects tend to separate rather than aggregate things.
45. Data and information for guiding technical decisions, may be generated through partnerships, which are needed for global reports (IPCC, INC), design of projects to submit to donor organisations, and planning and development of strategies.

## **New Opportunities**

46. IRD does much research in areas that would be of great benefit to Members and where the Secretariat has limited capacity. These include in the areas of atmospheric services, geo-spatial services (to obtain finer resolution of data for decision making and adaptation planning), oceanography, mining natural hazards and health (traditional medicine, plurality of knowledge).
47. IRD summarised areas where partnerships could be strengthened which included:
  - a) Conceptualisation of programmes and projects;
  - b) Respond as a SPREP partner to international calls for tender;
  - c) Contribute to the implementation of programmes and projects;
  - d) Offer education training sessions;
  - e) Mobilise IRD funding mechanisms;
  - f) Use of consortium Cresica technical analysis platforms; and
  - g) Mobilisation of the French research vessel to support oceanic research.

48. CSIRO noted the need for an innovation agenda for the Pacific, which is currently absent in the climate science space. Opportunities to improve in this space include engaging with the private sector, particularly the financial sector. The MOU that is currently being negotiated between CSIRO and the Secretariat is widening in scope to include the whole of organisation capability.
49. The University of Newcastle is in the process of finalising two more research degrees that shall be advertised. Focus will soon be determined. Other opportunities with the University of Newcastle includes:
- a) Undertake research to make contributions to local communities.
  - b) Increase students' mobility.
  - c) Increase Pacific students' intake making it easier to get into the UoN masters programme.
  - d) Increase research collaboration.
  - e) Support capacity strengthening in the region through tailored courses. Education for the region, in the region, for the people of the region.
50. Current work focused on science, there is an opportunity for data harmonisation. Separation is usually a donor requirement. Scenario analysis brings historical data with future projections. CSIRO highlighted the Regional Climate Consortium for Asia and the Pacific (RCCAP), which has a portal that contains data for all Australian funded work for Climate Change.

## **SESSION 4: FOCUS: IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS**

### **Panellists:**

1. **Birdlife International** - Ms. Margaret West, Chair, Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas.
2. **Pacific Community** - Dr. Stuart Minchin, Director General
3. **Samoa Chamber of Commerce** - Ms. Lita Lui, Chief Executive Officer
4. **United Nations** - Mr. Themba Kalua, United Nations Resident Coordinator

**Moderator:** Ms. Amanda Wheatley, Biodiversity Adviser, Island and Ocean Ecosystems

### **State of Partnerships**

51. Birdlife International works with local communities to properly implement conservation with science. Partnerships serve as the foundation of its approach to support the four pillars of their work on species, sites, systems, and society. The Secretariat is a key partner and with Birdlife helps:
- a) Reduce invasive species
  - b) Conserve and restore key biodiversity areas around the region
  - c) Enhance bird biodiversity
  - d) Protect marine species by changing fisheries practices
  - e) Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas.



52. Birdlife International highlighted a key challenge is the knowledge and urgency to meet and recognise the issues of climate change to the environment. A new 5-year memorandum of understanding will be signed with the Secretariat during the 31<sup>st</sup> SPREP Meeting.
53. As an implementing partner, Birdlife International has an important role in supporting communities to be present and involved as a decision maker alongside donors and partners. It was recognised as important to work together faster and better when all key stakeholders are present.
54. SPC noted CROP agencies were designed to be a home of capabilities for the Pacific region, recognising the unique circumstances of the Pacific with small populations and administrations. The CROP is a shared technical capability, to be used collectively by and for Members. SPC has been in existence for 75 years, from which SPREP grew out of the UN Regional Seas Programme for the Pacific, originally based in Noumea more than 30 years ago. SPREP was created to focus on climate change, biodiversity, waste management and environmental monitoring and governance. The focus of SPC is on public health, maritime boundaries, aquaculture, marine ecosystems, pests, and human rights etc., which are all linked to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SPC have developed four flag ship programmes for cross cutting work on: gender, food systems, oceans, and climate change. SPREP and SPC have a close relationship.
55. The UN expressed commitment to the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, which is implemented through country implementation plans. Progress of the SDGs is at the halfway mark and are already off-track with only 12 percent likely to be achieved and most importantly have stalled or reversed in 30 percent of the SDGs. Need to approach these issues with urgency to achieve SDGs. National governments will bring in more ambitious actions and plans to accelerate their actions to meet these SDGs.
56. CROP agencies will be part of this acceleration in implementing these actions. UN offers expertise and resources to complement the Secretariat's activities in the region. The UN implements actions at a global level and the partnership with SPREP and other agencies allows the UN to bring these actions from a global level to a regional and national level. The UN can act as a global network to address the regional challenges in partnership with SPREP and other agencies.
57. The Samoa Chamber of Commerce provided an outline of its work and focus areas. Its key challenges highlighted as follows:
  - a) Accessing finance.
  - b) Fragmented sectors that need to be better coordinated.
  - c) Data coordination and collection as lacking data in the private sector.
  - d) Capacity weak and collaboration with stakeholders, especially with government
  - e) Information sharing not only with government but with development partners.

## **Areas to Strengthen Partnerships**

58. SPC has been working in climate change for a long time and currently has a team of 300 individuals focused on climate change work in agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and public health. Climate change is the most challenging existential threat in the region as identified by Pacific Leaders. There is much work to do. The capacity challenge in the region is huge e.g., adaptation. Need to spend one billion a year and another one billion to transition to renewable energy. Currently only putting in USD 200 million hence need ten times the effort and more capability. The issue is capability, not funding, where all partners must work together.
59. On accessing additional funding SPC noted the challenge with project funding is that it is not flexible to properly support core funding. Need new sources of funding that are highly flexible rather than restrictive and improve the region's capabilities.
60. SPC responded on capacity development in the region in that approaches that work in Africa fail in the Pacific, as a one size fits all, does not work. The urgency and needs of the Pacific are immense, so partners and donors need to work together. There is also the challenge of brain drain, with people trained by agencies, who move to regional agencies or other countries. SPC and the UN are very eager to work with other Partners. It is not a competition between Partners.
61. The UN noted that capacity development is something Partners can come together to help. Need to utilise and incorporate traditional knowledge in capacity development and capacity building.
62. The Director General of SPREP observed that there is a myth that CROP agencies do not work together. He noted a lot of joint work is conducted by CROP agencies that is not recognised and it is unfortunate that there is focus on the rare instances when CROP agencies do not work together.

## **New Opportunities**

63. SPC urged Members and Partners to be bold and look at other opportunities. Core funding for agencies has not grown, hence SPC is also looking at other sources of funding such as philanthropic. Core funding is defined by the ability to put it where it needs to be. In the spirit of urgency SPC have been working with the Bezo Earth Fund, Bloomberg, and Ocean 5 to develop a consortium to get significant funds for areas that remain unfunded. These new funds are to enable flexibility and do not have the same challenges as project funding.
64. The UN elaborated on what it views as opportunities to implement more partnerships, which was through the SDGs, that have been developed at the global level but were informed at the national level.
65. The Samoa Chamber of Commerce welcomed the opportunity to continue dialogue with Partners and looked forward to signing memorandum of understanding with Partners.

## SESSION 5: FOCUS: PARTNERSHIP – MULTILATERAL FINANCING INSTITUTIONS AND PHILANTHROPIES

### Panellists:

1. **Pacific Region Infrastructure Facility (PRIF)** - Mr. Meapelo Maiai, Technical Assistance Officer, PRIF
2. **World Bank** – Mr. Ingo Weiderhofer, Practice Manager for Global Unit of Social Sustainability and Inclusion Practice
3. **Global Environment Facility (GEF)** - Ms. Sarah Amy Wyatt, Biodiversity Specialist, Global Programs Unit
4. **Conservation International** – Ms. Susana Waqainabete-Tuisese, Senior Director Pacific Islands

**Moderator:** Mr. Jope Davetanivalu, Director, Environmental Monitoring and Governance

### State of Partnerships

66. Overall, the state of partnership with the World Bank and GEF is progressing well evidenced through the ongoing activities and projects being supported in the Pacific due to the Secretariat's commitment to continue to support and assist Members in various sectors to address environmental challenges. With new partners such as the Pacific Region for Infrastructure Facility (PRIF), there is still to some extent scoping work to see where PRIF can fit in the regional architecture and within the CROP coordination mechanism, noting the direct technical assistance to countries. With Conservation International, there are opportunities to build on existing collaboration initiatives through community engagement and at local and community levels.
67. In alignment with the Secretariat, Conservation International helps to protect and improve the environment. Conservation International called for joint attention to the triple planetary crisis, collaborating and helping transform economies. CROP work noted as important. Financing and partnership viewed as fundamental to what Conservation International does. The topic of capacity highlighted the urgency for there to be more multiskilled experts on the ground in the Pacific region, to work faster and across the different sectors.
68. It was noted that Conservation International is part of the Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas (PIRT), which SPREP serves as the Secretariat. This enables more collaboration and discussion among practitioners about what is needed on the ground across the Pacific. The PIRT enables stakeholders to identify strengths and weaknesses, and how they can complement each other in their respective work across the region.
69. The GEF provided an overview of its work including programmes and activities of relevance to Members, such as reporting to conventions, and special global programmes such as Implementing Sustainable Low and Non-Chemical Development in SIDS (ISLANDS) and the Blue and Green Islands Integrated Program. It was noted that capacity building for transparency (CBIT) supports developing countries to build institutional and technical capacity to meet enhanced transparency requirements as defined in Article 13 of the Paris Agreement and may provide additional resources for countries in the region that have access to this funding. The GEF also shared that there is USD 32 million

available for assistance to support national ratification and implementation of the legally binding instrument on BBNJ.

70. The Pacific Region Infrastructure Facility (PRIF) is a multi-partner coordination and technical assistance facility established in 2008 to improve the quality and coverage of infrastructure through coordination and technical assistance, that includes eight development partners and 14 Pacific Members. PRIF Phase IV highlights noted as:
- a) 12 National Infrastructure Investment Plans (NIIPs) completed or underway.
  - b) Increased linkages between high level coordination and strategic technical assistance.
  - c) Evidence NIIPs are used by Pacific islands.
71. The World Bank presented on collaboration in training, and knowledge exchange, with respect to environmental social safeguards. It seeks to build on the success of existing partnership activities, and approach. The Pacific Learning Partnership for Environmental and Social Sustainability (PLP-ESS) highlighted as a successful collaboration between ADB, SPREP, USP and the World Bank. The partnership between the Secretariat with the World Bank on environmental and social safeguards, to be strengthened.

### **Areas to Strengthen Partnerships**

72. Strengthening partnerships needs appropriate documentation regarding mutual benefits and understanding of what each partner brings, as well as providing scope of engagement and collaboration areas.
73. PRIF can strengthen alignment and identification of technical assistance with Pacific islands infrastructure needs, that covers mainstreaming and cross-cutting thematic priorities such as gender equality and social inclusion, climate change, disaster risk reduction, and environmental and social management safeguards. It can also support targeted capacity building in Pacific islands to apply for technical assistance to effectively work with CROP agencies such as SPREP and SPC. PRIF can also assist with effective monitoring and evaluation of technical assistance such as results based versus output-based reporting.

### **New Opportunities**

74. There are opportunities to build on existing partnership arrangements. The World Bank through environmental and social safeguards; with PRIF on possible direct country support and through technical assistance; the GEF through enhanced partnership relationships for countries that are beneficiaries of GEF funding, to better access the relevant pockets of funding available; and with respect to Conservation International at the country and local levels of engagement, taking a more programmatic approach over a project-based approach.
75. The GEF noted that each country in the Pacific has a minimum of USD 8 million System of Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) allocation. The GEF's two climate adaptation funds, the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) and Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) were highlighted under the GEF-8 Programming Strategy for

Climate Change Adaptation, which aims to scale up resilience in developing countries in support of the Paris Agreement's global goal on adaptation. In the GEF-8 period, each LDC will have USD 20 million for country project support from the LDCF. The SCCF includes a dedicated programme for SIDS, giving each USD 3 million to USD 6.5 million for country project support. All recipient countries will also have access to support to facilitate climate adaptation technology transfer, innovation, and private sector engagement.

76. The World Bank highlighted the opportunity for regional level engagement to share resources for environmental and social safeguards that can be used in the Pacific context. SPREP is involved with the Government of Samoa on this matter, and the World Bank is exploring the opportunity for further dialogue with other governments on environmental and social safeguards. There is an increased demand for environmental and social safeguards, especially in climate financing.
77. PRIF can support Pacific islands access climate financing through the Green Climate Fund and Adaptation Fund proposals for climate resilient infrastructure, as well as implement regional and national trainings such as 'Shared Approach for Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts for Pacific Island Countries'.
78. PRIF explained that it can help engagement with climate finance in the region by partnering with agencies such as SPREP. The example of the National Infrastructure Investment Plans (NIIP) and National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process in Tuvalu shared. It was noted that there is overlay, as essentially what is in the climate resilient infrastructure project, is also in the NAP and the NIIPS. The technical assistance that maybe provided, will help the country to work with an intermediary and identify at the concept level, if a country is looking at an infrastructure project, and to potentially use technical assistance to strengthen content of the concept.
79. PRIF-5, which commences in January 2024, will look to adopt new strategic focus such as climate change and economic resilience.
80. Conservation International suggested delivery with regional delivery partners (CSO) which can access sustainable financing systems and pathways in the Pacific.

## **SESSION 6: WRAP UP AND CLOSING**

81. The Director General thanked all Members and Partners for their participation in the First Partnership Dialogue. noting the positive feedback received, it shall continue from hereon as part of the SPREP Meeting and associated meetings that convene biennially. A summary of the key outcomes of the Partnership Dialogue will be presented to the SPREP Meeting, and a report will be shared with all participants with the formal meeting reports.