

CIRCULAR

FILE: AP_2/43 **TO:** SPREP National Focal Points
DATE: 15 November 2024
CIRCULAR: 24/83

SUBJECT: Oceania Seabird Symposium invitation to participate

Dear National Focal Points,

Following the cancellation of the Oceania Seabird Symposium in New Caledonia in September this year, SPREP has great pleasure in announcing the first **Oceania Seabird Symposium** (OSS) to be held in Auckland, Aotearoa/New Zealand from the 14th to 17th April, 2025.

The OSS is being co-hosted by SPREP, the University of Auckland, the Pacific Community (SPC), and the World Seabird Union. A flyer introducing the OSS is attached and there is a link to a web site here: <https://oceaniaseabirds2025.com/> For our venue we will be hosted at the University of Auckland, Auckland campus.

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, 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 finalising a Seabird Survey and Monitoring Manual for the Pacific which will be officially 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, check the website link above regularly for updates.

Together, Pacific BioScapes, Fonds Pacifique and SPC will fund one delegate from every Pacific Island Country and Territory to take part in this exciting symposium. SPREP will be organising the travel. We recommend that the nominee be from the department or ministry responsible for biodiversity management and protection and biodiversity management including birds. Alternatively, you may wish to nominate someone outside the government agencies who is involved in seabird research or conservation in your country/territory. You may also self-fund additional participants to attend.

With the changes to the event dates and location for the Symposium, we kindly request the submission of new nomination forms using the attached nomination form and send to Karen Baird, on email karenb@sprep.org before 30 November 2024.

Registrations and a call for abstracts are open for this exciting event <https://oceaniaseabirds2025.com/>
Please provide your nominee's details in the attached form and send to Karen Baird (karenb@sprep.org) before 30 November 2024.

Please also be advised that VISA requirements will be the responsibility of the nominee, so early registration and VISA applications are recommended. If requested SPREP can provide a letter of invitation for VISA applications through Karen Baird.

Yours sincerely,



Easter Chu Shing
Acting Director General

Encl:

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