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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between

CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

and

THE SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT
PROGRAMME (SPREP)

COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

I. Background

Conservation International (CI) is a U.S. based non-profit organization with a presence in more than 45 countries on four continents. Its mission is to conserve the earth's living heritage, our global biodiversity, and to demonstrate that human societies are able to live harmoniously with nature. CI draws upon a unique array of scientific, economic, awareness and policy tools to implement biodiversity conservation initiatives and recognizes that conservation can only succeed with the support of local communities.

The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) is a regional inter-governmental organisation comprising 25 members consisting of 21 Pacific island countries and territories and four developed countries with direct interests in the region, namely, Australia, France, New Zealand and the United States of America. Its mission consists of promoting co-operation in the Pacific region and providing assistance in order to protect and improve its environment and to ensure sustainable development for present and future generations.

In 2004 SPREP established two operational programmes. The Island Ecosystems Programme focuses on sustainable management and conservation of the terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems of Pacific islands. Sub-programmes deal with nature conservation and island biodiversity, coastal and marine issues including marine species, alien invasive species and capacity development. The Pacific Futures Programme focuses on supporting member countries and territories with sustainable development policies for improved environmental governance. Issues of concern include improving monitoring and reporting on environmental performance and socio-economic pressures on the environment; improving the understanding and strengthening the capacity of Pacific islands to respond to climate change and variability, and sea level rise; marine pollution, hazardous and solid waste, sewage and other land-based sources of pollution.

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CI focuses conservation efforts on biodiversity hotspots – areas of unique biological richness that are suffering extensive human impact. It also works in tropical wilderness areas and key marine areas around the Pacific islands region.

The countries of the Pacific Islands Region share a unique geo-political context, characterised by many similarities. They also exhibit great diversity in ecological, social and economic terms. Within the region, biodiversity conservation and management demands urgent attention and in many cases transcends national boundaries.

II. Preamble

Noting that SPREP is required, *inter alia*, by its action plan and guiding principles, to encourage co-operation within the region and internationally in the protection of the environment and natural resources of the Pacific Islands;

Aware that the region covered by the 25 members of SPREP, includes 3 biodiversity hotspots, namely the Polynesia-Micronesia Hotspot, the New Caledonia Hotspot and the East Melanesian Islands Hotspot and one tropical wilderness area on the island of New Guinea.

Further aware that the region includes one of the richest marine biodiversity areas in the world, the Pacific Ocean;

Recognising the recent establishment of CI's Pacific Islands Program as part of the CI Indonesia-Pacific Field Division, which acts as a liaison for and facilitator of CI activities in the Pacific Island region;

Further recognising that the role of this CI Program is to promote active partnership and collaboration among all regional stakeholders towards biodiversity conservation outcomes in the wider Pacific Islands region;

Taking into account the complementarity of their respective goals and missions and believing that mutual co-operation will benefit both organisations;

Now therefore CI and SPREP have reached the following understanding:

III. Objectives

1. This Memorandum of Understanding has the main objective of providing a framework of co-operation between the two signing organisations in the field of biodiversity conservation in the Pacific Islands region.
2. Each organisation agrees to work in close collaboration and, to the extent possible, consult each other on their respective biodiversity conservation program in the region for the benefit of both organisations and their members.
3. CI and SPREP agree to work in partnership, according to their respective resources, towards the implementation of the 2008-2012 Regional Action Strategy for Nature Conservation.

4. CI and SPREP will seek to strengthen and expand activities consistent with their respective programs, including collaboration as warranted in annual programme planning, meetings, workshops and in field projects. The following is a non-exhaustive list of areas of current and potential collaboration:
 - Biological diversity and natural resources conservation
 - Control, eradication and prevention of invasive alien species
 - Community-based conservation
 - Indigenous/traditional knowledge issues
 - Marine and coastal conservation
 - Climate change and its impacts
 - Communication, awareness, and training in conservation
5. CI and SPREP will keep their respective memberships and institutions informed of co-operative activities undertaken pursuant to this Memorandum of Understanding.

IV. Collaboration with other Organisations

1. In seeking to attain these objectives, CI and SPREP may, where appropriate, agree to enlist the co-operation and collaboration of relevant regional and international institutions and non-governmental organisations with an interest in biodiversity conservation issues in the Pacific region and, if necessary, will amend this Memorandum of Understanding, or enter into complementary Memoranda in order to formalise such collaboration.

V. Operational Provisions

1. This Memorandum of Understanding constitutes only an expression of shared objectives and vision and of the intention of the Parties to exert efforts to develop a legal basis for achieving these shared objectives.
2. Each Party will name and keep updated focal points to co-ordinate the co-operation called for in this Memorandum of Understanding, and to coordinate implementation of any activities hereunder.
3. The Parties, through a process to be agreed between them, will review progress towards the objectives and other matters in this Memorandum of Understanding annually.
4. As a result of their execution of this Memorandum of Understanding, neither Party will incur any financial obligations relating to any activities described under the Memorandum unless authorized by a separate and more specific agreement.
5. Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed to create a relationship between the Parties of agency, partnership, or joint ventures, nor to render either Party liable for any debts or obligations incurred by the other. Neither Party is authorized to make representations on behalf of the other, or to bind the other in any manner whatsoever.



VI. Annexes

1. Joint annual work plans that set out specific areas of collaboration to be developed and agreed by SPREP and CI will be attached to this Memorandum of Understanding.
2. These annexes shall form an integral part of this Memorandum of Understanding and, unless expressly provided otherwise, a reference to this Memorandum of Understanding constitutes a reference to the Memorandum with any annexes thereto.

VII. Duration, entry into force, amendments and termination

1. The duration of this Memorandum of Understanding will be five years, renewable for such further period and on such terms as may be agreed between the Parties.
2. The Parties hereto have caused this Memorandum of Understanding to be executed and entered into force on March 1, 2008.
3. Any modifications or amendments to this Memorandum of Understanding must be made in writing. Either Party may initiate such an exchange.
4. Either Party may terminate this Memorandum of Understanding by giving sixty days written notice to the other Party.

For and on behalf of the SECRETARIAT
FOR THE PACIFIC REGIONAL
ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMME
(SPREP)



Signature

7 March 2008

Date

F. Vitolio Lui
Acting Director
Secretariat for the Pacific Regional
Environment Programme

For and on behalf of CONSERVATION
INTERNATIONAL (CI)



Signature

7/3/08

Date

Dr. Claude Gascon
Executive Vice-President for Programs
and Science
Conservation International