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The Pacific environment, sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.

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

Apia, Samoa

15th September 2017

Agenda Item 5.7: Operations and work program for the STAC for 2018-2019

Purpose:

1. To seek the meeting approval to trial the operations and work program for the STAC in the coming biennium in the same format as the OEWG for the Basel Convention;

Background:

2. The meeting will recall that at its Sixth Meeting (COP-6) in one of its decisions under the Agenda Item 8 on *"Future Arrangements for the SCPRC and the STAC"*, it directed the Secretariat to seek and act on advice from Member countries on how best to maximise involvement in the Technical and Steering Committees associated with the Waigani Convention and Pacific Regional Centre for the joint implementation of the Basel and Waigani Conventions.
3. An evaluation report was consequently prepared and discussed both at the STAC-4 and SCPRC-3 meetings which acknowledged that both Committees had not performed as fully as expected and discussed way in which to improve their performance. A number of suggestions were agreed to at these two meetings and these were forwarded to the COP-7 meeting, which in its decision on Agenda Item 5 on the Effectiveness of STAC and SCPRC, after much discussion only *noted the value of the content of the Evaluation Report presented by the Chairperson of the STAC and the Secretariat* without providing any guidance or direction on what the STAC or the SCPRC should be doing in terms of matters that it should be attending to.
4. At the STAC-5 meeting under Agenda Item 11 on *Improving the function of the STAC*, the discussions on the role of the STAC highlighted that it was established to assist the work of the Secretariat in pursuing the implementation of the Convention, specifically by:
 - (a) examining the information provided by the Parties on the measures adopted to implement the Convention.
 - (b) working with the Secretariat to develop plans, programs and measures related to the technical and scientific aspects of the Convention.
 - (c) providing guidelines and standards for the environmental sound management of hazardous wastes.
 - (d) assisting in creating coordination between the Waigani and the other regional and global Conventions.
5. During the discussions, the similarities between the STAC of the Waigani Convention and the Open-ended working group (OWEG) of the Basel Convention were highlighted and suggestions were made that the

STAC should be performing its functions in much the same way as the OEWG. It was noted that these two committees have very similar mandates and roles in how they should be feeding technical and scientific reports and information to their respective COPs. An example of how the OEWG does its work is contained in Annex 1 of this working paper.

1. The STAC-5 Meeting then directed the Secretariat to develop the improved mode of operations for future STAC Meetings.
2. The Secretariat having studied the manner in which the OEWG operates, proposed to the COP-8 meeting that the WC STAC operate in a similar manner to the BC OEWG but focusing on the issues pertaining to the Waigani Convention area. In this regard, the STAC should strengthen and focus its work on dealing with the Pacific-specific matters on:
 - a. Strategic issues;
 - b. Scientific and technical matters;
 - c. Legal, governance and enforcement matters;
 - d. International cooperation and coordination; and
 - e. Programme of work and budget
3. The STAC did not need to duplicate the work of the OEWG or reinvent the wheel on many of these matters but could use the work of the OEWG as a guide with a focus on matters specific to our region. This will, in time, improve the effectiveness of the STAC and the SCPRC and provide quality information to the COP to discuss and make decisions on.
4. The COP in its decision:
 - *directed* the Secretariat to develop and send to Parties an invitation for national work priorities, along with guidance materials for Parties to identify their national priorities against priorities and actions under the Convention; and
 - *agreed* to work closely with the Secretariat to improve the role and function of the STAC and SCPRC, by aligning its operations to model that of the OEWG of the Basel Convention and increased participation and by responding to the Secretariat's calls for reports on national priorities.

Recommendation:

6. The Meeting is invited to:
 - **discuss** and **approve** the proposal to trial the operations and work program for the STAC in the coming biennium in the same format as the OEWG for the Basel Convention; and
 - **direct** the Secretariat to prepare future operations and work program for the STAC in this format and based on the priorities of the parties to the convention
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