

**The participants to the Pacific Regional Joint Preparatory Meeting for the 12th CBD COP, 11th CMS COP and 12th Ramsar COP held in Nadi, Fiji from the 11 - 15 August, 2014, concluded with the following key outcomes:**

1. Noted that this joint preparatory meeting for the CBD, CMS and Ramsar COPs is a historical event where all sister conventions came together, including CITES in an observer capacity, as part of preparations for the COPs to strengthen synergies between each other and the possible harmonization of each other's work program.
2. Noted the importance of synergies between the biodiversity related MEAs and strongly supported the need for effective coordination amongst the MEAs. The work of each MEA complements each other, especially in helping countries meet the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.
3. Recognized existing efforts to strengthen synergies across MEA Secretariats at the global and regional level, including institutional and programmatic cooperation.
4. Noted the close alignment between the new Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Island region 2014-2020, NBSAPs and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and called for commitment from Governments, development partners, donors, NGOs, local communities and all those involved in conservation action to support the implementation of these key biodiversity policy frameworks at all levels.
5. Recognized the importance of strengthening coordination and cooperation with the new Framework for Pacific Regionalism.
6. Requested the Secretariats of the biodiversity MEAs to further explore options for harmonized reporting against the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.
7. Recognized the importance of values for biodiversity and ecosystem services and the need for Parties to ensure that NBSAPs are costed and their implementation factored into national accounting and budgetary processes through development of resource mobilisation plans.
8. Noted that the NBSAP is an overarching policy document and should engage focal points and other relevant stakeholders in its development, implementation, monitoring and reporting. The NBSAP should integrate and reflect key objectives of key biodiversity MEAs, have measurable targets and indicators to enhance its successful implementation.
9. Strongly emphasized the greater need and importance of involving the private sector, NGOs, communities and civil societies in the implementation of NBSAPs.
10. Emphasized the importance of developing private sector partnership and local community members.
11. Highlighted the level of commitment shown by the region through declaration of large sanctuaries and Ramsar sites to protect threatened migratory species and habitats and to ensure the sustainable use of resources for the benefit of local communities.
12. Recognized the abundance of internationally significant wetlands and the potential to establish more Ramsar sites.

13. Strongly called for mainstreaming of NBSAP objectives and priorities into sectoral and national sustainable development plans by Pacific Island Countries. Also stressed the importance of developing national targets that are relevant, achievable and implementable together with national and sectoral plans.
14. Stressed the need to address threats to biodiversity in the Pacific from invasive species, linear barriers, marine debris, underwater noise, habitat loss and degradation, wildlife diseases, pollution and poisoning, illegal fishing, and climate change.
15. Recognised that there is a wealth of technical capacity and initiatives available through the various Conventions (e.g.) CMS MoU Technical Advisory Groups; InforMEA which enables access to MEA information and Species Plus which allows users to access and search for species by common and scientific names in relation to CITES, CMS and EU annexes.
16. Highlighted the urgent need for dedicated support to national focal points for simplifying administration, implementation and reporting on multiple biodiversity MEAs.
17. Recognized the value of partnership with and the role of relevant NGOs, academic institutions and other regional organisations with implementation at the grassroots levels in terms of sharing data and expertise.
18. Recognized the need for better cooperation across range states and countries including private sector and continued community engagement in migratory species conservation and Ramsar site management.
19. Recognized that high level interest can result in getting political will and/or advocating to ministerial level to gauge their support to promote species work at the national level.
20. Noted the value of the Pacific Voyage Campaign and encouraged effective participation by countries in highlighting key messages such as traditional stories about migratory species, community initiatives, Pacific legends, and the importance of island and ocean biodiversity.
21. Recognized the key role of SPREP as a conduit for strengthening communication between National Focal Points and MEA Secretariats, thus increasing access to information to assist with implementation.
22. Noted the value of having CMS and Ramsar positions at SPREP and expressed the desire to create similar positions for other biodiversity related MEAs such as CITES.
23. Noted that the economic valuation of biodiversity is important as a tool to provide information for decision making and stressed the need for these to be conducted properly to include social and cultural values.
24. Encouraged Pacific island delegates to learn and understand COP processes and dynamics and to ensure our Pacific voices are heard and have an impact on COP decisions.
25. Noted that invasive species and living modified organisms (LMOs) could be integrated under one legislation as in New Zealand.

## **Marine and coastal biodiversity**

26. Noted the need to incorporate socio-cultural and local communities (Traditional Knowledge) inputs into Ecological and Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs); and to review and update Pacific EBSAs.
27. In the context of underwater noise, it was important to note:
- seabed mining as an emerging issue in terms of how it impacts on biodiversity related conventions, such as CMS with respect to cetaceans and the tourism industry, eg. the socio-economic impact on whale watching;
  - a need to consider the precautionary principle in light of limited information on seabed mining and deep sea biodiversity data.
28. Ocean acidification (OA) has a long term impact on coral reefs, therefore a need to develop a long term monitoring system for Pacific Island Countries and Territories to monitor the impacts of OA on coral reefs to identify resilient reefs and develop networks of resilient MMAs and MPAs.
- Note the ocean acidification workshop that will be held before the UN SIDS conference which hopes to establish stronger monitoring programs in the Pacific region.
  - Inform COP of the need to improve understanding of potential responses to OA for specific coastal habitats and resources including seagrass and coral reefs.
29. Noted that since Aichi Target 10 (By 2015, minimise anthropogenic pressures on coral reefs and other vulnerable ecosystems impacted by climate change or ocean acidification) will not be achieved in the current timeframe, strongly recommend the timeline for this target be extended. Efforts are ongoing to reduce anthropogenic pressures on coral reefs in an attempt to have the best possible chance of achieving the target. Additionally, to create incentives and an enabling environment to encourage private sector support to ensure sustainable fisheries, forestry and agriculture.
30. On Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), highlighted the Pacific Alliance under the Oceanscape Vision and Framework as a tool which brings together PICTs to encourage the wider global ocean community in ocean governance.
- Request the Secretariat of the CBD to facilitate financial and technical support to PICTs to conduct capacity building and training on MSP.
  - Urge Parties to use the outcomes of the MSP exercise to help inform conservation and development policies and plans.

## **Invasive Species (IS)**

31. Noted actions taken to address IAS in the Pacific Islands region such as:
- a. Use IS guidelines and also note that some countries have committed their GEF 6 allocation;
  - b. NISSAP milestones by Tonga, Niue, Cook Is, Vanuatu, Palau, Samoa and Kiribati;
  - c. Pacific Invasive Partnership and Pacific Invasives Learning Network efforts;
  - d. Examples from Samoa and Cook Islands rapid response efforts to mongoose, fruit fly, and rat eradication;
  - e. Desktop studies completed to identify pathways.

### **Cooperation across MEAs**

32. The Pacific Island Countries appreciate the effort of the biodiversity MEAs and regional organisations (including SPREP, UNDP, and UNEP) in implementing greater cooperation and synergies which in turn help with implementation and reporting.
33. Requested the biodiversity Convention Secretariats to assist Pacific Island Countries to:
  - a. Facilitate funding support to Parties to strengthen reporting and implementation at the national level;
  - b. Investigate opportunities for a common reporting mechanism to the different Conventions;
  - c. Investigate joint mechanisms toward the achievement of the Aichi Targets;
  - d. Ensure that when drafting Decisions or Resolutions for presentation to the respective MEA COPs that references are made to Decisions or Resolutions on the same topic from other Conventions.

### **Resource mobilization and the Financial Mechanism**

34. Noted the importance of resource mobilization and the Financial Mechanism (GEF) to the Pacific and urge Pacific island parties to review carefully relevant documents and seek appropriate technical expertise and advice to assist in preparation for the COP meetings.
35. Stressed the need to provide training support in the development of alternative resource mobilization for biodiversity projects and programmes.