

## **Agenda Item 7.1 : Implementing the Pacific Leaders Agenda Update on the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent implementation**

### **Purpose:**

1. To provide an update on 2050 Strategy implementation, with reference to CROP strategic priorities and coordination, Pacific Partnerships for Prosperity, and the review of the regional architecture.
2. To seek Members' endorsement of SPREP hosting the Pacific Climate Change Ministers Meeting.

### **Background:**

#### **2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent**

**Vision:** As Pacific Leaders, our vision is for a resilient Pacific Region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion and prosperity, that ensures all Pacific peoples can lead free, healthy and productive lives.

**Strategy Pathways:** Governance; Inclusion and Equity; Education, Research and Technology; Resilience and Wellbeing; and Partnership and Cooperation.

**Thematic areas:** Political Leadership and Regionalism; People-Centred Development; Peace and Security; Resource and Economic Development; Climate Change and Disasters; Ocean and Environment; and Technology and Connectivity

3. Recalling the key decisions of the 31<sup>st</sup> SPREP Meeting in 2023 on the 2050 Strategy, which:
  - a. Noted the Pacific Leaders Agenda Update; and
  - b. Noted the process for the out-of-session endorsement of the Implementation and Monitoring Plan for the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.
4. As per the guidance of the 31<sup>st</sup> SPREP Meeting, the Secretariat disseminated out of session the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan for endorsement of Members under Circular 23/92 dated 26 October 2023. No objections were received from Members.

5. The 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan was endorsed at the 52<sup>nd</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting held in the Cook Islands from 6 to 10 November 2023. Recalling the key decisions of the Communique on the 2050 Strategy:
  8. *Leaders reaffirmed the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent (2050 Strategy) as the region's long-term strategic policy document... Leaders further reaffirmed the importance of alignment to the 2050 Strategy across all sectors and partnerships to ensure effective regional cooperation.*
  10. *Leaders endorsed the Pacific Partnerships for Prosperity (PPfP) as a political prioritisation process to mobilise resources to empower Pacific people to bring about transformational change through national and regional development.*
  12. *Recognising the centrality of the regional system in the delivery of the 2050 Strategy and its implementation plan, Leaders discussed the Review of the Regional Architecture (RRA), noted the evolving synergies, and tasked the FOC to progress and conclude the RRA for consideration by Leaders at the 53<sup>rd</sup> Pacific Islands Forum.*
6. The 53<sup>rd</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting will be hosted by the Government of the Kingdom of Tonga from 26 to 30 August 2024 prior to the 4<sup>th</sup> SPREP Executive Board Meeting in September.

#### **2050 Strategy Implementation Plan 2023 - 2030**

7. The SPREP Strategic Plan 2017-2026 outlines key strategic priorities of Climate Change Resilience, Ecosystem and Biodiversity Protection, Waste Management and Pollution Control, and Environmental Governance. It also articulates that Climate Change is the principal concern of SPREP, and Oceans is a crosscutting theme of the work of the Secretariat. Implementation of Strategic Plan 2017-2026 supports the implementation of the 2050 Strategy.
8. Noting the above, the Secretariat co-leads with other CROP agencies relevant thematic areas (TA) in the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan<sup>1</sup>, as follows:
  - a. TA: Climate Change and Disasters – **SPREP leads Climate Change**
  - b. TA: Oceans and Environment – **SPREP leads Environment**
9. To complement the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan, the Secretariat, as part of the CROP Monitoring, Evaluation and learning (MEL) Working Group, has contributed to the development of the Baseline Report for the 2050 Strategy. The Report is currently in draft form and aims to present 'an overview of where the region is currently at compared to the goals set out in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific'.

---

<sup>1</sup> 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan 2023-2030. Phase I – 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. [https://forumsec.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/2050-Strategy-Implementation-Plan\\_2023-2030.pdf](https://forumsec.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/2050-Strategy-Implementation-Plan_2023-2030.pdf)

## **Pacific Partnerships for Prosperity (PPfP)**

10. Introduced by the Cook Islands, Chair of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting, the PPfP is a response to the call by Leaders for transformative outcomes with enduring impacts and as a mechanism for leveraging partnerships towards the achievement of the regional collective actions (RCAs) of the 2050 Strategy.
11. As noted in the 52<sup>nd</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting Communique the Leaders endorsed the PPfP that consists of 12 prioritised RCAs under the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan. With respect to SPREP the two relevant PPfP initiatives are 'Toward the Global Plastics Treaty' and 'Mobilising Resources for the Weather Ready Pacific Decadal Programme of Investment'. Both of these PPfP are reported on in Agenda Items 4: Action Taken on Matters Arising from the 31st SPREP Meeting, 5.2: Strategic outcomes from the 2022/2023 Performance Implementation Plan (PIP): High Level Summary Report and 8.5: Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution: INC-4 Outcomes and Preparations for INC-5.

## **Review of the Regional Architecture**

12. To support implementation of the 2050 Strategy of the Blue Pacific Continent, the Leaders requested a review of the regional architecture (RRA) in 2019 to ensure that it was fit for purpose. While the 2050 Strategy was being developed, in 2022 the Leaders expanded the scope and provided further guidance on what the RRA must consider:
  - a. **Political Settings:** including political groupings, leadership, collective interests and decision-making and sustained political will;
  - b. **Institutional Processes, Systems and Mechanisms:** including those supporting collective decision-making, actions and advocacy;
  - c. **Governance Mechanisms:** including those in place to support effective cooperation and coordination between the various regional entities, and their engagements with the Pacific Islands Forum; and
  - d. **Engagements and Partnerships:** to consider how the region interacts with international partners and stakeholders to progress the region's interests and priorities.
13. The endorsement of the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan in 2023 has helped inform the approach to the RRA. The phased approach has been outlined by the Pacific Islands Forum, and in summary, involves :
  - a. **Phase 1: Understanding the current regional environment and architecture**

Aims to articulate and consolidate an understanding of existing regional organisations, institutions, governance mechanisms and mandates, initiatives in place under each thematic area of the 2050 Strategy. *Completed.*

**b. Phase 2: Analysis**

Focused on the regional architecture that is needed to ensure the realisation of the vision of the 2050 Strategy, including the governance mechanisms needed to ensure continued political leadership and ownership of the 2050 Implementation Plan. The primary focus of Phase 2 is on reforming and clarifying regional governance decision-making platforms at the ministerial level and strengthening CROP coordination and collaboration across the thematic areas of the 2050 Strategy. *Phase 2 will be reported to the 53<sup>rd</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in 2024 by the Kingdom of Tonga.*

**c. Phase 3: Rationalisation of the Regional Architecture**

This will be informed by Phase 2 and will consider the further rationalisation of the regional architecture. The options from this Phase will inform Leaders' guidance on the way forward, and the relevant next steps. *Phase 3 will be reported to the 54<sup>th</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in 2025 to be hosted by the Solomon Islands.*

**d. Phase 4: Transition of the Regional Architecture**

This will focus on the transition of the regional architecture in line with the decision of Leaders on the options presented under Phase 3. *Phase 4 will be reported to the 55<sup>th</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in 2026.*

**Key issues for the consideration of Members:**

14. As noted above the Secretariat views there is close alignment of the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan thematic areas of Climate Change and Disasters, and Ocean and Environment with the current SPREP Strategic Plan, and this alignment will also be reflected in the next Strategic Plan of SPREP. The Secretariat will play a pivotal role with respect to leading and contributing to implementation of the systems outcomes and RCAs for both thematic areas.
15. The Secretariat has advocated that the 2050 thematic areas be supported and coordinated by CROP working groups. In principle it may allow for non-CROP membership, however the respective working group co-chairs be given the flexibility to determine what is best suited, upon the final consideration and approval of CROP Heads. A key principle behind CROP working groups is to ensure accountability in reporting to Members, and to enhance the working relationship, collegiality and collaboration between CROP agencies to support the aspirations of Members as outlined in the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan. The One CROP is an excellent example of CROP agencies led by SPREP that collaborate and coordinate to provide technical advice and support for Pacific island parties to the UNFCCC, as part of the negotiations process.
16. Noting the direction of Members the Secretariat will continue to be involved in the RRA process as part of the RRA Working Group, CROP Deputies and CROP Heads. It is also involved in the MEL working group that is providing input and coordination for the 2050 Strategy Baseline Report to ensure consistency across agencies for high-level outcomes reporting.

17. The RRA process has highlighted the importance of reviewing the CROP Charter, which was last revised and endorsed by Leaders in 2018. The CROP Charter provides the high-level direction, guidance and clarity on areas of responsibility, that are pertinent to a dynamic regional architecture being fit for purpose to implement the 2050 Strategy. The CROP Charters includes:
  - a. CROP Mandate
  - b. Role of CROP
  - c. Guiding Principles
  - d. CROP Membership
  - e. CROP Engagement with Regional Partners
  - f. Governance and Accountabilities
  - g. Communications
  - h. Review
  
18. As identified in the Phase 1 RRA Report there is no ministerial meeting on Climate Change. At the Senior Forum Officials Talanoa that was held on 8 to 9 April 2024 it was acknowledged that SPREP is the regional lead for climate change and should lead in addressing this gap. The Talanoa outcomes included recommending SPREP convene the Climate Change Ministers Meeting.
  
19. At present SPREP convenes biennially the Environment Ministers Meeting and Pacific Ministerial Meeting on Meteorology. The Pacific Community convenes the Disaster Risk Reduction Ministers Meeting which last met in 2022. As the lead on climate change, SPREP has the mandate and capacity to convene the Pacific Climate Change Ministers Meeting which may be held in the alternate year to the SPREP Environment Ministers Meeting. As Members may recall upon direction from the 31<sup>st</sup> SPREP Meeting, the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable reconvened in May 2024. The Pacific Climate Change Ministers Meeting may serve as a complementary component of the PCCR to jointly provide political oversight. The Secretariat intends to convene in October with the support of Australia the Pacific Climate Change Ministers Meeting, as part of regional preparations for COP29.
  
20. Phase 2 of the RRA is currently underway and will inform Phase 3: Rationalisation of the Regional Architecture for the consideration of Leaders in 2025. The Secretariat will highlight that SPREP is an independent organisation established under the SPREP agreement in 1993, with the mandate to *“promote cooperation in the South Pacific region and to provide assistance in order to protect and improve its environment and to ensure sustainable development for present and future generations.”* SPREP is also responsible for two regional Conventions for which it has obligations as the Secretariat:
  - a. Noumea Convention - Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region, Noumea (1986); and
  - b. Waigani Convention - Convention to Ban the Importation into Forum Island Countries of Hazardous and Radio Active Wastes and to Control the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Waste within the South Pacific Region, Waigani (1995)

21. The Secretariat is cognisant of earlier reviews conducted by request of Leaders including the Regional Integration Framework (RIF) which saw the merger of SOPAC and SPBEA under SPC and specific functions of SOPAC under SPREP, which came into effect in 2010. The process and cost of the extensive consultancies and consultations are embedded in the history of SPREP as outlined in the 19<sup>th</sup> SPREP Meeting (2008) working paper on the 'Regional Institutional Framework (RIF) Review'.
22. Noting Phase 3 of the RRA has yet to commence, the Secretariat is mindful of the SPREP Agreement (1993) in that there are only 2 organs of SPREP which are the SPREP Meeting the plenary body (Article 3.2) and the Secretariat (Article 1). Hence all decisions affecting SPREP as outlined in the SPREP Agreement must first be considered by the SPREP Meeting and through its 26 Members, as was evident throughout the RIF process, where the respective plenary bodies of SPC, SPREP and SOPAC duly considered, the matters accordingly. This is highlighted for the due consideration of Members on process.

### Recommendations

23. The Executive Board Meeting is invited to:
  - 1) **Note** the progress on the 2050 Strategy Implementation and Monitoring Plan 2023 - 2030;
  - 2) **Note** the update on the review of the regional architecture and acknowledge the Secretariat's continued engagement in this process;
  - 3) **Confirm** that SPREP is an independent intergovernmental organisation established under the SPREP Agreement and the SPREP Meeting is the plenary body responsible for its governance; and
  - 4) **Approve** SPREP convening the Pacific Climate Change Ministers Meeting.