

A monthly e-bulletin from the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

MESSAGE FROM MR. KOSI LATU, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF SPREP

Talofa from the SPREP campus,

We are heading into the third month of the year and SPREP has hit the ground running. We have been doing a lot of work both internally and externally in preparation for another busy year.

Our internal planning sessions are underway, whereby each of the five divisions within the Secretariat – Waste Management and Pollution Control, Biodiversity and Ecosystems Management, Climate Change, Environmental Monitoring and Governance and Corporate Services – take time to plan what their objectives are for the year, as well as lay out their work plans for 2017.

Several milestone events are happening this year, one being the Whales in a Changing Ocean conference, hosted by Tonga in April will look at emerging threats against Pacific whales, and will be the highlight of our two-year campaign to protect Pacific whales. If you'd like to find out more please visit www.sprep.org/whales-in-a-changing-ocean-conference-2017/home.

Our team is also working with UN Environment to support our Members in the lead up to the UN Ocean Conference in New York in June. This is a very important conference which



Mr. Kosi Latu, Director General of SPREP.

will address the health of our oceans, for which preparations are already underway at SPREP.

We look forward to another great year of work, and sharing them with you in our SPREP-Tok.

Soifua,

Director General, SPREP

SPREP-Tok LATEST NEWS



With key partners joining forces to tackle the issue of waste, rubbish on the streets of Majuro may soon be a thing of the past. Photo: A.Carvan/SPREP

TURNING THE TIDE ON THE WAR AGAINST WASTE

A wave of innovative new waste management initiatives and the introduction of landmark legislation, looks set to place Republic of Marshall Islands at the forefront of sustainable waste management practices in the Pacific islands region.

Work towards the transformation of the waste management on the small island nation has been made possible through close collaboration between key players working in the waste sector including donors, regional agencies, national and local government, local agencies, private sector, NGOs and crucially, community members.

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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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SPREP STRENGTHENS PARTNERSHIP WITH THE GLOBAL ISLAND PARTNERSHIP (GLISPA)



Pacific island delegates with SPREP at a special GLISPA event celebrating 10 years of leadership, at the CBD COP13 in Mexico.

2017 began in the spirit of partnership for SPREP, officially becoming a Friend of the Global Island Partnership (GLISPA). Working to promote action to build resilient and sustainable island communities, GLISPA is a partnership aiming to inspire leadership, catalyse commitments and facilitate collaboration for all islands. The work of GLISPA helps to implement Programme of Work on Island Biodiversity under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

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TONGA TO HOST MAJOR INTERNATIONAL WHALE CONSERVATION CONFERENCE



Photo courtesy of Niue Tourism.

Whales in a Changing Ocean is a new approach to whale conservation. The three-day event will focus on emerging threats to Pacific whales and will bring together political decision-makers, scientists, community, industry and development partners to investigate future legislative and research needs as well as designing innovative ways of cooperating and collaborating effectively. The conference is a highlight of the two-year campaign to protect Pacific whales led by SPREP.

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PACIFIC-UK MARINE SCIENCE PARTNERSHIP TO PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH AND COLLABORATION



L-R: Mr Kosi Latu and Dr Brett Lyons.

Pacific-UK marine science collaboration has been further strengthened with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between SPREP and the UK Government's Centre for Environment Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas). The agreement and work plan will explore a range of different partnership opportunities in the field of marine science. The MoU was signed on Monday 30 January at the SPREP headquarters in Apia, Samoa in a ceremony attended by Cefas and senior management from SPREP.

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SAMOA TAKES STEPS TO IMPROVE DATA AND INFORMATION ON ITS PROTECTED AREAS



Participants of the national workshop for protected areas stakeholders. Photo: SPREP

Samoa has been at the forefront of efforts to protect its unique biodiversity and ecosystems. It is home to O le Pupu Pu'e National Park, established in 1978, the first national park declared in the South Pacific. A national workshop for protected area stakeholders, co-organised and implemented by SPREP and MNRE was completed for Samoa last month to help initiate measures to improve data and information on Samoa's protected areas.

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SPREP UNDERGOES CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING



SPREP staff during one of the sessions for the MSP training. Photo: SPREP

SPREP underwent a week-long capacity building and training project with the Nataij consultancy firm in February. The capacity building activities and training were designed to strengthen the overall capacity of SPREP to develop and implement environmental projects across the Pacific region. A compendium of policies, manual, procedures and guidelines are in place and form key elements of SPREP's governance and management system.

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UN ENVIRONMENT AND SPREP PARTNERING TO SUPPORT THE PACIFIC ISLANDS AS THEY HEAD TOWARDS THE UN OCEANS CONFERENCE



Samoa. Photo: C.Iacovino/SPREP

Home to more than 10 per cent of the planet's oceans, the Pacific islands are uniting to help shape global ocean management as defined at the UN Ocean Conference in June this year. SPREP and the UN Environment Programme through its Pacific sub-regional office are partnering together to implement several different initiatives to support Pacific island countries as they prepare for the UN Ocean Conference.

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SPREP AND ISLAND CONSERVATION STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIP



The working relationship between SPREP and Island Conservation has been further strengthened following a visit from Island Conservation CEO, Ms Karen Poiani, and Southwest Pacific Regional Director Ray Nias. Island Conservation is SPREP's key partner for rodent eradication and have done a lot of joint work in Tonga, French Polynesia and other Pacific islands. The visit discussed preparations for a longer term Memorandum of Understanding between the two organisations which will see Island Conservation provide funding for the Invasive Species programme.

AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR FOR THE ENVIRONMENT VISITS SPREP



The Australian Ambassador for the Environment, H.E. Patrick Suckling, visited the SPREP headquarters in February. During his visit, Ambassador Suckling engaged with the Samoan Government and other partners on issues such as implementation of Samoa's nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement and also discussed Australia's climate support to the region.



PLANNING FOR BIOPAMA PHASE II TAKES PLACE

SPREP hosted members of the IUCN Oceania Regional Office in February. The overall objective of the visit was to meet with key SPREP staff to discuss BIOPAMA Phase II activities, with the aim being to have a draft grant partnership agreement, including a work plan and Terms of Reference developed. To find out more about BIOPAMA please visit: <https://pipap.sprep.org/content/About-BIOPAMA-0>