



## SPREP and UNDP sign US3.1 Million Project

*As the coordinating organisation for climate change issues in the Pacific region, SPREP is executing a new programme funded by the Global Environment Facility, which is administered through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The following article provides details of this new programme together with its current status of activities and the people involved in its implementation.*

The Director of SPREP, Mr Tamari'i Tutangata, and the UNDP Resident Representative, Mr Anthony Patten, officially signed the project document of the Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Programme or PICCAP on 8 April 1997. Funded under the auspices of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), PICCAP is a regional Climate Change Enabling Activities Project, that will assist participating Pacific island countries meet their initial reporting obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC),

particularly *Articles 4 and 12*. PICCAP has been integrated with CC:TRAIN, a Climate Change Training programme undertaken by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), which will avoid duplication of efforts in the region.

For the ten participating countries (Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu),

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PICCAP Signing of Project document

## DID YOU KNOW THAT ...


SPREP's first coordinator was Arthur Dahl. During his first year as coordinator of SPREP, he travelled the world three times in eight months looking for funding and collaborating partners. From a staff of one in 1975, SPREP in 1997, has just under 60 staff members.

**The mission statement of SPREP is** “... a community of Pacific island countries and territories with the capacity and commitment to implement programmes for environmental management and conservation. This SPREP community shares responsibility for implementation of the Action Plan, facilitated by its Secretariat.”

**SPREP is the product of** regional and international agencies. These were: Forum Secretariat (in the early days was called the South Pacific Bureau for Economic Cooperation (SBEC)); SPC; UNEP and ESCAP.

The Pacific ocean is the **largest geographical feature in the world**. It covers over 29,000,000 square kilometres.

SPREP **leads the world** in a number of areas. One of these is in the GEF funded *Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for International Waters of Pacific Islands*. Implemented by SPREP, it is the first in the world to design a Strategic Action Programme in international waters for a group of small island developing states.

SPREP is one of seven intergovernmental organisations in the region. The others are: South Pacific Commission (SPC), Forum Secretariat, Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), University of the South Pacific (USP), South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC), Pacific Island Development Program (PIDP), and Tourism Council of the South Pacific (TCSP). 

# French funds climate change meeting

*The French Government, through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs, donated FF200,000 to help organise the Third Intergovernmental SPREP Meeting on Climate Change and Sea Level Rise in the Pacific.*

**T**he agreement was formally signed by Madame Odiles des Deserts for the French Development Fund and Mr Tamari'i Tutangata, Director of the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). According to Mr Tutangata, “Pacific island countries are particularly vulnerable to climate change, climate variability and sea level rise. The financial support by the French government will provide SPREP with the necessary resources to organise the *Third SPREP Intergovernmental Meeting on Climate Change and Sea Level Rise* in August this year. This meeting will help the region's governments prepare and respond to events that may occur due to the impacts of climate change and sea level rise”.

The meeting which is organised in collaboration with French Scientific Research Institute for Development through Cooperation (ORSTOM) in Noumea, New Caledonia will bring together over 110 senior government officials, non-government organisations, decision makers, scientists, planners, policy advisers and the

media from all parts of the globe. One of the main objectives of the meeting is to review the latest scientific developments and their implications for the Pacific region as well as advancing the region's knowledge on climate change issues.

Climate Change is an area currently receiving global attention and in the Pacific it is one of the most extensive programme implemented by SPREP. “The effects of climate change are significant to the region, therefore it is important for the public to be aware of the range of activities implemented by SPREP in the area of climate change and sea level rise”, said Mr Tutangata. “Especially given the fact that SPREP is the organisation which coordinates climate change activities in the region.”


SPREP looks forward to working together with its Member governments, donor agencies and other regional organisations to ensure that the objectives under its climate change programme, through an integrated coastal approach, are successfully achieved for the benefit of the region. 



Photo by Fatuu Taufatua (SPREP)

*Mr Tutangata and Ms Desert after signing the agreement*



## from the Director's desk

Three months certainly go by so quickly. Yet, so many things have taken place or are in the SPREP pipeline that one begins to wonder whether it is really just three months that have gone by. The PICCAP project is signed and underway; the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for International Waters of Pacific Islands is forging ahead to meet its October deadline; staff is increasing to cover these new programmes thus changing the physical environment of the Secretariat further; staff development training in the areas of desktop publishing, communications and presentation have taken place to cater for the ever-widening scope of SPREP's activities and to respond to the changing needs of the Pacific people that we serve.

The above activities are dealt with in more detail inside this issue of your *Environment Newsletter*. Everyone from SPREP's member countries can help in making this newsletter more interesting and relevant to your needs by letting us know as to the type of information that you want from your environment organisation. This newsletter comes out quarterly so it documents activities by SPREP and materials produced over the preceding three months period. We could also produce a feature article in each issue on specific subjects that may be of particular interest and relevance to you, our regional readers.

To provide current information, we put out press releases, circulars, even hold meetings, but nothing stops you from asking us directly, and we look forward to receiving your enquiries on anything relating to the environment and its inevitable links to sustainable development. As everyone knows, in protecting our environment for present and future generations, we are also promoting the sustainable use of our natural resources.

The Pacific Year of the Coral Reef campaign is well underway and feedback have been positive. In this connection,

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the British Government of stg2,000 towards our campaign and, at the same time, also acknowledge the major contributions of the governments of Australia and New Zealand, as well as all the other agencies and individuals who have contributed one way or another to our region's Coral Reef campaign. It is gratifying to note that the region's campaign has become an example to the rest of the world.

In June, I attended the 49<sup>th</sup> Congress of the World Meteorological Organization, and this served to highlight even more the global nature and significance of the climate change and sea level rise issues. SPREP is the regional coordinating organisation on climate change efforts for the Pacific island countries and, to this end, our relevant Officers have been active, convening the *Third Meeting of the SPREP Working Group on Climate* in Rarotonga in May; assisting in the coordination of inputs by Pacific Islands representatives at the June meeting of the Ad Hoc Group on the Berlin Mandate in Bonn; the Commission on Sustainable Development in May in New York; and the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York in June which reviewed developments since the 1992 Rio Earth Summit.

SPREP is also organising the *Fourth Meteorological Services Directors Meeting* in Apia in July; the *Third SPREP Intergovernmental Meeting on Climate Change and Sea Level Rise* will be convened from 18 to 22 August 1997, in Noumea, New Caledonia as a joint effort between SPREP and the French Scientific Research Organisation known as ORSTOM; and the *Sixth South Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas* from 29 September to 3 October 1997, in Pohnpei, FSM.

In May, the High Level Consultations between AusAID and SPREP in Canberra proved highly satisfactory and




Mr Tutangata,  
Director of  
SPREP

provided the opportunity for useful consultations with the Australian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Environment Australia officials as well as the Australian National University, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, and Australian Council for Overseas Assistance (ACFOA).

May was also the month for me to be in Tuvalu for consultations with the government and to attend the Forum Fisheries Committee Meeting. I was most fortunate in being able to meet with the Prime Minister, Hon. Bikenibeu Paeniu, as well as other Cabinet Ministers and government officials. Environmental issues of concern to Tuvalu were high on the agenda in these meetings.

Discussions in June with Mr Claude Martin, Deputy Secretary General in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and His Excellency, Ambassador Pierre Garrigue-Guyonnaud, Permanent Representative of France to SPREP, proved most useful in clarifying likely inputs by France into SPREP's activities.

I also took the opportunity, while in Europe to meet with officials in the various divisions of the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Foundation. A number of cooperative activities arising from these discussions are now being followed up with the Commonwealth Secretariat. We will be pursuing potential areas of cooperation with the Commonwealth Foundation in relation to our activities with non-government organisations for 1998. 

Tamarii Tutangata  
Director

# Sub-regional EIA workshops

*Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is the process of gathering, analysing and communicating information about the consequences of social and economic development for natural and human resources, and environmental quality. In short, EIA helps decision-makers make informed decisions about development(s). Mr Komeri Onorio (SPREP's Environment Impact Assessment Officer) describes in the following article the status of EIA activities in the region and the role of SPREP in these activities.*

The South Pacific Regional Environment Programme is the recognised international institution for cooperative work on environmental management in the Pacific islands region. Although EIA is used in the region, its concepts must be understood and practised from the high government official to the local farmer or fisherman level. Therefore, a large number of persons need to be

programme throughout the Pacific island nations called, *Train the Trainers* (the first phase was completed by the end of 1993). Due to differing situations and logistics involved, "... it was decided that in order for the region to gain maximum benefit, it would be better to focus training activities at the sub-regional level", says Mr Onorio. "Even though this required extra funding, in terms of

**Although EIA is used in the region, its concepts must be understood and practised from the high government official to the local farmer or fisherman level.**

made aware and trained in the application of EIA concepts and techniques in the Pacific region.

In answering this regional need SPREP is currently implementing the second phase of a major EIA training

practical application for the participants, it was definitely the correct decision". The workshops for both Polynesia (28 April to 6 May 1997 in Apia, Western Samoa) and Melanesia (30 June to 4 July 1997 in

*continued on page 10*

The workshops concentrate on the following areas:

- to develop an understanding of the intentions and role of EIA in environmental management, and in the context of sustainable development
- to highlight the importance of methodology in EIA activities and in particular, the relationship with scientific studies
- to set-out a consistent methodology or framework to guide EIA studies
- to develop teaching, confidence and practical skills to:
  1. train others to perform EIA
  2. impart awareness to development officials
  3. gain access to information sources and technical assistance in other countries and international agencies
  4. form a network of mutual help with fellow EIA trainers and practitioners in the Pacific region




The workshops will be five days in length and structured to provide greater opportunities for participation and interaction between the participants. Emphasis is placed on working group activity and the assessment of case studies familiar to the participants. Pre-prepared Case study course materials are used as a focus for illustrating the various steps in the EIA process, as well as assignments for practical EIA exercises. Each trainee is required to produce a written report of the allocated practical scoping exercise for use as examples in in-country EIA activities. 

Photo by Komeri Onorio (SPREP)

# Marshall Islands Teachers Environmental Education Workshop

*The Marshall Islands is one of six countries participating in the AusAID/SPREP Regional Environmental Education Project. The other five countries are Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Cook Islands and Samoa.*

The project is generally aimed at promoting awareness of the importance of the environment, knowledge of basic ecological and environmental concepts, familiarity with environmental issues, positive attitudes toward environmental protection, and to practise behaviour which enhances the environment.

The project targets the population at large through its three components. The Media component provides in-country training for local radio journalists and broadcasters in environmental issues and production of resource materials for broadcasting on local environmental concerns. The NGO/Church Component provides the opportunity for bringing together all the local non-government organisations and church groups to develop a strategy for effectively disseminating environmental information. The Formal Education Component provides in-country training for teachers and improve resourcing of existing environmental education dimension in the curriculum.

The Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Vanuatu and Samoa have completed all the activities in the three components mentioned above. Two more workshops remain to be carried out in the Cook Islands.

The final activity of the Project in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), namely the Teachers Workshop, was conducted between the 9 to 19 June 1997. SPREP's Environmental Education Officer, Ms Gisa Salesa-



*Workshop participants demonstrating environmental education activity about the interrelationships in our environment*

Uesele and Environmental Education (Curriculum Development) Officer/Palau Country Attachment Trainee, Ms Tiare Holm, conducted the workshop in conjunction with the local Ministry of Education Science Curriculum through their Science Specialist, Mrs Juanita Rilometo and Mr Karness Kusto, the Education Officer from the local Environment Protection Authority. The major purpose of the workshop was to trial the Environmental Education Teachers Resource Manual that was developed during 1996 under the same AusAID/SPREP project.

Extensive discussions were held regarding the kind of activities which were most appropriate and effective

during a particular development stage of student learning and growth. Comparative examples of activities and strategies that work for other Pacific island classrooms were presented for consideration and relevant modifications. The feedback provided is now being used to modify and improve the draft to make it more applicable and appropriate to the Marshallese settings and classroom situations. 🌱

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# Building closer relations: SPREP, SPC and USP

*In order to maintain its high level of service to its members, SPREP is constantly looking for opportunities to enhance staff development. Although funding for such activities has been difficult to identify and raise, SPREP has been lobbying to pool the resources and expertise available within the Pacific regional organisations themselves, in order to make such activities possible and cost effective.*

One successful example of this collaborative approach is the Desktop Publishing Workshop for SPREP Divisional Assistants held from 9 to 13 June 1997. The workshop involved the South Pacific Commission (SPC) Regional Media Centre and the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Alafua, Samoa.

The aim of the workshop is to raise the skill-level of SPREP Divisional Assistants so that they will be able to assist with SPREP's publication process, by increasing its rate of output. The other areas covered involved the ability to generate products relevant to the administration and support of workshops (one of SPREP's main area of in-country activities) such as certificates, name tags, layout of documents for in-house use etc. Of course the capacity building aspect in terms of skills gained by Pacific island people is also enhanced.

Mr Ian Rolls, Graphic Specialist from the SPC Regional Media Centre in Suva, Fiji, conducted the workshop using Microsoft Publisher '97. This software was selected due mainly to its user-friendly make-up. The software allowed the participants to come to grips with the application of techniques involved in Desktop Publishing. Since desktop publishing softwares such as PageMaker, QuarkXpress etc., are only tools, the workshop had an introductory component on the basics of desktop publishing which involved, the usage and placement of shapes, colours as well as the importance of knowing how the brain works in relation to design creativity.




Photo by Fenu Tanihaili (SPREP)

According to Mr Rolls, "Initially when I was told of Microsoft Publisher, I was sceptical of the software and its application, but as I went through the course with the participants, I found it to be very useful for its intended target audience. Also, it provides a lot of scope for design work than its price tag would suggest". The target audience that could benefit from this software are people who are very busy and would just like that newsletter or brochure to go out. This would probably apply to most government "information officers" who have countless other duties to perform. It will also appeal to Desktop Publishing trainers in the region as an easy and affordable software that can be easily understood by trainees. However, they must provide an introductory course of one to two days on the basics of design layout in order to ensure that the participants have a grasp of the basics involved in design and layout work.

"It was really good and I learned a lot", said Ms Sarona Stanley, Divisional Assistant of the Conservation of Natural Resources Division. "I didn't know that there were so many things

involved in the design or layout of a publication. I'm really excited to put some of the things I've learned into practise."

Through collaborating activities such as these, the regional organisations are able to utilise their in-house expertise to help each other, and coordinate and improve common activities which in the end, is helping the region that we serve.

As coordinator of the workshop, I would like to acknowledge the SPC for making Mr Rolls available for this very successful initiative. The USP campus in Alafua, Prof. Bill Pattie and Ms Lori Lee for making the computer facilities available together with their technical assistance during the workshop. Mr Herve Dropsy, SPREP's Computer Information and Technology Officer, SPREP management, especially Officer in Charge Mr Reti and Heads of Division for their support to the workshop. However, last but not least, to SPREP's administration section and drivers for making the travel arrangements smooth, contributing to the overall success of the workshop. 



# TOOLS for NATURE CONSERVATION

*The Sixth South Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas will be centred on the theme of “TOOLS—for supporting nature conservation and protected area initiatives in the Pacific Islands region”.*

This conference continues a series, begun in 1975, that forms the premier international and regional event for reviewing progress and setting future agendas for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use in the Pacific islands region.




In honour of the 1997 Pacific Year of the Coral Reef, a one-day special focus on Marine Protected Areas is being developed as part of the Protected Areas Tool. This is also the first time the Conference has been held in Micronesia. It provides a special opportunity to celebrate and focus on conservation initiatives in the Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Kiribati, Nauru, Northern Mariana



carried out in SPBCP Conservation Areas will be particularly important in both the protected areas and enterprise development working groups. Conference delegates will have the opportunity of visiting the SPBCP supported Pohnpei Watershed Management Project as a pre-conference field trip.

The “TOOLS” theme was deliberately chosen in order to draw out lessons learnt of what has worked and what has not amongst the various initiatives aimed at the conservation and sustainable use of the region’s biodiversity. Four key nature conservation TOOLS will be the focus of the Sixth Conference, with the overall objective of producing a “toolbox” of practical, solution-oriented guidelines for use.



The Conference is a key opportunity to find out about work carried out in the region and to join together on common agendas for further work. 

The TOOLS focused on in the Sixth Conference will be:

- Protected Areas—marine protected areas and community-based conservation areas;
- Enterprise Development and Conservation Incentives;
- Environmental Trust Funds; and
- World Heritage Convention.



6th South Pacific Conference  
*on*  
 NATURE CONSERVATION  
 &  
 PROTECTED AREAS  
 29 September — 3 October 1997  
 Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia

Islands, Republic of the Marshall Islands and Palau.

The Sixth Conference will build on previous conferences through revision of the Action Strategy for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas and by keeping faith with the strong emphasis on community involvement and partnerships in conservation initiatives. Lessons learnt from work



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# SAP—the new world initiative for small island states



Pacific island nations officially launched on 5 June 1997 a new world initiative – development of a Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for International Waters of the Pacific region – to protect its regional environment. Thirteen Pacific island nations have agreed to develop a regional strategy for the environmentally sustainable development and conservation of waters they share under the auspices of the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

In the official opening ceremony, at SPREP headquarters, Mr Tamariki Tutangata elaborated on one of the unique aspects of this Plan. “This is the first GEF project to specifically address the international waters focal area in the (Pacific) region”, he said “... and the first in the world to design a Strategic Action Programme in international waters for a group of small island developing states”.

The Strategic Action Programme to be developed and finalised by October 1997, aims to integrate and coordinate

the coastal and ocean resources of the Pacific. It will include activities such as: sustainable management of regional fish stocks; tourism development; protection of water supplies; land and marine-based sources of pollution; and vulnerability to climate change.

A small *Regional Task Force* responsible for the preparation of the SAP conducted its first meeting at SPREP headquarters on 5 June 1997. “The SAP will be country driven with detailed input from the 13

participating countries expected in the next three months”, said Mr Tutangata. Task force members include representatives from five of the participating Pacific island countries; South Pacific Organisations Coordinating Committee (SPOCC); private sector; non-government organisations; and the three GEF implementing agencies (World Bank, UNEP and UNDP).

“While all the parties and stakeholders have an important part to play”, said Mr Anthony Patten, UNDP’s Resident Representative in Apia, “I personally believe that the success of the project will hinge largely on the work of this Regional Task Force in guiding the direction the project ought to take”.

Development of the SAP is funded by the GEF with extra financial support provided by the Australian and New Zealand governments. 🌍

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# V-FILES — THE GREAT GREEN WAY

*In the V-Files for this issue, we will change tack a little and see what happens when a SPREP Officer goes on “duty travel”. Since this is a first, your Editor may as well be the subject. In the following article, I will try and take you on a road of discovery—the Great Green Way. What is the Great Green Way? Perhaps it is a call from mother nature for help, perhaps not. However, if it is, what is the message? Are we still deaf and blind to what is happening around us regarding our environment? Read and find out about the Great Green Way some 3,000 kilometres from Apia, home of the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme and make your own conclusion or discovery.*



**T**ears of milky white sap trail slowly down mother \*Ifilele’s arm. Her skin ripped painfully away to reveal the raw and naked white flesh underneath. Her pleading cries for help and mercy are lost in the gleeful avarice of timber merchants and glaze-eyed people in the know. As the darkness of death billows from within her bough, a sadness for the children of mother earth rustles through her weeping leaves. A lasting scenery of days gone by flashes through her chlorophyll lined eyes, when both mother earth and her human children lived and talked in harmony. Where have those days gone ... will they ever come again? My children, my little saplings, what will become of them she pines?

Back in May 1997, I had the privilege of working alongside some of the people at the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA),

located in Townsville, Australia. I was there to find out and be trained on how communication strategies formulated—to help protect the Great Barrier Reef and the impact of these strategies on the communities who have interests in the Great Barrier Reef—may be applicable to the work of SPREP.

The *Great Green Way* is the slogan used by the State of Queensland to describe the highway between Cairns and Townsville (to the horror of the Cairns township, Townsville is now the official capital of North Queensland). A slogan that contrasts sharply to the red and bare landscape encountered. Along this highway, approximately 2,000 kilometres of the Queensland coast and some 300,000 square kilometres within that transect, reside perhaps the most diverse and breathless scenery of biodiversity in the world today—The Great Barrier Reef.

GBRMPA was established in 1975 by the Commonwealth of Australia specifically to protect the Great Barrier Reef. This is very similar to the role of SPREP established in 1982 to protect the environment and natural resources of the Pacific region. In this respect, both organisations have very similar areas of activities although, in terms of coverage, couldn’t be more different. They deal with communities that have wide and diverse cultures and traditions as well as being located over wide and sometimes isolated geographical locations; the transfer of applicable techniques for preservation which needs to be taught and promoted to the communities assuring them that their rights are not affected; and that future generations will pay for the current mismanagement of the environment today. In effect, the North Queensland coast is a microcosm

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Photo by Andrew Elliot (GBRMPA)

*Part of the “Great Green Way” as viewed from the great barrier reef. The township of Townsville is seen in the background*

\* *Ifilele* is a tree used by Samoans to make handicrafts

# UK government supports Pacific Year of the Coral Reef

*The great and positive impact made by the Pacific's Coral Reef campaign has attracted international interest to the Pacific region. The Government of the United Kingdom has donated stg2000 to the campaign which will help with the production of materials.*

“**T**he donation from the UK Government is very much appreciated. The funds will allow some of the campaign's urgent activities to go ahead”, said Campaign Coordinator, Ms Lucille Apis-Overhoff. “I am also very excited that the hard work and commitment put in by SPREP and the participating Pacific island countries and territories for the campaign is being recognised by the international community. Significant funding has already been provided by the Australian and New Zealand governments. This support has raised awareness of the damage and dangers faced by our precious coral reefs, and perhaps will encourage other international donors to provide extra help for the campaign.”

1997 is the International Year of the Coral Reef, yet the Pacific is the only region in the world that has officially started its campaign (launched on 11 February 1997). Currently, activities are being carried out by 18 Pacific island countries and territories,



Photo by Fahu Tauaititi (SPREP)

*Pacific Year of the Coral Reef campaign coordinator Ms Lucille Apis-Overhoff receiving Robert Louis Stevenson school's (Samoa) special magazine dedicated to Coral reefs*

supported by regional activities that include the Regional Arts Competition (the three available categories were won by individuals from Tonga and Samoa); the launch of the Coral Reef video documentary; Coral Reef Music video; and awareness materials such as the Coral Reef posters, stickers, colouring sheets, factsheet and other teaching aids have been produced. “These materials complement and provide support to the National campaign which is organised and run

by each Pacific island country involved,” said Ms Overhoff. “National activities include coral reef theme competitions in: dancing; music; poetry; essay writing; floats etc, which are great vehicles for carrying target messages to key audiences.”

The positive impact made by the Pacific Year of the Coral Reef campaign is achieving one of its main goals—raising awareness of the international community to the plight

of the world's coral reefs. The result thus far is due to many years of hard work by the international community through the framework of the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) right down to individuals from each of the countries involved. SPREP as the Pacific coordinator of the campaign is happy with the progress made but realises that years of hard work and fundraising lie ahead if success is to be achieved in protecting this precious resource. 🌊

## Sub-regional workshop

*continued from page 4*

Port Vila, Vanuatu) have taken place and the response has certainly justified the approach taken. Training for the Micronesia sub-region will be held between 2 to 8 September 1997 in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands.

The purpose of these workshops is to provide the participants with a firm

grounding in the principles and methods as well as confidence in the practise of EIA in their respective countries. The method used to achieve the purpose is to provide opportunities



for participation and interaction. A lot more emphasis is placed on group activities and the assessment of case studies familiar to the participants. 🌊

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Following is an article sent to SPREP by Noe Yalap of the Palau Conservation Society. The Society is spearheading a year long campaign to protect and conserve Palau's Dugong population. Activities of the campaign are supported by SPREP's AusAID/GEF funded South Pacific Biodiversity and Conservation Programme together with other collaborating partners.

Palau is the only nation in Micronesia that supports a population of dugongs, known as *mese kinu*. As legend has it, this gentle sea mammal is the descendant of a young girl who transformed into a dugong. Even today there are stories of the tears that the dugong shed as they are brought to be cut up for feasting. Many people claim that the tail of the dugong looks like two human feet joined together, having five bones in each side of the tail that resemble the skeletal structure of toes.

Although the *mese kinu* holds a long and treasured place in Palauan history and folklore, its population has declined steadily. Aerial surveys in 1991 estimate the population to be between 50 to 200 individuals. Female dugongs – called cows – begin to reproduce at 10 years of age and bear calves every five years thereafter. Due to their slow rate of reproduction, dugong populations are slow to recover if their numbers are reduced dramatically, which is the concern and major reason behind Palau's year long campaign focusing on dugong conservation.

The main cause of decline in the dugong population has been narrowed down to the people who hunt them. Although there is existing law prohibiting the harvesting of dugongs, active hunting still continues. There is speculation that apart from hunters enjoying the thrill of chasing and killing dugongs, the market for dugong meat and jewellery (made from their bones) is profitable, even

after paying the poaching fee if a hunter is caught. More importantly, no conviction has been made on anyone violating the dugong poaching law. At the current rate of declining numbers, environmental experts are concerned that the dugong will be extinct if nothing is done to protect them better.

In December 1996 the Palauan Conservation Society spearheaded a committee made up of the Palau Community College, University of Hawaii Sea Grant Extension Services, Environmental Quality Protection Board, Ministry of Education, Peace Corps, The Nature Conservancy, and Crime Stoppers. The committee will oversee the implementation of the year

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# Palau on Dugong conservation

A year-long campaign

The article as it appeared in the "Wow" booklet

# SPREP Staff Update

*Due to the expanding coverage of environmental issues in the region, the Secretariat has also seen a corresponding expansion in its staff roll.*

## SPREP newcomers

**Mr Herve Dropsy** joins the Environmental Education, Information and Capacity-building Division as Computer Information and Technology Officer. Herve had previously worked for the Mineral Resources Department of Fiji, as Data and System Manager since 1988. He had also worked for the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission in 1986-87. Herve is currently establishing SPREP's internet service including the development of a web site as well as maintaining the systems and network of the Secretariat.

**Mr Wayne Tamangaro King** joins the Environmental Management and Planning Division as Project Manager for the Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Programme and CC:TRAIN. Wayne is a

Cook Islander having spend a lot of his time in New Zealand. Initially, he will be involved in setting up a Project Implementation Plan for the first year of operation.

**Dr Graham Sem** is the other half of the PICCAP and CC:TRAIN project. He is the Scientific Adviser to the project. Dr Sem is from the big island of Papua New Guinea.

**Ms Aranzazu Lascurain** comes to SPREP on a three month volunteer scheme (Micronesia and South Pacific Technical Assistance Program) with the University of Oregon in the United States of America. Aranzazu is working with SPREP's Environmental Education Officer, Ms Gisa Salesa-Uesele, to complete teacher resource materials for the Republic of Kiribati.

Aranzazu, on the completion of her time with SPREP, will be relocating to Seattle, Washington, where she will be looking for employment in the environmental education and capacity training field. She hopes to keep up the canoeing skills she gained in Samoa by rowing in Seattle's Lake Union.

**Ms Mafuli Matalavea** is the new Accounts Clerk. She takes care of a variety of financial duties but specialising in the area relating to purchase orders.

**Mr Ray Wright** is the new Head of the Finance and Administration Division. Ray is not new to Samoa as he had

previously been the Inland Revenue Commissioner for Samoa from 1982 to 1984 before taking up the position of Revenue and Budget Policy Adviser to the Samoa government from 1984 to 1992. Before taking up his post at SPREP, Ray was the Manager of the Australian Tax Office's Transfer Pricing Program. At SPREP, Ray and the Finance section is currently upgrading SPREP's financial accounting system and staff establishment policies.

## SPREP farewells

**Mr Lucas Dosung**, a Papua New Guinean, helped to establish SPREP's Library and Information Centre. He has helped many of the Pacific island countries establish their own Library and Information centres. He is fondly remembered by staff of the Secretariat.

## Promoted

**Ms Satui Bentin:** Having previously worked at USP Alafua Library, Satui was the Senior Library Assistant working together with Mr Lucas Dosung in establishing SPREP's Library and Information Centre (SLIC) from 1994 to 1997. Ms Bentin has now officially taken over as Librarian of SLIC since May 1997, and will be concentrating on building up the six national environmental centres that was part of the Library's 1995-1997 training activities. These centres were established because of the need for national environmental information to be

*continued on page 13*

## V-FILES

*continued from page 9*


of the Pacific region and therefore events are more concentrated. One graphic example illustrating this parallel of sorts is the plan being pursued to protect the coastal environment. Protection of the coast, now involves linking coastal activities to the terrestrial environment. In the communities of the Great Barrier Reef, a plan called the *Queensland Coastal Management Plan* is following this school of thought. In the Pacific

region, SPREP is coordinating a Strategic Action Plan for the Pacific region as part of the GEF funded International Waters Program (this plan should be ready by October 1997). The wonders of scientific research, semantics, politics and millions of dollars have finally given birth to these plans to protect our coasts.

But interestingly enough, towards the end of my stay at GBRMPA, I watched the video *Saltwater People*. At the end of this video, an aboriginal tribal elder was telling his grandchildren about their fast disappearing

culture and in his final words he said, " ... the land and sea work together, one benefits the other".

The expensive and time consuming answers yielded by scientific research appears to have uncovered what has already been known and practised traditionally by the indigenous people early in their history.

Whatever will happen to mother Ifilele? The Great Green Way—it is there to be discovered, we just have to open our eyes. 

## SPREP Staff Update

*continued from page 12*

made accessible by environmental experts, not only in specific countries themselves, but also by outside agencies/organisations working on environmental related projects. This strand of library activities comes under the Capacity Building framework within member countries.

With the addition of new projects coming on top of already existing ones, the Library has had to look at expanding its physical facilities in order to accommodate the information requirements of new officers, and also its member countries.

Satui hopes to see the past three years as only the stepping stone into what she sees the Library achieving in the next three years. She is an advert supporter of existing library “networks” and urges environmental centres to make use of them, and vice versa. 🌐



*Herve Dropsy*



*Wayne King*



*Graham Sem*



*Aranzazu Lascrain*



*Mafuli Matalavea*

## IN THE NEXT ISSUE ...

**Fourth Meteorological Service Directors Meeting:** some of the issues discussed

**Update** on the Climate Change Meeting in Noumea

**The SPREP Brief:** a brief summary on your Pacific organisation dealing with environmental issues

Information about the **Indigenous Language Press** workshop organised by PINA



*Ray Wright*



*Satui Bentin*

## Palau's Dugong campaign

*continued from page 11*

long campaign. The campaign is made possible through the financial assistance provided by SPREP, The Nature Conservancy, Palau Community College and the British Embassy to Micronesia (Suva, Fiji). Some of the issues the Committee will be addressing involves:

- Reviewing the present law protecting dugongs and recommending changes to make it stronger
- A nationwide survey to gauge perceptions, attitudes and attitudes of the local population to dugongs
- Identification of research needs and to formulate long term management strategies for dugongs

- Awareness and promotional activities in Palau's sixteen states is ongoing. The hope is that once individuals understand, identify and sympathise with the plight of the dugong, the demand for *mesekei* will diminish.

The following tasks and materials have been produced through the initiative and work of the Palau Conservation Society and the Palau Year of the Dugong Committee:

- Colourful poster of a dugong and calf
- Puppet shows with the dugong as main character
- Dugong songs. Two songs, a rap song and an ode to the dugong, written by local musicians will be broadcasted on local radio
- Articles have been published by a variety of print media, including the

Tia Belau (Palau weekly newspaper); Wow magazine (a visitors guide to Palau brochure); and the Ngerel a Biib newsletter.

- Radio talk back show on the dugong
- Radio and Television announcements
- A 15 minute video documentary 🌐

For more information on the Dugong campaign contact:

**Mr Noah Idechong**

Executive Officer

Palau Conservation Society

PO Box 1811

Koror

Republic of Palau

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# National Conference on Sustainable Development Conference Report

This report results from a national conference held on 21 to 23 May, 1996 in Port Vila, Vanuatu. The conference initiated from a call for all activities undertaken in Capacity 21's Component One to come together, to consider and recommend ways to best integrate economic, social, and environmental factors in a national framework for sustainable development.

Presentations centred on the concept of sustainability and its application to national environmental policies. The concept of sustainability revolves around the notions put forward in Brundtland's report. To suit the uniqueness of Vanuatu, slight altera-

tions were introduced by Mr. Edward Nalial.

Some parts of the draft proposed "Environment Act" for Vanuatu is also included together with a summary of how to conduct a review of environmental law and policy. One of the most talked about issue is the implementation of sustainable forest management in Vanuatu. The three major considerations:


1. Biological/Silvicultural/Environmental;
2. Market/Economic/Finance; and
3. Socio-economic, which are crucial to the development of sustainable forest management programmes are also covered. 



Photo by Fenu Tanihali (SPREP)

*National Conference on Sustainable Development, 21-23 May, 1996 Port Vila, Vanuatu: conference report.*-Apia Samoa: SPREP, 1996. iv, 54pp. ISBN: 982-04-0159-3. Copies of this report are available from SPREP (also available in French and Bislama)

from page 1


## Signing of PICCAP project

PICCAP will assist in terms of training, institutional strengthening and planning activities to meet their reporting requirements, and will focus on six major capacity building objectives to generate the following outputs:

- an Inventory of Greenhouse Gas sources and sinks;
- an evaluation of Mitigation options;
- National Vulnerability Assessments;
- an evaluation of Adaptation options;
- a National Implementation Plan; and
- an initial national communication to the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC.

PICCAP became operational on 1 July 1997 with the selection of the

PICCAP team consisting of Project Manager, Mr Wayne Tamangaro King, and a Scientific/Technical Officer, Mr Graham Sem. They are developing the Project Implementation Plan for the first year of operation. As part of developing the implementation plan, there will be a special Consultative Meeting on PICCAP during the *Third SPREP Climate Change and Sea Level Rise Conference* in Noumea, New Caledonia, from 18 to 22 August 1997.

The main emphasis of the PICCAP project will be its use of government selected country teams and national experts to implement the three year project in each participating country. 



For more information contact:

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# Meetings 1997

DATES	MEETING	VENUE	ORGANISATION
<b>July</b>			
7	Task Force on New SPREP Headquarters	<i>Apia</i>	SPREP
8 - 9	Regional Task Force and the National Task Coordinators Meeting	<i>Apia</i>	SPREP
8 - 10	4 <sup>th</sup> SPREP Meeting of Regional Meteorological Service Directors	<i>Apia</i>	SPREP
28 - 8 Aug.	Community-Based Ecotourism Workshop: A skilled development Programme for SPBCP-Supported CAs	<i>Kosrae</i>	SPREP
<b>August</b>			
4 - 15	Sub Regional Environmental Impact Assessment Training Workshop	<i>Saipan</i>	SPREP
18 - 22	3 <sup>rd</sup> SPREP Intergovernmental Meeting on Climate Change and Sea Level Rise	<i>Noumea</i>	SPREP/ORSTOM
25 - 27	5 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme Technical and Advisory Group	<i>Apia</i>	SPREP
27 - 29	Regional Meeting on Strategic Action Programme for International Waters	<i>Apia</i>	SPREP
<b>September</b>			
12 - 13	7 <sup>th</sup> Economic Summit of Smaller Island State Leaders	<i>Rarotonga</i>	Forum Secretariat
15 - 16	Forum Officials Committee Pre-Forum Session	<i>Rarotonga</i>	“
17 - 21	28 <sup>th</sup> South Pacific Forum	<i>Rarotonga</i>	“
22 - 23	Post Forum Dialogues	<i>Rarotonga</i>	“
29 - 3 Oct.	6 <sup>th</sup> South Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation of Protected Areas	<i>Pohnpei</i>	SPREP
<b>October</b>			
6 - 31	Training Attachment for the 8 <sup>th</sup> Pacific Sea Level and Climate Change Monitoring Project at the NTF	<i>Adelaide</i>	SPREP
12 - 13	7 <sup>th</sup> Economic Summit of Smaller Island State Leaders	<i>Rarotonga</i>	Forum Secretariat
16 - 18	27 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Committee of Representatives of Government and Administrations (CRGA)	<i>Canberra</i>	SPC
16 - 21	37 <sup>th</sup> South Pacific Conference	<i>Canberra</i>	SPC
27 - 30	Samoa Glossary of Environmental Terms Workshop	<i>Apia</i>	SPREP



*Climate Monitoring and Sea Level Rise  
Newsletter Vol. 2 No. 1*

*1997 Pacific Year of the Coral Reef.  
Factsheet No. 14 (French version)*

*Ol Tris Impotan (poster)*

*From Wanem Natongtong Emi Impotan  
Blong Yumi Mas Lukaotem Gud (Poster)*

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## The last word

The period covered by this issue of your Environment newsletter is certainly full of activities for the SPREP Secretariat and in the “From the Director’s Desk” section on page 3, Mr Tutangata provides an overview on most of these areas.


The PICCAP project was officially signed during this period, and the SAP program got well underway. These two programmes are well worth reiterating as they are unique activities and highlights the global leadership role SPREP is performing on behalf of the Pacific region. Further details on these two programmes are contained in pages 1 and 8 respectively.

However, in my work area, I undertook a trip to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) in May, to follow up on

some of the activities and collaborate more closely with this organisation on mutual areas of interest. Some of these impressions are contained in the “V-Files” on page 9 of this issue. On the practical front, Mr David Lloyd, Senior Extension Officer, from GBRMPA will be conducting a workshop on Communication Strategies with SPREP professional staff, following through on this collaborative theme (details of this workshop will be in the next issue of the Environment Newsletter).

Continuing with the collaborative spirit, SPREP Divisional Assistants were involved in a Desktop Publishing workshop which was conducted by Mr Ian Rolls of the South Pacific Commission’s Regional Media Centre (located in Suva, Fiji), and held at the University of the South Pacific’s (Alafua campus in Apia, Samoa) computer lab. This was an excellent initiative and one enjoyed by all parties

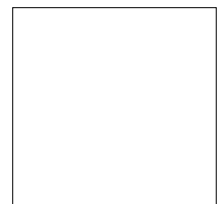
involved (more details about this training activity is found on page 6 of this issue).

Two of the major SPREP activities covered in the next issue of your Newsletter include the *Third Climate Change and Sea Level Rise Intergovernmental Meeting* held in Noumea on 18 to 22 August. This is coordinated by SPREP and hosted by ORSTOM, the French government has provided funding to help with this meeting (details of the French assistance are on page 2 of this issue). The other is the *Sixth South Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas* hosted by the Federated States of Micronesia government in Pohnpei, from 29 September to 3 October (details of the conference are on page 7 of this issue). 

Fatu Tauafiafi  
**Editor**

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# Air Mail



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