



Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

TWENTY-FIRST SPREP MEETING

Madang, Papua New Guinea
6 – 10 September 2010

Agenda Item 6.3: Regional Institutional Framework (RIF) Update

Purpose

1. To update Members on progress in implementing the Regional Institutional Framework review decisions relating to the functions of the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC), the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and SPREP.

Background

2. The joint meeting of the governing bodies of SOPAC, SPC and SPREP in July 2009 in Nadi, Fiji, agreed:

- The ICT outreach programme of SOPAC would be integrated with SPC's digital strategy programme under the new economic development division of SPC;
- The energy programme delivered by SOPAC would be transferred to the Economic Division of SPC;
- The Pacific Global Ocean Observing System, the Islands Climate Update, the Climate and Meteorological database, and the component of the energy sector relating to monitoring and evaluation of greenhouse gases and the clean development mechanism (CDM) would be transferred to SPREP; and
- the remaining functions of SOPAC would be transferred to SPC as a new geosciences division.

3. These decisions were endorsed by the Forum Leaders in Cairns in August 2009 with implementation from 1 January 2010. The 20th SPREP Meeting noted both the arrangements relating to energy policy and climate change and the next steps for the four functions to be transferred from SOPAC to SPREP.

Overview of progress since the last SPREP meeting in November 2009

4. Significant progress has been made since the last SPREP meeting. In February 2010, the CEOs of SOPAC, SPC and SPREP agreed to a two-track approach to implement the RIF reform process:

Track 1: the transfer of ICT outreach and Energy functions of SOPAC to SPC and the four climate change related functions to SPREP by 1 April 2010;



Track 2: the transfer of the rest of the core work programme of SOPAC to SPC from January 2011.

5. The 'two-track' approach was favourably considered at the special meeting of the SOPAC Subcommittee in late February 2010, which agreed to proceed straight away with Track 1 implementation.
6. The CEOs of SOPAC, SPC and SPREP – represented by its Deputy-Director signed formal 'Letters of Agreement', including one covering the transfer of the climate change related functions from SOPAC to SPREP, from 1 April 2010.
7. A copy of the Letter of Agreement (LOA) between SOPAC and SPC is attached.

The four functions transferred to SPREP

(i) Pacific Islands Global Ocean Observing System

8. PI-GOOS is part of the global ocean observing system for meteorological and other environmental observations in support of World Meteorological Organization programmes. SPREP hosts the closely linked climate observing system (PI-GCOS). The aim of the PI-GOOS programme is to assist sustainable development in Pacific Island nations by facilitating coastal and open ocean observing programmes, and helping to improve uptake and use of the data, information and products generated. It has several main tasks – data management and access, observing programmes, communication through the Vai Pasifika newsletter, and education and awareness.

9. The post of PI-GOOS Coordinator has been vacant since late 2008. SOPAC undertook an initial recruitment in mid-2009 which was later halted due to the RIF discussions. SPREP will re-start the recruitment as soon as sufficient donor funding is available.

10. The PI-GOOS has been funded to date by SOPAC, Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), UNESCO, NOAA, and the Australian Bureau of Meteorology.

11. As discussed at the 20th SPREP Meeting there are many opportunities for updating the PI-GOOS TOR and to forge close links between different SPREP work streams, such as with marine conservation, marine pollution and climate change more generally.

Next steps

12. In order for SPREP to fully engage in the PI-GOOS work, it will be necessary to bring on board a full time programme officer. This post sits logically with the Pacific Futures Programme as it will work closely as quickly as possible with the climate change team and the waste and pollution prevention team. The costs for this post will be approximately US\$120,000 per year, commensurate with the budget reported on by SOPAC for 2008. This includes a salary component of US\$65,000 plus the balance for operational expenses.

13. The Secretariat has secured a copy of the Terms of Reference for the post issued by SOPAC when they advertised the post. Relevant donor organizations have been contacted to assure them that the PI-GOOS governance structure will be maintained and in fact, strengthened. It is also possible that a closer link will need to be made with regional work on sea level rise monitoring.

14. A financial statement has been provided by SOPAC to SPREP indicating carried over funds of approximately FD30,000 (US\$15,000) from 2008.

2010 Update

15. The PI-GOOS position and its associated reference materials from SOPAC were transferred to SPREP in April 2010. SPREP recognized that the approximately US\$15,000 of remnant budget from SOPAC was insufficient for the recruitment and initial deployment of the PI-GOOS Coordinator position within SPREP and requested PI-GOOS donors to assist by providing 2010 funding as soon as possible so as to resume the recruitment process. At the time of writing the donors are still in deliberations as to the funding to be sent to SPREP for 2010 and 2011. Recruitment efforts will commence once SPREP receives sufficient funds.

(ii) Islands Climate Update

16. NZAID funds a programme which since the late 1990s has provided monthly climate information through the Pacific Island Climate Update (ICU) and which has developed and strengthened the basic hydrological training needs of small island countries in the Pacific. Plans are being developed to broaden the scope of the ICU to include additional information for end users in Pacific islands, such as effects of forecasted climate on islands' water resources (rainfall, surface and ground waters), agriculture (sugar cane) and energy (hydro-electric) sectors.

17. While the ICU has been distributed widely, key stakeholders in a 2008 review indicated that the ICU's focus should be refined for more specific relevance for use by climate sensitive sectors such as energy, water supply and agriculture, to fit into a more specific role for primary climate information providers such as the national meteorological services, and to make a better fit with other monthly regional climate information bulletins.

18. SPREP expects to receive the totality of the NZAID funding support for the ICU production (this includes the bulletin production as well as the coordinated monthly teleconference call between experts and Pacific NMSs) for the period July-September 2010. A contract between SPREP and NIWA will be drawn up to facilitate the work of NIWA to produce the ICU bulletin, and funds should then be transferred to NIWA to produce the ICU.

Next steps

19. This work will require a new contract with NZAID.

2010 Update

20. NIWA and SPREP have collaborated on a funding proposal to NZAID which has been under consideration since early 2010. Currently the proposal is being refitted to a 2010 only funding schedule with a meeting between SPREP and NIWA planned for early August to decide on future multiyear funding for the ICU after 2010.

(iii) Climate and Meteorological Database

21. In 2007 SOPAC and NIWA initiated a project for climate data rescue, funded by NZ Ministry of Environment/NZAID (and sourced from a climate bilateral between the USA and New Zealand using US funds). The goal of the project is to rescue and digitize historical climate data that the NIWA office holds for Pacific Island countries in which the NZ Met Service formerly operated (including Samoa, Niue, Cook Islands, Fiji and Tonga). NIWA has carried out this digitization work over the past few years in Wellington. SOPAC's role has been to facilitate the transfer of funding to enable the work by NIWA and to provide updates to its partners (including SPREP) and NZAID.

22. It is understood that while SOPAC was to get a copy of all digitized records, it has only received metadata rather than the core data on rainfall and temperature, etc., because of NIWA policy that Pacific data belongs to the Pacific countries and access permission must be sought from Directors of NMSs.

23. The Secretariat could act as custodian and repository for historical climate records, providing some access for researchers and practitioners for use in relevant Pacific based climate change work. However, the sensitivity over data access would persist, and to develop this capacity would require some considerable ICT involvement to develop a database and possibly a database server to provide web-based access. As such it is likely that some cost considerations will be required, something that is likely not included in the current agreement between SOPAC and Ministry of Environment/NZAID.

Next steps

24. In order to progress this work the Secretariat requires a clearer understanding of the contractual arrangements between SOPAC and NIWA/NZAID/NZ MfE so that a revision could be made to accommodate the transfer of the tasks. A discussion will also be needed on the issue of access to the database.

2010 Update

25. NIWA and SOPAC have reported that the project was completed in June 2010 as per schedule of the existing contract between NIWA and SOPAC. Final payments have been made with final project activities of sending the data and metadata CD-ROMS to participant PICs and SOPAC and SPREP.

(iv) **Component of the energy sector relating to monitoring and evaluation of greenhouse gases and the clean development mechanism (CDM)**

26. Current activities in the SOPAC work programme appear to be largely the provision of information on the CDM and methodologies for monitoring GHG emissions in the region. The work is being carried out by a Project Officer-Energy, but is not the only work areas for that post. The activity budget of US\$2,000 covers the publication of leaflets and brochures.

27. SPREP is the hub for the EU MEA project which has a capacity building component on CDM.

2010 Update

28. On the monitoring and evaluation of greenhouse gases, the Secretariat is currently assisting member countries: by providing training to three members of the Tuvalu Second National Communication team in the conduct of their greenhouse gas inventory; assisting UNDP in the conduct of the mitigation part of a follow-up workshop on the Second National Communication; and it will respond to Niue's request for assistance once arrangements are finalised. Due to staff turnover, SPREP facilitated the delivery of assistance to the Republic of the Marshall Islands. SPREP has recently recruited a Climate Change Mitigation Officer to assist members in this area.

29. A regional workshop in Suva in May 2009, discussed specific activities and explored the needs of the countries or the region in terms of CDM capacity development, and a project work-plan based on the needs in the countries and the region was endorsed. While the project placed initial emphasis on Fiji and PNG, Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands are also being considered as alternatives.

Energy

30. On 1 January 2010 SPC assumed the lead agency role in the regional energy sector, and in April 2010 it absorbed SOPAC's energy programme. SPREP has supported SPC in its implementation of the RIF reforms relating to energy and other matters.

31. Following an intensive planning workshop to discuss and articulate the energy policy directions for the region, which SPREP participated in and to which SPREP also funded the participation of experts from Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu, SPC identified three main outputs:

- i. A draft 'new' Regional Energy Policy for the Pacific islands based on a review and refinement of the existing policy;
- ii. A draft 'single over-arching Pacific regional strategy for energy' that translates the policy into a strategic and focused action framework; and
- iii. A draft work-in-progress 'comprehensive plan for implementation' based on the premise of 'many partners, one strategy, one plan, one financing mechanism, one monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanism'.

32. The overarching Framework for Action on Energy Security in the Pacific was endorsed by a special Forum Energy Ministers' Meeting in Brisbane in June 2010, and will be submitted for endorsement by Leaders at the Forum meeting at Port Vila, Vanuatu in August. Endorsement by other non-Forum PICTs will be at a Pacific Energy Ministers' Meeting in 2011.

Recommendations

33. The meeting is invited to:

- **note** the full and effective transfer as of 1 April 2010 of the SOPAC climate change related functions to SPREP; and
- **endorse** the full and effective implementation of the four SOPAC functions within the Secretariat work programme.

20 July 2010