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# South Pacific Regional Environment Programme

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REPORT OF THE  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING ON THE  
SPREP ACTION PLAN

Noumea, New Caledonia, 24 - 28 September 1990

South Pacific Commission  
Noumea, New Caledonia  
October 1990

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**SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME**

**SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION**

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING ON THE SPREP ACTION PLAN**

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**REPORT**

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## INTRODUCTION

1. The Third Intergovernmental Meeting on the SPREP Action Plan was held at South Pacific Commission Headquarters, Noumea, New Caledonia, 24-28 September 1990. The meeting was convened to enable direct involvement by the member governments and administrations in the determination of SPREP's Work Programme for the ensuing two-year period, 1991-92. Generous financial assistance from the Government of Australia made it possible for SPREP to hold the meeting which was well attended not only by representatives of member countries and territories but also by representatives of a large number of international and regional supporting organisations. A full participants list is attached as Annex I.

## AGENDA ITEM 1 - OPENING OF THE MEETING

2. The meeting was opened by Mr Atanraoi Baiteke, the Secretary-General of the South Pacific Commission (SPC), who welcomed delegates to this, the third in a series of SPREP meetings to adopt a biennial work programme. He referred to the vital role to be played by delegates who were charged with ensuring that the countries and territories that they represent benefit most effectively from the environmental protection activities of their own regional environment programme. The success of the future activities of SPREP hinged not only on the planning and forethought that the Secretariat had put into the meeting, but on the work that delegates would undertake over the following week in adopting a realistic and viable work programme and budget for 1991-92.

3. The Secretary-General referred delegates to other important issues for discussion, particularly those of the future for SPREP and the implications for the programme associated with the entry into force of the SPREP Convention. SPREP, he said, has reached a crucial stage in its development and now has the legal backing of an important international convention. As well, the programme is continually strengthening, attracting considerable interest and increasing financial support.

4. Thanks were given to the network of implementing institutions, collaborating regional and international organisations as well as donor governments and agencies for their assistance in the successful implementation of the 1989-90 Work Programme. Appreciation was also accorded to the SPREP Steering Committee for its significant contribution in guiding and directing SPREP throughout the biennium. The Secretary-General urged those present to again assist SPREP in 1991-92 through the provision of adequate funding, provided in a timely fashion to enable the large number of projects on the Work Programme to reach fruition.

5. The Secretary-General thanked the Government of Australia for the generous financial support it had provided which had assisted SPREP in convening this meeting. A full text of the Secretary-General's speech appears as Annex II.

## AGENDA ITEM 2 - ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

6. In accordance with the agreed alphabetical rotation of office bearers, the representative of the Federated States of Micronesia, Dr Eliuel Pretrick, was elected as Chairperson and the representative of Fiji, Mr Bhaskaran Nair, as Vice-Chairperson.

## AGENDA ITEM 3 - ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

7. The agenda was adopted with modifications. The revised agenda is attached as Annex III.

8. It was agreed that the meeting working hours would be as follows:

9.00 am	-	10.30 am	Plenary Session
10.30 am	-	10.45 am	Tea
10.45 am	-	12.00 noon	Plenary Session
12.00 noon	-	1.30 pm	Lunch
1.30 pm	-	3.00 pm	Plenary Session
3.00 pm	-	3.15 pm	Tea
3.15 pm	-	5.00 pm	Plenary Session

## AGENDA ITEM 4 - COUNTRY STATEMENTS

9. The representative of American Samoa stated that American Samoa has a very strong environmental programme, but also a myriad of problems like everyone else. With an increase of purse seiners, the cannery production has also increased thus continues to create enormous stress, not just to the environment, but to government services. The cannery high strength waste segregation is being barged five miles and disposed under an ocean dumping permit issued by the US EPA.

10. American Samoa is also reviewing the incineration of a solid waste proposal by French Polynesia in which American Samoa is very much interested due to its limited land resources and increased population. American Samoa is working closely with U.S. federal agencies in the development of a Wetlands Management Plan. This is not an easy task due to their communal land system and limited area for expansion. Recently a bill was passed by their local legislature granting statutory authority to the Coastal Zone Management programme.

11. The Government has established a Marine Protection Division to provide round-the-clock enforcement within the harbour and marine sanctuary. As well, the Governor recently signed into law the establishment of an environmental fund from fines collected from oil spill citations to be used for environmental restoration and cleanup activities. A public awareness programme is being set up to utilise local media including, TV, radio, newspaper, etc. Also they are working with their education department putting together an environmental curriculum aimed at all grade school levels.



12. The delegate concluded, stating that American Samoa enjoys a relatively good standard of living in spite of having a lower minimum wage than the US. But they have not exploited their labour forces in order to achieve this. They desire a healthy environment, as well as a stable economy simultaneously and realise this is a very expensive and difficult proposition to achieve, but they do not want to sacrifice one at the expense of the other. They desire a balanced perspective that provides the best of all three.

13. The representative of Australia stated that his country views itself as firmly part of the South Pacific region. The overwhelming majority of its population live within the coastal zone, and have common problems with other South Pacific nations. The development of the coastal strip has increased dramatically in the last few decades. Urban sprawl, tourist development, and manufacturing and natural resource based industries have placed stresses on what once seemed an inexhaustible resource. Competing claims on resources such as our remaining native forests have become major political issues in Australia as with other South Pacific nations. The impact of global changes such as ozone depletion and climate change induced sea level rise is shared by all in the region.

14. Australia has taken significant measures domestically to address these problems. Some, such as the National Working Group on Coastal Management, and the Resource Assessment Commission inquiries into forest resources and coastal zone resources, may provide results and methodologies which could have value to other countries in the region. In more direct ways Australia has shown its commitment to assisting countries of the South Pacific region address the environmental problems we face. As well as individual assistance projects, Australia has as a priority the representation of South Pacific interests in the international fora addressing environmental issues, such as climate change, ozone depletion and the conservation of biological diversity. This is reinforced by our activities in ensuring there is a capability in the South Pacific to monitor the degree of sea level rise.

15. Australia is part of the South Pacific region and shares the same types of problems of managing and conserving the environment and their natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations. Australia is involved in the conservation of endangered species, their habitats and in the conservation of rare and sensitive ecosystems; the conservation of migratory species such as birds, marine turtles and marine mammals; the involvement of traditional communities and the integration of traditional knowledge and practice in protected area management; and in the conservation and management of small island ecosystems. As a party to the Apia Convention which has recently entered into force, Australia looks forward to working together with other South Pacific countries on nature conservation issues of mutual interest and concern.

16. He further stated that the voice of the South Pacific could easily be overwhelmed on the world stage as we approach the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Australia is committed to ensuring that this voice is as clear and as loud as necessary.

17. The representative of the Cook Islands stated that Administration and overall environmental protection in the Cook Islands is progressing slowly. The Government has shown some support to the Conservation Services in performing its tasks by increasing its staff and expanding its accommodation and a general support for conservation.

18. Amongst the highlights in the environmental protection are: completion of posters on Rarotonga Mist Zone and sea birds of Takutea and Suvarrow; Rarotongan Flycatcher Booklet and a 1991 traditional calendar; identification of a mechanism to organise and implement Conservation Week activities; television documentary on the Environment produced by TVNZ; coastal zone management plan and coastal zone management oriented projects for 1991-92 SPREP Workplan; identification of a national mechanism to co-ordinate bilateral aid development and the activities under the Technical Assistance provided by multilateral organisations and subsequently proposed projects to that nature submitted to SPREP. The delegate noted and appreciated the nature of the NZODA environmental policy; the progressing success of the Kakerori recovery programme; Suvarrow wildlife survey and the collection of physical data required for the management plan and EIA on the proposed pearl farm and training facility establishment and, finally, the monitoring process of the implementation of the aluminium can recycling project which is currently underway. The Government of the Cook Islands appreciates SPREP's great help in assisting the Conservation Service.

19. The representative of the Federated States of Micronesia stated that his Government was very pleased to be participating in this Third Intergovernmental Meeting of the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme. They appreciated the value of the meeting in offering a forum for the environmental experts of the South Pacific to exchange information and experience and to determine future priorities for the development of the region's environmental resources in a sustainable fashion.

20. In the Federated States of Micronesia, the past two years has seen the cessation of financial assistance from the United States of America for their environmental protection programme as agreed upon by the Compact of Free Association. While this has allowed FSM to become more flexible in its environmental rules and regulations, it has also necessitated FSM becoming more economical in the management of these programmes. Due to this financial reduction, FSM has found that the success of many of its environmental protection activities depends much more on human than on financial resources. Environmental protection, in one form or another, has been practiced in their islands for generations and by building on this cultural history, such protection can be integrated into everyday activities.

21. Outside assistance continues to be provided to the public and private sectors of the country for economic development projects. Most of these involve the areas of tourism, marine resources and agriculture. The need to integrate these development schemes, in order that they can mutually support each other, is becoming increasingly apparent. With the completion of the FSM's second five-year development plan, such integration should be possible by following a planned programme of development with clear and agreed upon goals and objectives. Regarding the administration of the country's environmental protection programme in compliance with its constitution, FSM is continuing to support and develop the capabilities of the State Governments to conduct their own programmes, with a minimum of national government involvement. The national government remains ready to assist the states by providing technical assistance and in co-ordinating matters with international organisations such as SPREP, but the day-to-day programme activities are handled at the local level where such matters can be better handled and their impact understood.

22. The FSM looks forward to working with SPREP in order to maintain the resources of the region and to develop economies for the benefit of all its people. They are very happy to hear that the SPREP Convention is now in effect and are anxious to see it implemented.

23. The representative of Fiji stated that Fiji's diverse and relatively rich environmental resources have provided the basis for a stable tourism and primary industrial based economy. However, economic and population growth is placing pressure on key aspects of the country's resources and environment which, if not managed and utilised on a sustainable basis, will lead to resource depletion and degradation of environmental quality. In recognising this, the Government has proceeded to prepare a National Environment Strategy to assess the state of the national environment and develop mechanisms to ensure that a sound environmental planning and management framework is set in place to guide the future development of the country. Furthermore, Fiji has emphasised its regional and international commitments to environment and conservation by acceding to the SPREP, Apia and Vienna Conventions, and the Montreal Protocol.

24. The delegate further stated that the establishment of the Environmental Management Unit and recent policy initiatives indicates that the Government of Fiji is committed to developing an effective national approach to environmental planning and management. Development of the forthcoming National Environment Strategy provides the opportunity to set Fiji on the path to sustainable development by providing a much-needed data base, improved environmental planning and management policies, specific environmental legislation, and a framework for Fiji's future development.

25. The Representative of France reaffirmed the French Government's determination to define a new national environment policy geared to the large international problems. As examples of the latter he cited climatic changes; degradation of the ozone layer; pollution of aquatic environments and mismanagement of water resources; destruction of tropical forests; conservation of genetic diversity; waste management and control of chemical and industrial wastes; identification, promotion and protection of the world's heritage.

26. In all these fields of action, France intends to opt for regional and international co-operation. This was made clear by the President of the French Republic during his visit to French Polynesia in May 1990. At the end of the meeting of the South Pacific Council which was held during his visit, the announcement of the establishment of a permanent South Pacific environment observatory was a concrete manifestation of France's commitment in this part of the world. While this reemphasised France's intention to respond increasingly to the planetary challenges for coherent environment management in the South Pacific, an essential prerequisite for viable development, the Representative of France recalled that France had long contributed to studies carried out in the region for environmental protection and better resource management.

27. The French national research organisations, CIRAD, IFREMER, ORSTOM, CNRS, Museum of Natural History and various research institutes established by the French territories, in particular French Polynesia, have been actively involved in this type of work. ORSTOM, for instance, has been associated with SPREP activities virtually since the programme was set up. ORSTOM is also closely associated in the region with several international programmes aimed at achieving a better understanding of global climate mechanisms through comprehensive study of ocean-atmosphere interaction. Lastly, French research bodies are already collaborating or about to collaborate with their scientific counterparts in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, and Hawaii in fundamental and applied studies of tropical Pacific environments. All of this underscores the value that France, which has ratified both the Noumea and Apia Conventions, attaches to SPREP's activities and to whatever provisions might be adopted at this Meeting with a view to enhancing its efficiency, in response to the issues that will shape the future of the Pacific island populations.

28. The representative of Kiribati stated that, until recently, his country has taken for granted its physical environment making the assumption that ecosystems, on land and in the sea, as well as features of atolls which all support life of the people, are favourably self-adjusting and self-sustaining. But developmental and construction work has increased following economic growth and the changing of lifestyles from a traditional to a more modern one, as well as steady population growth and urbanisation. Compounding these development pressures, is the awareness of the greenhouse effect and sea level rise. Changes in the physical environment, particularly the shorelines which have retreated in many places together with uncertainties about the future, are attracting dispassionate concern of the Government and the people.

29. There is a recognition that local and global sources of pollution could have contributed to the degradation of the environment, which in turn leads to a greater limitation of the resource base for the people. As for global pollution sources, particularly greenhouse gas emissions, Kiribati thinks that SPREP should assist, in an adaptive way, with addressing these problems. He suggested that SPREP ought perhaps to take a more positive role to influence global discussions and deliberations on climatic change and sea level rise issues which could lead to negotiation of an international convention.

30. The Government of Kiribati has decided to establish an environmental monitoring unit, relating specifically to sea level rise and dependent on financial and technical assistance. It was reported that, in response to a Kiribati request, SPREP/UNEP/ASPEI had carried out a study of what the problems are and how Kiribati can effectively address these. This valuable assistance was much appreciated by his Government.

31. The environmental problems in Kiribati were clearly acknowledged and Kiribati anticipates and welcomes SPREP playing an increasing and expanding role within a national, regional, and global context, towards developing measures that will mitigate these problems. Financial and technical assistance from developed countries and other aid donors would be most welcome by Kiribati.

32. The representative of the Marshall Islands stated that the Republic of the Marshall Islands consists of twenty-nine low-lying coral atolls and five small islands, or table reefs, arranged over approximately one quarter million square miles of the central Pacific Ocean. The land mass is small (about 70 square miles in total), and their atolls' average height above sea level is between six and eight feet. Their environment is fragile, but they are committed to maintaining and preserving it and share with all peoples of the Pacific a deep and abiding respect for the land and the sea, which have provided daily sustenance to their people for thousands of years.

33. The daily management and conservation of the environment resides with two government-funded statutory authorities: the RMI Environmental Protection Authority and the Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority. The Ministry of Resources and Development has also been very active in environmental management and plans are presently underway to develop a nature conservation unit within the Ministry.

34. RMIEPA programmes include water quality monitoring, earthmoving permitting, solid waste management, pesticide monitoring, toilet facilities and sewage disposal permitting, a village inspection programme, and an active public education programme. They are also now drafting a comprehensive national environmental regulatory scheme. Much work, however, remains to be done in the protection of species and development of nature preserves. Additionally, the Marshall Islands shares the fate of many developing Pacific nations in regard to pollution. Their lagoons and shorelines are becoming increasingly polluted by urban wastes caused in part by overcrowding and poor sanitary conditions on their more populated atolls. Stronger local participation in environmental decision making is a partial solution, as is increased conservation funding and facilities. The RMI feels confident that its goals will be accomplished if people in the Pacific unite and work together to save their shared natural heritage.

35. The representative of Nauru brought greetings from his President and Government and congratulated the Chairman on his appointment and the Secretariat and the SPC for its arrangements which augured well for a successful meeting. He hoped that deliberations would be forward looking and that, as a result of this meeting, SPREP would be invested with authority, international and regional support and adequate financial resources to implement its future Work Programme.

36. He stated that it was an honour to be representing Nauru and contributing to deliberations to assist the increasingly important work of SPREP which would be of great benefit to the region as a whole.

37. The representative of New Caledonia outlined the environmental issues of importance to his territory; namely protection of lagoons, especially from pollution caused by mining; and wildlife protection, such as preservation of the Cagou. He stated that various environmental studies are currently underway in New Caledonia through research institutions such as ORSTOM and public awareness raising activities are being undertaken to make people conscious of the seriousness of threats to New Caledonia's environment.

38. Through co-operative activities between officials of New Caledonia and ORSTOM, projects are underway on mangrove protection, studies of the ciguatera problem, lagoon species protection, and underground water quality protection (in the islands of the territory). As well, remote sensing technology is being extensively used to carry out surveys on erosion. The delegate stated that there is considerable scope for extension of many of these activities to the region through SPREP.

39. The representative of New Zealand reported that a Resource Management Bill, which was referred to at the last intergovernmental meeting, was currently before Parliament, with sustainable development as this legislation's cornerstone.

40. The Government of New Zealand considers this Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) to be a key gathering, which should be a turning point in assisting SPREP to meet the growing environmental challenges facing the region. There has been much discussion of the future of SPREP, beginning with the Rongap/Piddington Review in 1985, Secretariat discussion papers dating from 1987 and active debate in the last two meetings of the Steering Committee - which deferred discussions to this Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM). New Zealand is convinced that this meeting can, and indeed must, steer a way forward, so that SPREP can deliver increased benefit to island countries through enhanced capacity and operational autonomy. These issues must be addressed now if an important opportunity is not to be lost for the region.

41. The delegate reported that his Government has ratified the SPREP Convention and announced its commitment of an additional NZ\$ 500,000 in 1990-91 and NZ\$ 1 million in 1991-92 in support of SPREP and related environmental activities recognising the importance of environmental issues in the region and the need to strengthen regional capacity. Referring to the continual escalation of the profile of environmental and conservation issues, he stated that New Zealand believes strongly both in the need to strengthen South Pacific regional capacity and in the region's need to maintain a high international profile.

42. New Zealand's environmental priorities, regionally and internationally, have been on ozone layer protection, global climate change, driftnet fishing, the protection of marine mammals, environmental protection of Antarctica, management of hazardous substances and follow-up to the Brundtland Report. The delegate outlined specific detail on each of these as well as domestic initiatives in Conservation Management.

43. New Zealand is playing an active role in preparations for the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) especially in relation to priority issues of interest to New Zealand and small island states. His Government sees the UNCED process as an important forum to promote policies which will translate the concept of sustainable development into practice and address the significance of sustainable development in the Pacific region to its future economic and social development.

44. New Zealand looks forward to close co-operation with SPREP under the DOC/SPREP Agreement and institutional support to be provided through the New Zealand Development Co-operation Programme.

45. The representative of the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas outlined the demographic features of the CNMI which is made up of a chain of 16 islands, 1,500 miles south of Tokyo and 1,500 miles east of Manila with a population of 40,000. The CNMI is currently undergoing tremendous growth in tourism and foreign investment with associated hotel development and impacts together with infrastructure and resource planning demands.

46. Responsibility for the environmental protection activities is vested in the Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ), essentially funded and organised around the structure of the US EPA and whose fundamental objectives are resource management, technical assistance, public awareness, and regulation/enforcement activities. With a staff of twenty people and a budget of US\$ 750,000, the DEQ addresses issues such as water quality, groundwater resource management, solid and hazardous materials storage and disposal, all of which are exacerbated by increased development activities. The future environmental protection needs of the CNMI relate to funding for infrastructure, greatly improved planning and resource management, together with enhanced public education.

47. The representative of Palau stated that over the past year the Republic of Palau has undertaken environmental education activities particularly with development of school curricula, environment/conservation posters, and production of an environmental video. During this period a module for teaching environmental education using local materials, i.e. concepts and examples, was produced. All of these were made possible with the help of SPREP, US Fish and Wildlife Service and the EPA, together with other national and international help. The establishment of the Nature Conservancy's Office in Palau has become a great help in many of the accomplishments and the development of many of the proposals for environmental/conservation projects.

48. The culture and release of clams, turtles and trochus has continued with some enforcement work being carried out by the Bureau of Public Safety and the Office of the Attorney. Other agencies of the Palau Government, active in the area of environmental/conservation, are the Bureau of Resources and Development, Bureau of Education and the Palau Environmental Quality Protection Board.

49. There is currently considerable development pressure, particularly in the construction area, with many joint ventures involved in building hotels/motels and/or a combination of hotels/motels and golf courses in the Republic. This has resulted in many so-called environmental scientists being hired to produce EIA's for the various projects.

50. The representative of French Polynesia stated that his territory attaches great importance to the universal environmental problems with which we are confronted, such as damage to the ozone layer and destructive fishing techniques. However, as his territory is not in a position to effect these larger issues, it has been necessary for French Polynesia to develop its own environmental policy which gives adequate protection to land and heritage.

51. Environmental policies in French Polynesia are four-fold; namely, (i) prevention of all forms of pollution, (ii) protection of wildlife, (iii) planning and management of land and marine areas, and (iv) education and consciousness raising.

52. The major changes that have taken place over the past twenty-five years associated with the replacement of a traditional way of life by a consumer economy, have resulted in major environmental degradation. However, recent community initiatives together with legal mechanisms and awareness raising activities are working towards amelioration of environmental problems. For instance, measures are being taken to protect black coral, green turtles, bird species and flora; six small islands have been protected under the first territorial park created in 1990; research is being undertaken to develop a marine management plan; environmental studies are being undertaken on rehabilitation of reef areas and erosion problems associated with building; policy is being established relating to ecosystem protection; the Ministries of Environment and Tourism are rehabilitating sites; celebrations for Environment Day with activities such as tree planting, have become institutionalised; audio-visual techniques are being used in public education activities to reach wide audiences; posters and booklets are being produced as a result of a close association between the Education and Environment Departments; and French Polynesia is exploring regional co-operation through such bodies as SPREP.

53. The representative of the Solomon Islands stated that the current state of environmental activity within his country is difficult to accurately assess due to the lack of an ongoing programme. Whilst his government is supportive of the development of legislative mechanisms, the multisectoral character of the environment results in legislation and policies specific to individual ministrates such as Health, Agriculture and Natural Resources.

54. Despite the lack of integrated environmental legislation, it is recognised that the impacts of natural resource exploitation such as tropical forest logging, agricultural development, mineral exploration and trade in wildlife are problems which must be resolved quickly. A recent ESCAP project which has developed draft legislation for environmental management will assist in this regard as will Solomon Islands' involvement in the proposed ADB/SPREP Regional Environmental Technical Assistance (RETA) programme.

55. The Solomon Islands is keen to follow a path towards sustainable development and is endeavouring to define that concept in terms of its national social, economic and environmental priorities. In this respect it is pleasing to note that there is growing public awareness and interest in the environment and conservation of natural resources by activities of Provincial Authorities, NGOs, Youth and Women's Organisation.

56. The representative of Tonga reported that Tonga still has a long way to go in achieving sound and sustainable development through incorporating conservation and environmental concerns at all stages of development. Nevertheless, the government of Tonga has shown progress since the last intergovernmental meeting.

57. As an example of this progress, she highlighted the collaborative effort by the Government of Tonga's Inter-departmental Environment Committee, ESCAP Secretariat and the Government of Norway in producing the Environment Management Plan (EMP) for the Kingdom of Tonga. The Government's endorsement of the plan and its recommendations will mark a major development within the Kingdom, however, effective implementation of the EMP for Tonga will be realised through technical and financial assistance from SPREP and other international organisations and donor agencies.



58. The representative of Tuvalu stated that responsibility for environmental conservation and management, together with its enforcement and administration, is vested within different ministries and within island councils on the outer islands. However, once this becomes the responsibility of one well co-ordinated and organised authority, the important issue of protection of the environment will be more effectively managed.

59. He drew delegates' attention to the growing concern within Tuvalu over sea level rise and its impact. Figures quoted in the report to the Commonwealth Secretariat on 'Climatic Change Meeting the Challenge' give best estimates of sea level rises of 17-26 cm by the year 2030 and 24-67 cm by the year 2050. The latter figures represent more than a one metre rise which would mean total submersion of Tuvalu. He urged fellow delegates from atoll countries to put this issue to regional and international organisations in the hope that suggestions and solutions to this big and difficult global problem might be forthcoming.

60. The representative of the United States of America (USA) expressed his delegation's appreciation of the warm welcome they had received to this Third Intergovernmental Meeting, and stated that, as a Pacific nation, the USA is committed to protecting the fragile environment of the region. As a nation whose citizens are increasingly concerned about the global environment, the USA is committed to taking the steps necessary to protect the environment within its borders and to working with its partners to ensure that the visions all have of what the world should look like becomes the reality.

61. He stated that never before in history has the environment been the focus of such passionate concern as it is today, and never have nations realised more strongly that national borders are no protection against environmental degradation. We all recognise that environmental policy must be regional at least and often global in order to be effective; what happens in the rain forests of Brazil affects us all. The USA is committed to working on environmental issues with fellow citizens everywhere. Although there may not always be agreement on each issue, it is known that there is no other way to proceed.

62. The USA has been a strong supporter of UN environment activities, such as the UNEP Regional Seas Programme. For example we are active in the Caribbean, signatories to the Cartagena Convention, are taking part in the Commission on Society and Cooperation (CSCE) Meeting in Palma de Majorca discussing environmental problems in the Mediterranean, and are here in the South Pacific to support SPREP. The USA has signed the SPREP Convention and is in the process of ratification. While we cannot predict how long ratification will take, there is good support in Washington for the Convention and no problems are anticipated.

63. The USA is also firm in its support of the national and regional programmes carried out under the SPREP Action Plan. The American Embassy in Suva, especially the Agency for International Development (AID) mission, demonstrates clearly, and on a daily basis, the commitment of the USA to protecting the environment of the South Pacific through its activities in seeking information about environmental problems and in discussing with the people in the region how these problems can best be resolved. The fact that resolving these problems is beyond the efforts of individual governments underlines again why we are in Noumea this week working together.

64. In posing the question: 'What does the USA expect for SPREP?', he said, the USA saw SPREP meetings as a forum for airing and dealing with regional environmental concerns; the SPREP Work Programme as offering economies of scale not possible if individual nations separated by wide expanses of ocean try to implement projects themselves. The USA wants to help ensure that SPREP research and projects are of high scientific and technical quality, they want to promote strong and efficient institutional and financial arrangements for SPREP and to ensure that the SPREP Work Programme and Convention are complementary and avoid duplication of effort. In short, they want SPREP to be effective in combating environmental problems. The USA is part of the Pacific community of nations, and cares about the Pacific environment.

65. The representative of Vanuatu stated that of the nine project proposals submitted to SPREP under the 1988-89 and 1989-90 Work Programmes, four have been implemented and the remaining five projects re-submitted under the Work Programme for 1991-92. He referred to signs of progress in some areas of environmental, social, economic and political development stating that, advice given by the Government's Environment Section is well received particularly in rural areas. No protected areas have yet been established although potential protected areas have been evaluated (PA 13) under the 1989-90 SPREP Work Programme, a project which will continue into 1991-92.

66. Education and Training play, and will continue to play, a vital role in Vanuatu's environmental protection and management programmes. The Government Environment Section has identified the training needs of the country and is particularly keen to give the grassroots as much training as possible so that they could make wise decisions with advice from the Government Section about what sustainable development means and how resources could be exploited.

67. As regards legal and policy matters, Vanuatu is currently progressing towards drafting its environmental legislation. Other sets of guidelines, e.g. EIA, have been produced and it is now mandatory that an EIA be produced for all large-scale developments proposed for Vanuatu.

68. The delegate referred also to the importance of environmental Non-Government Organisations (NGOs). The growing awareness of environment problems in Vanuatu has, he said, opened ways for other organisations to also deal with the issues that are arising. In this respect the establishment of the Vanuatu Natural Science Society (VNSS) in 1983 and the Wan Smolbag Theatre group in 1989 have played a significant role in environmental education programmes in Vanuatu. Whilst the methods of approach taken by these active NGOs are different, they have the same goal to educate the people. Vanuatu Natural Science Society (VNSS) produces a journal and organises seminars and meetings on topics relating to environment while the Wan Smolbag Theatre performs plays which address the environmental problems faced in this region.

69. The representative of Western Samoa described the birth of his government's new Environment Agency which enabled the co-ordination of environment and conservation issues by one department, namely that of 'Land and Environment'. He referred to the acceleration of interest in environmental issues since the establishment of this new agency which was evidenced by a five-fold increase in budgetary allocation, the convening of ten seminars and workshops within a nine-month period and a general increase in public awareness. The new agency has recently strengthened its staffing position and has been very successful in attracting funding for its forthcoming Environment Week activities in October.

70. A raised public consciousness of the need for environmental protection was further indicated by the recent establishment of an environmental Non-Government Organisation (NGO) which attracted 100 members within its first month of operation. Village initiatives, such as protection measures for two large customary-owned forest areas have also been undertaken. The devastation to the environment of Western Samoa caused by Cyclone Ofa also served to highlight the need to re-evaluate conservation as a priority.

71. Western Samoa has ratified the SPREP and APIA Conventions and, in the case of the latter Convention that Government was the first to sign and the last to ratify. Western Samoa will also participate in the forthcoming ESCAP Ministerial Meeting which they regard as a valuable opportunity for environmental ministers to discuss face-to-face with their colleagues from the driftnet fishing nations, the banning of this practice in the South Pacific region.

#### **Statements by Former Co-ordinating Group Members**

72. The observer from UNEP recalled the long association of UNEP with SPREP and its importance as the South Pacific component of the Regional Seas Programme. With the entry into force of the SPREP Convention, it is important to decide on the relationship between the intergovernmental arrangements for the Action Plan and those for the Convention, which should be simple, cost-effective and allow for the fullest participation of all states and territories in the Action Plan, while reserving to the contracting parties those legal issues relevant to the Convention and its Protocols. UNEP is ready to continue supporting SPREP as part of the Regional Seas Programme, and as part of its mandate to catalyse and co-ordinate the environmental work of the United Nations system.

73. The representative of ESCAP thanked the Chairman, as well as the SPC Secretary-General and the SPREP Co-ordinator for inviting him to attend this Intergovernmental Meeting. ESCAP, which had been involved in the setting up of SPREP, was glad to be able to go on contributing to its development. ESCAP was confident that the entry into force of the Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific would enhance SPREP's capacity to respond to the new environmental concerns that have arisen in the South Pacific.

74. The representative of ESCAP drew attention to preparations for the Ministerial Meeting on the Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific which will be held in Bangkok in October 1990, to the topics to be discussed at this Meeting and to the events that would take place concurrently. This Meeting was, among other things, expected to adopt a ministerial declaration in which participants would pledge to work together for the protection of the natural environment and the promotion of sustainable and environmentally sound development.

**AGENDA ITEM 5 - IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1989-90 WORK PROGRAMME OF SPREP**

75. The SPREP Co-ordinator introduced Working Paper (WP.3) on the Implementation of the 1989-90 Work Programme of SPREP in which delegates were given information on the status of the 140 project proposals previously submitted to SPREP for implementation within the preceding 1989-90 biennium.

76. He thanked those associated with the implementation of projects, namely SPREP staff, regional institutions, donor organisations and member governments. He referred to the extensive nature of the Work Programme and the earlier request from the previous intergovernmental meeting to incorporate the multifarious projects into integrated programme elements, namely: Natural Resource Management; Protected Area and Species Conservation; Coastal Resource Management and Planning; Monitoring and Control of Marine Pollution; Land and Freshwater Pollution Prevention; Environmental Education and Training; Environmental Information; Environmental Planning and Administration; Climatic Change and Sea Level Rise; Pollution Emergency Response and Planning; and Meetings, Workshops and Training Courses. This integration of activities facilitated both project implementation and funding approaches to donor organisations.

77. Several delegates congratulated the Secretariat on its achievements over the last two years and the suggestion was made that, when integrating project proposals in the future, it would be useful for SPREP to be cognizant of the recurring theme of environment/economic/social development. Delegates also suggested that certain projects under three programme elements, namely, Natural Resource Management; Protected Area and Species Conservation; and Coastal Resource Management and Planning be integrated under a Biological Diversity programme element.

78. The success of the Environmental Education aspects of SPREP's work were acknowledged and it was suggested that material also be provided for in-country celebrations of Environment Week, centred around World Environment Day (5 June) where possible. It was requested too that, where feasible, SPREP utilise technical information available from within the region.

79. Considerable discussion ensued relating to the Climatic Change/Sea Level Rise programme element with particular reference to activities of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Following concern expressed by the representatives of Kiribati and Tuvalu relating to small atoll countries being accorded an equal voice in international climatic change/sea level rise fora, the meeting expressed its support for the need to focus on participation by South Pacific island representatives.

80. The observer from UNEP outlined for the meeting the most effective role for SPREP as a co-ordinator of South Pacific input into IPCC meetings and as a clearing house facility to effectively disseminate information on this important issue to member governments.

81. The meeting was advised by the Government of Australia of the hectic timetable of meetings over the next two years and of the pivotal Second World Climate Conference for which Australia has funding to support Pacific island representation. Further, in the interests of dissemination of information relevant to Pacific Islands, the Government of New Zealand circulated its report on Basic Studies for South Pacific Climate Change produced by the New Zealand Meteorological Service.

82. The Government of France referred to the twelve projects being undertaken by his Government, some of which are a co-operative activity between France and Australia, and he expressed his Government's willingness to organise a seminar on climatic changes which will update the acquired knowledge in the region to be held in Noumea in association with other countries.

83. Whilst appreciating the Secretariat's efforts to produce a working paper of a more manageable size as had been requested at the previous IGM, it was nevertheless agreed that additional detail of financial requirements of projects together with information on funding sources, be incorporated in future reports of SPREP's Work Programme activities.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 6 - STATUS OF THE SPREP AND APIA CONVENTIONS**

84. The Secretariat introduced its working paper (WP.1) on the status of the 'SPREP' and 'APIA' Conventions explaining that, following the recent announcement of additional ratifications, both Conventions were now in force. SPREP's future activities thus now had the added benefit of being backed by international legal instruments. Delegates were requested to consider the implications for SPREP that emanated from the entry into force of both Conventions and eligible governments, that had not yet ratified/acceded to these Conventions, were urged to consider such action.

85. The delegate of the USA stated that his Government was in the process of ratifying the SPREP Convention and that such an action could be expected to reach fruition by July 1991.

86. The delegate of New Zealand reiterated his government's offer of support, through the services of a New Zealand legal adviser, to give advice to eligible governments on the practicalities of becoming party to both the SPREP and Apia Conventions.

87. The delegate of Australia reported that his government is making progress in adjustments to its domestic legislation which will enable Australia, in the not too distant future, to also become party to the 'Protocol for the Prevention of Pollution of the South Pacific Region by Dumping' of the 'SPREP' Convention.

88. In response to a question from the government of France, the Director of Programmes of the South Pacific Commission stated that, as the Organisation responsible for convening the Meeting of the Parties to the SPREP Convention, and in accordance with provisions under Article 22 of that Convention, the South Pacific Commission will be convening a meeting of the Parties prior to August 1991.

**AGENDA ITEM 7 - SPREP BIENNIAL REPORT: 1988-89**

89. The SPREP Co-ordinator, introduced the *Biennial Report of the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP): January 1988 to December 1989* (WP.2) which, in accordance with the institutional requirements within SPREP's mandate, had already been presented to the Twenty-first South Pacific Forum in August 1990 and is planned to be presented to the Thirteenth Meeting of the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations in October 1990.

90. This report, constituting the fourth biennial report of the SPREP Secretariat, contained an overview of the programme's activities during 1988-89, details of SPREP staffing and institutional arrangements together with a summary financial report. Delegates noted the continuing growth in number of activities being requested by member governments and administrations and the considerable progress achieved by SPREP in project implementation, despite relatively limited funds and a small number of staff members.

91. The Director of Programmes of the South Pacific Commission outlined the budgetary difficulties for SPREP associated with slow receipt of 'voluntary' country contributions.

92. Delegates agreed with the need for more secure funding for SPREP, the representatives of Tonga and Western Samoa specifically stating that their Governments regard their SPREP contribution as 'firm' rather than 'voluntary'. The concept of a 'pledged' rather than 'voluntary' contribution was mooted but it was agreed that a more definitive position on this matter was best developed under agenda item 10 on 'What Future for SPREP'.

**AGENDA ITEM 8 - (A) FUND-RAISING EFFORTS OF THE SECRETARIAT  
(B) DIVISION OF BUDGET FOR 1990**

93. The Secretariat informed the Meeting of the fund-raising efforts undertaken in support of the 1989-90 Work Programme, as outlined in Working Paper 4. He stated that, although financial contributions had been a major factor in the ability of the Secretariat to implement its work programme, the in-kind contributions by member governments, the regional institutions which are members of ASPEI, as well as other organisations working in collaboration with SPREP, had assisted substantially in successful project implementation.

94. The SPREP Co-ordinator gave a special vote of thanks to his predecessor, Mr Iosefatu Reti, for his very substantial contribution in securing SPREP's recent influx of extra-budgetary funds.

95. Delegates congratulated the Secretariat on its fund-raising efforts and expressed the hope that a financial contribution, committed by the Government of Japan in 1988, would soon be forthcoming to the programme.

96. The delegate of New Zealand reiterated his Government's recent statement to the Forum which indicated additional funding for SPREP, specifically in support of one/two new positions, with a suggested priority for a person who would assist the programme in securing additional financial support.

97. The delegate of France announced his Government's commitment through the provision of 1 million French francs over a three year period, for projects implemented by SPREP and involving the French institutes whose projects are implemented in the framework of SPREP POL. This amount was additional to France's annual 'voluntary' country contribution of US\$ 50,000.

98. Recognising the vulnerability of SPREP's dependence on 'voluntary' country contributions for programme staff/administrative costs, delegates suggested SPREP continue its practice of incorporating an element for project management into requests to donor organisations.

99. Delegates approved the revisions to SPREP's 1990 budget which appear in Working Paper 5.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 9 - IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS UNDER SUB-CONTRACTS BY MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH PACIFIC ENVIRONMENTAL INSTITUTIONS (ASPEI)**

100. The representative of the Association of South Pacific Environmental Institutions (ASPEI) introduced Working Paper 6 which contained the Report of the Fifth Consultative Meeting of Research and Training Institutions held in Suva, Fiji, 25-29 June 1990. This Meeting had been convened to provide technical advice to SPREP to assess the various projects proposed for inclusion in the 1991-92 Work Programme; to comment on possible revisions to SPREP's Action Plan; to conduct an ASPEI business session formalising the association and defining its relationship to SPREP; discussing SPREP/ASPEI activities on Climatic Change and Sea Level Rise; and discussing SPREP POL. The meeting had also recommended the development of an Inland Water Resources Group similar to SPREP POL.

101. In discussion of ASPEI membership, it was clearly determined that this Association would be actively encouraging the widening of its membership to include additional regional institutions such as those suggested by French Polynesia, as well as institutions in neighbouring countries for example, Australia and New Zealand.

102. It was also recognised that ASPEI activities were not limited to those associated with SPREP and that SPREP should seek project implementation assistance from as wide an institutional base as possible. In short, ASPEI was viewed as a 'competitive consultant' to SPREP.

## AGENDA ITEM 10 - WHAT FUTURE FOR SPREP/SPREP STAFFING

103. The SPREP Co-ordinator introduced the Secretariat's paper on 'What Future for SPREP' (WP.11) and related papers (WP.9 and WP.10) on SPREP Staffing dealing with the positions of an Administrative Assistant and a Community Development Officer.

104. The paper on 'What Future for SPREP' had previously been submitted to two Steering Committee meetings, the original idea behind the paper being to stimulate discussion and serious consideration of what was likely to lie ahead for the programme and how it could best be strengthened to carry out most effectively its increasingly diverse and expanding mandate. A series of questions were posed in the paper and plenary discussion of these follows. Later in deliberations a drafting committee was formed and recommendations agreed by the Plenary appear in paragraphs 128-162.

### *Question 1 What should be the mission and essential approach of SPREP?*

105. Delegates expressed the view that the mission of SPREP, as outlined in the Secretariat's Working Paper (WP.11), was still the most appropriate one for SPREP.

### *Question 2 Should SPREP become an independent agency and what should be the nature of such independence?*

106. There was consensus on the need for autonomy and discussion ensued relating to the nature of this autonomy. It was recognised that independence was desirable to ensure greater efficiency and to enable SPREP to be recognised as the main environmental body in the region.

107. In addition, it was felt that SPREP should have a proper legal footing as an appropriate tool with which to carry out its work effectively. Delegates also felt it would be necessary to consider the cost implications of a fully independent SPREP and that these implications would become clearer as SPREP evolved. Delegates further believed SPREP should be responsible to an annual intergovernmental meeting and through the intergovernmental meeting should provide annual reports to the SPC and the Forum. The delegate of Nauru requested that a Working Group, to look at independence, should be convened to report back to an Intergovernmental Meeting and Ministerial Conference in 1991.

108. The representative of Western Samoa stated that his Government's position called for complete independence for SPREP by 1992 (its tenth anniversary). He believed this would give ample time for the SPC and SPREP to work out a mechanism for a smooth beginning to a fully independent SPREP similar to FFA and SOPAC. He stated that full independence was not possible while one organisation existed within another organisation. Western Samoa appreciated that complete independence could not happen overnight but that there was a need for a clear indication of target dates. He supported an expanded Secretariat together with upgrading of the level of Co-ordinator but believed that this could not happen within the SPC without creating difficulties. Western Samoa further offered to host an independent SPREP in 1992.



109. The representative of France stated that France recognised that SPREP constituted the instrument for applying the 'SPREP'/'Noumea' Convention. Its entry into force has two legal consequences: it offered a distinct framework to SPREP activities which is to be welcomed, and allowed it to move towards a greater autonomy, thereby attaining greater efficiency. Furthermore, the Convention clearly envisaged that the Secretariat functions will be the responsibility of the SPC. It seemed logical that this should be the case because the members of SPREP and SPC are the same and furthermore because the Secretariat services offered by the SPC allow SPREP's management costs to remain low.

110. The delegate explained that this position seemed legally correct and also logical. It follows the practice established by UNEP in its other Regional Seas programmes. It prevented duplication of regional institutions which deal with environmental protection and also prevented difficulties in dividing responsibility between the SPREP Secretariat and the Meeting of the Parties. Having said this, the delegate nevertheless appreciated the complexity of this question and suggested it deserved a more in-depth study by a working group or groups.

*Question 3 To whom should SPREP be accountable and what should be the relationship between SPREP/SPC and SPREP/FORUM?*

111. The Meeting agreed that SPREP be accountable to the intergovernmental meeting and that the SPC grant similar authorisation for the SPREP Co-ordinator to provide annual reports 'directly' to the South Pacific Conference as already applied to his reporting to the South Pacific Forum. An arrangement of direct reporting would ensure a high profile for SPREP in the interim period after which the arrangements would probably change.

*Question 4 Should SPREP become a member of SPOCC?*

112. Consensus was reached relating to SPREP becoming a member of SPOCC.

*Question 5 Relationship Between SPREP and ASPEI*

113. Delegates firmly established that ASPEI, as a scientific organisation, is a technical adviser to SPREP. However, it was regarded as most important that SPREP also be able to utilise the services of other institutions and organisations, in the interests of effectively implementing its Work Programme.

114. The justification for maintaining the consultative meeting mechanism was questioned. It was suggested that the need for future consultative meetings should be kept under review by the Secretariat and later agreed that these meetings should be discontinued.

115. The Secretariat was requested to establish a list of institutions for circulation, an activity which it explained had already recently begun.

116. The relationship between the institutions and SPREP, prior to the establishment of ASPEI, was outlined and it was stated that direct institutional/SPREP contact was probably more effective, especially as ASPEI was not mandated to sign MOU's on behalf of its member institutions.

*Question 6 What are the structural and staffing needs of SPREP to handle the current expansion of demands and support of the SPREP Secretariat and the future role of the SPREP Secretariat?*

117. Delegates reached a consensus on the need for an expansion of SPREP staffing based on priorities of programme activities and an elevation of the position of the Co-ordinator to that of Director.

118. The Meeting believed that staffing needs should be determined in light of tasks arising out of the proposed Action Plan revision. It was also recognised that there was an urgent need for a deputy to the Co-ordinator to assist in fund-raising activities; a position which New Zealand said it would financially support. New Zealand would also consider funding the position of Information Publications Officer, which the Co-ordinator had indicated was a high priority. Australia indicated that during the High Level Consultations planned for December 1990, it would consider funding positions from within the financial allocation previously announced.

119. In considering the staff positions outlined in WP.9 and W.10, delegates pointed to a possible eleven positions and called upon the Co-ordinator to determine priorities of his programme's staffing needs in accordance with priorities of the Work Programme.

*Question 7 Where should SPREP be located?*

120. The representative of Western Samoa reiterated his Government's offer to host a fully independent SPREP if SPC would find it difficult to do so.

121. As a point of clarification, the Deputy Director of Programmes of the SPC referred to the SPC's building programme in which SPREP's needs had been considered. He referred to the unique nature of SPREP in that it is not only an SPC programme. Whilst he did not envisage great difficulties over the next 12-24 months, he suggested that, given considerations of expanded staff numbers and elevation of the Co-ordinator's position, there may be a need to make a decision on this matter in the future.

122. Delegates agreed that, for the moment, SPREP was best hosted by the SPC but that this question would be kept under review. It was considered important that SPREP administrative costs to the SPC be shown in the budget, to provide additional information on which a decision regarding relocation could be made.

*Question 8 Once the SPREP Convention is signed, should the Parties to the Convention comprise the sovereign body having authority over the activities of SPREP?*

123. Delegates clearly determined that, in the interests of enabling full member country and territory participation, the intergovernmental meeting be the responsible body relating to decisions of SPREP.

*Question 9 Should there be a reporting responsibility to SPC and Forum given the responsibilities of SPC and the Forum Secretariat, (and their different membership) should there not be a reporting responsibility to these two bodies and if so how should this be defined?*

124. Delegates agreed that this question had already been answered under earlier discussions.

*Question 10 Is there a need to initiate a study of budgetary considerations, cost effectiveness and programme efficiency on practicable options for the future of SPREP?*

125. The Meeting concurred on the need for this study and later agreed that it would be encompassed within the Working Group on Finance.

126. The importance of the issues raised under this agenda item and the associated in-depth deliberation which took place during the plenary, necessitated the convening of a drafting committee to draw together all views expressed and to develop an agreed position of the Intergovernmental Meeting.

127. Those elected to the drafting committee were Fiji (Chair), France, French Polynesia, Nauru, NZ, PNG, Tuvalu, USA and Western Samoa. The drafting committee outcomes were later agreed in the Plenary in the form of a series of recommendations on the Future of SPREP. These recommendations are listed below.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS AGREED FROM DISCUSSION ON 'WHAT FUTURE FOR SPREP?'**

128. The Intergovernmental Meeting discussed and reached consensus on a series of questions (as listed in WP.11) concerning the Future for SPREP. The Meeting identified three categories of measures for action to enhance the capacity and autonomy for SPREP while retaining the full and equal participation of all member countries and territories: immediate steps which are within the authority of this Intergovernmental Meeting; steps which require the endorsement of the 30th South Pacific Conference; and those more complex issues for which in-depth investigation is required and for which Working Groups have been set up by this Meeting. These Working Groups will meet early in 1991 and submit recommendations for approval to a meeting of officials and a Ministerial-level Meeting before the end of July 1991, preferably preceding the first Meeting of the Parties to the *Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region* (The 'SPREP' or 'Noumea' Convention). The three Working Groups will consider financial, legal and Action Plan issues respectively.

*Question 1: What should be the mission and essential approach of SPREP?*

129. The Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) **endorsed** the mission, approach and objectives of SPREP as set out in Annex V.

130. The IGM **agreed** that there is a definite need to revise and update the SPREP Action Plan to take into account of the following factors:

- (i) the passage of time since the adoption of the existing Action Plan in 1982, beyond the five year period for which this was expected to be current,
- (ii) the increasing priority and importance attached by member countries and territories to environmental matters within and beyond the region,
- (iii) the increasing availability of international resources for environmental protection and management,
- (iv) the existence of important new environmental policy issues of concern to the region, including *inter alia* climate change and sea level rise, the disposal of toxic wastes, and other issues,
- (v) the suggested revisions to the Action Plan recommended by the Fifth Consultative Meeting of SPREP Research and Training Institutions (1990) (Annex VI),
- (vi) the evolution of new approaches to sustainable development and new techniques for environmental management,
- (vii) the enhancement of SPREP's capacity and autonomy,
- (viii) SPREP's increasing role in: mobilising and managing resources for environmental activities; participating in the co-ordinating of the implementation of such activities; providing information on the environment and environmental activities being carried out in the region; and maintaining technical excellence through direct implementation of some activities in its own right,
- (ix) the need for SPREP to encompass events and developments outside the South Pacific region which may have effects on the environment within the region,
- (x) SPREP's emerging role in supporting regional representation in international environmental meetings and negotiations, especially at this time in the UNCED process and negotiations towards global conventions on the atmosphere and biological diversity.

131. The IGM **agreed** to establish a *Working Group on the SPREP Action Plan* with the following objectives:

- (i) to examine and make recommendation on revisions to the 1982 SPREP Action Plan, based on those factors listed in paragraph 130, and to present a new draft action plan to the proposed 1991 Ministerial Conference (which the Governments of France and French Polynesia offered to be hosted in Papeete, Tahiti),
- (ii) to establish broad priorities for SPREP for the period 1991-95 to form the basis for development of prioritised annual work programmes for SPREP during this period,
- (iii) to recommend means to assist SPREP in the development of management techniques to maximise its efficiency and effectiveness in achieving these objectives and fulfilling its role as the region's leading environmental agency as set out in paragraph (b) (viii) of this section,
- (iv) to submit to the Ministerial Meeting any recommendations considered appropriate towards a Ministerial Declaration on the Environment.

*Question 2 Should SPREP become an independent agency and what should be the nature of such independence?*

132. The Intergovernmental Meeting **agreed** on the need for full autonomy for SPREP to enable it to better achieve the objectives of its Work Programme and to adequately meet the increasing environmental needs of the region. In particular, autonomy is required for SPREP:

- (i) to mobilise and capture international funding,
- (ii) to manage more effectively its financial and human resources, projects, contracts and consultants,
- (iii) to enhance its dialogue with other relevant international bodies,
- (iv) to represent the interests of the region in appropriate international fora,
- (v) to provide information on issues for which a broad policy mandate is required, and
- (vi) to be directly accountable to all member countries and territories.

133. The Intergovernmental Meeting **noted** the benefits of close co-operation between SPREP and SPC.

134. The Intergovernmental Meeting **endorsed** the need for SPREP to have its own separate legal personality, as dealt with under Question 8 below.

135. In order to give effect to this autonomy the IGM **agreed**:

- (i) that SPREP should be directly accountable to all member countries and territories through an annual intergovernmental meeting,
- (ii) that the position of SPREP Co-ordinator should be redesignated as Director of SPREP as soon as possible with full management authority for SPREP within policy guidelines set by the Intergovernmental Meeting,
- (iii) that SPREP should have financial autonomy once its budget and work programme are approved by the annual intergovernmental meeting, including separate identification and accounting of SPREP components within the SPC Core Budget in order to achieve greater financial transparency of the full costs of the SPREP programme,
- (iv) that SPREP have its own letterhead, logo, and other materials to provide it with a recognisable separate personality,
- (v) to recommend to the 30th South Pacific Conference that it note sub-paragraphs (ii) and (iii) above and arrange for the action necessary for their implementation,
- (vi) to recommend to the 30th South Pacific Conference that the Secretariat functions for which the South Pacific Commission is responsible under Article 21 of the SPREP/Noumea Convention and under Article VIII (2) of the Apia Convention should forthwith be carried out by SPREP on behalf of the South Pacific Commission.

136. The Intergovernmental Meeting **agreed** to set up a *Working Group on Finance* to study and make recommendations on the items listed here and any other items deemed useful and appropriate for consideration by the Working Group on:

- (i) means of providing SPREP with a firm, timely and adequate financial basis addressing, among other things, the issue of assessed contributions,
- (ii) means of mobilising funds from other international sources,
- (iii) the financial implications of the increased capacity and autonomy of SPREP agreed upon by this Intergovernmental Meeting,
- (iv) means of clarifying the longer term financial relationship between SPREP and SPC,
- (v) any other financial matters considered important by the Working Group.

*Question 3 To whom should SPREP be accountable and what should be the relationship between SPREP and the South Pacific Forum and between SPREP and the South Pacific Commission?*

137. The Intergovernmental Meeting **agreed** that SPREP should be accountable through its Director to an annual Intergovernmental Meeting of all member states and territories.

138. The Intergovernmental Meeting **agreed** that the SPREP Steering Committee be disbanded.

139. The Intergovernmental Meeting **agreed** that the Director of SPREP should present annual reports for the information of both the South Pacific Forum and the South Pacific Conference.

*Question 4 Should SPREP become a member of SPOCC?*

140. The Intergovernmental Meeting **agreed** that SPREP participate as a full and equal member of SPOCC.

*Question 5 What should be the relationship between SPREP and ASPEI?*

141. The Intergovernmental Meeting **noted** the useful contribution of ASPEI members in providing technical advice to SPREP.

142. The Intergovernmental Meeting **agreed** that the formulation, implementation and monitoring of the SPREP Work Programme remains the responsibility of the SPREP Secretariat, accountable to the Intergovernmental Meeting.

143. The Intergovernmental Meeting **agreed** that SPREP must be free to draw upon the best available technical expertise and services from ASPEI and others to obtain the most cost-effective technical support for the programme.

144. The Intergovernmental Meeting **agreed** that the SPREP Secretariat should maintain a comprehensive list of all relevant research institutions and experts available to the region in accordance with established SPREP procedures.

145. The Intergovernmental Meeting **noted** that, in view of the above, the consultative meetings of research and training institutions should be discontinued.

146. The Intergovernmental Meeting **agreed** that the Secretariat should implement ways and means to ensure that the technical and scientific review of project proposals is undertaken as appropriate.

*Question 6 What are the structural and staffing needs of SPREP to handle the current expansion of demands and support of the SPREP Secretariat and the future role of the SPREP Secretariat?*

147. The Intergovernmental Meeting **recognised** that the capacity of the SPREP Secretariat needs to be greatly increased in order to implement effectively its Work Programme and Action Plan and to address the rapidly increasing environmental needs of the region.

148. The Intergovernmental Meeting **agreed** that, in addressing these needs, resource requirements must be clearly derived from work programme priorities and the most cost effective means of implementing the work programme should be adopted.

149. The Intergovernmental Meeting **noted** that, in view of these considerations, SPREP's role would increasingly become one of a mobilising and co-ordinating body in addition to being an implementing agency.

150. The Intergovernmental Meeting **recommends** that the 30th South Pacific Conference provide for the establishment of the following staff positions.

- A Director (or equivalent)
- A Deputy Director
- At least five (5) professional staff
- A Finance Manager
- An Administrative Officer
- A Publications Officer

*Question 7 Where should SPREP be located?*

151. The Intergovernmental Meeting **agreed** that SPREP should continue to benefit from the advantages of co-operation with the SPC for accommodation and services, while these are available.

152. The Intergovernmental Meeting **agreed** that for these reasons SPREP should continue to be located in Noumea.

153. The Intergovernmental Meeting **agreed** that this decision should be reviewed in the future as the need arises.

154. The Intergovernmental Meeting **acknowledged** the offer of Western Samoa to host SPREP were SPC not in a position to do so.



*Question 8 Once the SPREP Convention is signed, should the Parties to the Convention comprise the sovereign body having authority over the activities of SPREP?*

155. The Intergovernmental Meeting **noted** that the SPREP and Apia Conventions have now come into force, but that a number of SPREP members are ineligible or have difficulties with signing or ratifying these Conventions.

156. The Intergovernmental Meeting further **noted** that the SPREP Action Plan and Work Programme include elements not fully or explicitly covered by the SPREP and Apia Conventions.

157. The Intergovernmental Meeting **agreed** that all SPREP members must be able to play a full and meaningful role in deliberations and decisions concerning the SPREP programme.

158. The Intergovernmental Meeting **agreed** to establish a central role for the Intergovernmental Meeting and workable co-operative mechanisms between this body and the Meeting of the Parties to the SPREP Convention.

159. The Intergovernmental Meeting **agreed** that the SPREP Programme and Secretariat must have the full formal and legal status necessary to operate as an autonomous body (including the ability to contract, employ, litigate, etc.) and fully to manage its own affairs.

160. The Intergovernmental Meeting therefore **agreed** to set up a *Working Group on Legal Issues* to examine and make recommendation on means to give effect to the decisions stated in paragraphs 157, 158 and 159 taking into account the factors noted in paragraphs 155 and 156. While recognising that only the Parties to the SPREP and Apia Conventions can make decisions relating to those Conventions. The Working Group may consider amongst other things the following issues:

- (i) redesignating SPREP as the responsible Secretariat agency under Article 21 of the SPREP/Noumea Convention and Article VIII (2) of the Apia Convention,
- (ii) amending in some other way the SPREP and/or Apia Conventions,
- (iii) developing additional international legal instruments to supplement these Conventions, for example by Memorandum of Understanding,
- (iv) any other measures considered appropriate by the Working Group.

*Question 9 Given the responsibilities of SPC and the Forum Secretariat, (and their different membership) should there not be a reporting responsibility to these two bodies and if so how should this be defined?*

161. The Intergovernmental Meeting noted that this question had been dealt with under Question 3 above.

*Question 10 Is there a need to initiate a study of budgetary considerations, cost effectiveness and programme efficiency on practicable options for the future of SPREP?*

162. The Intergovernmental Meeting **agreed** that this is covered by the existing *Working Group on Finance*.

163. The above concludes the Recommendations of the Intergovernmental Meeting relating to the 10 key questions put to the Meeting in Working Paper 11.

164. The Representative of Western Samoa requested that the Meeting note his Government's reservations on the above recommendations.

165. The Meeting then discussed the composition and work of the Working Groups whose membership is as follows:

<i>Legal</i>	<i>Action Plan</i>	<i>Finance</i>
Cook Islands (Convener)	Western Samoa (Convener)*	Fiji (Convener)
Nauru	Kiribati	United States of America
Australia	Solomon Islands	Tuvalu
Federates States of Micronesia	New Zealand	New Caledonia
France	French Polynesia	American Samoa
Papua New Guinea	Northern Marianas*	Marshall Islands
Guam*	Tonga	Vanuatu*
	Tokelau*	Palau*

(\* To be confirmed)

166. The representative of Tonga pointed to the financial implications of the Working Groups and requested that countries include women delegates in their representation. New Zealand and Australia agreed with the concerns of Tonga and indicated that they would seek to provide financial support for the Working Groups. The USA indicated they may be able to provide financial support for the Working Groups.

167. The representative of the UNDP offered to provide, without cost, a chartered accountant for the Financial Working Group and a legal consultant for the Legal Working Group. The SPREP Co-ordinator noted that the Secretariat will service the Working Groups and that the timing of the Working Group meetings will need to be well co-ordinated in relation to the preparations for the 1991 Ministerial Conference. Australia agreed with the Secretariat's concern and suggested that meetings of the Finance and Legal Working Groups be held back-to-back as these groups may need to interact in their deliberations.

168. Delegates welcomed the offer by French Polynesia to host the 1991 Ministerial Conference.

**AGENDA ITEM 11 - CONSIDERATION OF PROJECT PROPOSALS FOR THE 1991-92 BIENNIUM**

169. The SPREP Co-ordinator introduced the Secretariat's Working Paper (WP.7) which contained 153 project proposals within the 1991-92 Work Programme under twelve programme elements, a new element having recently been added for projects incorporated in the Asian Development Bank ADB/SPREP Regional Environmental Technical Assistance (RETA).

170. The Co-ordinator explained that the financial resources required to implement these projects approximated US\$ 3,300,000 for 1991 and US\$ 2,800,000 for 1992 which is expected to far exceed funding available to SPREP during the biennium. He thanked those donor governments and organisations who had already indicated financial support to projects and urged governments to prioritise their projects to ensure that SPREP was able to most effectively allocate funds as money becomes available.

171. The delegate of Western Samoa suggested that as well as prioritisation of projects submitted by governments and administrations, those submitted by institutions and the Secretariat should also be listed in priority order listing.

172. Whilst fully appreciating that it is most appropriate for South Pacific countries to prioritise their own project needs, the representatives of larger supporting member governments namely, New Zealand, Australia and the USA indicated broad areas for their governments' assistance to SPREP. New Zealand stated it places priority in support of: (i) institutional strengthening of the Secretariat; (ii) national conservation strategy development; (iii) environmental education and training; (iv) Pacific island country involvement in major international exercises such as that on Climate Change and (v) habitat and species protection. Australia stated that its broad priorities were for projects that were widely applicable across the region, e.g. the Regional Turtle and Avifauna projects. They also saw as priorities, projects relating to biological diversity, coastal zone management, and pollution prevention. The USA saw as broad priorities, projects related to conservation of tropical forests, biological diversity and pollution prevention.

173. Delegates agreed that the principle should be established whereby those seeking assistance with projects should ensure that SPREP is involved from the initial stages of project formulation, rather than being called upon to fill assistance gaps with activities already underway.

174. It was agreed that, in order to avoid duplication of effort, there was a need for more co-ordination of the growing number of environmental activities being undertaken in the region by various organisations, together with a need for a greater flow of information about these activities. Accordingly, in this co-operative spirit the representatives of France and Australia advised the meeting of plans to consult and hold discussions with the SPREP Secretariat with a view to convening an international workshop on Climate Change (referred to earlier) to be held in Noumea on a date to be determined by SPREP, in consultation with the SPC. Additional co-sponsorship and support was also called for.

175. The Intergovernmental Meeting endorsed the Work Programme for SPREP for the 1991-92 Biennium.

**AGENDA ITEM 12 - STATEMENTS BY OBSERVERS**

176. The opportunity was provided for observers from international and regional organisations to give a statement on their activities and potential support to SPREP. Summaries of these statements appear as Annex IV to this report.

**AGENDA ITEM 13 - (A) CONSIDERATION OF A BUDGET FOR SPREP FOR THE BIENNIUM 1991-92****(B) ADOPTION OF A WORK PROGRAMME FOR SPREP FOR THE BIENNIUM 1991-92**

177. The SPREP Co-ordinator introduced the Secretariat's Working Paper (WP.8) on the Budget for the 1991-92 Biennium which, due to the high degree of uncertainty relating to receipt of funds, can only be indicative of SPREP's expected financial situation.

178. The Co-ordinator referred to the projected income from various known core and extra-budgetary sources, namely 'voluntary' country contributions; SPC core budget; Asian Development Bank (ADB); United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); Canada South Pacific Ocean Development Project (CSPODP); International Centre for Ocean Development (ICOD); Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB); United States Agency for International Development (USAID); The Nature Conservancy (TNC); East-West Center/MacArthur Foundation; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); European Community (LOME IV); Government of Japan; and the Government of Chile.

179. Delegates appreciated SPREP's action in providing a budget that was 'indicative' only and saw this as a reflection of the uncertain and flexible nature of financial support to the programme.

180. The representative of the USA announced an increase from US\$ 100,000 to US\$ 125,000, in his Government's 1990 extra-budgetary support to SPREP, above the USA 1990 'voluntary' country contribution of US\$ 85,000.

181. The representative of Australia announced his Government's commitment of A\$ 300,000 for the 1991 financial year (which includes their 'voluntary' country contribution of A\$ 80,000), representing a 50% increase on 1990 figures. Details of allocation of this money with SPREP's Work Programme will be one of the subjects for discussion at the High Level Consultation proposed between the Australian Government and SPREP later this year. Support to SPREP represents only one aspect of Australian assistance to the South Pacific, addressing environmental issues. Substantial bilateral aid is also provided and the major single environment project is the Climate Change and Sea Level Monitoring Project, which has a budget of A\$ 6.25 million over five years. The delegate referred to the co-operation and assistance given by the SPREP Co-ordinator in selection of an appointee to take up the Fiji-based post of Climate Change Information Officer under this project.

182. The Meeting endorsed the indicative budget for SPREP for the 1990-92 biennium and adopted the Work Programme.

**AGENDA ITEM 14 - SOUTH PACIFIC PARTICIPATION IN 1992 UN CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT**

183. The SPREP Co-ordinator introduced the Secretariat's Working Paper (WP.16) and Information Paper (IP.4) which outlines a strategy for input by the South Pacific Region into the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) to be held in Brazil in 1992.

184. Delegates' attention was specifically drawn to a High Level Meeting on Environment and Development to be convened, with financial assistance of the UNCED Secretariat, to review national reports and consolidate South Pacific regional input to UNCED. Such a meeting should be held in conjunction with an existing regional meeting.

185. As part of the Strategy, delegates were asked to consider the appropriateness of SPREP preparing a paper to assist delegates at the forthcoming ESCAP Conference on Environment and Development in Bangkok, 10-16 October, 1990. The Strategy also called on governments to ensure attendance by Senior Officials and Ministers at the Bangkok Meeting.

186. Considerable concern was expressed by delegates relating to their disappointment that the forthcoming ESCAP meeting, which was a lead-up to UNCED, would again fail to adequately address the environmental concerns of the South Pacific region. Some delegates questioned whether the attendance of South Pacific delegates at a ministerial level was, indeed, worthwhile.

187. However, delegates were urged to encourage their Governments to send high level representatives as a means of ensuring a strong South Pacific voice at the ESCAP Meeting. The importance of the UNCED and associated preparatory meetings, was stressed and the support for South Pacific concerns held by the UNCED Secretary-General, Maurice Strong, was affirmed.

188. The Meeting reached a consensus on the importance of UNCED and supported the Strategy for South Pacific regional input as proposed by the Secretariat.

**AGENDA ITEM 15 - JOHNSTON ATOLL**

189. The SPREP Co-ordinator introduced the Information Paper (IP.1) on the Proposal to Dispose of U.S. Chemical Munitions at Johnston Atoll Chemical Agent Disposal System (JACADS) Facility in which the Secretariat had attempted to give information on all available views relating to this proposal. Also provided for delegates' further perusal, was a binder containing papers and reports collected by the Secretariat.

190. The representative of Kiribati expressed the concern held by members of the public in his country over this proposal. The representative of Western Samoa informed the Meeting of the ministerial-level mission from South Pacific countries currently visiting the USA to explore the JACADS issue, a mission which it was hoped would be successful in expressing South Pacific concerns.

191. The Meeting noted the Information Paper and thanked the Secretariat for its continuing activities in keeping member countries and territories informed on important environmental issues.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 16 - THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS (NGOS) IN RELATION TO FUTURE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

192. The SPREP Co-ordinator introduced the Secretariat's Working Paper (WP.12) on The Role of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) in Relation to Future Steering Committee Meetings in which delegates were asked to determine whether or not NGO participation with 'observer' status was appropriate at future Steering Committee meetings and, if so, to decide on an appropriate mechanism for facilitating such representation.

193. The Meeting agreed that, in light of the decision to hold annual intergovernmental meetings which would thus result in the disbanding of the SPREP Steering Committee, it was more appropriate to consider NGO participation at future Intergovernmental Meetings (IGMs).

194. It was clearly established that NGO participation, with 'observer' status, would be welcomed by future IGMs. The representatives of New Zealand, USA, French Polynesia, Australia and France specifically referred to the importance of encouraging such participation in the interests of wide community involvement in ameliorating environmental problems within the region.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 17 - REVIEW OF SPREP ACTION PLAN**

195. The SPREP Co-ordinator introduced the Secretariat's Working Paper (WP.13) on the Review of the SPREP Action Plan. Initially adopted by the ministerial-level Conference on the Human Environment in the South Pacific, Rarotonga, Cook Islands in 1982, the Action Plan has served as the guiding framework for activities and institutional arrangements of SPREP since that time. Almost a decade after the adoption of the Action Plan, the Secretariat is cognizant of the need to review SPREP's mandate to bring it up to date with new global and regional environmental issues, to ensure that SPREP's institutional arrangements are appropriate to meet its expanding role, and to take account of changed legal arrangements associated with the entry into force of the SPREP and Apia Conventions.

196. The Meeting agreed that there is a definite need to revise and update the SPREP Action Plan. Details of which appear in the Recommendations under paragraphs 130 and 131.

197. The representative of France asked the Meeting to note his government's request that the Working Group be informed that in a future Action Plan revision, paragraph 20.11 be withdrawn. France regards paragraph 20.11 as a political, rather than a technical matter.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 18 - SPREP STEERING COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION**

198. Following the report of the drafting committee and subsequent plenary discussion, delegates agreed that, in light of the establishment of annual Intergovernmental Meetings, there was no longer any need to maintain the SPREP Steering Committee. The valuable work undertaken by past meetings of the Steering Committee was recognised and participants of those meetings, together with the Chairman and Acting Chairman, were thanked for their past guidance and direction given to SPREP.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 19 - ADDITIONAL REPRESENTATION AT INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETINGS**

199. The SPREP Co-ordinator introduced the Secretariat's Working Paper (WP.5) on Representation at Intergovernmental Meetings in which two issues were included for deliberation; namely, (i) additional representation by the Chair/Vice Chair and (ii) status of former Co-ordinating Group representatives.

200. Delegates firmly established the need for the Secretariat to provide financial support to enable the participation by an additional representative from the member country or territory whose turn it was, according to the alphabetical rotation established procedure, to chair future Intergovernmental Meetings. Similar support for additional representation for the Vice-Chair, was not regarded as necessary.

201. As regards the meeting status of the former Co-ordinating Group members, it was established that their role remain as an 'advisory' one.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 20 - OTHER BUSINESS**

202. The Intergovernmental Meeting reaffirmed the role of SPREP as the principal mechanism for the co-ordination of environmental activities in the region. It therefore urged governments and international and non-governmental organisations to channel the environmental assistance to the region through SPREP or to co-ordinate it with SPREP to avoid duplication of effort, to ensure efficient use of resources and to take advantage of the accumulated experience of the Secretariat.

203. As there is no specific requirement under the provisions of the Apia Convention for a date by which the first Meeting of Parties to that Convention should be held, delegates were referred to an Information Paper produced by Australia and urged to encourage their governments to consider participation in a meeting over the next twelve months, possibly to be run in conjunction with another intergovernmental meeting. The representative of Western Samoa, whose Government is the Depository for the Apia Convention, strongly supported this action.

264. Also tabled at the Meeting were additional working and information papers on:
- SPREP-POL: A Regional Programme addressing Marine Pollution problems in the South Pacific (WP.7(A))
  - Marine Pollution Related Conventions within the South Pacific Region (IP.2)
  - Strengthening Environment Monitoring and Assessment Capabilities in the South Pacific Region - UNEP GEMS/GRID (IP.3)

**AGENDA ITEM 21 - ADOPTION OF THE MEETING REPORT**

205. The Meeting adopted the Report of the Third Intergovernmental Meeting on the SPREP Action Plan.



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**ADDRESS BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL,  
SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION**

It gives me great pleasure on behalf of the South Pacific Commission (SPC) and the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) in particular, to extend to you all a very warm welcome to the South Pacific Commission Headquarters on the occasion of this Third Meeting on the SPREP Action Plan.

As many of you will recall, the first in the series of two-yearly meetings to discuss SPREP's Work Programme was held in 1986 and, for the first time since the programme's inception, governments and administrations of the region were given the opportunity to be directly involved in determining the activities of SPREP. The second meeting was held in 1988 and your meeting this week is the third in the series and will, we hope, prove to be a profitable and rewarding experience which will result in successful adoption of SPREP's Work Programme for 1991-92. Your role is vital in ensuring that the countries and territories that you represent benefit effectively from the environmental protection activities of your own regional environment programme. There is a great need in our region today for people like you who care; for people who are prepared to work actively, collectively and co-operatively to protect and conserve our island environment not only for ourselves but for the benefit of future generations.

The success of the future activities of SPREP hinges very much on the planning and forethought that the Secretariat has put into this meeting. Success also rests on the work that you will undertake here. As you will see from the agenda, you are charged with the important task of reviewing the project activities and fund-raising efforts of SPREP over the past two years. As well, we hope your input and deliberations will lead to the adoption of a realistic and viable work programme and budget for 1991-92.

Other important issues for discussion include the 'Future for SPREP' and the implications resulting from the entering into force of the *Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region* (the 'SPREP' Convention). SPREP has reached a most crucial stage in its development. Almost ten years after its inception in 1982, the programme is surging ahead with the legal backing of an important international convention, attracting considerable international interest and increasing financial support. Your discussion of SPREP's future is thus vital to the continuing environmental protection of the South Pacific.

In your review of the 1989-90 programme activities you will note that a significant number of the projects on this large work programme have been completed for which, not only is the Secretariat commended, but our thanks must also go to the network of implementing institutions, collaborating regional and international organisations as well as donor governments and agencies without whose assistance the high degree of success would not have been achieved.

The SPREP Steering Committee, too, has contributed significantly to the successful implementation of the 1989-90 Work Programme. Established in 1989 to provide guidance and direction to SPREP in-between intergovernmental meetings, this small group of government representatives has met three times and ensured the smooth running of the programme and enabled closer contact between the Secretariat and the governments on whose behalf it works. It is now timely that we review the composition of this Steering Committee to ensure that it continues to effectively assist the on-going work of SPREP.

In considering the 1991-91 Work Programme, you are asked to note the increase in the number of projects submitted by member governments, administrations and regional institutions and requested to offer guidance to SPREP in implementing these and securing adequate funding. Although increased financial support is being provided to the programme, it is still insufficient to keep pace with the increasing demands, is still largely project-specific and intermittent in the timing of its receipt, not allowing much flexibility to SPREP with planning and expenditure particularly as regards direct Secretariat costs.

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The 1991-92 Work Programme being proposed for SPREP is an ambitious one and the Secretariat's ability to implement it will only go as far as the resources which are placed at its disposal by your governments, collaborating institutions and international organisations. Therefore I urge our member governments to consider making an early commitment of their contribution to SPREP to assist the Secretariat to organise and implement activities in a timely and effective manner. I strongly believe that the regional co-operation demonstrated through SPREP has brought the environmental concerns of each country and territory in our region to the forefront. It is now time for us to support our regional environment programme in its efforts to address these problems.

The purpose of this Meeting is to decide and agree on actions to be taken through SPREP. The South Pacific Commission wishes you well with your deliberations and looks forward to your active participation and co-operation in the implementation of the 1991-92 Work Programme.

Before closing, I would like to convey to the Government of Australia, our thanks and gratitude for their financial contribution which assisted the Secretariat in convening this Meeting.

It is my pleasure to declare this Meeting open.

## AGENDA

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Election of Office Bearers
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Country Statements
5. Implementation of the 1989-90 Work Programme of SPREP (WP.3)
6. Status of the SPREP and Apia Conventions (WP.1)
7. SPREP Biennial Report: 1988-89 (WP.2)
8.
  - (a) Fund Raising Efforts of the Secretariat (WP.4)
  - (b) Revision of Budget for 1990 (WP.5)
9. Implementation of Projects under Sub-contracts by Members of the Association of South Pacific Environmental Institutions (ASPEI) (WP.6)
10. What Future for SPREP (WP.11)  
SPREP Staffing
  - (a) Personal Administrative Assistant (WP.9)
  - (b) Community Development Officer (WP.10)
11. Consideration of Project Proposals for the 1991-92 Biennium (WP.7)
12. Statements by Observers
13.
  - (a) Consideration of a Budget for SPREP for the Biennium 1991-92 (WP.8)
  - (b) Adoption of a Work Programme for SPREP for the Biennium 1991-92

14. South Pacific participation in 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (WP.16) (IP.4)
15. Johnston Atoll (IP.1)
16. The Role of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) in Relation to Future Steering Committee Meetings (WP.12)
17. Review of SPREP Action Plan (WP.13)
18. SPREP Steering Committee Representation (WP.14)
19. Additional Representation at Intergovernmental Meetings (WP.15)
20. Other Business
21. Adoption of the Meeting Report
22. Closing of the Meeting

## STATEMENTS BY OBSERVERS

### United States Forest Service

The representative of the US Forest Service drew the meeting's attention to the existence of the US Forest Services Tropical Forestry Program (TFP). Initiated last year, the Tropical Forestry Program provides funds for training and technical assistance in tropical forestry. Thus far much of its funding has been realised to support workshops in such areas as agroforestry, social forestry, forest economics, and forest protection and management. Workshop implementors have included FAO, NGOs, Research Institutions and various universities. Funds provided for each workshop have ranged from about \$ 10,000 to \$ 30,000.

The Forest Service participant to this Intergovernmental Meeting will be exploring the possibility of utilising TFP funds to support SPREP efforts in training and technical assistance.

### Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES)

The relationship between SPREP and CITES is not very old, but is already fruitful, hopefully for both institutions. It should continue to develop in the future, in particular through an increased membership of SPREP members to CITES. For the time being and from the area served by the SPC, only Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu are parties to CITES. Some dependent territories are, however, associated with CITES under the flags of France or the United States of America.

International trade in CITES species occurring in the SPC areas is not very heavy, although several key species for CITES are found in the region, e.g. sea turtles, corals, giant clams, the saltwater crocodile, etc. Therefore, it is the strong feeling of the CITES representative that the accession to CITES of more countries of your organisation would be beneficial for both organisations.

### The Commonwealth Secretariat, London

In 1989 the leaders of 49 Commonwealth nations representing one quarter of the world's population adopted the Langkawi Declaration on Environment. This declaration reflects a unanimous Commonwealth view of critical global environmental problems. In meeting member country requests for assistance in actions for sustainable development to address such problems, the Commonwealth Secretariat deploys its resources to minimise duplication of other efforts and maximise collaboration with other international organisations and agencies. In its activities the Commonwealth aims to help secure international agreements on global environmental issues, as well as helping its Member States at the national level to assess the environmental impact of development programmes and to mitigate against environmental degradation.

Two main approaches are used to address environmental questions. The first is directed at international issues. Commonwealth Expert Groups have been established to examine climatic change and tropical forestry. Another is being set up to address the environmental problems facing small states. In all these pan-Commonwealth projects Pacific member countries have played or will play a part to ensure regional representativeness and the equitable distribution of benefits to member countries. The second approach revolves around technical assistance which may include environmental monitoring, forecasting, legislation and policy, resource management, appropriate technology and so on. A special area of emphasis in the Commonwealth is training and human resources development, particularly for environmental management. Agriculture also commands high priority, with soil and water conservation projects to meet food security and other objectives and specific projects for the Pacific on indigenous conservation farming practices.

### **Asian Development Bank (ADB)**

With the prospects of broadening future ADB-SPREP co-operation, I would like to take this opportunity to inform you of some relatively new developments in the ADB's environment programme and to briefly describe some of the activities of the bank in the Pacific region which are of concern to this gathering.

In view of the crucial role of the environment and the fact that environmental aspects are intrinsic to all development planning, the ADB recognises that it must have an appropriate institutional arrangement for addressing such environmental issues. I am happy to inform you that the Bank has responded to these concerns by upgrading our environment division to an 'Office of the Environment', reporting directly to the Vice-President (Projects), an arrangement which became effective on 1 September 1990.

Based on recent developments in the environmental field, the ADB's environmental policies have been reformulated and refocussed to make the Bank more responsive to the changing needs of the Bank's developing member countries (our DMCs). The future programme focusses on the following major elements: (i) strengthening the integration of environmental considerations in development projects; (ii) promotion of lending in environment-oriented projects; (iii) promotion of projects with environmental components and environmental projects *per se* and (iv) promoting technical assistance projects for institution building.

ADB can play a substantive role in assisting governments in their development of national environment management strategies, in preparing concomitant management plans and in providing financial assistance for implementing such plans. ADB is well placed to assist in strengthening environmental education and public awareness programmes throughout the Bank's Pacific Island DMCs. Many ADB funded environment projects may best be implemented through an existing regional institution. This is one explanation for our presence at this SPREP-IGM. It has also prompted the ADB to approve two regional technical assistance grants to SPREP. The first such project was a technical assistance grant to SPREP for a training programme on the assessment of environmental impacts on tropical islands and coastal areas. The second environmental technical assistance grant in the South Pacific was to the Government of Vanuatu which will result in recommendations for legislative modifications and additions which are considered necessary to transform the existing law into an effective legal regime for environmental and natural resource conservation and management.

In March this year, the ADB approved a technical assistance grant to assist the Government of Fiji to formulate a national environment strategy which is consistent with sound economic development. The strategy formulation process will involve the preparation of a state-of-the-environment report and identifying priority action programmes and projects.

A similar technical assistance grant has recently been approved by the Bank to assist the Government of Western Samoa to strengthen its environmental planning and management capabilities.

At the regional level, the Office of the Environment is preparing an environment sector strategy covering selected member countries of the Bank in the Pacific to enable the ADB to identify high priority proposals appropriate for consideration for funding by the ADB over the next five-year period. The ADB is also considering a regional technical assistance grant to assist regional institutions and governments to develop institutional mechanisms for dealing with global environmental issues and we anticipate co-operation with SPREP for this study.

Finally, I would like to mention what we consider a significant regional technical assistance grant. Last month the ADB Board of Directors approved a grant of \$ 900,000 for technical assistance to be implemented by SPREP over the next two years. This grant, being undertaken in co-operation with IUCN and the East-West Center, will facilitate the preparation of environmental management strategies in several of the Bank's DMCs in the region as well as provide training for many government officials from the region.

We see SPREP as an important regional organisation and a potential partner for executing and undertaking regional environmental activities in the South Pacific and participation in this Meeting will assist us in further exploring forms of co-operation for the future.

### **The Nature Conservancy (TNC)**

The Nature Conservancy is an international conservation non-government organisation headquartered in Washington DC. Through the support of our 550,000 members and 1,200 staff members, we promote conservation activities in all 50 of the United States, Canada and in 17 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. We have been active in the South Pacific Region since 1988 and in early 1990, we established a Regional Office in Hawaii to co-ordinate our growing activities in the Pacific.

Our long-term goal is to help the people of the Pacific obtain the information, technical expertise and resources they need to manage their natural resources in a way to ensure a healthy and productive future. Our plan, in this initial three-four year phase, is to select no more than six programmes on which to focus our efforts. We intend to use the following principles to guide the selection of projects and to evaluate our progress:



*Our programmes must involve partners*

In addition to partnerships with local governments and NGOs, we want to build broad international partnerships with multi-national institutions, international conservation NGOs, and countries that have broad regional interests in the Pacific. Encouraging broadly co-operative efforts will result in an effective balance of conservation and development throughout the region and ensure sustained efforts. At the heart of this strategy is our intention to work with, and support, SPREP.

*Success requires a consistent presence*

Where possible, we intend to place staff within countries in the region. In this way, we will be better able to appreciate the needs and obstacles facing the community and interact more frequently with decision makers and community leaders. At the same time, we will work to build local institutional capacity that will eventually make TNC's presence obsolete.

*Projects need to be sustainable*

Projects will only be developed with a clear strategy to sustain them beyond the life of the Conservancy's involvement. At this time, The Nature Conservancy has two major initiatives in this region. The first is our new programme to support conservation activities in the US affiliated island countries in Micronesia. Chuck Cook established our field office in the Republic of Palau in July 1990 and already has an initiative underway to assist the Government of Palau with inventories of key species with an eye towards possibly developing new conservation projects based on sustainable harvest programmes and the establishment of a law enforcement programme.

Sam Pearsall is heading up our second major initiative to establish a regional network of conservation data centers to serve the information needs of environmental assessment, land-use planning and regulation, and reserve establishment and management. At this time, we hope to establish the first national centre in Western Samoa, based on data from projects of SPREP and the East-West Center Environment and Policy Institute.

We also have an initiative underway with assistance from the US Agency for International Development, and co-operation with SPREP, to map the endangered ecosystems of the South Pacific. This represents the next logical step beyond the excellent work laid by Dr. Arthur Dahl in his regional surveys of 1980 and 1986. We are very enthusiastic about working with SPREP and all of you in the region and we hope to have a chance to meet all of you during the course of the Meeting.

## **TRAFFIC Oceania**

Thank you for inviting TRAFFIC OCEANIA to attend this Intergovernmental Meeting. I would like to provide a very brief overview of TRAFFIC's current work in the region. As most of the delegates will be aware, TRAFFIC is an International Network, supported by the World Wide Fund for Nature, responsible for monitoring world trade in wild fauna and flora. Whilst trade in endangered species has traditionally been our primary focus, we have more recently diversified to examining the international tropical timber trade and commercial fisheries. Currently TRAFFIC OCEANIA is researching tropical timber trade in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, with a particular emphasis on species in trade. Shortly, we plan to undertake some work on invertebrate fisheries, and will be liaising closely with the Forum Fisheries Agency on this project.

Over the last couple of years, we have co-operated closely with the SPREP Secretariat and have provided financial and technical assistance to a joint project with SPREP and the Solomon Islands Government in a survey of wildlife management in the Solomons. One of the primary objectives of this project is to provide recommendations for the sustainable utilisation of wildlife and the implementation of appropriate regulations. The final report of this project was completed earlier this year and is currently being considered by the Solomon Islands Government.

Another project of direct relevance to SPREP is work we are presently doing to document trade and utilisation of wild birds in the South Pacific region. The results of this survey will be presented in November to the conference of the International Council for Bird Preservation as a contribution to the Regional Avifauna Conservation Programme.

We look forward to further involvement with SPREP projects and working with governments in the region during the coming years.

## **Greenpeace New Zealand**

Greenpeace is an international non-governmental organisation with a balanced agenda between peace and environmental issues. Greenpeace has actively campaigned in the Pacific since 1971, on a broad range of issues including ocean ecology, ocean dumping and marine pollution, the export of hazardous wastes and technologies, nuclear testing and more recently the climate change issue. The work we do in the region can be divided into two areas:

### *HIGH SEA/INTERNATIONAL WATERS*

#### *COASTAL ZONE*

The Greenpeace Pacific Campaign works in several ways:

Non-Violent Direct Action.

Distribution Information - Information is power. One of our goals is to ensure that the environmental viewpoint is presented on issues.

*CO-OPERATING WITH Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)* - NGOs are a resource. They often provide an accountability mechanism for governments on their conservation and environmental record and help develop a political commitment to the environment.

We note the concern and need expressed for increasing SPREP's staff and the funding required to be able to support them. Maybe it is possible to look to the NGOs for some assistance with this need and it might be that with the combined resources of the NGOs here, one position could be filled.

*LOBBYING GOVERNMENTS AND INDUSTRY* - to promote new approaches to the environment that acknowledge that environmentalism is not anti-development *per se*, encouraging the adoption of the precautionary approach to the way we relate to the environment. The precautionary approach shifts the emphasis from proof of environmental harm to proof of environmental safety. Environmental protection must not be divorced from our daily lives, it must be comprehensive and within a structure which recognises that everything is connected. We want to acknowledge the good work done by the SPREP Secretariat. We have, where appropriate, co-operated and consulted with SPREP and we hope that this co-operative relationship will continue into the future.

#### **Tourism Council of the South Pacific**

In recognition of the importance of the natural environment as the tourism resource base, the Tourism Council of the South Pacific (TCSP) has initiated a scheme for the protection of the natural environment which forms part of its work programme under the Pacific Regional Tourism Development Programme financed by the European Community. Bearing in mind the future utilisation of the natural environment, the principal objective of the scheme is to protect the natural environment and to ensure proper control, and where possible, prevention of potential adverse effects of tourism development.

Through this scheme, TCSP has directed efforts to the need of promoting environmental awareness in the development and management of tourism in the region. Emphasis was placed on the development of detailed proposals for specific nature conservation and in particular, nature legislation for the protection of the natural environment at the national level. In this connection, TCSP has recently published the guidelines for the protection of the natural environment including guidelines and procedures for the environment validation of tourism development projects, for use by national tourism authorities and other relevant government institutions.

Apart from the need to complete a follow up on the recommended activities for the protection of natural environment which include the development of informative and educational materials, TCSP's future role will diminish with the expansion of national tourism authorities and their ability to monitor and manage their own tourism development. TCSP will, however, continue to assist and/or direct assistance to specific areas in accordance with the priority which member governments attach to their needs.

### The Government of Chile

The representative of the Government of Chile stated that Chile, being a member of the South Pacific basin, has commercial and cultural links with countries of this vast ocean since our Independence and particularly through the Province of Easter Island situated in Polynesia.

Since 1975 Chile has been an observer member of the South Pacific Commission. It contributes annually with financial assistance to the works carried out by the Commission through the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme SPREP. Last year this contribution was used in the Project 'Environmental Education Week Activities' in the Republic of the Marshall Islands. This year's contribution, which I have just handed over to the Secretary-General, will be used in a project called 'Traditional Resource Management and Yam Cultivation in Pohnpei', Federated States of Micronesia, as agreed with the Office of Dr Vili A. Fuavao, SPREP's Co-ordinator.

The representative of Chile wished to inform the meeting of the efforts made and the works carried out by the Latin American nations on the Eastern side of the Pacific Basin and members of the Permanent South Pacific Commission (Chile, Peru, Ecuador and Columbia).

On this occasion, he talked about the Regional Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme and the South Pacific Permanent Commission. This programme consists of an Action Plan on Environment Protection in the South East Pacific, its Protocols and its Agreements. The Action Plan, which took effect on 19 May 1986, includes the Marine Environment and South Pacific Coastal Zone Protection Agreement, as well as the Regional Co-operation Agreement, aimed at preventing the pollution caused by Hydro-carbons and other harmful substances in the South Pacific. It also includes two Protocols: One is complementary to the aforementioned Regional Co-operation Agreement, and the other is aimed at the protection of the South East Pacific against land originated pollution (in force since 20 May 1987 and 23 September 1986 respectively).

Likewise, on 21 September 1989 two Protocols were subscribed in Columbia; one for the Protection of the South East Pacific against Radioactive Pollution, and the other, for the Preservation and Administration of Coastal and Marine Areas in the South East Pacific. The last two Agreements have not been ratified yet by the PSPC member countries (Chile, Peru, Ecuador and Columbia). This Action Plan and its Protocols, which are under the PSPC General Secretariat's Administration, have been included in the Regional Seas Programme of UNEP and, in spite of UNEP's financial assistance for this Action Plan, the PSPC member governments still fund most of these activities.

Currently, the Administration of this Regional Programme UNEP/PSPC is carried out from Santiago, Chile, as the Executive Secretariat 'Protempore' of this Regional Organisation is located in this Capital for a period of four years. Chile has nominated, as the National Organisation entrusted with co-ordinating its works, the General Division of Marine Territory and Merchant Navy, in its capacity of Chilean focal point in the Action Plan. This General Division is carrying out Scientific Research in the Bay of Valparaiso-Chile, in accordance with the Mandate given at the VI Intergovernmental Meeting of this Action Plan held in Lima, Peru, in October last year, where this bay was nominated 'Pilot Area on Environment Management'.

### **Association of South Pacific Environmental Institutions (ASPEI)**

The Association of South Pacific Environmental Institutions (ASPEI) is a regional, scientific organisation, composed of the research and training institutions of the Pacific Basin. ASPEI has served as a technical advisor to SPREP and UNEP in this region, and is ready to assist SPREP and the region in carrying out the Action Plan.

Objectives of ASPEI include: (i) improvement of communication among environmental scientists and policy makers in the countries of the SPREP Region and (ii) the development of local capacity in environmental issues.

### **The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)**

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) is the principal scientific research agency in Australia. It has national responsibilities for environmental research in marine, terrestrial and atmospheric areas, and a history of collaborative research and training in the international arena. The Australian Marine Science and Technology (AMSAT) is a consortium group of Australian Commonwealth agencies developed to act as a focal point for provision of Australian research capabilities internationally. Both CSIRO and AMSAT look forward to closer ties and collaboration with SPREP, to enhance research and training in environmental issues.

### **The International Union for the Conservation of Natural Resources (IUCN)**

The mission from IUCN is to promote the wise use of nature and natural resources are in line with the mission SPREP as defined in the SPREP Action Plan.

IUCN has been associated with SPREP from its very inception and have endeavoured to promote the activities and the mission of the SPREP. The mission of SPREP is in line with IUCN's mission which aims to promote the wise use of nature and natural resources, within the context of furthering the aims of the WORLD CONSERVATION STRATEGY. Therefore, we are pleased to observe the advances made by the Pacific countries in responding positively to key environmental development issues in the region and the emerging role of SPREP as an effective regional co-ordinating institution.

IUCN plans to continue its support to SPREP during 1991-92 by providing two person/months of technical expertise, (under the institutional arrangement of the ADB/SPREP technical assistance) in the areas of environmental legislation and natural conservation strategies. These are two areas where IUCN can claim to have a comprehensive technical institutional capability.

In addition IUCN will initiate a dialogue with SPREP aimed at collaboration in ecologically sensitive areas classifications and management and to enable us to promote biological diversity in the natural planning process. We hope to elaborate on this collaboration during the forthcoming IUCN General Assembly in Perth, Australia (28 November - 5 December 1990).

### **United Nations Environment Programme - Global Resource Information Database (GRID)**

GRID, the Global Resource Information Database, was established within the framework of GEMS, the Global Environment Monitoring System of UNEP, in 1985. GRID is developing a global network of centres which utilise geographic information system (GIS) and remote sensing technology to process environmental data and analyse the interaction of environmental variables. The mission of GRID is to provide timely and reliable environmental information and access to a unique international data management service, to help address environmental issues at global, regional and national levels, in order to bridge the gap between scientific understanding of earth processes and sound management of the environment.

GRID has three principal functions: to compile geo-referenced environmental data collected by various organisations; to supply this data to GRID users; and to help nations and institutions acquire GIS and related image-analysis technology and expertise so that GRID can develop into a global environmental information network. At present (September 1990) GRID operates through three regional centres located in Nairobi, Geneva and Bangkok. Future centres will be established as the GRID system expands. In recognition of the unique situation of the South Pacific region, UNEP/GEMS is proposing the establishment of a GRID Centre for the South Pacific, including supportive training and technology transfer mechanisms, as a co-operative venture with SPREP.

The project would seek to enhance environmental monitoring and assessment capabilities through the establishment of regional and national resource data bases and, where appropriate, the provision of GIS capabilities within both SPREP and in participating countries. A summary description of the proposed project is provided as Information Paper 3 (IP.3).

### **New Zealand Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR)**

The New Zealand Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) conducts a wide range of environmental-related research, both in New Zealand and Pacific countries. This research has largely been in relation to agricultural, forestry and industrial development; land and water resources inventory, management, and monitoring; natural hazard assessment; plant and animal ecology and biodiversity; water pollution; natural resource data management; environmental impact assessment; and training. It also has significant laboratory, computing and library services to support such research. DSIR has previously made technical contributions to SPREP in the development of its marine pollution programme, and in ecological studies of Kakerori in the Cook Islands under SPREP's species conservation programme.

### **The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**

UNDP globally has been directed to focus on six major themes in its technical assistance programme in the 1990's. One of the six is related to the Environment. In line with this new emphasis, the UNDP regional office based in Fiji, undertook its first major initiative in this field by organising the Regional Workshop on Environmental Management and Sustainable Development in April this year in Suva. The principle objective of the Workshop was to heighten awareness on some of the major environmental problems associated with development in countries of the South Pacific Region as well as identify policy instruments available and actions to be taken to promote environmentally sound development in our countries. The Workshop was also intended to provide a South Pacific input into the Ministerial Conference to be held in Bangkok in October 1990.

The Workshop approved 40 recommendations under the areas of: Environmental Management, Tourism, Forestry, Industrial Development, Pollution and Waste Disposal, EIA and Challenges for Sustainable Development.

One of the recommendations under Environmental Management pertained to the need for the update of the SPREP Action Plan to provide more comprehensive guidelines and direction for sustainable development consistent with that of the Report of the World Commission on the Environment and Development.

It was also recommended that UNDP and other donor agencies should, within the means available to them, increase their support in terms of funding, staffing and other resources to these island countries thereby increasing their capability to address environmental problems. More specific recommendations pertained to the need for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Environmental Management Strategies (EMS) in these countries.

UNDP has also noted another recommendation made at the workshop, calling on international agencies and organisations to liaise and co-ordinate environmental issues with SPREP so as to avoid duplication and wasteful use of resources in the region. UNDP has decided to pick on some of the elements of these recommendations to commit US\$ 400,000 which is proposed to fund an EIA officer to be based at SPREP as well as complement other donor inputs in the carrying out of EMS in the region.

The UNDP is now in the process of formulating the focus of its regional programme for the next funding cycle 1992-96. In view of the importance that UNDP is now placing on the Environment, there is favourable indication that increased funding will be made available for this initiative. UNDP looks forward to the start of a fruitful working relationship with your governments through SPREP in attempting to make some impact in addressing environmental problems in this region.

### **World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) South Pacific Conservation Programme**

Thank you very much for the opportunity to introduce the South Pacific Programme of the World Wide Fund for Nature, to this Intergovernmental Meeting of SPREP. The World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF) is one of the world's largest international nature conservation organisations with 27 Affiliate and Associate National Organisations on five continents. WWF works globally, regionally and nationally. Its programmes are aimed at conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of natural resources, and reduction of pollution and wasteful exploitation.

The WWF South Pacific Programme is the newest WWF Regional Programme formally launched in July 1990. The programme is managed by WWF International in association with the WWF National Organisations; WWF Australia and WWF United States playing a major role in implementation of this programme. The Co-ordinator of the WWF South Pacific Programme is currently based within the offices of WWF Australia.

*The primary objectives of the WWF South Pacific Programme are to support conservation efforts in the South Pacific region, with particular emphasis on maintenance of biological diversity; promotion of sustainable use of resources; and promotion of traditional islander resource management, knowledge and practice.*

*The WWF South Pacific Programme will work within the context of the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme, focussing effort in areas where WWF can best contribute and seeking to avoid duplication of the efforts of others while at the same time developing opportunities for inter-agency co-operation.*

*The means by which WWF will work in the South Pacific include:*

- support for model conservation projects which recognise and allow for the economic and social needs of local populations, which build upon the conservationist component of traditional knowledge and practice;
- provision of technical expertise to assist with flora and fauna surveys, species conservation, and protected area planning and management;
- provision of small grants to catalyse worthwhile conservation initiatives;
- supply of information on conservation problems and on appropriate solutions for these problems;
- assistance with establishment and management of protected areas of a type appropriate to the region;
- generation of a wider awareness, concern and commitment to positive conservation action, and
- encouragement and assistance to governments to introduce and implement conservation policies and legislation.



Three particular areas of WWF support will be emphasised namely, support for conservation institutions; conservation of biological diversity, particularly tropical rainforests, wetlands, coral reefs and threatened species, and conservation education and training.

*WWF relationship with SPREP.* WWF has had a productive working relationship with SPREP over a number of years. WWF has partially supported the position of the Protected Areas Officer and assisted with the Third Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas. WWF is continuing its involvement through SPREP in the management of the Ngerukewid marine reserve of Palau and will also make available funds for the production of materials for selected countries.

As the principal source of funds for TRAFFIC (Oceania), WWF also maintains an interest in wildlife trade issues and the sustainable utilisation of wild species. WWF intends to continue to develop its relationship with SPREP and to provide assistance generally to government and non-government conservation agencies according to the priorities and methods outlined in the programme document. With particular reference to SPREP, WWF could provide assistance through the following activities: (i) providing or seeking funds for project activities either in total or in part; (ii) helping to provide consultants to assist in project development and implementation; (iii) providing international liaison with WWF activities in other regions which could assist the SPREP work programme.

#### **Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service**

The Agency is primarily responsible for management of Protected Areas and Wildlife Management and Conservation. There has been a long history of co-operation with countries of the region and it is intended that this should be put on a more formal basis through an MOU with SPREP.

Matters to be covered in such an agreement could include rare and endangered species protection and management, tourism in relation to protected area management, education and interpretation. It is envisaged that there would be support for training of/and secondment of Pacific nationals to ANPWS and secondment of ANPWS officers to Pacific Island countries to undertake projects and assist with training of local staff.

Australia will be providing staff assistance for the regional Turtle Conservation Programme and has recently hosted a conference of South Pacific countries to promote joint control activity related to International Wildlife Trade.

## MISSION AND APPROACH OF SPREP

(EXTRACT FROM SPREP/ACTION PLAN MEETING 3/WP.11)

### The Central Mission

- 2.1 The mission of SPREP is defined in the SPREP Action Plan as: "helping the countries of the South Pacific to maintain and improve their shared environment and to enhance their capacity to provide a present and future resource base to support the needs and maintain the quality of life of the people."
- 2.2 This definition makes it clear that human needs stand at the centre of SPREP's concerns. The SPREP mission is to ensure the future for South Pacific island people, in a stable balance with the natural systems of the biosphere on which that future depends. The goal is to preserve and manage natural resources "in a way that is conducive to the peace, progress and prosperity of island people".
- 2.3 This message is consistent with that articulated in the World Conservation Strategy, produced by IUCN, UNEP and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) in 1980. It will be expounded further in the development of a World Conservation Strategy for the 1990's (now in progress) and it would be desirable that SPREP's mission should continue to be consistent with the sentiments of this global strategy.
- 2.4 The central mission of SPREP can be summed up in a single sentence:  
  
"The mission of SPREP, is to help the peoples and governments of the South Pacific to apply their insights, skills and resources so as to develop and sustain the harmony which should characterise humanity's relationship with other components of the environment".

### The Approach

- 2.5 The above mission, if it is to be realised, demands four things:
  - a) that the SPREP is **authoritative**. This means that it must gather knowledge and distill clear insight and compelling guidance. Its science has to be first class, although the scientific and technical prescriptions it develops have to be relevant to the needs of communities interacting with the environment in the real world and applicable by them to enhance their future. If the SPREP's primary task is to provide an intellectual base for conservation and sustainable development, that intellectual product has to be expressed through practical tools and methods.

- b) that the SPREP is **outward looking**. SPREP can only achieve its objectives by working with and through others. It has to be a catalyst and a facilitator, for example helping Government departments and agencies concerned with the environment to convince political leaders and Ministries of Finance and Development that sound conservation practices mean sound economic development. The "conservation movement" has to face outwards and convince the rest of the world that its message is sound.
- c) that SPREP **communicates**. SPREP can achieve the results it seeks by drawing on the expertise of national, regional and international experts and institutions and promulgating its conclusions to those who can and will use them. "Outreach" is crucial. If the SPREP's conclusions do not reach users in a convincing and applicable form they will get nowhere, labour will have been lost, and the credibility of the Programme will be diminished.
- d) That SPREP works in **partnership** with other international bodies (such as the UN agencies, IUCN, WWF, ADB, the World Bank, etc.), and with non-governmental organisations including the churches, women's organisations and youth clubs. SPREP must have direct access to these NGOs as all have something to contribute to its mission. It is part of the task of SPREP to justify its existence by working in harmony with others and assisting their missions as if they were its own.

### Specific Objectives

- 2.6 The SPREP Action Plan was intended to provide a framework for environmentally sound planning and management, suited to the needs and conditions of the countries and people in the region and to enhance their own environmental capabilities. Its more specific objectives include:
- (i) further assessment of the state of the environment in the region including the impacts of man's activities on land, fresh water, lagoons, reefs and ocean, the effects of these on the quality of man's environment, and the human conditions which have led to their impacts.
  - (ii) the development of management methods suited to the environment of the region which will maintain or enhance environmental quality while utilising resources on a sustainable basis.
  - (iii) the improvement of national legislation and the development of regional agreements to provide for responsible and effective management of the environment.
  - (iv) the strengthening of national and regional capabilities, institutional arrangements and financial support which will enable the Action Plan to be put into effect efficiently and economically.

**SUGGESTED REVISIONS TO THE ACTION PLAN FOR MANAGING  
THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT OF  
THE SOUTH PACIFIC REGION  
(UNEP REGIONAL SEAS REPORTS AND STUDIES NO. 29)**

(EXTRACT FROM REPORT OF THE FIFTH CONSULTATIVE MEETING  
OF RESEARCH AND TRAINING INSTITUTIONS  
SUVA, FIJI, 25 - 29 JUNE 1990)

**1. PREAMBLE AND GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members of the Fifth Consultative Meeting acknowledge that given the present state of understanding of the environment, the scale and rates of environmental change, and uncertainties regarding the exact consequences of environmental change, there is a continuing need, under the SPREP Action Plan, for both: a) legislation, education and action to address environmental issues, and b) further applied studies to better understand the nature and long-term consequences of environmental change.

Given these needs, the meeting recommends that:

1. The Action Plan be revised and updated to reflect the broadening environmental awareness and the new environmental issues which have emerged since the adoption of the Action Plan in 1982.
2. The Action Plan be edited and reorganised into a framework which would reflect the interactive nature and the cultural and economic importance of the environment and environmental management.
3. The Action Plan place greater emphasis on the considerable economic, cultural, ecological and human welfare benefits that are derived from existing physical and biological resources and biological diversity in particular; and that it also recognise the urgent need to undertake comprehensive work programmes to conserve and maintain the full range of biological diversity and physical environments for the benefit of future generations.
4. The Action Plan place greater emphasis on nature conservation in the Pacific and the protection of a full range of ecosystem types and species. In this regard, the preservation of traditional conservation knowledge and values, and their integration into environmental assessment and management in the Pacific Islands is of paramount importance; more emphasis should be placed on the important subsistence, economic and cultural benefits of environmental management and conservation.

5. In order to heighten the quality of effectiveness of the full range of work undertaken in the Action Plan, there is a need to increase participatory opportunity for indigenous people and women in general, as scientists, collaborators, and through projects such as community-level conservation projects and initiatives.
6. The Action Plan be seen as a basic guideline to focus on important environmental issues that can be addressed or acted upon at the international, regional, national and local level in the region, and that the guidelines be simplified and translated into the vernacular for promotion at the community level and in schools.

## **2. SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS**

Areas of additional or new emphasis, and their rationales, which require environmental assessment on a regional basis, and which could be included under a revised section 15 of the current Action Plan include:

### **1. The impact of fossil fuel dependency on Pacific societies and environments**

*Rationale:* The reliance of oil-based energy production presents serious environmental and economic problems for island states. Energy related issues that need to be addressed in the Action Plan are self sufficiency, alternatives to the dependency on oil with its associated environmental implications, conservation of energy sources and renewable energy such as solar, wind, hydro-electric, ocean thermal energy conversion and biomass.

### **2. The impact of climatic change on Pacific Islands environments and societies**

*Rationale:* The implications of global warming, and its consequences, such as sea level rise, for biophysical, social, cultural and economic systems, need to be assessed in the South Pacific.

### **3. The impact of natural hazards on natural and human systems**

*Rationale:* The effects of the changes in the spatial and temporal patterns of natural hazards, such as floods, tidal waves, tropical cyclones, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions, need greater consideration given the impact of such extreme events on Pacific societies. Consideration should be given to both the effects of possible changes in the frequency of such events and to the consequences of increased vulnerability of communities due to factors such as technological, social and demographic changes, including the movement of people into marginal or urban areas.

**4. The impact of population pressure, inappropriate consumption patterns, and technological change on scarce or dwindling resources and the environment**

*Rationale:* Most environmental problems are the result of increasing demands on natural resources due to an interaction between population growth, increasing per capita consumption, and technological change. Continued growth in population and per capita consumption, and the increasing impact of technology, need to be assessed in relation to the ability of island resources to sustain current patterns of growth. These factors have implications for all components of the Action Plan.

**5. The impact of modern development on traditional values and cultures, the cultural environment, and traditional resource-use systems**

*Rationale:* In many areas, traditional knowledge and subsistence resource-use systems are being threatened with extinction. The conservation and preservation of cultural and traditional values and knowledge and resource management strategies need to be given greater attention in light of their paramount importance to the habitation of the Pacific Islands and the cultural identities of their peoples.

**6. The impact of development on the quality and quantity of inland water resources**

*Rationale:* Although this is item 15.9 of the existing Action Plan, it was felt that insufficient emphasis is given to the whole area of inland water resources. Given the vital role of water to all living systems and the limited freshwater supplies in many countries in the region, this topic needs greater attention. Factors such as changing availability and consumption patterns, and waste disposal, need to be addressed, as do the linkages between land-based pollution and marine water quality.

**7. The impact of destructive fishing practices on marine ecosystems and the societies and economies of the Pacific Ocean**

*Rationale:* The potential negative long-term impacts on the tuna resources and tuna industry, as well as on the wider marine resources and economies of the Pacific, make oceanic drifnet fishing and other destructive fishing activities such as use of explosives, fish poisons, gillnetting and over-exploitation or out-of-season exploitation of strategic marine resources a major threat to the viability of Pacific societies.

**8. The impact of environmental degradation and pollution on human health and nutrition**

*Rationale:* Given the very serious nutrition and health problems in the region, there is a need to address environmental health and food supply considerations related to environmental degradation, agricultural deterioration and pollution.

**LIST OF MEETING DOCUMENTATION****INFORMATION PAPERS**

- IP.1** Johnston Atoll
- IP.2** Marine Pollution Related Conventions within the South Pacific Region
- IP.3** Strengthening Environment Monitoring and Assessment Capabilities in the South Pacific Region
- IP.4** 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

**WORKING PAPERS**

- WP.1** Status of the SPREP and Apia Conventions
- WP.2** SPREP Biennial Report: 1988-89
- WP.3** Implementation of the 1989-90 Work Programme of SPREP
- WP.4** Fund Raising Efforts of the Secretariat
- WP.5** Revision of Budget for 1990
- WP.6** Implementation of Projects under Sub-contracts by Members of the Association of South Pacific Environmental Institutions (ASPEI)

- WP.7** Consideration of Project Proposals for the Biennium 1991-92
- WP.7(a)** SPREP POL: A Regional Programme Addressing Marine Pollution Problems in the South Pacific
- WP.8** Consideration of a Budget for SPREP for the Biennium 1991-92
- WP.9** SPREP Staffing: Personal Administrative Assistant
- WP.10** SPREP Staffing: Community Development Officer
- WP.11** What Future for SPREP
- WP.12** The Role of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) in Relation to Future Steering Committee Meetings
- WP.13** Review of SPREP Action Plan
- WP.14** SPREP Steering Committee Representation
- WP.15** Representation at Intergovernmental Meetings
- WP.16** The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED): Opportunities for National and Regional Input from the South Pacific Region
- WP.17** What Future for SPREP (Agenda Item 10) - Recommendations emanating from Drafting Committee for Discussion in Plenary