



Special Issue: 1995 Year of the Sea Turtle



Ban Turtle Sales now, or Pacific Will Lose Them Forever!

With a call to end all commercial trade in turtles and their products, the **1995 Year of the Sea Turtle** began throughout the Pacific islands in the first week of March. At the regional launch of the initiative, SPREP's Director, Dr Vili Fuavao, emphasised that the Year of the Sea Turtle was a new way for SPREP and its member countries to work together on a conservation issue - **by campaigning.**

Launching the Campaign

"The '*Let Our Turtle Family Live!*' campaign has the endorsement of Pacific Heads of Government, which gives the Year of the Sea Turtle the highest level of support possible. The slogan encapsulates the need for the Pacific to work together as a family of nations to ensure the survival of turtles which migrate throughout the region," said Dr Fuavao at the launch in Apia.

School children joined government agencies and NGOs, donor organisations, the media and SPREP to launch the regional campaign at SPREP's offices in Apia.

Sue Miller, SPREP's turtle campaign co-ordinator, underlined the region-wide declines in turtle breeding populations. She also pointed out that "turtles are a 'flagship' species for our marine environment. Thus, their decline gives strong signals that we are not taking care of this environment, which has serious implications for our own survival."

"All six species of sea turtle are endangered in the South Pacific", said Ms Miller. "If threats to them do not cease it is highly likely that many of their populations will become extinct. Sea turtles are an important part of Pacific cultures and identity. If they are lost, Pacific peoples will lose part of themselves", said Ms Miller.

A key action and focus for the launch and during the campaign is for Pacific island countries to develop enforceable bans on the commercial trade in turtles and their products. This focuses on domestic - or in-country - and international - such as tourist - trade in turtles. Fewer catches for subsistence and traditional needs are also strongly encouraged.

This point was superbly demonstrated during the Solomon Island's campaign launch when the Minister for Forests, Environment and Conservation, Hon. Allan Kemakeca affirmed that traditional aspirations of nature conservation were more important than economic development for turtle resources. He also said that maintaining turtle subsistence takes for turtle were important but only "as long as our laws, and regulations are adhered to, and if our subsistence harvests do not endanger our turtle population any further".

National Campaigns

National campaigns were launched in American Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, New Caledonia, New Zealand, PNG, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu and Western Samoa during March. Other participating countries plan launches later in the year as part of events dedicated to conserving sea turtles.

Launches around the region received excellent media coverage in TV, radio, newspapers and magazines throughout the region and the

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Let our turtle family Live!



1995 year of the sea turtle

Let Our Turtle Family Live! is the message for the 1995 Year of the Sea Turtle campaign. Posters, fact sheets and bumper stickers (left) are available from national turtle focal points.

Ban Turtle Sales now, or We Will Lose Them Forever!

Let our turtle family live!



1995 Year of the Sea Turtle

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world. This has generated much interest in the campaign and in conserving sea turtle.

The recent ban in Fiji on commercial trading in turtles is already a good example of an effective national campaign. In honour of the Year of the Sea Turtle, the Fiji government announced a year-long ban on the commercial take of sea turtles, with the Cabinet decision able to extend the ban after one year. Fiji's news received wide media coverage, including BBC World Service.

SPREP has called on other Pacific nations to follow Fiji's lead.

The Campaign Plan

Regional work for the Year of the Sea Turtle is co-ordinated by SPREP, which has produced a campaign plan based on the expressed desires of the *Regional Marine Turtle Conservation Programme* network. In each of the 27 participating countries, complementary national campaign plans and activities have been developed to take the turtle conservation message to targeted key audiences. Special campaign artwork, based on turtles drawn by children in last year's regional turtle art competition, was produced by SPREP.

A video highlighting key aspects of turtle conservation has also been produced for use in schools, village meetings and TV broadcasts. TVNZ Pacific Service has already agreed to air the video as part of its programming to eight Pacific nations.

Campaign Activities

Many varied activities are planned in countries and the region to ensure sustained momentum on the need to conserve turtles. These include:

- ➔ a four-month mini-campaign aimed at reducing the tourist trade in turtle products, for the Pacific's peak tourist season;
- ➔ a TV advertisement, now in production;
- ➔ a regional competition to guess where satellite-tagged turtles migrate, in October;
- ➔ a promotion of opportunities for 'turtle-watching' ecotourism, in November.
- ➔ a module on turtle conservation in all SPREP's Teacher Training and Community Development Workshops held during 1995, which includes the issues, the need and what people can do; and,
- ➔ a turtle rap song and music video aimed at younger audiences.

The Media

The media is a key target to enable the turtle conservation message to be spread widely - and at low cost! The response to date from the media to this campaign has been overwhelming. The January issue of *Islands Business Pacific* - one of the region's pre-eminent business magazines - profiled the turtle conservation issue with a 6-page feature spread. *Islands Business* then donated fifty copies of this issue to distribute to the turtle network. An ITN TV News feature story on the Year of the Sea Turtle went worldwide and throughout the region on ITN, CNN, Channel 9 (Australia) and TV NZ and TV3 (New Zealand).

Newspaper and radio coverage has been equally successful. An article in *The Times* (London, UK) was then reprinted by newspapers all over the world, including the *Seychelles National* newspaper!

Radio Australia's *One World* regional environment program is another successful way to spread the message, with two features already covered in 1995, and further stories planned. Items on the BBC World Service and "Voice of America" are two more examples of the campaign's coverage to date which also reaches a wide range of Pacific audiences.

Media coverage is extremely effective in getting the message spread throughout the region. To this end, information on "Developing Relations with the Media" was specifically included in the regional campaign plan sent to the RMTCP network.

Working with NGOs

Developing networks with NGOs is another effective way of working on the Year of the Sea Turtle. There have been very positive responses from the region's NGOs, particularly in joint activities with govern-



The media are vital for any campaign - this *Televise Samoa* crew was on hand to televise the release of a Hawksbill turtle in Western Samoa in 1994.

Photo: SPREP

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SPREP
Director
Dr Vili A.
Fuavao

Welcome to this special issue of SPREP's *Environment Newsletter* announcing the regional launch of the **1995 Year of the Sea Turtle** campaign. This is a significant moment for SPREP, because it embodies a new way for SPREP and its member governments to work on conservation issues - we are campaigning.

The regional launch of the Year of the Sea Turtle commenced in New Zealand with the Hon. Denis Marshall, New Zealand's Minister of Conservation, leading the occasion, followed closely in the Kingdom of Tonga by the Acting Prime Minister, and throughout the Pacific islands in Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and many others.

The high level of political support for these launches is due to the campaign's endorsement by all Heads of Government in the Pacific islands - by *Forum Leaders* and by members of the *South Pacific Commission*. Their concern recognises the urgent need to conserve sea turtles in the region.

Why sea turtles? Unfortunately, that is an easy question to answer.

All six species of sea turtle are endangered in this region - if threats to them do not decrease it is highly likely that many populations will become extinct.

Sea turtles are important in Pacific cultures and indeed our identity. If we lose these unique sea creatures we lose part of ourselves.

The costs are even higher, for sea turtles are but one group of animals

in our seas. These long-lived, highly migratory animals are a "flagship species" for our marine environment. Their decline gives strong signals that we are not taking care of this environment. This has serious implications for our own survival.

For over five years now, SPREP has co-ordinated the *Regional Marine Turtle Conservation Programme*. We have seen interest grow such that today there are nineteen

Why sea turtles? Unfortunately, that is an easy question to answer.

active nations in the programme.

To date, turtle research, tagging and monitoring projects have all been key activities. Many of these projects have indicated a massive decline in nesting turtles. Education and awareness material have also been developed.

In 1993, however, the Turtle Programme recognised that it had to do more to get the conservation message out. We have been preparing for the 1995 Year of the Sea Turtle since then.

Last year I sat in a meeting hearing turtle managers and scientists talk in what I thought was the quite peculiar language of slogans, key messages, target audiences and so on. I think that they had some fun with it, and you will see the results in events that will take place throughout the region over the coming year.

The campaign slogan - "Let our Turtle Family Live!" - was carefully thought out. It emphasises that to conserve these resources for our children means we must work together as a family of nations. This is because turtles migrate around our shared seas, feeding and breeding in different countries.

It is important to realise that this is an active, region-wide turtle conservation network - not just a SPREP initiative. Government agencies and NGOs are all working together on this issue - scientists, managers, teachers, conservationists and politicians.

We hope to communicate to all in the region that unless we conserve turtles now we will lose them forever. To get this message out to cities, towns and villages in the region is a big task, and hundreds of people will work in many ways to achieve this.

One key action of the campaign is to end commercial trade in turtles. It is simply not sustainable. By ending commercial trade - domestic and international - we can secure turtle resources for generations to come, so that they may also use turtles for traditional and subsistence purposes.

I ask that you all help in this task.

I thank all who are working to make the Year of the Sea Turtle the success it must be, for the sake of these precious animals. To those who receive this message, remember that 1995 is the year that we have dedicated ourselves to conserving the sea turtle. Please contribute positively to this worthwhile campaign.

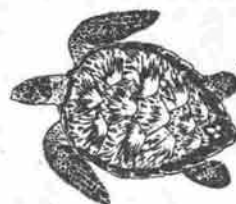
Ed.: This article was taken from Dr Fuavao's speech on 6 March for the regional launch the 1995 Year of the Sea Turtle, at SPREP Headquarters in Apia, Western Samoa.



Dr Vili Fuavao, Director of SPREP (right) addressed media, government officials and school children at the regional launch of the campaign. Ms Sue Miller, Turtle Campaign Co-ordinator (centre) and Mrs Gisa Gaufa Salesa, Programme Officer (Education), also spoke to the full conference room at SPREP Headquarters.

Photo: SPREP

Fiji Takes Lead in Battle to Save Sea Turtles



Fiji recently made a crucial decision for the survival of sea turtles by announcing a ban on the sale of turtles and their products. This is Fiji's, and the region's, first major step for the 1995 Year of the Sea Turtle campaign.

"This is a major victory for turtle conservation, and a great way to kick off the 'Year of the Sea Turtle'", said Dr. Vili A. Fuavao, SPREP's Director. "This year-long ban has the potential to be turned into a permanent ban, thus helping to secure the future of turtle resources in the Pacific region", he said.

One key target for the Year of the Sea Turtle is to encourage coun-

tries to ban commercial sales of turtles and their products to reduce harvest pressure on these slow breeding creatures.

"If the numbers of turtles killed does not drastically decrease in this region we are facing extinction of our turtle resources" said Sue Miller, SPREP's Turtle Campaign Coordinator.

"SPREP is advising all nations in the region to follow Fiji's lead and work towards a permanent ban on the sale of turtles and their products in their respective countries - and internationally", said Ms Miller.

"Turtle resources in the South Pacific cannot sustain commercial

harvest, and if we are to maintain turtle resources for ceremonial and subsistence purposes the sales of turtles for money will have to stop now. If we lose turtles from the Pacific we will all lose an important part of Pacific cultures and a way of life", she continued.

Fiji is part of SPREP's *Regional Marine Turtle Conservation Programme*. Fifteen Pacific island countries are working together in this programme to conserve turtles. This co-operation is vital as turtle migrate vast distances around the region to breed and feed.



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ment agencies, as in Fiji between the Ministry of Fisheries and AHI-Fiji (Action Humanitarian Internationale). Other NGOs active in the Year of the Sea Turtle include SPACHEE, Greenpeace (New Zealand and South Pacific), *O le Siosiomaga Society* (Western Samoa), TNC (The Nature Conservancy - Pacific Programme), the *Hiti Tau* network (French Polynesia) and the *Honu Project* (Hawaii, USA).

The "Let Our Turtle Family Live!" campaign for the Year of the Sea Turtle is already achieving measurable results for conserving these threatened species. SPREP is encouraging active participation by government and non government agencies, including people from education, media, research and management.

Ed.: If you would like more information on the campaign or see a way for you or your group to become actively involved please contact **Sue Miller**, Turtle Campaign Coordinator at SPREP.

SPREP's Turtle Art Competition - 'Great Success'

Over 1600 children from eighteen Pacific island countries entered the art competition on sea turtles, the first major regional event for the 1995 Year of the Sea Turtle.

Sue Miller, Species Conservation Officer for SPREP, said that "SPREP was overwhelmed with the response to the competition. The quality of the artwork was incredible, and it illustrated the creative talent of children in the Pacific islands."

In the competition children drew turtle pictures to support the campaign's theme, "Let Our Turtle Family Live!". SPREP has used the artwork to develop posters and stickers for the region-wide turtle awareness and education campaign.

The winners of the art competition were:

1 Faaeaina Iakopo (aged 8) from Robert Louis Stevenson School in

Apia, Western Samoa, who received the first prize of US\$ 250;

2 Mouauri Trego (Year 6) from Aroroangi School, Rarotonga, Cook Islands (second prize: US\$ 100); and,

3 Alapati Alalatoa (aged 18) from Tuasivi College, Savai'i, Western Samoa (third prize: US\$ 50).

Ms Miller said that the competition was very difficult to judge given the high quality of entries, but that the final winners were selected because their entries best reflected the campaign theme.

These and other artwork received in the competition have been used for a series of posters, T-shirt designs and stickers, which are now available around the region and from SPREP.

Ed.: For more information, contact **Ms Sue Miller**, Turtle Campaign Coordinator, at SPREP.



Niue:

Village Competition Raises Environmental Awareness

Namukulu village on Niue carried off a NZ\$600 first prize for a village beautification competition held late in 1994.

In a small, UNDP-funded and SPREP-supported project, the Niue Tourism Association organised a village competition to clean up Niue generally, and more particularly near scenic tourist sites, tourism accommodation, and along recently sealed roadsides from Avatele to Hikutavake villages.

Litter and Tourism

The competition was used to increase community awareness of the solid waste problem in Niue, particularly around village areas, and the importance of this for Niue's growing tourism industry. The Tourism Association is keen to promote Niue as a "clean, green and beautiful" destination for overseas visitors.

In a small country such as Niue, community activities such as village competitions are very effective, particularly where prizes encourage community participation.

Below: The view from the lookout to the Topaka Resort fale and the coast.

Photo: Herman Tagaloailuga



Various groups participated in the project, including government agencies, village councils, youth associations, the Tourism Office and the New Zealand High Commission.

Tourists Welcome New Shelter

In an associated project, a traditional Niuean house - or fale - was built as part of the Topaka Resort at Hikutavake village. The new facility was opened by the Acting Minister for Tourism, Hon. Jack Willie Lipitoa, on 5 October 1994.

Tourists can now use the fale as a rest place when climbing to the nearby lookout, which has a magnificent view of the natural surroundings and villages in the area. The lookout also overlooks the culturally significant Matapa Chasm, which was a swimming place for the chiefs of old.

A track was cleared to the top of the mountain, with the fale built on flat ground near the top. This facility and the surrounding area are managed by local landowners, with assistance from the Niue Tourism Office and the Niue Tourism Association.



Acting Minister Tourism and Community Affairs, Hon. Jack Lipitoa, opens the track to the Topaka Resort fale.

Photo: Herman Tagaloailuga

The whole project was funded through SPREP's now completed PMI Project, which provided funds and technical assistance for small-scale environmental activities.

Ed.: Thanks go to the Niue Tourism Association and the Environment Unit, Department of Community Affairs, for providing the information and photos on the project.



Environment news for the Pacific islands

New Cyclone Radar Commissioned

A new radar system at Nausori Airport, Fiji, will provide early warnings for tropical cyclones for Fiji and immediate neighbours.

Commissioned on 25 October 1994 in time for the upcoming cyclone season, the system was funded by the Fiji government and AIDAB. The new radar compliments a similar system at Nadi Airport in the west of Fiji.

Australia-South Pacific Newsletter, 1/11/94.

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New Project Addresses Climate Change in the Pacific

Neville Koop
Meteorology / Climatology Officer

A new US\$1-million, 3-year research project will investigate the amount of heat in the atmosphere to help predict changes in this region's and the world's climate.

The **Atmospheric Radiation Measurement (ARM)** project is major part of a *US Department of Energy* research strategy to improve the understanding of global climate change.

Improving Predictions

Recent studies now permit scientists to better understand the climate of the Pacific islands. While there is still much more to be discovered, it is well known that the warm ocean waters of the Western Pacific Ocean are also very important to the world's climate.

Better understanding of the mechanics of processes of the oceans and the atmosphere allows researchers to build computer models which can predict future climate scenarios. These models will help governments to develop strategies to respond and adapt to various possible climate regimes in the future.

Poor knowledge of the processes involved in atmospheric re-radiation is the major hurdle in improving these computer models. Re-radiation is the way in-coming radiation from the sun is absorbed, reflected or weakened by the earth and the atmosphere (see diagram).

The ARM Project

There are presently three sites being considered for monitoring atmospheric solar radiation in the tropical Pacific Ocean. The first station will be installed on Manus Island, PNG, in August 1995, and the second station will be built on Nauru or Tarawa, Kiribati, early in 1996. A third site will be considered later, possibly on Kanton Island or Christmas Island, also in Kiribati.

In an agreement signed in December 1994, SPREP and the US Los Alamos National Laboratory will collaborate on this important project. Los Alamos will be responsible for installing and maintaining the atmospheric monitoring stations - or Atmospheric and Radiation Cloud Stations (ARCSs).

Information from the ARCS will be available locally before being transmitted each month to Los Alamos in USA.

SPREP's Role in ARM

SPREP's role will be to:

- identify suitable sites; obtain permission, contracts and agreements with national governments for siting and operating ARCS; and assist in installing and operating ARCS.
- establish and conduct local public relations and public awareness programmes, by developing and distributing fact sheets, video, television and radio materials in local languages.
- establish and run local and regional school education programmes, conducting workshops, and producing and distributing educational materials to schools.
- ensure that the establishment and operation of ARCS comply with local environment, safety and health requirements and regulations.
- help local staff interpret data collected by the local ARCS.
- work with relevant regional agencies and institutions wanting to collaborate with the project, and identify those that may also be interested in the data collected, possibly helping with data distribution to these agencies.

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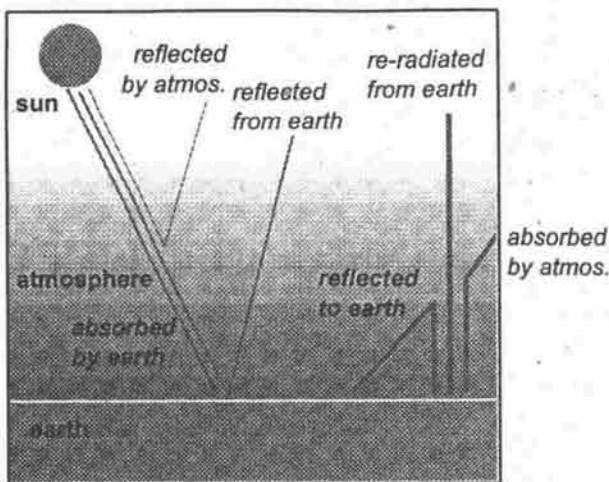


Figure: Radiation in the earth's atmosphere

This figure shows what happens to short wave - or ultra-violet - energy from the sun when it reaches the earth and its atmosphere. Some radiation is reflected by the atmosphere and the clouds in it, while the rest passes through the atmosphere to the ground, where it is absorbed by the earth's surface.

When any object absorbs energy, it heats up and then will give off long wave or infra-red - radiation. Unlike short wave radiation, some long wave radiation is absorbed by the atmosphere, and is re-radiated back to the earth's surface.

The ARM Project aims to discover the amounts of various radiations involved, and so determine exactly how much energy is entering and leaving the atmosphere.

Clouds complicate this research, as they change the movement of short and long wave radiation through the atmosphere. Since the amounts and types of clouds are constantly changing, at least ten years of information is needed to find the impact of seasonal and annual changes in atmospheric radiation.

— short-wave radiation
 — long-wave radiation

First Climate Change Conference Meets in Germany

The German government will host the first Conference of Parties (COP) for the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* in Berlin on 28 March - 7 April 1995.

The Convention calls for reductions in emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs - such as carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) to levels that will allow ecosystems to adapt to global warming.

The first COP follows eleven sessions of the International Negotiating Committee (INC) which established the details for implementing the Convention. The last session, INC XI, concluded in New York on 17 February. Pacific island countries were active in the negotiating sessions - individually, as a region, and as part of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

A draft protocol to the Convention was submitted by AOSIS to INC-XI that might be considered at the first COP. The protocol aims to set maximum amounts and timetables for reducing GHGs, and specifically calls for reductions in carbon dioxide emissions to 20 per cent below 1990-levels by 2005.

This protocol and other amendments could be the topic for heated debate during the COP, with many developed and so-called "transition" countries opposed to such rigid conditions for reducing GHGs.

New Project Addresses Climate Change

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SPREP will also provide appropriate representatives for project planning meetings and the ARM Science Team Meetings.

Ed.: For more information, contact **Neville Koop**, SPREP's Meteorology / Climatology Officer, or **Chalapan Kaluwin**, Climate Change Officer at SPREP.



Many Pacific island countries support the protocol, seeing these reductions as critical in limiting and mitigating the impacts of climate change to the region.

The COP will consist of two meetings: a technical session (28 March-4 April) followed by a ministerial-level meeting (5-7 April). Neville Koop, SPREP's Meteorology and Climatology Officer, will provide technical assistance to SPREP member countries during the meeting.

The Climate Change Convention was signed by over 150 countries at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. It came into force in 21 March 1994. As of February 1995, 119 countries had ratified this convention.



Pacific island countries who have signed and ratified the Framework Convention on Climate Change (to date) are:

- Cook Islands
- Federated States of Micronesia
- Papua New Guinea
- Solomon Islands
- Western Samoa
- Fiji
- Tuvalu
- Marshall Islands
- Kiribati
- Vanuatu
- Nauru

Stop Press!

In the last issue of *Environment Newsletter*, we reported on a research programme that uses sea turtles tagged with satellite transmitters to study their migration patterns from their breeding area on **Rose Atoll** in American Samoa.

Peter Craig from A. Samoa reports that this year the tagged green turtle swam 1250 miles to **French Polynesia**, in 36 days!

Did you guess its destination correctly? **Tela Malaga** in American Samoa did, and won USD 250.00 as well!

The Editor



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South West Pacific is Warming

The South West Pacific has been warming since early this century. This is one conclusion from a paper presented to the Greenhouse 94 Conference in Wellington, NZ, in October 1994.

Ten researchers from Australia and NZ, have found that the region's air temperature has risen 0.4 - 0.7°C since 1951, and most markedly since 1975. Sea surface temperatures have shown a similar rise.

The group's spokesman, Dr Neville Nicholls from Australia, said that this does not confirm global warming, as "(the changes) may reflect natural climate variability. However, the observed changes are not inconsistent with the pattern of climate change expected from an enhanced greenhouse effect", said Dr Nicholls.

Australia-South Pacific Newsletter, 1/11/94.

Loggers to Provide Services

Logging companies operating in Solomon Islands will be required to provide social services in their areas of operation under a proposed new law, according to Solomon Islands' Forest Secretary, John Naitoro.

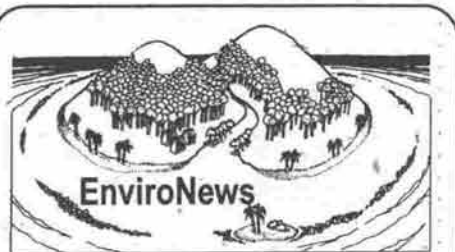
He said that under a new policy loggers would be required to fund the building of health clinics, schools, water supply lines, roads and reforestation projects as part of compensation to local landowners, in return for access to indigenous forests.

AFP, Honiara, 7/12/94.

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The Pacific Environment Information Network:



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Small Islands Clash with USA

In a surprise move, USA has sought to delete references to small island states in key documents for the World Summit for Social Development, in Copenhagen, Denmark, on 6-12 March 1995.

Islands state representatives, headed by Fiji and Jamaica, led a lengthy debate that resulted in USA backing down from its proposal. A US delegate had proposed to delete a paragraph that recognised the special needs of small island states through technical and financial cooperation, from the commitments section of the negotiating documents.

Fiji UN Mission Press Release, 19/1/95.

Leading NGOs Disappointed with Climate Negotiations

International NGOs expressed disappointment with the results of the last preparatory conference before the Berlin Climate Summit.

Representatives of Greenpeace, WWF and the Climate Action Network criticised OECD countries, particularly the EU and USA, for their lack of commitment to agree to stabilise carbon dioxide emissions by the end of this century.

Rising levels of carbon dioxide, which is a major cause of accelerated global warming, originates mostly from OECD countries. These levels are a major cause of concern for many low-lying Pacific island countries.

Climate Action Network press release, 17/1/95.

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A regional initiative is now being developed to improve the way environmental information is disseminated around the Pacific islands - from regional organisations such as SPREP through to Pacific island communities.

An initial co-operative effort by SPREP, UNESCO and SPC has assessed how environmental information is currently obtained by national bodies, and how it is then processed and disseminated, as well as how local knowledge is gathered and stored for future use.

Two survey missions visited 11 countries in Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia (see box on page 9), and had detailed discussions with government agencies, NGOs, the local media and people in general on how they received and disseminated environmental information, and what was necessary to improve this information flow.

It was found that information was not flowing effectively to the media and the public. This poor flow was often due to insufficient training and resources in key national agen-

cies. Insufficient systems for information storage, poor accessing and selection of relevant information (where available), and little or no interpretation of this information into simple English or translation into local languages were also evident.

Corporatisation of government media offices has affected the use of the mass media, especially where environment agencies and NGOs could no longer afford to pay for newspaper space or radio or television airtime.

It was also found that a basic regional environmental network existed - from SPREP to member countries through SPREP's focal points - but that much could be done to improve the onward flow of relevant information to the media and environmental information users, including NGOs. There were also existing national information networks that could be used to spread environmental messages within a country, but these needed to be provided with appropriate materials.

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Communications experts attending the recent PEIN Project inter-agency meeting: Fiu Mataese Elisara (UNDP), Sam Sesega (PSDNP, SPC), Lance Polu (Consultant), Conrad Mill (SPC), Elizabeth Rijdsdijk (UNESCO), Jim Bentley (UNESCO) and Lucas Dosung (SPREP).

Photo: SPREP



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A Regional Information Initiative

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All countries surveyed, except Nauru, have completed National Environment Management Strategies (NEMS), all of which also emphasised the need for the improved dissemination of environmental information. Thus, national governments and NGOs who were involved in the NEMS process considered this an important concern.

A technical meeting of information specialists met in Apia in February 1995 to discuss the findings of the survey missions. These experts in media, libraries and information systems developed the basis for a project proposal to establish and develop the **Pacific Environmental Information Network**, to be based at SPREP.

The meeting recommended establishing national information centres for the environment that would improve the collection and distribution of environmental information, especially in the amount and quality of information reaching the media and the general public. It was also recommended that the new SPREP Library and Information Centre receive some resources to improve its distribution of environ-

mental information to member countries.

A related regional information project, the *Pacific Sustainable Development Networking Programme* (PSDNP), actively participated in the meeting to ensure that the activities of the PSDNP and the Pacific Environment Information Network would complement each other.

Indeed, SPREP is already actively involved with the PSDNP by hosting the Pactok e-mail hub for Western Samoa, and by assisting in upcoming PSDNP training workshops in 1995.

The SPC Regional Media Centre will also be involved by providing media and communications training for participating organisations.

The technical missions and the follow-up meeting were organised by UNESCO's Regional Office in Apia, Western Samoa, and funded by UNDP. The missions involved representatives from SPREP's Environmental Education, Information and Co-ordination Division, UNESCO's Communication Programme, and SPC's Regional Media Centre (based in Suva).

Ed.: For more information on the missions and the inter-agency meeting, contact:

Mr Jim Bentley
Communication Adviser,
UNESCO Office for the Pacific States,
Private Mail Bag,
Apia, Western Samoa.
Fax: (685) 22 253.

For more information on the proposed **Pacific Environmental Information Network**, contact **Wesley Ward**, Information and Publications Officer, or **Lucas Dosung**, Library and Information Centre Co-ordinator, at SPREP.



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Finance Ministers Commend New Forest Code

Forum Finance Ministers recently endorsed the new draft Code of Conduct on Forestry, which is based on the twin concerns of the need for sustainable forestry practices and for maximum returns for the region's timber.

The Ministers also welcomed the outcomes of recent High Level discussions between Forum member countries and distant water fishing nations, and urged greater efforts towards practical ways to ensure sustainability and greater returns to island countries for exploiting migrating fisheries.

Australia-South Pacific Newsletter, 1/3/95.

Ozone Still Declining

A comprehensive report by nearly 300 scientists from 35 countries stated that, although international efforts are beginning to take effect, the vital ozone layer above the earth's surface is still growing thinner.

World Climate Newsletter, 12/94-1/95.

New "Enviro-Friendly" COTS Control

Recent research in Australia has revealed a more "environmentally-friendly" method of controlling the destructive crown-of-thorns starfish (COTS).

Researchers from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority have shown that *sodium bisulphate*, or *dry acid*, is an effective chemical agent for locally controlling numbers of the starfish.

This recommendation replaces the previously "unfriendly" chemical control, copper sulphate.

Reef Research, 4:4, 12/94.

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Countries visited by the PEIN Technical Missions were:

Cook Islands
Fiji
Kiribati
Marshall Islands
Nauru
Niue
Palau
Solomon Islands
Tonga
Vanuatu
Western Samoa

Pacific Island Countries Join the "Information Super-Highway"

Recent workshops in Fiji, Vanuatu and Western Samoa signaled the entry of some Pacific island countries onto the so-called "information super-highway".

These workshops established local electronic mail networks using the **Pactok system**, with users from national government and regional agencies, NGOs and private businesses.

At the opening of the workshop in Western Samoa, the local UNDP Resident Representative, Mr Tony Patten, stated that the *Pacific Sustainable Development Networking Programme (PSDNP)* sought to improve the access by Pacific islanders to up-to-date and relevant information for making better informed decisions. (See PSDNP article this page for more details).

Establishing national Pactok networks is one way the PSDNP will improve information access in the region. Participating organisations will form the core of national networks of users, who will be linked

through their computers to other Pactok users elsewhere in the Pacific and Asia, and globally through the associated *Internet* system.

Local users can send and receive messages by electronic mail, transfer computer files and documents, and participate in electronic conferences. They can use existing computers and telephone lines, and a modem, to connect to other computers in the network. These users will also form a local user group, which will seek to establish and expand the national network, and to decide on policies for the future funding of the national network.

The PSDNP, based at SPC's Suva office, provided trainers for the workshop. Mr **Samuela Sesega**, PSDNP Co-ordinator, said that this was the first of a series of national training workshops involving national user groups. He was assisted by Mr **Ken Fakamura**, the Programme's *Training / Information Officer*.



Mr Sam Sesega
PSDNP Co-ordinator, SPC

Photo: SPREP

SPREP is collaborating with SPC to carry out PSDNP activities in Western Samoa, and hosts the local *SDN Officer*, Ms **Wanda Ieremia**, who manages the day-to-day activities of the PSDNP and the Western Samoan node computer for Pactok.

SPREP's *Capacity 21 Project*, led by Ms **Neva Wendt**, is also working very closely with the PSDNP to encourage sustainable development in Pacific island countries.

This programme originated from a UNDP-funded initiative that was adapted by a regional steering committee for use in the Pacific islands region. The *Asia Foundation*, a non-profit organisation with a regional office in Suva, Fiji, also funded Mr Rob Garnsey from *Pactok* to provide technical assistance and training in the workshop. ☺☺☺

What is the Sustainable Development Network?

The **Pacific Sustainable Development Networking Programme (PSDNP)** is part of a global UNDP-funded programme aiming to establish worldwide information networks to promote sustainable development. It is implemented in the Pacific islands by the **South Pacific Commission**, based in Suva, Fiji.

What is the Role of the PSDNP?

PSDNP's role is to promote sustainable development and to support all national and regional efforts aimed at achieving this. PSDNP will do this by:

- assisting key organisations and groups to access relevant regional and global information;

- encouraging the sharing of experiences and traditional knowledge among Pacific island countries;
- enhancing the capacities of local community groups, NGOs and government agencies to repackage information aimed at communities; and,
- fostering participatory decision making by all elements in society.

How does PSDNP Work?

PSDNP's main activities are:

- linking various groups involved in sustainable development, using computers and telephone lines; and,

- training NGOs and government agencies in information repackaging skills for material destined for local communities.

The target groups include community groups, national NGOs, national government agencies, private business and regional organisations.

PSDNP uses two communications systems:

- PEACESAT, a satellite-based telecommunications system connecting over 40 sites throughout the Pacific islands; and,
- Pactok, a low-cost electronic mail network which uses normal telephone lines.

Director Opens New SPREP Library

SPREP's information services to the Pacific islands region have improved dramatically with the official opening of the **SPREP Library and Information Centre** on 28 February 1995.

While opening the Centre, SPREP's Director, Dr Vili Fuavao, stated that this opening was a significant event as the Pacific islands region now had its own information resources to address the region's and the world's environmental concerns.

The Centre will collect, process and arrange information on books, journals, extension materials, maps and videos to build a database. People in the region will be able to search this database to request information held at the Centre.

The SPREP Library and Information Centre arrived at SPREP's headquarters in Apia in January 1992, in nearly one hundred boxes from SPC, New Caledonia. Some volunteers initially worked to place some books on shelves. However, no formal work commenced until August 1993 when a USP consultant, funded by the New Zealand

government, advised SPREP on how best to establish and manage the Centre.

Work on the Library and Information Centre began in earnest in April/May 1994, when SPREP recruited a Library and Information Centre Co-ordinator and a Senior Library Assistant with further funding from New Zealand. Work continued on unpacking and cataloguing books from Noumea, expanding the library's space, building shelves and establishing databases until the opening day.

The Centre now houses over 150 journal titles, 1,500 monographs and 150 audio visual materials such as video cassettes, slide-tape sets, audio tapes and tape scripts. All cataloguing, storage and retrieval of records is completed on INMAGIC-PLUS software.

As part of SPREP's mandate under the SPREP Action Plan, the Library and Information Centre will rapidly develop into the main depository for the region's environmental information, as well as becoming the region's major environmental information distribution centre.

Services Offered by the SPREP Library and Information Centre are:

- monograph loans
- pamphlet loans
- periodicals services
- video and audio cassette loans
- database searches and document delivery
- electronic mail

For more information on the services offered by the Centre, contact the:

Library and Information Centre Co-ordinator

PO Box 240
APIA, Western Samoa.
tel.: (685) 21 929
fax: (685) 20 231

Internet: sprep@pactok.peg.apc.org
Pactok: 90:685/101, sprep



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TOGA Project Finishes

The 10-year Tropical Ocean-Global Atmosphere (TOGA) programme completed its activities in December 1994. TOGA focused on the El Niño / Southern Oscillation (ENSO) events that so drastically affect climate patterns in the Pacific region and elsewhere.

The TOGA programme has achieved outstanding success in forecasting changes in the ENSO a season or more in advance. An associated experiment in the warm water pool of the western Pacific Ocean has provided data that will be "a source of scientific advances in understanding air-sea interactions for years to come".

The results of TOGA will be reviewed at a conference hosted by Australia in early April, 1995.

World Climate News, no. 6, 1/95.



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For more information on the PSDNP, contact:

PSDNP Co-ordinator, or
Training / Information Officer
PSDNP Secretariat
South Pacific Commission
Private Mail Bag
SUVA, Fiji
Tel.: (679) 370 733
Fax: (679) 370 021
E-mail: spsuva@pactok.peg.apc.org



Ken Fakamura, SDN Training Officer (above left), and Wanda Ieremia (above right), Western Samoa SDN Officer based at SPREP, were trainers for the Workshop.

Ken (left) is demonstrating access to Pactok through a notebook computer, a modem and a telephone line.

Photos: SPREP



Three New Officers for Capacity 21 Project

Regional organisations are always seeking to improve the establishment and management of their national projects in member countries.

SPREP's new **Capacity 21 Project** is tackling this problem "head-on" by appointing three local officers to oversee the Project's activities in six SPREP member countries - Cook Islands, FSM, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Western Samoa.

These local officers met in March in Apia, Western Samoa, to familiarise themselves with SPREP's current activities and the resources available to them. Ms **Neva Wendt**, the *Project's Manager*, said that this will improve their effectiveness in implementing local activities in the Capacity 21 Project, as well as in assisting with other SPREP projects and activities in their countries.

The officers met with various SPREP staff during their meeting, and also developed workplans for the coming year. They left with a keener appreciation of what SPREP is and what it does, and so will be more effective in-country representatives of SPREP.

Each officer is responsible for two countries: Mr **O'Kean Ehmes**, based in Pohnpei, covers *FSM*, and *Kiribati*; Ms **Sarah Naupa**, based in Port Vila, is responsible for *Vanuatu* and *Solomon Islands*; and Mr **Vai Aiavao**, based in Apia, works in *Western Samoa* and *Cook Islands*.

The Capacity 21 Project is aimed at institution building in government and non-government agencies; improving awareness of sustainable development in key national decision makers; and improving the capacity of local custom landowners to sustainably manage their resources. These officers will carry out many local activities to achieve these aims.

The Project is funded by UNDP and implemented by SPREP. It also works closely with the related *Pacific Sustainable Development Networking Programme*, based at SPC in Suva, Fiji.

Ed.: The next issue of the *Environment Newsletter* will include profiles of these officers. Also see *Environment Newsletter no. 38* for more details on the *Capacity 21 Project*, or contact Ms **Neva Wendt**, Project Manager (Capacity 21), at SPREP.

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
ENSO	El Niño-Southern Oscillation
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
EU	European Union (formerly EC)
EWC	East-West Center
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (UN)
FCCC	Framework Convention on Climate Change
FFA	Forum Fisheries Agency
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IMO	International Maritime Organisation
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on 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
PIDP	Pacific Islands Development Programme (EWC)
PNG	Papua New Guinea
RMI	Republic of the Marshall Islands
SOPAC	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)

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SPREP's new *Capacity 21 Officers* (from left): **Vai Aiavao** - Polynesia, **Sarah Naupa** - Melanesia, and **O'Kean Ehmes** - Micronesia. Welcome to the SPREP family!

Photo: SPREP

Outreach Begins for Population Project

**Taiamoni Tongamoa
and Beau Henry Merto**
Population and Environment Project

SPREP's *Population and Environment* project has commenced its outreach programme for the coming year with a national training workshop in Honiara, Solomon Islands.

Invited organisations for the Solomon Islands workshop included:

Development Services Exchange
Environment Division, Ministry of
Forests and Environment
Greenpeace
Integrated Human Development
Programme
Kaipito Farmer's Community
Kasika Community Project
Kolomola Community,
Solomon Islands Development Trust
Solomon Islands Planned Parenthood
Solomon Trust
The Nature Conservancy
Village Education Programme
World Vision International

Community development workers from the country's eleven provinces participated in a five-day workshop on "Integrating Population into Environmental Management for Sustainable Development".

Government agencies, NGOs and local community organisations (see box) provided over thirty participants, who worked closely together in all workshop activities.

The course addressed problems in village development because of pressures on the local environment from changing populations. Participatory approaches in community development were used during the workshop to show techniques that could be used in the villages.

The course ran from 12-17 February 1995, funded by UNFPA. It is part of an on-going series of workshops for sixteen SPREP member countries which suffer from the combined pressures of increasing populations and environmental stress.



Participatory activities were an important part of the Solomons workshop.

Photo: SPREP

Funding

Support for Climate Change Studies US Country Studies Program

Donor: USA

Purpose:

To provide technical and financial support to help developing countries prepare studies addressing climate climate.

Assistance is provided to:

1. develop an inventory of net national emissions of greenhouse gases;
2. assess vulnerabilities to climate change;
3. evaluate options to mitigate and adapt to climate change; and,
4. support efforts to develop and implement national policies and measures to deal with longterm climate changes.

For more information:

US Country Studies
Management Team (PO 63)
1000 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC. 20585.
USA
Tel.: (1202) 426 1628
Fax: (1202) 426 1540
E-mail: csmt@igc.apc.org



Radio Training for Solomons

Gisa Gaufa Salea
Environmental Education Officer

Twelve participants from NGOs, church groups, the media and government agencies received practical training in radio production at a recent national workshop in Honiara, Solomon Islands.

The enormous output from the five-day workshop - five radio talks, fifteen "spots" and a radio drama - showed the dedication of participants and the practical nature of the course.

David Palapu, Programme Director at the Solomon Islands Broadcast Corporation was the chief trainer. He was assisted by SPREP's local education co-ordinator, Gerry

Whewell, and Moses Biliki, the Chief Environment and Conservation Officer from the Ministry of Forests, Environment and Conservation.

The material produced in the workshop will be used for the second phase of a national Environmental Awareness campaign. This will be run over national radio stations during 1995, particularly in February to April. These materials will also be used during the year to support various awareness seminars and workshops run by the Environment Department and NGOs.

This workshop follows a similar activity in November 1994, where radio material was produced and then broadcasted by the Broadcasting Corporation.





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

Fiji's New Waste Strategy

Development, population growth and urbanisation in Fiji has resulted in serious pollution and waste management problems that threaten human health, water and soil quality and fragile island ecosystems.

To address this rapidly growing problem, Fiji developed a National Pollution Prevention, Waste Minimisation and Waste Management Strategy during a national workshop in September 1994. This is outlined in the Proceedings of the Workshop.

With wide representation from government agencies, NGOs and the business sector, it seeks to practically address the problems with a "Declaration of Co-operation" and a "Proposed Waste Minimisation and Management Strategy for Fiji". The Proceedings also contain a Summary Workshop Report and copies of the papers presented at the Workshop.

For more information on the Strategy and the Workshop, contact:

Sefania Nawadra
Department of Environment
PO Box 2131
Government Buildings
SUVA, Fiji
Fax: (679)

For more information on any SPREP publications, contact:

The Director, SPREP
PO Box 240
APIA, Western Samoa
Fax: (685) 20 231
Email: sprep@pactok.peg.apc.org

New SPREP Publications

The SPREP Meeting is the important annual conference for this organisation. The report of the *Seventh SPREP Meeting* in Tarawa, Kiribati, in October 1994, contains the major decisions of its member countries for SPREP for 1995.

Two important documents endorsed by this SPREP Meeting were the *1994-96 Corporate Plan*, and the *Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the South Pacific Region 1994-98*. Both are important if you wish to find out more on what SPREP stands for and does, and how it carries out its mandate.

SPREP continues to expand its technical publishing in the SPREP **Reports and Studies** (SRS) series with *Palolo Deep National Marine Reserve: a Survey, Inventory and Information Report* (SRS 84), by E. Lovell and F. Toloa. With numerous photos and diagrams, it is a useful example of how to complete a detailed inventory of a marine reserve using local staff and facilities.

SPREP also has an important role in providing relevant technical information for a variety of groups, some of whom require this information in a simpler format. The **Fact Sheet** series provides much of this information. Four new fact sheets in this series are on the *SPREP Convention* (no. 12/4) and the *Apia Convention* (no. 12/5) in the *Environmental Law* series, and a description of the *South Pacific Sea Level and Climate Monitoring Project* (no. 13/1) and its equipment, the *SEAFRAME Monitoring Station* (no. 13/2).

Agencies and individuals requiring more information on SPREP's **Population and Environment Project** can now order a colourful 4-page pamphlet that clearly lays out the environmental problems associated with changing human populations in the region, and how this project will address some of these problems.

Sustainable Development or Malignant Growth?

'Atu Emberson-Bain, well-known social researcher in the Pacific islands, has edited a provocative book by Pacific women that challenges accepted perspectives on "development" in the Pacific islands.

Sustainable Development or Malignant Growth? has 26 chapters on a wide number of topics, including the declining Pacific environment and over-using natural resources. Contributors are drawn from many fields, providing new and interesting critical perspectives on resource management, fishing, population growth and wider environmental issues.

Some articles also question the fundamental assumptions that underlie current approaches to development in the region.

For more information, contact:
Marama Publications
Box 5151, Raiwaqa
SUVA
Fiji

New Forests Newsletter

Soltrust, a community development NGO based in Honiara, Solomon Islands, has commenced publishing a new newsletter on sustainable forestry - *Sol-Tree Nius*.

It promotes the aims of Soltrust's Ecoforestry Project, which look to promote sustainable forestry practices while maintaining national economic growth and social development.

The newsletter itself promotes sustainable practices by also providing advertising space for local businesses.

For more information or subscriptions, contact:

Sol-Tree Nius
c/- Soltrust
PO Box 748
HONIARA, Solomon Islands
Tel.: (677)-30 948
Fax: (677) 30 468



Meetings '95

Date	Meeting	Venue	Officer / Org.
April, 1995			
2 - 7	TOGA '95: International Scientific Conference	Melbourne, Australia	N. Koop
3 - 7	Working Group on Regional Hazardous Waste Convention	Suva	Forum Sec.
11 - 28	Commission for Sustainable Development Meeting	New York, USA	CSD/UN
18 - 22	Community Development Workshop: Participatory Skills for Community Development	Deuba, Fiji	H. Merto
20 - 21	International Conference on Marine Mammals and the Marine Environment	Scotland, UK	Norway
early	SPREP Working Group on Climate Change	Rarotonga	C. Kaluwin
May			
30 May-9 Jun	11th World Meteorological Organisation Congress	Geneva	N. Koop
June			
11-14	Sustainable Aquaculture '95	Hawaii, USA	Pacon International
September			
	<i>27th South Pacific Forum Meeting</i>	<i>Port Moresby</i>	<i>Forum Sec.</i>
October			
5	3rd Meeting of the Parties to the Apia Convention	Apia	SPREP
6	3rd Meeting of the Parties to the SPREP Convention	Apia	SPREP
8-14	International Conference on Wetlands and Development	Malacca, Malaysia	AWB
10	1st Meeting of Advisory Committee on Barbados Conference Outcomes	Apia	SPREP
11-13	Eighth SPREP Meeting	Apia	SPREP
23 - 27	Ocean and Atmosphere Pacific	Adelaide, Australia	C. Kaluwin
Notes:	<i>tba</i> - to be advised. Meetings in italics are still to be finalised. Contact the organising agency or relevant SPREP officer for more details.		

Training Courses and Workshops

International Environmental Management Seminar

Where? Halifax, Canada

When? 25/5 - 16/6/95

Who for? Senior managers in business, government, educational institutions and NGOs.

Aims: Participants will receive an intense and practical treatment of the principles, approaches and tools of environmental management in attaining sustainable development.

Last date for application:
3/4/95

For more information:

Seminar Director, IEMS '95
 School for Res. and Environ. Studies
 Dalhousie University
 HALIFAX, Canada.
 Tel.: (1902) 494 6517
 Fax: (1902) 494 3728

Forestry Planning and Management

Where? Gympie and Canberra, Australia

When? 16/10 - 8/12/95

Who for? Middle and senior level forest managers, and rural development workers in community forestry.

Aims: Course participants will gain knowledge and skills in:

- ⊗ identifying, appraising and managing forestry projects, including natural forests, community forests and plantations;
- ⊗ planning and managing large scale plantations and native forests;
- ⊗ using computers for resource planning, and for financial and economic analysis;
- ⊗ EIA and environmental protection in forest planning; and,
- ⊗ methods to encourage people participation in forestry projects.

For more information:

Dr Frans Arentz
 Manager, Forestry Division
 ANUTECH Pty Ltd
 CANBERRA, ACT. 0200.
 Tel.: (616) 249 0617
 Fax: (616) 249 5875
 E-mail Frans.Arentz@aplemail.anu.edu.au



Acronyms

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UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund (UN)
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
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



Let our turtle family live!
 1995 year of the sea turtle

The Last Word ...

Welcome to 1995 and this *Environment Newsletter*, where we commence an important year for SPREP and its member countries - **The Year of the the Sea Turtle.**

There have already been a number of activities around the region, including the official launch of this vital campaign by SPREP's Director, Dr Fuavao. Read his opening address for the regional launch in *From the Director's Desk* on page 3.

Fiji has already shown the way for the Pacific islands with a one-year ban on all commercial sales of sea turtles and turtle products. If you have been near the fish market in Suva in the past, you know why. Read more on the ban on page 2.

This campaign is also a historic occasion for SPREP - it is the first time that SPREP, its member governments and local community groups have co-operated in a major regional campaign. Read more on this campaign on page 1.

There have been a number of initiatives in recent years to improve the dissemination of environmental information around the Pacific islands. Read more on these projects in this issue.

We have our usual round-up of regional and national activities, in this issue from Solomon Islands and Niue. We also review new environment and development publications in *Environment Book Review*, and you can scan this year's regional and national meetings in our *Meetings* calendar.

Finally, I urge you to take part in the events carried out in your country for the **Year of the Sea Turtle**. Support the call for bans on the commercial exploitation of our fast disappearing turtles. **Let Our Turtle Family Live!**

Tofa soifua,
Wesley Ward,
Editor.

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