

First Executive Board Meeting

Apia, Samoa
10-11 September 2018

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AGENDA ITEM 7.3: Update on Ocean-related Strategic Engagements

Purpose:

1. Update the Executive Board on progress towards implementing the 2017-2026 Strategic Plan cross-cutting focus on oceans and initiatives taken since the UN Oceans Conference in 2017.

Background:

2. SPREP Members endorsed an over-arching oceans focus in adopting the 2017-2026 Strategic Plan in 2016. Regionally and nationally there has been growing momentum to better conserve and manage the ocean and its resources, including establishment of marine protected areas and species specific sanctuaries, engagement in the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) negotiation process and participation in the UN Oceans Conference in New York in 2017.
3. SPREP Members and Secretariat had high impact engagement at the UN Oceans Conference. The conference resulted in over 1,420 voluntary commitments to help achieve SDG 14: Life Below Water, of which 65 were led by the Pacific islands region. SPREP listed four commitments in the Ocean Registry in collaboration with a wide range of partners:
 - a. *Clean Seas for a Cleaner Pacific*
A partnership was formed between UN Environment, SPREP and other organisations to cooperate in the delivery of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter, a #CleanSeas Campaign for the Pacific and implementation of the Cleaner Pacific 2025 Strategy to reduce marine debris and achieve a Clean Pacific Ocean.
 - b. *Pacific Ocean Research Alliance (PORA)*
PORA connects and expands coastal and offshore ocean research with the aim to source and provide marine data for decision makers, build Pacific capacity, connect international, regional and national experts and stakeholders, and support the Pacific Ocean Alliance and the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner.

- c. *Pacific Partnership on Ocean Acidification*
This partnership aims to build on the NZ Pacific Partnership on Ocean Acidification project with the goal of building resilience to ocean acidification and climate change impacts on oceans in coastal communities and ecosystems.
 - d. *Protecting, Conserving and Restoring Whale Populations in the Pacific islands*
Building on the SPREP and the Kingdom of Tonga hosted 'Whales in a Changing Ocean' conference in 2017, participating governments and organisations signed a Voluntary Commitment to save whales and to collectively address emerging threats facing whales.
4. Increased interest in ocean-related issues is also reflected in donor support. Annex 1 summarises current, pipeline and proposed SPREP projects and programmes that have an ocean focus, and how these relate to Strategic Plan objectives and 2018-2019 PIP targets. These projects and programmes address the full range of SPREP strategic priorities, including integrated approaches to climate change, biodiversity and waste management and pollution. They also engage a range of existing and developing donors and partnerships, including: Germany, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, EU, France, Monaco, GEF, GCF, UN Environment, UK Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), Australian CSIRO, IUCN, Swire Shipping, and CROP organisations.
 5. The total combined value of existing and pipeline ocean focused projects and programmes is approximately US\$157 million (noting that this amount includes funding for partner activities) , and the proposed coastal resilience programme currently in discussion with the GCF in partnership with IUCN is US\$50 million, the proposed GEF-7 Healthy Oceans Programme Framework in development will be in the order of US\$20 million (see WP 10.2.1), and the GEF-7 SIDS Islands integrated chemical and waste management framework US\$25 million (see Att.1).

Recommendations:

6. The Executive Board is invited to:
 - **note** the increasing level of donor and partner support for SPREP ocean-related projects and programmes that will deliver 2017-2026 Strategic Plan outcomes for Members.
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