



PO Box 240, Apia, Samoa
 E: sprep@sprep.org
 T: +685 21929
 F: +685 20231
 W: www.sprep.org

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



Twenty Seventh SPREP Meeting of Officials

Alofi, Niue

19 – 21 September 2016

Agenda Item 6.7 : Priorities under the Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape (FPO)

Purpose

1. To provide an update on current ocean priorities for SPREP under the Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape (FPO) and seek Member endorsement and support in these issues:
 - a. Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ)
 - b. Integrated ocean management for sustainable ocean economies
 - c. UN Conference on the Ocean SDGs

Background

2. The themes covered in this paper form important elements of the **Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape** (FPO), which was endorsed by leaders in 2010. SPREP's commitment and approach on these key issues is guided by the six strategic priorities in the FPO:
 - SP1 Jurisdictional rights and responsibilities
 - SP2 Good ocean governance
 - SP3 Sustainable development management and conservation
 - SP4 Listening learning, liaising and leading
 - SP5 Sustaining action and
 - SP6 Adapting to a rapidly changing environment.
3. SPREP's key approach is to seek greater levels of collaboration across agencies, jurisdictions, organisations and governance levels, and as noted in our recent submission to the *Framework for Pacific Regionalism*, inclusion of regional and national leadership to help design joint solutions to our shared challenges – linking environmental, economic and social priorities. SPREP has also advocated for mobilising resources for operating the key regional mechanisms under the *Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape*, such as the Marine Sector Working Group (MSWG) and the Pacific Ocean Alliance (POA) - both of which currently operate opportunistically and without dedicated resources.
4. **Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ)**. SPREP is working with other CROP agencies to provide support to Pacific SIDS Missions at the UN negotiations for an international legally binding Agreement for the conservation of biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction. Resource extraction and other economic activities in the high seas pockets and other high seas areas adjacent to our EEZs is of direct importance to the health of natural resources and economies within our EEZs and SPREP member states have unique and longstanding historical and economic links with the high seas.

5. SPREP's mandate to assist members to protect biodiversity, within and beyond national jurisdiction covers the four key issues under consideration by the UN: i) area-based management tools, including marine protected areas ii) marine genetic resources and sharing of benefits, iii) environmental impact assessments and iv) capacity building and the transfer of marine technology.
6. The Pacific SIDS have to date been able to show strong leadership on BBNJ issues at the UN negotiations. Achieving an effective final outcome for Pacific SIDS however relies on strong collaboration between SPREP Secretariat, SPREP members, other CROP agencies and experts, the UN multi-lateral environment agreements (MEAs) and the global community. The support from SPREP and expert partners is currently unfunded and is conducted opportunistically through the Marine Sector Working Group and the Pacific Ocean Alliance.
7. **Integrated ocean management.** With tuna fishing, deep sea mineral extractions, coastal developments, shipping, eco-tourism and shipping being seen as critical elements of our sustainable development futures, the marine ecological systems that underpin and inter-connect all these industries and economies must be managed through strong integration and collaboration among all sectors. Integrated ocean management is a crucial policy approach of the *Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape*, to ensure that multi-sectoral, multi-jurisdictional and multi-level governance systems lead to sustainable blue economies. Under projects such as MACBIO, the GEFPAS Integrated Island Biodiversity project and other national initiatives, many SPREP members are now progressing with EEZ scale ocean policies and marine spatial planning. Integrated or multi-sectoral and ecosystem based management of ocean resources requires the combined efforts of national EEZ-scale activities, multi-national or regional scale management, and a number of measures to put these into practice.
8. The CBD-Sustainable Oceans Initiative (SOI) workshop to be held in Samoa on Oct 31 to November 4 to further advance capacity in integrated ocean management. The workshop will bring together experts and representatives from all Pacific island states and marine industry sectors, to seek integrated approaches for progressing towards the marine Aichi Target 6 (on sustainable fisheries), Target 10 (on coral reefs) and Target 11 (on marine protected areas). A Pacific Ocean Alliance meeting is also proposed around this SOI workshop. The Pacific Ocean Alliance workshop will specifically focus on private sector engagement on sustainable ocean development opportunities for the Pacific in the context of SDG14 to feed into CBD-SOI workshop about balancing sustainable development/use and conservation.
9. SPREP and partners of the CBD - Sustainable Oceans Initiative (including the CBD, Government of Japan, French MPA agency, Australia's CSIRO and the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner) encourage our members to take full advantage of these two workshops through strong representation and participation from their environment, fisheries and development/central agencies. This event also provides a useful step towards implementing the new Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries and the "New Song" to which governments recently agreed.
10. Technical agencies and organisations that are willing to seek collaborative solutions also require the political, legislative and regulatory environment to enable changes that need to be made for achieving diverse and sustainable ocean ecosystems and economies. This requires active and sustained high level political impetus for integrated ocean planning policy and marine spatial planning. High level support by members is also required to drive implementation of the key regional frameworks through which SPREP works (eg, FPO, MSWG and POA).

11. **UN Conference on Ocean SDG 14**, June 2017 is where we can bring greater international attention to our ocean-related priorities and challenges. The theme for this conference is "SDG 14: Life below water – sustainable conservation and use the oceans, seas and marine resources". SPREP is working within the other CROP agencies to ensure the following elements are given priority attention at the conference:

- a. **Biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ)**: ensuring strong support for Pacific SIDS Missions in the UN negotiations on an international legally binding Agreement for the conservation of biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction.
- b. **Integrated Ocean Management**: collaboration among environment and development sectors to achieve sustainable ocean economies predicated on the conservation of biodiversity and mindful of cultural/social values, through integrated planning and management of ocean resources.
- c. **Ecosystem based adaptation to climate change**: improving and maintaining island, nearshore and oceanic ecosystem components and ecosystem services for resilience to climate change; including expanding the protection of vital ecosystems such as seagrass, mangroves and coral reefs.
- d. **Marine debris**: reducing the total oceanic load of marine debris originating from island populations, fishing, shipping and tourism operations, with a particular focus on plastics and microplastics in the marine environment.
- e. **Ocean acidification**: strengthening the Pacific Partnership for Ocean Acidification (PPOA) to enable more countries and sites to participate in monitoring and mitigating impacts of ocean acidification on coastal coral reefs. The New Zealand government has supported the development of this project and the Secretariat urges other donors and partners to support an expanded programme.
- f. **Proposing major Pacific islands initiatives on oceans and coastal resilience** that would enable SPREP and its partners (CROP agencies, NGOs and donors) to implement practical programmes of work that address the above priority areas.

12. In preparation for the June 2017 UN Oceans Conference, SPREP seeks the support of Members and invites suggestions for their further priority needs and successful representation of these issues at the UN conference.

Recommendation

13. The Meeting is invited to:

- **endorse** SPREP's efforts to advance the interests of Pacific island countries and territories on biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ), integrated ocean management including through participation in the 2017 UN Oceans Conference;
- **ensure** Member participation in the upcoming CBD-Sustainable Oceans Initiative (and Pacific Ocean Alliance) regional workshops on integrated ocean management and marine Aichi Targets.
- **endorse** SPREP to collaborate with partners, and in the spirit of the *Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape*, to identify resource mobilisation opportunities that enhance support of critical regional activities and mechanisms such as the MSWG, POA.
- **endorse** the Secretariat to collaborate with partners to develop a major regional oceans initiative for substantial action on achieving sustainable ocean economies, balanced with conservation of biodiversity and mindful of Pacific cultural and social values.