



Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

TWENTY-FIRST SPREP MEETING

Madang, Papua New Guinea
6 – 10 September 2010

Agenda Item 9.1.1: Regional marine species programme

Purpose

1. To seek endorsement of the proposal to declare 2011 the Pacific Year of the Dugong, and to inform the Meeting on the status of the Regional Action Plan for Sharks as developed jointly by SPC, FFA and SPREP.

Background

2. One of the medium priority actions listed under the theme of Education and Awareness in the SPREP regional Dugong Action Plan 2008-2012 is to declare a Pacific Year of the Dugong.

3. The 18th SPREP Meeting in 2007 agreed to include sharks as a species of special interest in the SPREP regional marine species programme framework. The meeting directed the Secretariat to collaborate with other relevant regional IGOs, in particular the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), SPC, and FFA in developing a regional action plan for sharks.

1. Pacific Year of the Dugong

4. SPREP's regional marine species programme focuses on three groups of marine species: dugongs, marine turtles and cetaceans (whales and dolphins). Each of these groups has a 5-year regional action plan for 2008-2012 developed by members and partners and endorsed by the SPREP Meeting. The action plans highlight national, regional and international priority actions under nine themes including Education and Awareness.

5. One of the regional priority actions in the Dugong Action Plan 2008-2012 is the declaration of a Pacific Year of the Dugong, with the Secretariat providing support in the planning, development and implementation of in-country and regional range state conservation campaigns. In particular, this initiative will involve close collaboration with the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS). The celebration of the Pacific Year of the Dugong will be specific to the members of SPREP that are dugong range states – Australia, New Caledonia, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The campaign will be sub-regionally focused and will include development of awareness material on dugongs and their habitats. Assistance will be provided by the Secretariat to island range states for the national campaign activities including translation of awareness information into local languages and other relevant work.



2. *Pacific Islands Regional Plan of Action for Sharks*

6. The consultancy to develop a regional action plan for sharks was funded by FAO under a joint proposal by FFA, SPC and SPREP. Work was carried out during 2009 involved:

- Gathering of information on the National Plans of Action – Sharks implemented by WCPFC Conservation and Management Measures, and on existing regional action plans for other marine species;
- Meeting with focal points from FFA, SPC, SPREP and WCPFC;
- Gathering data, information and advice on fisheries monitoring (shark species identification, catch reporting, etc.) and options for scientific analysis, including catch estimation, the feasibility of shark stock assessment and interim indicators of fishing impacts; and
- Producing a draft Pacific Islands Regional Plan of Action for Sharks and incorporating comments from focal points from SPC, WCPFC, SPREP and FFA.

7. The consultancy was completed in October 2009 and the document launched on 16 November 2009. The document is available on the SPREP website: http://www.sprep.org/att/publication/000853_RPOA_Sharks.pdf.

Recommendations

8. The Meeting is invited to:

- **endorse** the year 2011 as the Pacific Year of the Dugong;
- **call** on partners and donor agencies to provide assistance where possible to ensure a successful Pacific Year of the Dugong;
- **note** the Pacific Islands Regional Plan of Action for Sharks, produced jointly by FFA, SPC and SPREP; and
- **direct** the Secretariat to provide assistance to Members in the implementation of the Pacific Islands Regional Plan of Action for Sharks where possible.

14 June 2010

