



Report of the 18th SPREP Meeting

11-14 September 2007
Apia, Samoa

SPREP PROE

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**Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment
Programme**

PO Box 240, Vailima, Apia, Samoa

T: (685) 21 929

F: (685) 20 231

E: sprep@sprep.org

W: www.sprep.org

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Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

PO Box 240

Apia, Samoa

P: (685) 21929

F: (685) 20231

E: sprep@sprep.org,

W: www.sprep.org

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Contents

Report on the 18th SPREP Meeting 1

Agenda Item 1:	Official Opening	1
Agenda Item 2:	Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair	2
Agenda Item 3:	Adoption of Agenda and Working Procedures	2
Agenda Item 4:	Action Taken on Matters Arising from the Seventeenth SPREP Meeting	3
Agenda Item 5:	Performance Review/Overview of Developments in 2006	3
Agenda Item 6:	Members' Issues	11
Agenda Item 7:	Staff Remuneration Issues	19
Agenda Item 8:	2008 Work Programme and Budget	22
Agenda Item 9:	Institutional Matters	31
Agenda Item 10:	Regional Cooperation	34
Agenda Item 11:	Items Proposed by Members	35
Agenda Item 12:	Statements by Observers	37
Agenda Item 13:	Other Business	37
Agenda Item 14:	Date and Venue of Nineteenth SPREP Meeting	37
Agenda Item 15:	Adoption of Report	37
Agenda Item 16:	Closure of the Meeting	37

Annexes

Annex I	List of Participants	39
Annex II	Welcome Statement by SPREP Director	49
Annex III	Statement by CEO and Chairperson of GEF Secretariat	51
Annex IV	Statement by Prime Minister of the Government of Samoa	54
Annex V	Adopted Agenda	56
Annex VI	Duty Statement for the post of Director	58
Annex VII	Sub-committee Report on Independent Corporate Review	59
Annex VIII	Remarks by Deputy Director of SPREP	60
Annex IX	Closing Statement by SPREP Director	61

Acronyms used and their explanation 63

Meeting Report

Introduction

1. The 18th SPREP Meeting (18SM) was convened in Apia, Samoa from 11 to 14 September 2007. Representatives of the following SPREP countries and territories attended: American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, France, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, United States of America and Wallis and Futuna. Observers from a range of regional, international and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also attended. A list of participants is attached as Annex 1.

Agenda Item 1: Official Opening

2. The Master of Ceremony, Taito John Roache, greeted all delegates and invited Rev. Dr Featuna'i Liua'ana to bless the meeting.

3. The Director of SPREP, Mr Asterio Takesy welcomed all delegates and thanked the Prime Minister of Samoa, the Hon. Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi for agreeing to address and officially open the 18th SPREP Meeting. He also congratulated the Government of Samoa for successfully hosting what many considered the best South Pacific Games ever.

4. The Director also thanked Madame Monique Barbut, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Secretariat Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Chairperson for accepting his invitation to attend the 18th SPREP meeting as special guest and highlighted the importance of the GEF and Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS) working together to ensure the future sustainability of the Pacific islands by addressing the special needs of the region and making the GEF relevant to the Pacific SIDS.

5. The Director stated that although much work had been undertaken in the time that SPREP had been established, threats and challenges to the environment still remain and in certain areas becoming more

serious and urgent. He highlighted the willingness of the SPREP Secretariat to continue to support Members to the best of its ability.

6. The Director referred to the current study on "regional architecture" and urged members who have views on the matter to raise the issue in their governments and administrations, prior to the Pacific Islands Forum Meeting in October, where the findings would be discussed and a decision made. He also made reference to a planned independent corporate review of SPREP and commended the review to the meeting for endorsement and to donors for funding support.

7. He highlighted the work programme for 2008 and raised the need for members to increase their equity, ownership and commitment to SPREP's work. The Director also referred to the need for adjustments in remuneration for staff to continue to be competitive and fair. His full statement is contained in Annex 2.

8. The Chief Executive of the GEF Secretariat, Mme Barbut thanked the Government of Samoa for the warm welcome and SPREP for the organization of the meeting. She stated the Pacific islands stand as symbols for the rest of the world, highlighting the region's natural wealth and beauty, but also the challenges and threats facing Pacific islands.

9. She expressed her commitment as GEF CEO to supporting developing countries participate in the protection of the global commons to achieve sustainable development. She highlighted the importance of investing GEF money wisely focusing on future sustainability as well as present needs. Mme Barbut announced that US\$100 million of GEF funding was going to be available to Pacific SIDS for the next three years focusing on four areas: biodiversity, climate change mitigation and adaptation, international waters, and cross-cutting issues integrated across sectors such as land and water management.

10. She expressed her delight at SPREP's employment of a GEF Support Adviser for the region with financial support from New Zealand and Australia. She commended the work and commitment undertaken and pledged to assist countries to support national policy change and institution building. She concluded her remarks by stating that she believes everybody is entitled to prosper on a living planet and extended an invitation to the Pacific islands to continue to commit to the evolving GEF-Pacific Alliance for Sustainability (GEF-PAS). Her full statement is contained in Annex 3.

11. The Prime Minister of Samoa, the Hon. Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi welcomed delegates and thanked the CEO of the GEF for accepting SPREP's invitation to attend the 18th SPREP meeting. He highlighted that the threats and challenges facing the region a decade and a half ago were still current. He acknowledged the work that SPREP had undertaken since the Secretariat's move to Samoa in 1992 and addressed the current study on the Regional Institutional Framework (RIF). He expressed the Government of Samoa's commitment and belief in the usefulness of SPREP and reinforced his belief that SPREP should continue its service as it was presently constituted.

12. He also highlighted the need to continue to support growing organizations and called on the collective help and support of all SPREP members to ensure the organization was able to deliver on its services. This included sharing how each Member was meeting its responsibilities through the Country Profiles template and paying Member contributions on time. The Prime Minister's opening address is contained in Annex 4.

Agenda Item 2: Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

13. The Meeting in accordance with the SPREP Meeting Rules of Procedures, appointed the Representative of Guam, Ms. Lorilee T. Crisostomo as Chair, who made a brief opening statement and the Representative of Samoa, Tu'u'u Dr. Ieti Taulealo as Vice-Chair.

Agenda Item 3: Adoption of Agenda and Working Procedures

14. The Representative of Australia proposed that Agenda Item 8.2.1 *Strengthening GEF Support Services Within the Region* be moved forward for discussion before Agenda Item 5.2 and proposed that consideration be given to the formation of a Working Group to look at key issues such as country priorities and support.

15. The Representative of Niue proposed the inclusion of the discussion on the Regional Institutional Framework (RIF) into the Meeting's agenda.

16. The Representatives of Samoa and Cook Islands supported the proposal by Australia stating that this issue was one of the most important issues facing the Pacific and should be made a priority discussion of the Meeting.

17. The Representative of the United States of America agreed with Niue's proposal and requested that it be included under Agenda Item 11: *Items Proposed by Members* stating that they had followed this review quite closely and if possible, would like to share the questions they had regarding the proposal.

18. The Secretariat stated that Members were free to discuss the Regional Institutional Framework, however it did not have a report for discussion given that this was currently being finalized for submission to the RIF Task Force and the Pacific Plan Action Committee at the end of the month.

19. The Representative of Papua New Guinea also proposed the inclusion under Agenda Item 11 of an update on the 8th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas scheduled for Alotau, PNG in October.

20. The Meeting adopted the Revised Agenda (contained in Annex 5) and its proposed hours and programme of work.

21. The Meeting also appointed an open-ended Report Drafting Committee comprising of a core group of Australia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, and the United States of America with the Vice-Chair (Samoa) chairing the Committee.

Agenda Item 4: Action Taken on Matters Arising from Seventeenth SPREP Meeting

22. The Secretariat reported on actions taken on decisions of the 17th SPREP Meeting (17SM). In addressing this paper, the Secretariat explained that a number of items in the report are further addressed in separate agenda items.

23. The Representative of the Republic Marshall Islands suggested that action taken under Agenda Item 5.3 be rephrased to clarify the reference to arrears of US\$381,477. She also suggested the inclusion of the Micronesia Challenge into the actions taken under Agenda Item 8: *Island Ecosystems Programme Issues*.

24. The Representative of the United States of America noted the lack of action on Agenda Item 8.1.4 and sought more information on the conference in Papua New Guinea. She also requested more information on marine species under action taken in Agenda Item 8.1.5.

25. The Representative of Papua New Guinea enquired whether the workshop mentioned under action taken in Agenda Item 8.1.4 will be at the same venue as the Conference in Alotau.

26. The Secretariat advised that marine species will be discussed later under Agenda Item 8.1.1, and reiterated the proposal from the Representative of Papua New Guinea to provide an update of the Conference in the Meeting under Agenda Item 11. The Secretariat took note of the comments from the Representative of the Republic of the Marshall Islands in reference to para.23 in which they wanted their concern addressed before the release of the papers for the next SPREP Meeting.

27. The Representative of France enquired whether the marine protected areas (MPA) discussed in action taken under Agenda 8.1.4 was being discussed with regards to the Coral Reef Initiative of the South Pacific (CRISP).

28. The Secretariat informed the Meeting that an informal meeting to develop the proposed regional framework on MPAs would be convened in conjunction with the 8th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas.

29. The Meeting noted the paper and actions taken by the Secretariat on the decisions of the 17SM.

Agenda Item 5: Performance Review/Overview of Developments in 2006

5.1: Presentation of Annual Report for 2006 and Director's Overview of Progress since the Seventeenth SPREP Meeting

30. The Director tabled the Annual Report for 2006 and presented his Overview of progress since the 17SM. The overview not only included highlights of SPREP operations during the year under review but also alerted Members to emerging issues and raised matters on which he and the Secretariat required guidance and direction.

31. The Director paid tribute to the Deputy Director, Mr. Vitolio Lui who was coming to the end of his six-year term and hence was participating in his last SPREP Meeting in his current capacity. He then invited the Meeting to acknowledge Mr Lui's contribution to the work of the Secretariat through applause, to which the meeting warmly responded.

32. The Representative of New Zealand congratulated the Secretariat on its Annual Report, as a comprehensive summary of the work undertaken by the Secretariat. He noted the new programme agreement between New Zealand and SPREP and identified that there were many pressing environmental challenges to be addressed in the region. He stated that the challenge of translating the broad range of initiatives into tangible results on the ground was one faced by the Secretariat and Members and looked forward to continuing to work with the Secretariat and Members to pool scarce resources to focus on addressing these environmental issues.

33. The Representative of the Marshall Islands thanked the Secretariat for the assistance given to the Marshall Islands over the past year.

34. The Representative of Tuvalu commended the Secretariat and donors for its work particularly on country training attachments and hoped that it would continue into the next year as it was an important issue for Tuvalu.

35. The Representative of Samoa expressed his appreciation that the Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project (PIGGAREP) was underway but noted that in terms of project outcomes, there was little focus on energy efficiency and therefore requested the new PIGGAREP Coordinator to incorporate energy efficiency issues into the programme.

36. He also informed the Meeting that his Government had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Tokelau on the issue of waste. He advised the meeting that the MoU focused on both waste minimization as well as movement of Tokelau's solid waste to Samoa for disposal.

37. The Representative of Kiribati expressed appreciation for the work of the Secretariat over the past year and thanked the Director for visiting Kiribati and the staff for their responsiveness to the needs of his country. He also thanked the Secretariat for the excellent documentation made available to the delegates.

38. The Representative of Australia in commending the Director for a very impressive and improved report, suggested for future improvement breakout boxes in next year's Annual Report which would provide quantifiable indicators to gauge SPREP work programmes achievements. He requested quantifiable and measurable data in short form so that members could see what progress was being made. He also thanked the Deputy Director for his service.

39. The Representative of France thanked the Secretariat and SPREP staff for the excellent work done over the year. He noted two important items in the report: the efforts undertaken by SPREP to secure funds from the GEF; and the fact that SPREP was now able to raise funds from many international donors and coordinate them to offer better services to all its Members.

40. The Representative of Tokelau thanked the Secretariat and the Government of Samoa for supporting Tokelau in waste management. He also reiterated Tuvalu's wish for SPREP to continue training opportunities particularly in the form of practical attachments.

41. The Chair noted the consensus for the Annual Report to be adopted and thanked the Director and his team for the excellent work provided.

42. The Meeting then adopted the 2006 Annual Report.

5.2: Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report (PMER) on the 2006 Work Programme and Budget

43. In accordance with the SPREP Meeting Rules of Procedure, the Secretariat presented its internal Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report (PMER) for 2006, explaining that the PMER had been used as a tool to identify areas where improvement was needed, to capitalize on opportunities presented as well as, focus on emerging issues and challenges. The PMER guided the formulation of work programmes and budgets for ensuing years.

44. The PMER complements the Director's Overview and separate reports on the financial performance and accounts for the 2006 financial year. It detailed the achievements under each programme, output and performance indicator established for approved activities for 2006. The Secretariat saw the PMER as a useful tool for management, members and donors and intended it to be supplemented with independent evaluations of aspects of its work on a rolling basis.

45. Overall the Secretariat was able to expend 100% of the 2006 budget in terms of actual funds received. In terms of approved budgetary resources for the year 2006, the Secretariat expended 93% of approved resources in delivering work activities to the PICTs and in maintaining the Secretariat and programme support.

5.2.1: PMER – Island Ecosystems

46. In response to Member's wishes to hear from staff in greater detail and illustrating work programme performance, the Secretariat presented a video overview of the Island Ecosystems Programme.

47. The Representative of the Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI) thanked the Secretariat for the comprehensive report and stated that RMI welcomed partnerships and achievements with member countries.

48. The Representative of Niue acknowledged the informative presentation and thanked especially the programme areas that had assisted Niue. He thanked the backstopping and technical support provided to the National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) as well as the Sustainable Land Management workshops. He stated that Niue appreciated the hardware and network established by and through the Pacific Environmental Information Network (PEIN) as well as the support on the review of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) and provision of guidelines. He requested the Secretariat's assistance to enable draft NBSAP documentation to be ready for the October Conference in PNG.

49. He also mentioned that the Invasive Species Management Project was taking too long and referred to the GEF meeting the day before where he raised a question on this project and asked the Members for their support on this project. He also reminded the Meeting that at the 17SM, the International Waters Project (IWP) evaluation report was never properly discussed especially on the area of waste management. He stated that the Secretariat needed to share lessons learnt through the IWP project.

50. The Secretariat stated that the discussion on the Pacific Futures Programme would be the best place to cover Niue's concern on waste management issues.

51. The Representative of Fiji asked for clarification on environmental education through schools and the status of the review of school curriculum and whether it was to be distributed. The Secretariat responded that the review had been included into the regional education framework evaluation and that the final report would be distributed to Fiji as well as other Members once available.

52. He also commended the PEIN project and stated that it should be an ongoing project and asked if it was going to continue in Fiji. The Secretariat responded that attempts had been made to progress the work of PEIN in Fiji, but their national focal point had been promoted to another position hampering progress. The Secretariat stated that once Fiji identified a new focal point they would look at renewing support for Fiji.

53. The Representative of Samoa also thanked the Secretariat for the presentation and supported Niue's comment on the Invasive Species Project. He stated that countries needed to include this issue as part of the priorities for GEF-PAS.

54. The Representative of France stated that the delay in the implementation of the CRISP programme had been addressed and that with the appointment of the CRISP officer, there should be no further problem with its progress in the future.

55. The Representative of Cook Islands informed the Meeting that a Biodiversity Unit had been established under their Environment Service and that it would work in close collaboration with the Secretariat on collaborative programmes.

56. The Representative of the United States of America acknowledged the good work of the Secretariat and reiterated their willingness to support the experts of this particular programme.

57. The Representative of the Federated States of Micronesia valued the backstopping and technical advice provided by the Secretariat to conferences of parties (COPs) and other important meetings and urged the Secretariat to continue this service in the forthcoming Bonn COP.

58. The Representative of Marshall Islands requested clarification from the Secretariat as to why the Invasive Species Project was removed given its importance to Member countries. The Secretariat responded that all regional projects were put on hold pending the GEF-PAS and that this project was raised as an issue at the GEF Focal Points meeting.

59. The Representative of Australia also acknowledged the good work by the Secretariat and again stressed the need for the inclusion of more quantitative information in the report that can be compared from year to year. He also pointed to the repeated comments by Members in relation to funding issues and encouraged the GEF-PAS programmatic approach to reduce potential cash flow problems for projects. He reiterated the importance of clear guidance on the GEF-PAS to assist with the development of country and regional priorities. He also supported Niue's suggestion to draw from the 'lessons learned' section of the IWP project report.

60. The Representative of French Polynesia echoed the comments of the previous speakers, congratulating and thanking the SPREP Secretariat for the quality of the actions undertaken by the Island Ecosystems Programme and for the comprehensive presentations made. He welcomed the start of the CRISP project and the success of the sea turtle tagging campaign. He mentioned the successful translocation of 27 specimens of Kuhl's Lorikeet, a bird species endemic to the Rimatara island in the Austral archipelago, to the Atiu island in the Cook Islands, with the support of Bird Life International. He also welcomed French Polynesia's joining the Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN) which successfully held their first annual meeting in Moorea from 3 to 7 September 2007. He closed his remarks by thanking the Secretariat and all the Members for the condolences expressed to his government following the tragic plane accident which killed 20 people last August, including five officers from the Polynesian Environment Ministry.

61. The Representative of Tuvalu also expressed appreciation for assistance from the Secretariat through the PEIN project and sought clarification in relation to their NCSA proposal which was submitted in 2005, but had not received any response.

62. The Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Mr Andrea Volentras, responded that Tuvalu and Nauru's NCSA proposals were still outstanding and should Tuvalu still saw this as a priority, then it could be included into the GEF-PAS. On the other hand, because it was an old proposal, he would seek further clarification in relation to progressing it immediately.

63. The Representative of the Marshall Islands in response to the SPREP Secretariat's elaborations in regards to invasive species, strongly urged the GEF Secretariat to seek clarification on national priorities directly from Member countries over issues that may have been forwarded by other sources to SPREP.

64. The Representative of Kiribati pointed to the Secretariat's strong focus on formal education and requested that it also look at informal outreach programmes on environment and sustainable development (ESD) to inform grassroots people on environmental issues. She also requested the Secretariat to look at extending PEIN's assistance to other PICTs. She closed her comments by stating

that Kiribati was also thankful to the Secretariat for their backstopping role at meetings such as the COPs.

5.2.2: PMER – Pacific Futures

65. As with the Island Ecosystems Programme, the Secretariat presented a video overview of the Pacific Futures Programme achievement for 2006 to supplement the detailed information contained in WP.5.2/Att.1.

66. The representative of Niue congratulated the Secretariat on the work done, in particular, assistance through legal advice which enabled the passing of its Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) legislation as well as policy advice on solid waste management, including asbestos. He called on the Secretariat and donor members to look at the issue of asbestos disposal and reiterated Niue's full support for the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) project.

67. He further requested information on, and expressed support for the proposed GEF Access and Benefit Sharing Project. He also urged that when the region develop projects, they be seen through to the end.

68. The Representative of the United States (USA) appreciated the report presented, and acknowledged activities by the United States Environment Protection Agency (US EPA) and US Affiliated Members on the issue of waste management. She stated that the USA had provided assistance with environmental impact assessment (EIA) training to Palau and the Marshall Islands and offered to share its training materials with the Secretariat and assist with future training.

69. She sought clarification on the climate change section of the report querying the differences between operating and actual costs and the source of the additional funds. She also queried the post of the Meteorological Officer and its relationship to the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) sub-regional office based at the Secretariat and that USA is looking forward to filling that position.

70. The Secretariat clarified that meteorological services currently operate on barebone funds and did not have the funding to deliver the work programme fully each year. In relation to staffing matters, the

Secretariat clarified that the meteorological position as with several other positions across the Secretariat, was currently unfunded for lack of donor support and that it would continue to seek further funding to fill these unfunded positions.

71. The Representative of American Samoa offered technical assistance to Niue on the proper disposal of hazardous waste, inclusive of cost effective ways of disposing them and documentation on the issue.

72. The Representative of the Cook Islands welcomed the Secretariat's new staff, and commended the work carried out by the Pacific Futures. He stated that their regulations completed with assistance from the Secretariat were in the process of being passed by Cabinet. On the issue of asbestos, he commended the Secretariat for its quick response to their recent request for assistance and expressed support for the meteorological services position within the Secretariat.

73. The Representative of New Zealand acknowledged comments by Niue and Cook Islands in relation to asbestos, stating that he would pass the concerns back to his colleagues in Wellington. He thanked the two programmes for the breadth and depth of activities being undertaken in the region. He reflected on mainstreaming climate change and outlined that climate change was something that exacerbates a number of existing challenges in the region including biodiversity, water, meteorology and other issues. He questioned how a project like the PACC could provide support to the region in relation to the issues outlined earlier and how it assisted mainstream climate change.

74. The Secretariat clarified that PACC was focusing on food production and food security, coastal management and water. It further clarified that in the detailed planning it was taking on board mainstreaming as part of the programme. It gave the example of Vanuatu where climate change was being mainstreamed into their public works programme.

75. The Representative of the Marshall Island (RMI) agreed with New Zealand that mainstreaming of environmental issues could be difficult, but necessary. She thanked the Secretariat for its assistance in the preparation of its medium-size proposal on

renewable energy. She also spoke about solid and chemical waste issues and outlined the creation of the new Marshall Islands Solid Waste Corporation. She also acknowledged the assistance and partnership of the USA especially in the areas of EIA and water monitoring.

76. She further informed the Meeting that initial discussion at the national level on the Climate Change Roundtable and advised the Meeting of RMI's interest in hosting the Climate Change Roundtable in 2008. She looked forward to working with the Secretariat on an oil spill workshop and expressed support for state of the environment (SOE) activities.

77. The Representative of Fiji stated that the Waigani Convention was a challenge for the Pacific island countries (PICs) and requested that the Secretariat assist with the development of guidelines for the management and disposal of hazardous chemicals for small island countries. On the issue of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), he believed the region needed assistance with the implementation of national implementation plans and suggested the utilization of the University of the South Pacific Institute of Applied Science's POPs monitoring programme. He requested further information from PICs on any POPs issues that should be taken up by Fiji to the Stockholm Convention Secretariat, since it was a member of the POPs Review Committee. In terms of air pollution control, he requested further focus on this issue under the management of waste in Pacific island countries and territories (PICTs). On ODS, he urged the facilitation of issues within the region to be taken up at the Montreal Protocol Meeting of the Parties. On legislation, he wanted to see improved enforcement and assistance from the Secretariat in this matter.

78. The Representative of Kiribati commented on support to PICs at COPs and other international meetings and encouraged the Secretariat to maintain this service. She also asked that the Secretariat try to strategise its attendance at COPs with the PICs and requested SPREP to coordinate Pacific input as well as convene caucuses. She particularly supported and acknowledged the Secretariat's excellent effort in securing a second participant from PICs to attend the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) COP 8. This needed to be enhanced and maintained for all

future CBD COP meetings. She also encouraged SPREP programmes to be linked to all strategies including the Mauritius Strategy, the Pacific Plan and others.

79. On the issue of climate change, Kiribati asked for clarification on the vulnerability and adaptation activities outlined in the report. She also asked for more information on the ODS and whether approved funding had been utilized. She also expressed her support of the ODS United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) proposal.

80. She also thanked and commended the Secretariat's excellent support and quick response to provide assistance to the Government of Kiribati, through Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in financing the South Tarawa Scrap Metal Cleanup Project undertaken this year. She stated that there was a plan at the national level to impose levies on all imported vehicles, to sustain this scrap metal cleanup initiative.

81. The Secretariat responded that it would continue to support pre-COP preparations and PIC participation at COPs but it needed additional funding. On ODS, the Secretariat outlined its efforts to get institutional strengthening funding for PICs and that it was working with UNEP on this issue. It also clarified that the delay in funds reaching the countries was not within the control of the Secretariat.

82. The Secretariat also explained that the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) vulnerability and adaptation initiative was reported on in the Secretariat programmes because the Secretariat had worked with AusAID in developing the initiative. However, the decision had since been made by AusAID to implement the project on a bilateral basis rather than through SPREP.

83. The Representative of France informed that the French Pacific Fund had supported meteorological training workshops in the region. He also stated that Members were welcome to take part in the workshops offered and if Members had specific requests on meteorological issues, France was happy to look into those issues through the Pacific Fund. He expressed France's interest in the tsunami warning systems in the Pacific and sought regional cooperation on this issue. He also underlined the importance and usefulness of the presentations of projects listed in the programme.

84. The Representative of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) repeated his request for preparatory assistance for the Conference of the Parties (COP 9) of the CBD particularly on the issue of invasive species. He also supported Niue's concern on the issue of access and benefit sharing.

85. On the Montreal Protocol, he stated that his country had been noncompliant to date. He requested further assistance due to the complexity of the issue in terms of drafting legislation for ODS.

86. The Representative of Australia congratulated the Secretariat, and was pleased with the significant achievements of both programmes. She repeated their request on results based quantitative indicators in future reporting and felt that this could be addressed further under the review of the Strategic Programmes. She noted the concerns on asbestos and committed to taking the issue back to Canberra as well as discussing with SPREP the risks of asbestos to the region.

87. The Representative of Samoa commended the quality of the staff recruited over the past few years and acknowledged the Secretariat for assisting with the wide range of activities that Samoa had undertaken. He further committed to supporting the Secretariat as much as Samoa's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) could to achieve national and regional priorities. He supported the concerns raised on the issue of asbestos and asked whether anything had ever been done about it. He sought the support of Australia on this issue and asked whether there was a second phase to the POPs in PICs initiative.

88. He also commented on the issue of climate change in particular renewable energy, highlighting its importance and the political support for this issue.

89. The Representative of the Marshall Islands clarified that it had completed the Second National Communications proposal in late 2006 with the assistance of UNDP.

90. The representative of New Caledonia advised the Meeting that in 2006 his country launched a waste management framework for its entire territory. The waste storage facility in Gadji, commissioned in early

2007, was the first of its kind to meet European standards. He added that the Northern Province had developed a project to remove natural asbestos from houses and also indicated that New Caledonia had removed asbestos from schools and public buildings. The tremolite eradication project was implemented by the provincial health service. It was carried out over five years and comprised three components: demolition of houses containing tremolite; construction of replacement houses; medical monitoring of people living in those houses. He vowed to provide more information on these activities and to collaborate and share the experiences of the Territory with the other Members.

91. The Representative of New Zealand echoed the comments of Australia on results based reporting and the importance of this to the region. He also stated that it was important to share lessons learned from evaluations and to be able to show results. He further outlined the need for the Secretariat to demonstrate progress against the Strategic Programmes.

92. The Representative of Australia spoke on the issue of POPs stating that they were trying to progress the POPs in PICs project in PNG and felt that the issue of asbestos could be further discussed in later agenda items.

93. The Secretariat responded on the issue of access and benefit sharing and stated that if Members wanted to develop a GEF project on this issue, it needed to be identified as a priority through national priorities under the GEF PAS. On traditional knowledge, it outlined that the Forum Secretariat had some funds available for traditional knowledge and biodiversity activities. On early warning systems for tsunamis it stated that there was also an initiative by Australia and suggested that there could be collaboration with France on this issue.

5.2.3: PMER – Executive Management and Corporate Support

94. The Secretariat reported on the work of the Executive Management and Corporate Support.

95. The Representative of the Marshall Islands commended the Secretariat on the financial reports noting especially its attempt at budget savings. She sought clarification on why actual expenditure was

more than the budget and where these funds were acquired from.

96. The Secretariat advised that the additional expenditure was to purchase vital and urgently needed information technology (IT) equipment and this additional expenditure was offset with transfers from other items under the Management and Corporate Support budget.

97. The Representative of Niue noted that this programme had never received appropriate acknowledgement in the past and yet was the engine of the Secretariat. He acknowledged the links between finance and other activities of the Secretariat. He also acknowledged the contribution by the Deputy Director to the improved situation within this programme as well as his contributions through other CROP agencies. He further expressed appreciation for the work of other Secretariat staff in particular support staff that had contributed to this result.

98. The Representative of Australia associated himself with the comments by Niue.

99. The Meeting then accepted the Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report (PMER) on the 2006 Work Programme and Budget noting the comments and suggestions by Members.

5.3: Financial Reports

5.3.1: Report on Members' Contributions

100. In accordance with Financial Regulation 13, the Secretariat reported on Members contributions received up to 10 September 2007. The Secretariat noted that total outstanding contributions as at 10 September 2007 was US\$639,230 (equivalent to 68% of total annual contributions) of which US\$381,476 was from 2006 and prior years' contributions and US\$257,754 for 2007 contributions. Of the total contributions due for 2007, the Secretariat had received only US\$677,818, approximately 72% of the US\$935,572 expected in 2007.

101. The USA clarified that the term "arrears" applied to assessed contributions, not to SPREP contributions which are not assessed. She suggested

changes to the recommendation to replace the term “arrears” with “unpaid member contributions”. She added that the US contribution is in the final stages of processing and should be paid shortly.

102. The Representative of Marshall Islands stated that the Meeting should note the report on contributions, the situation concerning arrears and stated their support for the work of the Secretariat.

103. The Representative of Cook Islands stated that he was often reluctant to speak on the matter of arrears but noted that Cook Islands also had contributions to other Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) agencies as well as other commitments in the region and around the world. He concluded by advising that the Cook Islands contribution would be forthcoming over the next two weeks.

104. The Representative of American Samoa advised the Meeting that their contribution was in the mail.

105. The Representative of New Zealand commented that this has been a continuing concern, and that the Secretariat needed an approach to address the situation. He suggested four ideas for consideration:

- (i) the Secretariat proactively consulting with members in arrears on a payment plan on the arrears;
- (ii) the Director taking the matter up bilaterally at the highest level;
- (iii) the Secretariat providing the next SPREP Meeting with an options paper; and
- (iv) the Secretariat to communicate and demonstrate the value of its services including through tailoring its assistance to the unique needs of each Member.

106. The Representative of Fiji assured Members that his delegation would do its utmost to clear its arrears.

107. The Representative of Australia supported the suggestion by New Zealand and favoured the proposal of an options paper on approaches to address this issue. He commented that the magnitude of the amount in arrears was unfair, suggesting that the number of countries on the list, the span of time and

the amounts involved was a concern and that the Secretariat and members should do something to address the problem in line with New Zealand’s suggestion.

108. The Representative of Niue supported the suggestion by New Zealand agreeing that the problem needed to be addressed.

109. The Representative of Marshall Islands reassured the Members of their commitment to the organization and that they would do their best to meet their commitments. She also said that the RMI was committed to paying their contributions for 2007 as soon as possible and it was her understanding that a cheque was being issued by their Ministry of Finance. She also expressed support for the proposal by the United States to replace the word “arrears” with “unpaid member contributions”.

110. The Representative of Kiribati referred to their USD30 arrears noting that the amount had been carried forward for some time and asked how this had arisen.

111. The Secretariat responded that the amount related to a 2002 contribution that was short paid by USD30 and that the Financial Regulations had no provision for writing off unpaid contributions.

112. The Members noted with appreciation Australia’s assistance in paying Kiribati’s arrears during the Meeting.

113. The Representative of French Polynesia supported New Zealand’s suggestions and, referring to a country that never paid its contributions, raised the issue of the accounting treatment to be applied when contributions remain unpaid for several years. He wondered whether, from an accounting perspective, such arrears would not have to be written off, as was done in other regional organisations on the recommendation of their auditors.

114. The Secretariat advised that it was standard CROP agency practice that membership contributions not be written off. It related that in other intergovernmental organizations sanctions existed for such situations. For example, those in arrears for 2 years lose voting rights. The Secretariat

then offered to provide some suggestions in this respect, in the paper it was to provide to the 19th SPREP Meeting in accordance with NZ's proposal.

115. The Director stated that he had written and communicated in person to countries on the matter. He acknowledged however the competing demands in national budgets especially for small island countries. Treating membership contributions as voluntary further compounded the issue.

116. The Meeting:

- noted the status of unpaid membership contributions;
- heard commitments from members with unpaid contributions on that these would be settled promptly; and
- adopted the proposal by NZ for a paper by the Secretariat on the issue for consideration at the 19th SPREP Meeting.

5.3.2: Audited Annual Accounts for 2006

117. Consistent with Financial Regulations 26(c), 30-32 and 33, the Secretariat presented the Audited Financial Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2006 noting that the auditors had again given a clean and unqualified opinion of the Secretariat's financial statements for 2006.

118. The Secretariat referred to the Core Budget accumulated surpluses as shown in the statements, and explained how these were carried forward from year to year. It referred to the one item raised in the Auditors Management letter, which had been addressed and cleared.

119. Referring to the expenses of Executive Management and Corporate Support, which represent about a third of the expenses incurred for programme implementation, the Representative of France asked how this ratio compared with that of other CROP or environmental organisations.

120. The Secretariat advised that it would provide such a comparison for consideration by the Meeting in future.

121. The Representative of Marshall Islands thanked the Secretariat for the documentation and complimented it on the clean and unqualified opinion expressed by the Auditors. She referred to and sought clarification on amounts shown in the report as surpluses.

122. The Secretariat explained how and when these surpluses occurred and were allocated to the Programme and Core budget. It noted that approximately \$2.4 million in total was involved.

123. The Representative of New Zealand asked that it be put on record that NZ welcomed the clean audit opinion expressed by the Auditors and the good use of New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID) funds applied by the Secretariat. However, he was interested in the details of the Audit Management Letter referred to in the audit opinion which he had not received.

124. The Secretariat responded that the Management Letter should have been attached to the distributed Financial Reports, and that it involved only one item. It explained that the matter raised therein was minor and had already been addressed and resolved.

125. There being no further comments, the Meeting adopted the audited Financial Statements and Auditors' Report for 2006.

Agenda Item 6: Members' Issues

6.1: Country Profiles – Exchange of Information by Members on National Developments related to Natural Resource Management Priority of the Action Plan

126. The 17SM after adopting the Country Profile template also agreed that starting with the 18th SPREP Meeting (18SM), Members would exchange information on developments related to the first priority area of the Action Plan. The Chair duly invited Members to present and exchange information on national actions related to Natural Resource Management as agreed to at the 17SM and to provide copies of their Country Profiles to the Secretariat.

127. The Representative of American Samoa informed on their hosting of the US Coral Reef Task Force Meeting including the presentation of an award to the SPREP Secretariat in recognition of its outstanding work in policy coordination. He congratulated the Secretariat for the hard work being done in this area and on being recognized with this award. In the area of climate change mitigation, he advised that the Governor of American Samoa recently issued an Executive Order instructing government agencies to implement measures to minimise greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The delegate ended his presentation by re-stating an offer of assistance to Fiji in the area of capacity building in environmental assessment and enforcement.

128. The Representative of Australia informed that it had completed the Country Profile template using 2005 as the baseline year. A range of key initiatives were highlighted including, inter-alia, an agreement between Australian State governments to phase out all large scale land clearances. In the area of oceans and fisheries management, there had been a major restructure to minimize total catch in government-managed fisheries and the creation of a marine protected areas in State and Territory waters. A water reform program was being advanced and initiatives to improve environmental stewardship continue including market based reforms, policy development and long term contracts with private operators to achieve environmental outcomes. A range of biodiversity conservation achievements were highlighted including increased native vegetation cover, approval of recovery plans for threatened species, protection of 7.3 million hectares of Ramsar-listed wetlands and increased areas of land under protection and management through the National Reserve Systems Programme.

129. The Representative of Cook Islands stated they were in the process of completing the Country Profile report and verbally informed the Meeting of the establishment of a biodiversity unit. He also talked about plans to review the National Environment Strategic Action Framework (NESAF) by the end of 2007 that would give rise to reviewing and identifying priorities for the coming years. He also stated that work had started in preparing Cook Islands for accession to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS).

130. The Representative of FSM briefed the Meeting on a range of national programmes and initiatives which included FSM's commitment to and participation in the Micronesia Challenge, the rapid ecological assessments conducted in Pohnpei and Kosrae which would be conducted in 2008 in Yap and Chuuk. He spoke of training in harmonizing protocols for monitoring reefs including reef fishes already undertaken as well as the first FSM Environment Conference convened in August 2006 which was attended by more than 100 stakeholders. The FSM participated in the first planning meeting in Palau to progress the Micronesia Challenge which led to the endorsement of the Micronesia Challenge by all Presidents during the 4th Micronesian Presidents Summit at the start of the month.

131. The Representative of Fiji informed that their Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for 2007-2011 was being finalized and that the NBSAP continued to be used as a guide for the management of biodiversity and monitoring development activities. The public launching of the NBSAP the previous month had resulted in increased collaboration initiatives with NGO, resource owners, private sector and government as well as the re-establishment of NGOs at the local level. Legislations that were now in place in relation to natural resource management include Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), the Endangered and Protected Species Act and the recently approved Environment Management Act. The national Forest Policy had been reviewed incorporating sustainable forest management principles and environment units. Environment committees were also being established across a number of industries and government agencies. A National Rural Land Use Management Policy was also being implemented. He further stated that discussions had been initiated with partners to develop an appropriate legislation for protected areas. The delegate concluded by thanking American Samoa for offering to assist Fiji with environmental assessment and enforcement.

132. The Representative of France informed that the French territories' reports relating to the French national strategy on biodiversity had been completed and were available to the Members and Secretariat.

133. The Representative of Guam informed that it had circulated an outline of events relating to its national initiatives in natural resources management. He highlighted the serious problem with invasive species and the resultant loss of species including native birds. On-going efforts had been made to ensure that the Brown Tree snake was contained and to ensure that it did not enter other neighboring islands and countries. He stated that Guam was actively working on turtle monitoring including the tagging of turtles. The growing industry in dolphin watching was being monitored and controlled to ensure minimal harm to dolphins. Over the past years five large MPAs had been established and were being monitored. There had been an observed increase in marine species as a result of these initiatives. Collaboration continue with other Micronesian countries on the establishment and monitoring of MPAs. He concluded his report by commending the Micronesian Challenge approach to Members.

134. The representative of Kiribati informed that they had completed the amendment of the Environment Act (1999) and the Wild Life Conservation Ordinance and these were now combined into one consolidated legislation. The amended Act was awaiting assent by the President once a new Government was in place before the end of the year. Formulation of the National Development Strategy (NDS) for the next four years 2008-2011 was in progress with active participation of the Environment and Conservation Division to mainstream the environment into the NDS and requested assistance and support of SPREP and other CROP agencies. She acknowledged the assistance of NZ and other agencies which resulted in a survey of threats by invasives on Kiritimati Island in June 2007 which would assist in planning for the ecological restoration of the island. The NBSAP had been completed and was awaiting Cabinet approval. Kiribati established the 3rd largest MPA in the world (Phoenix Islands Protected Areas) through collaboration with a number of international partners like the Conservation International and the England Aquarium Corporation. She thanked donors for enabling the work of the PILN and in the conduct of the Invasive Species Action Planning workshop in March 2007. She also spoke of the PIC survey conducted in 2006. The survey determined the seabird status, invasive species and impacts, ecological data as

well as training of local staff. She stated Kiribati was not yet a signatory to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance and requested assistance under the Ramsar small grants fund (SGF) for wetland conservation and wise use. A National Bio-safety Framework was to be completed at the end of the year and the delegate acknowledged the support of SPREP and Dr Keneti Faulalo of UNEP. She concluded her remarks by highlighting the following issues that were of importance to Kiribati and invited the Meeting and international communities to continue to address:

- (i) local community aspirations and livelihoods as an integral element of natural resource management;
- (ii) the need to address gaps in supporting the establishment and implementation of community-based conservation at grassroots level;
- (iii) the need for a strong marriage of traditional practices and new science tools in establishing a network of protected areas;
- (iv) Marine biodiversity as increasingly under threat from a range of sources including activities such as fisheries; and
- (v) state of knowledge of ocean biodiversity with greater scientific knowledge and information.

135. The Representative of Marshall Islands advised that they would provide details of their Country Profile following consultations with national stakeholders and informed the Meeting of progress. Over the past years, their Vision 2018 document had been used as a guide in planning and implementing NRM initiatives. RMI was actively participating in the Micronesian Challenge initiative and placed a strong emphasis on balancing conservation and resource use particularly in the fisheries sector. Assistance from Taiwan, US and the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) had enabled successful community projects. Additionally, much improvement and progress had been made in the use of EIA to regulate development. There was improved water quality monitoring. Invasive species was a growing concern with rats being a particular problem. The bio-safety project was being progressed and a recent meeting between government and NGO's had

resulted in increased collaboration. The GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) was underway with support provided to local NGOs and communities. Two major difficulties hindering the timely implementation of planned initiatives included limited available expertise and lack of finance.

136. The Representative of New Zealand welcomed the opportunity for Members/Parties to the SPREP Agreement to share experiences and identify areas for future support to the Secretariat. He informed the Meeting that New Zealand had a bio-diversity strategy focusing on the control of invasive species. This included the approval by national authorities on the use of poison to control invasive and pests resulting in the restoration of native populations and contributing to an effective ecosystems approach. He highlighted some initiatives undertaken by New Zealand in collaboration with SPREP Members which included the Whale and Dolphin Action Plan, support for World Heritage development resulting in the World Heritage Pacific Fund, support for the Pacific invasive initiative and assistance to the Secretariat's Island Ecosystems Programme.

137. The Representative of Niue briefed the meeting on their progress and achievements. He stated that the NBSAP was being reviewed and requested technical assistance from the Secretariat to complete this task. Niue had developed the Biosafety regulation but its enforcement would be a challenge. The 3^d national report to the CBD had been completed which identified progress in implementing biodiversity conservation. Under the IWP project, two protected areas were developed and a national workshop convened which resulted in the development of in-shore fisheries management plans for villages. He acknowledged the support of SPC with this initiative. Niue had conducted the NCSA thematic assessments and the GEF funded Sustainable Land Management project with assistance from SPREP. Under the SPREP PEIN project, a range of interventions were implemented to strengthen capacity of the Environment Department to manage and disseminate information. He restated the need for more work to be done in addressing the asbestos problem and that the Environment Department was taking the lead in this area. The delegate acknowledged assistance from UNDP with the SGP where four communities had benefited. An Environment Open Day was held

focusing on the Year of Turtle and Waste Management. The Niue Government had approved the ODS regulation and work was progressing on the development of forest legislation with assistance from FAO.

138. The Representative of New Caledonia offered to distribute details of its work to officials and informed the Meeting of a range of initiatives implemented in the recent past. This included: the identification of coral reef areas as potential United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) world heritage sites; watershed management; waste disposal measures to fit with European standards; tagging of sea turtles; and work on increasing the level of awareness on species and natural environment due to limited available information and the need for more research. Maps were also being developed on natural asbestos sites. Protected reserves for birds had been established and a rat eradication programme carried out over a broad area. An initiative to address an invasive species affecting birds in wetlands had started and work was continuing on feral pigs using trained dogs with assistance from NZ.

139. The Representative of Papua New Guinea stated that sustainable management of natural resources was a challenge given the country's desire to use natural resources to develop the economy to reduce poverty and ensure human well being. His Government was also committed to ensuring environmental sustainability and in this regard, was in the process of reforming environment protection and biodiversity policy programmes for the country. The Government was committed and was leading two world initiatives including *PNG Millennium Development Goal (MDG7) Initiative on environmentally sustainable economic growth and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation in Developing Countries*. The intentions of the policy initiatives were to put into place policy frameworks that would reverse environmental degradation while providing economic opportunities. This would involve a multifaceted approach but with a strong emphasis on identifying opportunities for using environmental services such as carbon trading. In light of these, the DEC initiated a policy white paper called *DEC: New Strategy Directions* which would focus on four main areas: strengthening institutional capacity,

strengthening provincial and local governments and private sector involvement in regulation, development of partnerships and resource mobilization initiative to assist with financing and ongoing implementation of initiatives as well as strengthening agency performance. He stated that this was a challenge but was confident because the Prime Minister was leading the environmental agenda. He also highlighted that the prospects were positive, as it would involve a whole-of-government approach in finding ways to improve environmental sustainability.

140. The Representative of French Polynesia was pleased to have the opportunity to share information on natural resources management. French Polynesia had two key documents in this area: a territorial strategy for biodiversity and an ecosystem profile. He noted that the French Polynesian government also established a specific import tax, with this revenue being allocated to environmental protection. He mentioned several actions undertaken in the areas of biodiversity protection and endangered species conservation, such as the translocation of the Kuhl's Lorikeet from Rimatara Island to Atiu Island in the Cook Islands, the marine turtle tagging campaign and the creation of nurseries for injured turtles in collaboration with NGOs and partners from the private sector, the ban on the capture and sale of sharks (to control the traffic in shark fins) and the establishment of the French Polynesian EEZ as a sanctuary for cetaceans. On the subject of coral reefs, he advised that the CRISP Project had been launched and that several communities were developing management plans for their maritime areas including the creation of MPAs. Concerning invasive species control, he announced that French Polynesia was now a member of the PILN which had just held its first annual meeting in Moorea. He referred to the success of the pissing fly eradication programme, based on the introduction of microwasps, and the start of a programme to contain the spread of the small fire ant. Miconia uprooting campaigns were continuing in some islands with the help of the army. Concerning the management of solid and bulky waste, the authorities had established a processing chain ranging from waste separation to the establishment of technical landfills for final waste that could not be recycled. There was also a programme to remove abandoned cars, which included decontaminating and

sending car bodies to New Zealand. Larger retailers were also approached to stop the use of plastic bags. Finally, the sewage treatment programme, completed on Bora Bora, was continuing in the Papeete urban area (Punaaui) and on Moorea.

141. The Representative of Samoa informed of some initiatives that his government had undertaken in the past eight years and which were still in progress. He outlined that there were three key areas: institutional reform, policy and legislative development. He stated that under institutional reform, a unit of 40 people was established when SPREP came to Samoa, since then the unit had developed into the MNRE employing more than 400 people. This had been supported through the transfer of environmental services to the Ministry such as land management, renewable resources, environmental services including climate and weather, waste etc. This had also included making more opportunities available through the GEF given the importance of the agency to the Ministry's access to funding. Samoa highlighted the challenges of transferring services to the Ministry, such as forestry but had led to a more holistic approach to forestry and national parks. Under policy development, policies had been developed for waste management, heritage, land use, coastal management, water resources, biodiversity and forestry, climate change, sustainable management of chemical and renewable energy and efficiency. National global plans, such as NAP and sustainable land management had also been developed. Samoa had also developed a coastal management strategy dealing with hazard concepts that integrated a community development plan implemented through small grants. Legislative development was considered an important part of the Ministry's work and informed that Samoa had commenced a programme in collaboration with SPREP on chemical legislation. Samoa was also in the process of drafting water resources and biodiversity legislations. He advised that they were focusing on concepts rather than having a large legislation. He also spoke on information management and access including global information system (GIS) and land valuation (through formal valuation), and a land registration system. Regulations were completed on phasing out ODS, so were legislations on EIA and disaster management. Samoa had also recently opened up a early warning system using Global Systems for Mobile communications

(GSM) network phones to warn about natural disasters. Since the introduction of this system, they had reduced the time to get disaster warnings to villages from 2 hours to 4 minutes.

142. The Representative of Tonga congratulated the Chair on her appointment and advised the Meeting that two ministries in his government had merged into one to strengthen capacity. He stated that the IWP had recently completed and the NCSA was in its final phase. He also advised that the SOE Report was under preparation, and should be completed by the end of the year. He further advised that they had commenced the biosafety activity and hoped that the PACC project would commence next year. He informed that turtle conservation activities were still being undertaken following the Pacific Year of the Sea Turtle as well as the PIGGAREP initiatives. In regards to legal and enforcement areas, there was an agreement with Fisheries to sign the CMS MoU. He also said they were looking at drafting a land use management bill and had completed a renewable energy bill. He further stated that the GSM initiative highlighted by Samoa could be useful to Tonga.

143. The Representative of Tokelau informed that there were very few activities taking place in his country as there was only one professional staff to deal with the environment. In waste management, there was the MoU with Samoa and the Clean up Tokelau week activity (funded from the national budget, UNDP, and SPREP). Fisheries and food security were highlighted as environmental issues. He also informed that through support from SPC fisheries, Tokelau had developed an inshore fisheries management plan. Myna bird eradication was still ongoing and he requested support. A conservation area on one of the islands for giant clams had been established through an initiative with one of the schools. Tokelau supported Fiji's point about the involvement of communities in conservation initiatives and highlighted the importance and challenge of community driven activities. Tokelau requested support to develop an action plan for biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation (with potential funding from the small grants programme). He concluded by advising that Tokelau might be requesting further assistance from Samoa's MNRE.

144. The Representative of Tuvalu informed that the NBSAP was not yet in place due to the late submission of the proposal. However, he highlighted achievements of the past few years including the establishment of six conservation areas (with support from fisheries, local NGOs and regional organizations such as SPREP and the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI)). He stated that they were currently working towards establishing a protected area and informed the Meeting about their work with the NZ Department of the Conservation (DOC) and NZAID on cetaceans, sharks, turtles, and corals. He advised that their NAPA was completed and submitted to the Secretariat and were in the process of developing the Project Identification Forms (PIFs). Renewable energy projects were being undertaken and he hoped to share lessons learned from these. He further advised that they received assistance from SPREP to review the Environment Protection Act and was currently working on biosafety legislation. He also advised that the Cabinet was currently considering a ban on certain ODS products. He stated that they were hoping to work with SPREP on SOE reporting in the next few years. Tuvalu reported that they were currently working on a corporate plan and strengthening of the environment unit, and indicated that there were only three staff in the department. Tuvalu requested assistance under capacity building, for people to work in-country to support their staff.

145. The Representative of the United States of America commended the American Samoan government on the Coral Reef Taskforce meeting recently convened in American Samoa. She informed that they were working on coral reefs which included working with partners to facilitate the Year of the Coral Reef. She also stated that the USA continued to support the Micronesia Challenge. The USA reported on the \$500,000 funding provided to each of its territories for watershed and coral reef protection as well as their continued support of the Pacific Biodiversity Information Forum. She stated that through National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the USA was providing support on a variety of marine turtle activities including tagging and genetic sampling whilst at the same time supporting fish-observer training. The Meeting was informed that USA was committed to the ecosystems based approach to management. She

highlighted two pieces of legislation including the Magnuson-Stevenson Act which managed fisheries in the US and the Coastal Zone Management Act, both providing capacity building and technical assistance. Regarding the military expansion on Guam, she advised that they would work closely with Guam and others to minimize environmental impacts.

146. The Representative of Wallis and Futuna began by congratulating the Director and the SPREP Secretariat for the work undertaken. He stated that Wallis and Futuna was a special territory as its administration was widely dispersed. He advised that the environmental codex had been adopted and had a marine biology specialist supporting work in that area. He stated that a landfill had been created in Wallis in the past few years which met European standards while one was to be opened in Futuna at the end of the month. He reported that a used oil and batteries agreement had been developed and that under the Environmental Protection Agreement, special programmes had been put in place.

147. The Meeting noted all the Member presentations and Country Profile reports as presented.

6.2: Options to Streamline Reporting by Pacific Island Countries to MEAs

148. The Chair invited the Representative of Australia to summarise its options paper in relation to streamlining reporting by PICs to five biodiversity-related Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs).

149. The Representative of Australia thanked SPREP for its lunchtime presentation on reporting which was relevant to their paper and after summarizing the objectives of the paper invited Members to consider the advantages and disadvantages of each option presented. He advised of Australia's preferred option and recommended that the Meeting consider trialing Option 1 based on the advantages it presented relative to the other options.

150. He assured that AusAid funding for the work would continue into the trial phase and noted that rather than taking a top down approach where changes

to reporting would be firstly sought from the biodiversity related MEA Secretariats or their COPs, this work could be trialed first with PICs and if proved practical, the consolidated template would then be submitted to the various biodiversity COPs for approval.

151. The Representatives of Papua New Guinea, Cook Islands, Fiji, Samoa and Kiribati supported Option 1 and indicated their desire to participate in the trial.

152. The Representatives of New Zealand, Marshall Islands, France, FSM, Tuvalu and Tonga also supported the recommendation.

153. The Representative of Samoa suggested that one of the options could be trailed at the next SPREP Meeting in 2009 however the theme would then need to be changed to biodiversity.

154. The Representative of France enquired whether it would be SPREP that would be coordinator of the trial phase.

155. The Representative of Australia responded that it would be Australia's Department of the Environment and Water Resources (DEW) that would coordinate the trial.

156. The Representative of the United States appreciated and generally supported Australia's proposal and queried whether the COPs of each Convention would be the bodies that would actually be asked to change the reporting requirements.

157. The Representative of Australia affirmed that was the case. He also noted that consultants used by countries to complete MEA reports could continue with their work but that the trial would make their job easier. He also assured that the proposed initiative would not discontinue funding for current work.

158. The Representative of Niue welcomed the deletion of provisions in those reports that were not relevant to PICs.

159. The Representative of Marshall Islands reiterated the call by the 17SM that the Country Profile template was for information exchange between Member countries.

160. The Secretariat explained that the Country Profile template was for sharing of country information in relation to that country's obligations under the SPREP Action Plan 2004-2009 and that it did not relate to the MEAs and the consolidated framework currently being addressed.

161. The Representative of Samoa commented that for the Country Profiles template to be useful to members and the Action Plan, PICTs should complete their templates and provide them to the Secretariat.

162. The Meeting endorsed Option 1 and further agreed for Australia to report on the results of the trial to the 19th SPREP Meeting.

6.3: Genetic Resources in the Pacific Region

163. The Representative of Australia introduced their paper and explained that the notion behind it was to stimulate discussion on PICTs experiences, perspectives and needs in setting up domestic systems to regulate access to and benefit sharing of genetic resources. She detailed the benefits of having domestic systems in place, including increased investment in communities, increased knowledge of ecosystems from biodiscovery research and increased capacity in communities involved in such research. The challenges that PICTs face in setting up systems, including simple ones, were recognised. Further discussion on these issues would be facilitated by the proposed informal email discussion group.

164. The Representative of the Federated States of Micronesia thanked Australia for the paper and expressed their support of the recommendation.

165. The Representative of Papua New Guinea stated that an access and benefit sharing (ABS) framework existed nationally and that a draft Bill on ABS was in progress for submission to Parliament.

166. The Representative of New Zealand supported Australia's view on countries establishing domestic regimes and stated that New Zealand was undergoing national consultations for its own regime. He said there was a need to look at the international ABS regime that was evolving and consider what stance

countries would adopt in relation to that regime. He emphasised the importance of Pacific countries having a position for CBD COP 9 as a regime was meant to be finalised by 2010.

167. The Representative of Samoa thanked Australia for raising the topic and stated that considerable capacity already existed in the region through SPREP assistance on this matter. He also expressed Samoa's interest on this issue.

168. The Representative of the USA thanked Australia for the paper. She noted that this applied to resources within national jurisdiction, and that the pre-eminence of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) for marine resources should also be reflected in the discussions. She supported the recommendation to form an email contact group and that participation not be restricted to environmental officers. She urged that the group mandate be framed in terms of practical implementation or regional standardization and not duplicate other fora.

169. The Representative of the Cook Islands also expressed interest in this topic and informed that with support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Cook Islands had developed draft regulations relating to this issue.

170. The Representative of France supported the recommendation by Australia to establish an email working group.

171. The Representative of Australia acknowledged the work of SPREP on this issue and clarified that the focus was on systems contained within national jurisdictions. She clarified that the working group's main purpose would be to share information between PICTs and should not be seen as a negotiating forum.

172. The Representative of Tuvalu thanked Australia and queried what previous work had been undertaken in the area of traditional knowledge.

173. The Secretariat explained that there was a strong linkage between ABS and traditional knowledge and informed that the Forum Secretariat would be providing support in the area of traditional knowledge in 2008 and the SPREP Secretariat would notify countries of the details of this support at a later stage.

174. The Representative of RMI also supported the recommendation by Australia for the establishment of a discussion group.

175. The Meeting accepted Australia's proposal to form an email network of relevant officials amongst SPREP members to continue the discussion and information exchange on ABS of genetic resources in PICTs.

Agenda Item 7: Staff Remuneration Issues

7.1: Sustainable Financing for Periodic Staff Salary Increases

176. The Secretariat presented its long-term strategy to financing periodic professional staff salary increases as requested by the 17SM. In its presentation, the Secretariat agreed with the view earlier expressed by Members that salary increases financed by savings was unsustainable. The paper therefore recommended four options for financing future staff increases: through modest and planned regular increases in membership contributions; increase donor funding to the Core Budget; freeze SPREP salaries; or reduce the number of Core budget funded staff.

177. The Representative of France stated that any planned regular increases would always be difficult to consider without obtaining proper justifications. In that regard, he indicated that there needed to be additional information or criteria to justify any modest staff salary increases that also took into account other comparable organizations that provide similar services. He also sought additional information on the 30/70 split between the Core and Programme budget supported staff.

178. The Representative of Samoa underlined the importance of retaining the best qualified professional staff and therefore the need to maintain competitive salary remuneration. The task was to match the staffing needs with resources, and this was always the challenge for any organization. He observed that even some Members were having difficulties in meeting their assessed contributions. He stated that the Meeting needed to find other options to address this

challenge in such a way that produced a balanced and sustainable result. He suggested that the Secretariat consider utilizing more project funding or expanding the terms of reference for existing staff to cover additional work functions rather than appointing new staff.

179. The Representative of USA stated that the US current policy was one of zero nominal growth and therefore she was not in a position to accept any proposed increases. She agreed with France and Samoa that the Meeting needed to find ways of meeting the need somehow and that there was opportunity later in the agenda to carefully look at this issue within the context of the Corporate Review. She referred to the importance of taking a more strategic view of what SPREP's long terms goals were and how best to achieve those goals.

180. The Representative of Australia supported the proposal for a modest and planned increase as outlined in Option 1. She noted that the use of savings was unsustainable and the importance for Members to contribute to the operations of the Secretariat. She also noted the connection with arrears mentioned in Item 5.3.1. She also agreed with the US suggestion that the issue be best considered within the context of the Corporate Review discussed in Agenda Item 9.3.

181. The Representative of NZ supported the need for a periodic review of staffing needs and agreed to Option 1 as the most effective and sustainable way of meeting SPREP's goals and activities. He also noted the importance of looking at this issue in more detail within the context of the Corporate Review and encouraged Members to seriously consider their capacities to meeting their financial obligations to SPREP.

182. The Representative of RMI stated that she was not in a position to provide her government's position on this issue. She however agreed with the importance of retaining professional staff as this was also a challenge her government was facing. She stated that while Option 1 appeared the logical choice, she would need to obtain her government's formal position on this issue.

183. The Representative of Fiji agreed with comments by Samoa and Australia on the importance of retaining professional staff. He also agreed with comments by Australia and RMI that this issue would be best considered along with the Corporate Review in Agenda Item 9.3. He emphasized the importance of ownership by Members of SPREP and agreed that the most logical option was option 1.

184. The Representative of PNG stated that he would need to refer this to his capital for its position on this matter.

185. The Representative of Tonga conveyed his regrets for the delay in payment of his contribution. He acknowledged the importance of an agency that took care of the environment and agreed with Samoa's point that the Secretariat needed to retain the best qualified staff and therefore supported Option 1.

186. The Representative of French Polynesia also supported the view that the Secretariat needed to retain the best professional staff and that the Meeting needed to explore ways of meeting these objectives. He said that his government was able to increase their contribution and therefore supported Option 1. He also alluded to the possible reviewing the formula for different scales for assessed contributions in order to better take account members ability to contribute.

187. The Representative of New Caledonia supported Option 1 as it offered the opportunity for retaining the best qualified staff.

188. The Director stated that the issue before the Meeting was at the core of SPREP's existence. He alluded to the importance of getting the support and ownership by Members to leverage support and attention in the international arena. He also acknowledged that to ask for increased contributions was always a difficult issue for Members. But in the face of the reality SPREP and its Members were facing, both needed to ask what realistically they could do to attract and retain the best staff to continue to serve the region's environment needs. He stated that the Secretariat had taken on board Members' views that while Option 1 may be the way to go, it needed to be considered within the context of other associated issues such as the Corporate Review, possible savings and other additional information.

189. The Representative of the USA stated that she understood it differently that it was not the consensus of the Meeting to agree to Option 1 and reiterated the US position that it would not be able to support any increase at this stage. She agreed with other Members that the issued needed to be considered within the context of the Corporate Review discussion as well as the issue of unpaid contributions.

190. The Representative of Samoa sought clarification on the US reference to the Corporate Review.

191. The Representative of the USA said that as an example, SPREP was taking over additional roles such as the Climate Change Roundtable and these issues on SPREP's roles could be considered in more detail in the Corporate Review.

192. The Representative of Samoa suggested that rather than bringing in outside consultants to undertake the review Members should consider using people from within its council.

193. The Representative of FSM stated that using the Australian median market to base the staff salaries was very high for the Pacific islands region and agreed with the need to explore other ways to meeting salary increases.

194. The Representative of Cook Islands agreed with the US views and like PNG, he too needed to consult with his capital on the matter.

195. The Representative of Australia asked whether the Working Group proposed by the US could be done through the Corporate Review discussion.

196. The Representative of Tuvalu also agreed with the Meeting's view that the issue be deferred until later in the agenda.

197. The Representative of NZ sought clarification on the levels of resources that SPREP was able to offer.

198. The Secretariat addressed FSM's question and explained that the current formula was an average of the medians of the 3 reference markets of Australia and NZ public sectors and Fiji all organisations. He sought clarification on precisely what additional information the Meeting required and how best to

assemble that information. He said that the Secretariat was ready to provide information on the perceived benefits Members derived from SPREP services.

199. The Representative of Niue stated that they had evaluated the value of SPREP services provided to Niue and that there were substantial benefits, thus their contribution to SPREP was justified. He referred to the arrangements for sub-contracting certain work services that could reduce the financial burden on SPREP. While he saw the benefits of agreeing to Option 1, he also needed to obtain his government's position on this.

200. The Representative of France reiterated his support for Option 1, but said he needed additional information to justify his government's approval of any increase. He looked forward to seeing the results of the SPREP audit report on this topic. Regarding the arrears, he stated that it would greatly assist his government's acceptance of additional contributions if there was a credible plan on the recovery of Members' contributions in arrears.

201. The Representative of FSM advised that while favoring option 1 he would need relevant additional information to justify to his government any increases. He thanked the Secretariat for the clarification on the reference market formula.

202. The Representative of Samoa alluded to the need for an alternative option, as suggested by the US, in streamlining and rationalizing all of SPREP activities and programmes. He asked for example whether SPREP was able to obtain GEF resources for its activities and whether that would help bolster its financial resources.

203. The Representative of Australia suggested that the Meeting thank the Secretariat for the paper and agree to defer taking any decisions on the options provided in the paper until after consideration of the Corporate Review.

204. The Representative of USA agreed with the proposal by Australia.

205. Following discussion of the independent corporate review, many Members agreed in principle with pursuing Option 1 in the future, noting that some Members expressed a need to take the matter back to capitals for further consultation.

206. The Meeting therefore requested the Secretariat to take note of the Meeting's tendency to support Option 1 and building on its current paper also include other financial considerations including a review of the scale of membership contributions, a plan for collecting unpaid contributions, streamlining programmes etc. and resubmit the paper back to the 19th SPREP Meeting in the context of the Internal Corporate Review for consideration and decision.

7.2: Annual Reference Market Data Review (Professional Staff)

207. The Secretariat explained that harmonisation of salaries and terms and conditions of service for all participating CROP organizations had been the practice for approximately a decade and a half. CROP salaries, terms and conditions of service were fundamentally reviewed every three years on a simultaneous and collective basis, by a single agreed reviewer. The paper set out the findings of this review which indicated that salaries of the CROP agencies would have to increase in the top four grades of the scale by between 7.4% and 16.6% to retain parity with the approved reference markets.

208. It further clarified that at the August 2007 CROP Heads Meeting, after consideration of the financial implications on budgets and the known dislike of members to see any increases in contributions, agreed that agencies seek adjustments only to 80% of the required averages. As this review had only recently been completed, the 80% adjustment had not been factored in the 2008 proposed work program and budget.

209. The paper sought the Meeting's approval to the required adjustments of 80% of the review's recommended percentages.

210. The Meeting:

- approved the application of the 80% of the average of the 3 reference markets to professional staff as follows:
Grades: J – 5.9%, K – 9.7%, L – 9% and M – 13.3% effective from 1 January 2008; and
- the adjustments not be financed via additional membership contributions.

Agenda Item 8: 2008 Work Programme and Budget

8.1: Island Ecosystems Programme Issues

211. The Secretariat provided an overview of the proposed activities of the Island Ecosystems Programme for 2008 and thanked Australia for the support provided through its Strategic Programmes Adviser. It acknowledged the requests by Members in continuing support for the CBD COP, the Conservation Roundtable, cooperation with stakeholders such as NGOs and undertook that it would continue to provide support in these areas. The Secretariat summarized key issues addressed in WP8.1.1-8.1.3.

8.1.1: *Regional Marine Species Programme Framework and Regional Arrangements for the Conservation of Marine Species of Special Interest*

212. The 17SM in endorsing the review process of the Marine Species Programme Framework 2003-2007, requested the inclusion of other marine species of special interest to the region and directed the Secretariat to revise and draft a new Marine Species Framework for endorsement at the 18SM.

213. The Secretariat accordingly tabled the revised Marine Species Framework for 2008-2012 (WP8.1.1/Att.2) for consideration and adoption, noting that the new framework included sharks as one of the marine species of special interest.

214. The Representative of the USA thanked the Secretariat for the hard work and expressed its support of these efforts. Shark conservation was an issue of interest however, she noted that it should be done in collaboration with other relevant regional organizations. She encouraged enhanced reporting on the CMS MoU to the Members, in particular sea turtles. She questioned the use of the term sustainable management in some instances given the paucity of data to determine what such a level might be. She endorsed the new Marine Species Framework.

215. The Representative of France confirmed their involvement in these processes, stating that France was also a signatory to one of these memorandum of

understanding and that the French territories were also progressing in this regard. He was favourably disposed to the CMS MoU with the Asian region, and cautioned that from a legal point of view there should be no binding provision in such an MoU for it to be consistent with French legislation. He supported the inclusion of sharks in the list of species.

216. He also stated they had been involved in dugong conservation and expressed support for an inclusive CMS MoU with Asia, noting that there should be no contradiction in such an MoU with the provisions of French legislation. He was also in favour of the inclusion of sharks and wanted to see greater involvement of FAO.

217. The Representative of Australia commended the Secretariat and expressed support of all the recommendations put forward. He expressed support for the inclusion of sharks, and the development of a regional action plan for sharks. He welcomed the increase in Parties to the CMS MoU as well as the work on dugongs and encouraged all eligible Members to become Parties. He further stated that Australia looked forward to supporting PIC participation in a technical workshop of CMS.

218. He further stated that Australia would continue to support the preparation of a Pacific wide MoU on turtle conservation and was in favour of the Secretariat taking the lead. He emphasized the need to support increased awareness-raising on migratory species and informed of Australia's commitment to increasing the number of signatories and enhanced cooperation. He also noted the pilot project to be implemented in Samoa, as well as a new initiative in PNG. He encouraged PNG, Solomon Islands and New Caledonia to sign the dugong CMS MoU. He referred to the support provided by Australia on MoUs.

219. The Representative of New Zealand congratulated the Secretariat on its work and on the updates provided. He stressed that the whale and dolphin action plan should become the guidance for the regional action plan and encouraged Members to sign on to the MoU. He emphasized the need to conserve dugongs and sharks, and to involve all relevant organizations in the case of sharks.

220. The Representative of French Polynesia expressed satisfaction with the work of the Secretariat and endorsed the framework. He also expressed their willingness to sign the CMS MoU and were in favour of the inclusion of sharks. He also encouraged the involvement of other relevant organisations. He suggested the replacement of the word “envisage” with “approve”.

221. The Representative of New Caledonia noted that turtles, dugongs and cetaceans were very important to his country and expressed support for the suggested actions. He stated that he would inform his Government on the content and nature of the CMS MoU for appropriate action. He also supported the inclusion of sharks, as shark fishing was already prohibited in New Caledonia.

222. The Representative of RMI welcomed the report, and while not a Party to the CMS, the RMI placed great importance on biodiversity conservation, especially as proposed under the Micronesia Challenge. She noted the relevant paragraphs on the traditional value of turtles, the need to link new agreements with ongoing regional work, and to provide appropriate avenues for focal points to convey relevant information to their Governments. In terms of the recommendations, she expressed support for most in principle, but as she had not the chance to discuss the CMS MoU with relevant Government agencies, she suggested the recommendations include “to call on non-CMS Members to consider signing the MoU with the view to making a decision at the national level”.

223. The Representative of Samoa thanked the Secretariat for the work conducted and reaffirmed that this highlighted the quality of the staff. He endorsed all of the recommendations and acknowledged the support provided by SPREP to Samoa’s national activities and looked forward to the implementation of the new action plans and CMS MoU. He expressed interest in exploring the tourism potential of whale and dolphin watching.

224. The Representative of Niue supported the work undertaken by the Secretariat and sought information on the development of the list of marine species of interest asking whether coconut crabs could be included given that they breed in the coastal areas and were under threat of being over-harvested.

225. The Representative of Cook Islands supported all the recommendations, especially the inclusion of sharks. He agreed that coconut crabs were an important species that could be included in a protected species listing.

226. The Representative of FSM supported the report and in the case of turtles noted its national experience with tracking turtles. He also noted that dugongs do travel through FSM waters.

227. The Representative of Tuvalu endorsed the recommendations and noted that they had raised the issue of sharks at previous sessions and had had ongoing work on sharks and cetaceans with New Zealand.

228. In response to Niue, the Secretariat informed that coconut crabs had not been listed by any country involved in the process of developing the list and that the Secretariat would favourably receive a request from Niue for assistance in this matter.

229. The Representative of PNG supported the recommendations, but stated that in terms of adding to the list of species of special interest coconut crab should require a more extensive national level consultation before being brought to the SRPEP Meeting.

230. The Secretariat requested views on the inclusion of sharks, noting that the issue had gone through expert review and the recommendation was merely to list sharks for inclusion. It stated that only after inclusion would the consultative process on practical matters with all relevant organizations commence on a suitable Action Plan which would have to be submitted to the SPREP Meeting for consideration and approval

231. The Representatives of French Polynesia and Samoa welcomed the Secretariat’s clarification. Samoa noted that there was also a problem with invasive species as well and called for networking on how to deal with mynah birds.

232. The Representative of Australia responded that a document on possible responses to the mynah problem had been passed to relevant authorities in Samoa and that Australia could provide this

information to assist with mynah eradication in Tokelau.

233. The Meeting:

- Endorsed the revised Marine Species Programme Framework for 2008-2012;
- agreed to the inclusion of sharks as a species of special interest to the regional Marine Species Programme Framework 2008-2012;
- Directed the Secretariat to collaborate with other relevant regional IGOs, in particular, the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), SPC, and FFA in progressing an appropriate approach in developing a Regional Action Plan for sharks, noting the decision 2006/05 by the Third Regular Session of WCPFC on Conservation and Management Measure for Sharks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean;
- Encouraged participating PICTs who have not signed the MoU for the Conservation of Cetaceans and their Habitats in the Pacific Islands Region under the auspices of CMS to consider signing the MOU;
- Noted the forthcoming report of the First Meeting of Signatories to the CMS MoU for the Conservation of Cetaceans and their Habitats in the Pacific Islands Region;
- Encouraged dugong range states and territories to sign the MoU for Conservation and Management of Dugongs in the south-east Asian region under the auspices of CMS when it is open for signature; and
- Urged Members who are parties to CMS and the CMS Secretariat, in collaboration with SPREP, to initiate the first meeting to develop the MoU for the Conservation of Marine Turtles in the Pacific.

8.1.2: Capacity Building through the Pacific Invasives Learning Network: Turning words into Action

234. The Secretariat provided an update on progress made by the PILN since its inception, highlighting in particular two examples of areas where the PILN had assisted PICTs gain practical experience. One of which was the rodent eradication programme conducted in 6 atolls in the FSM.

235. The Chair advised that the paper was for information and invited the Meeting's general views.

236. The Representative of New Zealand noted the threat of invasive species in the region, and expressed support for PILN. He also expressed strong support for the work on invasives eradication working primarily through the New Zealand-based Pacific Invasives Initiative (PII) and supported a merger of these two efforts. He stated that NZ had agreed to provide three more years of support for the PII and this was conditional on its closer links to SPREP's work.

237. The Representative of Australia noted the success of PILN and welcomed the New Zealand remarks.

238. The Representative of the USA also commended PILN stating that expectations of PILN had exceeded expectations and acknowledged the role of the Secretariat in building this important network which provided an effective method in this field of controlling invasive species.

239. The Meeting noted the progress made by the PILN towards completion of its Pilot Phase and welcomed the report by the Secretariat.

8.1.3: Pacific Year of the Reef 2008: A Plan of Action

240. The Secretariat tabled a proposal to approve the declaration of 2008 as the Pacific Year of the Reef (PYOR 2008). The paper was accompanied by a detailed campaign plan (WP.8.1.3/Att.1) as well as identifying funding sources, the largest of which would be the French financed CRISP.

241. The Representative of Australia thanked the Secretariat for the initiative and reminded the meeting of the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) which they hosted some 10 years ago and was glad to see the promotion of reef conservation through this initiative. He stated that Australia would be active in 2008 in the Pacific Year of the Reef activities. He congratulated the Secretariat for putting together this paper.

242. The Representative of USA commended the Secretariat and made reference to the link of this proposal to the ICRI initiative of 1997. She noted that the US with Mexico were serving as current host of ICRI. She also stated that the US had a strong coral reef programme that included the US Coral Reef Task Force. She further advised that SPREP Members and the Secretariat should take advantage of the NOAA International Coral Grants Program to assist their coral projects.

243. The Representative of French Polynesia welcomed the initiative and advised that their government would be supporting these activities amongst others through the CRISP project.

244. The Representative of RMI in supporting the initiative advised the meeting that as an atoll country, reefs were a critical part of their livelihood and further advised that they were part of the US Coral Reef Task Force.

245. The Representative of New Caledonia supported the initiative and advised that they had nominated part of their reef to be listed under the UNESCO World Heritage Convention.

246. The Representative of New Zealand supported the initiative and made note of the useful information contained in the background paper and encouraged the Secretariat to integrate the awareness raising work contained in the document into its work programme. He also advised that community groups seeking assistance under this initiative could access the resources made available to the region through NZAID's support of the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP).

247. The Representative of Tokelau supported the initiative and the slogan "Strong Reef, Strong Island". He went on to state that like RMI, coral reef systems were a crucial part of their life system and wanted the project to take note of the damage a shipwreck was causing to one of their reef systems.

248. The Representative of Fiji in supporting the initiative pointed to the issue of degradation of coral reefs from human activities.

249. The Representative of France highlighted the links between this initiative and the CRISP project. He added that the French Development Agency was considering a new funding tranche for this project.

250. The Meeting then endorsed the proposal for 2008 to be the Pacific Year of the Reef and noted that the initiative would be officially launched during the

Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in Alotau, PNG in October 2007.

8.2: Pacific Futures Programme Issues

8.2.1: Strengthening GEF Support Services Within the Region

251. In accordance with the Meeting's agreement with Australia's proposal on this item, its representative was invited by the Chair to speak to his proposal.

252. The Representative of Australia stated that he did not feel there had been closure on the discussions at the GEF focal points meeting held the day before and suggested the formation of an Informal Working Group to address some of the issues that Members were not clear on during the GEF meeting of focal points. These included the link between regional and national activities and priorities, roles and responsibilities of the implementation agencies and options for co-financing. He further proposed that the Meeting hear from the World Bank as the lead agency in the development of the GEF-PAS on an update on the GEF process for developing project concepts.

253. The Representative of the World Bank, Mr Samuel Weddenburn, outlined the process and timetable for the identification and development of projects through the new GEF-PAS stating that the deadline for presenting the final document to the GEF Secretariat was March 2008. He said that the document would include an overall framework for the programme, implementation and coordination arrangements, criteria for selection of projects for inclusion in the programme as well as project identification forms (PIFs). He explained the process by which countries would be able to access assistance from GEF PAS as firstly, countries needing to finalise their priorities through national consultations by 15 October and that the World Bank would hire consultants from the region to help countries requiring assistance to complete the priority identification exercise. He stated that the major objective of the GEF PAS was to help countries optimize the use of GEF funds to obtain global and national/local benefits. A key principle, was that proposals to be included in the programme would be

identified through a country driven process. GEF implementing agencies (IAs) would be available to help countries develop the priorities and ideas, first into project concepts using GEF's formats (PIFs) and then into implementable projects.

254. He further advised that project concepts should be available in draft form by 15 December and would then be circulated to an interagency group comprising of all GEF agencies, who would consider the proposals for GEF eligibility. Final decisions on the composition of the programme to be submitted to GEF would be made by the countries. On the issue of co-financing, he expressed the need for engagement of possible co-financers in the period of project development. He said that there were a number of options for co-financing, including government, collaborating GEF agencies, private sector, NGOs and bilateral partners. He further stated that the World Bank would endeavour to communicate by email and other means (such as through a dedicated website for GPAS recently established through GEF's country support programme) opportunities for country discussion and consultation on the process. In addition to country consultations, which were the immediate next steps, key stakeholders (countries, regional organizations, bilateral partners, GEF agencies, etc.) would meet as a group on at least two further occasions before submission of the final document. In terms of IAs, he stated that countries were requested to select the one they would like to work with to implement agreed projects, and explained that the role of regional organizations would likely become clearer as priorities were identified and the operational framework for the programme further developed.

255. In terms of the interaction between regional and national issues, he stated that the GEF-PAS was a regionally coordinated and nationally implemented programme and referred to the Micronesian Challenge as an example of a regional strategy to which the programme would be linked. He also said that it would become apparent once country priorities have been identified which activities could be addressed at the regional or sub-regional level.

256. The Representative of the Marshall Islands questioned whether the GEF PAS would be regionally coordinated and if so, which activities would be regional and which would be sub-regional and whether there was less emphasis on national execution.

257. The Representative of the World Bank clarified that the focus of the programming was on national execution but that some regional coordination was necessary and at times there might be issues that could be better addressed at the sub-regional or regional level.

258. The Representative of Samoa sought clarification on how countries could get clarity on what priorities were being included in the programme, between the identification of priorities phase and the finalisation of project concepts.

259. The Representative of the World Bank clarified that in providing the support for the consultation and development exercise, they would assist by screening out ineligible projects as well as ask countries to rank and prioritise the project concepts. Moreover the final decision on which project concepts would be included was to be made by the countries, based on the criteria being developed in the programme framework and guidance provided by the agencies.

260. The Representative of Niue asked about regional projects that had already been developed that would impact on the proposed allocation.

261. The Representative of the World Bank explained that the countries themselves would determine which regional projects would go ahead and whether they would allocate some of the GEF-PAS resources to these projects. The GEF CEO had earlier indicated that regional projects already in the GEF pipeline would need to be consistent with the programme framework being developed to be eligible for inclusion. He added that regional organizations would be consulted as part of the process of identifying and developing regional projects..

262. The Representative of Tuvalu felt that the prioritization process could lead to overprogramming and supported the idea of further discussion of the GEF PAS.

263. The Representative of the World Bank clarified that the prioritisation process was to assist with issues of over programming and the final decision on the composition of the programme would be a collective decision.

264. The Representative of Samoa clarified that regional projects in the Pacific were actually regionally coordinated national projects and that in

determining national and regional projects, Members ensure there were no overlaps and that they were focused on country priorities.

265. The Representative of New Caledonia enquired whether New Caledonia and other territories were eligible for the GEF funds.

266. The Representative of the World Bank responded that while territories were ineligible for GEF funding, they were not excluded from taking part in regional projects and could be funded from non-GEF sources.

267. The Representative of Kiribati enquired about the development of integrated and multi-focal area projects particularly on the issue of waste.

268. The Representative of the World Bank clarified that they were trying to move away from the focus only on focal areas and were keen to see projects which were integrated across a number of focal areas.

269. The Representative of Australia informed that his government had contributed AUD60 million to the last GEF replenishment and that his government would like to see GEF PAS work. He expressed concern about the timing of the process and said that Australia also wanted to see how different regional strategies fitted into the process, how the national prioritization process would occur in compressed timeframes, the role of SPREP in regional strategies and decision making and the ability of donors to fit into the time frames. In terms of co-financing, he stated that Australia's priorities would continue to be climate change, water and environmental governance.

270. The Representative of New Zealand supported the comments of Australia and saw the GEF PAS as a great opportunity for the region. However, he was also concerned about timing and the development of criteria. He requested clarity on where countries would get assistance in undertaking this process.

271. The Representative of the World Bank clarified that the criteria for defining the priorities would be finalized in two weeks and that countries would be provided with technical support to complete consultations towards identifying their priorities. He further clarified that the IA selected by the country would be able to assist that country with the preparation of the PIF and development of the project. He also said that the World Bank would use some of

the funds from the Project Preparation Grant (PPG) from the GEF for a communications plan to ensure that there was good communication in the process.

272. The Representative of Australia stated that based on the discussions that had just taken place the informal working group earlier suggested by his delegation need not be proceeded with.

273. Following the presentation by the World Bank on the GEF-PAS, the Secretariat updated the Meeting on progress regarding the urgent need for the Pacific small island developing states (SIDS) to increase access to funding available through the GEF 4th Replenishment 2006-2010 and the recruitment by SPREP of an adviser to focus on this important concern.

274. The paper reported on progress since the 17SM inclusive of the appointment of an officer in March 2007 and a completed Work Plan detailing the GEF Support Adviser's role in assisting island countries generate project ideas, developing project concepts and providing backstopping services to PICs in matters related to the GEF Secretariat and Council operations, procedures and information sources.

275. The Secretariat introduced the new GEF Support Adviser and outlined how SPREP and other CROP agencies could support PICs access resources from the GEF. It went on to remark on the issue of regional projects and how these offered the ability to share lessons learned and greater efficiency through the pooling of resources.

276. The Meeting:

- Welcomed the progress made concerning strengthening GEF coordination within the region through the establishment of the new position of GEF Support Adviser in SPREP;
- Welcomed the innovative and integrated approach to GEF PAS;
- Welcomed SPREP Secretariat's support and assistance to island Member countries in developing projects for GEF consideration; and
- Noted with concern the tight timeframes for putting proposals to the GEF Secretariat.

8.2.2: Regional Project for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol in the Pacific Region: Actions needed to achieve compliance

277. The Secretariat in accordance with requests from member countries at the 17SM, presented its findings and recommendations on activities that needed to be completed by Pacific Island Parties to comply with the provisions of the Montreal Protocol and its amendments. In particular, the Secretariat focused on the need to put in place licensing systems for chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). While the UNEP/Australian funded Pacific Islands Regional Strategy Project would be concluded at the end of 2007, a number of key milestones needed to be reached by some countries to achieve full compliance. Additionally, the Secretariat drew attention to the 1997 Amendment of the Protocol and the implications should Pacific Island Parties not comply with its requirements.

278. The Representative of Niue commended the Secretariat for developing the paper and stated that Niue had developed ODS regulations and difficulties had been experienced in compliance. He requested information from the Secretariat on requirements needed to access funding support for institutional strengthening activities and how funding was going to be distributed to countries.

279. The Secretariat responded that access to institutional strengthening funds under this project was conditional on countries reporting on the level of ODS consumption in the previous year. Also, countries were expected to achieve at least 90% of established targets prior to obtaining assistance under the scheme. The Secretariat informed the delegates that Niue had been provided USD7,000 of the USD30,000 entitlement and that the balance could be accessed conditional on the established targets being met and the submission of a quality report.

280. The Representative of Samoa commended the Secretariat on the report and acknowledged countries that were making good progress. He stated that a problem experienced with the licensing systems was in relation to the importation of cheap non-CFC compliant products originating from New Zealand and Australia.

281. The Representative of Fiji supported the concerns raised by the Secretariat in relation to non-compliance and the slow progress in the development of legislations. In the case of Fiji, there was a potential of an economic problem being experienced if legislations and licensing systems were not in place. Fiji also raised concern about non-CFC compliant goods transiting through its ports, bound for other island countries.

282. The Representative of Cook Islands informed that they also were experiencing challenges in achieving the milestones. He stated that they had completed training for refrigeration and air conditioning technicians and were in the process of customs and other enforcement officers training. He stated they were working on national legislation but as with the case of Samoa, Cook Islands was also experiencing challenges in dealing with the influx of non-CFC compliant products.

283. The Representative of Australia commended the Secretariat for clarifying the issue and noted the difficulties experienced by island governments in dealing with non-CFC compliant products. He informed that this would be looked into. Australia noted that the Regional Strategy would end in December 2007 and urged all countries to place a high priority on finalizing regulatory and licensing systems.

284. The Representative of Tuvalu thanked the Secretariat for the paper and for the assistance in drafting their legislation which was now before the office of the Attorney General. The Tuvalu government was considering an order to control the import of non-CFC compliant products.

285. The Representative of New Zealand joined Australia in recognizing the issue of non-CFC compliant products exported to island countries and pledged to raise the issue with their government and national stakeholders.

286. The Representative of Marshall Islands stated that they had the privilege of an early start with the Project and had met the requirements as listed in the table of WP8.2.2. But she noted the concerns around the table about capacity constraints that had hampered progress in some countries in complying and requested the Meeting take note of this.

287. The Meeting:

- Noted the need for further progress with controlling and phasing out of ozone depleting substances under the Regional Strategy, noting in particular the need to put in place licensing systems for CFCs, where resources permit;
- Noted the Secretariat plans to continue to provide technical support and advice to Members under the current project until its conclusion at the end of 2007; and
- Urged countries that had not yet implemented a licensing system for CFCs to, as soon as practicable, complete their reporting requirements under the Montreal Protocol.

Agenda Item 8.3: Consideration and Approval of the Proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2008 and Indicative Budgets for 2009 and 2010

288. The Secretariat after presenting its detailed Work Programme and Financial performance of 2006 and its key work programme components for 2008, then presented the Proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2008 (WP&B) as well as the Indicative Budgets for 2009 and 2010 for consideration and approval of the Meeting.

289. The Secretariat indicated that the proposed budget for 2008 totaled US\$7.7million with donor grants making up US\$5.5million, Members' contributions US\$0.9million and the rest from other income sources.

290. The Secretariat further advised that in preparing the 2008 WP&B, significant attention was given to improving the verifiable indicators to take into account concerns that had been voiced over past years. The Secretariat also paid tribute to the contribution of the AusAID-seconded Strategic Programmes Adviser to its ongoing work in this regard.

291. The Representative of Australia commended the Secretariat on the document and acknowledged the improved development of the WP&B from previous years and the continued progress in the

programmatic approach. He welcomed the inclusion of the staff development component in the Corporate Service section. He then sought clarification on the unsecured funds and whether collecting outstanding membership contributions would balance the budget. He then went on to comment on some of the activities under Output 2.1.2 and their relevance to last year's decision to shelve the Apia Convention. He noted with appreciation the improved structure of the activities under Output 2.1.1 on management of MEAs. On Output 2.4.4 on solid waste management, he expressed satisfaction with the manner in which the presentation was done, especially how the activities were aligned to the Regional Strategy on Waste Management (RSWM) and Action Plan. However, he expressed concern that while it looked good, he was aware that funding for this work area may be declining as GEF-PAS would not fund solid waste work.

292. The Representative of New Zealand commended the improved format of the document, especially the improvement of measurable and quantifiable indicators. He then sought clarification from the Secretariat on how the indicators would be monitored as alluded to in a previous Agenda item 5.2. He also sought clarification on the issue of "Programme Management Services" whether the Secretariat had an institutional policy on this.

293. The Secretariat advised that the SPREP Meeting established a policy on the level of the Programme Management Services fee in 1992 at between 10-15% of the project cost. On the issue of monitoring the indicators, the Secretariat advised that internally, quarterly progress report would be generated to monitor the progress but for external reporting purposes, 6-monthly reports had been generated to form the basis for the annual PMER presented to the SPREP Meeting. The Secretariat went on to advise of the improvement in the monitoring mechanism since the employment of Program Managers outlining how they had helped in the regular monitoring and reporting of progress.

294. The Representative of France noted that the expected interest revenue was very high (US\$305,000). This meant that SPREP permanently had a very high cash flow. These funds were from donors' payments for projects and programmes, which were slow to

implement, leaving substantial unused sums with SPREP. He added that this situation was a source of concern. Should the payment terms of donors' funds become more stringent, SPREP could lose an important resource. The Representative of France also enquired whether a comparison could be made between the share of the Core Budget in the total budget and that of other CROP organisations.

295. The Secretariat advised that as previously stated, the comparison exercise with other agencies would be done and a paper presented to SM19.

296. The Representative of Niue commended the Secretariat on the WP&B and stated that it was a far more improved document from the ones presented over the last two years. He then voiced his concern on the issue of adequate resources being made available to carry out waste management activities in light of the concerns expressed earlier by the representative of Australia. He urged that adequate resources be made available so that work in the waste management programme continue unhampered.

297. The Representative of the United States commended the Secretariat on the document and noted the report text clarifying that the indicative budgets for 2009 and 2010 were not currently for approval, as her government could not accept the indicated increases. She asked why the activities under Output 2.3.1 did not reflect the involvement of the Climatology/Meteorology Officer post as outlined on page 19. She went on to state that the activities under Output 2.3.3 on PACC may be affected because of the GEF-PAS situation, and funds may not be forthcoming. On the PIGGAREP activities, she advised that the US would be happy to share information on renewable energy technologies that held promise for the Pacific region.

298. The Representative of Samoa commended the Secretariat on the WP&B. On the issue of invasive species (Output 1.3.2) he advised that this was not a priority according to the countries and queried whether it was a realistic program. Similarly on the PACC project (Output 2.3.3) he advised that it could also be in the same situation as invasive species. He went on to state that although PACC was identified as a regional priority, he questioned whether the activities were realistic enough given the GEF-PAS

situation. He suggested that the indicators for Output 2.3.4 (on PIGGAREP) should be similar to the PACC ones as it was supported regionally. On Output 2.4.4 (Solid Waste Management) he urged the Secretariat to explore ways to develop a regional waste management project as a cross cutting program as this had been recognized as a priority for the region.

299. The Secretariat advised that the WP&B was developed before the GEF system put the PACC and all projects on hold but it was still optimistic that PACC would be implemented in 2008. On the waste management issue, the Secretariat advised that GEF did not have a specific window as such on waste management but was exploring ways in which resources could be acquired through other sources such as the European Union's 10th Economic Development Fund (EU EDF-10).

300. The Representative of Australia advised that countries should make their priorities very clear at the national level for them to be addressed at the regional level. He also stated that timeliness of the funding delivery for activities to be carried out was a critical issue.

301. The Representative of Samoa stated that there were opportunities to access the resources for waste management through the GEF windows under the auspices of tourism, waste and other similar initiatives and sources. He stated that there was a real prospect for the Secretariat to access more funding through the GEF.

302. The Secretariat advised that it would take on board the suggestions and work to explore additional access to resources.

303. The representative of the USA again sought clarification on the Climatology/Meteorology Officer position and how activities under Output 2.3.1 were not reflective of this and went on to state that not reflecting climatology/meteorology work could be difficult in securing funds for the post.

304. The Secretariat explained that the activities outlined in the 2008 WP&B only included activities for staff who were already employed and funded and since the post of Climatology/Meteorology Officer was unfunded there were no activities listed for it.

305. The Representative of French Polynesia commented on the issue of accessing EU funding. He pointed to the budget and observed that only USD56,500 was obtained from the EU. He then advised that staff of the Secretariat took a trip to Brussels last year to discuss funding opportunities and sought an information on the outcomes of the trip. He also asked the Secretariat to remind the EU of SPREP's existence and not to neglect this possible source of financing.

306. The Secretariat explained that the funds from EU were for PEIN activities but would advise if new funds were secured under both the EDF-10 and African, Caribbean, Pacific Economic Partnerships Agreement (ACP EPA) discussions.

307. The Representative of French Polynesia sought clarification on whether the Secretariat had submitted project proposals for funding under the 10th EDF programming for the Pacific region.

308. The Secretariat advised that under the Regional Indicative Programme (RIP), where €75 million was to be made available, the process involved a EU-programme under two concepts – the blue and green concepts. A great deal of work had been done by the Secretariat in association with other CROP agencies but these proposals had now become caught up in the ACP-EPA negotiations which deal mainly with trade issues and were awaiting the conclusion of these negotiations.

309. The Representative of Kiribati supported Samoa's intervention that waste was of great concern particularly to atolls like Kiribati. She sought assistance from the Secretariat in developing an integrated waste management proposal that met criteria of the GEF thematic areas under GEF PAS. She acknowledged the difficulties faced by SPREP in financing work programmes but urged them to continue seeking funds to be able to offer full assistance to PICTs. She commended Island Ecosystem on their ongoing technical support to NBSAP implementation and called on the Secretariat to ensure Island Ecosystem programmes complimented strategies and activities of the Action Strategy for Nature Conservation of the next 5 years. She urged the Secretariat to ensure activities listed for 2008 be fully undertaken and that they be made more meaningful at the ground level. She also requested assistance in technical and financial areas

to undertake an integrated coastal management programme in atolls. She also sought assistance in the development of a user friendly Regional Red Data Species list. She asked the Secretariat for more emphasis on the bird conservation work and environment education. She reiterated the need for informal outreach material. She also encouraged the donor community to provide adequate resources to support the work of the Secretariat. She closed her intervention by asking the Secretariat to support initiatives similar to the IWP approach and to facilitate in-country workshops to enhance the implementation of activities.

310. The Secretariat encouraged Kiribati and other countries to advise the Secretariat of their needs so that the Secretariat staff could deliver timely assistance to these requests.

311. The Meeting then approved the proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2008 and noted the indicative budgets for 2009 and 2010.

Agenda Item 9: Institutional Matters

9.1: Process for Recruitment of Director

312. In accordance with the agreed Rules of Procedure for Appointment of Director, the Secretariat sought a decision of the Meeting on the composition of a Selection Advisory Committee (SAC) as well as endorsement of the proposed draft duty statement and selection criteria. Given that the incumbent Director's contract would expire in January 2009, the Secretariat proposed a schedule for advertising the post, in the first half of 2008.

313. Guam being the incumbent Chair (2008-2009) would preside over the recruitment process as the SAC Chair. At the end of the process, a report recommending a successor would be presented to the SM19 for its consideration and decision.

314. On the SAC composition, the Secretariat advised that for cost effectiveness, the SPREP Meeting had opted in the past to base the SAC on those members located in Apia and supplemented with any additional members required to ensure regional representation. On this basis the only subregion without representation would be Melanesia.

315. The Director volunteered to vacate the room but the Meeting saw his presence as beneficial to the meeting.

316. The Representatives of USA, Australia and New Zealand confirmed their availability to serve on the SAC. The other countries and territory with diplomatic posts in Apia confirmed likewise.

317. The Representative of Marshall Islands indicated its interest and availability to participate. For Melanesia, the Representative of Fiji nominated Papua New Guinea who accepted.

318. The Representative of Australia suggested that under the heading 'Required Knowledge, Skills, Experience and Attributes' there be an additional selection criteria, namely, "Demonstrated capacity to manage organizational and cultural change". This was supported by New Zealand and accepted by the Meeting.

319. The Representative of Papua New Guinea asked regarding the Deputy Director's position. The Secretariat explained only the Director's position was selected by the SPREP Meeting.

320. The Meeting:

- Decided on the current Chair of the SPREP Meeting and representatives of countries and territories with diplomatic posts in Apia and Papua New Guinea to make up the SAC;
- agreed for any other interested Member to join, but at their own expense; and
- Approved a duty/responsibility list including the additional selection criteria: "Demonstrated capacity to manage organizational and cultural change" proposed by Australia and the position requirements for the post of Director as contained in Annex 6.

9.2: Updated Staff Regulations

321. The Secretariat introduced the revised and updated Staff Regulations for consideration and noting. The revisions to the Staff Regulations were to reflect decisions by the 17SM on staff terms and conditions and to delete references and practices in the Regulations long unused and outdated.

322. The Chair queried whether the staff had been given the opportunity to input into the revised regulations.

323. The Secretariat explained that the revised regulations was to incorporate earlier decisions by the SPREP Meeting on staff terms and conditions and the Secretariat and staff were not making any new proposals.

324. The Meeting noted the revised and updated SPREP Staff Regulations and commended the Secretariat for its initiative.

9.3: Independent Corporate Review of SPREP

325. The Secretariat presented for consideration and approval, a proposal for the conduct of an independent corporate review of SPREP in 2008, its terms of reference (TOR) and the methodology. The Meeting was also asked to consider how the review was to be financed based on the draft budget provided.

326. The Secretariat explained that the proposed review should have been conducted in 2007 but was delayed because of funding and other work commitments of the Secretariat. The review was a condition of the 3 year MoU between SPREP and the Government of Australia, for continuing funding support to SPREP. The Secretariat also referred to the importance of the review as a way for all island members to assess and evaluate the work of SPREP in their service.

327. The Representative of France expressed its support for the review and volunteered to assist with its funding in consultation with other donor members.

328. The Representatives of New Zealand and Australia confirmed similar commitments. NZ asked for an update from the Secretariat on the composition of the corporate review team. He also proposed the formation of a sub-committee to determine the process for selecting the corporate review team.

329. The Representative of New Caledonia stated their willingness to provide a financial contribution to support the review.

330. The Representative of Marshall Islands also expressed her support of the review and thanked donor members for their assistance.

331. The Director in response to New Zealand's query explained that the team leader needed to be someone knowledgeable about CROP agencies and the SPREP Action Plan. Other members of the corporate review team could include representatives of donors, representatives of members and private consultants, however the selection of individuals could be left to Member countries.

332. The Representative of Australia expressed that the process of selection was critical and that a truly independent review team was very important to ensure an open and transparent process. Australia noted its interest in the process and timing of the review and would be interested in seeing a draft itinerary. She then asked that the following amendments be made to the Terms of Reference:

- To be inserted at the top of the document: "Objective: To make recommendations to the SPREP Council on steps to enhance Secretariat performance, based on SPREP Member feedback on the effectiveness of SPREP Secretariat services and the relevance of its priorities."
- To replace the paragraph on Outputs: "The Review Team report will be presented to the 19th SPREP Meeting in 2008 and should cover its terms of reference. The SPREP Council will then make decisions on which recommendations to accept or decline, and the steps required to implement those recommendations. The Report in addition to presenting its findings and recommendations should also provide Executive Summary with its key recommendations."

333. The Secretariat, in response to Australia's request on the relationship of the 2008 mid-term review of the Secretariat Strategic Programmes to the Independent Corporate review, explained that these were separate exercises although they would impact on each other. The mid-term review related to reviewing the Strategic Programmes logframe

including its outputs and indicators to take account of developing knowledge and experience in these areas. The Independent Corporate review was intended to be a members evaluation of SPREP's services and how it could be further improved.

334. The Representative of NZ suggested forming a sub-committee of Members to decide on a process to guide the Secretariat in implementing the review. He suggested that the sub-committee be of similar composition to the SAC on the Director recruitment. He then volunteered to coordinate the exercise.

335. The Representative of Samoa offered his support for the sub-committee.

336. The Representative of USA offered her support of the proposal as discussed, and welcomed the opportunity for all SPREP Members to participate.

337. The Meeting having considered the proposal and modifying the TOR:

- Approved the proposed Terms of Reference as amended by Australia;
- Approved the formation of a sub-committee comprising of Apia-based Members

338. During the discussion of the draft Record of the Meeting, the Meeting was briefed by the Representative of NZ on the outcomes of the Sub-Committee established by the Members to agree on a selection process for members of the SPREP Independent Corporate Review team.

339. He reported that they had decided on the sub-regional group having a representative each from Micronesia, Polynesia, Melanesia and Australia/New Zealand. He further reported that a focal point from each of these sub-regions would coordinate with counterpart focal points within their respective sub-regions to agree on a suitable nomination to the Secretariat. The provisional coordinating focal points were Samoa (Polynesia), RMI (Micronesia), Fiji (Melanesia) whilst Australia's and NZ's representative would be decided jointly by those countries with the aim of complementing the skills of other team members.

340. He further reported that NZ had been nominated to coordinate the process of gathering, nominating and selecting candidates based on the detailed process identified in the sub-committee's report to the Meeting. He further stated that given the timeframe within which the sub-committee had to report in, they had agreed that they would confirm all the arrangements in writing with Members and the Secretariat as soon as possible. The sub-committee's report is contained in Annex 7.

Agenda Item 10: Regional Cooperation

10.1: CROP CEO's Meeting Report

341. The Director tabled, for the Meeting's information, the Summary report of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) Chief Executives on their meetings of 11-12 June and 27 August 2007 respectively.

342. The Representative of NZ commented on paragraph 29 and requested an update on SPREP's plans.

343. The Director commented that there had been further developments since the GEF-PAS meeting on Monday 10 September stating that the Reference Group consisting of AusAID, NZAID, Chair of Pacific Island Forum missions in New York, Ambassador Robert Aisi, and a representative from the GEF Secretariat, Mr Ravi Shama, met to discuss the GEF-PAS work programme up to April 2008. He advised that they were currently awaiting clearer guidelines on the process over the next few months, as indicated by the World Bank. A work plan had been decided upon and that primarily the SPREP GEF Support Adviser would provide support to the World Bank and the GEF Secretariat up until the PIF had been confirmed and countries' project concepts had been submitted as well as continuing to work with CROP agencies on this process. He highlighted that SPREP with Heads of CROP agencies were developing a new initiative to provide backstopping services to countries to support and implement projects under GEF-PAS. This initiative required further discussion with countries and depended on whether countries identified the initiative as a priority. He stated that if countries were interested

in participating in this regional backstopping initiative, funding would have to come from the GEF-PAS allocation. He also stated that this regional programmatic approach would also need to be listed in the countries' priorities.

344. The Representative of Samoa stressed the importance of GEF-PAS to countries. He stated that previously only some countries were able to access GEF funding due to in-country capacity. He highlighted the importance of countries ensuring they met the targets and timelines to be able to access the GEF-PAS funding. He highlighted the need for the region to be certain about regional priorities through agreement between countries and pointed to biodiversity, adaptation, mitigation and cross-cutting issues like waste as regional priorities. He stressed that there was very little new Overseas Development Assistance and that countries had to work to access the GEF-PAS funding, otherwise there might not be many other funding opportunities.

345. The Representative of Australia supported Samoa's comments and highlighted that SPREP was obligated to move very quickly to develop a set of priorities through a set of country profiles, and some recommendations on the regional priorities that could link into national strategies.

346. The Representative of FSM supported the comments of Samoa and Australia and said that it was important to also look at how the Regional Allocation Framework (RAF) could be increased for the next allocation.

347. The Representative of Samoa highlighted that the countries needed to get their priorities in by due dates, and as the RAF was performance based, it would therefore influence the level of the next allocation.

348. The Representative of Tuvalu supported the comments by Samoa, Australia and FSM and sought support from SPREP in this area.

349. The Representative of Fiji supported the issues raised, particularly Samoa on the urgency and timely submission of these priorities and proposals. He commented that although PNG and Fiji had individual allocations under the RAF, they would also be affected if the concerns raised were not addressed.

350. The Representative of New Zealand welcomed the discussion and emphasised the urgency regarding the GEF-PAS and noted that this was probably the biggest funding opportunity for the Pacific. He supported comments by Australia on the role of SPREP in providing assistance to countries in this area and stated that SPREP could seek more information on the process on behalf of members.

351. The Representative of Australia stated that the GEF recently circulated the midterm RAF review and referred to the current weighting in marine and terrestrial biodiversity.

352. The Secretariat assured the Meeting that it would do whatever it could to assist with the current available resources. It stated that the relevant staff would assist the GEF Support Adviser in supporting countries and that it would also seek specialised assistance through CROP. However it highlighted the need to be able to access resources to provide these services.

353. The Meeting noted the report with the comments made by Member countries.

Agenda Item 11: Items Proposed by Members

354. The Chair referred the Meeting to the two items that had been raised by the United States of America and Papua New Guinea.

Regional Institutional Framework (RIF)

355. The Representative of the USA advised that they were following this up from an earlier question by Niue on the matter. She referred to the US questions which had been distributed on the RIF proposal (which were also raised at the RIF Task Force meeting of 14 June 2007) and stated that her purpose in circulating these questions was to raise awareness of the issue. She stated that some members of SPREP were not members of the Forum and noted the need for more information and further consultations to make countries aware of the proposal to enable country input into the debate.

356. The Representative of Niue expressed his

concern with the in-country consultation on this issue and in particular, in seeking the views of respective departments within the countries. He highlighted that this meeting needed to list some concerns in terms of SPREP's role. He stated that he was unsure what was going to be discussed at the Forum Meeting and indicated his concern of the changes that might take place between now and the next SPREP Meeting. He noted that there was another RIF Task Force meeting in the coming weeks to discuss the matter and expressed doubt that the Members' views on SPREP would be taken to that meeting. He expressed discomfort at the proposal and highlighted that the emphasis of the proposal should be on delivery of service and not cost saving.

357. The Representative of Australia thanked Niue for raising the issue and in proposing the discussion. He believed the questions from the US were much broader than SPREP's mandate and proposed that the paper not be discussed in great detail. He noted that the leaders had already agreed that the RIF review process was the best way to progress the issue and should the leaders endorse this process, then it would be referred for discussion at the respective CROP governing councils. He stressed that the Meeting did not have the mandate to discuss what would be discussed at the Leaders' meeting.

358. The Representative of the RMI proposed that Member countries take the RIF matter back to capitals to coordinate country views given the different mandates that the various governing councils had.

359. The representative of France recalled that France is not a Forum member but that New Caledonia and French Polynesia had been associate Forum members since 2006. As such, France and its territories were members of the RIF Task Force and had received all the relevant documentation. The decision that Forum leaders would take in October might very directly affect France and have financial repercussions. These issues would be discussed a month later, by the SPC Conference. Financial simulations show that, should it happen, France might be asked to cover a substantial part of the additional costs incurred by the amalgamation. France did not express its position at this stage. It would attend the Task Force meeting and finalise its

position after the decision of the Forum leaders.

360. The Representative of New Zealand noted the separate decision making process already in train and that there was a need for officials to consult in country prior to the RIF Taskforce and Leaders' meetings.

361. The Representative of Tuvalu indicated that consultations had been undertaken in Tuvalu with the various departments and agreed with Australia's position.

362. The Representative of the USA stated that the SPREP Members had the mandate to discuss the future of SPREP and pointed to the last question in the US document which asked whether the Forum had the mandate to override consideration by a treaty based organization.

363. The Representative of FSM noted that the RIF proposal was raised at the previous Leaders' meeting but deferred as the Leaders needed more information. He suggested that SPREP provide information and each country could then work in capitals to provide information prior to the Forum Leaders' meeting.

364. The Representative of Samoa noted the rights of the non-Forum members regarding treaty-based organizations and emphasised the importance of discussing this issue prior to the Leader's meeting. He supported the point that the SPREP Meeting did have the mandate to discuss the issue.

365. The Representative of Fiji supported the view that there should be discussion to reach some form of consensus for members to base their views on when they return back home.

366. The Representative of the Republic of the Marshall Islands agreed with the USA and Samoa that Member countries had the mandate to discuss the future of SPREP and proposed that Members express their concerns as an outcome of this meeting.

367. The Representative of the Cook Islands stated that his Department's view was that SPREP had to be a stand alone organization and advised that a letter had been sent to the Cook Islands Prime Minister, Secretary of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of the

Environment on his views. He expressed his concern that amalgamation might affect the quality of services provided to SPREP member countries. He also raised questions about the procedures of the RIF, and stated he had already aired his concerns to the Forum Secretariat consultant.

368. The Representative of French Polynesia suggested that the new election of Oscar Temaru of French Polynesia meant that he would have to refer the matter to his new leader before making any comments. He stated that it was an eminently political issue with highly significant technical, legal and financial implications. Recalling that he had attended the meeting of the Regional Institutional Framework (RIF) Task Force in Suva on 14 June 2007, he voiced the positions expressed by the representatives of the majority of regional organisations, who all advocated the sustainability and independence of their organisations, with the representative of SPREP highlighting that the decision would ultimately fall to the members of the organisations concerned, as stipulated by their founding treaties.

369. The Representative of Australia stated that the discussion was going beyond the mandate of the Meeting and was anticipating decisions of Leaders. He noted that environment agencies should consult with appropriate bodies such as the process in the Cook Islands. He noted that the RIF review issue should be driven by countries and not SPREP and highlighted that all facts were needed before substantive discussions and that any decisions should be made at the Leaders level.

370. The Representative of the FSM emphasised the importance of discussing this issue given the effect it would have on the delivery of services to Member countries.

371. The Representative of New Zealand supported the comments of Australia and noted that the SPREP Meeting had an opportunity to discuss this issue after the Leaders' meeting. He stated that the issue needed to be discussed at the Leaders' meeting first before the Members could comment and supported the views that in-country consultations needed to be undertaken

prior to the Leaders' meeting.

372. The Representative of Papua New Guinea highlighted that this was a political issue at the national level and that this meeting was not the appropriate forum to decide what should happen at the country level.

373. The Representative of Niue stated that his concerns stem from not having the information to advise his Leader.

374. The Meeting agreed to note discussions on the RIF process and encouraged Members to discuss the issue with appropriate stakeholders in Member countries.

Update on the 8th Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas

375. The Representative of Papua New Guinea presented a progress report on the preparations for the 8th Pacific Islands Conference on Conservation and Protected Areas and assured the Meeting that everything was in place and ready for the upcoming conference.

376. The Representative of American Samoa enquired whether there was an annual calendar of events for planning purposes.

377. The Secretariat advised that updates of SPREP events were distributed to all SPREP focal points on a quarterly basis and updated weekly on the SPREP website. The Secretariat also advised that invitations for nominations were distributed in advance, and assured that it would work closely with American Samoa to ensure they had received the information.

Agenda Item 12: Statements by Observers

378. The following Observers presented or provided statements: IUCN Oceania; Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC); Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA); University of the South Pacific (USP); Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species (CSM); International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW); BirdLife International; Conservation International (CI); Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society

(WDCS); United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); and International Maritime Organization (IMO).

Agenda Item 13: Other Business

379. The Representative of Australia proposed that at the next SPREP Meeting there be a paper on engagement of the private sector in the work of SPREP and its Members. The paper could cover how the private sector was presently engaged and how they could be engaged in the future. He also proposed the consideration of the use of economic instruments to achieve environmental goals.

380. The Representative of the RMI supported the proposal by Australia and looked forward to discussions on the paper at the next Meeting.

Agenda Item 14: Date and Venue of Nineteenth SPREP Meeting

381. Consistent with the SPREP practice of alternating annual meetings between headquarters and any of its Members who offered to host, the Representative of FSM reaffirmed their offer to host the 19th SPREP Meeting.

382. The Meeting warmly accepted the offer by FSM by acclamation.

383. The Secretariat advised that it would, in due course, announce the dates for the 19th SPREP Meeting in consultation with the Government of FSM.

Agenda Item 15: Adoption of Report

384. The Meeting in adopting its Record of Proceedings noted the verbal report of the Independent Corporate Review sub-committee.

Agenda Item 16: Closure of the Meeting

385. The Representative of Australia expressed his

appreciation of the translation and interpretation of the Meeting and the importance of being able to communicate with French speaking members. His comments were shared by the Representatives of France and New Caledonia.

386. The Representative of New Caledonia expressed appreciation to the Prime Minister of Samoa and Secretariat staff for their part in ensuring the Meeting's success.

387. The Representative of the Cook Islands thanked the Deputy-Director for his strong leadership, experience and contribution to the Secretariat and support provided to both the Cook Islands government and the region during his tenure. His comments were endorsed by the Chair on behalf of the Meeting.

388. The Deputy-Director thanked the Director and the Members for their generous comments and tributes to his service stating that it had been a pleasure and an honour to have served the region and SPREP, and in a small way help made a difference to the Pacific island peoples' lives and welfare. He spoke of the motives behind his wish to work for a regional organization and the inspiration that kept him focused on his work. He further spoke of the honour of having served alongside a team of competent, talented and very dedicated men and women at the SPREP Secretariat. He closed his remarks by asking Members to reflect on and appreciate how fortunate they were in having an excellent team and Secretariat at their service which often was taken for granted until it was lost. His remarks are at Annex 8.

389. In his closing remarks, the Director expressed condolences for the victims of the plane crash in

French Polynesia on 9 August and his deep sorrow on the loss of senior officials from French Polynesia's Ministry of Environment. The Meeting observed a moment of silence in memory for the victims. He congratulated and thanked the Chair for his participation, support and constructive contribution to the Meeting. He also thanked the Vice-Chair for ably leading the Drafting Committee and thanked the Members and partners for their work in ensuring the Meeting's success. He also thanked the Government of Samoa especially the Prime Minister for his commendations of the work of the Secretariat and his pledge for Samoa's continuing support. He thanked the Members for supporting and endorsing the 2008 WP&B and acknowledged Members who had offered technical and financial assistance to enable the continuation of programmes. He also thanked donor partners and representatives of the CROP organisations, NGOs, development agencies, institutions and the private sector who attended. He thought this Meeting was perhaps one of historical importance given the attendance of the GEF CEO and how the Meeting played a role in nurturing a novel partnership arrangement between the Members and the GEF within the framework of the GEF-PAS.

390. In concluding, the Director acknowledged the Member countries active participation and assured them that the Secretariat would record the views presented for future reference. He also reiterated his appreciation and acknowledgement of the Deputy Director's hard work, dedication and commitment throughout his term. The Director also thanked his staff for the work put into organizing and running the Meeting. His remarks are at Annex 9.

391. The Chair thanked the delegates for their support during the Meeting and commended Samoa for the warm hospitality and restated his commitment to working closely with Members during Guam's tenure as Chair. The Meeting was then closed.

Annex 1: Participants List

AMERICAN SAMOA

Mr. Fa'amao Asalele Jr.
Program Manager
Air and Land Division
American Samoa Environmental Protection
Agency
Pago Pago
American Samoa
Tel : (684) 633 2304
Fax : (684) 633 5715
Email : fasalele@gmail.com

Douglas J. Juergens
Legal Counsel/Assistant Attorney General
Department of Commerce
PO Box 6351
Pago Pago
American Samoa 96799
Tel : (684) 633 5155 Ext. 54
Fax : (684) 633 4915
Email : douglasjuergens@gmail.com

AUSTRALIA

Kevin Keffe
Assistant Secretary
Communications and International Branch
Department of the Environment and Water
Resources
GPO Box 787
Canberra ACT 2601
Australia
Tel : (02) 627-61072
Fax : (02) 627-61058
Email : Kevin.Keffe@environment.gov.au

Laura Holbeck
Policy Officer
Communications and International Branch
Department of the Environment and Water
Resources
GPO Box 787
Canberra ACT 2601
Australia
Tel : (02) 627-61072
Fax : (02) 627-61058
Email : Laura.Holbeck@environment.gov.au

Melissa Jaques
Policy Officer
Communications and International Branch
Department of the Environment and Water
Resources
GPO Box 787
Canberra ACT 2601
Australia
Tel : (02) 627-61072
Fax : (02) 627-61058
Email : Melissa.Jaques@environment.gov.au

Harriet Baillie
Executive Officer
Environment Branch
Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade
Canberra ACT 0221
Australia
Tel : (612) 6261-1884
Fax : (612) 6112-1884
Email : Harriet.Baillie@dfat.gov.au

Amanda Roberts
First Secretary
Development Cooperation
AusAID , Australian High Commission
P.O Box 704, Apia, Samoa
Tel : (685) 23411 Ext: 704
Fax : (685) 26872
Email : amanda.roberts@ausaid.gov.au

Chris Derrick
Strategic Programmes Advisor to SPREP
Department of the Environment and Water
Resources
c/- SPREP
PO Box 240
Apia, Samoa
Tel : (685) 21929
Fax : (685) 20231
Email 1 : chrisd@sprep.org
Email 2 : chris.derrick@enviroment.gov.au

Terry Hills
Global Environment Group
AusAID, Canberra
Australia
Tel : (612) 6202 4919
Email : Terry.Hills@ausaid.gov.au

COOK ISLANDS

Mr. Vaitoti Tupa
Director
Environment Service
Rarotonga
Cook Islands
Tel : (682) 21 256
Fax: (682) 22 256
Email: vaitoti@oyster.net.ck

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

Mr. Marion Henry
Assistant Secretary
Division of Resource Development of Economic
Affairs & Management Development
PO Box PS-12
Palikir, Pohnpei
Federated States of Micronesia
Tel : (691) 320-5133
Email: marionh@mail.fm

FIJI

Mrs. Banuve Kaumaitotoya
Permanent Secretary for Tourism & Environment
Ministry of Tourism & Environment
Level 3 Civic Towers
Suva -FIJI
Tel : (679) 3312 788
Email : Bkaumaitotoya@govnet.gov.fj

Mr Epeli Nasome
Director of Environment
Department of Environment
PO Box 2109
Government Buildings
SUVA, Fiji
Tel: (679) 3312-788
Fax: (679) 3312 -879
Email: enasome@govnet.gov.fj

FRANCE

Mr Patrick Roussel
Permanent Representative to SPREP
Permanent Secretary for Pacific Affairs
27 rue Oudinot
75007 Paris
France
Tel : (331) 5369 2929
Fax : (331) 5369 2276
Email : Patrick.ROUSSEL@diplomatie.gouv.fr

FRENCH POLYNESIA

Bruno Peaucellier
Head
Department of International Relations
Papeete
French Polynesia
Tel : (689)-47.22.76
Fax : (689) 47.22.71
Email : bruno.peaucellier@presidence.pf

GUAM

Ms. Lorilee L. Crisostomo
Administrator
Guam Environmental Protection Agency
Tel : + 1-671-475-1658
Fax : + 1-671-477-9402
Email : Lorilee.Crisostomo@guamepa.net

Mike Gawel
Acting Chief Planner
Guam Environmental Protection Agency
Guam
Tel : 1-671-475-1646
Fax : 1-671-477-9402
Email : Mike.Gawel@guamepa.net

KIRIBATI

Mr. Tebwe Ietaake
Secretary
Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agriculture
Development
PO Box 234
Bikenibeu, Tarawa
Kiribati
Tel : (686) 28211
Fax : (686) 28334
Email : Tebwe@melad.gov.ki

Dr. Iete Rouatu
Director of Planning & Statistics
Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
Bikenibeu, Tarawa
Kiribati
Tel : (686) 21808
Fax : (686) 21809
Email : iete_rouatu@hotmail.com
Email : teiti.ecd@melad.gov.ki

Ms. Nenenteiti Teariki-Ruatu
Deputy Director of Environment & Conservation
Division
Ministry of Environment, Lands and
Agriculture Development
P.O. Box 234
Bikenibeu, Tarawa-Kiribati
Tel : (686) 28507/28000/28593
Fax : (686) 28425
Email: nrtitaake@yahoo.com.au

MARSHALL ISLANDS

Ms Yumiko Crisostomo
Director
Office of Environmental Planning and Policy
Coordination
Office of the President
PO Box 975
MAJURO 96960
Republic of the Marshall Islands 96960
Tel : (692) 625 7944
Fax : (692) 625 7918
Email : oeppc@ntamar.net
Email: yumiko.crisostomo@gmail.com

NEW CALEDONIA

Mr. Daniel Poigoune
President of the Environmental Commission
Member of the Northern Province
Noumea, New Caledonia
Tel: (687) 47.71.45
Email: jj-cassan@province-nord.nc

Ms Gentiane Bisio
Elected Member of the Southern Province
Noumea, New Caledonia
Tel: (687) 77 39 56
Email: gentiane.bisio@province-sud.nc

Mr. Germain Padome
Special Assistant for Environment, Northern
Province
Noumea, New Caledonia
Tel: (687) 47.71.41
Email: Charge.environnement@province.nord.nc

Mr. Jean-Jerome Cassan
Engineer – Northern Province
Enviroment Department
Noumea, New Caledonia
Tel: (687) 47 72 39
Fax: (687) 47 71 35
Email: jj-cassan@province-nord.nc

NEW ZEALAND

Mr. Andrew Bignell
Department of Conservation
Wellington
New Zealand
Tel : (644) 471-3191
Fax : (644) 471-3049
Email : abignell@doc.govt.nz

Mr Tom Wilson
Development Programme Manager
NZ Agency for International Development
NZAID, AIDPAC
Private Mail Bag
Wellington
New Zealand
Tel : (644) 439-8327
Fax : (644)
Email : Tom.Wilson@nzaid.govt.nz

Mr. Malcolm Millar
Deputy High Commissioner
New Zealand High Commission
Beach Road
Apia- Samoa
Tel : (685) 21711
Fax : (685) 20086
Email : Malcolm.Millar@mfat.govt.nz

NIUE

Mr Sauni Tongatule
Director for Environment
Department of Environment
PO Box 80
Alofi
Niue
Tel : (683) 4021
Fax : (683) 4391
Email : tongatules@mail.gov.nu

Mr Crossley Tatui
Secretary to Government
Premier's Department
PO Box 40
Alofi
Niue
Tel : (683) 4200
Fax : (683) 4206
Email : c.tatui.sog@mail.gov.nu

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Dr. Gae Gowae
Deputy Secretary
Department of Environment and Conservation
Papua New Guinea
Tel : (675) 325-0180
Fax : (675) 325-0182
Email : gmaxau@yahoo.com

Mr. Gunther Joku
Acting Director Policy
Department of Environment and Conservation
Papua New Guinea
Tel: 325-0180
Fax: 325-0182
Email: guntherjoku@yahoo.com

Mr. Tony Torea
National Environment Policy Advisor
UNDP Office
Papua New Guinea
Tel: (675) 325-0180
Fax: (675) 325-0182
Email: tony.torea@undp.org

SAMOA

Mr. Aiono Mose Pouvi Sua
Chief Executive Officer
Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade
PO Box L1859
Apia, Samoa
Tel : (685) 21171
Fax : (685) 21504
Email : mose@mfa.gov.ws

Tu'u'u Dr. Ieti Taulealo
Chief Executive Officer
Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment
and Meteorology
Private Mail Bag
Apia, Samoa
Tel : (685) 685 25019/685 22481
Fax : (685) 685 23176
Email : tuuu.ieti@samoa.ws

Faumuina Sailimalo Pati Liu
Assistant Chief Executive Officer
Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment
and Meteorology
Private Mail Bag
Apia- Samoa
Tel : (685) 685 31198/685 31197
Fax : (685) 685 23176
Email : Pati.Liu@mnre.gov.ws

Ms. Perina J. Sila
Assistant Chief Executive Officer
Political & Protocol
Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade
PO Box L1859
Apia, Samoa
Tel : (685) 685 63313
Fax : (685) 685 21504
Email : perina@mfa.gov.ws

Dr Steve Brown
GEF Consultant
Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment
and Meteorology
Private Mail Bag
Apia, Samoa
Tel : (685) 22481 Ext 13
Fax : (685)
Email : stevebrown@mnre.gov.ws

TOKELAU

Mr. Mose Pelasio
Director
Department of Economic Development,
Natural Resources & Environment
Tokelau
Tel: (690) 3127
Fax: (690) 3108
Email: mose.pelasio@clear.net.nz

TONGA

Dr Nailasikau Halatuituia
Secretary for Lands, Survey, Natural,
Resources & Environment
Ministry of Lands, Survey & Natural Resources
PO Box 5
Nukualofa
Tonga
Tel : (676) 23611/23210
Fax: (676) 23216
Email: ceo@lands.gov.to

TUVALU

Mr. Enate Evi
Acting Director
Department of Environment
Private Mail Bag
Funafuti
Tuvalu
Tel : (688) 20179
Fax : (688) 20167
Email : enviro@tuvalu.tv

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Ms. Jennifer Christenson
International Relations Officer
Office of Ocean Affairs
Bureau of Oceans & International Environmental
And Scientific Affairs
U.S. Department of State
Tel: (202) 647-3073
Fax: 1 (202) 647-4353
Email: ChristensonJL@state.gov

Mr Howard Diamond
Program Manager
U.S Department of Commerce,
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.
Tel: + 1 301-427-2475
Fax: + 1 301-427-0033
Email: howard.diamond@noaa.gov

Mr Mark Fornwall
Pacific Basin Information Node Manager
United States Geological Survey
Department of the Interior
Tel: 808-984-3724
Fax: 1 (808) 2421128
Email: mark_fornwall@usgs.gov

Ms. Susan Ware Harris
Executive Director
NOAA Office of Internal Affairs
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,
Department of Commerce
Tel: 01 202-482-6196
Direct Line: 01 202-482-5143
Email: susan.ware-harris@noaa.gov

Mr. John McCarroll
Manager, Pacific Islands Office
Environmental Protection Agency
San Francisco, California
Tel: 415-972-3774
Fax: 415-947-3560
Email: McCarroll.John@epamail.epa.gov

Mr. Joseph Murphy
Regional Environmental Officer
U.S. Department of State
American Embassy
Suva
Tel: (679) 331-4466 Ext 8166
Fax: (679) 330-2998
Email: MurphyJP@state.gov

Ms. Helene Takemoto
Senior Program and Project Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Fort Shafter
Department of the Army
Department of Defense
Honolulu, Hawaii
Tel:
Fax: 01 (808) 4387801
Email: Helene.Y.Takemoto@poh01.usace.army.mil

Ms. Karen Frutchey
U.S Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Tel: 01 202-482-6196
Email: Karen.Frutchey@noaa.gov

WALLIS AND FUTUNA

Mr. Toma Savea
President of the Environment Equipment
Wallis et Futuna

Mr. Sanele Tauvale
Environment Department
Wallis et Futuna
Tel: (681) 72 03 51
Fax: (681) 72 05 97
Email: senv@wallis.co.nc

CROP AGENCIES/ADVISERS**FORUM FISHERIES AGENCY**

Mr. Su'a N. F. Tanielu
Director General
Forum Fisheries Agency
PO Box 629
Honiara
Solomon Islands
Tel : (677) 21124
Fax : (677) 23995
Email : dan.sua@ffa.int

FORUM SECRETARIAT

Dr. Padma Lal
Sustainable Development Advisor
Forum Secretariat
Suva, Fiji
Tel : (679) 331 2600
Fax : (679) 322 0249
Email : PadmaL@forumsec.org.fj

**SECRETARIAT FOR THE PACIFIC
COMMUNITY (SPC)**

Mr. Falani Aukuso
Deputy Director
Private Mail Bag
South Pacific Commission
Suva, Fiji
Tel : 679 3370733
Fax : 679 3370021

**SOUTH PACIFIC APPLIED GEOSCIENCE
COMMISSION (SOPAC)**

Ms. Cristelle Pratt
Director
SOPAC
Private Mail Bag
GPO Suva, FIJI
Tel : (679) 338 1377
Fax : (679) 337 0040
Email : Cristelle@sopac.org

Ms. Tagaloa L. Cooper
Regional Communications and Coordination
Advisor
SOPAC
Private Mail Bag
GPO Suva, Fiji
Tel : (679) 338 1377
Fax : (679) 337 0040
Email : tagaloa@sopac.org

OBSERVERS**ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK**

David McCauley
Senior Environmental Economist
Regional and Sustainable Development Department
Asian Development Bank
PO Box 789
MANILA 2800
Philippines
Tel : (632) 632 5332
Fax : (632) 632 6184
Email: dmccauley@adb.org

Edy Brotoisworo
Senior Safeguards Specialist
Pacific Department
Asian Development Bank
PO Box 789
MANILA 2800
Philippines
Tel : (632) 632 5332
Fax : (632) 632 6184
Email : ebrotoisworo@adb.org

BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL

Mr. Don Stewart
Head of Pacific Division
BirdLife International
Pacific Partnership Secretariat
10 MacGregor Road
GPO Box 18332
Suva, Fiji
Tel: (679) 331 3592
Fax: (679) 331 3492
Email: don@birdlifepacific.org.fj

CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL

Mr. Francois Martel
Executive Director
Pacific Islands Program
Conservation International
c/- PO Box 240
Apia, Samoa
Tel : (685) 21953/28569
Fax : (685) 28570
Email : fmartel@conservation.org

Mrs. Sue Miller-Taei
Marine Program Manager
Pacific Islands Program
Conservation International
c/- PO Box 240
Apia, Samoa
Tel : (685) 21593/28569
Fax : (685) 28570
Email : staei@conservation.org

Mr. James Atherton
Conservation Outcomes Manager
Pacific Islands Program
Conservation International
c/- PO Box 240
Apia, Samoa
Tel : (685) 21593/28569
Fax : (685) 28570
Email : jatherton@conservation.org

CONVENTION OF MIGRATORY SPECIES

Dr. Margi Prideaux
Convention on Migratory Species
UNEP/CMS Secretariat
UN Campus, Hermann-Ehlers-Str.10
Tel : (618) 8242 5842
Fax : (618) 8242 1595
Email : margi@cetaceanconservation.com.au
CMS Secretariat
53113, Bonn Germany
Tel: (49228) 815-2426
Fax: (49228) 815-2449
Email: secretariat@cms.int

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANISATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO)**

Dr. Vili A. Fuavao
FAO Sub-Regional Representative for the Pacific
FAO Representative in Samoa
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United
Nations, Subregional Office for the Pacific
Private Mail Bag
Apia, Samoa
Telephone: (685) 22127
Fax: (685) 22126
Email: FAO-SRO-Pacific@fao.org
FAO-SAPA@fao.org

INTERNATIONAL FUND IFAW

Mr. Mick McIntyre
Director
IFAW Asia Pacific
8 Belmore Street
Surry Hills NSW 2010
Australia
Tel : (612) 9288 4900
Fax : (612) 9288 4960

Ms. Olive Andrews
IFAW Officer
C/o SPREP
P.O Box 240
Apia, Samoa
Tel : (685) 66279
Fax : (685) 20321
Email : oandrews@ifaw.org

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANISATION

Mr. Moin Ahmed
Head, Asia-Pacific Section Geographical Focal
Points
Technical Co-operation Division
International Maritime Organisation
4 Albert Embankment
London SE1 7SR
Tel : (+ 44) 0 207 587 3108
Fax : (+ 44) 0 207 587 3210
Email : MAHMED@imo.org

**INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVA-
TION OF NATURE AND NATURAL RE-
SOURCE (IUCN)**

Mr. Taholo Kami
Regional Director
IUCN Oceania
5th Ma'afu Street
Suva, Fiji
Tel : (679)
Fax : (679)
Email : Taholo.Kami@iucn.org

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY (TNC)

Mr. James Hardcastle
Senior Advisor, Policy & Finance-Asia Pacific
The Nature Conservancy
Brisbane, Australia
Tel : (617) 3214-6904
Fax : (617) 321-6999
Email : jhardcastle@tnc.org

Mr. Yabanex Batista
Senior Policy Advisor- GEF
The Nature Conservancy
4245 North Fairfax Drive, Suite 100
Arlington, VA 22203-1606
Washington D.C
USA
Tel : (+ 1 703) 841-8170
Fax: (+ 1 703) 276-3241
Email : ybatista@tnc.org

**UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMME (UNDP)**

Ms. Naheed Atiq Haque
Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative
UNDP Country Office
Private Mail Bag
Apia, Samoa
Tel : (685) 23670/1
Fax : (685) 23555
Email : naheed.haque@undp.org

Ms. Easter Galuvao
Assistant Resident Representative
Environment and Energy Unit
UNDP Country Office
Private Mail Bag
Apia, Samoa
Tel : (685) 23670/1
Fax : (685) 23555
Email : easter.galuvao@undp.org

Mr. Luatutu Andrea Volentras
UNDP/GEF Regional Technical Advisor for the
Pacific
UNDP Country Office
Private Mail Bag
Apia, Samoa
Tel : (685) 23670/1
Fax : (685) 23555
Email : andrea.volentras@undp.org

Mr. Thomas Jensen
Associate Programme Specialist REP-POR
UNDP Country Office
Private Mail Bag
Apia, Samoa
Tel : (685) 23670/1
Fax : (685) 23555
Email : Thomas.Jensen@undp.org

Ms. Leilani Duffy
SGP National-Coordinator
UNDP Country Office
Private Mail Bag
Apia, Samoa
Tel : (685) 23670/1
Fax : (685) 23555
Email : leilani.duffy@undp.org

**UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT
PROGRAMME (UNEP)**

Mr. Max Zieren
GEF Regional Programme Coordinator
Regional Office for Asia & Pacific
UN Building
Rajdamnern Ave
Bangkok 10200
Thailand
Tel : (662) 288 1873
Fax : (662) 280 3829
Email : uneproap@un.org

Mr. Mahesh Pradhan
Regional Environmental Affairs Officer
Regional Office for Asia & Pacific
UN Building
Rajdamnern Ave
Bangkok 10200
Thailand
Tel : (662) 288 1873
Fax : (662) 280 3829
Email : uneproap@un.org

Mr. Thanavat Junchaya
Programme Officer
Regional Office for Asia & Pacific
UN Building
Rajdamnern Ave
Bangkok 10200
Thailand
Tel: (662) 288 1873
Fax: (662) 280 3829
Email:

Mr. Suresh Raj
Representative –Pacific Islands
UNEP
c/- SPREP, PO Box 240
Apia, Samoa
Tel: (685) 66264
Fax: (685) 20231
Email: sureshr@sprep.org

Dr. Keneti Faulalo
Coordinator for Pacific Islands
UNEP- Division of GEF Coordination
C/- SPREP PO Box 240
Apia, Samoa
Tel: (685) 21430
Fax: (685) 20231
Email: keneti.faulalo@unep.ch

**UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC
(USP)**

Dr. Pa'olelei Luteru
Dean
Faculty of Islands and Oceans
The University of the South Pacific
Alafua Campus
Private Mail Bag
Apia, Samoa
Tel : (685) 21671
Fax : (685) 22933
Email : enquiries@samoa.usp.ac.fj

**WHALE & DOLPHIN CONSERVATION
SOCIETY (WDCS)**

Dr. Cara Miller
WDCS International
PO Box 720
Port Adelaide Business Centre
Port Adelaide SA 5015
Australia
Tel : (61) 422 388 725
Fax : (618) 8447 4211
Email : cara.miller@wdcs.org

**WORLD METEOROLOGY ORGANIZATION
(WMO)**

Mr. Henry Taiki
WMO
C/o SPREP
Vailima, APIA
SAMOA
Tel: (685) 21929
Fax: ((685) 20231
Email: htaiki@wmo.int

FRENCH LANGUAGE SOLUTIONS**INTERPRETERS & TRANSLATORS**

Olivier Richard
French Language Solutions Pty Ltd
Australia
Tel : 61-2-9398 1767
Fax : 61-2-8569 1383
Email : olivier@french.com.au

Bertold Schmidt - Interpreter
Gérard Maré - Interpreter
Christian Degueldre - Interpreter
Pierre Pellerin - Translator
Raymond Poirrier - Translator
Alan Doyle - Technical

SPREP SECRETARIAT

PO Box 240
Apia, Samoa
Tel : (685) 21 929
Fax : (685) 20 231
Email : sprep@sprep.org

Asterio Takesy
Director

F. Vitolio Lui
Deputy Director

Taito John Roache
Corporate Services Manager

Bruce Chapman
Programme Manager – Pacific Futures

Stuart Chape
Programme Manager – Island Ecosystems

Dr Frank Griffin
Pollution Prevention & Waste Management
Adviser

Kate Brown
Action Strategy Adviser

Frank Wickham
Capacity Development Adviser

Seve Paeniu
Sustainable Development Adviser

Espen Ronneberg
Climate Change Adviser

Joe Stanley
GEF Support Adviser

Taito Nakalevu
Climate Change Adaptation Officer

Dominique Benzaken
Coastal Management Adviser

Solomone Fifita
PIGGAREP Programme Manager

Peter Murgatroyd
Information Resource Centre Manager

Satui Bentin
Consultant - Chief Rapporteur

Tamara Logan
Education & Social Communications Adviser

Lui Bell
Marine Species Officer

Caroline Vieux
Coral Reef Management Officer

Alan Tye
Invasive Species Officer

Alofa S. Tuuau
Finance Manager

Clark Peteru
Environmental Legal Adviser

Anthony Talouli
Marine Pollution Adviser

Dean Solofa
PI-GCOS Officer

Anna Tiraa
Island Biodiversity Officer

Tepa Suaesi
Environment Officer

Nannete Woonton
Associate Media & Publication Officer

Makereta Kaurasi-Manueli
Project Accountant

Simeamativa L. Vaai
Senior Administration Officer

Kemueli Qoroya
Information Technology Officer

Aliitasi Uesele-Petaia
IT/Network Officer

Ruta Tupua-Couper
Personal Assistant to the Director

Apiseta Eti
Personal Assistant to the Deputy Director

Litia Brighthouse
Personnel Officer

Lupe Silulu
Registry Supervisor

Miraneta Williams-Hazelman
Assistant Librarian

Pauline Fruean
Conference & Travel Officer

Tuputa Uliate
Property Services Officer

Rosanna Galuvao-Ah Ching
Secretary - Corporate Services

Makerita Atiga
Secretary - Island Ecosystems Programme

Phaedra Moors
Secretary - Pacific Futures Programme

Saunoa Matau
Programme Assistant - Pacific Futures Programme

Theresa Afa-Fruean
Programme Assistant - Island Ecosystem
Programme

Annex II: Statement by Mr Asterio Takesy, Director of SPREP

Rev. Featunai Ben Liua'ana
The Hon. Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi,
Prime Minister of Samoa
Madame Monique Barbut,
Chief Executive of the GEF Secretariat
Ministers of Cabinet
Distinguished Representatives of SPREP Member
Countries and Territories
Members of the Diplomatic Corpsss
Fellow CROP Members
Distinguished Observers
My fellow SPREP team members
Ladies and gentlemen

I would like to thank Rev. Liua'ana for his inspiring spiritual invocation.

I would like to extend to each of you warm greetings and a special welcome to the eighteenth session of SPREP's governing body – the SPREP meeting. For our guests who have traveled from afar, I hope your journey here had been pleasant and uneventful.

I would like to extend to each of you warm greetings and a special welcome to the eighteenth session of SPREP's governing body – the SPREP meeting. For our guests who have traveled from afar, I hope your journey here had been pleasant and uneventful.

May I thank you, Honourable Prime Minister for your courtesy and consideration in making time in your demanding schedule to be with us this morning to address our gathering and officially open our 18th session.

In the wake of Samoa's very successful hosting of the 13th South Pacific Games, I believe congratulations are in order to you Sir as a medal winning athlete and as the head of the government that has enabled and hosted perhaps the best SPG ever. People of my age can now believe more seriously the adage – there is life after 50. You Sir have proven that there is not only life beyond that point but active, fun filled and competitive life. Malo le tausinio.

I am very pleased to once again welcome our distinguished SPREP representatives for enchanting Samoa. In the same vein I welcome my distinguished colleagues from the CROP agencies, and all our Observers.

To our special guest, Madame Monique Barbut, CEO and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), I am grateful that you have accepted my invitation in spite of your many and weighty international commitments. Your presence does not only do me and SPREP honour, but also honour our host country Samoa, and convey to Pacific small island developing states and territories gathered here today, that their struggle for a better living standard, and the many unique challenges they face in that struggle are not lost on but heard and acted upon in the corridors of power in the developed world and by the leader of one of the most influential and well resourced institutions in the world.

Madame Chair, if we, the GEF and Pacific SIDs, can partner effectively in your constructive initiative – GEF pacific alliance for sustainability implementation to suit and serve the special needs of our struggling peoples, future generations of pacific islanders will always remember you as their special friend and benefactor who, while presiding over a global institution in far off Washington DC took personal interest in their plight to make GEF relevant to the Pacific SIDs. Madame Barbut, I applaud you for being the first GEF Chief Executive Officer and Cchairperson to grace our warm pacific shores ushering in a new wave of optimism and enduring relationship.

Distinguished delegates, in this our 16th year in Samoa and 12th since becoming an intergovernmental organization, SPREP stands at the crossroads. In this regard, I am justifiably proud that over the past 16 years, the men and women who make up SPREP and had dedicated their time and service over the past 16 years to help Pacific islands countries and territories protect and improve their environment and develop their capacities, had accomplished much and the evidence is with your countries and communities. However environmental threats to the region's islands remain and in some areas are becoming more serious and urgent. Therefore, the challenge for SPREP staff to assist island members looms larger. And my staff and I are always ready to do our duty to the best of our ability and to the limit of the resources available to us.

In this connection, you are all aware of the current study on the so called “regional architecture” or regional institutional framework (RIF in short) that is recommending SPREP be folded with other agencies into SPC – the organization from whence SPREP was weaned from, 16 years ago. The ostensible reason for this is to save cost and increase service efficiency. The study results are available to your countries and administrations and while we in the executive have our own personal views and perspectives on the matter, I believe the ultimate judge on the value and cost effectiveness of our service lies with you. This issue will come up for a decision at the Pacific Islands Forum meeting this October and no doubt some of you may have views on this; I therefore respectfully urge you to take this matter up in the appropriate manner within your governments or administrations.

Similarly, since SPREP’s establishment, the focus has been on service delivery addressing the many and urgent environmental challenges facing Pacific islands. Hence in the last 16 years, apart from a donor inspired review of the organisation in 2000, there has not been an independent review or evaluation of our service other than our internal annual work programme evaluation reports to the SPREP Meeting. We believe the time is now opportune with a similar requirement by AusAID, that SPREP consider a comprehensive independent corporate review to gauge how members particularly island countries and territories that SPREP was established to serve, consider and value the work performance of SPREP, the mode and delivery of this service and receive suggestion on how any identified deficiencies might be remedied and overall service improved.

We commend the Secretariat’s paper on this to you for decision and for serious consideration by donors for funding.

Distinguished delegates, once again, we have tried to provide you with a realistic Work Programme for 2008 that addresses the region’s pressing and priority needs without increasing membership contributions. We have been able to do this by balancing the budget with the fruits of the secretariat’s efficiency measures and cost cutting in previous years. This, of course, is

neither ideal nor sustainable but your concerns about increased contributions necessitates this. In this regard, may I point out that you are the members would also have to come to terms with reality and the need to increase your equity, ownership and commitment in the organization and the increasing demands on it to meet the mounting environmental challenges of our region.

Like my fellow crop heads, I am increasingly concerned about SPREP’s ability to continue to attract sufficient numbers of competent men and women to select from, as in previous years, to provide you the high service you demand and certainly deserve. Part of this is due to the competitiveness, and might I say fairness, of the remuneration for staff. I am fortunate and I am proud to say that SPREP can boast the largest proportion of Pacific islanders in its professional rank of 75%, the largest among CROP organisations. This fact, has helped SPREP attract and retain top level professionals. In accordance with your decisions in 2004 and last year, we in the CROP family have surveyed the markets you had determined for our professional staff and the results indicate a need for adjustments to be fair to staff. For cost reasons however, we at crop have agreed to seek compensation for our staff to only 80% of the needed adjustments. As in previous years and so that members do not have to pay by increased contributions, the secretariat would do its utmost to accommodate the cost via further cost savings and other measures while ensuring that in so doing we do not compromise service delivery.

In conclusion, to our guests that have traveled from afar, I hope you will enjoy your stay and able to find time later in the week to see some of the beautiful sights of Apia and the whole of Samoa and experience the warm hospitality of the Samoans and their ancient but living culture.

Our agenda is full and so without further ado, I wish you a productive meeting and as always my staff and I are at your service throughout the meeting.

Soifua.

ANNEX III: Statement by Ms Monique Barbut, CEO and Chairperson GEF Secretariat

Your Excellency Mr. Prime Minister Tuila'epa,
Distinguished Delegates:

It is my great privilege to join you here today for this important gathering. Here at the heart of Samoa, half a world away from the busy industrial capital of Washington DC, I find the importance of the work we are doing together to be more clearly illuminated.

Indeed, your countries stand as symbols to the rest of the world in two ways. First, you hold some of the planet's greatest natural wealth and beauty, for which you serve as stewards: countries with small populations but big responsibilities. You are a stronghold which must be preserved. But second, you are at the end of the spectrum of today's environmental risk, and your citizens face a combination of economic challenges and environmental vulnerability more serious than most other regions today. So you epitomize the polarized nature of our planetary condition.

As the CEO of the Global Environment Facility, it is my commitment to help the world's developing countries find the means by which they can participate in protection of the global commons while they move to achieve sustainable social and economic development. It is a difficult time to undertake this task for governments. Our window for responding to the stress on environment is rapidly growing smaller and the costs are growing larger. It is for this reason that the political momentum has swelled and governments will gather in New York on September 24 and later in Bali to consider the best political way forward.

But for the islands which you govern, this is not a theoretical exercise. I know that this is an order of the highest magnitude, as you and your citizens face some of today's most daunting environmental conditions, at a time when we must find urgent and effective solutions for sustainable development on a global scale. GEF is dedicated to supporting you in this onerous task.

In 2006, the GEF was replenished at \$3.13 billion, its highest replenishment to date, for which as CEO I am grateful. However, as I stand at the helm of the GEF, I am faced with the dichotomy of growing environmental needs in developing countries

juxtaposed against this relatively small pot of GEF money, given the enormity of the global environmental problems we face. It is my responsibility to ensure that we invest our money most wisely, taking into account its impact not only based on today's environmental conditions but on tomorrow's as well.

Multi-Focal GEF Program For Pacific SIDs.

In line with this, and in consideration of the enormity of your own challenges, I am aware that our partnership with your countries must move to the next stage in its evolution. I am pleased to put on the table today a new GEF-Pacific Alliance for Sustainability through a Multi-Focal GEF Program for Pacific SIDs, structured on an innovative new three-pronged approach to our support to the Pacific which includes:

- 0 ***an exponential increase in funding*** throughout four region, making use of country allocations under the GEF Resource Allocation Framework;
- 0 ***a new programmatic approach***, rather than attacking problems project by project;
- 0 ***a newly rationalized regional approach***, through which we will help aggregate national programs at the regional level to scale up our impact throughout the Pacific.

The Alliance is a partnership which brings together GEF agencies, regional organizations, NGOs and others with your countries to define and deliver an investment *program* that helps your countries develop sustainability while delivering global environmental benefits, through projects that are implemented national and regionally. The World Bank will take the lead as implementing agency for the initiative.

I am excited by the dramatically increased possibilities for more effective use of resources for your region in this new design. The GEF has provided approximately \$86 million to 14 of your region's countries in the past 15 years for your work in biodiversity, climate change and persistent organic pollutants. But progress on this work has been slow. I believe this new program represents a sea change in our work together, and I am delighted to announce today that the total GEF funding available for this

program for three years is proposed to be approximately \$100 million, a nearly six-fold increase on an annual basis

In response to your top national priorities, we will work through four areas of concern: biodiversity; climate change mitigation and adaptation; international waters; and cross-cutting issues integrated across sectors such as land and water management.

In Biodiversity, we are acutely aware that your countries face increasing pressures from a variety of sources which increasingly cause breakdowns in ecological systems and loss of biodiversity. Forests, for instance, are being converted to agricultural and other uses, not always with regard to their underlying functions and coral atolls are at risk from the threat of sea-level rise and the greater frequency of extreme hydrological events. The biodiversity program would focus on management of coastal and marine protected areas; prevention, control and management of invasive alien species; and conservation and sustainable use of your forest resources. The program could include a regional approach to managing invasive alien species, in support of the South Pacific Regional Invasive Species Strategy. It could focus on marine biodiversity conservation through protected areas.

In Climate Change, we know that your countries are faced with tremendous pressures which ultimately have a grave impact on the sustainable development you are working so hard to achieve. I know that your countries have already recognized the need to reduce your vulnerability to increasing climate change risks through adaptation and climate-proofing, and that you want to strengthen your human and institutional capacities to respond to these challenges. We want to support that more effectively, and are suggesting a two-pronged approach which includes some mitigation and provides a strong focus on adaptation. Support for mitigation could be through renewable energy projects in appropriate countries and, in larger countries, through projects focusing on energy efficient buildings. Regionally, these two initiatives would help reduce the cost of imported fossil fuels.

But perhaps more critical is our support for climate change adaptation. Adaptation funding from the GEF, including the climate change adaptation funds, will support the Pacific small island countries' work

to identify and implement suitable adaptation measures, including the integration of adaptation into core development sectors such as agriculture and food security, access to drinking and irrigation water, health, and disaster risk management. Moreover, we can work with you to establish a process to climate proof your critical infrastructure so that climate-related risks become an integral part of your national strategic planning.

In International Waters, through earlier GEF work you had identified two priorities for urgent action: management of the tuna fishery in the Pacific Warm Pool, and protection and management of your freshwater supply. This had led to adoption and ratification of the landmark *Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean*. We want to build on that. We would also hope to help you establish an integrated water management system including surface and groundwater in all the Pacific small island states, with consideration of water harvesting and waste water management, and differentiated approaches in highly water stressed low lying islands (atolls) and in volcanic mountainous islands.

Finally, in cross-cutting areas, we would focus on issues such as tourism and solid waste management. Efforts to identify solid waste management toxic waste management can be considered as a joint intervention in international waters and land management focal areas. This program would respond to the priorities identified in the Mauritius Declaration and the conventions while fitting with the emerging strategic priorities of the GEF.

As an additional form of support to the program, I am also delighted that SPREP is hosting a GEF Support Advisor here in the region, with financial support from New Zealand and Australia, where he will be available to help bridge the long distance from here to Washington and address your concerns.

Distinguished Guests:

This work will not be easy, and will require a powerful commitment on the part of your countries. I would commend the work you have already done to ensure good communication and harmonization among your ministries and departments, and your work for national policy change and institution-building to ensure that the work the GEF supports

takes hold at the deepest levels of your governance. On behalf of the GEF, I pledge to assist you in that process to the best of my ability.

My dear friends:

Your islands are held dear to me; I am no stranger to them. In fact, for many years, I was the general manager for the French government of all public investment in the Pacific French territories.

I understand that there is an ancient tradition in your part of the world called “wayfinding”, a remarkable art of navigating on the open ocean without sextant, compass, clock, radio reports, or satellite reports. Instead, if I understand it correctly, the wayfinder would observe the stars, the sun, the ocean swells, the birds, and other signs of nature for clues to direction and destination.

I would like to call upon this remarkable tradition here today. The path ahead is not clear and is fraught with unknown dangers and uncertainties. We must rely on the knowledge we have to navigate these new waters, and we must trust the living elements of the planet, as your forebears so ably did. As GEF CEO, I hold to the belief that everyone is entitled to prosper on a living planet, now and in the generations to come. I invite you to wayfind with me on the journey ahead, and commit to the evolving GEF-Pacific alliance for sustainability .

Thank you.

ANNEX IV: Statement by The Hon. Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister of Samoa

Rev. Feaunati Liua'ana
Ministers of Cabinet
The Chief Executive of the GEF Secretariat
The Director of SPREP
Distinguished Representatives of
 SPREP Member Countries and Territories
Members of the Diplomatic Corps
Representatives of CROP Organisations
Distinguished Observers
Ladies and gentlemen,

I extend to all our visitors a very warm welcome to Samoa.

I wish to acknowledge in particular and warmly welcome the attendance of Madame Monique Barbut, Chief Executive of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Secretariat. I hope that during your brief stay Madame Barbut you will get to experience first hand, not only the challenges we as Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDs) face and keep raising with GEF, but also some of the things we do well as small developing Pacific islands.

This is the 14th SPREP Meeting since the Secretariat moved to Samoa in 1992 to become a fully independent intergovernmental organization, and the 7th hosted here in Apia. The SPREP is a 'Treaty organization' and its evolution to this status was over a long period of time. The threats to our Pacific islands environment demanded the full time attention of a specialized environmental organization. The environmental threats and challenges that confronted our region a decade and a half ago are still with us today and in certain areas have increased in volume and intensity – global warming and climate change, land based and coastal pollution, mounting waste generation, threats to and loss of biodiversity, to name a few. I believe that none of us here doubt the evidence that SPREP's work to protect and improve our environment since its formation has borne fruit and produced results.

I am aware that the current study on the Regional Institutional Framework (or RIF as it is commonly called) has cast doubt in some people's minds on the

continued existence of SPREP in its present form. I would like to make it clear and assure the SPREP Council of Samoa's commitment and belief in the value and usefulness of SPREP. The evidence I have seen so far of the RIF study reinforces my belief that SPREP should continue its excellent service as presently constituted under the SPREP Agreement treaty.

The problems that our Pacific islands face with the environment are broad in scope and the work of SPREP to address these is most challenging. The organization therefore needs the collective help and support of all member countries. It goes without saying that SPREP must have the necessary resources to enable your organization to deliver on the many requests and tasks the organisation is asked to carry out. I am informed that it would be a great help to SPREP if members assessed contributions are paid up and on time.

Very importantly SPREP must have your critical assessment of its performance to help the organization improve its responsiveness to the members needs. At the same time it is also most important that member countries provide advice and share information on how each member is meeting its environmental responsibilities at the national level and how each country is contributing to regional and global efforts to address environmental concerns. The SPREP Secretariat is facilitating this crucial stock-take work by proposing the Country Profiles template approved at last year's council meeting for immediate implementation. I understand that at this meeting you will be exchanging information on one of the priority area of the Profiles under the Action Plan; that of "natural resources management".

The work and quality of any institution whether in government or private sector and in any setting, is only as good as the quality of its workers. This is certainly true of an organization such as SPREP whose work programme is largely comprised of the technical and legal advisory assistance and services provided by the staff. To attract and retain competent staff require fair market remuneration. Our SPREP

memberships have been cognizant of this and have willingly awarded fair salary adjustments in the past. However, the funding of these adjustments has been made through from Secretariat's savings. This method admittedly has undeniable attractiveness for those of us that go begging to our Treasury Departments to justify every extra dollar we ask for. However, it is also an undeniable fact that relying on savings to pay these adjustments is very clearly not sustainable over extended periods. I therefore urge that while exercising financial prudence, we should also be conscious of the financial challenges facing the Secretariat in obtaining and sustaining the required level of expertise to serve the needs of our members and the resources to achieve this.

To end my remarks, I hope that you will have time to also have a look around our town and island to experience some of our culture, our way of life and Samoan hospitality. You would have likely missed the South Pacific Games and the opportunity to witness and enjoy the sights, sounds and colour of the cultural diversity, talent and sportsmanship displayed by all our Pacific peoples who participated and competed in the Games. We do however have our annual Teuila Festival which started yesterday and I hope you have a chance to enjoy some of the Festival's events.

You have a full and challenging agenda ahead of you and I wish you well in your deliberations. It is now my pleasant duty to declare the proceedings of the 18th SPREP Meeting open.

Soifua ma ia manuia.

Annex V: Agenda

Agenda Item 1: Official Opening

Agenda Item 2: Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

Agenda Item 3: Adoption of Agenda and Working Procedures

Agenda Item 4: Action Taken on Matters Arising from Seventeenth SPREP Meeting

Agenda Item 5: Performance Review/Overview of Developments in 2006

5.1 Presentation of annual report Presentation of Annual Report for 2006 and Director's Overview of Progress since the Seventeenth SPREP Meeting

5.2 Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report on the 2006 Annual Work Programme and Budget

5.3 Financial Reports

5.3.1 Report on Members' Contributions

5.3.2 Audited Annual Accounts for 2006

Agenda Item 6: Members' Issues

6.1 Country Profiles – Exchange of Information by Members on national developments related to Natural Resources Management Priority of the Action Plan

6.2 Options to Streamline Reporting by Pacific Island Countries to MEAs (Paper by Australia)

6.3 Genetic Resources in the Pacific Region (Paper by Australia)

Agenda Item 7: Staff Remuneration Issues

7.1 Sustainable Financing for Periodic Staff Salary Increases

7.2 Annual Reference Market Data Review (Professional Staff)

Agenda Item 8: 2008 Work Programme and Budget

8.1 Island Ecosystems Programme Issues

8.1.1 Regional Marine Species Programme Framework and Regional Arrangements for the Conservation of Marine Species of Special Interest

8.1.2 Capacity Building through the Pacific Invasives Learning Network: Turning words into Action

8.1.3 Pacific Year of the Reef 2008: a plan of action

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- 8.2 Pacific Futures Programme Issues
 - 8.2.1 *Strengthening GEF Support Services Within the Region*
 - 8.2.2 *Regional Project for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol in the Pacific Region: Actions needed to achieve compliance*
 - 8.3 Consideration and Approval of Proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2008 and Indicative Budgets for 2009 and 2010

Agenda Item 9: Institutional Matters

- 9.1 Process for Recruitment of Director
- 9.2 Updated Staff Regulations
- 9.3 TORs for an Independent External Corporate Review of SPREP

Agenda Item 10: Regional Cooperation

- 10.1 CROP CEOs Meeting Report

Agenda Item 11: Items Proposed by Members

- 11.1 Regional Institutional Framework (RIF)
- 11.2 Update on 8th Nature Conservation and Protected Areas Conference

Agenda Item 12: Statements by Observers

Agenda Item 13: Other Business

Agenda Item 14: Date and Venue of Nineteenth SPREP Meeting

Agenda Item 15: Adoption of Report

Agenda Item 16: Close

Annex VI: Duty Statement and Position Requirements for the post of Director

Duties/Responsibilities of Director

1. Provision of exceptional leadership, strategic direction and overall vision;
2. Efficient and effective management and administration of SPREP's work programme, staff and assets;
3. Delivery of high quality advice and services to members and governing body;
4. Articulation and strong advocacy for environment concerns of the regions; and
5. Develop and maintain effective relationships through networking and interaction with other regional organisations, donors and stakeholders

Required Knowledge, Skills, Experience and Attributes

- High integrity with proven leadership qualities, managerial ability and experience at executive level in leading a multi-disciplinary, multicultural team. An academic qualification in an appropriate discipline is an advantage;
- Commitment to the social, economic and environmental aspirations of Pacific island peoples and ability to effectively communicate and liaise with members;
- Ability to advocate for and promote the environmental concerns, the protection and development of the environmental resources of the region and to cooperate effectively with other partner organisations and institutions;
- Demonstrated capacity to manage organisational and cultural change;
- Good health and ability to travel and consult widely in the region; and
- Knowledge of both working languages would be an advantage

Annex VII: Report on the sub-committee on the Independent Corporate Review (WRITTEN ACCOUNT OF VERBAL REPORT)

Mr Chair,

Members will recall from yesterday that Council agreed a representative sub-group be formed to agree on a selection process for members of the SPREP Independent Corporate Review team.

Given this mandate by Council, the sub-group met this afternoon, consisting of New Caledonia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, France, Australia, and New Zealand. The new sub-group has asked me as Chair of the meeting to verbally update members on the sub-group's decisions. The sub-group proposes to follow this with written advice to Council Members.

Firstly, the sub-group noted Members' endorsement of the Independent Corporate Review yesterday and the need for a transparent yet practical process that can be completed quickly to allow the review to proceed.

The sub-group firstly considered the process for appointing the sub-regional representatives on the review team. Sub-regional representatives are required from Micronesia, Polynesia, Melanesia and Australia/New Zealand. The time requirements for these positions were also discussed, noting that there would be some short travel requirement but that the remainder of input would be through email and telephone to comment on and support the work of the Team Leader and consultant.

It was decided that one SPREP Focal Point from each of these sub-regions would coordinate with counterpart focal points in their sub-region to bring forward a suitable nomination to the Secretariat. Provisionally these coordinating focal points are Samoa (Polynesia), RMI (Micronesia), Fiji (Melanesia) but please note these are only provisional and we will confirm this later in writing. It was agreed that Australia's and New Zealand's representative would be decided jointly by those countries and would aim to complement the skills of other team members.

The sub-group then considered the process selecting the Team Leader position and the private sector/consultant position. The sub-group decided that for simplicity and transparency that these selections would be made by an Apia-based group consisting of Samoa, USA (if they wish), Australia, New Zealand and Tokelau (if they wish). The Republic of the Marshall Islands also requested to be part of this group by telephone or email – the sub-group agreed to this while noting that they would not be able to accommodate any further expansion beyond Apia-based people for reasons of practicality.

This mostly Apia-based group will gather approximately six names, with qualifications for each of the two positions (Team Leader and Consultant) and then jointly make their selections which the Secretariat will then engage. Council Members will be able to submit candidates should they wish. The sub-group nominated New Zealand to be the lead coordinator of this process in Apia.

Mr Chair, the sub-group noted that completing these selection processes quickly is very important. The immediate next step will be for the sub-group to confirm these processes in writing with Council members and then to complete sections well before the end of the calendar year.

Finally, Mr Chair, I note that the sub-group discussed some other details including desirable qualities for the Team Leader to have public administration experience, wisdom and seniority to allow high level conversations with Members. It was also agreed that all team members should have excellent inter-personal skills to understand and work collaboratively in the Pacific context.

Mr Chair, the sub-group's considerations have come late in the week and so as I mentioned before, the sub-group will confirm this arrangement in writing with Council Members and the Secretariat as soon as possible. This will also allow the sub-group to finalise details and timeline of the process from here.

Thank you.

ANNEX VIII: Remarks by F. Vitolio Lui, Deputy Director of SPREP

Mr Chairman
Distinguished Representatives

Thank you for the opportunity to say a few words as it would be remiss of me if I do not acknowledge the generous tribute to my service by my Director earlier this week and your own very warm endorsement of it.

It has been a pleasure, a privilege and an honour to have served you through this position.

Allow me some reflections on my service with SPREP. I applied for the post for two main reasons:

Firstly, I consider myself, as a senior Pacific island public servant, as one of the privileged few not only in Samoa but in the Pacific islands. For most of my working life, I had served my country, my people and my family and I had always felt some guilt and regret that for the 95% of the region's less fortunate I can do little to help them. I felt by serving in a regional organisation, I can help make a small difference to their lives and welfare.

The second reason was that I have been intimately involved with CROP agencies for practically my entire working life. And even though my friend Kevin here, sometimes, lightheartedly refers to himself as troublesome in regional meetings, I can assure him he will never even be half as troublesome as I had been to regional secretariats. Secretariats used to go into mourning when they see my name on the participants list.

I ask a lot of uncomfortable questions, point out lapses, propose ideas and changes, call for better performance – to the point, where my detractors claim I am just a negative, nasty and unhelpful person. While of course I do not believe this fair, I had to demonstrate somehow that they were wrong.

The best way was to join a regional organisation and demonstrate that I am just as good at dishing out criticisms as I am at receiving them. That I am just as good at proposing ideas and changes as I am in implementing them and making them work.

That what I can dismantle, I can reconstruct in a better way. That not only I make people work, I can also work alongside them, just as hard and as long as any

In short I want to show **I can Walk my Talk.**

Those are what motivated and inspired me in my service.

Colleagues,

Having said that, my greatest pleasure and privilege was the honour to have served alongside and amongst a team of such competent, talented and good natured men and women, dedicated to their work and service of the region at SPREP.

I have learned a lot from them all – from our groundsman to our Director about respect, humility, loyalty, commitment, dedication and perseverance against all obstacles and challenges. I have benefited more from my association with them, than I had ever contributed.

I have worked in many places but there is a unique chemistry and bond between SPREP staff that makes working there so special.

This will be the most difficult thing for me to come to terms with when it is time to leave.

Let me leave you with a thought.

It is a truism of life, that we never really come to appreciate the value of what we have, until we lose them.

Do not make that mistake with SPREP and the team you are fortunate to have serve you there.

Mr Chairman, representatives,

For the support, the courtesy and honour you had done me, I am grateful and will always treasure.

May God bless you all and safely guide you back to your families when we part.

Soifua.

Annex IX: Closing Statement by Mr Asterio Takesy, Director of SPREP

Mr Chairman,

With your indulgence I would like to publicly express, once again our belated condolences to the Government and people of French Polynesia for the tragic loss of lives in the plane crash of August 9th that claimed some 20 lives. In particular I express our deep sorrow for the irreplaceable loss of senior officials from the Ministry of Environment:

Mr Didier Laurier – Chief of Staff

Mr Guillaume Ratte – Advisor for Environmental Issues

Mr Pierre Coissac – Director (who attended the 2005 and 2006 SPREP Meetings)

Mr Eric Sesboue – Head of the Bureau for Sanitation and infrastructures

Mrs Moetia Fourreau – Deputy head of the Bureau for sanitation and infrastructures

I request that we observe a moment of silence.

Mr Chairman,

Please allow me allow me to take this opportunity to convey to you all, on behalf of the management and staff of the Secretariat, our sincere gratitude and thanks for your valued participation, support and very constructive contributions to the Meeting agenda.

We acknowledge and thank you all our Members and partners for committing your time and resources to participate in this meeting. Governing council meetings take up a lot of staff time, energy and resources to plan and convene and so you can imagine the great sense of accomplishment we feel to have you all here actively participating in the formal meeting agenda and informal events, building and renewing acquaintances, forging new partnerships and strengthening our collaborative efforts. We continue to value your counsel and the wealth of knowledge and information we have gained from you during such meetings.

Please allow us some time to recover from this demanding exercise and we assure you we will begin to attend to your recommendations and requests.

Mr Chairman, I have exercised a great deal of self-restraint from mentioning names of certain Parties rugby or cricket teams – for fear of unleashing another barrage of – You know what – across the Tasman Sea. But thank you Australia for the intermittent sprinkling of humor in our Meeting. It is good that we find space for some fun and laughter throughout our formal deliberations.

We say faafetai tele lava to our host, the people and government of Samoa for their steadfast and on-going support to the Secretariat. We thank the Honourable Prime Minister for gracing our Meeting with his presence and we humbly appreciate his commendations on the work of the Secretariat and the pledge for on-going support.

Distinguished delegates, on your behalf, I thank Guam for very ably chairing the meeting proceedings that has seen all agenda items effectively and efficiently dealt with. Thank you Mr Chairman Sir and please convey our gratitude to your colleague Ms Chrisostomo. We also recognize the hard work of the chair and members of the drafting committee for aptly capturing the essence of our proceedings.

Mr Chairman, my staff and I are truly grateful for the kind words of commendation, support and constructive contributions by our distinguished delegates and partners during this meeting, to the papers and proposals presented.

We thank you for supporting and endorsing the 2008 AWP and Budget and the new initiatives proposed, for offering your assistance as well as for requesting our assistance in addressing your needs. We thank our donor partners for supporting our Programmes and Projects with funding and technical advice and we wish also to acknowledge the kind assistance of the Government of Australia and New Zealand for providing Programme funding to the Secretariat that continues to enable us to deliver services to our Members.

We acknowledge the presence and participation of representatives of our CROP sister agencies and we look forward to the on-going collaborations in the service of our Members and in adding value to the work carried out at the national levels. Amongst us

are also representatives of international NGOs, development agencies, institutions and the private sector. Thank you for participating as observers, for hosting side events and for the very useful informal interactions.

Mr Chairman, in many ways, in my humble view, this Meeting will go down as a special and memorable one for all of us.

It is the first time for the head of the GEF Secretariat to visit our shores and grace our SPREP Meeting with her presence. This Meeting has also contributed to ushering in a novel partnership arrangement between the GEF, SPREP Members and development partners within the framework of the Pacific Alliance for Sustainability. The Secretariat has been privileged to play a role in facilitating this significant initiative and we look forward to being an active and strong partner in assisting our Members maximize the benefits the PAS programmatic approach has to offer.

This Meeting has also, for the first time, enabled Members to share information on their work in progressing initiatives and achieving outcomes relating to our SPREP Action Plan. I respectfully encourage those that have not yet made presentations to contribute to this very useful update and sharing of information. We will proceed to compile the information you presented in your country profile templates.

Mr Chairman, we wish to thank distinguished delegates for the strong interest shown in the affairs of the Secretariat reflected in the approval granted for an Independent Corporate Review. This is the first time our Governing Council has considered and endorsed a proposal for such an important exercise. We thank Australia, New Zealand and France for offering funding assistance and look forward to supporting the work of the reviewers as best we can. We also look forward to the recommendations of the review, which we believe can only strengthen and enhance the capacity and effectiveness of our Secretariat to deliver services to Members.

Mr Chairman, I wish to now acknowledge the hard work put in by Vito and all my staff in preparing for and supporting this Meeting. Thank you colleagues and team for your usual dedication and commitment and for a job well done.

We are very grateful to the management of Development Bank of Samoa for availing us the use of their new premises and thank the staff for their support role.

In closing Mr Chairman, I wish you, all our distinguished delegates, observers and partners, Gods blessings and a safe journey back to your home destinations and families and thank you all again for contributing to this successful meeting.

Acronyms Used and Their Explanation

Acronym	Explanation
ABS	Access to genetic resources and Benefit Sharing
ACAIR	Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research
ACP	Africa Caribbean and Pacific
AES	Agreement Establishing SPREP
AFD	[French Development Agency]
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBDAMPIC	Capacity Building for the Development of Adaptation Measures in Pacific Island Countries
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFC	Chlorofluorocarbon
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species
COP	Conference of the Parties
CRISP	Coral Reef Initiative for the South Pacific
CROP	Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific
DEH	Department of Environment and Heritage (Austr.)
EDF10	European Development Fund (10th round)
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FFA	Forum Fisheries Agency
FFC	Forum Fisheries Committee
FOC	Forum Officials Committee
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
GCOS	Global Climate Observing System
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GloBallast	Global Ballast Water Management Programme
IBPOW	Island Biodiversity Programme of Work
ICRAN	International Coral Reef Action Network
IFRECOR	[French Initiative for Coral Reefs]
IHE	Institute of Hydraulic Engineering (Delft, NL)
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IMP	Introduced Marine Pests
IUCN	The World Conservation Union (previously: International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources)
IWP	International Waters Project
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NAP	National Action Plan
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCSA	National Capacity Self-Assessment (for Global Environmental Management)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (USA)
NSDS	National Sustainable Development Strategy
NZAID	New Zealand Agency for International Development
OBIS	Ocean Biogeographic Information System
OCT	Overseas Countries and Territories (EU)
ODS	Ozone-depleting substances
PACC	Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change

PACER	Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations
PacINET	Conference of the Pacific Islands Chapter of the Internet Society
PACISOC	Pacific Islands Chapter of the Internet Society
PBIF	Pacific Biodiversity Information Forum
PDF-B	Project Development Facility - phase B
PEIN	Pacific Environmental Information Network
PICs	Pacific Island Countries
PICTs	Pacific Island Countries and Territories
PI-GCOS	Pacific Islands - Global Climate Observing System
PIGGAREP	Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project
PILN	Pacific Invasives Learning Network
PIREP	Pacific Islands Renewable Energy Project
PMER	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Report
PNG	Papua New Guinea
POP	Persistent Organic Pollutant
PRC	Pacific Regional Centre (for Training and Technology Transfer for the Joint Implementation of the Basel and Waigani Conventions)
RAF	Resource Allocation Framework (GEF)
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission - Solomon Islands
RE	Renewable Energy
RIF	Regional Institutional Framework
RMI	Republic of the Marshall Islands
RMSPF	Regional Marine Species Programme Framework
SAP	Strategic Action Programme
SGP	Small Grants Program
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SOE	State of Environment
SOPAC	South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SPREP	Pacific Regional Environment Programme; or: Secretariat of the ...; [no longer South Pacific]
SRIMP-PAC	Shipping-Related Introduced Marine Pests in the Pacific Islands
SWMP	Solid Waste Management Plan
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNF	United Nations Foundation
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNU	United Nations University
USA	United States of America
USCRTF	United States Coral Reef Task Force
WP	Working Paper
WSSD	World Summit for Sustainable Development
