

CIRCULAR

FILE: AP 2/43 **TO:** SPREP National Focal Points
DATE: 10 May 2024
CIRCULAR: 24/26
SUBJECT: **Oceania Seabird Symposium - Invitation to participate**

Dear Members,

SPREP has great pleasure in announcing the first **Oceania Seabird Symposium (OSS)** to be held in Nouméa, New Caledonia from the 23rd – 26th September 2024.

The OSS is being co-hosted by SPREP, the Pacific Community (SPC), the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD) and the World Seabird Union. A flyer introducing the OSS is attached and there is a link to a web site here <https://oceaniaseabirdsymposium2024.com/>

Funding is primarily coming from the European Union (EU) funded Pacific Biodiversity and Sustainable Land-Seascapes (Pacific BioScapes) Programme and the Fonds Pacifique; it is also being supported by other partners such as SPC, IRD, Australasian Seabird Group and the New Zealand Department of Conservation.

Seabirds are more highly threatened than any other comparable group of birds. Of only 370 'seabirds' known globally, 42 are known to breed within Oceania, 17 unique to our region.

SPREP Members endorsed the first ever Seabird Action Plan as part of the **Pacific Island Regional Marine Species Programme 2022-2026** at the SPREP meeting in 2023. Building capacity for monitoring and managing seabird populations at community and national levels is a key objective of this plan.

The purpose of the OSS is to bring together policy makers and scientists and conservation practitioners and provide an opportunity to share knowledge and expertise as well as provide opportunities to gain knowledge and practical skills in monitoring and managing seabird populations through training.

SPREP is currently preparing an Oceania Seabird Monitoring Manual which will be launched at the Symposium. As well as the usual presentations you expect at a conference, there will be practical workshops and field trips to provide capacity building and training on seabird monitoring. For more information, please check the website regularly for updates.

Together Pacific BioScapes and Fonds Pacifique will fund one person from every Pacific Island Country and French Territory to take part in this exciting Symposium. Ideally, they will be from the Department or Ministry responsible for biodiversity management and protection.

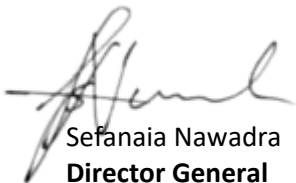
Alternatively, you may wish to nominate someone who is involved in seabird research or conservation from your country/territory.

SPREP also welcomes and encourages participation from our US territories, although we do not have funding to support; we hope that participants will see the value of this opportunity and be able to participate.

Registrations and a call for abstracts are open for this exciting event at <https://oceaniaseabirdsymposium2024.com/>

Please provide your nominee details in the attached form to Karen Baird (karenb@sprep.org) before 31 May 2024.

Yours sincerely,



Sefanaia Nawadra
Director General
SN/KB/ma

Att.