

## REQUEST FOR TENDERS

RFT: PBS 2023 - 004  
File: AP\_2/43  
Date: 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023  
To: Interested consultants  
From: Karen Baird ; Threatened and Migratory Marine Species Adviser

**Subject: Request for tenders (RFT): (Service- based Consultancy) Develop marine tourism guidelines for marine species for Pacific Island Countries and Territories.**

### 1. Background

- 1.1. The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) is an intergovernmental organization charged with promoting cooperation among Pacific island countries and territories to protect and improve their environment and ensure sustainable development.
- 1.2. SPREP approaches the environmental challenges faced by the Pacific guided by four simple Values. These values guide all aspects of our work:
  - We value the Environment
  - We value our People
  - We value high quality and targeted Service Delivery
  - We value Integrity
- 1.3. For more information, see: [www.sprep.org](http://www.sprep.org).

### 2. Specifications: statement of requirement

- 2.1. SPREP wishes to call for tenders from qualified and experienced consultants who can offer their services to develop a **Marine tourism guidelines for marine species for Pacific Island Countries and Territories**.
- 2.2. The Terms of Reference of the consultancy are set out in Annex A.
- 2.3. The successful consultant must supply the services to the extent applicable, in compliance with SPREP's Values and Code of Conduct: [https://www.sprep.org/attachments/Publications/Corporate\\_Documents/spreporganisational-values-code-of-conduct.pdf](https://www.sprep.org/attachments/Publications/Corporate_Documents/spreporganisational-values-code-of-conduct.pdf). Including SPREP's policy on Child Protection, Environmental Social Safeguards, Fraud Prevention & Whistleblower Protection and Gender and Social Inclusion.
- 2.4. SPREP Standard Contract Terms and Conditions are non-negotiable

### 3. Conditions: information for applicants

- 3.1. To be considered for this tender, interested consultants must meet the following conditions:
  - i Submit a detailed **Curriculum vitae** detailing qualification and previous relevant experience for each proposed personnel;
  - ii Provide **three referees** relevant to this tender submission, including the most recent work completed;

iii Complete the **tender application form** provided (*Please note you are required to complete in full all areas requested in the Form, particularly the Statements to demonstrate you meet the selection criteria – DO NOT refer us to your CV. Failure to do this will mean your application will **not** be considered*).

*Provide examples of past related work outputs*

*For the Technical and Financial proposals, you may attach these separately.*

iv. Provide a copy of valid business registration/license.

- 3.2 Tenderers must declare any areas that may constitute conflict of interest related to this tender and sign the **conflict of interest form** provided.
- 3.3 **Tenderer is deemed ineligible due to association with exclusion criteria, including** bankruptcy, insolvency or winding up procedures, breach of obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions, fraudulent or negligent practice, violation of intellectual property rights, under a judgment by the court, grave professional misconduct including misrepresentation, corruption, participation in a criminal organisation, money laundering or terrorist financing, child labour and other trafficking in human beings, deficiency in capability in complying main obligations, creating a shell company, and being a shell company.
- 3.4 Tenderer must sign a declaration of **honour form** together with their application, certifying that they do not fall into any of the exclusion situations cited in 3.3 above and where applicable, that they have taken adequate measures to remedy the situation.

#### 4. Submission guidelines

- 4.1. Tender documentation should demonstrate that the interested consultant satisfies the conditions stated above and in the Terms of Reference and is capable of meeting the specifications and timeframes. Documentation must also include supporting examples to address the evaluation criteria.
- 4.2. Tender documentation should be submitted in English and outline the interested consultant's complete proposal:
- a) **SPREP Tender Application form and conflict of interest form.** (*Please note you are required to complete in full all areas requested in the Form, particularly the Statements to demonstrate you meet the selection criteria – DO NOT refer us to your CV. Failure to do this will mean your application will **not** be considered*).  
*Provide examples of past related work outputs*  
*For the Technical and Financial proposals you may attach these separately.*
  - b) **Honour form**
  - c) **Curriculum Vitae** of the proposed personnel to demonstrate that they have the requisite skills and experience to carry out this contract successfully.
  - d) **Technical Proposal** which contains the details to achieve the tasks outlined in the Terms of Reference.
  - e) **Financial Proposal** – provide a detailed outline of the costs involved in successfully delivering this project submitted in United States Dollars (USD) and inclusive of all associated taxes.
- 4.3. Provide three referees relevant to this tender submission, including the most recent work completed.

- 4.4. Tenderers/bidders shall bear all costs associated with preparing and submitting a proposal, including cost relating to contract award; SPREP will, in no case, be responsible or liable for those costs, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the bidding process.
- 4.5. The tenderer/bidder might be requested to provide additional information relating to their submitted proposal, if the Tender Evaluation Committee requests further information for the purposes of tender evaluation. SPREP may shortlist one or more Tenderers and seek further information from them.
- 4.6. The submitted tender proposal must be for the entirety of the Terms of Reference and not divided into portions which a potential tenderer/bidder can provide services for.
- 4.7. The Proposal must remain valid for 90 days from date of submission.
- 4.8. Tenderers must insist on an acknowledgement of receipt of tender.

### 5. Tender Clarification

- 5.1. a. Any clarification questions from applicants must be submitted by email to [procurement@sprep.org](mailto:procurement@sprep.org) before **16<sup>th</sup> June 2023**. A summary of all questions received complete with an associated response posted on the SPREP website [www.sprep.org/tender](http://www.sprep.org/tender) by **20<sup>th</sup> June 2023**.
- b. The only point of contact for all matters relating to the RFT and the RFT process is the SPREP Procurement Officer.
- c. SPREP will determine what, if any, response should be given to a Tenderer question. SPREP will circulate Tenderer questions and SPREP's response to those questions to all other Tenderers using the SPREP Tenders page (<https://www.sprep.org/tenders>) without disclosing the source of the questions or revealing any confidential information of a Tenderer.
- d. Tenderers should identify in their question what, if any, information in the question the Tenderer considers is confidential.
- e. If a Tenderer believes they have found a discrepancy, error, ambiguity, inconsistency or omission in this RFT or any other information given or made available by SPREP, the Tenderer should promptly notify the Procurement Officer setting out the error in sufficient detail so that SPREP may take the corrective action, if any, it considers appropriate.

### 6. Evaluation criteria

- 6.1. SPREP will select a preferred consultant on the basis of SPREP's evaluation of the extent to which the documentation demonstrates that the tenderer offers the best value for money, and that the tender satisfies the following criteria: Knowledge and experience of the marine tourism industry in the Pacific, knowledge of migratory marine species which are involved in marine tourism: sharks and rays, whales and dolphins, turtles, dugong and seabirds and knowledge of international and regional guidelines or codes of practice to manage interactions with marine species.
- 6.2. A proposal will be rejected if it fails to achieve 70% or more in the technical criteria and its accompanying financial proposal shall not be evaluated.

**I. Technical Score – 80%**

Criteria	Detail	Weighting
<b>Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A minimum bachelor’s degree or equivalent in environmental science, marine biology, social science (e.g. governance, policy) or related field.</li> </ul>	15%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extensive knowledge and proven professional experience of the marine tourism industry in the Pacific including developing guidelines or manuals in areas for tourism.</li> </ul>	20%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good knowledge of migratory marine species which are involved in marine tourism and associated issues: sharks and rays, whales and dolphins, turtles, dugong and seabirds.</li> </ul>	20%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge of international and regional guidelines or codes of practice to manage interactions with marine species.</li> </ul>	10%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proven experience in facilitating successful stakeholder sessions and workshops</li> </ul>	5%
<b>Technical Proposal / Methodology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical proposal outlining methodology and implementation plan demonstrating how the consultant will successfully carry out the activities outlined in the Terms of Reference.</li> </ul>	10%

**II. Financial Score – 20%**

The following formula shall be used to calculate the financial score for ONLY the proposals which score 70% or more in the technical criteria:

$$\text{Financial Score} = a \times \frac{b}{c}$$

Where:

a = maximum number of points allocated for the Financial Score

b = Lowest bid amount

c = Total bidding amount of the proposal

**7. Variation or Termination of the Request for Tender**

- 7.1 a. SPREP may amend, suspend or terminate the RFT process at any time.
- b. In the event that SPREP amends the RFT or the conditions of tender, it will inform potential Tenderers using the SPREP Tenders page (<https://www.sprep.org/tenders>).
- c. Tenderers are responsible to regularly check the SPREP website Tenders page for any updates and downloading the relevant RFT documentation and addendum for the RFT if it is interested in providing a Tender Response.

- d. If SPREP determines that none of the Tenders submitted represents value for money, that it is otherwise in the public interest or SPREP's interest to do so, SPREP may terminate this RFT process at any time. In such cases SPREP will cancel the tender, issue a cancellation notice and inform unsuccessful bidders accordingly.

## 8. Deadline

- 8.1. **The due date for submission of the tender is: 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023, midnight (Apia, Samoa local time).**
- 8.2. Late submissions will be returned unopened to the sender.
- 8.3 Please send all tenders clearly marked ***“RFT PBS 2023-004 : Develop marine tourism guidelines for marine species for Pacific Island Countries and Territories”***

Mail: SPREP  
Attention: Procurement Officer  
PO Box 240  
Apia, SAMOA

Email: [tenders@sprep.org](mailto:tenders@sprep.org) (MOST PREFERRED OPTION)

Fax: 685 20231

Person: Submit by hand in the tenders' box at SPREP reception,  
Vailima, Samoa.

Note: Submissions made to the incorrect portal will not be considered by SPREP. If SPREP is made aware of the error in submission prior to the deadline, the applicant will be advised to resubmit their application to the correct portal. However, if SPREP is not made aware of the error in submission until after the deadline, then the application is considered late and will be returned unopened to the sender.

SPREP reserves the right to reject any or all tenders and the lowest or any tender will not necessarily be accepted.

SPREP reserves the right to enter into negotiation with respect to one or more proposals prior to the award of a contract, split an award/awards and to consider localised award/awards between any proposers in any combination, as it may deem appropriate without prior written acceptance of the proposers.

**A binding contract is in effect, once signed by both SPREP and the successful tenderer. Any contractual discussion/work carried out/goods supplied prior to a contract being signed does not constitute a binding contract.**

**For any complaints regarding the Secretariat's tenders please refer to the Complaints section on the SPREP website <http://www.sprep.org/accountability/complaints>**



## Annex A: Terms of Reference

Develop Marine Tourism Guidelines for Marine Species for Pacific Island Countries and Territories.

Context.

SPREP is implementing a proposed component within the framework of an existing Financing Agreement between the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) and the European Union (EU) for the implementation of the Intra-African Caribbean Pacific (ACP) Support Programme for ACP Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Coastal Countries. The programme has been approved for a total of EUR 35 million under the Intra-ACP Cooperation–11th European Development Fund Strategy Paper and Indicative Programme 2014-2020 programming actions for ACP regional organizations/institutions and countries. The programme contributes directly to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 14 and 15, as well as the three Rio Conventions - the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It will also promote gender equality and good governance. Its overall goal is to support implementation of SDGs 14 (Life Below Water) and SDG 15 (Life on Land) concentrating on climate change, resilience building and the environment and to contribute to addressing the development challenges of ACP SIDS and coastal countries by focusing on the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway.

The programme component for the Pacific ACP region with the title The Pacific Biodiversity and Sustainable Land-Seascapes (Pacific BioScapes) Programme is being managed and implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). The programme will contribute to the sustainable development of Pacific SIDS by supporting and improving the management and sustainable use of marine and coastal resources. It provides an opportunity to address critical issues concerning coastal and marine biodiversity, and ecosystem-based responses to climate change adaptation. Pacific SIDS continue to face growing environmental challenges with the potential to drastically impact the natural assets upon which the foundation of their national economies and community livelihoods depends. The programme will apply ridge-to-reef and other management approaches to consider both marine and terrestrial environments and to contribute to addressing barriers to effective conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. In total, there are 30 activities to be funded by the programme to address Key Result Area (KRA) 1: strengthened capacities of Pacific countries to effectively manage coastal and marine biodiversity and enhance resilience to climate change and KRA 2: support regional, national, and local efforts to assess, conserve, protect, manage, and sustainably use marine and terrestrial biodiversity.

As well as region-wide and sub-regional actions that comply with decisions of all SPREP Member countries, 11 Pacific countries (Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu) will implement activities to be funded by the Programme with support ranging from national to community levels. SPREP will work with several nationally based NGO and civil society partners to facilitate effective in-country and sub-regional delivery of the actions.

Implementation and coordination are being undertaken within the SPREP Island and Ocean Eco-systems Programme with specific engagement of all sub-programmes: Coastal and Marine Ecosystems; Threatened and Migratory Species; Biodiversity; Invasive Species.

This particular activity falls under *Activity 1.1.4 Regional Marine Tourism Guidelines of the Pacific BioScapes Project*.

## Background

### **Marine Species.**

Tourism plays a critical role in the economic development of Pacific Island countries in that it is the major driver of economic growth, foreign exchange earnings and employment. With tourism arrivals reaching a record high of 2.2 million in 2019, it generated total receipts of USD 4 billion, contributed about 7.8 percent of regional GDP and employed over 90,000 people (ref. *Draft Concept Note SPTO Development of the Sustainable Tourism Criteria for the Pacific Islands Countries*)

Marine megafauna (whales and dolphins, sharks and rays, marine turtles, dugong and seabirds) and the habitats on which they depend – coral reefs, mangroves and seagrass are important in providing the key natural attractions for tourists to Pacific Islands.

Tourists participating in non-captive wildlife tourism may place greater importance on the educational aspect of their visit. Tourists can also be empowered to be co-protectors or partners in the conservation process of our marine ecosystems.

Increasing tourists' awareness and changing their attitudes can lead to them undertaking pro-conservation actions and help mitigate the possible negative consequences of human interactions with wildlife and their habitats.

Marine wildlife tourism can provide entertaining and educational experiences that motivate tourists, promote environmental sustainability, and instigate behavioural and societal change.

### **Whales and dolphins.**

Whales, especially humpback whales have long been important in several Pacific countries for whale watching and swim with opportunities. Tonga, New Caledonia, Niue, French Polynesia and Cook Islands all offer whale watching or swimming opportunities. A regional review of the status of whale watching tourism (IFAW 2008), showed a 10-fold increase in value between 1998 and 2005 and a 45% growth in whale watchers, expanding from 9 countries to 14. In 2005, the industry had a total estimated direct economic value of USD 7.5 million and USD 21 million in total value. Data from Tonga (Teisa Fifita-Tupou, Ministry of Tourism, 2021) shows that the number of whale watchers more than doubled between 2006 and 2019 from 9,804 to 20,018, providing increased direct revenue from USD 1,515,069 to USD 9,107,643.

### **Sharks and rays.**

Sharks and rays have also become important attractions, such as in Fiji and Palau. Palau has argued that live sharks are significantly more valuable for tourism than as commercial catch. A 2010 study in Palau showed that the value of an individual reef shark over its lifetime was estimated at US\$1.9 million compared to a one-time value of US\$108 for the carcass. Similarly, in 2011 in Fiji, the value of shark and ray tourism contributed approximately US\$42 million annually to the economy. In the Yasawa Island group seven resorts offer swim with manta ray opportunities and even name themselves after manta rays e.g., Mantaray Island Resort. A code of conduct has been developed by Manta Trust Fiji to advise on appropriate behaviour around the manta rays. Countries such as French Polynesia offer both whale and shark swim with operations recognising people are interested in a variety of marine life.

### **Dugong and marine turtles.**

Vanuatu offers swim opportunities with dugongs and a national guideline for interacting with them has been developed by local NGO Vanuatu Environment and Science Society (VESS), in recognition of the potential impact to these gentle animals from people<sup>1</sup>. Other species are also an important component of tourism operations supporting the attractiveness of the Pacific dive industry providing opportunistic encounters with a wide variety of marine species including marine turtles, sharks and rays. Marine turtles can also be observed when they come to shore to nest.

There are some situations in the Pacific where turtles are held in captivity. These include captive rearing of hatchlings where turtles may be released by tourists. The effectiveness of this management technique has not been proven and there is a potential conflict of interest with these activities. This issue will need considerable assessment and development of guidelines on its appropriateness. Aquaria which hold injured or turtles being rehabilitated is a different although related issue.

### **Seabirds.**

Seabird watching is an extension of the global phenomena known as 'birdwatching'. Opportunities to observe seabirds can occur on land or at sea. At sea, disturbance is far less likely but land operations which target seabird colonies may cause unintended impacts to those colonies, particularly during the breeding season. For example, Kiribati Tourism promotes the seabird colonies found on Kiritimati Island in the Phoenix Island Protected Area. The attraction for birders is to find and see species that are unique to a country or region. For example, in Kiribati these islands support endemic species the Phoenix shearwater and the Christmas shearwater as well as a range of other species.

The International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators have developed some guidelines for birdwatching<sup>2</sup>, and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority have also developed some guidelines for visiting seabird breeding islands<sup>3</sup>.

Providing alternative sources of income related to marine species is an important component of increasing their value to Pacific communities as living creatures which can be used in tourism experiences rather than dead. This means that they can become a source of income as well as national pride and continue to contribute their ecosystem services which would be lost if the animals are harvested instead.

### **Impacts to marine species.**

Interacting with marine species is not without risks both for people and the animals concerned. Impacts can result in behavioural change in species and affect key life history activities which support their survival such as feeding young and protecting them from predators. Support vessels can cause unintentional injuries especially when travelling fast and erratically or they can cause disturbance between groups of animals which is of particular concern when this is between mothers and calves of cetaceans and dugong. Distracting animals from behaving naturally can reduce their alertness for presence of real predators or reduce feeding or resting opportunities. Aircraft including drones may also cause disturbance. In water interactions can also be problematic when not managed carefully. People can be tempted to get too close or even touch or capture animals which can be a risk to both the animals concerned and people. Seabirds at nesting colonies could abandon their nests if disturbed and leave eggs or chicks vulnerable to predation or overheating or be left abandoned altogether. All of these activities can have individual impacts but also potentially long-term consequences for populations of these animals by increasing mortality or reducing breeding success.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.vanuatuconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Tourists-Guide-for-Interacting-with-Dugongs-WEB.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://iaato.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/IAATO-Bird-Watching-Guidelines-A3-Poster.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/4765/gbrmpa\\_GuidelinesManagingVisitationSeabirdBreedingIslands.pdf](https://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/4765/gbrmpa_GuidelinesManagingVisitationSeabirdBreedingIslands.pdf)



### **Diving and snorkelling.**

Intensive scuba diving, snorkelling and associated boating can directly damage corals, making them susceptible to other stresses. Significant diver damage is often seen on frequently visited reefs. As a result, reef tourism constitutes an increasing threat to the natural resource base from which they have grown and risks undermining a source of income and development. This is of particular concern since reefs are facing increasingly severe climate change impacts, and reducing direct stress is critical to promote resilience.

Guidelines to reduce impacts to the environment by divers have been developed by Green Fins, a public-private partnership developed by UN Environment and The Reef-World Foundation. The Marine tourism guideline should also incorporate these concepts and there is the opportunity for national governments and industry to sign up to implementation of this model. However, whether or not they do, these marine guidelines should provide overarching principles and codes of practice to enable tourism operators to develop their own guidelines.

### **Other impacts to the environment.**

There may also be other associated impacts to the environment from marine species tourism. Other habitats such as seagrasses and mangroves may also be impacted by tour vessels such as causing wave wash and associated erosion. Vessel operators may also require separate or associated advice on ways to ensure protection of the environment from their operation and from the tourists they convey. For example, use of certain types of sunscreens can be damaging to corals and there is an expectation that trash brought on vessels will be appropriately managed to prevent entry into the marine environment. Tourists also often like to collect natural souvenirs, such as shells and coral. There are international (Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species, CITES) and national rules around this in many cases, but where there are not, expectations on what tourists should and shouldn't be allowed to collect should be made clear. Tourists of course, also wish to take photos, but again guidelines around proximity to wildlife and use of equipment such as drones should be controlled.

### **Culture.**

Culture and the natural world are closely intertwined. When people visit Pacific Islands there is an expectation that they will interact with new and diverse cultures. This provides an additional opportunity for Pacific peoples to also showcase their traditional knowledge, culture and understanding of the natural world. This is particularly important in relation to marine species in the Pacific. Many marine species are iconic and hold important significance for Pacific peoples. They are also likely to be desirous that there should not be harm caused to these marine species and that their beliefs and traditions are respected and sensitively portrayed. Many local communities are already effectively monitoring and managing their marine species, for example there are a number of community groups that monitor and tag turtles. Cultural issues and opportunities for communities to provide unique nature based cultural experiences relating to marine species will need to be integrated into the new guidelines. The Pacific Regional Culture Strategy which has been endorsed by the Pacific Ministers highlights the importance of developing cultural heritage tourism. This will inform the development of this marine tourism guideline.

### **Cruise Industry.**

Cruise ships are an integral part of tourism in the Pacific region and it is likely that this mode of tourism will grow rapidly post COVID. Cruise ship operations also have the potential to impact marine species and their environments. Impacts can range from poor management of waste, accessing remote and sensitive habitats and species, overcrowding and disturbance of marine species and disturbance from ships lighting for seabirds resulting in birds crashing in to ship superstructure at night. There are a number of industry organisations and individual operators relating to the cruise industry in the Pacific who will be

important to consult with in the development of these guidelines. Most have sustainability advice for their members. For example the South Pacific Cruise Alliance<sup>4</sup>. (Pacific network) Cruise Lines International Association<sup>5</sup>. The South Pacific Sailing Network<sup>6</sup>.

Existing resources supporting sustainable tourism in the region.

Following the inception of the Pacific Tourism Organisations Sustainable Tourism Programme in 2017 The **2030 Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework** (PSTPF) was developed. This sets out the shared vision, policies and actions needed to transform tourism to be more sustainable and provide greater benefits to Pacific communities. The vision is: *By 2030 we are empowered by, and benefitting from tourism that is resilient, prosperous and inclusive. It improves the wellbeing of our communities and protects, restores and promotes our cultures, islands and ocean ecosystems.*

The marine tourism guidelines will support the aims of the 2030 PSTPF particularly in relation to biological diversity as the guidelines state: *To support the conservation of natural areas, habitats and wildlife, and minimise damage to them.*

Goal 4 of the policy on Healthy Islands and Oceans, Action 4.7 states: *Provide guidelines for visitors to undertake responsible behaviour in ecologically important areas.*

The PSTPF also contains an appendix listing a wide range of existing supporting resources.

SPREP in association with the Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) have also produced Environmental Impact Assessment Guidelines for Coastal Tourism Development in Pacific Island Countries and Territories found [here](#). These guidelines provide specific tourism sector advice to complement SPREP's overarching regional EIA guidelines. It is important when developing new tourism products that include building or expanding existing infrastructure that this guidance is taken into account. However these guidelines and the 2030 tourism Policy Framework do not provide specific advice relating to protecting marine species and habitats from operations which enable people to interact with them or their environment. These new guidelines and codes of conduct are intended to do this.

#### **Other resources being developed concurrently.**

The SPTO is also working on other resources to inform tourism development in the Pacific.

*Sustainable Tourism Criteria for Pacific Islands Countries.* SPTO has developed a draft Pacific Sustainable Tourism Standard (PSTS) There are already some national standards in place including Quality Assurance Programmes and minimum standards for beach fales and hotels in Samoa, for example. The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) have established universal standards for sustainable travel and tourism, known as the GSTC criteria and can provide certification and training. <https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-destination-criteria/>

The SPTO is now a member of the GSTC as is Vanuatu, French Polynesia and Fiji. However, existing standards do not clearly align with the key pillars of sustainability for destinations which is what the SPTO has now developed through this PSTS. The PSTS envisages a code of practice for wildlife viewing which reflects international standards and this project will provide those guidelines/codes of practice.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://southpacificislands.travel/south-pacific-cruise-alliance/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://cruising.org/en/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.south-pacific-sailing.com/>

SPTO is developing a sustainable destination planning and management guideline/toolkit and SPREP is developing regional environmental auditing guidelines for tourism operations in the Pacific. This will support existing guidelines – the EIA Guideline and a coastal EIA guideline.

### Existing guidelines.

There is already a wide array of existing guidelines available internationally, regionally and nationally in some cases with guidance on appropriate behaviour around marine species.

Some Pacific countries have also developed regulations and /or guidelines on how to safely interact with marine species. For example, Tonga has an updated draft regulation to improve management of the whale swimming industry.

In 2009 SPREP, supported by the Australian Government with International Fund for Animal Welfare and Opération Cétacés in New Caledonia produced the Pacific Islands regional guidelines for whale and dolphin watching.

Others include

- Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) in 2017 developed guidelines on marine boat-based wildlife watching for different taxonomic groups (Sirenians, marine turtles, pinnipeds, elasmobranchs, and seabirds [Sustainable boat-based marine wildlife watching](#)
- CMS is currently developing guidelines for recreational *in-water interactions* with aquatic mammals and other CMS listed species
- [Global best practice guidance for responsible whale and dolphin watching](#) Sophie Lewis and Dylan Walker World Cetacean Alliance, 2018
- [Responsible shark and ray tourism WWF Project Aware Manta Trust](#)
- <https://www.vanuatuconservation.org/guidelines-for-interacting-with-dugongs/>
- The New Zealand Department of Conservation (DOC) also have advice on how to behave around wildlife including birds to marine mammals and sharks and provide resources including fact sheets. <https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/native-animals/how-to-behave-around-wildlife/>
- DOC also provide guidance on visiting pest free islands. <https://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/know-before-you-go/visiting-pest-free-islands/>

### Approach.

The Marine tourism guideline for marine species will provide practical guidance for Pacific Island countries and territories to effectively manage their marine tourism operators who provide tourism opportunities for people to interact with marine species and their environments. These guidelines could also inform or be a component of the environmental standards which are to be developed by the SPTO through the Sustainable Tourism Criteria for the Pacific Islands. It is expected that the guidelines will also be suitable to be used directly by tourism operators as guidelines or codes of conduct to inform their own daily best practices.

SPREP and the SPTO are proposing to collaborate on the development of the Marine Tourism Guideline for Marine Species for the Pacific. As a first Step the SPREP consultant will conduct a desk top review of all available guidance relating to interacting with marine species and their environments and evaluate and assess how they should inform the development of a specific guideline for the Pacific situation. The output will be a review document. From this , the consultant will scope out what the Pacific guideline should contain. At this stage and before the final document is developed, there will be a period of consultation with stakeholders across the region, through a series of workshops, led by the SPTO with support from SPREP and the consultant. This will ensure that the proposed scope and content of the

document will meet the needs of the regional tourism industry and the protection of the marine species and their environments. It is envisaged that the guidelines will contain case studies from the region to enhance and support the guidelines messages.

The final guideline is intended to be published on the web and will be supported by follow-up awareness raising and training workshops supported by videos and webinars.

### **Description of Services.**

1. Undertake a review of current marine tourism guidelines and best practice globally specifically for marine species such as whales and dolphins, turtles, dugong, sharks and seabirds in the Pacific including seeking input from marine species experts and others as appropriate. Consideration of habitat protection such as coral reefs should be included. Provide a review document for publication by SPREP.
2. Based on this assessment, develop a proposed structure and content for the Pacific Marine Tourism Guidelines/Code of Conduct (PMTG/COC).
3. Conduct a Human rights/Gender and Social Inclusion assessment of the developing PMTG/COC
4. In collaboration with the South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) and SPREP Threatened and Migratory Marine Species Adviser undertake stakeholder consultation in the region to ensure the proposed structure and content will meet the needs of the tourism industry to ensure protection of marine species, the environment and tourists.
5. In collaboration with the Pacific BioScapes programme communications and outreach specialist develop a communications and public awareness strategy to promote and socialise the PMTG/COC.
6. Following stakeholder consultation including expert elicitation, produce a draft PMTG/COC for comment by SPREP in collaboration with SPTO including the Threatened and Migratory Species Adviser and the BioScapes Communications Officer.
7. SPREP and the consultant to conduct further consultation of the draft PMTG/COC prior to finalisation by the consultant.
8. Consider and provide recommendations on how to enhance integrating the PMTG/COC into tourism policy development.
9. Following finalisation of the PMTG/COC, the consultant with SPREP in collaboration with SPTO will hold a final workshop presenting the final guideline for tourism operators.
10. The Final document will be provided to SPREP for online publication.
11. Provide photos for use in the guideline publication and other awareness materials

### **Communications**

The consultant will follow the Pacific BioScapes Programme Communications and Visibility Strategy in the development and approval of all external documents and media publications. The Pacific BioScapes Programme has a communications and outreach specialist who can provide advice.

### **Remuneration**

The budget for services provided is up to **USD 40,000** based on submission and acceptance by the Threatened and Migratory Species Adviser of a summary report of agreed deliverables and invoices.

All travel costs, development, and production of public awareness materials will be covered in the Consultancy Fee.



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SPREP in collaboration with the SPTO will organise and fund workshops and consultations to which the consultant will be required to attend.

### **Work Arrangements**

The consultant does not need to be based in the Pacific but will be expected to travel to any consultation meetings if required.

### **Duration of Consultancy**

The consultancy is expected to run for 12 months.