



Brisbane Forum '94:

Managing Our Resources

Forum Leaders made a huge leap towards the next century in basing this year's discussions on the theme "*Managing our Resources*".

By concentrating on common regional issues such as managing indigenous forests, developing fisheries, managing land use and managing the growth of tourism, the Forum Meeting explored how the region's resources are currently used and how they could be used more sustainably in the future.

One important decision from the meeting was the agreement on forestry management, between the Prime Ministers of Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. They agreed to work towards:

- a common code of conduct governing logging of indigenous forests, to which companies operating in their countries will have to adhere;
- urgently improving the monitoring of logging and exports of timber; and,
- bringing senior officials together, within two months, to begin implementing these decisions.

The leaders also agreed to continue and strengthen their multi-lateral approach to managing the region's fisheries. This includes negotiating more multilateral agreements with deep water fishing nations. Currently, only USA has such an agreement, coordinated through FFA.

The *Forum Communiqué* stressed the central importance of indigenous rights and customs, and the special relationship of indigenous people to their land. This comment was in response to recent suggestions by the Australian Minister for Pacific Affairs, Gordon Bilney, that perhaps Pacific island countries should reconsider some aspects of traditional land ownership to encourage more foreign investment.

The 1995 Forum Meeting will be held in Port Moresby, PNG. Officials are hopeful that negotiations for the *Regional Treaty Controlling the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Management within the South Pacific Region* will be concluded in time for signing by the region's leader at the meeting. ☼☼☼

The '94 Forum Communiqué at a glance..

on Forests ...

The Forum Meeting agreed to:

- implement activities to curtail the current unsustainable harvest of some indigenous forests in the region.

on Land Tenure ...

- recognise the central importance of indigenous rights and customs, and the special relationship of indigenous people to their land.

on Fisheries ...

- promote the sustainable exploitation of the region's fisheries stocks through multilateral actions.

on Fuel ...

- lower the amount of octane in fuel sold in the region, recognising the economic and environmental advantages in doing so.

on Climate Change and Sea Level Rise...

- call for more comprehensive measures to lower greenhouse gas emissions through the FCCC.
- call on Annex 1 countries to ensure that joint implementation complements and does not replace their domestic actions.

on Coastal Zones and Land-Based Pollution ...

- welcome the attention drawn to preserving healthy coral reefs for sound coastal protection.

on the Biodiversity Convention ...

- endorse the establishment of conservation areas under the SPBCP.
- encourage Forum members to ratify the Convention on Biological Diversity.



After NEMS, What Next?



Neva Wendt
(above) will continue her work with SPREP as the *Project Manager (Capacity 21)*.

Photo: Apia Photomart

Over the past four years, major donors have assisted Pacific island countries plan their environmental management to ensure that they will protect their environment as they develop economically. This process has produced a series of *National Environmental Management Strategies - NEMS* - for a number of countries across the region.

The Process was Vital ...

The process of developing NEMS in each country was important. Rather than printing a document that might merely "sit on a shelf", producing a NEMS has involved raising a country's environmental awareness and improving community consultations. In most countries, there were detailed reviews of environmental legislation, policy and institutional mechanisms; and

awareness raising and education activities. *State of the Environment Reports* and environmental awareness-raising videos, in English and local languages, were also produced.

National seminars and awareness-raising workshops were held to develop the NEMS, and to obtain comments from government and private agencies, NGOs and community organisations. In many countries, the draft NEMS was then subjected to further in-country reviews before final approval by the national Cabinet.

A major part of the NEMS process was strengthening the environment sections in each country, and associated training in areas such as EIA, testing water quality and developing resource surveys and management plans.

Who has a NEMS?

NEMS have now been produced by most Pacific island countries. Two major SPREP projects assisted twelve countries with the NEMS process:

☒ in Cook Islands, FSM, RMI, Solomon Islands and Tonga, ADB funded the project with technical assistance from IUCN;

☒ in Kiribati, Niue, Nauru, Palau, Tokelau, Tuvalu and Western Samoa, UNDP and AIDAB funded the development of these NEMS.

Similar documents were also produced by Fiji and Vanuatu during this time.

Each NEMS also details *programme profiles*, a set of projects needed to carry out activities outlined in the NEMS. These profiles are now also the basis for SPREP's work programme. These are continually submitted by SPREP to donors as outlines of the assistance required by member countries.

The Response to NEMS: "Capacity 21"

UNDP has responded to the outcomes of the NEMS by providing finance for a new project, which commenced in August 1994. This *Programme of Capacity Building for Sustainable Development in the South Pacific: Building on NEMS - or Capacity 21* for short - emphasises the needs for institutional building identified in the NEMS, and implementing the principles outlined in *Agenda 21*, the action programme from the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, Brazil.

The '94 Forum Communiqué at a glance..

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- ☒ condemn the international trade in endangered species. (Ed. Note that this includes all species of sea turtles).
- ☒ urge all Forum members to consider accession to CITES.
- ☒ welcome the establishment of the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary,
- ☒ support the continuation of the moratorium on commercial whaling.
- ☒ note the growing interest in whale-watching and its implications for ecotourism.
- ☒ endorse the proposal that 1995 be declared the Year of the Sea Turtle.

on the Barbados Conference ...

- ☒ endorse the Programme of Action from the Barbados Conference.
- ☒ establish a consultative mechanism, which includes SPREP, ESCAP and senior officials, to co-ordinate the implementation of the Programme of Action in the region.

on the GEF ...

- ☒ welcome the restructuring and replenishment of the GEF, including intentions to implement the outcomes from the Barbados Conference.

on the Regional Hazardous Waste Treaty ...

- ☒ direct officials to make every effort to conclude negotiations for the regional hazardous waste treaty in time for the 1995 Forum.

on Radioactive Wastes ...

- ☒ reiterate concerns with the risks for shipping radioactive materials to Japan through this region.
- ☒ gain assurance that shipments are made under the highest international safety and security standards.
- ☒ express appreciation to Japan in providing information about its programme of plutonium use.

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Environment has been at the forefront of the agenda of the annual meeting of the **South Pacific Forum** for many years now.

Issues such as sea level rise and its potential devastating impacts on the region's low-lying atoll islands; domestic, industrial and hazardous wastes; endangered plants and animals; coastal protection; lack of environmental awareness; and the rapid rate of population growth and its adverse effects on the limited resources of the region have all been conspicuous in the agenda and the Communiqués of recent Forum meetings. The most recent Forum in Brisbane, Australia, was no exception, emphasising the theme "Managing our Resources".

The Brisbane Forum will be long remembered as a point where it was attempted to return the Forum Meeting to early ways of "doing business". This Forum also focused primarily on the theme, with the Leader's Retreat producing a statement committing themselves to address issues such as forestry, fisheries and airlines.

Regional co-operation is vital in ensuring fair returns for the region with the sustainable harvest of our natural resources. Of course, sustainable development can only be achieved if and when environmen-

tal issues are diligently considered, accepted and incorporated as a part of national development planning.

The Brisbane Forum was a success. Pacific leaders focused on a theme vital for preparing the region for the challenges of the next century. SPREP continued its role in providing advice and information to the Forum Meeting on environmental issues and the recent international trends and developments in this area.

The **Seventh SPREP Meeting** will be held in Tarawa, Kiribati, on 11-13 October 1994. Agenda items of great importance include the adoption of a Corporate Plan for the Secretariat, the frequency of the SPREP Meeting, budgets and work programmes for 1995-97, and the mechanism for implementing the outcomes and decisions of the Barbados Conference. The deliberations and decisions on yet another review of terms and conditions for SPREP staff will no doubt have an impact on SPREP's ability to implement its annual work programme.

To date, five countries - Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand and Western Samoa - have ratified the *Agreement Establishing SPREP*. We need five more ratifications to bring this Agreement into force, giving SPREP the legal entity it needs to



Vili A. Fuavao

function as an autonomous regional organisation. Meanwhile, we continue to work in the spirit of the Agreement, and the interim mechanism allowing SPREP to function independently.

In 1990, SPREP embarked on the Regional Marine Turtle Conservation Programme. This programme was further recognised when the Brisbane Forum Meeting supported the declaration of 1995 as "Year of the Sea Turtle".

SPREP has prepared programme activities to coincide with this declaration, and will require your active support to meet the goals of these activities. The common theme for the year is "Let Our Turtle Family Live". I call on us all to support this noble initiative, and stop the alarming decline in turtle numbers in our region.

Looking forward to seeing you in Tarawa.

Vili A. Fuavao
Director

School Art Competition for Turtle Logo

What do sea turtles and art have in common? Sea turtles are the subject of an art competition for school students from Pacific islands. This is the start of a regional campaign to highlight the rapid decline of turtle numbers in the Pacific islands.

1995 is the **Year of the Sea Turtle**, with the theme - "Let Our Turtle Family Live".

School children are invited to send artwork, in black-and-white or colour, to SPREP. The winning entry, based on the theme, will be the logo for the Year of the Sea Turtle. Three cash prizes are being offered to the winners, with the competition closing on 18 November 1994.

SPREP's Sue Miller, the officer co-ordinating the Regional Marine Turtle Conservation Programme, is also running the competition. She recently pointed out the importance of making all Pacific islanders more aware of the imminent loss of most sea turtles in the region unless they curb current fishing rates for this rapidly diminishing animal.

"Sea turtles need our help", said Ms Miller. "Their numbers are decreasing as more are being killed than can be replaced by the breeding populations. We must kill fewer turtles now, or none at all, or our children may never see them".

Another recent discovery about sea turtles in this region is that they only breed in the areas where they were originally hatched. This means that if the breeding turtles disappear in a particular area because of over fishing, then it is very unlikely that these turtles will breed again in that area.

"These factors weigh heavily against the survival of sea turtles in the region," said Ms Miller. "This means that Pacific islanders must work together to save this culturally and economically important animal from disappearing forever in our region".

For more information, contact Ms Sue Miller, the Project Officer (Species), at SPREP (Tel.: (685) 21 929; Fax: (685) 20 231).



After NEMS, What Next?

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Phase I of the project runs for 30 months, to February 1997. This phase targets six Pacific island countries - two each from Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia.

The project aims to:

- create and strengthen national administrative and legal frameworks for sustainable development;
- integrate environmental considerations into national development and fiscal policies;
- increase public environmental awareness, and so encourage the public to participate in planning and implementing development projects;
- increase the perception of, and skills for, integrated planning in managing land and sea resources;

- improve recognition of traditional resource management systems;
- improve recognition of the value of traditional land and marine tenure in modern development;
- improve links between government agencies, NGOs and community groups;
- improve information on sustainable development and dissemination of this information among all parties concerned; and,
- improve the science and technology available to obtain information and develop the methods needed for sustainable development.

The assistance from Capacity 21 will:

- ☑ improve in-country capabilities to design strategies involving multi-sector planning, so promoting sustainable development;
- ☑ draw up appropriate policies, legislation, regulations and enforcement frameworks;
- ☑ develop ways of actively involving communities in sustainable development issues; and,
- ☑ develop a network to support information access and exchange in the region.

SPREP will also continue to seek extra donor assistance for implementing the activities identified in the NEMS to ensure that each countries' needs are fulfilled.

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Competition

International Photographic Competition on the Environment

Theme: *Focus on Your World*

Closing Date: 30/4/95

Who by? UNEP, Canon Inc.

Categories:

1. professional
2. amateur
3. children (as of 1/1/94, less than 16 years old)

Limits:

1. Maximum of 3 photographs or slides, in colour or b/w; and,
2. Entries must highlight the theme.

More information?

SPREP

or

UNEP Photographic Competition
Dentsu Australia Pty Ltd
20 Riley St
East Sydney, NSW. 2011
Australia.

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NEMS Documents now available from SPREP ...

State of Environment Reports

Cook Islands
Kiribati
Federated States of Micronesia
Marshall Islands
Niue
Palau
Solomon Islands
Tokelau
Tuvalu
Western Samoa

National Environmental Management Strategies (NEMS)

Cook Islands
Federated States of Micronesia
Kiribati
Marshall Islands
Niue
Palau
Solomon Islands
Tokelau
Tonga
Tuvalu
Western Samoa

Reviews of Environmental Education and Community Awareness-Raising

Kiribati
Niue
Tuvalu

Environmental Legislation Reviews

Cook Islands
Federated States of Micronesia
Kiribati
Marshall Islands
Niue
Palau
Solomon Islands
Tokelau
Tonga
Tuvalu
Western Samoa

Awareness Videos

Kiribati, in I-Kiribati and English (PAL).
Niue, in Niuean and English (PAL).
Palau, in English, (NTSC).
Tokelau, in Tokelauan and English (PAL).
Tuvalu, in Tuvaluan and English (PAL)
Western Samoa, in Samoan and English, (PAL).
Combined NEMS video (on Kiribati, Niue, Tokelau, Tuvalu and Western Samoa) in English (PAL).
RETA (ADB/IUCN) video, in English, (PAL).

Contact the SPREP Information and Publications Officer for your copies.

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Tonga:

A New Awareness in Vava'u: "Protect the Earth and She Will Protect You"

Described by some tourists as perhaps one of the most beautiful places in the Pacific islands, Vava'u was recently the site of a major environmental awareness campaign.

Churches, radio, community meetings and even kava parties were used to promote the theme "Protect the Earth and She Will Protect You", during Vava'u's Environmental Awareness Week from 12-15 June. The campaign focussed on a new aspect each day to reinforce the impact of the campaign.

Sunday - Raising Awareness

Activities commenced on Sunday, 12 June, with every church on Vava'u promoting the theme, including a live broadcast of the morning service from the Free Wesleyan Church in the main town, Nei'afu. The day's message was then discussed and debated at Sunday schools, church groups and kava parties, with members of the local NGO, *Mana Fakatupu*, available for discussions.

The first environmental awareness video produced entirely in

Vava'u (in Tongan) was also shown at a number of locations on Sunday night, together with environmental posters and other materials.

Monday - Cleaning up

Monday was designated a "clean-up day" for Nei'afu and the villages of Vava'u. For two weeks beforehand, Radio Tonga broadcasted requests for householders to collect rubbish which was then collected by *Mana Fakatupu*. Rubbish was also collected from yachts moored around Vava'u. Rubbish bins were also distributed throughout Nei'afu and the harbour area.

Tuesday - Greening Vava'u

Tuesday was dedicated to planting trees, with over 3000 seedlings distributed to individual landowners for planting throughout Vava'u. Hon. S. Maafu Tupou, the Minister of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources, lead the people by planting a *langakali* tree at the King's palace in Nei'afu.

There was a high demand for popular cultural trees such as the *heilala* and *langakali*. Timber tree guards were also erected to protect the seedlings from grazing animals.



Hon. S. Maafu Tupou, Tonga's Minister of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources, plants a *langakali* tree at the King's palace, Fangatongo, Vava'u.

Photo: Mana Fakatupu

Wednesday - Recognising Tourism

Local people, including *Mana Fakatupu*, recognise the importance of tourism to the local economy, so the final day was spent cleaning the beaches and nearby marine areas of Vava'u.

This day's activities included a competition for the cleanest beach resort, and adjacent marine area, with Nuku Island Beach winning the first prize of 200 pa'anga from eight other contestants. Boats and trucks were again used to remove and dispose of the rubbish.

Taniela Tukia, Managing Director of *Mana Fakatupu*, said that the week's activities were most successful for the environment and people of Vava'u, marking the beginning of further campaigns to restore the environment of Vava'u.

UNDP provided funding for this campaign through SPREP.

Ed.: Many thanks to Taniela Tukia of *Mana Fakatupu* for providing the information and photos. Let's hope we hear more of the successful activities from this group.



Nuku Island Beach, winner of the beach clean-up.

Photo: Mana Fakatupu



Tokelau:

Clean up the World - But Start at Home First ...

The region has seen many clean-up campaigns in recent years, which are often part of Environment Week activities. Often, however, these are isolated annual events, with little attention to changing the long-running littering habits of people.

Two projects that addressed this problem were recently initiated on Nukunonu atoll in Tokelau. The first was to clean-up the lagoon near the inhabited islets of Nukunonu, where building materials and household rubbish had accumulated after recent cyclones.

Environment staff used diving and snorkelling equipment and local boats to locate and collect the large volume of debris in both deep and shallow water of the lagoon. This rubbish consisted of glass, plastic and aluminium, which were separated and stored in 200-litre drums for shipment to Apia, Western Samoa; and scrap iron, which was carted to the end of the island for re-use or disposal.

However, after completing such major collection and shipping projects, it is important to minimise the return of rubbish into the lagoon.

The second project aimed to show local people how to sort their household rubbish into the various types before it was collected. It aimed to educate householders to take responsibility for their own waste, recycling wherever possible.

This message was spread using simple posters and discussions with community groups and individual households. Householders were encouraged to separate rubbish into glass, metals, plastics, batteries and used engine oil, and to reduce, re-use and recycle rubbish. The campaign particularly targeted women and school children, with full support from the village council.

It was felt, however, that an equally important message still had to be addressed: waste minimisation. As Tokelau moves towards



Sorting household rubbish on Nukunonu atoll, Tokelau.

Photo: Catriona Glendinning

independence and sustainable development, these issues must be successfully addressed if the relatively healthy environment of Tokelau is not to follow in the footsteps of some neighbouring island countries.

Ed. Thanks to Catriona Glendinning, a volunteer working for the Office for Tokelau Affairs, for providing this information and photos. She was supported by UNDP through the NEMS project based at SPREP.

Solomon Islands:

World Environment Day '94

Alison Ofofalu
Solomon Island Broadcasting Corporation

World Environment Day was celebrated this year in most countries of the South Pacific. In Solomon Islands, the day was officially opened on 3 June with a speech by Ezekial Alebu, the Hon. Minister of Forestry, Environment and Conservation.

The message from the Director of UNEP, Ms Elizabeth Dowdeswell, with the theme "One Earth, One Family", was read by the Ministry's Permanent Secretary, James Salanga.

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Workers unloading rubbish collected from Nukunonu Lagoon, Tokelau ...

Photo: Catriona Glendinning



... and Kimi (left), Makaleo and Heho with the final pile of gabbage and scrap from the lagoon.

Photo: Catriona Glendinning



Western Samoa:

Children Bring Endangered Manumea into Local Schools

School pupils from Leififi Middle School, Apia, Western Samoa, are the main actors in a rare event in the Pacific islands: a puppet show on the endangered *manumea*, or *tooth-billed pigeon*.

The puppeteers, aged 11 to 13 years, recently performed a play on the loss of Western Samoa's national bird, the *manumea*, and its lowland rain forest habitat. The first show was to primary school students from the Church of Latter Day Saints at Pesega, Apia. Puppet shows are not common in Western Samoa, so the show was truly a treat for the young audience.

The play depicts the clearing of the forest for logging and agriculture and by two recent major cyclones, together with their effects of these on the endangered *manumea* and other forest animals. It also depicts the effects of uncontrolled hunting by villagers, who value the bird as a delicacy.

The audience was treated to a fast-moving production with excellent sound effects and a catchy theme song sung by the whole audience. The script was presented in English and Samoan.

Officers from the national Division of Environment and Conservation (DEC) wrote the play and designed and produced the puppets and the set, with technical support from the RARE Project, based in the Caribbean.

It is intended that students from other Samoan schools will learn the play and be able to travel around the country to bring this conservation message to rural schools, with support from staff of the DEC, and from SPREP.

Ed.: At the time of printing, the play was touring the rural primary schools of the main island of Upolu on its way to Savai'i.

World Environment Day '94

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Various NGOs and the Environment Division of the Ministry of Health emphasised the environmental message of the day with displays and posters, while the Ministry of Forestry, Environment and Conservation showed environmental videos for the public at the opening.

On the following Sunday, churches around the country also focused on this year's theme.

Hon. Ezekiel Alebua,
Minister for Forestry,
Environment and
Conservation in Solomon
Islands, officially
opening World
Environment Day in
Honiara.

Photo: A. Ofotalau



Environment news for the Pacific Islands

Brisbane to Host Next Ramsar Meeting

Australia's Minister for the Environment, John Faulkner, recently announced that Brisbane, Australia, will host the Sixth Meeting of the Conference of Parties of the Ramsar Convention.

The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat - the Ramsar Convention - was the first international global nature convention. It is still the only international treaty devoted to a particular habitat type.

RAMSAR press release, 10/6/94.

Climate Meeting Paves Way for Berlin

The tenth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) for the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) met in Geneva to prepare for the first meeting of Parties in Berlin in March 1995.

Amongst the contentious issues of the so-called INC-10 was the proposed need for a protocol to strengthen the commitments of developed nations that by 2000 they will reduce emissions to 1990 levels.

Developed countries will also now describe how they are currently limiting greenhouse gas emissions.

UN press release, 19/9/94.

Taiwan Agrees to Negotiate Multilateral Fishing Pact

At the Post-Forum Dialogue in Brisbane, Taiwan said it was prepared to increase its payments to fish regional waters, and to negotiate a multilateral fishing agreement similar to the US pact.

Washington Pacific Report, 12:23.



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Coral Bleaching - Worst Ever

Greenpeace has released a report documenting possibly the worst ever outbreak of coral bleaching in French Polynesia.

Dr. Ove Hoegh-Guldberg of the University of Sydney, Australia, links the bleaching with abnormally high sea temperatures around Tahiti. "What we found in Tahiti seems to be consistent with some scientific projections of climate change", said Dr. Hoegh-Guldberg.

Greenpeace has cited the bleaching as another example of how human-induced climate change affects the global environment.

Greenpeace news release, 2/6/94.

Seabed Mining Agreement Brings UNCLOS Closer

Six SPREP member countries have signed an Agreement which modifies a contentious section on seabed mining in the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea - UNCLOS. This is very significant as this Agreement now paves the way for general international acceptance of the Convention.

The Agreement acknowledges that all deep seabed resources beyond national limits are "the common heritage of all mankind". A seabed Authority will be set up to oversee mining seabed activities, based on free market principles and non-discrimination.

UNCLOS has significant provisions for protecting the marine environment, including management of migratory fish stocks. As of 19 August, Australia, Fiji, France, FSM, New Zealand and Vanuatu have signed the Agreement.

Ocean Policy News, 8/94.

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National Activities

Palau:

"Plant a Giant Clam": Environment and Tourism in Partnership

A unique partnership between environment and tourism is growing in Palau - with the giant clam at the centre.

Palau is becoming world famous as a location for "dive" holidays, with the Rock Islands and its pristine coral reefs at the centre of this attraction. A growing number of dive shops specialize in hiring equipment to diving and snorkeling tourists, and taking them to the best reefs.

The "Plant a Giant Clam" project was started earlier this year by Palau's Division of Marine Resources (DMR) to halt the decline of wild stocks of giant clams on Palau's reefs. Overfishing of these unique animals is the main cause of this decline.

"The program is simple," said Lisa King, head of the Marine Education Project at DMR. "Local dive shops buy live giant clams from the Micronesian Mariculture and Demonstration Centre (which grows the clams) ... who then provide divers and snorkelers with a chance to plant these endangered clams in the wild".

"Divers coming to Palau don't realise that giant clams are endan-

gered throughout the world", continued Ms King. "When a



dive shop joins (the program) it creates an opportunity for divers and snorkelers to actively participate in a reef conservation experience. Participants take a sense of stewardship towards Palau's reefs and dive more carefully in the future".

Divers are often photographed or videoed while planting "their" clam, and are excited to learn that the clam they plant now may still be alive when they are old.

Giant clams have a symbiotic relationship with a special algae that grows inside their bodies. As a result, giant clams are found only in clear shallow water with good light penetration. The clams are planted below the lowest low tide mark and no deeper than 10 metres.

Ed.: Thanks to Ms Lisa King for the information on this project. For more information, contact Lisa at:

Marine Education Project
Division of Marine Resources
Bureau of Natural Resources
Koror, Palau.
Tel. (680) 488 3125
Fax: (680) 488 2017

Vanuatu:

Minister Launches National Conservation Strategy

Vanuatu recently joined the growing ranks of Pacific island countries who have developed national strategies to address their environmental problems.

On 5 August 1994, the Minister of Health and Environment, Hon. Dr Edward Tambisari, officially launched Vanuatu's *National Conservation Strategy* at a ceremony attended by fellow government min-

isters, NGOs and AIDAB officials, all of whom contributed significantly to the document.

Hon. Tambisari pointed out that this document was the work of the people and communities of Vanuatu. "It was the main objective of the project that the people of Vanuatu should decide on what they want to see included in the report, and a

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Coastal Management Training: Smaller is Better

A recent series of subregional workshops on the training needs in coastal management concluded that "smaller is better" when it came to providing appropriate training.

These were among the conclusions of three 2-day meetings held in Pago Pago, American Samoa (18-19 July), Saipan, CNMI (25-26 July) and Honiara, Solomon Islands (1-2 August).

Participants enjoyed the more relaxed proceedings in these smaller meetings, which included country reports, an overview of SPREP's Coastal Management Programme, and general discussions on the overall state of coastal management in the region and specific talks on the training needs for coastal management.

These meetings highlighted the most common training needs as:

- developing integrated coastal zone management (ICZM);
- raising public awareness;
- understanding coastal processes and monitoring;
- environmental impact assessment;

- improving extension work in villages;
- enforcing coastal management regulations;
- developing and implementing coastal management plans; and,
- negotiating and mediation techniques.

Most countries agreed that small, in-country short courses were the most beneficial forms of training. However, it was stressed that this training should be practical and preferably based on field work.

A common problem was also stressed by most participants - the lack of communication and co-ordination between the various agencies, departments and offices that were responsible for coastal management in Pacific island countries. Discussions pointed out that there was insufficient training for many officers who dealt with this area.

The results of this meeting were incorporated into a revised Integrated Coastal Management strategy now being developed by SPREP. The meetings were run by SPREP with funding from the Canadian Government.

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Vanuatu Minister Launches NCS

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report which they could accept as an environmental plan to work with," said Tambisari.

Vanuatu's Council of Ministers endorsed the Strategy in March 1994, calling for further support for implementing the Strategy from the main organisations involved in the project: IUCN, AIDAB and SPREP.

The National Conservation Strategy includes projects aiming to:

- ☑ improve environmental education in schools;

- ☑ improve public awareness of the country's most pressing environmental problems;

Although the National Conservation Strategy project was "outside" of the ADB and UNDP-funded NEMS projects, SPREP has worked closely with the Vanuatu government and AIDAB. Vanuatu's Strategy was developed along similar lines to other NEMS in the region.

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Marshalls to Continue Study into Nuclear Waste Dump

RMI's President Kabua announced at the Brisbane Forum Meeting that his government would continue to explore the possibility of global nuclear waste dumps on already-contaminated Bikini and Enewetak atolls.

A six-eight month study, including a panel of nuclear physicists, doctors, economists and international finance experts, will look at the suitability of coral atolls for permanent disposal of the world's nuclear wastes.

Washington Pacific Report, 12:23.

El Niño Springs Back

The latest El Niño event, which has caused unusual droughts or heavy rains across different parts of the region between 1991-94, has returned after predictions that it would weaken earlier this year. Present climate factors now show that last year's El Niño event will now continue, if not strengthen, peaking early in 1995.

Experts now predict continuing dry conditions in the south west of the region - e.g. New Caledonia, Fiji, Tonga and Vanuatu, and above average rainfall in the north and south east parts - e.g. Kiribati, French Polynesia and Cook Islands.

There is also a warning of an above-average risk of tropical cyclones in the eastern areas - Cook Islands and French Polynesia.

South Pacific Climate Monitor, 8/94.

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Let Our Turtle Family Live!



It's official - a recent meeting of turtle experts, discussing promotional activities for the 1995 "Year of the Sea Turtle", have decided on the theme "Let Our Turtle Family Live".

Technical officers from national fisheries and environment agencies, NGOs and SPREP were brought together for the fourth annual meeting of the *Regional Marine Turtle Conservation Programme*, based at SPREP. Discussions revolved around the latest available information on marine turtles in the region, and ways of arresting the steady decline of their numbers.

"The marine turtles of the Pacific islands are in danger of extinction,

mainly due to over fishing for subsistence and commercial uses, including the use of turtle shell for handicrafts", said Sue Miler, SPREP's officer in charge of the regional turtle project. "The fall in turtle populations that we are now seeing are due to over harvest in the past decades. Female turtles take over 20 to start laying eggs. If we continue to catch the same number of turtles, our children may not be able to catch turtles in many areas in the future", said Ms Miller.

To highlight the plight of the region's sea turtles, it was decided at the 1993 meeting in Apia, Western Samoa, to declare 1995 as the "Year of the Sea Turtle". This recommendation was later supported by the Sixth SPREP Meeting in Fiji, the Fifth Conference on Nature Conservation in the South Pacific in Tonga, and finally the Twenty Fifth South Pacific Forum Meeting, held recently in Brisbane.

This year's meeting, held in Apia on 4 - 5 August, agreed that SPREP would co-ordinate a number of public awareness campaigns and activities highlighting the plight of sea turtles. A video about the sea turtle in the Pacific islands will soon be released to government agencies, the media, schools and NGOs. A number of poster and pamphlets, some in local languages, have already been developed.

Ms Miller said that "we hope to involve all relevant groups in raising the attention of all Pacific islanders to the danger of losing their turtles forever".

Thirty representatives from 14 Pacific island countries reviewed other activities of the Turtle Programme, including the widespread national turtle tagging projects.

Fisheries and environment officers from participating countries attach metal tags to live individuals, at the same time taking various measurements of each animal. If these animals are again caught, the tag number should be returned to the local fisheries officer or SPREP, where information on the location the animal's capture is also stored.

Tagging turtles is vital for assessing the numbers of various species of turtles in the region, and where they feed and breed. This assists in developing practical and co-ordinated management plans for conserving the turtles that remain in the region.

Tagging also shows how far these unique creatures can travel - a female green turtle tagged on Rangiroa in French Polynesia was captured again in Solomon Islands, nearly 7,000 kilometres to the east!

The Regional Marine Turtle Conservation Programme is funded by the Global Environment Fund through the South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme, the Canadian government, AIDAB and IUCN.



Cedric Schuster (right) from Western Samoa tags a Hawksbill turtle during the recent turtle experts meeting in Apia, Western Samoa. Tony Robinson looks on.

Photo: SPREP



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Tonga Seeks Whale Watchers

The Tongan government is looking at regulating a new possible eco-tourism industry in Vava'u - whale watching. With Vava'u's other physical and cultural attractions, and an well-established cruising yacht harbour, it is poised to cash-in on the migratory humpback whales.

However, Tonga "is treating the business of whale watching very responsibly, and urgently", said Sue Miller of SPREP. SPREP is making recommendations to the Tongan cabinet on managing whale watching so as not to endanger the local population.

Samoa Observer, 13/9/94.



Surveying Deforestation in the Pacific Islands

Francois Martel

Community Deforestation Project Coordinator

Countries around the Pacific island's region are concerned about the loss of forest and the related soil erosion and land degradation, especially through logging and clearing for agriculture. In some areas it is suspected that traditional agricultural practices are the main culprit.

To review the current situation of deforestation in the region, SPREP commissioned pilot *Community Deforestation Surveys* for Western Samoa, Niue and Vanuatu in December 1993, with funds from UNEP.

The project aims to:

- ☑ determine the current state and rate of deforestation and land degradation, using survey techniques;
- ☑ determine the reasons and motivations behind this deforestation;
- ☑ improve community awareness of the effects of agro-deforestation; and,
- ☑ indicate national and regional policies, programmes and legislation needed for sustainable use of forest resources and minimizing or reversing land degradation.

Surveys have been completed in Western Samoa and Niue, while the survey for Vanuatu has been postponed. The survey team is based in Western Samoa.

The Landowner's Perspective

Case study villages were selected in each country, investigating deforestation using community development survey and field survey techniques.

The step-by-step approach is to:

- ☉ select representative villages;
- ☉ design, translate and test landowner questionnaires;
- ☉ prepare manuals for and training of local interviewers;
- ☉ design case-study survey methods, including sampling design if needed;
- ☉ arrange and conduct village meetings;
- ☉ plan and conduct key informant interviews; and,
- ☉ compile and analyse data for each village.

The interviews aim to provide answers as to why villagers - men, women, *matai* and untitled people - clear forests. This is a difficult and lengthy task.

Two Samoan villages were selected and surveyed: **Vailoa** on Savai'i, and **Lotofaga** on Upolu, with 90 households interviewed. A similar survey, translated into Niuean, was first tested and then conducted in **Liku** village in Niue, with 39 interviews.

The Field Surveys

The project also aims to put figures to the rate of deforestation.

Clearing marginal land for agriculture - a growing problem.

Photo: SPREP



Aerial photographs and satellite images are used to identify the areas of forest cover at a particular point in time. These areas are checked using field surveys of existing forest land boundaries for each village. So, there is a combination of field surveys, aerial photo interpretation, forest cover mapping and geographical information systems (GIS) analysis to determine these areas, and the changes over time.

It was difficult to locate village boundaries in Western Samoa and Niue, especially as these rely on customary and traditional knowledge of boundaries within a village. The final village boundaries were interpreted from village chiefs, physical boundaries and registered boundaries.

Field surveys were used to find the changes in forest boundaries since the last aerial photo. The 1994 survey was then added to the historical photos and digitized into a GIS. The GIS-software IDRISI was used to overlay various forest maps with various base and thematic maps for Western Samoa and Niue.

The project is now producing land use maps that show the areas of rainforest converted to agriculture in each village over time, and the progress and intensity of deforestation over the years. Preliminary forest cover maps have been prepared for Lotofaga, Western Samoa (see maps).

The remaining work revolves around interviews and GIS analysis to finalize country reports. These reports will be then presented in village and national workshops, with recommendations then entered into a final report on community deforestation in the region.



SPBCP:

New Conservation Areas At Hand

For many years, there have been long discussions on how to best establish effective conservation areas in the Pacific islands. A compounding problem has been that these areas must account for the development aspirations and customary land ownership by local people to be effective. The *South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme* (SPBCP) is trialling specific examples to address this issue.

Existing proposals for ten conservation areas across the region, as well as four new ones, were considered at the recent Technical and Management Advisory Group meeting for the SPBCP in Apia, Western Samoa on 1-2 September.

These proposals were considered by conservation and natural resource experts from SPREP member countries, to assess their progress and their suitability for funding through the SPBCP.

Original projects proposed for funding under SPBCP ...

- Saanapu/Sataoa Conservation Area, Western Samoa.
- Koroyanitu Conservation Area, Fiji
- Big Bay Conservation Area, Vanuatu.
- Pohnpei Integrated Watershed Management Project, FSM
- Palau Conservation Area
- Koramindi Conservation Area, Solomon Islands
- Niue Conservation Area
- Kiribati Conservation Area
- Funafuti Marine Park, Tuvalu
- Conservation of Fiji Forests
- (endorsed by the previous TMAG meeting in Apia in February 1994)

New projects approved for SPBCP funding in August '94:

- Ha'apai Conservation Area, Tonga
- Arnarvon Conservation Area, Solomon Islands.

The Programme seeks to establish a series of conservation areas around the region, managed by local landowners, with assistance from government agencies, NGOs and external expertise, as required.

One unique feature of these conservation areas is that they are expected to be able to fulfill the development needs of the local community. However, the Project Manager, Muliagatele Joe Reti, expressed concern to the meeting on the sustainability of external assistance to establish these areas, the need for careful planning of this assistance, and the need for a "weaning period" to be built into the projects.

"(This assistance) should account for the needs of local people and (for) the desirability that communities continue the conservation process themselves (after assistance has ceased)", said Mr Reti.

The project areas will be managed by Conservation Area Coordinating Committees (CACCs), consisting of representatives from landowners, government agencies and NGOs. This is an alternative approach to other conservation projects run by government departments. These CACCs will also elicit contributions of human and other resources from all these groups.

Disputes over land tenure are recurring problems in the project, which is a common feature for projects in many Pacific island countries, given the importance of customary land title. The SPBCP does not pay cash compensation for land included in conservation areas, but rather provides support services to develop the ability of the local community to use and manage the resources of the conservation areas economically and sustainably.

Particular endangered species are also protected by these areas. For example, the proposed Arnarvon Islands Conservation Area in Solomon Islands would protect local populations of endangered Hawksbill turtles. This area has been involved with SPREP's Regional Marine Turtle Conservation Programme since the mid-80s, and the proposal would enhance the chances of survival for the local turtles.

Another interesting proposal from Tonga is to develop the entire Ha'apai Islands group as a conservation area. It was recently suggested that the Ha'apai be declared a World Heritage Site, and that a conservation area approach would still allow fishing by local villagers around the group's 59 islands. This is possible, as most humans live on Lifuka Island, so limiting human impact on the rest of the group.

The Meeting concluded that:

- there should be a limited number of projects to be handled by SPBCP;
- existing conservation area projects should be fully developed and implemented;
- the long consultative process was necessary, especially to increase the involvement of local communities; and,
- appropriate "rewards" must be incorporated into projects, to reduce bureaucratic delays and maintain momentum.

The next meeting will review the process and progress of establishing these conservation areas, a difficult process given the involvement of such varied groups as landowners, government agencies and NGOs.

The SPBCP is funded by the Global Environment Facility and AIDAB, and managed by SPREP.



INC-10: Next Round of Negotiations for the Climate Convention

The Framework Convention for Climate Change (FCCC) came into force on 21 March 1994, and it is now up to the nation's of the world to implement the spirit of the Convention.

With the first Conference of the Parties to the Convention (COP-1) due in Germany on 28 March - 7 April 1995, there is pressure for competing groups to have their views included in the Conventions.

The INC-10 of the FCCC was held at Geneva on 22 August - 2 September, and dealt with financial mechanisms for technical and financial support to developing countries; institutional procedural and legal matters, especially for COP-1; and various contentious issues in the FCCC, especially between developing and developed countries.

AOSIS, the Alliance of Small Island States, again lead negotiations

for the Pacific island countries. Among the most contentious issues of INC-10 negotiations were the Joint Implementation debate and the so-called AOSIS Protocol to the FCCC.

The AOSIS Protocol seeks to further reduce carbon dioxide emissions, and to extend the FCCC beyond 2000. It also set ways of adopting and co-ordinating specific measures and strategies to meet these targets, emphasising the need for urgent action, especially for the sake of particularly vulnerable island countries in the region. However, some developed and developing countries are opposing this protocol to varying degrees.

One positive outcome was the final agreement on the process of reviewing information from developed countries on how they are responding to the treaty. As this group is

the major producers of greenhouse gases.

There are a number of outstanding issues that will carry over to negotiations for INC-11 and COP-1. These include the:

- AOSIS Protocol;
- Joint Implementation debate;
- Rules of Procedure;
- future location of the Secretariat;
- implementation of the financial mechanism in the FCCC; and,
- programme priorities for GEF arrangements.

Representatives of SPREP member countries - Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, France, FSM, Kiribati, NZ, RMI, PNG, Solomon Islands, Tonga, USA, Western Samoa - attended the meeting, as well as the SPREP Secretariat.

Acronyms

ADB Asian Development Bank
 AIDAB Australian International Development Assistance Bureau
 AOSIS Alliance of Small Island States
 CITES Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
 CNMI Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands
 EIA Environmental Impact Assessment
 EU European Union (formerly EC)
 ESCAP Economic and social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
 EWC East West Centre
 FAO Food and Agriculture Organisation (UN)
 FCCC Framework Convention for Climate Change
 FFA Forum Fisheries Agency
 FSM Federated states of Micronesia

GEF Global Environment Facility
 GCSDSIDS Global Conference on Sustainable Development in Small Island Developing States
 IMO International Maritime Organisation
 IPCC Intergovernmental panel for Climate Change
 IUCN World Conservation Union
 NEMS National Environmental Management Strategies
 NGO Non-government Organisation
 NZ New Zealand
 OECD Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
 PIANGO Pacific Island Association of NGOs
 PIDP Pacific Islands Development Programme (EWC)
 PNG Papua New Guinea
 RMI Republic of the Marshall Islands
 SOPACS South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission
 SPBCP South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme

SPC South Pacific Commission
 SPREP South Pacific Regional Environment Programme
 UH University of Hawaii
 UN United Nations
 UNDP United Nations Development Programme (UN)
 UNEP United Nations Environment Programme (UN)
 UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UN)
 UNFPA United Nations Population Fund (UN)
 UNITECH University of Technology (PNG)
 UoG University of Guam
 UPNG University of Papua New Guinea
 USA United States of America
 USAID US Agency for International Development
 USP University of the South Pacific
 WMO World Meteorological Organisation
 WRI World Resources Institute
 WWF World Wide Fund for Nature





Books, videos, slides and other materials from SPREP and other environmental organisations in the Pacific islands.

New Annual Report and Information Brochures

SPREP's latest *Annual Report 1993/94* (32 pp) is aimed at the media and donors as well as member governments to clearly show what SPREP is and what it does.

There are also a number of new information brochures now being printed, including those on two new SPREP services: the **SPREP Library and Information Centre**, and the **Pacific Environmental and Natural Resource Information System**.

The **publications lists** of our English and French technical and educational publications have also been updated.

New Technical and Meeting Reports

In keeping with SPREP's rapid growth in recent years, there has also been a rapid growth in its publishing effort. This includes a number of new technical and meeting reports:

- ☐ *Land based Pollution Sources in Western Samoa*, by P. Gangaiya (SRS 81);
- ☐ *Climate Change and Sea Level Rise Issues in Guam*, by U. Prasad and H. Manner (SRS 82);
- ☐ *Applicability and Use of Natural Resource Accounting and Environmental Economics in SIDS*, by Te'o Fairbairn and C. Tisdell (SRS 83);
- ☐ *Coastal Protection in the Pacific Islands: Current Trends and Future Prospects*, a joint SPREP/SOPAC report;
- ☐ *Natural Disaster Reduction in Pacific Island Countries: Report to the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, Japan 1994*, a joint report by SPREP / Emergency Australia / South Pacific Programme Office of the UN Department Humanitarian Affairs; and,
- ☐ a reprint of the popular *Pacific Way: the PIDC Report to UNCED*.

Environment Law Fact Sheets

There has been a number of new international treaties in recent years, many dealing with the environment and managing our shrinking natural resources. However, it is often difficult to find out about what these treaties mean to the people of the Pacific islands.

To address this problem, SPREP is developing the *Environmental Law Fact Sheet Series*, in simple English, to explain the conventions, how they work, and what they mean for the environment in the Pacific. They are written with a wide audience in mind: politicians, technical personnel, administrators, teachers and students.

The Series currently consists of:

- ☐ 12/1 *Biodiversity Convention*;
- ☐ 12/2 *World Heritage Convention*;
- ☐ 12/3 *Ramsar Convention for Wetlands*.

The series will also soon include other international and regional environment and conservation conventions.

Write to the **Director, SPREP**, for your copies of all these publications, pamphlets and brochures.

Training Courses and Workshops

Management and Development of Coastal Fisheries

Venue: Suva, Fiji.

Date: 24/10 - 25/11/94

Who by? IOI, USP Suva.

Who for? fishermen, policy makers and middle management and technical personnel in government agencies, NGOs and private institutions.

Course Aims:

1. analyse factors that effect coastal fisheries;
2. highlight complex physical and cultural problems for coastal fisheries;
3. assess alternative strategies to manage and develop sustainable fisheries; and,
4. focus on special groups, especially women, in improving their roles in sustainable fisheries.

More information?

Prof. G. Robin South
Director, IOI-South Pacific
USP
PO Box 1168
SUVA, Fiji.
Tel.: (679) 304 556
Fax: (679) 301 490

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Environmental Modeling

Venue: Canberra, Australia.

Date: 3-14/7/95

Who by? ANUTECH, ANU, Canberra.

Who for? Resource planners and managers.

Course Aims:

1. develop understanding of GIS as a resource management tool; and,
2. develop practical skills in storing, retrieving and analysing resource and environmental data.

More information?

Mr George Collett
ANUTECH Pty Ltd
Canberra, ACT. 0200
Australia
Tel.: (616) 249 5671
Fax: (616) 249 5875

International Development Training Program

Venue: Armidale, Australia.

Date: 1995

Who by? UNE, Armidale, Australia.

Who for? Planners, managers and practitioners.

Courses Available:

1. Agroforestry management (16/1 - 17/2/95);
2. Water Resources Planning and Management (8/3 - 4/4/95); and,
3. National Park and Wildlife Management (20/9 - 24/10/95).

Meetings '94

Date	Meeting	Venue	Officer
October			
3-5	2nd SPREP Regional Meeting of Meteorological Service Directors	Nadi, Fiji	N. Koop
3-27	2nd Round of Subregional Training Meetings for South Pacific Climate and Sea Level Monitoring Project	Tonga, Nauru, Van.	C. Kaluwin
6-14	WMO Tropical Cyclone Programme Meeting	Nadi, Fiji	N. Koop
10-14	Pacific Law Officers Meeting	Apia	B. Moutou
10-14	Greenhouse '94	Wellington	C. Kaluwin
11-13	7th SPREP Meeting	Tarawa	SPREP
15-16	Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary Seminar/Workshop	Auckland	S. Miller
17-21	Training Workshop on Establishing Conservation Areas in the South Pacific	Nadi, Fiji	I. Reti
19-30	National Environmental Media Training Workshop	Honiara	G. Salesa
25-29	ESCAP Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development	Bangkok	
November			
Early	Forum Officials Meeting	Suva	Forum Sec.
Early	Forum Secretariat / SPC Regional Planners Meeting	Suva	Forum Sec.
7-18	CITES Conference	Fort Lauderdale, USA	SPREP
28-9 Dec	First Meeting of Parties to the International Biodiversity Convention	Bahamas	B. Moutou
-	<i>Pacific BioNet Planning Meeting</i>	Suva	S. Miller
December			
-	Negotiating Skills Workshop	Suva	G. Miles
1995			
February			
6-17	INC 10 - Convention on Climate Change	Geneva	C. Kaluwin
March			
29-5 Apr.	First Conference of Parties to the Convention on Climate Change	Germany	C. Kaluwin
April			
2-7	TOGA '95: International Scientific Conference	Melbourne, Australia	N. Koop
October			
23-27	Ocean and Atmosphere Pacific	Adelaide, Australia	C. Kaluwin

tba: to be advised.

Meetings in *italics* are still to be finalised. Contact the organising group or relevant SPREP officer for more details.

Training Courses and Workshops

More information?

Program Director
International Development Training Program
PO Box U298, UNE
Armidale, NSW. 2350
Australia
Tel.: (6167) 73 3248
Fax: (6167) 73 3799
E-mail: DSP@UNE.edu.au

International course on GIS, RS and GPS

Venue: Velp, The Netherlands.

Date: Three 3-week courses, starting 6-25/2/95

Who by? Larenstein International Agric. College, Velp, The Netherlands.

Who for? Resource planners, project managers and technical experts.

Course Aims:

To develop theoretic background and practical skills in:

1. geographic information systems (GIS);
2. remote sensing (RS), and,
3. global positioning systems (GPS).

More information?

Dr Agnes Hemelaar
centre of expertise GIS-Larenstein
PO Box 9001
6880 GB Velp
The Netherlands
Tel.: (3185) 695 716
Fax: (3185) 695 691



Environmental Assessment for Development Projects

Venue: Canberra, Australia.

Date: 4-29/9/95

Who by? ANUTECH, ANU, Canberra.

Who for? Resource planners, project managers and technical experts.

Course Aims:

1. environmental screening of projects;
2. identifying and scoping environmental impacts, and,
3. environmental appraisal in project design, monitoring and evaluation.

More information?

Mr George Collett
ANUTECH Pty Ltd
Canberra, ACT. 0200
Australia
Tel.: (616) 249 5671
Fax: (616) 249 5875

The Last Word ...

The major annual event for SPREP is the *SPREP Meeting*. It is the time when decisions on SPREP's work programmes and administration are made by the representatives from the 22 Pacific island member governments and administrations, as well as 4 metropolitan members.

The year's meeting is again a huge undertaking, involving the movement of much equipment and staff to Tarawa, Kiribati, the host for the 1994 Meeting.

Preparations by the Kiribati government are well advanced, and this year's promises to complete a number of administrative tasks that were necessary with the 1991 decision to move SPREP to Apia (read more on this in *From the Director's Desk*). The Forum also saw changes in format, with the theme "Managing Our Resources". See its recommendations and comments in this issue of *Environment Newsletter*.

Many countries have had vibrant **environmental awareness** activities already this year, some of which we have already seen in past *Newsletters*. In this issue, we review events in Tokelau, Solomon Islands and Tonga, with thanks to our local correspondents.

SPREP's own varied and active work programmes continue to produce a number of technical and educational publications. Find out more about these in *Environment Book Review*. We also continue our roundup of regional and national activities, as well as news stories in *EnviroNews*.

Hoping to meet you in Kiribati,
Bamahuta,



Wes Ward, Editor

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