



Sustainability Plan for SPREP's Regional Programme of Support for Protected Areas/ Pacific Regional Observatory

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Executive Summary

Introduction (Chapter 1)

(a) This project outlines a Sustainability Plan for SPREPs Regional Programme of Support for Protected Areas (SPREP-PA). The objectives of this report are:

- To develop a 5-year strategic and business plan for the sustainability of the SPREP-PA/Pacific Regional Office (RO).
- To provide key recommendations to enhance the SPREP-PA/Pacific RO's effectiveness and sustainability in key areas relevant to protected areas.

(b) Preparation of the report has been guided by a number of key principles (Section 1.3). Data collection for this report (Section 1.4) involved interviews with key stakeholders and a literature review. This report is structured under five chapters:

- Introduction (Chapter 1).
- Situational Analysis for the SPREP-PA (Chapter 2).
- Role and Effectiveness of the SPREP-PA (Chapter 3).
- Sustainability Plan for the SPREP-PA (Chapter 4).
- Recommendations and Implementation Plan (Chapter 5).

Situational Analysis (Chapter 2)

(c) This chapter provides a detailed Situational Analysis of the SPREP-PA. The following are outlined:

- BIOPAMA and the SPREP-PA (Section 2.1) – introduces BIOPAMA and the SPREP-PA. The section notes the SPREP-PA will end in mid-2023, with a 2 year no-cost extension, and emphasises the importance on-going funding to ensure existing protected area services for Pacific island countries, and other partners, can be continued beyond the end of the programme.
- Protected Areas in the Pacific Region (Section 2.2) - outlines a detailed analysis of key issues and challenges for protected areas in the Pacific region and highlights implications for the future development of the SPREP-PA.
- SPREP and Protected Areas (Section 2.3) - provides background on SPREP and its involvement with protected areas.
- BIOPAMA and sustainability in other regions (Section 2.4) - outlines results from interviews with other BIOPAMA Regional Coordinators in the Caribbean; Eastern and Southern Africa; and Western and Central Africa.

Overview of the role and effectiveness of the SPREP-PA (Chapter 3)

(d) This chapter provides an overview of the role and effectiveness of the SPREP-PA. The following are outlined:

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- Staff and budget of the SPREP-PA (Section 3.2) - outlines the key products of the SPREP-PA, including the Pacific Islands Protected Area Portal (PIPAP), the PIPAP newsletter, and support for capacity building. The report outlines the staff and budget for the SPREP-PA from 2017 to 2021 and provides an analysis of the current situation.
- Overview of SPREP-PA products (Section 3.3) - provides a detailed overview of the use of the PIPAP, including use statistics from 2017 to January 2022, showing levels of use from Pacific ACP countries. This analysis highlights that PIPAP has 6 times the use of all of the other regional observatories combined. Other SPREP-PA products are reviewed and analyzed in this Section.
- Awareness and communication of the SPREP-PA (Section 3.4) - reviews awareness and communication of the SPREP-PA. There is a variable level of awareness of the SPREP-PA programme. The report notes a clear and effective communications plan for the SPREP-PA should be prepared and widely communicated in the Pacific region.
- Effectiveness of the SPREP-PA (Section 3.5) – outlines the views of State Parties, donors and partners on the effectiveness of the SPREP-PA. These indicate the products of the SPREP PA are useful and effective in supporting PA efforts at national levels. While the SPREP-PA has been useful, many noted its full potential is yet to be realized.
- SWOT analysis of the SPREP-PA. (Section 3.6) - provides a detailed analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats associated with the SPREP-PA.

Sustainability Plan for the SPREP-PA (Chapter 4)

(e) This chapter outlines a Sustainability Plan for the SPREP-PA, for the period 2025-2030. The following are addressed:

- Objectives and key principles (Section 4.2) - provides the overall guiding framework for the SPREP-PA Sustainability Plan.
- Priorities and recommendations for the SPREP-PA Sustainability Plan (Section 4.3) – identifies the priority issues that the SPREP-PA should address over the 2025-2030 period and including recommendations to guide the future development of the SPREP-PA.
- SPREP-PA Budget and Staffing targets (Section 4.4) – identifies targets for the SPREP-PA over the 2025-2030 period, and also addressing SPREP governance issues.
- SPREP-PA Financing Strategy (Section 4.5) – identifies possible options for financing the SPREP-PA and a recommended approach and strategy for financing the SPREP-PA.
- SPREP-PA Partnership Strategy (Section 4.6) – outlines an approach to ensuring effective and sustainable partnerships for the SPREP-PA.
- SPREP-PA Communications Strategy (Section 4.7) - outlines an approach to ensuring effective communication and awareness of the SPREP-PA targeted at key stakeholders.
- SPREP-PA Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy (Section 4.8) – sets out an approach to assessing the performance and achievements of the SPREP-PA.

Recommendations and Implementation Plan for the SPREP-PA (Chapter 5)

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(f) This chapter summarises recommendations made throughout the report and outlines an implementation strategy for the SPREP-PA Sustainability Plan

(5) RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

5.1 Summary of Recommendations and Implementation Plan

(165) The table below (summary of recommendations) outlines the 25 recommendations in this report and also provides:

- reference to the relevant section in the text.
- The view of the consultant for this report on the priority of the recommendation with:
- High (H) having the highest priority; Medium (M) having medium level priority; and Low (L) having the lowest priority

(166) This table provides the framework for the Implementation Plan for this project, with recommendations denoted as priority H having the highest priority for attention and implementation, in the view of the consultant for this report. The allocation of priorities (H, M, L) is based on the professional judgement of the consultant in light of the following criteria:

- The need to take urgent/immediate action.
- The level of potential impact of the recommendation on the effectiveness and efficiency of SPREP.
- The level of potential impact of the recommendation on the reputation of SPREP.
- The level of impact on delivery of the SPREP work plan and/or reputation if a recommendation is not implemented.
- The level of potential for immediate outcomes or “quick wins”.
- A broad assessment of benefits relative to costs of the recommendation.

(167) This report recommends that the oversight of the implementation of these recommendations be undertaken by the SPREP Senior Management Team, on the basis of advice provided by the SPREP Protected Areas Officer, working through the Director of the SPREP Island and Ocean Ecosystem Programme. The report suggests the following as the Implementation Plan for the SPREP-PA Sustainability Plan:

- That SPREP, through the Director of the SPREP Island and Ocean Ecosystem Programme, on advice from the SPREP Protected Areas Officer, and working closely with the IUCN BIOPAMA Team, prepare a detailed Implementation Plan for these recommendations for consideration by the next SPREP Members Meeting.
- That SPREP, through the Director of the SPREP Island and Ocean Ecosystem Programme, on advice from the SPREP Protected Areas Officer, report on progress towards actioning this Implementation Plan at subsequent SPREP Meetings.
- The assessment of achievement of the Implementation Plan and specific recommendations should be undertaken by the SPREP Senior Management Team based on a report from the Director of the SPREP Island and Ocean Ecosystem Programme, which would be based on advice from the SPREP Protected Areas Officer.

Recommendation 25: that the Implementation Plan outlined in Section 5 of this report be developed by SPREP, working closely with the IUCN BIOPAMA Team (Section 5)

Recommendation # and content	Section(s) of the Report	Priority (H,M,L)
R1: That the future development of the SPREP-PA be guided by, and reflect the objectives and principles outlined in Section 4.2 of this report.	(4.2.2)	M
R2: That a sustainable PA programme be developed at SPREP and that SPREP core budget be allocated to support this programme. This programme should build on the achievements of the SPREP-PA programme, while addressing recommended improvements to key products such as PIPAP, as outlined in Section 3.5.2 of this report.	(4.3) (3.5.2)	H
R3: That the work of the SPREP-PA highlight successful examples of sustainable financing for protected areas in the Pacific region, and elsewhere, and encourage application of sustainable financing mechanisms within Pacific island countries.	(4.3)	M
R4: That a tailored programme of capacity building for protected areas should be developed and implemented in the Pacific region. This should be the key role of the SPREP-PA working with and through the Protected Areas Working Group within PIRT.	(4.3)	H

R5: SPREP should position itself as a Regional Centre of Excellence for the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and related targets	(4.3)	M
R6: That SPREP plans for a more ambitious and sustainable Protected Areas Programme over the 2025-2030 period, with an increased budget as outlined in Section 4.4 of this report.	(4.4)	H
R7: That SPREP allocate an amount of its core budget to support the implementation of the SPREP-PA programme over the 2025-2030 period and that the draft budget outlined in Section 4.4 of this report be further discussed within SPREP, and between SPREP and IUCN, and other key stakeholders, before the final budget is developed.	(4.4)	H
R8: that the key elements in Section 4.6.1 of this report be noted as broad guidance for fundraising for the SPREP-PA programme over the 2025-2030 period.	(4.6.1)	M
R9: that SPREP should immediately engage in a dialogue with the EU in Fiji regarding options follow up to the SPREP-PA project, noting the SPREP has passed the EU Pillar Assessment and has the capacity to receive and manage large grants directly from the EU. All options should be discussed, including but not limited to the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument; the BioScapes Programme; and the Regional envelope of funding for biodiversity conservation.	(4.6.2) (4.5.2)	H
R10: that SPREP should prepare a targeted GEF Medium Size Proposal to support the SPREP-PA as well as including support for the SPREP-PA within full size GEF project proposals. SPREP should also explore opportunities to be recognized as a Regional Centre of Excellence for the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)	(4.6.2) (2.2.4)	H
R11: That SPREP consider options for submission of a project to the GCF which includes support for the SPREP-PA.	(4.6.2)	H
R12: That SPREP consider options for support for the SPREP-PA from other sources including bilateral and multilateral donors as well the other potential sources of support listed in Section 4.5.6.	(4.6.2) (4.5.6)	H
R13: That the SPREP-PA needs to be seen as a clear priority within SPREP and should be recognized as a priority by the SPREP Senior Management Team and SPREP Members.	(4.6.3)	H

R14: That fundraising should be one of the highest priorities for the SPREP-PA Officer between now and the end of the current SPREP-PA in 2025, as well as influencing policy, such as in relation to the recognition of the SPREP-PA as a Regional Centre under GBF. The activity of funding for SPREP should have corporate support and priority from the SPREP Management Team, including through support from professional fundraisers where possible.	(4.6.3)	H
R15: That a recommendation regarding the SPREP-PA, incorporating the recommendations from this report, be presented to the next SPREP Meeting.	(4.6.3)	H
R16: That the SPREP-PA be promoted at relevant meetings and events, including donor related events, to increase awareness of the products of the SPREP-PA and their relevance to the establishment and management of protected areas in the Pacific region.	(4.6.3)	M
R17: That SPREP continue to ensure that the SPREP-PA is well integrated with other relevant programmes within SPREP, such as INFORM, and that it continue to be linked in a synergistic manner with future related programmes that may be developed.	(4.6.3)	M
R18: That SPREP Members endorse the further continuation of the SPREP-PA, after existing BIOPAMA funding ends, and endorse the recommendations included in this report to guide the further development of the SPREP-PA.	(4.6.4)	H
R19: That PIC State Parties support the SPREP-PA, including through use and application of SPREP-PA products, and provide their support for any proposed project proposals that may be prepared by SPREP, including those that require national level endorsement.	(4.6.4)	M
R20: That NGOs continue to support the SPREP-PA, and its partnership-based approach, after the existing BIOPAMA funding ends, and continue to provide guidance and input into the further development and implementation of the SPREP-PA.	(4.6.5)	M
R21: That SPREP develop a SPREP-PA Partnership Strategy which will seek to build on existing partnerships, including those outlined in Section 4.7 of this report, and develop new partnerships to underpin and strengthen the future development of the SPREP-PA. This strategy will identify and recognize the roles of different partners with the SPREP-PA and will seek to build on and strengthen existing mechanisms	(4.7)	M

including the PIRT and the PIRT Working Group on Protected Areas.		
R22: That the close and effective partnership between SPREP and IUCN in the overall management of the SPREP-PA, and the BIOPAMA project in general, should continue and be further strengthened to support the future sustainability of the SPREP-PA in the region.	(4.7)	H
R23: That SPREP develop a clear and effective SPREP-PA Communications Plan to ensure that awareness of the SPREP-PA and its products are more widely known and recognized in the region, particularly within PIC State Parties. This Plan should also encourage increased communication between Regional Observatories to share experience on common issues faced by all ROs, such as sustainability.	(4.8) (2.4)	H
R24: that progress against the recommendations in this report be regularly assessed, with a six-monthly review undertaken by the SPREP-PA Officer and an annual report provided to the SPREP Senior management Team, highlighting progress against the recommendations, challenges faced and actions taken to address these challenges.	(4.9)	M
R25: that the Implementation Plan outlined in Section 5 of this report be developed by SPREP, working closely with the IUCN BIOPAMA Team	(5)	H