



“Accelerating actions for a resilient Blue Pacific”

7th, 8th, 9th September 2021, Virtual Platforms
12:00pm – 5:00pm Samoa Standard Time

Agenda Item 8.2: Overview of Regional Goal 2 - Pacific people benefit from healthy and resilient island and ocean ecosystems

Purpose of paper

1. To provide the Meeting with an overview of key priorities to support the implementation and achievement of Regional Goal 2 for the biennial period 2022 - 2023.

Introduction

2. For the biennial period 2022-2023, SPREP will continue to assist Members to achieve their goals for the protection, management and sustainable use of island and ocean ecosystems. This working paper provides an overview of the key activities and initiatives to be implemented by SPREP for the next biennium.

Key Areas of Work for 2022-23:

RO2.1: Effectively manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems

3. Implementation of the EDF 11 PEUMP By-catch and Integrated Ecosystem Management (BIEM) Initiative during 2022-2023 will result in:
 - integrated coastal management at watershed scale at sites in Fiji and Vanuatu
 - national scale marine spatial planning in Fiji and the Solomon Islands in partnership with IUCN
 - mitigate the impacts and threats to coastal ecosystems through implementation of integrated coastal management and ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change components in Fiji and Vanuatu
4. The Inform Portal will be used to disseminate up-to-date information on coastal and marine ecosystems to Members.
5. Following its endorsement by Members, the Pacific Coral Reef Action Plan will commence implementation and partners and funding are currently being established to enable this to happen.
6. SPREP coordination of Kiwa Initiative Component B1 will enable capacity building to improve management policies and addressing threats and impacts in PICTs.

RO2.2: Support the conservation and sustainable use of marine, coastal, and terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity, consistent with regional and international commitments

7. SPREP will continue to implement its component of the IUCN implemented EU- funded BIOPAMA Phase 2 project, including:
 - Virtual basic-level training on the use of tools and features, and navigation of the Pacific Islands Protected Area Portal (PIPAP) and protected area related GIS training.
 - Working closely with national protected area contacts and experts and with UNEP-WCMC to review and finalise protected area data in at least three PICs, including publishing the information on PIPAP and the World Database on Protected Areas.
8. SPREP will continue to provide secretariat support to the Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation (PIRT), which will focus on implementation of the Pacific Framework For Nature Conservation And Protected Areas 2020-2025.
9. We will work with Members to support their implementation of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework following its adoption at the CBD CoP15 in 2020.
10. The GEF ABS project will continue to support Members to enable better regional and national management of genetic resources in ratified countries and continue to work with other Pacific island Members to encourage them to ratify the Nagoya Protocol.

RO2.3: Prevent the extinction of threatened species and support measures to sustain their conservation status

11. Support for implementation of Regional Marine Species Action Plans (RMSAPs) will be stepped up. This will include workshops for up to five species groups for PICTS to enable development of national implementation plans for the RMSAPs, funded through the ACPMEA3 programme.
12. Also, through the ACPMEA3, Important Marine Mammal Area management plans will be developed for 2 PICs.
13. A range of activities will be implemented through the PEUMP BIEM Initiative to address by-catch of threatened species in commercial fisheries in Fiji, PNG, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu.
14. The status of marine turtles in the region will be shared through a regional extinction risk analysis to increase the focus on turtle conservation measures. Considerably more work has been proposed on turtles through the proposed Pacific BioScapes Programme (see Challenges and Opportunities below).
15. SPREP will work in partnership with TRAFFIC to support CITES Parties to develop Non-Detriment Findings and management plans for Appendix II listed marine species.

RO2.4: Significantly reduce the socio-economic and ecological impact of invasive species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate priority species

16. Key activities will be executed through the GEF6 project *Strengthening national and regional capacities to reduce the impact of Invasive Alien Species on globally significant biodiversity in the Pacific*, the EDF11 OCT PROTEGE programme and the new NZMFAT project *Managing Invasive Species for Climate Change Adaptation in the Pacific* (MISCCAP): a PRISMSS-NZ collaboration for Pacific resilience. Further activities will be developed through the Pacific Regional Invasive Species Management Support Service (PRISMSS). Key activities across these projects and programmes will include:

- Complete implementation of invasive vertebrate species eradications in French Polynesia, RMI, Tonga, Tuvalu and Wallis and Futuna.
- Create a PRISMSS Predator Free Pacific Strategy and a Resilient Ecosystems – Resilient Ecosystems Strategy.
- Progress the delivery of natural enemies (bio-controls) into Niue, RMI, Tonga, Tuvalu.
- Implement site restoration plans in French Polynesia, Niue, RMI, Tuvalu and Wallis and Futuna.

Challenges and Opportunities

17. The major challenge with implementation of Regional Goal 2 (RG2) programmes and activities is, as with the implementation of the other regional goals, the impacts imposed across the region by the COVID-19 pandemic. Limitations on travel to and within PICTs has resulted in a slow-down in in-country activity implementation and most major donor funded programmes have received or are seeking timeline extensions. Some activities can be implemented by virtual means and other innovative approaches; however, it is possible that implementation constraints will continue into 2022.

18. With respect to opportunities RG2, SPREP is currently in the preparation phase with the EU for the €12 million Pacific component of the global €35 million ACP SIDS Support Programme, which was reported to Members at the 29th SM. The programme is focused on management of coastal, marine and terrestrial biodiversity and enhancing resilience to climate change. For the Pacific component SPREP has proposed the programme name Pacific BioScapes Programme, and designed a comprehensive programme of activities that support all RG2 objectives as well as RO1.2 on ecosystem-based adaptation. The programme budget has been allocated to both national and regional activities and 11 countries in all three sub-regions have endorsed their national activities. Execution of activities will be undertaken by the SPREP Secretariat, national entities and partner organisations in the Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation based in sub-regions and countries. Because the preparation phase is not yet completed, and the agreement has yet to be signed with the EU, the Pacific BioScapes activities have not been included in this iteration of the PIP.

Recommendation

19. The Meeting is invited to:

- 1) **endorse** the key strategic priorities and activities to support the implementation and achievement of Regional Goal 2 for the biennial period 2022 to 2023.

18 June 2021