

## **Draft Report**

### **Report of the Thirteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention to Ban the Importation into Forum Island Countries of Hazardous and Radioactive Wastes and to Control the Transboundary Movement and the Management of Hazardous Wastes within the South Pacific Region (Waigani Convention)**

Sheraton Aggie Grey's Hotel and Bungalows  
5 September 2025

#### **Introduction**

1. The Thirteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Waigani Convention was held on 5 September 2025. The meeting was held in person at the Sheraton Aggie Grey's Hotel and Bungalows in Samoa.
2. The 13 Parties to the Convention are Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.
3. Present at the Meeting were representatives from Australia, Cook Islands, Kiribati, New Zealand, Niue, Samoa, and Tuvalu. Observers present noted as the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) Convention Secretariat and SWIRE Shipping.

#### **Agenda Item 1: Opening Prayer**

4. Kiribati, as Vice President in the absence of Solomon Islands as President opened the Meeting and requested Tuvalu start the Meeting with a prayer.
5. Kiribati, extended appreciation towards the Secretariat and the Parties for their work and support towards meeting the Waigani Convention obligations and acknowledged the presence of the Executive-Secretary of the BRS Secretariat.
6. As the Meeting was one Member short of a quorum, the Secretariat advised the Outcomes of the Meeting will be confirmed by the Meeting. Once confirmed it will be circulated to Parties absent for their acceptance within a two-week period with any reservation's forthcoming added as a footnote. No response received will be noted as an acceptance. At the completion of this process the Outcomes of the Meeting are taken as adopted.
7. A full record of the Meeting will be distributed by email to those present providing a period to respond. Once this period is complete, the record will be circulated to all Parties for notification.

8. The Director General's opening statement highlighted the crucial role of the Waigani Convention as central to collective efforts to protect our region's human health and the environment from the harmful impacts of hazardous wastes and chemicals. The Director General noted the Secretariat has worked closely with Parties and partners to advance the implementation of the Waigani Convention, strengthen national capacities, and support compliance with international obligations under other Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs). He noted the continuing strong partnership between the Waigani Convention and the BRS Conventions emphasising their complementarity and additionality.
9. He commended the attendance of the BRS Executive Secretary, thanking the championing of Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) issues by the Executive Secretary within the work of the BRS Conventions. The Director General further highlighted the importance of continued implementation of work under these and encouraged the SPREP Members that are not a Party, to ratify the Rotterdam Convention. This is particularly relevant as the negotiation of a Plastics Treaty continues in utilising existing MEAs to address what we can.
10. The Executive Secretary of the BRS Secretariat stressed that in discussions with over the 60 Ministers during the 2025 BRS COP, all raised illegal traffic as an issue that has particular impact on SIDS. Pacific SIDS Parties to the BRS Convention were further encouraged to strengthen their voice in the BRS Convention spaces noting the power of SIDS.
11. The BRS Secretariat Executive Secretary highlighted the Moana Taka Partnership in the Pacific as the first in the world to utilise the Prior Informed Consent procedure successfully and suggested Parties and SPREP to prepare for opportunities to amplify this Pacific partnership to the world, including the 2027 Conference of the Parties to the BRS in Panama.

## **Agenda Item 2: Organisation of the Meeting**

12. In accordance with Rule 19 of the Rules of Procedure of the Waigani Convention, the Meeting elected a President and a Vice President by consensus.
13. The Parties elected Niue as President and Samoa as Vice President. The Secretariat clarified the role of the rapporteur and Parties elected the Cook Islands as Rapporteur.
14. Kiribati, as outgoing Vice President extended appreciation towards the Secretariat and the Parties for their work and support in meeting the Waigani Convention, further acknowledging the presence of the Executive-Secretary of the BRS Secretariat and extended its best wishes to the incoming President, Vice President and Rapporteur.

The Parties:

- 1) **Elected Niue** as President, **Samoa** as Vice President and **Cook Islands** as Rapporteur to oversee the proceedings of the Thirteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

### **Agenda Item 3: Adoption of the Provisional Agenda**

15. The Provisional Agenda for the Thirteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Waigani Convention (WC COP13) was presented to the Meeting for adoption.

The Parties:

- 1) **Adopted** the Provisional Agenda (Attached as Agenda Item 3.1) subject to any necessary amendments.

### **Agenda Item 4: Reports of the Secretariat**

#### **Agenda Item 4.1: Progress of Waigani Amendments**

16. The Meeting was updated on the progress of process towards bringing the Waigani amendments into effect.
17. Australia and New Zealand extended appreciation to the Secretariat for its update. Australia noted the status of the 2023 amendments to the Waigani Convention and looks forward to the review from Parties, and the opportunity to support the standalone depository. New Zealand noted the timeline and looks forward to receiving the final amendment for the standalone depository noting the adjustments to be made to its domestic processes.

The Parties:

- 1) **Noted** the status of the 2023 amendments to the Waigani Convention and the steps taken to bring them into force.

#### **Agenda Item 4.2: Activities undertaken since COP12**

18. Australia, New Zealand and Samoa welcomed the significant work undertaken recognising the activities undertaken by the Secretariat and endorsed the report.
19. Australia and Samoa highlighted effectiveness of Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) at the recent BRS Convention Conference of the Parties and recognised the impactful leadership of Tuvalu as Chair of PSIDS in this process. Cook Islands also noted with appreciation the PSIDS coordination together with the Secretariat support at the sessions of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a legally binding global plastics instrument. The Director General encouraged the continuation of this coordination arrangement to increase negotiation effectiveness further noting this guides the Secretariat in how best to assist Parties at the COP, as is with other MEAs.

20. Samoa congratulated the President on their appointment and provided Samoa's full support as Vice President. Samoa highlighted projects which funded most activities are now ending, urging the Secretariat to continue providing Parties implementation support through sourcing new funding avenues.

The Parties:

- 1) **Noted** the work undertaken since the 12th Conference of the Parties.
- 2) **Endorsed** the Pacific Small Islands Developing States (PSIDS) Report from the 17th Conference of the Parties Meeting to the Basel Convention, 12th Conference of the Parties Meeting to the Rotterdam Convention and 12th Conference of the Parties Meeting to the Stockholm Convention.
- 3) **Recognised** the effective coordination of Pacific SIDS through the leadership of Tuvalu at the last BRS COPs and welcome the PSIDS and Secretariat to maintain these arrangements.

#### **Agenda Item 5: Reporting and transmission of information on illegal traffic**

21. The Meeting was presented with reports received from Parties, as well as verbal reports of illegal traffic.
22. Tuvalu reaffirmed its commitments, reported no transmissions, and emphasised continued vigilance against illegal traffic to ensure a safer Pacific.
23. Australia confirmed submission of its national report on 1 September.
24. New Zealand confirmed no illegal transmissions to report, indicated it will submit its report by 30 December in alignment with both Waigani and BRS obligations, and reaffirmed its commitments for 2023 and 2024 reporting.
25. Samoa reaffirmed its reporting obligations, noted no illegal transmissions, and indicated reports will be provided in due course.
26. Kiribati requested support from the Secretariat to build its capacity of Customs Officers and Maritime Police to address illegal transmissions.
27. Cook Islands advised its report is in progress and sought clarification on reporting timeframes for which the Secretariat clarified there are no formal deadlines for reporting but encouraged Parties to submit in a timely manner.

The Parties:

- 1) **Noted** reports for 2023 - 2025 submitted by Australia and Solomon Islands.
- 2) **Shared** with the Secretariat and other Parties their experience on any instances of illegal traffic since July 2023.
- 3) **Urged** Parties that have yet to transmit reports to the Secretariat to do so as soon as possible using the reporting forms adopted by the Conference of the Parties.

## **Agenda Item 6: Financial statements from 2023 and 2024**

28. The audited reports for SPREP 2023-2024 and the Income and Expenditure reports for the Waigani Convention for the 2023 and 2024 financial years were presented to the Meeting.
29. Kiribati requested its outstanding balance and the deadlines for this to be submitted for which the Secretariat confirmed the membership contribution fee is USD 1,075 for which the secretariat will share invoices up to 31 Sept 2024.
30. Responding to a query by New Zealand, the Secretariat confirmed outstanding contributions is USD13,185. The Secretariat reminded Parties that the invoices for the outstanding contributions from Parties were circulated early this year to their National Focal Points.

The Parties:

- 1) **Adopted** the audited reports for SPREP and the Income and Expenditure reports for the Waigani Convention for the 2023 and 2024 financial years.

## **Agenda Item 7: Decision items**

### **Agenda Item 7.1: 10th Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee Meeting report Tenth STAC meeting report**

31. The report on the 10<sup>th</sup> Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) Meeting held on 13 to 14 March 2025 in Rarotonga, Cook Islands was presented to the Meeting.
32. Australia commended the Federated States of Micronesia for its role as Chairperson, Kiribati in its role as Vice Chair and Papua New Guinea for its role Rapporteur of the STAC Meeting, extending further appreciation to the Cook Islands as host.

The Parties:

- 1) **Endorsed** and **approved** the 10th STAC Meeting Report.

### **Agenda Item 7.2: Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee Work Programme**

33. The Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) Work Programme for the period of 2025 to 2026 was presented to the Meeting.
34. Australia and New Zealand acknowledged the Secretariat and Parties. New Zealand further noted its appreciation for recommendations 1.1 and 3.1.
35. The Secretariat confirmed the activities are funded under projects implemented by the Secretariat which haven't been put before the Convention noting this Work Plan and Budget was endorsed at the Thirty second Meeting of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme. The Secretariat further noted the unfunded activities are part of the ongoing work of the Secretariat that does not require funding.

The Parties:

- 1) **Approved**, subject to the availability of resources, the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee Work Programme 2025-2026.

### **Agenda Item 7.3: Workplan for the Implementation of the Waigani Review Recommendations**

36. The Meeting was presented with the Waigani Convention Review Recommendations Workplan for endorsement.
37. Australia and Tuvalu acknowledged the Secretariat and Parties for their work on developing the workplan.
38. The Secretariat provided additional information on the Secretariat's support to Fiji to ratify the Basel and Rotterdam Conventions through supporting a review of their national legislation and institutional arrangements to ensure Fiji can meet its national obligations as a Party to these conventions. This process is expected to be completed swiftly as Fiji is keen to progress ratification.
39. The Secretary stated it will provide guidance and support to Kiribati to support their ratification to the Rotterdam Convention in response to the request from Kiribati to do so.
40. Australia recognised there is significant work being implemented under the STAC and Waigani Workplan and noted there is much more work to be done, recommending Parties hold inter-sessional meetings via electronic means and proposed an additional recommendation. The Director General requested Australia to clarify if these would be informal gatherings, or formal out of session meetings for which Australia clarified the proposal was for informal gatherings.

The Parties:

- 1) **Approved**, subject to availability of resources, the Workplan for the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Review of the Waigani Convention
- 2) **Encouraged** to meet informally during the intersessional period, by electronic means, to discuss intersessional activities from the workplans and any other relevant items.

### **Agenda Item 8: Consideration of and adoption of the Core Budget**

41. The Secretariat presented the Core Budget 2026-2027 for Parties consideration. The core budget is funded by contributions of the Parties and allocated to providing for the next meeting of the Parties and other associated costs.

42. In response to a query from Kiribati, the Secretariat clarified the costed budget for travel to attend one day of the COP is limited to Cook Islands, Kiribati, Niue and Tuvalu.
43. Kiribati requested further explanation of the budget noting the rising inflation costs that may happen in two years' time for which the Secretariat confirmed these are estimated costs and should there be savings from other work that will be used to buffer increased costs of airfares and DSAs.
44. New Zealand sought clarification as to further areas where savings could be created or where past expenditures had come in under budget. Cook Islands queried what the proposed increase from 60k to 100k would look like in practice and whether it would be drawn from annual subscriptions.
45. The Secretariat advised that, under current contribution levels, a 40k increase would shift the distribution across Parties, while noting that New Zealand and Australia together contribute approximately 80% of the total budget. The Secretariat further clarified that the proposed 100k can be met through outstanding contributions to be collected and identified savings from previous years.
46. New Zealand thanked the Secretariat for its approach, encouraged ongoing efforts to secure timely annual contributions from Parties, and asked that future budgets be built on more realistic activity planning given sustainability concerns in past budgets.
47. New Zealand requested advance notification should there be a need to increased membership contributions.

The Parties:

- 1) **Considered** and **approved** the core budget for 2026-2027 with potential cost-sharing made available from available projects.
- 2) **Committed** to urgent clearance of outstanding contributions.

### **Agenda Item 9: Other Business**

48. The Meeting was open for any other business to be tabled for which none was forthcoming.

### **Agenda Item 10: Date and venue of the next meeting**

49. The Secretariat confirmed the Fourteenth Conference of the Parties to the Waigani Convention is to be hosted in Samoa alongside the SPREP Meeting.

The Parties:

- 1) **Confirmed** and **endorsed** the date and venue of the COP14 Meeting.

### **Agenda Item 11: Adoption of the Meeting Record**

The Parties present at COP13 considered and:

- 1) **Approved** the outcome report of the COP13 meeting that will be circulated for acceptance by Parties not present at the Meeting.

### **Agenda Item 12: Closure of the Meeting**

50. The Director General in his closing remarks to the Meeting acknowledged the presence of the Executive Secretary of the BRS Convention Secretariat and the SWIRE Shipping representative, a partner of the Moana Taka Partnership. The Director General further acknowledged the commitment of Parties for continued commitment and engagement at the Waigani COP, and with action on the ground nationally to address the issues agreed together ensuring collaboration and support for each other.
51. The Director General expressed appreciation to Australia and New Zealand for its technical and financial assistance for work to the Waigani Convention.
52. The Director General commended the PSIDS coordination in the BRS Convention led by Tuvalu, noting it is encouraging that Parties present at this Meeting highlighted its effectiveness and encouraged continuation of this coordination.
53. Niue as President expressed gratitude to Parties and the Secretariat for their work in bringing about the successful outcomes of the Thirteenth Conference of the Parties to the Waigani Convention.

The Meeting closed with a prayer from Tuvalu at 1.05pm.