

## **REPORT OF SECRETARIAT OF WORK PERFORMED IN THE PERIOD JULY 2008 – JUNE 2010 IN RELATION TO THE NOUMEA CONVENTION AND PROTOCOLS**

Implementation of the Noumea Convention over the past two years has been carried out under marine and coastal conservation work as part of the Islands Ecosystems Programme, and environmental impact assessment (EIA) work as part of the Pacific Futures Programme. Legal advice, as a cross-programme service is provided following requests from countries.

Implementation of the two Convention Protocols on Dumping and Oil Spills has been carried out by the Marine Pollution Adviser with funding from the International Maritime Organisation. The focus is ship-based pollution.

SPREP continues to collaborate with UNEP, particularly on marine and coastal Ecosystem-based Management (EBM) planning.

In general, efforts to reinvigorate the Noumea Convention have been limited. A funding opportunity was unsuccessful under the European Union's EDF-10 concepts, despite success in the review rounds.

### **Articles 6: Pollution from Vessels**

In October 2008 SPREP submitted a joint paper with Australia, Marshall Islands, New Zealand, United States and Vanuatu to the IMO MEPC 58 (MEPC 58/9) requesting the institutionalisation of regional waste reception facilities to ensure that developing small island States and less developed archipelagic States are not prejudiced in their efforts to protect and preserve the marine environment and to encourage ratification of MARPOL. The principles of the document were supported by a number of delegations, and the Committee endorsed the two main elements in document MEPC 58/9:

- (a) in order to institutionalize regional arrangements for providing reception facilities, appropriate amendments should be made to the relevant MARPOL Annexes and resolution MEPC.83(44); and
- (b) until any future amendments to the relevant MARPOL Annexes are adopted and entered into force, the decision of MEPC 55 to recognize the benefit of regional arrangements as a means of providing reception facilities should continue.
- (c) And that member states are invited to develop amendments to the relevant MARPOL Annexes, Member States were invited to propose appropriate amendments to a future session of the Committee

Subsequently in March 2010, a paper was submitted by Australia and SPREP to MEPC 60 (MEPC 60/6/4) recommending amendments to MARPOL and other related instruments to institutionalise regional reception facilities. Progress on this will be reported to the next Noumea COP in 2012.

In 2008 and 2009, technical assistance was provided to Nauru and Fiji on their Marine Pollution legislation with further follow up required in the future. For Nauru the assistance was to provide advice on the Nauru Maritime Safety Authority Act and components of the Marine Pollution Prevention legislation and for Fiji, technical assistance was provided in the review of the Marine Pollution Prevention Management Regulations under the Fiji Marine Act.

In September 2008 and July 2009 technical assistance was provided in collaboration with SPC/RMP on Port Management by participating and presenting in two regional workshops and in the Pacific Countries Ports Association (PCPA) conference in Tarawa. At this conference, the model Ports Oil Spill Contingency Plan/Strategy was presented and endorsed by the PCPA meeting.

The Secretariat also conducted a series of Regional workshops in March 2009, these were:

- London Dumping Convention and Protocol Workshop
- Introductory training course on Ships' Ballast Water Management
- Port Biological Baseline Survey Training Course.

These workshops and training course was carried out by a number of facilitators and experts. The BWM training course utilised the GloBallast Ballast Water Management Training Manual developed under the United Nations Train-X methodology of the TRAIN-SEA-COAST programme which uses a train-the-trainer format whereby participants are encouraged to run similar workshops in their home countries. The 27 participants of whom ten (10) were women from 14 Pacific Island Countries (Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Niue, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu) were from government ministries and semi-owned government entities – environment departments, maritime administrations, port authorities, transport ministries, fisheries and quarantine. Some of the participants had over 25years of maritime experience.

#### Revised PACPOL Strategy

Whilst significant progress has been achieved in the PACPOL strategy 2000-2005, and the work that was carried out from 2006-2009 followed the road map as outlined in the regional strategy, it was time to review the existing strategy to take stock of what had been achieved, review the gaps and determine the priorities for the next 5 years.

The Revised PACPOL Strategy 2010-2014 outlines the priorities in the region for addressing marine pollution from ships with a revised mission statement “to protect public health, safety, environment and the natural resources of the pacific islands from the effects of ship sourced marine pollution” with a vision “that the people of the Pacific Islands are better able to prevent, minimise and mitigate ship sourced marine pollution.”

The above stated PACPOL mission statement and vision will be achieved through the implementation of a number of work plans which fall under five broad core principles – Prevention, Control, Monitoring, Mitigation and Management. The emphasis has been on prevention of marine pollution rather than mitigation. There are 23 new work plans that capture the wishes and opinions of the SPREP stakeholders whilst still ensuring international best practice. The full cooperation and engagement of policy and decision makers is of utmost importance to ensure a successful outcome of the PACPOL strategy well into the future. The laws, legislations and conventions adopted and created today ensure that the Pacific Island Countries and Territories remain a clean and healthy environment for the people and children of the Pacific to enjoy in years to come.

#### **Article 13: Mining and Coastal Erosion**

In August 2009, SPREP provided assistance to PNG's Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) and other national government agencies for improving their national EIA regulations, including technical and administrative processes through the “National EIA Training with a Focus on Addressing Mining Impacts on the Health of Coastal Ecosystems & Human Settlements, Port Moresby, PNG, 10-14 August, 2009”.

The training covered the principles, methods, best practices and legal requirements of the EIA and risk analysis processes and delivered practical exercises on EIA case studies and development activities in PNG and other countries in the region. The exercises focused on investigating the effects and risks of coastal mining developments – especially waste and pollution. The exercises explored the linkages and synergies between EIA and disaster risk analysis and other environmental assessment and planning processes – with a specific consideration of the UNEP GEO IEA process.

SOPAC and SPREP in collaboration with PNG's DEC and University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) and in consultation with UNEP offices in Nairobi and Bangkok co-organised the exercise.

SPREP also collaborated with SOPAC on compiling an inventory of past, present and proposed mining projects in the Pacific Region.

#### **Article 14: Specially Protected Areas and Protection of Wild Fauna and Flora**

The Island Ecosystems Programme focuses both on species conservation and ecosystems management. In relation to the former: 2008 was designated Year of the Coral Reef and a Campaign was held on that theme, ending in 2009. The year 2011 is being proposed as the Year of the Dugong.

SPREP has entered into Regional Memoranda of Understandings under the Convention for the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS). Activities under this area include:

- Pacific Islands Cetacean MoU agreed upon by 11 SPREP members (with Pitcairn supportive);
- Five SPREP members are now party to CMS;
- SPREP is currently implementing dugong and turtle surveys, and a review of legislation for these two species in conjunction with the CMS Abu Dhabi Office;
- Development of a recovery plan for Oceania humpback whale in collaboration with the SPWRC;
- Funding for cetaceans work has been made available from the Australian Indo-Pacific Fund for specific projects (e.g. Fiji project on establishing a long-term dataset for monitoring trends in humpback whale migration through Fijian waters);
- CEPF-funded turtle projects in two communities in Fiji to establish turtle monitors in communities in collaboration with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF);
- Supporting assessment of impacts of whale watching on whales in Vavau, Tonga; and
- Sub-regional capacity building on turtle satellite tagging including provision of equipment for satellite tagging in Fiji, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Tonga and Vanuatu.

In relation to coastal and marine ecosystems, the Coral Reef Initiatives for the Pacific (CRISP), with a focus (among other things) on enhancing institutional capacity for integrated governance of coastal and marine resources, including the promotion of economic tools to assist the management of marine resources, supporting existing networks and initiatives such as the Global Coral Reef Monitoring and the Locally-managed Marine Area networks and sharing experiences and skills between the French territories and the neighbouring countries, has been going-on since January 2007 and will be completed by December 2010. Examples of activities include:

- Community exchange on community-based marine resource management between Wallis and Futuna and Samoa;
- Socio economic survey in the communities of North Efate, Vanuatu;

- Elaboration of a business plan for the financing of Marine Protected Area network in French Polynesia; and
- Support provided to the Solomon Island Government to establish mechanisms to assist community-based management in the Malaita Province.

Additional activities by SPREP with regards to marine conservation efforts include:

- Mapping Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) in Samoa;
- Support for mapping Community Conservation Areas and Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in Polynesia and Melanesia;
- Eco-regional analysis supported in Cook islands;
- Mangrove mapping for conservation in Kiribati; and
- Support for an EBM planning process in PNG.

In addition SPREP is continuing to support Pacific Island Country (PIC) Parties to the Ramsar Convention with conservation and wise use of their wetland ecosystems. Wetlands as defined under the Ramsar Convention cover everything from freshwater lakes to mangroves, seagrass beds and coral reefs. There are currently five PIC Parties to the Convention and six wetlands of international importance. Activities include:

- Assistance for PIC Parties in accessing the Ramsar Small Grants Fund;
- Assistance for the preparation of national reports for the 10<sup>th</sup> Ramsar Conference of the Parties;
- Coordination of national World Wetlands Days celebrations;
- Updating of the Oceania Wetlands Directory;
- Assistance provided to Kiribati to demarcate the boundaries of their first nominated Ramsar site;
- Support provided to Nauru, Tuvalu and Tonga to either draft the required documentation for joining the Ramsar Convention, and/or documentation for nominating their first Ramsar sites;
- Training workshop on Ramsar site management planning for the five PIC Parties;
- Capacity-building support for community-based conservation practitioners in PICTs;
- Assistance to the Republic of the Marshall Islands to undertake the designation of their second wetland of international importance, Namdrik Atoll, which will be formally designated as a Ramsar site in early 2010;
- Support has been provided to Niue to commence preparations for joining the Ramsar Convention – Including identification of potential sites for Ramsar designation and drafting of required documentation for accession.

#### **Article 15: Co-operation in Combating Pollution in Emergency Situations**

In June 2008 SPREP supported the participation of 6 Pacific island country participants from Fiji, RMI, Samoa, Tonga with funding to attend an IMO/OPRC Level II workshop in AMOSC Geelong.

In 2008 and 2009 SPREP also provided technical assistance to 5 PICs - Fiji, Kiribati, PNG, RMI and Samoa on updating of their NATPLANS.

The Secretariat also conducted the first *Environment & Marine Pollution Enforcement training* in Kiribati. The training involved both: classroom session covering illegal oil discharges from ships and a practical hands-on training at the local oil terminal, vessel and port area. The training was modelled on *International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, MARPOL 73/78 & the Interpol Manual – Illegal Oil Discharges from vessels*. This useful training material will be further adapted for implementation in the Pacific region with sessions scheduled for Kiribati and Fiji at the end of 2010.

In September 2009, the secretariat assisted in the Tier III response to the Forum Samoa II that ran aground at the Apia Harbour. The PACPLAN was activated by the Samoan Government with mutual assistance provided by the government of New Zealand. Maritime NZ provided about 7 tonnes of equipment and 5 response experts that were flown to Samoa on a Hercules aircraft.

Also in September 2009 the secretariat in partnership with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and in kind assistance from the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, with collaboration from SPC-RMP and support from the Fiji Islands Maritime Safety Administration, Fiji Ports Corporation Limited and Oil companies in Fiji – BP Oil, Mobil and Total conducted a five day IMO Level II Oil Spill Training Course in Suva from the 28<sup>th</sup> September to the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2009. It was attended by twenty nine (29) participants from port authorities around the region from 10 pacific island countries (Cook Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Fiji, Kiribati ,Niue, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu) as well as participants from FIMSA and the Oil Companies BP, Mobil oil and Total.

Although there have been participants from the region who have attended training in Australia, New Zealand, United States and France, this was the first time that a regional oil spill level II response training was conducted in the pacific. All the participants unanimously recommended that there should be more of this sort of training in the region to be run in different countries.

The training course also included 2 practical field exercises – a shore line boom deployment and a wharf deployment exercise.

#### **Article 16: Environmental Impact Assessment**

SPREP has run several EIA training courses for PICTs, including Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and PNG, and these will continue. Several legal assessments of EIA legislation have also been conducted.

As part of an overall EIA study for augmenting a hydro-electric scheme in Samoa, SPREP in conjunction with national government and research agencies conducted a 12-month marine quality monitoring programme.

See also under Article 13 above.

#### **Articles 17 and 18: Scientific and Technical Cooperation and Assistance**

SPREP continues to collaborate with partners and to provide and receive technical assistance.

The legal web-page provides information on the Noumea Convention: <http://www.sprep.org/legal/regional.htm>.

The Information Resource Centre at SPREP has recently launched a Clearing House for all Multi-lateral Environment Agreements <http://www.sprep.org/publication/MEA> which includes documents and links associated with the Noumea Convention.