

MESSAGE FROM MR. KOSI LATU, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF SPREP

Greetings from Apia,

This month, SPREP officially marked its 25th Year Anniversary on the 16 June. After 25 years of service to the Pacific region, SPREP is dedicated to continuing to serve for many years to come. It has been an honour for me to be leading our vaka on its latest journey, steering the Pacific towards a Resilient Pacific. To mark this special day, SPREP opened its doors to school children and members of the public, to showcase the work SPREP does with its Member countries, and to nurture the future leaders and environmentalists of our region.

It's been a great month for inspiring and making lifestyle changes, with big things happening in waste management around the region. A few of our members have begun to cut back on plastic waste by introducing legislation banning single use plastic bags, straws and Styrofoam containers, in order to protect our environment and our ocean.

Read more about what is happening around our region in this issue of SPREP-Tok.

Tofa soifua,



Mr. Kosi Latu, Director General of SPREP.

SPREP-Tok LATEST NEWS



Vailima Primary School students saving our coral reefs!

SPREP CELEBRATES 25 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE WITH AN OPEN SCHOOL DAY

The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) observed its 25th year anniversary on June 16, 2018. To mark this special milestone, SPREP opened its doors to five schools and members of the public on 19 June, hosting a SPREP Open School Day to showcase some of the important work the organisation does for the Pacific region.

This is just one of a range of activities that SPREP is undertaking in the region to commemorate 25 years of service.

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Our vision: A resilient Pacific environment sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.

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PACIFIC CONVENES PROTECTED AREAS WORKSHOP



With the aim to strengthen the management and governance of protected areas in the Pacific region, close to one hundred participants from governments, NGO stakeholders and partners convened in Apia, Samoa on 11 June, 2018 for the inception workshop of the second phase of the Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA) programme. In welcoming the participants, Afioga Taefu Lemi Taefu, Hon. Associate Minister for Natural Resources and Environment, Government of Samoa acknowledged the significance of protected areas. “The protected areas that exist today were established to protect the best remaining natural terrestrial, coastal and marine areas in our region. This is to ensure sustainability of these areas for the benefit of not only our generation but for many generations to come”

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PACIFIC ISLANDS MOVING TOWARDS BANNING SINGLE USE PLASTIC



Pacific actions to reduce plastic are to be commended as we count down to 1 July, 2018. From the first of July this year, plastic straws, single use plastic shopping bags and polystyrene takeaway boxes are no longer be allowed for sale or distribution in Vanuatu. This was the outcome of three Orders made under the Vanuatu Waste Management Act in February this year. Samoa is also in consultation with stakeholders from private and public sectors as well as the local community, on phasing out of unnecessary single use plastic and putting into legislation a ban on single-use plastic shopping bags and plastic straws which will be effective January 2019.

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CLIMATE TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE EXPERTS FROM AROUND THE PACIFIC COME TOGETHER TO SHARE EXPERIENCE IN APIA



Climate experts and elders from 11 Pacific island countries gathered in Apia, Samoa earlier this month from, to share their knowledge and expertise in the collection, monitoring, storage and communicating traditional knowledge on weather and climate.

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TAKING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT TRAINING TO VANUATU DECISION MAKERS



It is crucial that national and provincial Governments gain a greater understanding of the impacts of development projects on the environment. This is needed to ensure leaders at all levels make informed decisions that minimise damage to the natural environment while still ensuring economic growth.

These are sentiments expressed by participants at a series of workshops for National and Provincial government officials held in Lenakal on the Vanuatu island of Tanna and in the capital Port Vila. The workshops highlighted the benefits of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) and the Mitigation Hierarchy.

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THE JOURNEY OF COOK ISLANDS MARAE MOANA



Cook Islands Prime Minister Hon. Henry Puna as he presented his statement at the UN Ocean Conference in 2017.

Sitting in the world’s largest of the five oceans, the Cook Islands consists of 15 islands that are home to a population of close to 17,500 people according to the last Census in 2016. Having been labelled as the “Last Heaven on Earth” over the years, the Cook Islands has undertaken a remarkable feat, in legally declaring all of its Exclusive Economic Zone, that is close to two million square kilometres of water, as a Cook Islands multi-use Marine Park.

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PROTECTING OUR OCEANS – NOW AND FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS



Mr Kosi Latu presents the report to Ms Agnetha Vave-Karamui. Photo: IUCN

The Marine and Coastal Biodiversity Management in Pacific Island Countries (MACBIO) project launched three significant reports that together offer the building blocks for delivering national networks for an ecologically representative system of Marine Protected Areas in the South West Pacific during the Pacific regional workshop on protected areas.

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PACIFIC YEAR OF THE CORAL REEF LAUNCHED



SPREP has dedicated 2018 and 2019 to a Pacific Year of the Coral Reef (PYOCR) campaign to promote conservation of our coral reefs. It has been 10 years since the last regional and international campaigns for coral reefs, and the launch of this campaign will see close collaboration with the 3rd International Year of the Reef campaign, which is also being implemented in 2018 by the International Coral Reef Initiative and its members.

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BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN PACIFIC MET SERVICES AND MEDIA



Mock radio interviews with Solomon Islands Met Officer Mr Alick Haruhiru, and SPREP Communications Outreach Support Officer Ms Angelica Salele

Explaining technical climate and weather information while maintaining scientific accuracy is difficult. Yet it is a crucial part of Met Services work that is needed to prepare the public of an extreme event and allow people to make informed decisions. Helping to overcome this challenge for the Met Services of Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu is a specialised training on using both traditional, and social media. The training is jointly delivered by Pacific Science Solutions (PSS), Bureau of Meteorology, Pacific Community (SPC), Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), and media experts Dr. Jan Sinclair and Mrs Samantha Amjadali.

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PAPUA NEW GUINEA GAINS PORTAL TO EASE DATA SHARING AND ACCESS



Environmental representatives in Papua New Guinea learn how to use the country's national data portal. Photo credit: Paul Anderson/SPREP.

There is a need to have environmental and other data centrally stored and shared throughout the Pacific Island region. The Inform project—implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)—is addressing this need by creating national data portals in 14 countries, and a regional data portal. The most recent portal was created and demonstrated in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea on 23 May 2018 with stakeholders from the Conservation and Environment Protection Authority (CEPA), government ministries, non-governmental organizations, the national university, and other agencies.

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