



“Accelerating actions for a resilient Blue Pacific”

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

Agenda Item 8.4.1: Scaling up environmental data management in the Pacific islands region

Purpose of paper

1. To inform Members of the background and rationale for scaling up environmental data management in the Pacific to strengthen national planning, reporting, and decision making as well as in meeting regional and international reporting commitments; and
2. To seek Members’ endorsement of the Secretariat’s proposal to develop a full-sized project to support the scaling up of environmental data management in the Pacific.

Background

3. The Secretariat together with SPREP Members have developed a regional network of environment data portals linked to the Pacific Environment Portal (PEP) network. PEP is a resource that plays a crucial role in providing data and information to support national State of Environment (SOE) reporting and the latter informs the development of National Environment Management Strategies (NEMS). The PEP network has been a regional objective for several decades and achieving the PEP network in its current state is a success and testament to the dedication of Pacific Island countries commitment to fostering databased decision making. It is also unique globally and has attracted international attention. The network has increased the exchange and availability of information between data providers and users.
4. The PEP network and the processes of SOE reporting and NEMS implementation are in use throughout the region. For example, some PICs are starting on their second round of SoE reporting and NEMS as well as increased use of data available on the data portal network. This momentum is critical and needs to be maintained and enhanced.
5. Based on experience to date through the Inform Project and in consultation with national counterparts, there is a genuine need to further strengthen environment data management and use for decision making in the Pacific. There are five key areas that are critical to the scaling up of environment data management and use in the Pacific:
 - a) Environmental standards: the need to set clear definitions, language and thresholds noting the need for a tiered set for varying capacity levels and ability in countries.

- b) Data management and analysis: the maintenance and enhancement of the PEP network.
- c) Environmental monitoring and field data collection for key indicators including environmental standards.
- d) Enhancing GIS capacity for field sampling and planning including EIAs.
- e) Capacity building to convert data to Information and advocacy for use.

Recommendation

6. The Meeting is invited to:

- 1) **support** the scaling up of environment data management in the Pacific and **direct** the Secretariat to initiate a process for developing a full-sized project proposal to support the scaling up environmental data management and explore the options of seeking resourcing from the GEF 8 replenishment and other funding sources.

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