



SPREP

Secretariat of the Pacific Regional
Environment Programme

Third Executive Board Meeting

REPORT

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SPREP Third Executive Board Meeting (3rd : 2022 : Apia, Samoa)

Report of the Third (3rd) SPREP Executive Board Meeting, 8–9 September 2022,
Apia, Samoa : SPREP, 2022.

18 p. + annexes ; 29 cm.

ISBN: 978-982-04-1193-7 (e-copy)

1. Environmental protection – Oceania – Congresses.
 2. Environmental policy – Oceania – Congresses.
 3. Conservation of natural resources – Oceania – Congresses.
- I. Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).
II. Title.

363.7099

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SPREP

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OUR VISION: *A resilient Pacific environment sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.*

INTRODUCTION	1
AGENDA ITEM 1 OPENING OF THE MEETING	1
AGENDA ITEM 2 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR	1
AGENDA ITEM 3 ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND WORKING PROCEDURES	2
AGENDA ITEM 4 ACTION TAKEN ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 30TH SPREP MEETING	2
AGENDA ITEM 5 OVERVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SECOND SPREP PERFORMANCE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2020–2021	3
5.1 Presentation of Annual Report for 2021 and DG’s overview of progress since the 30SM	3
5.2 PIP2 (2020–2021) Final Strategic Outcomes Achieved: High Level Summary Report	3
5.3 Covid-19 Impacts on SPREP 2021 and 2022 Work Programme and Secretariat Response	4
5.4 Audited Accounts 2021	4
AGENDA ITEM 6 GOVERNANCE, INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND MECHANISMS	5
6.1 Audit Committee Report	5
6.2 Report on Membership Contributions	5
6.3 Sustainable Financing	5
6.4 Working Group for the Prioritisation of Recommendations of the 3rd Independent Corporate Review (ICR) and the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the SPREP Strategic Plan	6
6.5 Review of the 2012 Staff Regulations	6
6.6 SPREP Director General’s Performance Assessment – closed session	7
AGENDA ITEM 7 INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT	8
7.1 UNEA 5.2 Strategic Outcomes	8
7.2 Support for Members negotiating the International Legally Binding Instrument on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction under the Law of the Sea	8
7.3 Ocean Related Events and Engagement	9
7.4 UNFCCC – COP 27	9
7.5 Update on the Pacific’s journey to CBD COP15 and next chapter	10
7.6 Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm COP Strategic Outcomes	10
AGENDA ITEM 8 REGIONAL COOPERATION AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS	11
8.1 Implementing the Pacific Leaders Agenda – includes the 2050 Strategy	11
8.2 Project for Capacity Building for Climate Resilience in the Pacific – Pacific Climate Change Centre (CBCRP-PCCC) and PCCC Post-2023 Capacity Building Proposal	11
8.3 Securing climate financing to build resilience to Climate Change in the Pacific Region	12
8.4 Enhancing Pacific Island Countries and Territories access and use of environmental data	13

AGENDA ITEM 9	STRATEGIC AND SUBSTANTIVE PROGRAMMATIC MATTERS	14
9.1	Regional Goal 1 Overview: Pacific people benefit from strengthened resilience to climate change	14
9.1.1	Pacific Youth and Women – Non state stakeholder engagement in the UNFCCC processes	14
9.2	Overview of Regional Goal 2 – Pacific people benefit from healthy and resilient island and ocean ecosystems	14
9.2.1	Sustainability Plan – SPREPs Programme of Support for Protected Areas	14
9.2.2	Regional Guidelines for The Effective Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol in the Pacific (Pacific Access and Benefit Sharing Guidelines)	15
9.3	Overview of Regional Goal 3: Pacific people benefit from improved waste management and pollution control	15
9.3.1	Asbestos Management in the Pacific region	16
9.4	Regional Goal 4: Pacific People and their environment benefit from commitment to best practice of environmental governance	16
9.4.1	Draft Guidance Note for Coastal Engineering Good Practice in Environmental Impact Assessment for Pacific Island Countries and Territories	16
AGENDA ITEM 10	CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF THE UPDATED PIP3 (2022–2023) ACTIVITIES, COUNTRY AND TERRITORY STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FRAMEWORK, AND SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET FOR 2023	17
10.1	Updated PIP3 (2022–2023) Final Activities and Country and Territories Strategic Partnership Framework (CTSPF)	17
10.2	Consideration and Approval of the 2022–2023 Biennial Work Programme and Budget – Supplementary Budget	17
AGENDA ITEM 11	OTHER BUSINESS	17
AGENDA ITEM 12	DATES OF THE 31ST SPREP MEETING	18
AGENDA ITEM 13	ADOPTION OF THE OUTCOMES OF THE THIRD EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING	18
AGENDA ITEM 14	CLOSING	
ANNEXES		19
ANNEX 1	List of participants	19
ANNEX 2	Welcome Remarks by SPREP Director General, Mr Sefanaia Nawadra	22
ANNEX 3	Keynote Address by Prime Minister of Samoa and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Hon. Fiame Naomi Mata’afa	24

INTRODUCTION

1. The Third Executive Board Meeting was held virtually on 8–9 September 2022 in Apia, Samoa.
2. Present at the meeting were representatives from Niue, Republic of Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, United Kingdom and Wallis and Futuna. Attending as Observers were Australia and Samoa. The full list of participants is attached as Annex 1.

AGENDA ITEM 1

OPENING OF THE MEETING

3. The Meeting opened with a prayer by Pastor Leota Kosi Latu of the Samoa Call to Prayer Ministry, and former Director General of SPREP.
4. The official opening ceremony was held on 8 September 2022. The welcome remarks from the Director General of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) Mr Sefanaia Nawadra is attached as Annex 2.
5. The keynote address to officially open the Third SPREP Executive Board meeting was delivered by the Prime Minister of Samoa Hon. Afioga Fiamē Naomi Mata’afa. The keynote address of the Hon. Prime Minister is attached as Annex 3.

AGENDA ITEM 2

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

6. The Terms of Reference of the Executive Board Meeting (WP2/Att.1), states that the Chair and Vice-Chair shall be chosen from the Troika as the current and incoming Chair respectively of the meeting.
7. Republic of the Marshall Islands supported the motion for the recommendation for Tonga as Chair and Tokelau, Vice Chair. The United Kingdom seconded the motion.
8. Tokelau, as the outgoing Chair commended the former Director General Mr Kosi Latu, and congratulated Tonga as the incoming Chair and Director General Mr Sefanaia Nawadra for their respective roles.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Confirmed** the Representative of Tonga as Chair; and
- 2) **Confirmed** the Representative of Tokelau as Vice-Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 3

ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND WORKING PROCEDURES

9. The Agenda and Working Procedures were presented for consideration.
10. The Chair proposed to move Agenda Item 6.6 to the last agenda item before the meeting adjourned on day one.
11. The Secretariat clarified the report of the SPREP Rapporteur team will be available before Agenda Item 13 in response to a query from Republic of the Marshall Islands.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Considered** and **adopted** the Provisional Agenda; and
- 2) **Agreed** on hours of work.

AGENDA ITEM 4

ACTION TAKEN ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 30TH SPREP MEETING

12. The Secretariat reported on actions taken against the decisions and directives from the 30th SPREP Meeting of Officials on the 7, 8 and 9 September 2021 including the Special SPREP Meeting of Officials on the 15th October 2021.
13. The Secretariat advised it will work with the Green Climate Fund in response to the concern raised by Republic of the Marshall Islands on behalf of Federated States of Micronesia that the Green Climate Fund (GCF) Readiness Project was not approved for 2022, urging the Secretariat to work with the GCF Board to expedite the process.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Noted** actions taken against the decisions and directives of the 30th SPREP Meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 5

OVERVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SECOND SPREP PERFORMANCE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2020–2021

AGENDA ITEM 5.1

Presentation of Annual Report for 2021 and DG's overview of progress since the 30SM

14. The Director-General presented the 2021 SPREP Annual Report and provided the Executive Board with an overview report on progress over the last year.
15. Republic of the Marshall Islands expressed appreciation to the Secretariat for their role at COP26 including support provided to the Pacific High-Level Champions further highlighting support provided to the Micronesia Challenge, the development of the Republic of Marshall Islands State of Environment Report, assistance towards addressing waste management and biodiversity issues.
16. Republic of the Marshall Islands, Tokelau, United Kingdom and the Chair expressed appreciation for the work undertaken by the former Director General Mr Kosi Latu. The Republic of the Marshall Islands also further noted Mr Latu's support to Marshall Islands and Micronesia.
17. Republic of the Marshall Islands, Tokelau, United Kingdom and the Chair extended appreciation towards the Director General, Members and the staff of the Secretariat for its hard work. United Kingdom further commended the work of the Director General and the Secretariat for its significant work achievements both at high, and grass root levels especially under difficult circumstances.
18. The Chair echoed support for a moment of silence during the presentation by the Director General for those that have passed in 2021.
19. Republic of the Marshall Islands supported the recommendation for the meeting to note the Director General's report, seconded by Tokelau.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Noted** the Director General's Report.

AGENDA ITEM 5.2

PIP2 (2020–2021) Final Strategic Outcomes Achieved: High Level Summary Report

20. The Secretariat reported on the PIP2 (2020-2021) final strategic outcomes achieved by strategic goals: High Level Summary, as well as the PIP2 (2020–2021) final strategic outcomes achieved; linked to actual expenditures in the AWPB 2020–2022.
21. The Secretariat also reported on emerging crosscutting issues during the implementation of PIP2 and lessons learnt.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Endorsed** the PIP2 (2020-2021) Final Strategic Achieved Outcomes Report with the actual expenditures of Work Programme and Budget 2020–2021;
- 2) **Noted** the Secretariat responses and actions on cross-cutting issues and lesson learnt in the implementation of PIP2.

AGENDA ITEM 5.3

Covid-19 Impacts on SPREP 2021 and 2022 Work Programme and Secretariat Response

22. The Secretariat provided an update of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of SPREP programmes and projects in 2021 and 2022 and its response to ensure that the work programme and budget delivery was maintained to the highest possible level.
23. Solomon Islands acknowledged the excellent work of the Secretariat to continue work during the challenging time of the pandemic and supports the proposed recommendations, in particular recommendation four noting the strengthening of in country presence through projects already under way.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Noted** the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the SPREP 2021 work programme, and the continuing implications on the 2022 programme delivery;
- 2) **Noted** the responses of the Secretariat to ensuring the services of the Secretariat to Members continue amidst the challenges posed by COVID-19; and
- 3) **Noted** the opportunities provided in these responses to further strengthen the resilience of the Secretariat and Members.
- 4) **Supported** the Secretariat to strengthen in-country presence.

AGENDA ITEM 5.4

Audited Accounts 2021

24. In accordance with Financial Regulation 27 (e), the Secretariat presented its Audited Annual Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2021, prepared in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), and advised the auditors had provided an unqualified opinion of the Secretariat's financial statements for 2021.
25. United Kingdom congratulated the Secretariat for its significant achievement under difficult circumstances over the last two years, noting its preference to grow its reserves. United Kingdom acknowledged that further risks remain and concurs with the Secretariat's preference to increase reserves yet noted the work that has occurred provides the sound foundation for significant decisions to take place in the year ahead regarding the funding structure of the Secretariat.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Reviewed** and **adopted** the audited Financial Statements and Auditors' Report for 2021.

AGENDA ITEM 6

GOVERNANCE, INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND MECHANISMS

AGENDA ITEM 6.1

Audit Committee Report

26. The representative of the SPREP Audit Committee, Samoa presented an overview report of the Committee's work over the period from 1 August 2021 to 31 July 2022.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Noted** and approved the report of the Audit Committee for the period August 2021–July 2022.
- 2) **Noted** the reserve position though improved in 2021 when compared to 2020, is still at a critical level.
- 3) **Requested** members to update their outstanding membership contributions and grateful for provision of any extra voluntary contributions in support of their Secretariat.
- 4) **Recorded** its appreciation for the cooperation and support it has received from the Director-General, management, and staff of SPREP over the past 12 months.

AGENDA ITEM 6.2

Report on Membership Contributions

27. In accordance with Financial Regulation 14, the Secretariat reported to the Meeting on the status of Members' contributions as of 31 December 2021 as audited, as well as a brief update on the status of membership contributions as at 31 August 2022.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Considered** the report and addressed the issue of outstanding member contributions; and
- 2) **Committed** itself collectively and individually to paying current and outstanding contributions in full in 2022.

AGENDA ITEM 6.3

Sustainable Financing

28. The Secretariat presented an update on actions taken to continue addressing core budget pressures particularly for 2022 in light of continuing impacts of COVID-19. It also sought guidance from the Executive Board Meeting on options and actions to address sustainable financing for the long-term financial resilience of SPREP.

29. United Kingdom noted further work is required for the sustainable financing of the Secretariat highlighting the importance of awaiting guidance from the Independent Corporate Review/Mid-Term Review Working Group.

30. United Kingdom further urged the Secretariat to maintain maximum transparency with Members while awaiting recommendations of the Working Group in particular the financial commitments including the establishment of regional and sub-regional offices to help Members fully understand commitment and level of financing needed for the sustainability of the Secretariat.

- 31.** Republic of the Marshall Islands further presented comments on behalf of Federated States of Micronesia noting that although the Secretariat has demonstrated that is on track with Member contributions, it looks forwards to the work of the independent consultant and hope that this work will take into consideration Members that are struggling due to the impacts of COVID-19 upon national budgets.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) Noted** the update report.
- 2) Agreed** to await further update and guidance from the Working Group established in the 30th SPREP meeting to discuss the recommendations of the Independent Corporate Review/Mid-Term Review and Remuneration review reports particularly those which relate to Financial Sustainability of SPREP; and
- 3) Committed** to consider and support the review of the core funding percentage of membership contributions and donor funds through an independent consultancy to be undertaken to determine an appropriate Finance and Resource Sustainability Strategy for SPREP to be tabled and endorsed by members in the 31st SPREP meeting in 2023.

AGENDA ITEM 6.4

Working Group for the Prioritisation of Recommendations of the 3rd Independent Corporate Review (ICR) and the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the SPREP Strategic Plan

- 32.** New Zealand presented on behalf of the Working Group and updated Members on progress made which included the Prioritisation of Recommendations of the Third Independent Corporate Review and the Mid-Term Review of the SPREP Strategic Plan. It further noted that the Working Group will consider the recommendations of the Remuneration Review upon completion of its work on the recommendations of the ICR and MTR.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) Noted** the progress of the Working Group in regard the prioritisation of the ICR and MTR recommendations;
- 2) Endorsed** that more time is required for the Working Group to complete all its deliverables;
- 3) Endorsed** that the Working Group report on the priority recommendations and Key Focus Areas be submitted in an out-of-cycle paper to the full SPREP Membership, by the first quarter of 2023.

AGENDA ITEM 6.5

Review of the 2012 Staff Regulations

- 33.** The Secretariat presented an update on the progress of the review of the 2012 Staff Regulations and noted that the substantive overarching principles that govern staff terms and conditions remained outstanding pending the outcomes of the recent Remuneration Review currently being considered by the Members Working Group on the Independent Corporate Review of SPREP and the Mid-Term Review of the SPREP Strategic Plan 2017–2026. It further noted that decisions on these matters will impact on the review of the Staff Regulations.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) Noted** the progress of the 2012 Staff Regulations Review.

AGENDA ITEM 6.6

SPREP Director General's Performance Assessment – closed session

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Noted** and endorsed the proposed way forward by the Troika that for this year, the focus will be on finalising the Director General's performance development plan for 2022/2023. No review is required.
- 2) **Invited** all Members through a circular to propose relevant and appropriate specific targets they wish to be included in the Director General's plan by the end of September 2022. The Troika will then discuss and finalise with the Director General his PDP targets by the end of October 2022.

AGENDA ITEM 7

INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

AGENDA ITEM 7.1

UNEA 5.2 Strategic Outcomes

34. The Secretariat reported on the outcomes of the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA5.2) which was convened in person and online on the 28 February to 2 March 2022 in Nairobi, Kenya.
35. Republic of the Marshall Islands acknowledged Federated States of Micronesia and Fiji for their participation and representation of the Pacific at UNEA 5.2 and thanked Australia for its support for the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC1) for a new global agreement on the full life cycle of plastic.
36. United Kingdom on behalf of Metropolitan Members welcomed the outcomes of UNEA 5.2 and the move towards a new global treaty on plastic pollution.
37. United Kingdom on behalf of Australia, conveyed Australia's appreciation of its partnership with the Secretariat in the recent Pacific preparatory workshop for the INC1 on the Global Treaty on Plastic Pollution in Fiji and further noted Australia's support in enabling the participation of the Pacific in the INC process.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Acknowledged** with appreciation the leadership, support and effort by Members (Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, France, New Zealand, Palau, Samoa, Tuvalu, United States of America, United Kingdom) as well as Civil Societies and NGOs particularly the Centre of International Law (CIEL), Environment Investigation Agency (EIA), Massey University, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the University of Newcastle;
- 2) **Reaffirmed** our commitment as SPREP Members to the INC process to negotiate a global legally binding treaty to address plastic pollution;
- 3) **Acknowledged** the financial support from the Government of Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to support the engagement of Members in the INC process; and
- 4) **Requested** the Secretariat to assist and support to Members towards achieving the commitments made at UNEA5.2.

AGENDA ITEM 7.2

Support for Members negotiating the International Legally Binding Instrument on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction under the Law of the Sea

38. The Secretariat presented an update on SPREP support for Members negotiating the international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ).
39. United Kingdom recognised the importance of the Treaty and the hard work undertaken, noting its disappointment that the text has not yet been finalised.
40. Republic of the Marshall Islands extended its appreciation to the Chair of the Pacific Small Islands Developing States for its leadership and support in the negotiations.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Noted** SPREP long-standing and continuing support for BBNJ negotiators and the key issues for the region in the latest draft.
- 2) **Noted** the key updates in the negotiation process.
- 3) **Endorsed** SPREP continued engagement to support Members in the BBNJ negotiations.

AGENDA ITEM 7.3

Ocean Related Events and Engagement

41. The Secretariat provided an update on ocean related events and engagement relevant to the SPREP Strategic Plan 2017–2026, which has an overarching ocean focus across all areas SPREP’s work.
42. United Kingdom congratulated the Secretariat for its strong engagement at the Ocean events, further acknowledging the support to Members from the Secretariat which has led to a strong Pacific voice.
43. Republic of the Marshall Islands as a Large Ocean State is committed to promoting and advocating the objectives of Pacific Ocean Scape Framework and the Blue Pacific. It further acknowledged Palau for its excellent hosting of the Our Ocean Conference.
44. The Secretariat clarified its ocean work is guided by Members noting our ocean is a priority and an overarching issue that all programmes address further stating it continues to welcome advice from Members on how to strengthen the focus of our ocean activities, in response to a query from Solomon Islands as to whether the Secretariat needs to have a defined and sharpened efforts in its engagement in global ocean events and related forums.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Noted** the work of the Secretariat on Oceans which is an overarching priority of the SPREP Strategic Plan 2017–2026; and
- 2) **Encouraged** Members to work together with the Secretariat on strategic engagement on global ocean events to amplify Pacific voices and priorities.

AGENDA ITEM 7.4

UNFCCC – COP 27

45. The Secretariat provided an update of the progress of preparations by SPREP in support of Pacific Small Islands Developing States (PSIDS) that are Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) in their preparations for the Twenty Seventh Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP27) in Sharm El-Sheik, Egypt in November 2022 including the preparatory phase in the lead up to COP27, 2022.
46. Republic of the Marshall Islands acknowledged the support from New Zealand to the region for promoting our Pacific issues at the COP, in particular the Moana Blue Pacific at COP26 and the Pacific High-Level Champion work led by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. Republic of the Marshall Islands further commended the support from United Kingdom to the Pacific Islands in the lead up, at and after COP26.
47. The Secretariat clarified it has circulated information regarding accommodation options for those attending COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt following the Pacific Small Islands Developing States (PSIDS) Heads of Delegation Meeting in response to a query from Republic of Marshall Islands regarding accommodation options.

48. The Secretariat informed the meeting that the request for a nominee for the Pacific High-Level Champion will be circulated in due course.
49. The Chair acknowledged support from Australia on the journey to COP27.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Noted** the progress of preparations by SPREP and One CROP+ in the lead up to the UNFCCC COP27.

AGENDA ITEM 7.5

Update on the Pacific's journey to CBD COP15 and next chapter

50. The Secretariat reported on preparations leading up to the Fifteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP15) meeting in Montreal, Canada from 5–17 December 2022 for which the Pacific and the Secretariat will be attending in person.
51. United Kingdom on behalf of the Metropolitan Members welcomed the assistance from the Secretariat to identify the Pacific priorities, and areas of convergence, where all can work together as one Pacific Voice.
52. Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Chair commended Palau for its representation of the Pacific in the technical meetings leading up to the CBD COP15.
53. The Director General stressed the importance of high-level Pacific participation and engagement at the CBD COP15 to help ensure a Global Biodiversity Framework is endorsed.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Noted** the progress in preparation for the CBD COP15;
- 2) **Proposed** ways in which the Secretariat can support countries to implement the Global Biodiversity Framework;
- 3) **Directed** the Secretariat to continue to support countries in developing and/or reviewing National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plans; and implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework

AGENDA ITEM 7.6

Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm COP Strategic Outcomes

54. The Secretariat informed the Meeting of the outcomes of the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention, the 10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention and the 10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention (BRS).

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Encouraged** Members that are Parties to the BRS Conventions to attend future COPs and related meetings to amplify Pacific voices and priority needs;
- 2) **Noted** with appreciation the support from Australia, New Zealand and NGOs
- 3) **Reaffirmed** our commitment as SPREP Members to meeting our obligations to the BRS Conventions in making our region safe from the impacts of chemicals and hazardous wastes; and
- 4) **Requested** the Secretariat to work with Members to ensure the commitments made at the COPs are achieved.

AGENDA ITEM 8

REGIONAL COOPERATION AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

AGENDA ITEM 8.1

Implementing the Pacific Leaders Agenda – includes the 2050 Strategy

55. The Secretariat presented an update of its contribution to the coordinated efforts of the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) to implement the Pacific Leaders Agenda and acknowledged the endorsement by Leaders of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent at the 51st Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting and the ongoing activities for the implementation of the 2050 Strategy.
56. The Director General confirmed the Secretariat will explore ways for the European Union to engage at SPREP Meetings, as requested by the United Kingdom on behalf of Metropolitan Members and further supported by the Chair with an additional recommendation to this Agenda Item.
57. United Kingdom on behalf of the Metropolitan Members further supported work by the Secretariat to maximise use and benefits of the Pacific Climate Change Centre and the complementary work across the CROP.
58. The Director General confirmed the Secretariat is part of the work undertaken by the CROP Taskforce for Nuclear Legacy Issues led by Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat with an updated report presented at the Leaders Meeting. This was in response to a query raised by Republic of the Marshall Islands on the next steps regarding work undertaken on nuclear legacy.
59. The Director General further clarified these issues can also be raised at the International Maritime Organisation level through the London Dumping Convention and requested Members do so through this mechanism.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Noted** the 2021 CROP Annual Report to Pacific Islands Forum Leaders.
- 2) **Noted** the endorsement of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent by the 51st Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in Suva, Fiji.
- 3) **Endorsed** the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and the Secretariat's ongoing engagement in the implementation of the Leaders decisions including the implementation of the 2050 Strategy.
- 4) **Requested** the Secretariat consider arrangements for engagement of the European Union and other key partners at SPREP Meetings.

AGENDA ITEM 8.2

Project for Capacity Building for Climate Resilience in the Pacific – Pacific Climate Change Centre (CBCRP-PCCC) and PCCC Post-2023 Capacity Building Proposal

60. The Secretariat presented the outcomes of the Project for Capacity Building for Climate Resilience in the Pacific – Pacific Climate Change Centre (CBCRP-PCCC 2019–2023) and PCCC Post-2023 Capacity Building Proposal noting the successful approval of the proposal by the Government of Japan in April 2022.
61. Republic of the Marshall Islands expressed appreciation towards the Pacific Climate Change Centre for its support in seeking resources for national work.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) Noted** the outcomes produced by the CBCRP-PCCC and the project is on track towards achieving its expected outcomes by January 2023; and
- 2) Noted** the approval of the post-2023 project in April 2022 by the Government of Japan and acknowledged with appreciation the continuous partnership with the Government of Samoa and the Government of Japan.
- 3) Acknowledged** with gratitude the Government of Japan, Government of Samoa, Government of New Zealand and the Government of Ireland for their support to the Pacific Climate Change Centre.

AGENDA ITEM 8.3

Securing climate financing to build resilience to Climate Change in the Pacific Region

- 62.** The Secretariat presented an update on progress against climate financing opportunities highlighting the ongoing challenges and gaps for Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) in accessing climate financing to meet climate change priorities.
- 63.** Republic of the Marshall Islands on behalf of Federated States of Micronesia congratulated the Secretariat for its accreditation under the Adaptation Fund (AF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) further noting SPREP needs to capitalise and upscale institutional, systematic and individual capacities to support Members in accessing funds.
- 64.** Wallis and Futuna supported the point raised by Federated States of Micronesia further noting their concern that if funds are not made available then Members cannot benefit from the projects.
- 65.** United Kingdom welcomed increased commitments to Climate Financing in the past year, and further expressed its concern that these funds are available, and used appropriately. United Kingdom supports the Secretariat work to bridge the climate finance gap.
- 66.** Republic of Marshall Islands noted it is developing its National Adaptation Plan, in tandem with an assessment on financial needs for adaptation with the World Bank highlighting preliminary reports state between 9–13 billion must be raised.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) Noted** the update on progress in accessing climate financing through the UNFCCC funding mechanisms.
- 2) Noted** the ongoing and emerging challenges and gaps for SPREP Member countries in accessing climate financing through the UNFCCC funding mechanisms.
- 3) Endorsed** the approach to highlight the challenges and barriers to accessing funding with the GCF and AF Boards.
- 4) Approved** the proposed SPREP approach “Bridging the gap between adaptation priorities and climate financing in the Pacific Region, (WP.8.3/Att.1)” exploring options to bridge the gap between adaptation needs and adaptation financing.

AGENDA ITEM 8.4

Enhancing Pacific Island Countries and Territories access and use of environmental data

67. The Secretariat provide an update on the development of the Pacific Environmental Data project proposal following the successful implementation of the Inform Project.
68. Niue, Republic of the Marshall Islands and Solomon Islands acknowledged the support of the Inform Project and the significant role data played in developing national reports. Republic of the Marshall Islands further confirmed it is allocating GEF 8 STAR funds towards a second stage of the project. Solomon Islands confirmed it is exploring the possibility of allocating portions of the GEF 8 STAR funds towards the next phase of the project. Niue confirmed its GEF Star 8 funds be allocated to the second phase of this project further recommending for the proposal to be presented to the GEF OFF's.
69. Niue, Republic of the Marshall Islands and Solomon Islands commended the Secretariat for its excellent work in supporting Members through the Inform project.
70. The Secretariat confirmed the services delivered by the Inform Project to Members will continue at a reduced scale upon completion of the Inform Project in December in response to a query from Republic of the Marshall Islands as to how support will continue upon completion of the project. The Secretariat further clarified work will continue to develop the next phase of the Inform Project.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Supported** the proposed Pacific Environmental Data project concept that will scale up the outcomes and results of the Inform Project
- 2) **Urged** Members to continue to promote and use the national environmental data portals and national processes established over the past four years; and
- 3) **Endorsed** the contribution of a portion of Member countries' national GEF 8 STAR (Global Environment Facility System for Transparent Allocation of Resources) allocation to support the implementation of the proposed Pacific Environmental Data Project.

AGENDA ITEM 9

STRATEGIC AND SUBSTANTIVE PROGRAMMATIC MATTERS

AGENDA ITEM 9.1

Regional Goal 1 Overview: Pacific people benefit from strengthened resilience to climate change

71. The Secretariat provided an overview of key priorities to support the implementation and achievement of Regional Goal 1 for the biennial period 2022–2023

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) Noted** the update on implementation of Regional Goal 1 activities for the biennial period 2022 to 2023.

AGENDA ITEM 9.1.1

Pacific Youth and Women – Non state stakeholder engagement in the UNFCCC processes

72. The Secretariat presented an update on the Secretariat’s support to youth and women -non state actors’ engagement in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process and further sought endorsement of the Meeting for the Secretariat to collaborate with partners to engage more youth and women of the Pacific in the UNFCCC processes.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) Endorsed** the collaboration with partners to engage youth, and women in the UNFCCC processes and Twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties (COP) 27.

AGENDA ITEM 9.2

Overview of Regional Goal 2 – Pacific people benefit from healthy and resilient island and ocean ecosystems

73. The Secretariat provided an overview on the implementation of Regional Goal 2 for the biennial period 2022–2023.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) Noted** the update on implementation Regional Goal 2 activities for the biennial period 2022 to 2023.

AGENDA ITEM 9.2.1

Sustainability Plan – SPREPs Programme of Support for Protected Areas

74. The Secretariat presented the Sustainability Plan for SPREP’s Programme of Support for Protected Areas and sought endorsement of the Plan and its implementation.

75. Republic of the Marshall Islands extended appreciation to the Secretariat for its work in Protected Areas including support for the Micronesia Challenge and the inclusive approach undertaken.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) Endorsed** the Sustainability Plan for SPREPs Programme of Support for Protected Areas (SPREP-PA);
- 2) Encouraged** Members and Partners to commit to, and support the implementation of the Plan;
- 3) Directed** the Secretariat to prioritise donor engagement to encourage support to allow for the continued operation of SPREP-PA and implementation of the sustainability plan; and
- 4) Directed** the Secretariat to support implementation of the Plan by Members.

AGENDA ITEM 9.2.2

Regional Guidelines for The Effective Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol in the Pacific (Pacific Access and Benefit Sharing Guidelines)

- 76.** The Secretariat presented on the Regional Guidelines for the Effective Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol in the Pacific (Pacific Access and Benefit Sharing Guidelines) and sought endorsement of the Guidelines.
- 77.** The Secretariat confirmed that support for a continuation of the Pacific Nagoya Protocol Project through the UN Environment Programme was unsuccessful in response to a query from Republic of Marshall Islands on whether there would be a continuation of the project. The Secretariat further clarified that at the Fourteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP14) Parties were encouraged to use own funding through their GEF STAR (Global Environment Facility System for Transparent Allocation of Resources) Projects. While attempts were made to fund a phase 2 of the Nagoya Protocol project, the Secretariat advised for such discussion to be included in the resource mobilisation session of the CBD COP15, and at the Pacific preparatory meeting.
- 78.** The Republic of the Marshall Islands proposed the Secretariat explore possibilities with Members through the GEF STAR 8, as the Inform Project has done to finance its phase two.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) Endorsed** the Pacific Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) Guidelines and support its implementation

AGENDA ITEM 9.3

Overview of Regional Goal 3: Pacific people benefit from improved waste management and pollution control

- 79.** The Secretariat provided an overview of key priorities to support the implementation and achievement of Regional Goal 3 for the biennial period 2022–2023.
- 80.** United Kingdom commended all the reports presented thus far, on the Regional Goals from the Secretariat, putting on record its commendation of the Secretariat for its work.
- 81.** Solomon Islands expressed its appreciation for support provided from the Secretariat, requesting to include work undertaken for waste management at the local level in future work programmes.
- 82.** Solomon Islands acknowledged the work of the Secretariat is driven by the needs of the region noting that the same is relevant under the INC for the global treaty on plastic pollution and support to the Pacific from the Secretariat on this issue must continue.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) Noted** the update on implementation Regional Goal 3 activities for the biennial period 2022 to 2023.

AGENDA ITEM 9.3.1

Asbestos Management in the Pacific region

83. The Secretariat provided an overview of the management of asbestos in the Pacific region and sought the commitment of Members to strengthen asbestos management.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Supported** the implementation of a Model Asbestos Management Policy and Model Code of Practice for Asbestos Management; the delivery of training for government officials on asbestos management; and the dissemination of awareness and education materials to assist communities to reduce adverse impacts and disease from legacy asbestos and asbestos containing materials.

AGENDA ITEM 9.4

Regional Goal 4: Pacific People and their environment benefit from commitment to best practice of environmental governance

84. The Secretariat presented an update on the implementation of Regional Goal 4 for the biennial period 2022–2023 including challenges and opportunities.

85. Niue and Republic of Marshall Islands commended the Secretariat for its work. Niue further extended apologies for its absence at certain opportunities such as trainings and looks forward to expanding upon this in the future.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Noted** the update on the implementation of Regional Goal 4 for this period of 2022–2023.

AGENDA ITEM 9.4.1

Draft Guidance Note for Coastal Engineering Good Practice in Environmental Impact Assessment for Pacific Island Countries and Territories

86. The Secretariat presented on the Guidance Note for Coastal Engineering Good Practice in Environmental Impact Assessment for Pacific Island Countries and Territories and its use as a planning tool to systematically evaluate the environmental coastal engineering projects; and sought endorsement of the Guidance Note.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Approved** the Regional Guidance Note on Coastal Engineering Good Practice in Environmental Impact Assessment for Pacific Island Countries and Territories; and
- 2) **Urged** Members to promote and use the approved Guidance note as a planning tool to systematically evaluate the environmental coastal engineering projects.

AGENDA ITEM 10

CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF THE UPDATED PIP3 (2022–2023) ACTIVITIES, COUNTRY AND TERRITORY STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FRAMEWORK, AND SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET FOR 2023

AGENDA ITEM 10.1

Updated PIP3 (2022–2023) Final Activities and Country and Territories Strategic Partnership Framework (CTSPF)

87. The Secretariat presented the updated PIP3 (2022–2023) and progress in developing Country and Territories Strategic Partnership Framework (CTSPF) 2022–2023.
88. Republic of the Marshall Islands on behalf of Micronesia commended the work of the Secretariat noting further work in developing further its CTSPF following the period of closed borders across Micronesia due to COVID-19.

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Endorsed** the updated PIP3 (2022–2023) activities.
- 2) **Noted** the CTSPF 2022–2023 update.

AGENDA ITEM 10.2

Consideration and Approval of the 2022–2023 Biennial Work Programme and Budget – Supplementary Budget

89. The Secretariat presented the 2023 Supplementary Work Programme and Budget for the Biennial Work Programme and Budget for 2022–2023.

The Executive Board:

- 1) **Considered** and **approved** the proposed Supplementary Work Programme and Budget of USD\$36,548,949 for 2023. The provisional budget for 2023 as approved last year at the 30SM was USD\$23,731,883.

AGENDA ITEM 11

OTHER BUSINESS

90. The Chair opened the floor for any other business to be tabled.
91. No matters were raised under this agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM 12

DATES OF THE 31ST SPREP MEETING

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Agreed** to convene the Thirty-first SPREP Meeting in Apia, Samoa. The time and date to be announced in due course.

AGENDA ITEM 13

ADOPTION OF THE OUTCOMES OF THE THIRD EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

The Executive Board Meeting:

- 1) **Adopted** the agreed outcomes of the 3rd Executive Board Meeting.
- 2) **Noted** that the draft full record of the 3rd Executive Board Meeting will be circulated to Members for consideration no later than two weeks following the closing of the Meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 14

CLOSING

92. The Chair opened the floor for any final comments.
93. Republic of Marshall Islands, on behalf of Micronesia, and Niue thanked the Chair, the Secretariat, fellow Members and partners for the work done during these challenging times.
94. The Director General expressed gratitude to the Chair for leading the Meeting, instilling in all delegates the feeling of family throughout the Meeting.
95. Wallis and Futuna, on behalf of the three French Overseas Countries and Territories of the Pacific, would like to congratulate the Secretariat for a successful meeting, in particular its efforts to enable French-speaking Members to benefit from projects, and capacity-building opportunities.
96. The Chair closed the meeting extending appreciation for the work of the Director General, Secretariat, Members and Partners for the support and hard work for a successful meeting.
97. The Chair closed the meeting with a prayer.
98. The Third Executive Board Meeting was formally closed at 5.15pm Samoa local time.

ANNEX 1

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Third Executive Board Meeting – Virtual 8–9 September 2022

TROIKA

Tonga (Incoming Chair)

1 Mr Paula Ma'u

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Tokelau (Outgoing Chair)

3 Mr Mika Perez

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4 Ms Ake Puka-Mauga

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5 Dr. Melchoir Mataka

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ROTATIONAL SUB-REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

FRENCH MEMBER

Wallis et Futuna

6 Mrs. Laurianne Tatau Verger

Member of the Development, Economic Affairs, and Tourism Commission of the Territorial Assembly

Territorial Assembly of Wallis & Futuna

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7 Mr Ayméric Kolokilagi

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8 Mr Thomas LABRUNE

Deputy Secretary General

Chief of the State administration service

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MELANESIA

Papua New Guinea

Not present at the meeting.

MICRONESIA

Marshall Islands

9 Mr Warwick Harris

Deputy Director, Climate Change Directorate

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Republic of the Marshall Islands

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Nauru

Advised not available on the dates of the meeting.
Awaiting further reconfirmation.

POLYNESIA

Niue

10 Mr Haden Talagi

Director of Environment

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METROPOLITAN

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OBSERVERS

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12 Mr Dominic Ransan-Cooper

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INVITED SPEAKERS FOR SPECIFIC AGENDA ITEMS

On behalf of the Audit Committee (WP 6.1)

17 Ms Rosalini Moli

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On behalf of the ICR/MTR WG (WP 6.4)

18 Ms Caitlin Goggin

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19 Ms Sarndra Hamilton

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ANNEX 2

WELCOME REMARKS BY SPREP DIRECTOR GENERAL, MR SEFANAIA NAWADRA

Ni sa bula vinaka!

I want to start by acknowledging the very inspirational devotion by Pastor Kosi Latu, whom many of you might not know but has been a Pastor for a very long time. I agree that there are some things in life where despite our best efforts, we have our limitations and we need help and divine intervention.

I also want to thank Prime Minister Hon. Fiame Naomi Mata'afa for her opening remarks. I congratulate Samoa on her 60th independence anniversary and thank Samoa for the continued support to SPREP. Prime Minister Fiame's comments about the 'lived reality' of climate change in the Pacific is a familiar story for all of us. It has set the tone for our work in the next two days as we work towards a more resilient Pacific. This being my first Executive Board Meeting as the Director General of SPREP, I want to welcome you all. I thank our members for your confidence in me and your support over the last five months.

Although these are very challenging times especially with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, I want to say that these are also exciting times. There are a lot of challenges before us but there are also a lot of opportunities and I look forward to working with members for the rest of my term as the Director General to ensure these opportunities benefit our Pacific people.

We do not work in isolation. In our efforts to fulfil our vision of "a resilient Pacific environment, sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures", we are extremely grateful to our valued Members, development partners, donors and all stakeholders.

Let me say thank you to all our members for their continued commitment and support of SPREP, especially their timely member contributions. I acknowledge the longstanding support of the Governments of Australia and New Zealand through their continued multiyear funding support towards SPREP's core budget, which enables SPREP to deliver services and support to Members. We welcome the AUD10m funding support from the Government of Australia to support the PCCC and UNFCCC negotiations. This support from Australia will strengthen the engagement of Pacific Island Countries and amplify Pacific voices at COP negotiation processes.

I note the request from the European Union, our largest donor partner, to attend as an observer and the need for us as a full membership to review the Rules and Procedures for the Executive Board. In that light, EU and other partners had informally raised that they were interested in being more than just observers and suggested the possibility of looking at what Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat does with their special dialogue partner. This is an important matter for us to consider.

I also want to note SPREP's reaccreditation to the Green Climate Fund, which includes conditions for the Secretariat to address. The challenges and barriers faced by Pacific countries to effectively access climate finance to address climate change priorities is not a secret. Our Members have constantly asked that we raise these with the funding mechanisms and through relevant forums such as at UNFCCC COP processes.

The 2050 Strategy has been endorsed by our Pacific Leaders. This requires a concerted and collective commitment to implement the priorities articulated in the 2050 Strategy. The review of the regional architecture reinforces the mandate and role of SPREP as the premier regional environment organisation

in addressing environmental threats and impacts of climate change facing our region. This presents other opportunities for us to advance our work.

I am looking forward to our discussion in the next two days. We have an opportunity to review the efforts of the Secretariat in our ongoing pursuit to meet our mandate through the delivery of our Strategic Plan and support to our members to effectively engage internationally and in their efforts to meet their national obligations.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge the outgoing Chair for your leadership. I also want to thank all our staff members for their perseverance and commitment to ensure the services to Members continued amidst the challenges of COVID-19.

Vinaka vaka levu!

ANNEX 3

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY PRIME MINISTER OF SAMOA AND MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE, HON. FIAME NAOMI MATA'AFU

*Excellencies,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,*

I welcome you all to your Third SPREP Executive Board Meeting, held virtually for the second time. In particular, I extend warm greetings and acknowledgement to:

- the incoming Chair for 2022, the Kingdom of Tonga and Troika Members, Tokelau and the Solomon Islands;
- Executive Board Members;
- SPREP members and partner countries and agencies as Observers to this meeting; and
- the Director General of SPREP and Secretariat staff.

Director-General – with more than 30 years of experience in the field of environment and sustainable development in our Blue Pacific region and beyond, as well as in international organisations, you are no stranger to the work of SPREP and our regional organisations as well as the development aspirations and priorities of our Member countries. I extend to you again warm congratulations on your appointment as the Director General of our organisation and we look forward to working very closely with you during your tenure.

The social, economic and development costs of the pandemic coupled with the current climate emergency are still being felt acutely by many of our Member countries. I am deeply grateful for the timely responses and assistance provided by SPREP, as well as our regional organisations and development partners, to support our Pacific countries' efforts in addressing the dual crises of the pandemic and climate change. Despite the limitations and challenges that we have faced, I am very pleased to note that these have not diminished our commitment and obligation to addressing and supporting the needs of our Pacific peoples and region. To further advance our recovery efforts, we need to strengthen our resilience, and by extension, our participation as full partners in the determination of priorities, context and decisions being made for our own future.

The work of SPREP reflects the multi-faceted nature of our Blue Pacific region's work and priorities. But it also attests to the fact that the complexity and multitude of challenges that we face cannot be addressed by any one organisation or country alone. Your meeting as the Executive Board of our organisation provides you the opportunity to discuss issues that affect sustainable development, resilience and our joint regional efforts and cooperation to protect and conserve the environment. Your dialogue with the Secretariat will help inform and shape our shared priorities and mutual goals, to be met through robust and genuine partnerships

I wish to recall that our Leaders have reconfirmed that climate change remains the single greatest existential threat facing the Blue Pacific. Leaders have also declared that the Pacific is facing a Climate Emergency that threatens the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of its people and ecosystems, backed by the latest science and the daily lived realities in Pacific communities. Our region's priorities for COP27 have been considered by Leaders and we look forward to SPREP's and our CROP agencies' support

for our preparations and strategic engagement at COP27. In acknowledging the third anniversary of the Pacific Climate Change Centre, we look forward to continuing and successful efforts to further enhance our capacities through knowledge, training, networking and research to ensure Pacific-tailored solutions to address our adaptation needs and mitigation priorities.

Our region's work and leadership on ocean governance must continue unhindered. I commend our Members' concerted efforts to preserve and protect our greatest natural resource including support for the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and banning the use of single-use plastic bags, plastic and polystyrene packaging. I referred earlier to the daily 'lived realities in Pacific communities', and we know that failure to address waste management and pollution will have profound and lasting impacts on the health and well-being of our people.

The 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent endorsed by Forum Leaders in July provides the decisive overarching framework within which all of us should work together to manage our shared challenges, as well as leverage and exploit our strengths and our opportunities to secure our long-term future. A strengthened regional architecture and the successful implementation of the Boe Declaration are essential to the 2050 Strategy, and in this regard I commend the steadfast support and contribution by SPREP to these important work.

We are never alone in our development journey and I wish to acknowledge the support and generosity of our Metropolitan Members and all our development partners. In particular, I wish to thank Australia and New Zealand for their continued direct contribution to the core budget of SPREP through multi-year agreements.

You have a full work programme before you and important decisions to be considered. I wish you success in your deliberations and look forward to your Outcomes. I also look forward to welcoming you back to Apia in the not too distant future. I am pleased to declare your meeting open.

Soifua



**SPREP
PROE**