

71 SOPAC03

SOPAC

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
THIRTY-SECOND SESSION**



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hosted by the
Government of the Niue in
Alofi, Niue

19-27 September 2003



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SOUTH PACIFIC APPLIED GEOSCIENCE COMMISSION

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THIRTY-SECOND SESSION**

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Government of Niue in
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INTRODUCTION TO SOPAC

Objectives

The South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) is an independent, inter-governmental, regional organisation mandated by several Pacific nations to:

- develop resource policy, and advise on the management and development of onshore and offshore mineral and aggregate resources;
- meet the needs for water resources, waste management, health and sanitation through the provision of resource policy and management advice, appropriate information and training;
- support the information requirements and enhance the skills required for management and operation of the energy sector in member countries;
- assist decision makers and planners to develop coastal zones and extract resources while protecting them from degradation;
- predict the effects of hazards on the health, wealth and development potential of member countries;
- assist decision makers and planners to understand ocean processes, develop ocean areas and extract resources while protecting oceans from over-exploitation and pollution;
- provide geoscientific and related education needs through the provision of a variety of training and education opportunities at all levels of geoscience and resource management;
- meet the demands for electronic information by member country governments and regional organisations to manage resources and risk;
- support National authorities in disaster management activities through advice information; and
- provide readily-available and current information in geoscience and related fields to member countries and others.

Member Countries

Member countries are currently Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji Islands, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Kingdom of Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. American Samoa, New Caledonia and Tahiti Niu are Associate Members.

Background

The Commission comprises the Governing Council (the member country representatives), the Secretariat (based in Suva) and the Technical Advisory Group (TAG). TAG comprises advisors who are nominated by member countries and by supporting Governments and organisations, or are invited by the Secretariat.

The Commission's Work Programme is formulated from member country requests, and is carried out by its Secretariat based in Suva, Fiji Islands.

SOPAC was established in 1972 as CCOP/SOPAC (the Committee for Coordination of Joint Prospecting for Mineral Resources in South Pacific Offshore Areas) under the sponsorship of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). In 1984, CCOP/SOPAC changed its legal status to become an independent, regional inter-governmental body, changing its name to SOPAC (South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission) in 1989.

Funding

SOPAC is funded by a combination of statutory and voluntary contributions by its member countries and grants from donor governments and international agencies. An annual budget of around F\$10 million supports the implementation of the Work Programme and the operation of the Secretariat.

Supporting countries include Australia, Fiji and New Zealand as members, Canada, France, Republic of Korea, Japan, Norway, the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, United States and the United Kingdom. The European Union, Commonwealth Secretariat and UNDP are the principal multilateral supporting agencies. SOPAC has formal and informal links with many other supporting agencies and institutions. Member countries provide considerable support during survey work, and ship time in the region is regularly contributed by other countries such as the France, Japan and Germany.

SOPAC Annual Session

The SOPAC Annual Session is a meeting of the Commission, and has four components:

- (a) a Plenary Session covers the procedural aspects of the meeting and the presentation of reports from member countries, donor Governments and organisations, and the Secretariat. This session is a meeting of the Council at which other delegates are invited as observers, contributing to the discussion of non-technical matters concerning SOPAC such as cooperation and funding.
- (b) a meeting of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to consider the SOPAC Work Programme. All TAG members participate as equals during this meeting.
- (c) a meeting of the Science Technology and Resources Network (STAR) which is an open forum for reporting geoscientific research in the Pacific and for exchanging information and ideas between scientists from SOPAC Member Countries and the international geoscientific community.
- (d) a Governing Council meeting to discuss the administrative and financial business of SOPAC, which may be open to observers who could speak when invited.

See the Table on the next page for a summary of past SOPAC sessions.

Summary of SOPAC Annual Sessions

Session	Date	Venue	Chairman	Vice-Chairman	TAG Chairman	Rapporteur(s)
Preparatory	Jul 1971	Manila, Philippines	R.W. Willett, NZ	—	—	—
FIRST	Nov 1972	Suva, FJ	D. Green, FJ	S. Tu'a Taumoepeau, TG	R. Willett, NZ	—
SECOND	Aug-Sep 1973	Nuku'alofa, TG	S. Tongilava, TG	R. Richmond, FJ	R. Willett, NZ	—
THIRD	Sep 1974	Apia, WS	T. Enari, WS	P. Mueller, WS	J.W. Brodie, NZ	—
FOURTH	Sep 1975	Honiara, SI	R.B. Thompson, SI	G. Sawtell, CK	J.W. Brodie, NZ	—
FIFTH	Nov 1976	Rarotonga, CK	G. Sawtell, CK	S. Tongilava, TG	D. Kear, NZ	—
SIXTH	Oct 1977	Port Moresby, PN	N. Agonia, PN	R. Richmond, FJ	J.W. Brodie, NZ	J. Wright, UK
SEVENTH	Oct 1978	Wellington, NZ	D. Kear, NZ	S. Kingan, CK	J. Wright, UK	G. Shepherd, TS
EIGHT	Sep-Oct 1979	Suva, FJ	R. Richmond, FJ	A. Macfarlane, VA	M. Terman, US	J. Wright, UK
NINTH	Oct 1980	Tarawa, KI	T. Otang, KI	A. Macfarlane, VA	J. Wright, UK	J. Eade, NZ
TENTH	Oct 1981	Port Vila, VA	A. Macfarlane, VA	S. Tongilava, TG	J. Wright, UK	J. Eade, NZ
ELEVENTH	Nov 1982	Wellington, NZ	H. Thompson, NZ	S. Tongilava, TG	N. Exon, AU	J. Eade, NZ
TWELFTH	Oct 1983	Nuku'alofa, TG	S. Tongilava, TG	L. Ioane, WS	N. Exon, AU	D. Howell, US; J. Eade, NZ
THIRTEENTH	Oct-Nov 1984	Apia, Western Samoa	K. Eteuati, WS	S. Danitofea, SI	H.G. Greene, US	N. Exon, AU
FOURTEENTH	Sep 1985	Honiara, SI	J. Saliga, SI	S. Kingan, CK	H.G. Greene, US	D. Mallick, UK
FIFTEENTH	Sep 1986	Rarotonga, CK	S. Kingan, CK	G. Anderson, PN	J.V. Eade, NZ	D. Mallick, UK
SIXTEENTH	Oct 1987	Lae, Papua New Guinea	W. Searson, PN	S. Sopoanga, TU	D.J. Mallick, UK	J. Eade, TS; M. Fisk, UN
SEVENTEENTH	Oct 1988	Suva, FJ	S. Sopoanga, TU	R. Rutland, AU	C. Helsley, US	J. Eade, TS
EIGHTEENTH	Oct 1989	Canberra, AU	R.W. Rutland, AU	K. Kolone (Interim)	R.N. Richmond, TS	J. Harper, TS
NINETEENTH	Oct 1990	Tarawa, KI	T. Tokataake, KI	C. Mortimer, VA	R.N. Richmond, TS	H. Creech, TS
TWENTIETH	Sep-Oct 1991	Port Vila, VA	C. Mortimer, VA	S. Tongilava, TG	B. Page, UK	A. Sherwood, TS
TWENTY-FIRST	Sep-Oct 1992	Nuku'alofa, TG	S. Tongilava, TG	A. Simpson, FJ	H.G. Greene, US	A. Sherwood/J. Eade, TS
TWENTY-SECOND	Oct 1993	Suva, FJ	A. Simpson, FJ	M. Kaminaga, MI	R.N. Richmond, TS	A. Sherwood, TS
TWENTY-THIRD	Sep 1994	Majuro, MI	J. Kabua, MI	Nat. Rep. Australia	D. Pickrill, NZ	R. Howorth, TS
TWENTY-FOURTH	Sep-Oct 1995	Suva, Fiji	D. Ritchie, AU	C. Brown, CK	D. Pickrill, Canada	R. Howorth/L. Bukarau, TS
TWENTY-FIFTH	Oct 1996	Rarotonga, CK	R. Newnham, CK	G. Ayin, FSM	A. Macfarlane, UK	L. Bukarau/R. Howorth, TS
TWENTY-SIXTH	Sep-Oct 1997	Nadi, Fiji Islands	B. Rao, FJ	G. Ayin, FSM	D. Tappin, UK	L. Bukarau/R. Howorth, TS
TWENTY-SEVENTH	Sep-Oct 1998	Suva, Fiji Islands	S. Anefal, FSM	Nat. Rep. Guam	D. Tappin, UK	L. Bukarau/P. Fairbairn, TS
TWENTY-EIGHTH	Oct 1999	Nadi, Fiji Islands	T. Barrett, NZ	K. Ruaia, Kiribati	T. Barrett, NZ	L. Bukarau/P. Fairbairn, TS
TWENTY-NINTH	Sep-Oct 2000	Tarawa, Kiribati	K. Ruaia, Kiribati	M. Kaminaga, RMI	K. Ruaia, Kiribati	L. Bukarau/P. Fairbairn, TS
THIRTIETH	October 2001	Majuro, Marshall Islands	M. Maddison, RMI	A. Itsimaera, Nauru	M. Kaminaga, RMI	L. Bukarau/C. Pratt, TS
THIRTY-FIRST	Sep-Oct 2002	Suva, Fiji Islands	A. Itsimaera, Nauru	S. Talagi, Niue	A. Itsimaera, Nauru	L. Bukarau, TS
THIRTY-SECOND	Sep 2003	Alofi, Niue	S. Talagi, Niue	S. Nion, PN	S. Talagi, Niue	L. Bukarau, TS

Abbreviations used: AU - Australia; CK - Cook Islands; FJ - Fiji Islands; KI - Kiribati; MI - Marshall Islands; NZ - New Zealand; PN - Papua New Guinea; RMI - Republic of the Marshall Islands; WS - Samoa; SI - Solomon Islands; TG - Tonga; TS - SOPAC Secretariat; TU - Tuvalu; VA - Vanuatu; UK - United Kingdom; UN - United Nations; US - United States



Participants at the Official Opening of the 32nd SOPAC Session at the Niue Fale Fono, Alofi, Niue.

OPENING ADDRESSES

ADDRESS by Honourable Toke Talagi

Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance, Environment and Education
at the Official Opening of the SOPAC 32nd Annual Session

Ministers of the Crown, Minister of Religion, Director of SOPAC, Distinguished Delegates from Member Countries and Observers, Representatives from Regional and Partner Institutions, Ladies and Gentlemen ...

Fakaue fakamua ke he Atua

On behalf of the people and the Government of Niue, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to Niue, at the opening of the 32nd Annual Session of the Governing Council of the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC). We are very happy indeed to be your host and make your stay enjoyable. Thank you for agreeing to meet in our unique country.

Perhaps it is fitting at this point to acknowledge the outgoing Chair, the Republic of Nauru, for the leadership it provided us in the past year.

It has set quite a standard and I hope that Niue will live up to it during the term of its chairmanship for the 32nd SOPAC Governing Council.

I am more than pleased to make this opening address to such a unique gathering of policy makers, planners, managers and scientists. This would be the only regional organization that nurtures such a mix of professions and it is pleasing to see. In fact the role of scientists in shaping the comfort of society has not been appreciated enough. I hope that at this session aspirations for the results of science to be used to the full for society and call for mechanisms to be developed to allow the flow of information in a useable form. Council last year also agreed that it was vital to develop and strengthen the linkage between the scientists and the policy makers to ensure that scientific and technical information was factored into the decision-making process, at national and regional level. I believe that STAR's focus theme of "Towards Linking Geoscience and Policy for Pacific Small Islands Sustainable Development" is very fitting, given the environment vulnerabilities that threaten the very security of small island states.

Niue's association with SOPAC, in the last 8 years, has seen mixed results of achievements. Within that time, we have witnessed SOPAC formalize its name, and assume new programmes from other regional agencies and UN agencies under the directives of the Forum Leaders. The challenge to SOPAC was to find the resources to sustain those programmes. Being an active party of the CROP Agencies has also burdened SOPAC with expanded responsibilities, all for the sake of better collaboration and coordination of resources and avoidance of duplication of activities. I hope that this in no way has adversely impacted on SOPAC's attention to its core business.

We are very much aware of the Region's collaborative efforts towards the 2004 Barbados+10 Plan of Action, and the important role that SOPAC is expected to contribute, especially because of its leading role in the development of an Environmental Vulnerability Index.

SOPAC has proven that it has a leading role in some of the regional programmes and adding to that list is the Region's Ocean Policy that was recently adopted by the Forum Leaders. The development of the Policy Framework is an extremely important task and I wish you well in that exercise. The outcome should respond appropriately to the existing and emerging needs of the member countries and the links with respective sponsors. The fact that more countries wish to join SOPAC is a sure sign of confidence and reassurance that they have shown towards the success of the organization.

I would like to especially welcome the members of the donor community and the various scientists from research and tertiary institutions. I am informed that you have had no qualms about coming to Niue, and some of you have come out of curiosity to see its Geoscience potential.

We would welcome some concerted efforts in linking Geoscience with Tourism development. Niue believes that there is potential in this area to expand its Tourism products in

Niue, and technical assistance in this area would bring real results to the Niuean community, and no doubt to other member countries. I also welcome those of you who have been doing some WORK with your counterparts here in Niue, and we are very grateful for such assistance and commitment.

Niue's initial interest in SOPAC was urged by the significance that Niue places on its water resource and waste management. At present, 95% of water that serve the island households and the business sector establishments, is from groundwater. Rainwater is still available in some homes, catching of the roof runoffs. All households have water piped to their homes. But you may note that Niue has no surface water, like streams or rivers, and any prolonged period of drought, spells trouble for the growers and any farming activity. You will notice that the formation of the island shows a lower terrace and an upper terrace. Most of the water boreholes are drilled on the upper surface, and the catchments placed in a way to maximize the flow to the coastal settlements by force of gravity. The cost of pumping water from underground is high and Niue must continue to explore cheaper and cost-effective methods. The protection of Niue's underground water resource is very important so when scientists talk sea level rise, we immediately think of salt water intrusion into our water lense.

I am aware that SOPAC plans to facilitate assistance to Niue in two major programmes, and is in the process of completing one regional-cum-international project. The first is the SOPAC/Japanese sponsored JAMSTEC project, where it will explore the mineral potential of Niue's EEZ towards the end of the year. We are very grateful to the Metal Mining Agency of Japan for the offer of assistance.

The second programme involves the EU-funded national renewable energy project, using wind power and other renewable source of energy. SOPAC will play an integral part as the expert body of the region's energy programmes. We hope that the outcomes of both these projects will generate economic and social benefits for the entire Niue community. The other project

which Niue is most enthusiastic about is the development of its Environmental Vulnerability Index. Niue along with other member countries, look forward to seeing the successful completion of this project and would urge the donor community to give it full support. All of these programmes fit in well with Niue's Strategic Plan for the next 5 years as we chart our path towards prosperity.

One of the programmes that has been passed onto SOPAC, that is of importance to Niue, is the Maritime Boundaries Delimitation project. We would really like to see this project progress more actively than when it was handled by FFA.

In so far as your Council Meeting is concerned, I am sure that you have a lot of grounds to cover in the next 5 days or so, and I wish you all the best in your deliberations. The diversity of issues on your agenda tells me that you need to focus on SOPAC core business and the demands of international obligations may strain the resources of the organization. You will be appointing the new Director for the organization during this Council Session and I wish all candidates well and trust that you will provide leadership, directions and good sound management in the way it has been provided up to now.

Before I close, I would like to make some remarks respect of the outgoing Director. On behalf of the Niue Government, the whole SOPAC family, please accept our sincere thank you and appreciation for the tremendous work that you have performed, during the past 6 years of your tenure of office. You have lifted SOPAC's international image, to where it is at present no doubt under some personal sacrifice and many challenges. I don't know what or where you are going Alf, but I am sure you leave the organization satisfied that you have done what could be done at this point in time, and within the resources available to you. All the best and God bless.

I now have the great pleasure in declaring open this 32nd Annual Session of the SOPAC Governing Council Meeting.

Kia Monuina.

REMARKS by HE Mrs Camilla Solomon

Ambassador of the Republic of Nauru to the Fiji Islands and Outgoing Chair of the Governing Council in Response to the Opening Address

On behalf of the Governing Council and as your Outgoing Chair it is my pleasure to respond to the Opening Address of the 32nd annual session of the SOPAC Governing Council, just presented by Deputy Premier, Honourable Toke Talagi.

Deputy Premier, I would first like to thank you for your words of welcome to Niue. For those of us who have been here for the STAR Meeting we have already had the privilege to enjoy the hospitality of the Niuean community.

We deeply appreciate the intentions of the Government of Niue to host this annual session here in Niue as part of your commitment as the incoming Chair. We look forward to carrying out our business in the days ahead here on the Rock of Polynesia.

As the representative of Nauru, I cannot of course fail to make the observation that our countries names begin with "N", and we are both single island states. The land area of Niue exceeds that of Nauru by 10 to 1, and our populations differ also by a factor of ten. We have just over 10,000 on Nauru and I understand there are only around 1500 here on Niue. Geologically I am told we are both similar as raised limestone islands, although the migrating seabirds seem to have favoured Nauru to Niue sometime in the past.

If I may now turn my attention to some outgoing remarks as your Chair.

On behalf of the Government of Nauru, I would like to thank Governing Council for the confidence it placed in Nauru in electing us to Chair SOPAC Council over the past year.

It has been a challenging and busy time for us. Our first task was to Chair the Suva-based Group to oversee the work of the Secretariat in developing the new Work Programmes and Strategies. Council set a deadline of the end of the year on this work, and with the Session finishing early October this work began immediately. There were several meetings of the Group, discussions with the Secretariat, a short visit of a Facilitator provided by AusAID, and two rounds of communication with capi-

tals. Many hours of work by the Secretariat staff were needed and senior staff travel was curtailed in order that this work could be completed on time.

I am pleased to highlight that Nauru was able to sign-off on behalf of Council on time and the new Work Programmes and Strategies came into being on the first of January this year. In the succeeding months, initial implementation has first focused on the Secretariat adjusting its procedures. It is now up to Council to make similar adjustments in the way it seeks support from the Secretariat.

I commend the new Work Programmes and Strategies to you, especially to those stakeholders who support the work of the Commission. Here I make particular reference to the STAR community and the donors.

Our second major task has been to Chair the Suva-based Group who were charged by Council with the task to review the applications for the Director appointment to be made at this Session. I am pleased to report that we have completed that task and it is now the responsibility of the Council as a whole to take the process forward and come to a decision.

With the new Work Programmes and Strategies, and a new CEO of our Secretariat the Commission is on track for a viable and vibrant future.

As outgoing Chair of SOPAC it would be remiss of Nauru not to take this opportunity to acknowledge the long service of the Director to SOPAC and the region; first as Fiji's representative on Council for 12 years, then as Deputy Director for a three-year term, in 1995, before taking up the mantle to lead the Secretariat from 1998.

Under your leadership Alf, the organisation has grown and strengthened as reflected in the significantly increased operating budget that we now have. We acknowledge your consistent enthusiasm and commitment to addressing the important issues facing the membership. Your vision and innovativeness have led to the development of an Environmen-

tal Vulnerability Index which was a proactive response to an important outcome of the Barbados Programme of Action; the development of a sustainable development strategy for SOPAC which articulates the role and contributions of SOPAC to assisting us toward achieving sustainable development. These highlight just a few of the major contributions that you have made to the organisation as Director.

We are particularly appreciative of your efforts over the last eighteen months to provide the organisation with a sound strategic and operating framework through leading the development of our Corporate Plan and Business Plan and being responsive to, as well as inclusive of the membership throughout the process.

At the international level we know that you have worked tirelessly to represent regional interests and there have often not been confined to those that are in the interests of SOPAC, only.

Your contributions for the region in international initiatives such as being an elected member of the Legal and Technical Commission of the International Seabed Authority for which you sit as an Expert in your own right, we recognise and acknowledge.

We thank you for your dedication and commitment to SOPAC and the region for the duration of your tenureship.

We wish you and your family well.

REMARKS by Mrs Sisilia Talagi

Secretary to Government, Niue; National Representative of Niue to SOPAC and Incoming Chair

I wish to thank the Governing Council for allowing Niue to assume the Chair's duties at the 32nd Session of the Governing Council.

As this Council has a unique mix of professional people, we must always bear in mind during this Session to respect each other's contributions towards meeting SOPAC's mandate.

I am aware that some of the countries' representatives are new to SOPAC's annual meeting, and I can only ask that you stay focussed throughout the meeting, so that we will produce the expected outcomes within the time available to us. It is the duty of this Council to give clear directions to the SOPAC management team to guide their work in the next 12 months or so.

Your presence here today is testimony to your country's support of SOPAC's mandate. I would particularly acknowledge the presence of the various scientists who have dug deep into their own pockets to ensure that they attend the Niue SOPAC session.

Every member country of the Council reserves the right to express views, constructive views that is, for SOPAC management to follow through.

The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) is to assist the policy makers in the shaping of the Work Programme, as they link the science to policy.

SOPAC's mandate can only be successfully executed through teamwork, a team of scientists, planners, managers and donors. As a team we work as one, and if a member of the team is down, the rest of the team would have to prop it up one way or another.

Lastly, I would like to thank the Government and the Speaker of the Niue Assembly for allowing us to use the Assembly chambers for this meeting. I can only ask the delegates to accord it with all due respect in the manner that we go about our business, and our manner of dress. Thank you for listening.

OPENING SPEECH BY MR ALFRED SIMPSON

Director of SOPAC Secretariat at the Official Opening of the SOPAC 32nd Annual Session

Chair of the SOPAC Governing Council, Honourable Deputy Premier, Honourable Ministers Excellencies, SOPAC National Representatives, Distinguished Guests, Technical Advisers & Staff, Ladies & Gentlemen. Fakaalofa lahi atu.

May I, on behalf of the SOPAC Secretariat welcome you all to this the opening of the 32nd Annual Session meeting of the SOPAC Governing Council. The first ever meeting of the SOPAC Governing Council in this wonderful & unique country.

Honourable Deputy Premier, let me at the very outset convey through you to your Government and people our sincere appreciation for the overwhelming hospitality extended by your officials and people since we arrived on Friday. I might add that mixed with gratitude is a sense of awe of just how the dedication, commitment and generosity of a few people can overcome the often spoken about issues of limited size and finite resources. A lesson that I hope is not lost on any of the visitors attending this meeting.

How one of the first foreign experts to have contact with Niue could have called you the "Savage Island" escapes me. I refer of course to one named Captain James Cook. I must say I should not be surprised because even today experts who depend on first experiences and limited information still seem to get it wrong. I hope the experts we have brought with us this time will break the mould.

Madam Chair, for SOPAC this past year has been one that has been full of challenges, involved a particularly heavy workload and presented several new uncharted waters to negotiate. And through these challenges, the successes we have enjoyed have been under the Council leadership of your Government, the Republic of Nauru.

However, I would also like to acknowledge the help and encouragement you have personally provided to the Secretariat throughout the year when you have had to deputise for the elected Chair, your Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Madame Chair, if I could lay any claim to fame it would be that I started working in the re-

gion in the same year, 1972 that SOPAC was born. Please don't misread this as an attempt to say that long service makes me any better than the many short-term experts and visiting consultants. Neither do I want to use it as a window of opportunity to wallow in nostalgia.

What I was seeking to say was that as I'm a bit of an old hand I can, and would like to associate myself with the comments that the Deputy Premier and Minister for the Environment, the Honourable Toke Talagi, made in his address to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg last year. And I quote:

"I believe we are making progress, no matter how slow, and we must not be deterred from a cause we believe to be just. We know that we must integrate economic, social and environmental goals if we are to give our children a future worthy of them." End quote.

Let me assure you, after 32 years, I know just how slow it's been. Those who know me would now expect a long and opinionated discourse of just what went wrong. This would serve little purpose and detract from the resolve expressed by the Honourable Deputy Premier.

However, I would beg your indulgence as I make a few general comments on how I believe we might indeed give our children a future worthy of them. Whether there is a role for me might be debateable and irrelevant. What there can be doubt about is the role of SOPAC and its programmes.

The role I refer to is in working towards achieving the goal of Sustainable Development. Not just sustaining development where it exists or as we know it. Nor just promoting some form of sustained development which is sector driven.

It goes beyond the panaceas of economic reform, or about addressing law & order issues. It is not only about promoting so-called good governance and eradicating poverty, which in themselves are laudable goals. And how we wish it were just as simple as addressing the ills of so-called misspent and misused aid.

In my 32 years or more of service I have seen

it all. A lot of consultants got rich, a lot of academics built reputations and more often than not there was a great deal of wasted time and effort. But before I am deluged with a list of the pet success stories let me be the first to acknowledge that they have been indeed some things to celebrate along the way. But at the end of the day nothing, but nothing speaks stronger than performance. Sure there have been successes along the way but what real contribution have these individual successes made to the overall goal of Sustainable Development?

We are bombarded with indicators; SDIs, HDIs, GDP figures, even SOPAC's own EVI is trying to define where we really are. Every decade or significant global event has produced some target or goal against which we judge performance. Then there are donors or multilateral agencies who have demanded adherence to some reform or similar process as a measure of progress. But just how realistic are these in our own situations and our unique context? Maybe a trivial comparison would be to liken our performance to attempting to pass every school exam but coming out the other end no wiser, and perhaps at times even more confused.

Despite the analysis of the academics or the findings of so-called think tanks, for me the most telling assessment was made at a recent Forum Economic Ministers Meeting by an ex-Prime Minister of one of our small island states. No trend analyses or citing of indicators. His words were to the effect that in spite of following all expert advice, in spite of implementing the various reform processes that was demanded of his government at the end of the day, and I quote: "we remain poor." Why and what more must they do? If there was an answer no one amongst the audience offered one. In truth, how does one argue against a fact?

Madam Chair, Sustainable Development, is neither just another new game in town nor, for the cynics, is it just once again the moving of the goal posts. As stated by the Deputy Premier its attainment is because we truly feel it to be "a cause we believe to be just." At the emotional level it is about ensuring a future for our children. In reality, population statistics show that there are going to be far more children than any of us want to imagine, and the challenge to ensure their future an increasingly daunting one. However, in practical terms we must change or accept a global disaster.

What we're supposed to do is not rocket science. Following a holistic approach or integrating the three pillars of economic, social and environmental development is pure and simple commonsense. It should be viewed no longer as an aim or a worthy goal, but an absolute imperative.

For SOPAC our view of Sustainable Development for the Pacific Island Communities is defined as a process of development which ensures that quality of life, and quality of growth are achieved, through good governance, *within the limits of acceptable change* to these communities, their islands and their large ocean, without compromising the opportunities available to their future generations."

This is where we want to go. In theory this sounds so logical and full of commonsense. But mere thinking and speaking doesn't necessarily make it so. To translate rhetorical assertion to practical reality, we must plan and make the necessary, and sometimes drastic changes to ensure we achieve our defined goals. We must set those all too important milestones along the way understanding what they are and ensuring we keep within the limits of acceptable change. For how else will we assess progress and dare I say it, success.

Last year I referred to a vehicle that would take us on this new journey. Mere panel beating of the old vehicle or cosmetic changes or just re-labelling of old practices would not suffice.

A genuine stock-take will show that wholesale changes are sometimes required. SOPAC has done that; we must all do the same. A few of our sister CROP agencies are doing likewise. In this vein we should particularly welcome the recent decision of our leaders to review the Forum and I presume by extension the regional priorities and goals.

It must not just be about doing things right it is more about doing the right thing or things and being truly committed to pursuing change. It maybe a global priority but in our region we have to realise that "man doth not live by trade alone."

I trust there will be a realisation that if the foundation is weak then even a Palace built for royalty will in time collapse. We must address a few pre-requisite issues before we try to promote trade, economic growth, ensure food security, alleviate poverty and attain sustainable development.

I'm loath to repeat what might seem like a list of gripes but often we need a reality check

or for some maybe a wake-up call before we un-questioningly follow the path of sustainable development.

For example, we have to address the shocking WHO statistic that about 40% of the deaths of children under the age of 5 are attributed to water borne diseases, and this is but one example of the statistics available. In our region we should also note that in some urban centres the population might receive water for only an hour a day. If urban drift is now 25% and predicted to be approaching 50% then how much worse will the situation get for future generations?

We like to live with some sense of security believing that renewable energy will solve our future electricity demand problems. But nothing has changed in our economies to show we can afford these new technologies. In the meantime we have Power Utilities that on the supply side are up to 25% inefficient. Its simple maths, for every 4 litres of diesel that they purchase to run their generators for all intents and purposes they might as well pour one litre down the drain. One might ask how much commercial development would it take to compensate for the cost of this wastage?

The prospect of sustainable development seems more remote when national development efforts, (including programmes funded by donors) are set back each time a country has to recover from the effects of a natural disaster. There is no escaping the need to identify the vulnerability; determine the countries exposure to risk and put in place mechanisms to treat or transfer the risk. If not it's a bit like a game of snakes and ladders when no sooner have we climbed the ladder of progress then we have our efforts undermined or swallowed up by some disaster.

Any attempt to produce an exhaustive list of issues for the purposes of this address would just not be possible. However, I think it would be remiss if I didn't mention what I believe to be possibly both the greatest challenge and opportunity. The greatest opportunity for sustainable development of the Pacific large ocean island states (LOIS not SIDS) must be in the sustainable management of their relatively vast EEZs. At the same time if each State was to go it alone it would be a challenge of almost unsurmountable proportions in terms of physical, financial and scientific capacity.

I trust that I have highlighted a few of issues which we must overcome before we can achieve sustainable development. We just can't continue to address these issues on an ad hoc basis by technical agencies or the occasional expert. As I stated earlier SOPAC, SPREP and other CROP agencies are putting in place a programmatic approach which is priority or strategically driven in an attempt to address the needs of the region. Members of this Governing Council must ensure it addresses your country's needs and will lead to outcomes that are both measurable and sustainable.

The noting of a good idea or acknowledgement of a process is not enough, what we're trying to do requires not only recognition but also endorsement at the highest political level by our leaders. It also requires support from our development partners.

Madam Chair, I would like to draw things to a close with a quote attributed to a former President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt who said:

"The test of our progress is not whether we add to the abundance of those who have much, it is whether we provide enough for those who have little."

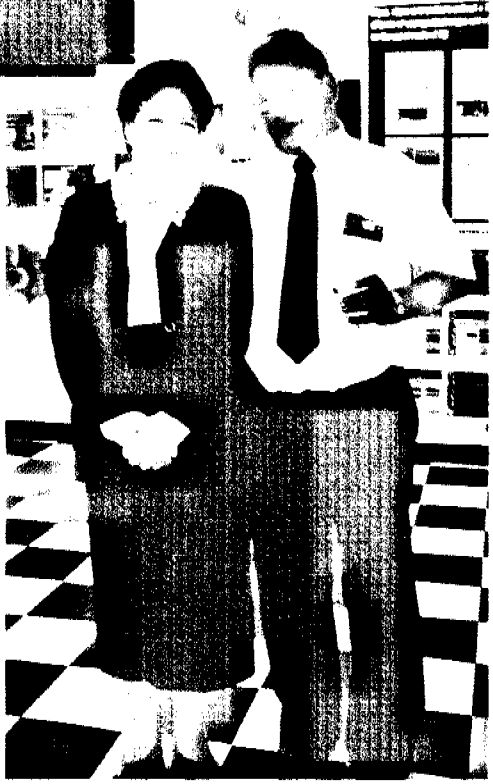
If indeed this were the measure of our progress then how will history judge us? How will it judge those who lead and those who have much to give? I suspect none too kindly.

Last year I challenged this Governing Council to make the strategic changes that we had presented to you. I know you will continue to accept the challenge and in the same vein I trust you will appoint as my successor a person with the energy and the vision to see through the implementation of such changes.

Such a decision should not made so as to reward an individual, neither merely to bring kudos to a country, it is so the Secretariat can play its part in seeing that SOPAC in its own crucial way can indeed ensure our children have a future worthy of them.

Madam Chair, Honourable Minister, Excellencies, colleagues and friends, I thank you for your patience and attention.

Fakaue



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE THIRTY-SECOND SOPAC SESSION

1. OPENING SESSION

1. The Thirty-second Session of the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC¹), was held in Niue, from 19th to 27th September 2003. Its Council Sessions including the joint Session with its Technical Advisory Group (TAG) was held at Niue's Fale Fono (Niue Assembly Meeting Chamber) and the preceding two-day scientific meeting of its Science, Technology and Resources Network (STAR) was held at the Niue Golf Club.

2. The Council meeting was called to order by HE Camilla Solomon, representative of Nauru, outgoing Chair of SOPAC Governing Council, at 2 pm, on Tuesday, 23 September 2003.

3. A spiritual message and the opening prayer was offered by Rev Matagi Vilitama, President of Ekalesia Niue.

4. The Deputy Premier of Niue, Honourable Toke Talagi, gave the opening address on behalf of the Government and people of Niue. The Deputy Premier of Niue highlighted the pleasure of hosting such a unique gathering of policy makers, planners, managers and scientists; acknowledging SOPAC would be unique in the region in nurturing such a mixture of professions. He also acknowledged that the SOPAC 32nd Session was an exercise to test their ability to host the Forum meeting next year. He highlighted SOPAC milestones in the length of Niue's 8-year association with the organisation. The efforts to link geoscience and policy as was demonstrated during the STAR meeting just prior to the Council meeting was welcomed by the Deputy Premier. He was very much aware of the region's collaborative efforts towards the ten-year review of the Barbados Programme of Action given SOPAC's leading role in the development of an Environmental Vulnerability Index. He especially welcomed the members of the donor community and the scientific fraternity from around to globe to Niue. The Deputy Premier's speech is produced in full in this volume.

5. On behalf of the SOPAC Governing Council, HE Camilla Solomon, thanked the Deputy

Premier for his opening address and made observations about the similarities and contrasts of the current host country and her own. In her remarks she highlighted the major tasks undertaken during her tenure and ended her remarks with expressions of appreciation to the outgoing Director of the SOPAC Secretariat, Alfred Simpson; and to the other members of Council for their support in the past year. Her remarks are produced in full in this volume.

6. The Director of SOPAC, Alf Simpson, addressed the SOPAC Governing Council, giving what might be his last address as Director of SOPAC. His message to the region on how to give "our children a future worthy of them" reminded Council of the views encapsulated in the SOPAC Sustainable Development Strategy. He stressed that following the holistic approach of integrating the three pillars of economic, social and environmental development was pure and simple common sense; and should be viewed not as an aim or a worthy goal, but an absolute imperative. He pointed out that for the Pacific Island communities, the place we want to get to is "development which ensures that quality of life, and quality of growth are achieved, through good governance, within limits of acceptable change to these communities, their islands and their large ocean, without compromising the opportunities available to their future generations." The Director's speech is also produced in full in this volume.

7. Delegates from the following member countries were in attendance: American Samoa (Associate), Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

8. BGS, KIGAM, MMAJ, Taiwan/ROC, UK (DFID), UNESCO/IOC attended as observers and supporters of SOPAC.

9. The following CROP organisations were represented: Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP), and the University of the South Pacific.

10. Other institutions and members of the

¹ A comprehensive list of ACRONYMS is included as Appendix 9 of this Proceedings volume

private sector and civil society represented included: Pacific Power Association, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, AMSAT, Electric Power Corporation (Samoa), Georgia Institute of Technology, Imperial College, James Cook University, Moss Landing Marine Labs, National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NZ), The Pennsylvania State University, Hawaii Institute of Geophysics (UH), School of Ocean & Earth Science & Technology, and Victoria University of Wellington. These are fully documented in the List of Participants in Appendix 1.

2. ELECTIONS

2.1 CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR OF SOPAC

11. Mrs Sisilia Talagi, Secretary to Government and National Representative of Niue to SOPAC, was appointed new Chair of the SOPAC Governing Council. In her brief statement as she assumed the Chair, she echoed the welcoming remarks of the Deputy Premier. She also counselled the meeting that SOPAC's mandate could only be successfully executed through teamwork: a team of scientists, planners, managers and donors - and that the team worked as one, and that if a member of the team was down, the rest of the team would have to prop it up one way or another. Her opening remarks as incoming Chair are produced in full in this volume.

12. Mr Stevie Nion, representative of Papua New Guinea to the 32nd Session of SOPAC was appointed Vice Chair in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

2.2 CHAIR OF STAR AND TAG

13. The Governing Council accepted STAR's nomination of Professor John Collen of Victoria University of Wellington to continue as Chair of STAR. Council also noted that Professor Collen was permitted by the Network to co-opt one (or two) from among them as Vice Chairs when he needed assistance with STAR business during the year. The current Vice Chair, Mr Faatoia Malele, of Samoa was no longer with the Apia Observatory and therefore unable to carry out his responsibilities as Vice Chair.

14. The Chair of Council announced her intention to chair both Governing Council sessions and the Joint Council/TAG sessions of the 32nd Session.

2.3 APPOINTMENT OF RAPPORTEUR

15. Ms Lala Bukarau was appointed Rapporteur.

3. AGENDA AND WORKING PROCEDURES

3.1 ADOPTION OF AGENDA

16. The Governing Council adopted the provisional agenda as presented in AS32/3.1 (Provisional Agenda). The approved agenda is attached in Appendix 2.

17. Council also accepted the draft working schedule (AS32/3.1/Info1), working procedures (AS32/3.1/Info2) and noted the list of conference room documents (AS32/3.1/Info3). A provisional list of participants was also sent into circulation for participants to amend their contact details. The final List of Participants is attached as Appendix 1.

3.2 APPOINTMENT OF DRAFTING COMMITTEE

18. An open-ended drafting committee was appointed comprising the Republic of Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Samoa as the core group to oversee the production of a Summary Record of Proceedings. According to meeting working procedures, Papua New Guinea (as Vice Chair) was appointed Chair of the Drafting Committee.

3.3 APPOINTMENT OF SUB-COMMITTEES

19. Council agreed to the Chair's proposal to convene an Ad hoc committee of the Council as a Whole to consider the appointment of the new Director of the SOPAC Secretariat. Nauru supported this suggestion and it was further agreed that countries be represented on the Adhoc Committee on the Director's Appointment by their heads of delegation.

4. REPRESENTATION

4.1 DESIGNATION OF NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES (AS32/4.1)

20. The Chair invited responses from all member country delegates to confirm the information given in paper AS32/4.1 (Designation of SOPAC National Representatives) that

was circulated. Council noted the amendments made by the Republic of Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The amended full list is attached as Appendix 3.

4.2 MEMBERSHIP ISSUES

21. The Director of the SOPAC Secretariat introduced this agenda item. He stated that the Governing Council had been informed in July about Palau's seeking membership this year. He further noted that the expected representative from the northern Pacific nation had not been on the much-delayed last flight that brought the rest of the delegates to Niue.

22. The representative from the Marshall Islands requested if Palau had advised the Secretariat that they were not going to be present at the meeting knowing that their application for membership was going to be considered by the Governing Council. He further stated that if however, Palau has met and fulfilled all the requirements, which are needed for their membership application to be considered and accepted by the Governing Council he would sincerely welcome and he moved for the Governing Council to accept Palau's application for SOPAC membership.

23. Council noted the application of Palau for membership, which was approved in Koror by the House of Delegates of the Sixth Olbiil Kera Kelulau, the Senate concurring, that attested to Palau's desire to become a member of SOPAC.

24. Council approved Palau's application to become the newest member of SOPAC.

5. STATEMENTS

25. The Chair suggested that delegations submit statements to the Secretariat to be included in full in the Proceedings volume of the meeting; but invited delegations with substantive issues to be raised and highlighted at this forum to give short statements. A number of member-country delegations made short interventions highlighting the positive contributions of the SOPAC Work Programme to their own national development, and most notably Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands with first-time attendees as head of delegation.

26. The Solomon Islands especially expressed deepest appreciation to the SOPAC Governing Council for being patient with them in the last four to five years in their time of extended

national troubles. They acknowledged the improvement of conditions on the ground since the arrival of the intervention force led by Australia to restore law and order; and thanked the members of SOPAC who contributed to the endeavour. Regarding their outstanding membership contributions to SOPAC, Solomon Islands also expressed gratitude to the Forum Fisheries Agency for making it possible for them to pay a token sum towards it.

27. Statements from other delegates expressed their support for; and continued commitment to work in partnership with SOPAC to achieve common goals in the SOPAC region.

5.1 STATEMENTS FROM MEMBER COUNTRIES

28. These statements are tabled in full in Appendix 4.

5.2 STATEMENTS BY CROP ORGANISATIONS

29. These statements are tabled in full in Appendix 4.

5.3 STATEMENTS FROM COOPERATING GOVERNMENTS AND INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES

30. These statements are tabled in full in Appendix 4.

5.4 STATEMENTS FROM NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

31. These statements are tabled in full in Appendix 4.

6. DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

32. The Director introduced the various components of his report to Council.

6.2 ISSUES ARISING FROM 31ST ANNUAL SESSION

33. The Director noted that the Secretariat had reported on all the issues raised during the 31st Session (AS32/6.2), and that most, if

not all issues, would also be addressed in later agenda items.

34. Council noted the reported actions.

6.3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2003 BUSINESS PLAN FOR THE 2002-2004 CORPORATE PLAN

35. The Deputy Director introduced paper AS32/6.3, giving some background into the documents referred to and was pleased to report to Council on the status of implementation of the tasks in the 2003 Business Plan that contributed to achieving the goals contained in the current Corporate Plan.

36. The key achievement at the corporate level was the completion of the Work Programmes and Strategies document.

37. While progress on the other corporate goals had been satisfactory, it was highlighted that more work needed to be done in the area of developing 'smart' indicators to effectively measure progress. Deferred activities from the 2003 Business Plan will be picked up in the 2004 Business Plan which is before Council for endorsement.

38. Australia thanked the Secretariat for all the reported activities, acknowledging that it was "breaking new ground in the region" but wondered at the level of detail being brought before Council via the Business Plan reporting which she felt was an in-house reporting document. She asked if the Secretariat was going to undertake a review of how the strategic documents worked together and to ascertain the level at which Council needed to be engaged in the process. She suggested that the beginning of the revision process for the Corporate Plan might be a good time for a review.

39. The Director explained his understanding of the purpose of the Business Plan reporting. He described it as a performance evaluation process for the Director on how he delivered on the corporate goals of SOPAC, with the Corporate Plan giving longer-term direction and the annual Business Plan giving short-term evaluation of the progress towards achieving the Corporate Plan goals. The Deputy Director added to the Director's comments pointing out that this was the first time all

the four "strategic" documents were in front of Council together and suggested that Council let the process run for a year to see how the documents relate to one another and the level of reporting needed for Council meetings.

40. Council accepted the report on the 2003 Business Plan and agreed to a revision of the Corporate Plan being prepared by the Secretariat for consideration at the 2004 Council Meeting, and to consider further the level of reporting.

7. FINANCIAL REPORTS

7.1 SUMMARY REPORT OF THE 2003 DONOR SUPPORT TO SOPAC

41. The Director highlighted key points of the report circulated to Council and indicated levels of support provided to SOPAC activities by key donors including Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Commonwealth Secretariat, European Union, France, Ireland, Japan, Taiwan, United Kingdom, United Nations, United States, Asian Development Bank, The World Bank Group, IHE Delft, Cook Islands, Kiribati and Tuvalu.

42. On the funding from the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Director stated that the funding for the ESMG course was coming to an end and encouraged the individual member countries who benefit from the ESMG course to highlight the need for continual funding when holding talks with the Commonwealth Secretariat.

43. On new donors such as Ireland, the Director stated that such funding was through the efforts of the missions in New York and that the member countries who have missions in New York should express the importance of the need for continual funding from Ireland, Norway and Italy.

44. Australia stated that their multi-year funding arrangement with SOPAC was a first for Australia. The new funding arrangement was directly influenced by their confidence in the new strategic programmatic approach of doing business that SOPAC had adopted. Australia was confident enough in the approach to commit its funding at the component level and the way the funds were allocated in the activities level was at the Secretariat's discretion. Australia stated that this approach

gave the Secretariat flexibility and that Australia would be relying heavily on how the Secretariat would perform against indicators to determine success of the new arrangement. Australia encouraged other donors to follow their multi-year programme funding approach.

45. Solomon Islands suggested that the record reflect the sincere appreciation of SOPAC to the various donors in particular the contributions from Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. Solomon Islands also mentioned that other CROP organisations should consider adopting something similar to the Fiji grant whereby the tax deducted from the Secretariat staff goes back to SOPAC as a grant.

46. In response, the Director thanked Australia for bringing up the need for the programmatic approach with other donors. The Director stated that this would assist the planning process.

47. New Zealand stated that they intend to enter into a multi-year funding approach and they look forward to discussing this with the Secretariat over the coming year with a view to reaching an agreement to take effect from January 2005.

48. Council acknowledged with pleasure the support from donors and encouraged them to make a commitment to multi-year funding at the work programme component level through arrangements such as MOUs in order to stabilise and facilitate the ongoing strategic planning of the Commission work.

7.2 FINANCIAL REPORTS

7.2.1 2002 Audited Financial Statements, Auditor's Report and Management Report

49. The Secretariat presented the audited 2002 Financial Report (AS32/7.2.1). In doing so, the Secretariat brought to Council's attention the explanatory notes and graphs it had provided in the report.

50. Solomon Islands commended the Secretariat for the presentation of the accounts; acknowledging with appreciation the endeavour by the Secretariat to ensure proper accounting of its finances as well as the diligence applied by the executive management to ensure the Secretariat continued on a financially-sound footing.

51. The Council received and accepted the 2002 Audited Financial Statements, Auditor's Report and Auditor's Management Letter; noting in the letter the single matter of the need to address member-country membership contributions in arrears.

7.2.2 Report on 2002 Budget Variance and Virement of Funds

52. The Secretariat tabled the Report on the 2002 Budget Variance and Virement of Funds (AS32/7.2.2) highlighting the net savings of F\$281,823.07; also bringing to Council's attention the monitoring nature of the report.

53. The Council accepted the report on the 2002 Budget Variance and Virement of Funds.

7.2.3 Report on Assets and Inventory written off for the Year ended 31 December 2002

54. The Secretariat tabled the Report on Assets and Inventory written off for the year ended 31 December 2002.

55. Council accepted the report.

7.3 REPORT ON 2003 ACCOUNTS TO 30 JUNE

7.3.1 Financial Accounts for the 6-month period to June 2003

56. The Secretariat introduced the Report on the 2003 Accounts to 30 June (AS32/7.3.1) and explained to Council that these accounts were not audited. The Secretariat also explained that the EU 8th EDF work was under the Corporate Services and that once the relevant log frames were approved by the RAO and EU, the EU funds would be allocated to the respective programmes.

57. Australia pointed out that the Corporate Services Programme was a support programme and that in terms of the strategic programmatic approach, the cost of delivering corporate services should be apportioned across the programme components. In response, the Secretariat considered that this exercise would be a difficult one but stated that they would take this into consideration in the preparation of the 2005 draft work plan and budget.

58. Council noted and accepted the Report on the 2003 Accounts to 30 June.

7.3.2 Membership Contributions

59. The Secretariat presented the paper on Member Country Contributions (AS32/7.3.2). An updated status report on member country contributions as at 23 September 2003 was also distributed to Council. The Secretariat reminded Council that the issue of outstanding member country contributions was the only point highlighted in the Auditor's Management Letter and has been classified as high risk. The Secretariat mentioned that recognition should be given to Solomon Islands' efforts to pay their contributions despite the current economic conditions. The Secretariat also explained that its efforts to get a response from Guam had not been successful. The Secretariat also stated it needed Council's guidance on how to deal with these issues.

60. Vanuatu stated that their Foreign Affairs Department had assured him that their arrears would be paid up before year end.

61. The Secretariat also informed Council that Kiribati had pledged that their membership contributions would be paid up soon.

62. Solomon Islands stated that due recognition should be given to those countries who have paid up their contributions. They promised to do their best to pay their dues.

63. Council received the Status of Membership Contributions report, noting that issues facing the countries would be discussed further during the Budget and Policy session.

JOINT COUNCIL-TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP (TAG) SESSION

8. REPORTS ON ISSUES COMMON TO PROGRAMMES

8.1 EUROPEAN UNION PROJECTS

64. The Secretariat reported that the informal Council briefing on Tuesday morning, 24 September 2003, described the progress of the implementation of the EDF8 Project as satisfactory and planning for EDF9 as moving quite well. The EDF9 Project approval process was underway in Brussels as indicated by the RAO for by implementation 01st Jan 2004.

65. Through the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat representative, the RAO commented that the "EDF8 Project commenced 1 April 2002 upon signing of the Financing Agreement and Grant Agreement. It is important to note that implementation under the Grant Agreement as with other regional projects, is recognition from the EU, that SOPAC, and other CROP organisations are reputable organisations able to deliver EDF-funded programmes. As the RAO for this project, we are pleased to see that the Grant Agreement is working without major problems, and we will continue to work together to ensure that this is maintained throughout the duration of the Project."

66. "The Project has progressed satisfactorily over the first 12 months with the first Steering Committee held in June 2003. The Project has also been the subject of two reviews by the EU over the first 12 months. The Project is slightly behind schedule due to the lengthy recruitment process that covered most of the first 12 months. Now that all the Team have taken up their appointments it is important that the project makes up for lost time as budgeted for in the 2003 work plan."

67. The RAO stressed the importance of the national stakeholders to be made aware of the activities to be delivered to their countries. This is because they play an important role, together with SOPAC, in ensuring that the Project results are delivered to targeted beneficiaries such as local communities. The EU has always stressed this point at project meetings, especially in this case, where we are producing scientific and technical data.

68. Regarding the proposal for the 9th EDF extending the current EDF8 Project to the 6 new Pacific ACP countries with a budget of approximately €2.5 million, the RAO advised that this is to be considered by the EDF Screening Committee in Brussels in September 2003. The RAO does not expect any problems and it stresses again the importance of moving quickly, as the timeframe for delivery of the new project, will be the same as the 8th EDF Project. SOPAC should start to advertise positions now.

69. Kiribati sought clarification on whether discussion on the Project was to be carried out at this level or under TAG to which the Secretariat replied that project implementation including technical issues would be discussed under the SOPAC Work Programmes emphasising the integration of the Project into the SOPAC Work Programme.

70. Fiji queried the linkages emphasised by the Secretariat between the Project and SOPAC at the briefing and how the appointment of the Project Leader would affect this. The Secretariat reiterated that following Stephen Booth's appointment as the Project Leader, the administration of the Project within the Secretariat was secure, and he had also been included onto the Executive Management Team (EMT) to facilitate integration at the highest level in the Secretariat.

71. Tonga requested that the Secretariat elaborate on the focal areas to address vulnerability with particular emphasis on the development of GIS infrastructure. The Secretariat referred Council to the Project Summary Report (ER15) which indicated achievement up until 30 June 2003 including the 1st Stakeholders Meetings. The Project Log Frame has since been revised through the Stakeholder Meetings keeping the key component areas similar to original Project document (refer Project 2003 Work Plan & Budget, ER15).

- Aggregates component has been broadened recognising its relatedness to coastal zone management.
- Water and Sanitation, no change.
- Hazard Assessment and Risk management basically captures the way of business.
- Developing GIS infrastructure in country, the National Resource Information Centre will be established within Government, with GIS/ICT and the required local area network to support it.
- Strengthening the capacity of states.

72. American Samoa enquired about the process for staff recruitment for the EU Project should a suitable candidate not be found in member and associate member countries. The Secretariat clarified that it was a donor requirement that initial advertising be confined only to the EU/ACP countries but further clarified that a facility exists in Brussels called "applied derogation" but the process can be extremely lengthy and the outcome usually negative.

73. Council noted with pleasure the progress of the European Union-funded regional projects assigned to SOPAC for implementation. A summary record of the informal briefing session for Council on the EU Project is included in Appendix 5.

8.2 CROP SUMMARY RECORD

74. Paper AS32/8.2 was presented to Council by the Director and it was noted that a similar paper had been presented at other regional organisations' meetings including at the PIFS meeting in Auckland, and the recently-concluded SPREP meeting. The report of the CROP 15th meeting in Honiara was included as an attachment to the paper.

75. A summary of issues discussed and covered at the CROP Heads meeting was presented to Council. These included:

- World Summit on Sustainable Development and Mauritius 2004;
- Forum Vision 1995; and
- CROP Working Groups.

76. The Director raised the issue of the time taken to prepare briefings for the Forum and recommended that the Forum use the opportunity of its current review process to include a position for someone who could be proactive in working with regional organisations in keeping Forum abreast of CROP activities. He felt that the heads of CROP may be better used as technical advisers to the region.

77. Council noted the 2003 report by the Chair of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific and:

- welcomed the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the emphasis in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation on Small Island Developing State concerns
- supported the regional preparations for the 2004 International Meeting in Mauritius, being the ten-year review of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA+10).
- agreed to the Secretariat's engagement in the Eminent Persons review process for the Forum Secretariat including the review of the CROP Charter as decided by the Leaders in the recent Auckland Forum.
- supported the review of the CROP Working Groups in order to ensure they remain relevant and focussed.

8.3 STAR CHAIR REPORT

78. The STAR Chair addressed the joint Council/TAG session, and presented his report

(AS32/8.3) on the 2003 STAR Session that was held at the Niue Golf Club during 20-22nd September 2003 (Appendix 6 in this volume). He informed Council that the theme of this year's Session was "Towards Linking Geoscience and Policy for Pacific Islands Sustainable Development." Twenty-nine (29) scientific papers and one longer special lecture were presented orally and a number were also presented in posters. Abstracts of these papers are published in SOPAC Miscellaneous Report 487.

79. Council received the full Report of the STAR Chair with acclamation, noting that the STAR Working Group reports had not been fully finalised by the STAR scientists, but they would be included in full in the STAR Report in the Proceedings volume (Appendix 6).

80. Council endorsed the STAR recommendations contained in the Report.

8.4 SOPAC REPORTS

8.4.1 2002 Annual Report Summary

81. The Director presented AS32/8.4.1 – 2002 Annual Report Summary highlighting that this summary was a shorter, more user-friendly version of the Director's annual report to Council. The work to produce the Summary was undertaken between sessions and aimed at providing the general public with information on the work of SOPAC. Completion of the Summary is aimed for first circulation at the Pacific Islands Forum meetings.

82. Council accepted the 2002 Annual Report Summary and agreed to its use in promoting the work of SOPAC.

8.4.2 Review of Country Profiles

83. The Director presented paper AS32/8.4.2 – Review of Country Profiles using the draft revision for Niue as an example, and highlighting the development of an electronic version that could be easily maintained and updated.

84. Kiribati commended the Secretariat for their efforts towards developing the country profiles and particularly the timeliness and value of this work in relation to their own preparation of Kiribati national development strategic plans. It was suggested that it would also be useful to include nationally initiated projects that were being implemented to which SOPAC is contributing and providing constructive input.

85. Nauru informed Council of the usefulness of this publication and how it has provided a valuable education resource in schools.

86. SPREP congratulated SOPAC on this important initiative noting how it provided a practical way of focussing on how a regional organisation works in its areas of expertise with countries to address key sustainable development issues. SPREP also suggested that the template should include a state of the environment reference and highlight the impacts that SOPAC is making in countries.

87. The Director responded that this information could be useful as a CROP information document particularly in light of the international processes and increasing demands for similar information. It was also highlighted that the development of the profiles in digital format could provide the basis for simplifying data collection and presentation for a variety of requirements.

88. Solomon Islands noted that the profiles provide a useful insight into country issues and had no major concerns with the template as presented. He, however, queried how the profiles related to other documents like the project activity documents. It was also suggested that some information should be provided such as when the country joined SOPAC and how many sessions they had hosted. He further noted that there should be careful consideration and a balanced presentation of information on SOPAC activities and country needs, and that the SOPAC activities not overshadow country priorities. This latter sentiment was echoed by Tonga who thought the inclusion of the summary table of SOPAC programme responses to country needs was self-promotional.

89. Samoa commended the Secretariat on the work undertaken to develop the profiles and asked the Secretariat if any thought had been given about cooperating further with other CROP organisations in compiling information particularly in the lead up to the BPOA+10 review which would need the integration of a substantial amount of information.

90. Cook Islands commended the Secretariat on the excellent job they had done in developing the country profiles and endorsed the recommendation before Council.

91. Council endorsed the template for the revision of the country profiles as illustrated by the draft Niue country profile. Council further encouraged the Secretariat to complete the revision of all country profiles within the coming year.

8.4.3 Summary of New Project Proposals

92. The Deputy Director presented paper AS32/8.4.3 as an update of ongoing work in SOPAC on preparing project proposals. Mention was made of twenty-five (25) new project proposals outlining a broad portfolio of proposals, target donors and substance.

93. Australia stated that the report was useful but questioned whether the information could be presented differently, as part of the reporting process in the different programmes so a relation between programme and funding could be more clearly outlined.

94. Federated States of Micronesia wondered if proposals relating to specific country tasks could also be included.

95. Council noted the paper and agreed that this information in future be reported on under relevant programmes.

8.4.4 SOPAC Gender Policy

96. The Director presented the amended SOPAC Gender Policy paper (AS32/8.4.4). He reminded Council that the paper before them was updated from the draft Gender Policy first presented to them at the 31st SOPAC session. The Director also acknowledged the support provided by the Forum Secretariat through its Gender Adviser, Margaret Leninston to this process.

97. The SOPAC gender focal point, Mr Owen White, briefly presented the amended Gender Policy to Council outlining reasons for its need from the viewpoint of the Secretariat. He initially outlined the importance of the policy in terms of SOPAC meeting regional and international agreements. He stated that part of SOPAC's role is aiding in the translation and implementation of regional and international agreements mentioning the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Kyoto 3rd World Water Forum as examples.

98. Mr White then focussed on SOPAC in terms of the gender policy and SOPAC's internal processes and additionally outlined the process by which the gender policy evolved to date mentioning that consultations had been held with many partners including UNIFEM, UNDP and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, to name a few.

99. The implementation of the gender policy at the Secretariat included the assembling of a gender focal team, training of selective staff

within each programme and annual reviews and reporting to the Director, Executive Management Team and Council.

100. Tonga stated that the policy should be treated as low profile, advising Council that in Tonga women were regarded on a higher level than men, however were not part of the decision-making process. They deemed the policy disrespectful to the culture of island member countries and that in their view the Secretariat would be better placed using resources somewhere else.

101. The Secretariat clarified that the policy was not intended to do such, instead that gender was about both men's and women's roles and this was done in a cultural context, and the policy was not intended to change these roles nor be culturally insensitive.

102. Solomon Islands stated that they understood the reason behind the formulation of a gender policy in terms of the agreement to do so within the CROP process, however he appreciated the comments made by Tonga in addition to raising concerns related to the scope of the policy. A question was raised as to whether the implementation of the policy should be restricted to the SOPAC Secretariat.

103. American Samoa raised the issue as to whether other regional organisations already had gender policies in place and suggested that the SOPAC policy be consistent with them.

104. Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat advised Council that it had a gender policy in place as well as a sexual harassment policy and were involved in providing policy advice to the SOPAC Secretariat that was aligned to their own policy. Council was also reminded that within the WSSD process the issue of gender was stated as being crucial in the context of sustainable development.

105. Australia advised that they strongly supported the policy, which was an improved version from the last session. They were however concerned that the policy had limited reference to its application to programme delivery and it was unclear how the gender issues team was structured or resourced.

106. Vanuatu expressed their appreciation of the policy and stated that any further issues they raised regarding gender would be dealt with through their own in-country programmes.

107. The Director clarified that the policy actually followed through with strategic direc-

tions in the Corporate Plan such as corporate governance and also affected our dealings with the outside world. He also stated that the policy is a living document to be revisited and updated.

108. Council endorsed the gender policy for implementation and reporting back next year.

8.4.5 SOPAC Work Programme and the MDGs

109. Paper AS32/8.4.5 was presented by the Deputy Director. He advised that the paper was for noting and indicated that the specific linkages between the SOPAC Work Programme and the MDGs were still in development. The Secretariat would report back to Council next year, particularly with respect to MDG Goal 7 (on Environmental Sustainability) that has the strongest link to the SOPAC Work Programmes and Strategies.

110. Global Indicators for MDG7 are still subject to further refinement, and as highlighted in recent regional meetings, global indicators whilst generally appropriate need to be turned into indicators appropriate to the Pacific for both its own development & reporting to the global process. There is therefore an opportunity for the Pacific to articulate its concerns and provide suggestions on future indicators.

111. Council noted the paper and requested the Secretariat to continue to develop the MDGs/SOPAC Programmes linkages, with particular regard to assisting member countries with targets and indicators for MDG7; and provide a progress report to the next SOPAC Session.

8.4.6 Preparation for the 2004 Review of Barbados Programme of Action for SIDS

112. The Deputy Director introduced the paper. He reminded delegates that the Barbados+10 review quickly follows on the WSSD and that 3 days of CSD in 2004 will be the preparatory meeting for the Mauritius meeting, and that there was therefore strong connectivity between the Johannesburg WSSD Programme Of Implementation and the SIDS engaging in the 10-year review of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA+10).

113. Barbados+10 preparations included the regional preparatory meeting for the Pacific held in Apia in early August. The outcomes document from the meeting provides a pre-

liminary regional position for the Pacific. The document states how the region would obtain closure on finalising the preparation process for BPoA+10, which included SOPAC advising CROP and its member countries accordingly.

114. The main concern expressed in Apia was that the national preparations for Barbados+10 were not complete and wouldn't be in time; therefore the regional submission could not be completed at that meeting. The countries had stated in Apia that the national statements must be completed before the regional statement. National statements are due to be completed now.

115. Australia reminded Council that the Barbados+10 preparation was discussed in Council last year and concerns were expressed about the extent of SOPAC's involvement. Australia reinforced that SOPAC's engagement should be consistent with the priorities in the programme strategies and should work closely with the other CROP agencies so as to avoid any duplication.

116. Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) advised Council that Forum Leaders endorsed that CROP provide full support to the member countries. Engagement in the preparation process was also endorsed at the SPREP regional meeting last month, and that they had supported this call for assistance from the Forum Leaders. PIFS advised Council that SOPAC has been fully active with the CROP Working Group set up to ensure full CROP collaboration.

117. Council, noting the recent Leaders' endorsement, agreed that the Secretariat remain engaged in the 10-year review process of the Barbados Programme of Action for SIDS, to the extent consistent with the priorities in the programme strategies in order to optimise SOPAC's work for its members.

118. Council further agreed to the Secretariat's full engagement with the CSD process in the coming years to ensure the member countries gain maximum support in regard to water, sanitation and energy issues.

8.4.7 Report on SOPAC Activities Concerning Climate Change, Climate Variability and Sea-Level Rise

119. The Deputy Director presented paper AS32/8.4.7 - Report on SOPAC Activities Concerning Climate Change, Climate Variability and Sea-Level Rise.

120. Council was given an overview of SOPAC's involvement through the work to consider a Regional Financing Facility for Adaptation to Climate Change; the Second High-Level Consultation on Adaptation; the 3rd Round Table on Climate Change, Sea-level Rise and Climate Variability; and in Phase III of the Sea Level & Climate Monitoring Project Phase III.

121. Council noted the involvement and contribution the SOPAC Secretariat has made towards the progress with activities relating to climate change, climate variability and sea-level rise.

122. Council agreed that the Secretariat remain fully engaged in the future development of a Regional Financing Facility for Adaptation.

9. OCEAN AND ISLANDS PROGRAMME

9.1 REPORT ON THE OCEAN AND ISLANDS PROGRAMME

123. The Secretariat referred Council to papers AS32/9.1 and AS32/9.2 and also noted the relevance of pages 17 to 34 of the paper AS32/15.5, relating to the proposed 2004 Work Plan and Budget for the Ocean and Islands Programme.

124. The Secretariat outlined the structure of the presentation as comprising a: brief revisit of the Programme framework; review of progress and achievements for the 2002-2003 reporting period; summary of the emerging issues facing the programme for 2004 and beyond; and the proposed work plan and budget for 2003-2004.

125. Council was reminded of the Programme's goal and three component areas and the definition of 'ecosystem' was reiterated as outlined in the *Programmes and Strategies* document stating SOPAC's role as addressing the physical and chemical aspects of ecosystems.

126. The Secretariat highlighted the specific outputs of the component areas of *Resource Use Solutions* and *Monitoring Physical and Chemical Change of Ecosystems* to which the EU-SOPAC EDF8 Project will contribute.

127. The Secretariat presented to Council the Ocean and Islands Work Plan Report for 2003 and drew Council's attention to the commentary under the Progress and Achievements column. They advised that a summary report of selected activities under each of the three

component areas, undertaken during 2003, would be presented.

128. Under the component *Resource Use Solutions* a description of progress on the following suite of activities was provided: Phase II of Stage 2 – Japan / SOPAC Cooperative Deep-sea Minerals Programme; mapping and sampling in Penryhn Lagoon, Cook Islands; geophysical surveying of selected coastal areas of Efate, Vanuatu; products of resource assessment surveys – Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Marshall Islands, and Samoa; design and development of the Pacific Islands Regional Maritime Boundaries Information System; results of coastal mapping of selected areas on Tongatapu and Atata islands, Tonga; transcription of geophysical data in the SOPAC Petroleum DataBank; and capacity building under the Certificate in Earth Science and Marine Geology.

129. For the *Ocean Governance* component, the Secretariat described progress on the design and development of the Marine Scientific Research Cruise Co-ordination database and implementation of the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy. The Secretariat highlighted progress on the following activities under the component *Monitoring Physical and Chemical Change in Ecosystems*: geodetic and cGPS surveys, as well as contributing to the maintenance and calibration surveys of SEAFRAME sites under the third phase of the South Pacific Sea Level and Climate Monitoring Project; outputs of the Regional Workshop on Potential Applications for Ocean Observation of the Pacific Islands Region and particularly the design concept for a Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Information System which seeks to provide data and information products to multiple users; and, the assistance provided toward procurement and commissioning of two moored oceanographic monitoring buoys for Penryhn and Manihiki Lagoons, Cook Islands, which will result in real-time physical and chemical data for improved planning, management and development decisions.

130. The Secretariat then informed Council of the importance, complexity and issues surrounding marine surveys, with a presentation outlining the survey process from the initial concept to resultant products and benefits of a completed activity.

131. The Chair of STAR commended the Secretariat on its presentation regarding the process of surveying and recognised the work and successes of the SOPAC team in this regard.

He advised that the Victoria University of Wellington and Georgia Tech have worked closely with the Secretariat on activities completed in the Penrhyn Lagoon, Cook Islands and that this initiative had offered a great opportunity to gather baseline physical and biological data. Furthermore, that this partnership provided additional expertise to SOPAC essentially free of charge and suggested that other members may wish to seek similar partnership opportunities.

132. He further advised that the activities to transcribe geophysical data held in the SOPAC Petroleum Data Bank was vital and that reacquisition was not an option due to the prohibitive costs involved. He emphasised the priority for transcription and commended the efforts of the Secretariat to address the matter. He also noted the value of these data for uses other than petroleum exploration e.g. to assist those members who have the potential to claim an extension beyond the 200-M limit of their exclusive economic zone.

133. Tonga acknowledged the efforts of the Programme in their response to activities specific to their needs and cited the value of the coastal mapping on Tongatapu and looked forward to adaptive measures that would result in improving the situation of communities in the area.

134. Tonga stated that on the issue of maritime boundary delimitation an independent consultant had been contracted by them to assist in their delimitation and extended continental shelf activities; further advising that they did not require the services of the Secretariat to assist them on matters of delimitation that they believed should be addressed at a national level.

135. The Director raised the issue of what the 'normal' state of a system is, and noted that due to lack of capacity the region's tendency is still to be reactive. He noted the link to SOPAC's definition of sustainable development highlighting that to determine the 'limits of acceptable change' required knowledge of baseline situations. He therefore, stressed that baseline assessments must be part of the overall strategy toward embracing the ecosystem-based management approach.

136. He noted the issues relating to delimitation of maritime boundaries and informed Tonga that the Secretariat's role is technical in nature, in the provision of data and information, and that the negotiation of shared boundaries remains the responsibility of Sovereign States.

137. He further noted that although the Pacific Islands ocean region is one of the most surveyed areas in the world a large amount of the data is either lost or difficult to identify. He advised that a large number of past research initiatives carried out over the past two decades have not been followed-up and believed this to be an unsatisfactory position. He suggested that the aim is to encourage countries to work with the Secretariat toward addressing the issue of data rescue and improved coordination of future marine scientific research activities through maintaining robust national and regional databases.

138. Kiribati endorsed the recommendations of the STAR Habitats and Coastal Working Group, further, recommending that the Secretariat explore potential partnerships with institutions that hold ROV technology to assist in improved habitat mapping in the region. She advised the Secretariat of their priority to develop a marine minerals policy to assist in guiding the development of national legislation and regulations and was encouraged by progress made with regard to the redesign of the marine scientific research cruise coordination database and looked forward to receiving it.

139. The Adviser from Imperial College (London) supported the recommendation of Kiribati relating to a request for an ROV. She suggested that such technology allows cost-effective options for identifying cobalt-rich crusts and nodules in areas yet to be mapped. Furthermore, that an ROV would benefit countries in enabling the collection of data for environmental baseline monitoring in light of potential marine mining.

140. Fiji noted the progress by the Secretariat on activities relating to commencement of Phase II of Stage 2 - Japan / SOPAC Cooperative Deep-sea Minerals Programme and acknowledged the value of this long-term joint initiative. He acknowledged the important role of seconding expertise from MMAJ to the Secretariat, provided under the JICA Expert Programme. He advised that the continuation of a JICA Expert to the Secretariat is of critical importance to ensure effective coordination and reporting on the Japan / SOPAC Cooperative Deep-sea Minerals Programme and recommended the Secretariat pursue the matter of ensuring a replacement of the JICA Expert to the Secretariat.

141. The Secretariat advised that copies of the marine scientific research cruise coordination database would be provided to member

countries upon request. However, member countries were encouraged to provide copies of all data and information pertaining to marine scientific research cruises to the Secretariat as a back-up repository to national datasets.

142. The Secretariat noted the excellent work completed under the Japan/SOPAC Cooperative Deep-sea Minerals Programme by the most recent JICA Expert – Nobu Okamoto; concurring with the comments made by Fiji and advised that the Secretariat would be proactive in securing a replacement JICA Expert, from MMAJ.

143. The Marshall Islands expressed their gratitude for the achievements of the Programme in 2003, advising of the benefits accrued from activities of capacity building and identification of aggregates through a comprehensive mapping and sampling survey. He informed Council of the discovery of a shipwreck in the Majuro Lagoon during the mapping that has now become a popular dive site for tourists.

144. UNESCO-IOC noted the International GOOS Forum to be convened in Fiji in February 2004 immediately following the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Forum and advised Council that this was a good opportunity for the region to take a strong leadership role in the strengthening of regional GOOS alliances. He encouraged that planning commence as soon as possible and cited the opportunities that the two meetings presented.

145. With regard to Pacific Island GOOS he advised that the Secretariat had secured seed funds from NOAA, USA, UNESCO-IOC and the EU to establish the PI-GOOS initiative. He suggested that these funds could be used to recruit a regional coordinator to develop PI-GOOS and assist in marine scientific research cruise coordination activities. He further urged that prompt recruitment of a coordinator would greatly assist in preparations for the mentioned meetings planned for February 2004.

146. Vanuatu registered satisfaction with the progress of the Programme activities in country and advised that activities for the delimitation of their maritime boundaries remain a priority. Vanuatu stated that outputs relating to on-land and marine mineral resources assessment and policy issues continue to remain a priority and recommended that the Secretariat seek opportunities to secure funds for recruitment of a Mineral Resources Adviser.

147. The Adviser from Moss Landing Marine Laboratory commended the mapping and sampling survey activities of the Secretariat and the value that such work represents to the region. However, he expressed concern on the aging equipment (such as the 18-year-old EPC recorder of geophysical data held by the Secretariat) to conduct such surveys. He advised of the risk of lost surveying opportunities in the event of equipment failure whilst in the field due to the lack of backup equipment and recommended that Council consider replacement of these equipment noting the likelihood of increased future demand for products from these types of surveys.

148. The Adviser from the University of Hawaii (SOEST) suggested that it would be very useful for the Secretariat to provide future sessions with more detailed reference on the actual 'products' of work programme activities advising that this would assist people should they wish to follow up on specific products.

9.2 ISSUES ARISING IN THE OCEAN AND ISLANDS PROGRAMME

149. The Secretariat presented paper AS32/9.2.

150. The Secretariat presented the issues arising in the Ocean and Islands Programme and acknowledged Council's comments, relating to some of the issues mentioned in AS32/9.2, during plenary discussions of Council under the previous Agenda Item.

151. The Secretariat sought Council's consideration and guidance on the following issues: transcription of geophysical data held in the SOPAC Petroleum Databank; mineral resources development, and policy; activities relating to delimitation of maritime boundaries and those related to selected countries who potentially could prepare claims for an extended continental shelf; education for sustainability through continued offer of the Certificate in Earth Science and Marine Geology, and SEREAD activities to build capacity and awareness at tertiary, secondary, and primary school level, respectively; and resource constraints related to personnel and equipment required for work programme delivery.

152. The Secretariat also commented on the challenges facing the Programme for 2004 and beyond. The opportunity of implementation of the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy was identified through the convening next February of the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Fo-

rum to develop an integrated regional framework for action of ocean initiatives that would influence the programming of all CROP agencies. The growing importance and acceptance of ecosystem-based management approach was highlighted, as well as the need to integrate resource economics into all SOPAC activities, especially in the planning, development and management of natural resources.

153. Other challenges included seeking Council's guidance on SOPAC's future role in the next phase of the AusAID-funded South Pacific Sea-level and Climate Monitoring Project; and ensuring favourable outcomes from the 2nd I-GOOS Forum to be held in Fiji in February 2004.

154. The Chair invited Council's comments on the issues and challenges facing the Programme as raised by the Secretariat.

155. The Federated States of Micronesia acknowledged the value of a regional approach to certain activities relating to the delimitation of maritime boundaries, whilst acknowledging that some actions remain a national responsibility. He commended the Secretariat on activities relating to this initiative.

156. Fiji highlighted the emerging issues of petroleum data transcription; marine mineral resources development; maritime boundaries delimitation and extended continental shelf; and the issue of education for sustainability as priorities. He also emphasised the need for the Secretariat to include capacity building as an element of all work programme activities. He queried the expected timeframe for completing the transcription of the petroleum data.

157. The Adviser from Ridge 2000 applauded the efforts and plans of the Programme, in particular the development of the databases and information management systems pertaining to ocean data. He advised Council that the regional challenge of rescuing historic data and data loss mentioned by the Secretariat is also a global challenge. He applauded the education for sustainability initiative and noted its importance in raising the awareness of marine science in the region.

158. He informed Council of the proposed US-based research initiative, the Ridge 2000 Programme and advised Council of the selection of the back-arc basin-spreading centre in the eastern Lau Basin, which occurs within the EEZ of Tonga, as one of three global locations for focussed, multi-disciplinary research relating to earth system dynamics over the next

twelve years. He advised that data collected would be open source; and that Ridge 2000 looked forward to working with scientists and educators in the region.

159. Tonga welcomed the comments made on the Ridge 2000 initiative and advised that his government looked forward to working closely with them.

160. The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat advised Council of the proactive role played by SOPAC in the CROP-Marine Sector Working Group toward preparations of convening the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Forum for the implementation of the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy. He informed Council that the draft integrated regional framework for action of ocean initiatives would be circulated to the membership through the Secretariat for review and comment.

161. The Secretariat advised Council that activities to transcribe petroleum data would commence in the fourth quarter of 2003. Council was also informed that cost savings would be realised due to using a larger initiative by Geoscience Australia to transcribe their aging datasets.

162. The Director noted the need to develop capacity to meet challenges faced by the membership with regard to capacity in the areas of ocean management and science. He sought the support of Council for the development of an integrated regional framework for action of ocean initiatives, citing this as critical to agreeing to regional priorities. He concurred with comments regarding the importance of mineral development for some countries and particularly the priority toward development of sound national minerals policies. He suggested that a coordinated, regional approach to addressing policy and strategy development provides an effective approach. He noted the progress of Papua New Guinea with respect to their minerals policy and the request by Kiribati and Fiji to progress their efforts in this regard. He reiterated that maritime boundaries is a key issue, with SOPAC's role being technical in nature. He suggested that regional collaboration, to ensure a mutually beneficial result for extended continental shelf claims in common areas of interest, would be cost effective.

163. The Director also raised the issue of environmental hotspots in the region and noted the excellent work by SPREP on developing a strategy to respond to the issue of World War II wrecks in the region, which was proactive in dealing with what could result in

catastrophic effects on the marine environment if mitigating action is not taken on wrecks that pose a high risk.

164. Tonga reiterated its position pertaining to delimitation of their maritime boundaries, advising that they would undertake all maritime boundary delimitation and extension activities themselves.

165. Council decided that with respect to the issues raised for Council consideration, mineral resources assessment remains a critical part of the SOPAC Work Programme and urges the Secretariat to work with partners during the coming year to secure a staffing position for an adviser in mineral resources for sustainable development.

166. Council further:

- Encouraged the Secretariat's proactive role in the planning of the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Forum, to date, and approved continued active engagement of SOPAC within the CROP-Marine Sector Working Group toward this important regional initiative.
- Acknowledged the progress made by the Secretariat on resolving the issue of transcribing the invaluable geophysical datasets held at the SOPAC Petroleum DataBank at Geoscience Australia.
- Acknowledged the progress made on maritime boundaries delimitation and extended continental shelf activities and encouraged those members who have the potential to submit claims for an extended continental shelf to remain mindful of the 2009 deadline for claims submission.
- Recognised Education for Sustainability as a guiding principle toward sustainable development and encouraged the Secretariat to identify and secure the resources necessary to sustain the capacity building activities of the Secretariat, in particular for the continuation of the Certificate in Earth Science and Marine Geology.
- Encouraged the Secretariat to continue to seek support for strengthening the human and institutional resource requirements for effective delivery of the Ocean and Islands Programme.
- Strongly supported the new initiative to establish a Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Information System and the continuation of activities to improve the coordination of marine scientific research within EEZs of the SOPAC Islands member countries.

- Acknowledged the emerging importance of resource economics toward more considered decisions for the planning, development and management of their land and ocean resources and thanked the UK/ODI for its continued support for the Resource Economist position.

- Requested the Secretariat to prepare for Council consideration a paper on the future role of SOPAC in the long-term South Pacific Sea Level and Climate Monitoring Project initiative.

- Supported the Secretariat's active involvement as co-host of the 2nd I-GOOS Forum to be convened in February 2004 in Fiji.

167. The Secretariat noted that the proposed 2004 Work Plan and Budget would be discussed under Agenda Item 15.5.

10. COMMUNITY LIFELINES PROGRAMME

10.1 REPORT ON THE COMMUNITY LIFELINES PROGRAMME FOR 2003

168. The Secretariat introduced the overall framework of the new Community Lifelines Programme, outlining that seven separate presentations would be made with allowance for discussions at the end of each presentation: Work Programme Reporting 2003; Issues Arising; New Items; EU Water Linkages; EU ICT Linkages; Pacific Water Regional Action Plan; and Proposed Work Programme and Budget 2004. The relevant papers and information for this session, being: Report on the Community Lifelines Programme for 2003 Paper AS32/10.1; Issues Arising Paper AS32/10.2; Work Plan & Budget Paper AS32/15.5 (pages 35-52); ICT - Data CD; Pacific Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management; Pacific Dialogue on Water & Climate - Synthesis Report; Water - CD (Sigatoka Meeting Papers and Proceedings).

169. The Secretariat reported on the Programme's activities for 2003, referring to Council Paper AS32/10.1, in particular highlighting the activities within the three component areas and acknowledged the various donor commitments and financial support to the Programme from Australia, New Zealand, DFID (UK), France, Japan, Taiwan (ROC), UNDP, UNEP, ESCAP, ADB, World Bank and EU.

170. The Secretariat outlined the current Community Lifelines Programme staffing arrangements and highlighted the need to ad-

dress the lack of a Water Resources Engineer and the imminent departure of the Department for International Development (DFID) Water and Sanitation Specialist.

171. The Secretariat outlined the new regional policies behind the Programme in particular the Pacific Islands Energy Policy and Plan (PIEPP); Pacific Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Water Management (PRAP); Pacific Wastewater Policy Statement; Pacific Wastewater Framework for Action; and Pacific Islands Information and Communication Technologies Policy and Strategic Plan.

172. Fiji noted the Programme emphasis on water and sanitation and acknowledged the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management as a mechanism to assist the development of national water management strategies and further support to the water sector. Fiji requested continued assistance in the development of a national water policy and in groundwater protection and management. Fiji further advised the need for water and sanitation assistance on the island of Rotuma.

173. The Secretariat advised Council that water policy issues were recognised as being a priority and were specifically identified within the work programme under Output CL3.6 and advised that the ESCAP Strategic Management and Planning Workshop in 2002 is expected to provide national level follow-up opportunities.

174. Vanuatu noted their appreciation for support provided by the Programme, but indicated their concern that some projects had not been completed in the energy sector and that there should be fairness shown in meeting individual country needs.

175. The Secretariat informed Council that over the past three years whilst the Secretariat of the Pacific Communities PREFACE Programme was being implemented, the Programme had focussed on policy, database and energy efficiency and conservation activities. The Secretariat also noted that for the optimisation of programme delivery in the energy sector, that there is a particular need to ensure effective co-ordination and facilitation of projects currently being implemented by several CROP organisations and other agencies.

176. The Federated States of Micronesia noted their concern that a lot of activities at the regional level were being undertaken with not much activity at the national level. They also

noted that countries are expected to contribute to the cost of a project but should not have to pay for available expertise within SOPAC.

177. American Samoa made reference to the Pacific Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Water Management and reminded Council that the issue of high unaccounted-for-water was identified within the PRAP preparatory consultations at Sigatoka and subsequently at Kyoto, and asked the Secretariat whether this issue was addressed in the future work plan. American Samoa also suggested SOPAC consider the procurement of appropriate equipment as was necessary to develop a regional utility capacity-building programme.

178. The Secretariat advised Council that unaccounted-for-water was recognised as a priority and that water demand management was addressed under work programme Output CL2.1 and that the Secretariat was actively seeking funding opportunities for such a programme and exploring opportunities to partner with the Pacific Water Association.

179. American Samoa informed the Secretariat of wind energy data research and monitoring information that they held and offered to make this available to SOPAC and USP. They noted the importance of having access to information to support their efforts in development of effective technologies for harnessing wind as an energy source.

180. Niue acknowledged the work carried out by the Secretariat in the water and energy sectors, however noted that in relation to the task profiles there were a number of projects that remained to be completed and that these needed to be reviewed and their status updated as appropriate, and if any of these cannot be completed in a timely manner then they should be deleted. Furthermore, he requested more information on resource assessment and development, especially with regard to wind energy. Niue acknowledged assistance provided by the Secretariat in investigating the recent incidence of fish poisoning requesting further assistance on water quality training and equipment use.

181. The Secretariat informed Council that the task profile system historically had been a wish list. As a result of the new strategic approach to SOPAC's work programme activities it was now necessary to progressively update the task profiles to more accurately reflect the current work programmes. In addition, the new approach would allow for the specific activities to be reported against the 2004 work programme Key Performance Indicators.

182. The Secretariat also acknowledged that the current expectations of countries were high with respect to the water and energy sectors and noted that two years ago concern was raised about the lack of resources in the water sector. Hence due to the lack of resources in the water and energy sectors the situation would still remain where activities are unable to be implemented.

183. Kiribati advised that water remains a priority and specifically identified training and capacity building as areas for further assistance. They advised they would submit a full list of requirements to the Secretariat. While commending the Secretariat for its assistance in providing user-friendly GIS and remote sensing training that has allowed the development of national capacity, Kiribati also requested that further training be carried out.

184. Australia, in noting the new strategic programmatic approach adopted by the Secretariat, indicated that they were not clear how work the Secretariat undertakes within each component was prioritised.

185. The Secretariat advised that the issue of priority of activities for countries in the 2004 Work Plan would be addressed under Agenda Item 15.5.

186. Tonga acknowledged the activities of the Programme noting the need for assistance in the development of a water policy, resource assessment and monitoring capacity building. Concern was expressed over the apparent delay between the development of the PRAP and resulting implementation. Furthermore, Tonga questioned the role of SOPAC in the energy sector - whether it was restricted to training and highlighted the support provided to them through the EU-SOPAC EDF8 Project that has given them the ability to develop an ICT network and to connect to the world wide web.

187. The Secretariat informed Council that in taking vision to action, activities had already started with the provision of assistance to Papua New Guinea, in using the PRAP to develop a National Water Strategy and that SOPAC can provide technical assistance to other PICs.

188. Samoa requested the Secretariat to assist in the establishment of a hydrological network as they have a significant amount of hydrological data stored in the Apia Observatory and Samoa Water Authority that is not easily accessible and will facilitate the sharing of information to relevant stakeholders.

189. The Secretariat acknowledged that this was important and that the issue had been raised in STAR, in addition the proposed hydrological training scheduled for early 2004 would assist in meeting these needs.

190. The Republic of the Marshall Islands noted the importance of all sectors of the Community Lifelines Programme to communities, and asked the Secretariat within what timeframe would the three sectors be reviewed.

191. The Secretariat noted that this was the first time that the work programme had been presented entirely under the individual components with key indicators and that it was anticipated that the fine tuning would be progressive over the next 2-3 years.

192. Vanuatu acknowledged the value of the Programme in particular the water component and requested assistance in water resources assessment, water supply in rural areas and specifically referred to activities CL2.1.2-2.1.5. He acknowledged the assistance provided by NIWA, SOPAC and UNESCO for the Catchment and Communities Project; and requested that information relating to World Water Day be sent well in advance so that adequate time is available for distribution.

193. NIWA reinforced the need for the timely rescue of data sets for the management of water resources and its long-term importance noting that it is preferable to do this now rather than trying to develop new data sets and this is also valuable for future planning and sharing.

194. Fiji commended the STAR Water Working Group recommendations to Council and asked for clarification on the US-GEF White Water to Blue Water Initiative.

195. The Secretariat confirmed that funding of US\$25 Million was available for the US-GEF White Water to Blue Water Initiative (Ridge to Reef) watershed and coastal area management project that is being implemented in the Caribbean and could potentially be rolled out into the Pacific through a mechanism similar to the EU EDF8 Programme. The benefit to the Pacific is that the PRAP is linked to the Caribbean through the Joint Programme for Action and allowed the soliciting of support towards the Pacific.

196. The Secretariat reconfirmed the strategic programmatic approach to the development of its work programmes and that these were underpinned within the Community Lifelines

Programme individual policies in the three sectors (Water and Sanitation, ICT and Energy) that have been supported and endorsed at the highest political level. It was further noted that there is a need to move away from "wish list mentality" and for countries to set priorities within the framework of these policies, and the need to develop a process of how to measure success and that a strategic approach is the way forward.

197. The Adviser from the Hawaii Institute of Geophysics raised the question of what SOPAC's role should be, indicating that it was best positioned to provide technical support and expertise in the development of guidelines and implementation of projects however the dilemma with this is one of the availability of adequate funds rather than that of expertise.

198. Australia noted its concern relating to the STAR comments regarding SOPAC's ability in respect to providing technical expertise and getting demonstrations on the ground considering funding is limited. She questioned how SOPAC could have the most impact, noting that SOPAC may not be able to keep all PICs happy. The question was how best to assist through development of policies and legislations for the more effective use of resources.

199. The Secretariat indicated that the greatest impact may be at the policy level and working within these policies, however this would need to be addressed within the context of SOPAC's overall mandate and consideration of the limited resources both financial and human.

200. Council noted and endorsed the report on the 2003 Work Plan for the Community Lifelines Programme acknowledging the need for additional financial and technical support to meet future commitments as urgent.

10.2 ISSUES ARISING IN THE COMMUNITY LIFELINES PROGRAMME

201. The Secretariat, referring to Council Paper AS32/10.2, highlighted to Council new and emerging issues that are of relevance to the Community Lifelines Programme. These being:

- Staffing level in the Programme is critical, particularly in relation to the urgent need for a water engineer and replacement water and sanitation specialist.
- The upcoming relevant Commission on

Sustainable Development themes for 2004-2005 water, sanitation and human settlements, and 2006-2007 includes energy for sustainable development, industrial development, and air-pollution/atmosphere and climate change.

- Type II Initiatives in Water through NZAID (ICU / Hydrology Training) and EU, and in Energy with the European Union and NZAID, noting that development and realisation of the Type II partnerships will require both human and financial resources to implement
- ADB - Kiribati National Water Resources Assessment and Management Project through the provision of technical assistance.
- Dialogue on Water and Climate - Regional node for the Collaborative Programme on Water and Climate in the future.
- 11th Regional Steering Committee Meeting for Southeast Asia and the Pacific - UNESCO IHP with the theme of "Managing Water Resources under Climatic Extremes and Natural Disasters".
- Energy, Gender and Sustainable Development Workshop - recommendations for the establishment of a Pacific Energy Gender Network and that this be initially located at SOPAC.
- Regional Biomass Resource Assessment - Fiji, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Tonga, Samoa, Vanuatu, and to be extended to other PICs in 2004.
- Energy Demand Side Management Project with Pacific Power Association and power utilities.
- Move to the use of Open Source software to reduce costs.
- GIS and Remote Sensing - standardisation of software through the recommendations of the Pacific Islands Information and Communication Technologies Policy and Strategic Plan (PIIPP).
- Participation in Regional and International Fora - World Summit on Information Systems (WSIS).
- Implementation of the Pacific Islands Energy Policy and Plan.
- Special reference was also made to the recommendations from the 2003 Forum Communiqué:

- * that endorsed the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management, Communiqué and Ministerial Declaration, and its associated Type II Partnership Initiatives. Leaders also endorsed the outcomes of the 'Water in Small Island Countries' theme at the 3rd World Water Forum including the Joint Caribbean-Pacific Programme for Action on Water and Climate Session Statement and priority actions (para 52);
 - * assist in the implementation of the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management, and host a side event on water at the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD12) (para 53); and
 - * the Energy Working Group of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific to review the Pacific Islands Energy Policy and Plan (PIEPP) in light of Palau's initiative to strengthen the renewable energy components of the strategic plan (para 63).
- World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) – Prepcom 3 Outcomes negotiated at intergovernmental level in Geneva will cover a wide range of issues concerning the development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) throughout the world.
 - Report on the joint New Zealand Water and Waste Water Association and Pacific Water Association Meeting – Auckland, September 2003.
 - Pacific Water Association Meeting 2004, and the proposal to hold this concurrently with the 33rd SOPAC Annual Session and STAR in 2004.
 - Global Water Partnership (GWP) – Integrated Water Management.
 - Support to Niue in water quality and resource assessment.
 - Recommendations from the 2003 STAR Energy and Water Working Groups.

202. Council, strongly supported the use of Open Source software applications as a cost effective means of information and data management and sharing in the region. In so doing Council recognised the immediate need for funding support to provide human capacity building and development for relevant staff from PICs in Open Source applications and deployment to achieve sustainable solutions.

203. Council further noted the above issues and supported the recommendations from the recent Energy, Gender and Sustainable Development Workshop, in particular that a Pacific Energy and Gender Network (PEG) be established and that the Network initially be hosted at the SOPAC Secretariat.

204. Council acknowledged the interest and support from NZAID and the EU in developing partnerships through the Type II initiatives in Water and Energy.

205. Council recognised the ongoing requirement and relevance for the Community Lifelines Programme to prepare, participate and contribute to the Multi-Year Programme of Work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, more specifically in relation to water and sanitation in 2004-2005 and in relation to energy in 2006-2007.

206. The Secretariat presented to Council for noting new items that had arisen since the preparation of Council papers AS32/10.1 and AS32/10.2. These were:

207. Council noted the new items as presented by the Secretariat.

208. The Secretariat presented to Council for noting the EU-SOPAC EDF8 Project water linkages and how these integrated with the Community Lifelines work programme. The Secretariat noted that the EU water activities fell within EU Key Result Area 2.

209. The Secretariat informed Council about the current status of the Type II Initiatives developed and presented at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development. In particular that SOPAC is involved in four out of fourteen of the Type II Initiatives (Vulnerability, Water, Energy and Oceans) and noted that the Programme is directly involved in the Water and Energy Initiatives.

210. The Secretariat also elaborated that the Type II's are about providing platforms for partnerships for further support to programmes and link to the water and energy strategies within the Programme and also to the relevant regional policies for water and energy.

211. The Secretariat noted the European Union Energy Type II Initiative and the proposal to work and link with the Pacific Energy Type II Initiative which is underpinned by the Pacific Islands Energy Policy and Plan. This would provide the opportunity for securing funding from European Union funds which are outside the EU EDF fund. The Secretariat further noted that the Pacific Water Type II Ini-

tiative is also underpinned by a regional policy.

212. The Secretariat advised that the EU Water Fund specifically targeted Africa, however, through international intervention have managed to succeed in getting the EU to recognise the Pacific through the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management (PRAP) and the Pacific Type II.

213. Council noted the Water and Energy linkages between the Community Lifelines Programme and the EU-SOPAC EDF8 Project and the opportunities for further developing partnerships through the Type II mechanism as presented by the Secretariat.

214. The Secretariat presented to Council EU-SOPAC EDF8 Project ICT Linkages and how these integrated with the Community Lifelines work programme. The Secretariat noted that the EU ICT activities fell within EU Key Result Area 4.

215. Council noted the ICT linkages between the Community Lifelines Programme and the EU-SOPAC EDF8 Project as presented by the Secretariat.

216. The Secretariat presented to Council the PRAP elaborating on its development through a regional consultative process, and through regional and international advocacy such as at the 3rd World Water Forum in Kyoto.

217. The Secretariat highlighted the opportunities for developing projects and activities based on the PRAP but acknowledged the challenge that these needed to be realistic and that considerable effort and resources would be required in particular if SOPAC was to fully participate in the upcoming CSD12 and 13, backstopping support to New York-based Pacific Missions.

218. The Secretariat also highlighted the other major regional commitments, which include the Dialogue on Water and Climate (DWC), ADB, support from NZ for the Pacific Type II, and EU Water for Life.

219. The Director acknowledged that the Secretariat had done well to place water and sanitation issues high on the political agenda, resulting in developing linkages with the Global Water Partnership (GWP) with SOPAC appointed to the Steering Committee and the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) (with SOPAC a Regional Node) and recommended that PICs at national

level make strong commitments that are consistent with regional policies.

220. Solomon Islands stressed the importance of energy, water and sanitation and acknowledged SOPAC's initiative in establishing the Community Lifelines Programme and the potential support from the EU to help support the activities of the programme. They further recommended that the Programme focus on capacity building where required by PICs and that the region needs to be represented in global fora, although SOPAC programmes should focus on national concerns as opposed to being driven by global agendas.

221. The Secretariat reconfirmed that the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management was developed from national consultations, stating national needs and issues. Within this context, levels of human capacity within SOPAC and PICs also need to be identified and the PRAP allows donors to match their priority areas with the relevant components within the PRAP.

222. Council noted the development of the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management and the opportunities that it affords for development of national water strategies and for the development of partnerships and securing of resources.

223. The Secretariat presented the proposed 2004 Work Programme and Budget for the Community Lifelines Programme, referring to Council Paper AS32/10.5 - Work Programme and Budget (Community Lifelines Programme - pages 35-52), and highlighting to Council the Key Performance Indicators for the three components within the Programme.

224. The Adviser from HIG/UH commented on the ambitious scope of the 2004 work programme and asked the Secretariat what percentage of this was anticipated to be achieved.

225. The Secretariat indicated that 80% of the Community Lifelines Programme 2004 work programme and budget was secured and that some activities were already on-going and that others would be implemented through partnering with other organisations such as NIWA for hydrological training and Live and Learn Environmental for environmental educational. However the issue of the lack of human capacity in the water sector especially in relation to the need for a water engineer would impact programme delivery.

226. Fiji noted the issues and challenges

ahead for SOPAC in delivery of the Community Lifelines 2004 Work Programme and the need to strengthen the capacity of the Programme to address issues at the national level.

227. Council acknowledged the excellent work the Secretariat had carried out over the past 12-24 months to develop the Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management, which was endorsed by the Pacific Island Forum Leaders and brought to the global attention at the World Summit on Sustainable Development and at the 3rd World Water Forum in Kyoto. This was achieved with new partners and limited staff.

228. Along with the WSSD Pacific Type II Partnership Initiative on Sustainable Water Management, this will provide an invaluable platform for developing partnerships including through the 10 year review of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Commission on Sustainable Development at the 2004-2005 sessions while still focussing on water, sanitation and human settlements. Council strongly endorsed the need to secure new resources for the Secretariat to remain engaged in this work.

11. COMMUNITY RISK PROGRAMME (CRP)

229. The Secretariat presented the Programme's report for work implemented in the year 2003 highlighting issues arising out of it, see Council papers AS32/11.1, AS32/11.2 and AS32/11.3.

11.1 REPORT ON THE COMMUNITY RISK PROGRAMME FOR 2003

230. Tonga highlighted the relationship between the World Bank Project and the Community Risk Programme and requested that assistance be extended to include nationally-funded projects such as the cyclone emergency and risk management project. Tonga informed Council that the new Disaster Management Office will be housed in the Ministry of Works premises. The National Information and Communication Centre will be set up in the new building at the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources. They look forward to the establishment of a MapServer as proposed under the EU-SOPAC EDF8 Project and that this MapServer would provide an invaluable tool for sharing information. Assist-

ance was also requested from the Secretariat in establishing a local network between line ministries to ensure the sharing of information.

231. New Zealand congratulated the Secretariat for the significant achievements made in developing CHARM but enquired as to the time frame for which the expected benefits could be transferred to all countries.

232. The Secretariat replied that it was a challenging task and needed capacity building to be embedded into Government processes. Consultations of the Advocacy Team, institutional strengthening and training are integral with the application of CHARM. A five-year time frame is envisaged to achieve this together with CHARM development partners. Countries need to be committed to make CHARM more meaningful in each country.

233. Papua New Guinea requested that the bathymetry of the EU-SOPAC EDF8 Project site be prioritised and carried out by SOPAC and this be strategically planned with similar work in neighbouring countries.

234. Papua New Guinea (PNG) enquired if the pilot project in Port Vila, Disaster and Risk Management in Marginal Communities in Vanuatu be carried out elsewhere in Vanuatu to determine if know-how had been transferred locally. If this is done, PNG requested that the lessons learnt and know-how be reported to Council in 2004.

235. Samoa expressed their concern that they did not feature much in the 2003 and 2004 Work Plan. The Secretariat responded by attributing this to the preoccupation in country with the government restructuring and transfer of the NDMO to the Lands Department.

236. Marshall Islands queried why the Programme strategies didn't involve FEMA in the North Pacific. The Secretariat responded that approaches to FEMA were not successful.

237. Vanuatu appreciated the work of the Programme and acknowledged the efforts of the High-Level Advocacy Team and ongoing support of donors. Vanuatu supports CHARM and particularly the involvement of local people.

238. Cook Islands extended their gratitude for the Community Risk Programme activities. They requested consultation with the Secretariat regarding the donation of a fire appliance and training programmes which had been adversely affected by the recent departure of the focal point at the NDMO.

239. Australia acknowledged the importance of Community Risk work and suggested that it look into profiling vulnerabilities in the region, how prepared countries are, and whether there are any trends.

240. Tuvalu thanked the Secretariat for the continued country support and looked forward to the implementation of the SOPAC Work Programme.

241. Vanuatu noted the importance of involving Government in future projects and requested that DFID project outputs be mainstreamed into Government processes for sustainability.

242. New Zealand noted the statement that "*the concept of the Pacific Islands Regional Catastrophe Insurance Scheme was accepted*" by the FEMM. New Zealand pointed out that there was no regional consensus for a regional catastrophe insurance fund at the 2003 Majuro FEMM or the Auckland Forum.

243. The Secretariat assured Council that the Catastrophe Insurance report was in draft form and all concerns will be addressed.

244. Niue thanked the Secretariat for assistance in the review of National Disaster Plans and emergency response and communication needs.

245. NIWA emphasised the importance of strategic planning in assessment of risk and commended the CHARM approach for building capacity to address islands at risk. NIWA also recommended the application of the EVI to provide a measure for strategic risk management at all levels i.e. between islands, catchments and sectors.

246. Solomon Islands noted the positive outcomes of the Disaster and Risk Management in marginal communities in the Vanuatu Project and requested a similar project in the Solomon Islands. It was suggested that the EU-SOPAC EDF8 Project could consider this approach.

247. Council accepted the report on the 2003 Work Plan for the Community Risk Programme.

11.2 ISSUES ARISING IN THE COMMUNITY RISK PROGRAMME

248. Australia was interested to know when SOPAC's support for the CHARM process would

no longer be critical. The Secretariat responded that the measure of success would be when islands are able to determine the individual risk exposures using available scientific tools and traditional knowledge. An example was the use of the EVI tool within country, island to island, watershed to watershed and sector to sector.

249. Council noted the issues raised in the Community Risk Programme briefing paper:

- Programme Design and Implementation taking into account lessons learnt and the situation on the ground in terms of resources and proactivity of focal points.
- Applying the broader risk management approach in Pacific Island Countries.
- Key outcomes from the 11th regional Disaster Management Meeting:
 - * An endorsement by the regional NDMOs of the Community Risk Programme priorities and approach;
 - * The identification of regional and national priorities for the 2004 programme work plan;
 - * A recommendation for SOPAC to develop a regional policy framework for communities at risk;
 - * The development of a regional disaster management planning framework for national adaptation; and
 - * A partnership between SOPAC and the ISDR Secretariat to coordinate the Pacific input to the global ten-year review of Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action.
- Ensuring an effective transition from the existing Disaster Management Project to the new Community Risk Programme by reviewing the staffing structure and skills base required to deliver broader programme priorities.
- Key challenges for 2004 and beyond were identified and these included:
 - * Gaining commitment from national governments for the adoption of risk management practices.
 - * Establishing a clear regional policy for the management of community risk.
 - * Developing a national policy and planning framework for dealing with disasters.

- * Clearly defining the role and responsibilities of the NDMO.
- * Clearly defining the national responsibilities for the implementation of tools such as CHARM.
- * Improving emergency preparedness and response capabilities.
- * Strengthening public awareness programmes.
- * Improving current skill levels through a range of professional development activities.
- * Integrating traditional coping mechanisms with scientific and technological solutions.
- * Documenting the technical lessons learnt from the impact of hazards.
- * Integrating existing SOPAC initiatives such as the Pacific Cities into the EU Project.
- * Applying the EVI database.
- * Conducting hazard and vulnerability assessments.
- * Providing timely and accurate data and appropriate tools and models to integrate risk assessment into national development planning.
- * Contributing to the improvement of early warning systems.
- * Developing a CHARM training programme and implementation guide.
- * Developing risk treatment models based on CHARM outputs.
- * Measuring the cost benefits of applying CHARM.
- * Coordinating in partnership with the ISDR Secretariat the Pacific input to the current review of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action by December 2004.

250. With respect to risk financing for disasters Council also recalled that at the 2003 FEMM:

“Ministers recognised the extreme vulnerability of the region to natural disasters, including cyclones, storm surges, tsunamis, earthquakes and droughts, and the substantial economic imposts

these events created. As such, risk financing needs to be placed within the broader set of risk management strategies”; and that ministers agreed to: (a) “encourage priority being given to the implementation of national risk management strategies, including appropriate enabling public policy, the use of the private insurance market where feasible, and expenditure on hazard assessment and risk management”; and (b) “urge donors to support the collection of information on hazards facing, and vulnerability of, FICs”. Council agreed to urge countries to have a whole-of-government integrated approach to managing community risk to ensure that safer communities are built.

11.3 DRAFT PACIFIC ISLANDS REGIONAL POLICY FOR COMMUNITIES AT RISK

251. Council noted the preliminary work on the draft policy framework and agreed to its continued development and improvement during 2004, and resubmission to Council at its next Annual Session for endorsement.

252. American Samoa brought to the attention of Council environmental risks, economic implications and potential crew safety issues associated with the fisheries industry in the transfer of fuel at sea or in the EEZs.

253. In response to the request raised by American Samoa, Director of SPREP reported that they had examined the issue of transfer of fuel at sea from fishing tankers and to fishing vessels, and its findings are set out in the Information Paper to the SOPAC meeting (see Appendix 4). Taking note of the recommendations contained therein, Council decided for the Secretariat to inform and work with FFA to seriously consider banning fueling of fishing vessels at sea or in the EEZ's by making it one of the minimum terms and conditions of fishing access in any of the FFA member country's EEZ.

254. SPREP advised Council of the FFA approach to prevent the transshipment of catch at sea in the minimum access condition for Distant Water Fishing Nations. SPREP strongly recommended that the best solution would be to incorporate controls on fuel transfer as a minimum term and condition of access. All fuel transfer shall be carried in a port as required for transfer of catch.

255. Cook Islands reported a similar problem in the Cooks and strongly supported the recommendation proposed by SPREP.

256. The SPREP Director also presented to Council the PACPOL report on WWII wrecks found in the Pacific and tabled for Council's consideration the recommendation from SPREP's Governing Council (see SPREP Statement, Appendix 4), given SOPAC's capacity to lead a regional approach to this regional threat.

257. Noting the progress SPREP had made on WWII wrecks, the decisions of the 14th SPREP Meeting, the requests by some member countries, and the real risk posed by the wrecks, Council agreed that the SOPAC Secretariat would, within its area of expertise and resources, be permitted to carry out baseline studies of select WWII wreck sites and ordnance dumps and work with SPREP to produce assessments including contingency plans for spills and risk management strategies.

12. PROGRAMME REVIEW MONITORING AND EVALUATION

258. The Deputy Director introduced the agenda item noting that the issue had been raised on two previous occasions at the Session, during the STAR Meeting and during the informal briefing session held for Council to introduce them to the Work Programmes and Strategies document (see Appendix 5). He also pointed out that the Work Programmes and Strategies document also has a section on reporting, monitoring and evaluation and a mention is also made in the document's Preamble that monitoring and evaluation were outstanding issues to be resolved in the new way of doing business.

259. Council was informed that the paper before them also encapsulated the substance of discussions between the Secretariat and the Chair of STAR. The paper was proposing the formation of three Programme Monitoring and Evaluation Groups (PMEG) from TAG/STAR scientists, one for each of the Work Programmes, to receive the work programme reporting and draft work plan and budget for the following year at the same time that Council did for the purpose of evaluation. Each PMEG would prepare a monitoring and evaluation report by e-mail and then travel to Suva just prior to the annual session to spend one to two days with the Programme Manager. It is anticipated that the process would lead to a more robust and better-informed discussion during Joint Council-TAG sessions, than has been the case lately.

260. Australia expressed strong support for a

monitoring and evaluation process but requested clarification with respect to the costs involved in the process recommended. What actual fees would be involved with regard to the scientists? Was this a service offered from goodwill?

261. The Chair of STAR responded that it was to be on a voluntary service, further noting that the current practice is to read documentation on the plane to the annual meeting as could be discerned from the general nature of the scientists' comments on the SOPAC Work Programme during Joint Council/TAG Sessions. He expressed the desire to get people committed to the PMEG process to enable full review and that the only cost to the Secretariat would be travel expenses.

262. Solomon Islands expressed support for the paper, and recognised the importance of establishing a PMEG, although he felt that the Secretariat should conduct monitoring regularly to keep abreast of relevant developments. With respect to the fact that PMEGLs would meet in Suva he queried whether PMEG would also need to review programmes in individual countries to be really effective.

263. The Deputy Director informed Council that whilst this model was built around discussions with the Chair of STAR, it also takes into consideration the experience gained during the review and monitoring of the SOPAC Disaster Management Project which included 1 to 2 visits to countries on an annual basis, but noted that if this were to be the case with a SOPAC PMEG it would clearly increase costs. It was felt that the country reviews would perhaps best be done in this circumstance in conjunction with the Annual Session.

264. The Director expressed the personal view that some may be considering the process without having fully thought about it. In view of the fact that the current Corporate Plan period was ending, and the new reporting structure and programmatic approach; he wondered whether it was best to accept the process in principle, and commence actual implementation at the 2004 Annual Session. This would allow the Joint Council/TAG and the Secretariat time to consider the process fully.

265. The Chair of STAR supported the Director's view stating that many STAR scientists deemed suitable candidates for the PMEGLs were not present in the room during consideration of this agenda item. Deferring implementation of the process by one year would allow a considered choice of names and refinement of terms of reference.

266. Solomon Islands expressed concern that Council might be imposing too much on STAR/TAG scientists if a serious process that produces good outcomes for the future of SOPAC was yet again being offered on a voluntary basis. He suggested paying a fee for the service to ensure more serious / professional approach is given to the work.

267. Fiji also supported the principle of the process. He noted that the review group of the Disaster Management Project included the same group of people led by a chairperson over the entire review period. He felt that level of commitment by the people involved in the PMEG should be such that they were prepared to work for a number of years in that capacity.

268. The Chair of STAR, in reference to the earlier comment by Solomon Islands on paying a fee for the PMEG service, reiterated the preference of STAR to conduct the work on a purely voluntary basis so that what was rendered to Council would invariably be honest and unbiased advice from individuals already committed to the region.

269. Cook Islands also expressed support for the paper and process and proposed a small modification to the text to increase the time allocated to the review at the Secretariat to allow for up to a 3-day stay.

270. Council agreed to establish three Programme Monitoring and Evaluation Groups, one each for the Ocean and Islands, Community Lifelines, and Community Risk Programmes. Council further agreed that budgetary provision be made for the Groups to meet in Suva for up to 3 days prior to each Annual Session, and that the Chair of STAR and the Director work on developing the process further during the coming year in readiness for implementation from the 2004 Annual Session.

GOVERNING COUNCIL POLICY SESSION

13. CORPORATE SERVICES PROGRAMME

13.1 REPORT ON THE CORPORATE SERVICES PROGRAMME

271. The Secretariat presented the report on the 2003 Work Plan of the Corporate Services Programme, summarising the role and function of the Programme, noting its three major components and introduced those responsible for the management of each component. He

reported that the vast majority of Programme activities were ongoing in nature. The Secretariat also provided a brief overview of the critical ICT element, the web-based window of the Secretariat to the outside world. Most notably, the Secretariat uses open-source software to develop its own products and infrastructure, to ensure communication systems are secure, cost-effective and transferable.

272. American Samoa queried whether SOPAC has access to video conferencing and suggested this to be a cost-effective way of conducting meetings in the future for the region and strongly urged the Secretariat to look at utilising such facilities. This view was supported by Tonga.

273. The Secretariat confirmed that video conferencing facilities were available at SPC, FINTEL and USP - each was accessible to SOPAC. The chief constraints against having a dedicated SOPAC facility is the high expense of bandwidth in Fiji; and at current pricing the Secretariat could only afford a 128K bandwidth.

274. Australia, while appreciating the importance of the role of Corporate Services, was of the view that Corporate Services existed as a cross-cutting function to support the key programme areas. It is internal support which does not need to be reported to Council as a separate function, though the effectiveness of the area will clearly affect the success of the programmes. The Secretariat agreed to take on board Australia's concerns in the 2004 report to Council. There was general consensus among Council members for this suggestion of Australia, in terms of reporting Corporate Services activities in future.

275. The Director explained to Council that the issue of what makes up the core functions of an organisation is an issue not unique to SOPAC. Other CROP organisations over a number of years have had to grapple with the same issue. SOPAC required a complete review of what the core service of the organisation was when it nearly closed down in 1996-7. The Director pointed out that SOPAC's core functions could easily be seen when one imagined a SOPAC without any programmes. The organisation would basically be a bank of information and data which would have to be promoted on behalf of the region to attract funding while there would be a financial/accounting facility to handle the administering of memberships funds, i.e. the Regular Budget. Publications, data and information management, financial and administration services are in fact core to the effective functioning of

the organisation. He agreed that within each programme there are administration and financial aspects, but that the core functional nature of Corporate Services would be better understood if Council understood it in the context of what it would pay for in the 'worst-case scenario'. Furthermore, he told Council that SOPAC's Corporate Services Programme remains amongst the most lean and efficient in CROP.

276. Australia reiterated the importance of the Corporate Services in ensuring the effective operation of the organisation. Her concern was more that reports to Council needed to focus on the programme outcomes and issues rather than the internal administration required to support the programmes.

277. American Samoa pointed out that the issue was 'right-sizing' rather than downsizing; acknowledging that it can be difficult for Council members to know whether we are at the right size or otherwise. Suggested possible benchmarking of SOPAC against other regional organisations to identify areas which need to and can be strengthened, such as that of water, which the Director identified previously. Such an approach would allow prioritisation of resources and planning. He requested that we look at areas where SOPAC is weak in so that they may be strengthened.

278. Solomon Islands suggested that the programme evaluation and monitoring process endorsed by Council earlier on in the meeting might also be useful for also reviewing the Corporate Services.

279. At a question by Solomon Islands about the prospect of hooking up SOPAC member countries to the IT network, the Secretariat informed Council that the EU-EDF8 and EDF9 projects had provisions to build a powerful bridge between the Secretariat and the member countries. It was also noted that all information would also be accessed through the Internet, and that the only constraint would be the national ICT capacities to sustain facilities.

280. The Director stressed that ICT was a key issue for the region, especially in areas of information and data to serve the countries. This issue has also been raised in many fora and noted the existence of a regional ICT Policy, though inconsistency still existed in the diverse and geographically vast region. He marvelled at how the region's political masters kept pushing it down as an issue; noting

that often media was owned by governments, which in itself could create conflicts of interest. He hoped that the current review of the Forum would highlight communication as key in the region.

281. The Director also reassured Council that the Secretariat would explore how the cross-cutting corporate support services can be incorporated for better programme reporting in the new year.

282. In answer to the question "How often does the Secretariat update systems?" by the Solomon Islands, the Secretariat informed Council that protective systems are updated both daily and weekly and core software on a 6-monthly to yearly basis.

283. The Chair suggested that delegates should approach the Manager of Corporate Service programme directly with any individual queries on the financial and administration aspects of the Corporate Services Programme.

284. Council accepted the 2003 Work Plan report for the Corporate Services Programme.

14. ESTABLISHMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

14.1 DIRECTOR POSITION

285. The agenda item consisted of the Chair's report on Council deliberations "en camera" to appoint a new Director of SOPAC.

286. Prior to announcing the name of the successful candidate, the Chair reported on the need identified by Council to review the current Rules of Procedure used in the appointment of an executive officer of the organisation. Council identified a number of discrepancies that needed to be addressed so that procedures were consistent with each other.

287. Council met twice to consider the Director position with respect to the view of arriving at the consensus. Council in the first meeting disapproved the recommendation by the Suva-based Appointments Sub-committee on the appointment of the new director. Council in the second meeting then decided to vote on the shortlist of four candidates submitted by the Appointments Sub-Committee. After the results of the vote were known, it was the consensus of Council to offer the position to the candidate who had the clear majority of votes, Ms Cristelle Pratt. Council looked forward to working with the new Director.

14.2 DEPUTY DIRECTOR POSITION

288. The Deputy Director presented paper AS32/14.2, advising Council that the Rules of Procedure for Executive Appointments that apply to this position required Council to review the job description, terms and conditions of employment and the job advertisement of the Deputy Director position, given that the contract of the current incumbent was ending in March 2005. The selection of a new Deputy Director or the renewal of the contract of the current incumbent is on Council's agenda for the 2004 annual session. Council members were asked to comment on the information package attached to the Council paper.

289. Tonga congratulated the new Director and told the meeting that before considering the paper before him he wanted some discussion on the rules and procedures regarding the recruitment of senior executives of the SOPAC Secretariat. His view was that the process of selection carried out by the Suva-based Missions was unduly influenced by the Secretariat. He wanted the current appointment of a staff member of the Secretariat into the top executive position of SOPAC to be the last appointment of its kind. He expressed the wish that rules should be modified to prevent Secretariat staff from gaining the upper hand over government-endorsed candidates as he felt this was unfair to the small countries.

290. The Director clarified that the Secretariat was not involved in any selection process, and that it was duty bound to follow the regulations laid down by our Leaders in their Forum meetings, noting that the over-riding principle is employment on merit.

291. The Chair steered discussion back to the paper before Council and asked members to consider the documentation on the other executive position and comment, noting that the current Session is supposed to endorse the details and process of recruitment for the position.

292. Marshall Islands posed the question on whether there was a role for a Deputy Director since there is an executive management team comprising programme managers in place.

293. The Director reminded Council that the position was enshrined in the SOPAC constitution although there was a time in the past when Council agreed not to fill it, opting for a

Programme Manager selected by the Director. During the restructuring it was agreed to reinstate the position. He was of the personal opinion that the Deputy Director position was absolutely vital as the work load required two people in the Directorate.

294. Australia supported the merit selection process, but commented that management skills were not included in the selection criteria and suggested that another bullet-point be added to the list that reads : "proven high-level management expertise".

295. Cook Islands agreed with remarks by his fellow councillors on the paper before them but looked back to the deliberations on the last executive appointment and urged Council members to address the concerns and inconsistencies within the rules of procedure associated with making executive appointments over the months leading up to the next Council meeting. He suggested immediate and comprehensive dialogue on the issues and volunteered his services to be part of the group tasked with the job.

296. American Samoa felt that in the draft documents the first bullet-point under Required Knowledge, Skills and Experience was too restrictive and should be extended to cover other skills, such as engineering, hands-on and technical experience which should also be considered apart from pure research. A number of points of clarification he posed were satisfactorily addressed by the Secretariat and one point in particular, on housing, uncovered an omission from the table summarising the terms and conditions of employment. He expressed particular concern at the disparity in the education packages for national and expatriate executive staff and wanted the Secretariat to raise this with other CROP organisations. He strongly recommended that this disparity be removed even if SOPAC needs to act on it alone ahead of other CROP agencies. The Secretariat explained that terms and conditions of employment were harmonised across CROP organisations and this governed all appointments to the Secretariat, as was contained in the SOPAC Staff Regulations.

297. Kiribati expressed concern that in the draft documents the second bullet-point under the Required Knowledge, Skills and Experience, the criteria where 15 years experience and scientific knowledge was required was too restrictive and biased against applications from Pacific Island States.

298. The Director suggested an amendment to the Deputy Director job description in section 4: proposing a change to the word 'required' in the section title to 'desired' would afford even more flexibility. He also explained that for the SOPAC appointment, technical knowledge was vital, however research may not be absolutely necessary. The '15 years of experience' clause raised by Kiribati should only be used as a guideline to ensure that the best people are considered.

299. The Chair summarised some of the key points in the discussion and called for a decision with respect to the use of the Suva-based missions committee to again serve as the review body for applications.

300. The Republic of Marshall Islands pleaded with Council to find other ways of facilitating the process of recruiting the Deputy Director pointing out that Council had now twice thrown out the results of the Suva-based sub-committee's time-consuming work.

301. Nauru supported Cook Island's proposal on further dialogue on the Rules of Procedure.

302. Cook Islands reiterated his earlier comments on his interest to take part in the work required to amend the rules of procedure. He pointed out that Council is allowed within the Rules of Procedure (section 28) to decline the recommendation of a Council-appointed sub-committee.

303. Solomon Islands continued the conciliatory tone by reminding the senior members of the Suva-based sub-committee that even though their process was rejected by the Council as a whole, they should be reassured by the fact that their recommendation/decision was carried in the final outcome of Council deliberations on the Director's appointment. Council remained appreciative of the sterling effort. He also observed that the most recent Appointments Sub-Committee's work was facilitated by the fact that the 2003 Chair had a Suva-based mission, which is not the case now, with Niue assuming the Chair.

304. Niue supported the Cook Islands proposal on looking at the Rules of Procedure with a view to amending them. Whichever way this is to be done, the outcome will have to be approved by the full Council in session rather than by a select group tasked with the work.

305. The Chair summarised what appeared to be the emerging consensus which was to defer the decision on advertising the Deputy Director position to after the Rules of Procedure

had been amended to the satisfaction of the Council as a whole. Volunteering their services to participate in the Rules of Procedure Amendments Sub-Committee are Niue (as Chair), Cook Islands and Tonga.

306. The Director attempted to focus discussions on the implications of two issues raised: the recruitment of a Deputy Director; and whether the Rules of Procedures for executive appointments need review? He noted the value of the shortlisting exercise being carried out by a smaller group because the number of applicants can get quite large and this would be impractical for the whole Council to be encumbered with; and that the smaller group tender the shortlist to Council without ranking or recommendation as to the preferred candidate. On the observation by the Solomon Islands on the current Chair's lack of presence in Fiji, the Director clarified this to be a non-issue - a budget existed to bring the Chair to Fiji at appropriate times - in any case it was also an option available to the Chair to deputise that responsibility should he/she see fit. He went on to summarise the value of a merit-based system, and that there was no place (in his personal opinion) for a political appointee.

307. Tonga picked up on a point raised here by the Director on the option available to the Chair to deputise those responsibilities. He was of the opinion that the review of the Rules of Procedure should be made by the elected Chair and not deputised. He stressed that the centre of the process had to be moved to Niue i.e. away from Suva so as to keep to a minimum level Secretariat influence on the process.

308. Vanuatu suggested that countries should perhaps carry out their own preliminary screening of the candidates they put forward.

309. Papua New Guinea observed what appears to be a delay in a decision at this point. He suggested the alternative where Council agree to a process for convening the sub-committee to be tasked with reviewing the Rules of Procedure and report back to the annual session in 2004. Furthermore, Papua New Guinea placed on record their desire to see that candidates for executive positions in SOPAC should be endorsed by their governments, given that the organisation was an association of states rather than a company.

310. Council approved the information package including the job description, terms and conditions of employment and job advertisement for the Deputy Director position subject to amendments; and agreed that a revised

information package be circulated prior to advertisement taking place.

311. Council agreed to review the Rules of Procedure for Executive Appointments which it noted were a decade or more old, prior to advertising the Deputy Director position in May 2004. To facilitate this review the Secretariat could be tasked to provide a first draft by the end of November which would be submitted to a small sub-committee under the Chair including at least Cook Islands and Tonga on a voluntary basis. The work of the sub committee is to be completed by the end of February and circulated to capitals for a response within two weeks. If a further round of consultations is required this is to be completed by the end of April.

312. Council noted that the Rules of Procedures for Executive Appointments determined an intergovernmental process as opposed to being a Secretariat procedure. Council therefore agreed that if it was not possible to reach agreement on the revision by May then this matter would be completed at next year's annual session, and in this instance further agreed to defer the advertisement of the Deputy Director position.

14.3 CROP REMUNERATION IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

313. The Deputy Director presented Council paper AS32/14.3, briefly reporting that there was no output from the CROP remuneration review process this year.

314. Australia expressed the view that the results of the CROP Remuneration Review process needed to be scrutinised carefully as per the affordability to Council of implementing its recommendations. Australia did not consider it a given that once a review process was completed that the recommendations be implemented.

315. Council noted the Secretariat's update.

14.4 STAFFING POLICY ISSUES

14.4.1 Proposed new Secretariat staffing structure

316. The Deputy Director presented paper AS32/14.4.1 in the context of Council's previous decision with regard to the new structure of the organisation.

317. Australia requested clarification about the cost implications of this new structure.

318. The Secretariat identified no financial implications in 2004 since no new positions have been created and based on the fact that existing contracts are still in place - therefore, cost implications for 2004 appear to be zero.

319. Tonga apologised for making comments on things he doesn't fully understand. With respect to the schematics in the paper, he felt that current people employed at the Secretariat should perhaps be rearranged, suggesting that the Director should head Corporate Services and that the Deputy Director concern himself with only the real technical issues. He felt that such a structure would allow the Secretariat to effectively focus on its 3 key programme areas.

320. Australia felt that it was principally the responsibility of the Secretariat how the organisation is structured most effectively. Council should be focused on monitoring the effectiveness of the work against the performance indicators.

321. Cook Islands recognised the value of what Australia was suggesting but observed that it might be advisable to follow the structure as presented noting that Corporate Services discussions were concluded earlier on. He wondered at the titles in the structure, citing the example of 'Senior Adviser', which did not truly reflect technical expertise.

322. The Secretariat clarified the title as being generic in nature. In actual usage, when applied to a particular position the professional area of expertise was tacked on e.g. Senior Adviser - Water and Sanitation.

323. Council considered the proposed new Secretariat staffing structure, and agreed to its implementation effective from 1 January 2004.

14.4.2 Staff Regulation 25: Director's Entitlement

324. The Deputy Director introduced paper AS32/14.4.2 in response to a direction by Council in 2002, noting its particular relevance with regard to the appointment of the new Director.

325. The Secretariat saw the need to amend Staff Regulation 25 with suitable language specific to the SOPAC Secretariat to reflect that the new entitlement was now harmonised

with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat Secretary General's entitlements.

326. Council endorsed the new Staff Regulation 25 as follows:

Staff Regulation 25

(a) Rent-free accommodation as determined by the SOPAC Chair. This determination to be done annually and be set at 100% of the rent determined during the annual rental survey carried out by the Suva-based CROP organisations of the executive housing market;

(b) electricity, water and sewage charges for accommodation; and

(c) a domestic assistance allowance as determined by the SOPAC Chair, this determination to be set at F\$8,500.00 for 2003 and adjusted annually based upon movement in the Fiji Cost of Living Index.

14.4.3 SOPAC Recruitment Process

327. The Deputy Director introduced paper AS32/14.4.3 informing Council that it was simply brought before them for noting. He provided background on how the process in the covering paper was arrived at.

328. Australia congratulated the Secretariat on a fair and transparent process and wanted to know how it aligned with Staff Regulation 11(d). Should the regulation now be amended to reflect the existence of a recruitment process?

329. The Secretariat pointed out that regularising the text of the recruitment process would render it too prescriptive. Regulation 11 was in regard to the Director exercising vested powers. Should Council prefer to be prescriptive it effectively removed the power from the Director to modify the process where circumstances warrant.

330. American Samoa wanted a step added to the standardised flow chart where in addition to referee checks, there be background checks on the accuracy of the information provided by the candidates.

331. Tonga suggested a small revision to the process to allow for any form of appeal.

332. Papua New Guinea expressed concern on where the country was asked to actually get the advertisement out in their local media at their own expense. He reported that it

was sometimes difficult for countries to find the cost for advertising locally and wanted the Secretariat to take responsibility for that aspect as well because it was essential that in all cases, positions are advertised in local media in all member countries. He perceived that the current staff complement was not regionally balanced nor did it reflect the membership.

333. The Director in response to Papua New Guinea informed Council that the suggestion had major financial implications. Currently Secretariat publishes in at least one regional magazine and each country is forwarded details and encouraged to publicise jobs as widely as possible. The Director explained that the lamentable composition of staff nationalities at the Secretariat was the very reason that it exists, in that this shows the lack of capacity within the region rather than the recruitment process of the Secretariat. He informed Council that the Secretariat is committed to a balanced and Pacific Island staff structure, noting that every effort was expended to recruit new graduates from USP Programmes as an element of strengthening capacity across the region.

334. Solomon Islands urged the Secretariat to continue to pursue a regional staff composition, particularly at the lower professional ranks within the Secretariat as this would enhance the overall visibility of SOPAC among its member countries as a regional institution.

335. A further amendment suggested by American Samoa to the flow chart was to indicate at a point after the background checks and before informing the successful candidate that a decision is taken on the preferred/successful candidate.

336. Australia in response to the Secretariat's comments with respect to the Staff Regulation 11(d), reaffirmed her strong support for the process and preferred that it be captured in the regulations as part of the official processes of the organisation.

337. Cook Islands supported the suggestion by Australia saying it was important for the organisation to align everything it does with the regulations. He also endorsed comments by Tonga on incorporating an appeals provision in the whole process.

338. Council noted the SOPAC Recruitment process and recommended that all Council concerns be incorporated into amendments to the paper presented.

339. Council agreed to the following new text for Regulation 11(d) of the SOPAC Staff Regulations:

"The power of appointment rests with the Director subject to the staff regulations and remuneration structure approved by Council, and in accordance with the recruitment process."

14.5 SOPAC/SPC/SPTO HEADQUARTERS "PACIFIC VILLAGE"

340. The Chair invited the delegate from Fiji to update Council on the progress of the "Pacific Village" undertaking by the Fiji Government.

341. Fiji acknowledged that the Government commitment made by Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka at the 1992 Forum Meeting held in Honiara is yet to be totally fulfilled. To date the Fiji Government has allocated a prime site for the development of the project; an architect competition had been organised and the winning design by Architects Pacific of Suva has been selected. The Pacific Village Project is now ready for implementation. The total cost of the project is estimated at around FJ\$34.5M.

342. There is strong support at the Government officials level and the political leaders to deliver the project. Fiji is serious about honouring this commitment and has recently completed a cost-benefit analysis of the project. Two of the directors of regional organisations involved have seen the final report of the consultants.

343. The Fiji Government is searching for funds among its financiers and donors to start work on the project once the legalities and paperwork were properly set in place. At the same time Fiji's Ministry of Foreign Affairs recently submitted a budget proposal for insertion into the Fiji Government's 2004 Budget to kick start the Project in 2004.

344. Tonga applauded the efforts of the Fiji Government and their commitment to making this project a reality and urged his fellow Council members to take note of it.

345. Solomon Islands added his vote of thanks to Tonga's and asked if there ever were any plans for SOPAC to get its own headquarters.

346. The Director gave a short background to the Pacific Village project, and explained that when given a choice SOPAC preferred to put funds into programmes rather than buildings.

There were never any plans for SOPAC to go it alone with respect to investing in building permanent headquarters unless a generous benefactor came along.

347. The Chair encouraged Fiji to make the project a reality sooner rather than later.

14.6 SECRETARIAT DRAFT RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

348. The Secretariat presented Council paper AS32/14.6 - Secretariat Draft Risk Management Plan to seek Council's guidance on further development and implementation of an Integrated Business Risk Management Report 2003. Council was briefed on its contents and its primary purpose, being to afford Council some comfort that their business was being run effectively.

349. American Samoa suggested that the Secretariat consider the following public liability items to be included in the plan, namely: threats from terrorism, major donor funds being retracted as these all impact on the performance of the organisation.

350. The University of the South Pacific commended the SOPAC Secretariat in this endeavour and mentioned that it was especially interested in the issue of the management of risk to electronic data. USP has just had a F\$29M project approved by Japan for an ICT complex to be established at its Laucala Campus. USP suggested that SOPAC might take the lead in initiating a dialogue among other CROP organisations on possible collaboration in the management of risk to electronic data, and that the usefulness of the proposed USP ICT facility within the region would be maximised as part of this.

351. The Secretariat noted the suggestions and agreed to further develop the risk management plan for reporting back to Council at the following session.

14.7 STATUS OF RATIFICATION OF SOPAC CONSTITUTION

352. The Deputy Director introduced Council paper AS32/14.7 - Status of Ratification of the SOPAC Constitution stating that there had been no change to this document during the past year, also reminding Council that Palau in joining SOPAC at this Session has submitted its instruments for ratification.

353. Council noted the status of the Ratification of the SOPAC constitution and urged the remaining members to ratify the amendments as soon as practicable.

14.8 STATUS OF AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

354. The Deputy Director introduced Council paper AS32/14.8 – Status of MOU's and LOA's with other organisations for noting.

355. Council noted the status of MOUs and LOAs with other organisations.

15. 2004 WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET

15.1 RESERVE FUND CEILING

356. The Deputy Director presented paper AS32/15.1 as a requirement for the Secretariat to review the ceiling on the Reserve Fund annually. The Secretariat advised that after taking into consideration the assumptions and based on the 30 June 2003 Accounts, it would cost F\$125,747 to close the Secretariat, should it cease operations. Based on this and after taking into consideration Council's decision at its last meeting, it recommended that the Reserve Fund Ceiling remain at F\$400,000. Council agreed that the Reserve Fund Ceiling remain at F\$400,000.

15.2 INCOME FROM COST-RECOVERY ACTIVITIES

357. The Secretariat presented paper AS32/15.2 as a requirement by Council for the Secretariat to update Council annually on the justification for service provided from funds generated from cost-recovery activities.

358. Australia expressed concern that these costs may have an impact on the delivery of programmes, stating that they would like the Secretariat to monitor and exercise caution when dealing with such transactions.

359. Solomon Islands enquired as to the reason for these types of income not being included as a regular source of income for SOPAC. Solomon Islands further commented that there should not be any restraint placed on the Secretariat to make such information available to other organisations at a cost.

360. Council considered the revised guidelines in the paper and endorsed them. (The full text of these revised guidelines is in Appendix 6).

361. Council also agreed for 2004 income from cost-recovery activities be allocated to support approved activities for which funding had not been secured.

15.3 APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR

362. The Deputy Director presented paper AS32/15.3 on the appointment of the auditor for the 2003 SOPAC accounts. The Secretariat advised that the Council in 2002 had appointed Ernst and Young as the Auditors for the 2002 and 2003 Financial years.

363. The Council noted that the audit of the 2003 accounts will be carried out by Ernst and Young.

15.4 BUSINESS PLAN 2004 FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CORPORATE PLAN 2002-2004

364. The Deputy Director presented paper AS32/15.4, noting that this should be considered an important document and that in many respects this paper can serve as a proxy of a performance assessment report of the Director.

365. Council was informed of the document's link to the Corporate Plan and noted that selected major issues within the Business Plan are the ongoing refinement, and the development of communications, the review and updating of financial regulations; and requested guidance with respect to a revision of the Financial Regulations.

366. The most crucial issue in the 2004 Business Plan is the review of the current and the drafting of a new Corporate Plan. With the new strategic way of working along with the new structure now in place, Council might reconsider the length of time covered by the new corporate plan. The current one was for 3 years and Council was advised that it could consider a plan that ran for 5 years.

367. Chair invited views and comment, and drew attention to recommendations in the paper.

368. Solomon Islands was happy to endorse the paper but sought clarification on the activities that were for meant for completion in 2004.

369. Marshall Islands also had no problem with endorsement of the Business Plan 2004 noting that from the previous meeting the document was designed to be revisited from time to time.

370. The Director clarified that the SOPAC Corporate Plan belonged to Council as Governing Body embodying instructions to its Director on what was to be achieved at the corporate level over the period of the plan. The Business Plan was related to the Corporate Plan by being a guiding document for the execution of the Corporate Plan to also monitor the annual progress of its implementation and as such was entirely distinct from the annual Work Plan and Budget.

371. Australia reiterated their position under Agenda Item 6.3, where they questioned whether there was a need for the paper to come before Council at all, as they felt that Council's key focus in any reporting period should be to evaluate the performance of the Secretariat in delivering the work programmes against the indicators. The Business Plan in their view was a procedural document and a basis for monitoring performance internally.

372. The Director felt that the Business Plan was an important level of reporting that was required to see progress on achieving corporate goals. He proposed the compromise position to Council that each year the paper be simply tabled for noting, while a fuller presentation of the reporting exercise be made to the Chair.

373. Tonga recorded that it took the point of accountability very seriously, and felt Council has the right to provide direction to the Secretariat, therefore if this was an accountability issue then it should be reported fully to Council.

374. Australia echoed Tonga's comments on accountability but felt that other reporting, particularly on the Work Programme and Budget were the key reports for the Council. Australia felt too many papers were being brought before Council that could distract from the evaluation of the Secretariat's performance in delivering the key programmes.

375. Australia supported the Director's suggestion of making this paper available through the Chair rather than placing it before Council as a full paper. The Director noted Australia's comment, and confirmed the sense that this becomes an internal document for delivering to the Chair of SOPAC by the Director perhaps on a 6-monthly basis.

376. Council endorsed the Business Plan 2004 noting the new arrangement for reporting by the Director to the Chair of SOPAC on a timely basis.

15.5 APPROVAL OF 2004 WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET

377. The Deputy Director presented paper AS32/15.5 calling on the Programme Managers to be available to make comment as necessary during the discussion under this item. Council heard that one of the main aims of this particular session and the Work Programme and Budget documents was to try to ensure there was equitable distribution of effort between member countries, so that all member countries equally benefit annually from the SOPAC work programmes taken as a whole.

378. The Secretariat summarised the work planning process and the dialogue which takes place prior to preparing the annual SOPAC Work Programme and carried forward throughout the annual meeting using the 'buddy' system to better cater for the country requirements when delivering SOPAC programmes in country.

379. New Zealand recalled the Director's earlier comments regarding further work needed on the performance indicators. She encouraged the Secretariat to develop smart indicators at the component level so that programme delivery could be assessed for its effectiveness and impact, not just delivery of outputs.

380. The Deputy Director indicated that the development of smart indicators was a new area for the Secretariat and he asked Council for more time to develop them fully.

381. Tonga had no objections to this. He was of the opinion that funds spent on programmes should be for maximum benefit.

382. Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) while appreciative of the efforts of Secretariat,

noted that the new way of reporting made it hard for him to see exactly what benefits do accrue to each country.

383. Without taking away from FSM's concern, the Director reiterated the importance of country-by-country assessment and reporting, but stressed that the focus of Council's discussions in 2004 should be on the progress towards the summary indicators of progress of delivery at the high level. Country concerns can be addressed through an ongoing process and the buddy system.

384. The Deputy Director stated that the current task profiles database had not been updated yet to truly reflect the new work programmes.

385. Australia acknowledged the difficulty in creating effective indicators. She requested that the report in 2004 include measuring success against component-level indicators to bring into focus the difference the organisation is making on in the region. Australia also expressed the view that reporting on the Corporate Services Programme distracted from reporting on the key programmes. She stressed that the role of Corporate Services was to ensure that the delivery of the key programmes was successful. Australia went on to express concern that EU project activities and funds had not been reflected in the SOPAC Work Programme and Budget and felt this was a major omission. They had difficulty with the inconsistency of having the money in the budget without any indication how such a large project was contributing to the programme outcomes.

386. In relation to the suggested 10% increase in membership contributions proposed for 2005, Australia supported zero growth planning and asked Council to adopt such an approach.

387. The Secretariat accepted and noted all the comments referring to component-level indicators noting that reporting to Council at this level would be possible. Likewise reporting at country level should also be feasible. With regard to reporting on the support given by the Corporate Services to the key programme years this would be accommodated in the reporting for the 2004 annual session. The EU EDF8 project funds is allocated across all the key programme areas. Each Programme has a line item for the EDF8 Project, and a sum total is captured in the overall budget summary (referred to Table 1).

388. The Deputy Director further clarified that the EU Project Financing Agreement requires separate work programme and budget reporting. This was completed for the first time for the new EDF8 Project on 30 June 2003. The budget figures are shown in the draft SOPAC Work Programme and Budget to programme level. This was completed early August. Work plan activities for the Project will progressively be incorporated into the SOPAC Work Programme and Budget. This was not possible this time around as the country activities had not been finalised through the national stakeholder consultation meetings.

389. The Deputy Director urged Council to accept the circulation of the EU Project's work plan and budget to non-Project countries as an acceptable compromise in this instance in order to avoid pulling two documents apart to create a third.

390. The Director followed up with an explanation of the political reality of the EU-SOPAC EDF8 Project. One of the key requirements of the EU is that the funds are absolutely not used to fund work under SOPAC's core areas. It must be reported on separately to the EU. Brussels considered the EU-SOPAC EDF8 Project as completely separate from, but fully integrated with, the SOPAC Work Programme and Council should be mindful of this when viewing Project funds and activities.

391. The Deputy Director further noted comments on resisting a membership contribution increase by maintaining a zero growth of budget. The Secretariat was mindful that this would translate to zero growth of staff salaries (approx 70% of RB is on salaries), thus if the CROP remuneration review process pushed salaries up, a greater amount of RB would be used. This should be looked at in conjunction with other organisations, noting the whole purpose of harmonisation was to have homogeneity across all CROP Organisations.

392. Following clarification of a number of his queries, Solomons Islands noted the importance of this particular item to SOPAC's work. They felt the level of information provided was not detailed enough to allow truly-informed decisions. They suggested an amendment to the way the budget figures are presented to quickly show the proportion of funds going to programme costs and the proportion going to salaries. He acknowledged that Table 2 gave a comparative picture, but this was only aggregated.

393. Council noted that concerns expressed around the table regarding the non-inclusion of the EU-EDF8 Work Plan and Budget was best addressed by having the separate Work Plan and Budget of the EDF8 Project as an attachment to the SOPAC Work Programme and Budget rather than fully integrating it into the SOPAC document.

394. Council approved the Revised 2003 Budget of \$F10,357,766 and approved the 2004 Work Plan and Budget of F\$12,303,553. The approved Work Plan and Budget 2004 is available from the Secretariat on request.

16. OTHER BUSINESS

395. Given that some Council members were leaving earlier in the afternoon flight out of Niue, the Chair allowed Council to receive parting a address from the outgoing Director Alf Simpson following a short speech from the incoming Director Ms Cristelle Pratt in which she thanked Council for their confidence in her and gave assurances that she would work to heal divisions within the Council, the Secretariat and the region. She recognised the challenges and only time would tell the mettle that she was made of.

396. Papua New Guinea questioned the constitutionality of the voting and the results leading to the appointment of the new Director of SOPAC. Papua New Guinea is strongly of the view that the candidate appointed did not muster the two-thirds majority required under Article 10 of the SOPAC Constitution and believes that this seriously calls into question the integrity and transparency of SOPAC as an intergovernmental organisation given its failure to adhere to its own Constitution.

397. The Chair responded that the Ad hoc committee of the whole Council on the Director's appointment had actually arrived at its final decision by consensus, and that it was not her intention to reopen discussion on a matter that was closed.

398. The outgoing Director, after expressing his thanks to the Acting Premier, the Chairperson and various other dignitaries, personnel and people of Niue who worked behind the scenes to make this yet another successful SOPAC Governing Council meeting, then added his expressions of appreciation to the National Representatives, the STAR/TAG

Team, donor representatives, the Director of SPREP, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and USP, staff of the Secretariat and the incoming Director. He appealed to all to think as a collective group and be committed to contribute to the roles of the organisation, urging them to be people of integrity and high moral values. He sought forgiveness for any personal failings and specially thanked the staff again for their support and hard work acknowledging that successes attributed to him were actually the successes of the staff. To everyone, especially the in-coming Director he challenged them to set their own goals and visions and not try to be someone else, as you will then come out second best. He was looking forward to spending more quality time with his young family, thanking them for their patience and support during his prolonged absences on the job and expressed a lifetime commitment to the region.

399. Mr Simpson was awarded two certificates of recognition from agencies of the US Government and UNESCO/IOC, attesting to the impact of his leadership going beyond the Pacific region.

400. The Director of SPREP thanked SOPAC for the invitation to be at this Council meeting and pledged his support to the incoming Director of SOPAC, particularly asserting that going forward together in phases of difficult decision-making will enhance solidarity. He acknowledged that SOPAC is in the forefront of scientific work and paid tribute to the leadership of the outgoing Director.

401. Delegates from Solomon Islands and Cook Islands expressed similar sentiments of appreciation to the Director for the benefits that their individual countries had derived from his committed leadership and energised work commitment through SOPAC.

17. VENUE AND DATE OF 33RD ANNUAL SESSION

402. Papua New Guinea informed Council of their intention to host the 33rd SOPAC Session at a venue to be decided in Fiji. A tentative starting date was set for 20 September 2004. Before making the announcement, the Papua New Guinea delegation expressed appreciation to the outgoing Director for his contribution to geoscience in the region and welcomed the new Director. (The full text of this address is in Appendix 4).

18. ADOPTION OF AGREED RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

403. Council adopted the agreed summary record of proceedings of the 32nd SOPAC Session subject to amendments.

19. CLOSING

404. Fiji thanked the Chair and the Niue Government and people commending the excellence of their arrangements and hospitality. Special gratitude was expressed for the Outgoing Chair, Nauru, and a warm welcome and congratulations were offered to the incoming Director. The outgoing Director was highly commended for his directorship, which he was confident would continue under the new leadership.

405. Federated States of Micronesia expressed deep gratitude to the Niuean people and Government. He assured the Chair of their full support under her leadership. Gratitude was also expressed to the outgoing Director for his service to SOPAC and the Federated States of Micronesia. They informed the meeting, that it was only after Alf Simpson took over as Director of SOPAC that the Federated States of Micronesia felt a closer relationship to SOPAC.

406. Tonga welcomed the clear and firm leadership displayed by the Chair in the light of some difficulties that had arisen during the meeting and noted the Council's pleasure to continue working closely with the Chair during her tenure. He asked the Chair to convey his good wishes to the people and Government of Niue for excellent arrangements. He apologised if any of his comments caused offence to his fellow Council members, commending the contribution of all, both in Council and the Secretariat. He stressed the need to look forward to new programmes and projects. He concluded by addressing the outgoing Director, saying he had known him a long time and deeply appreciated all he had established during his time at the Secretariat. He promised that Council would do its best to carry the work of the Secretariat forward along the best path they could, apologising for any comments that may have appeared to be against him.

407. Samoa expressed gratitude to the Niue Government on behalf of the Samoan Government for the welcome given to SOPAC. He

thanked the outgoing Director for his leadership and work for the region and SOPAC in particular. To the incoming Director, he looked forward to working closely with her and the Secretariat noting that it is their role to submit to their chosen leader's authority.

408. American Samoa continued the expressions of sincere appreciation to the Chair, and the Government of Niue officials for hosting the meeting. He also thanked the Niuean community and its leaders. To the outgoing Director he wished good luck, although he was certain this was not the last SOPAC shall see of him. He congratulated the incoming Director, and looked forward to working with her. He stressed to Council that their work actually started after they leave the meeting, and that it was in the delivery of benefits to those living in their villages that would measure the success of the organisation.

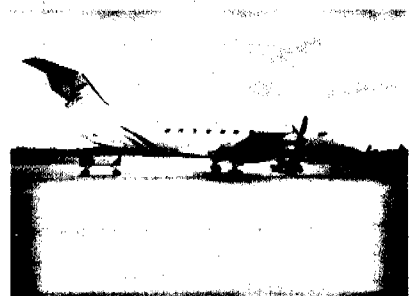
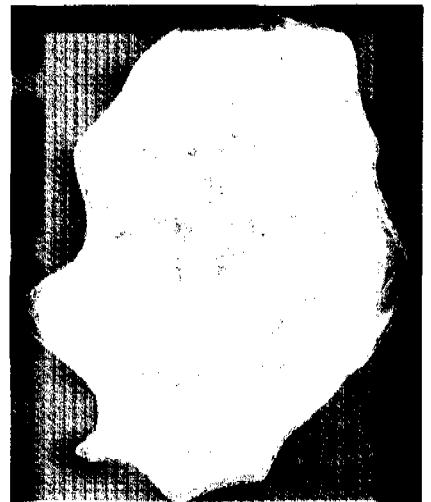
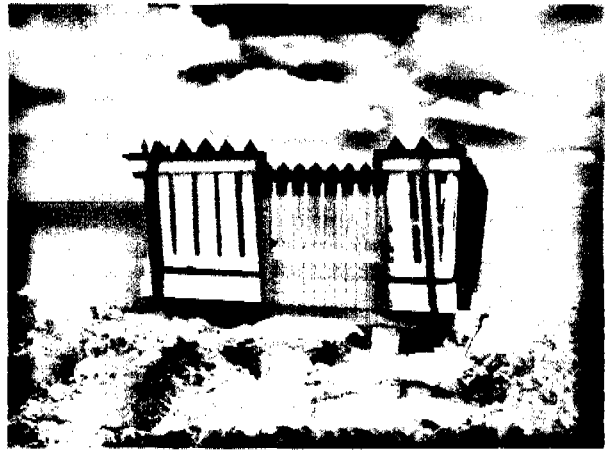
409. The Director supplemented his comments made under Other Business by thanking all who had made the incoming Director welcome. He pointed out that at the end of the day, SOPAC works for the countries, and the Secretariat should be strengthened to effectively deliver on SOPAC's mandate. He was pleased that Secretariat staff had welcomed the new Director also, and noted in particular the welcome given by Russell Howorth, Deputy Director. He assured Council that the directorship job had been a tremendous honour for him, and while many had been thanking him he felt it ought to be the other way around. It had been a wonderful experience, and one that has given him much satisfaction.

410. The Chair concluded the meeting by adding her expression of gratitude to all delegates, scientists, observers and the Secretariat staff for their input, support and work that all contributed to making the meeting a success. She communicated her hope that those present take away the good things achieved in Niue and that any problems can be resolved. She promised that she would convey all comments and expressions of appreciation to her people. She specifically attributed to the outgoing Director, Alf Simpson, the current admirable standing of SOPAC in the region and the world. She congratulated the new Director and expressed Council's wish to foster the development of SOPAC to the best of its ability under her directorship.

THE END.

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APPENDIX 2

AGENDA

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND RESOURCES NETWORK (STAR) SESSION

The main theme for the STAR Session will be:

"Towards linking Geoscience and Policy for Pacific Small Islands Sustainable Development", with a focus on freshwater issues.

OPENING SESSION OF GOVERNING COUNCIL

1. OPENING
2. ELECTIONS
 - 2.1 Chair and Vice-Chair of SOPAC
 - 2.2 Chairs of STAR and TAG
 - 2.3 Appointment of Rapporteurs
3. AGENDA AND WORKING PROCEDURES
 - 3.1 Adoption of Agenda
 - 3.2 Appointment of Drafting Committee
 - 3.3 Appointment of Sub-Committees (should any be necessary)
4. REPRESENTATION
 - 4.1 Designation of National Representatives
 - 4.2 Membership Issues
5. STATEMENTS (The intention is that these statements be tabled for inclusion in the Proceedings, and not presented verbally in full)
 - 5.1 Statements from Member Countries
 - 5.2 Statements by CROP Organisations
 - 5.3 Statements from Supporting Governments and International Agencies
 - 5.4 Statements from National Institutions
6. DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT
 - 6.1 Introduction
 - 6.2 Issues Arising from 31st Annual Session
 - 6.3 Implementation of the 2003 Business Plan for the 2002-2004 Corporate Plan
7. FINANCIAL REPORTS
 - 7.1 Summary Report of 2003 Donor Support
 - 7.2 Financial Report 2002
 - 7.2.1 2002 Audited Financial Statements, Auditors Report and Management Report
 - 7.2.2 Report on 2002 Budget Variance and Virement of Funds
 - 7.2.3 Report on Assets and Inventory written off for the year ended 31 December 2002
 - 7.3 Report on 2003 Accounts to 30 June
 - 7.3.1 Financial Accounts for the 6-month period to June 2003
 - 7.3.2 Member Country Contributions

COUNCIL - TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP (TAG) SESSION

(Member countries and other delegates discuss the SOPAC Technical Work Programme)

8. REPORTS ON ISSUES COMMON TO PROGRAMMES
 - 8.1 European Union Projects
 - 8.2 CROP Summary Record
 - 8.3 STAR Chair Report

- 8.4 SOPAC Reports
 - 8.4.1 2002 Annual Summary Report
 - 8.4.2 Review of Country Profiles
 - 8.4.3 Summary of New Project Proposals
 - 8.4.4 Second Pacific High Level Adaptation Consultation and Climate Roundtable
 - 8.4.5 SOPAC Work Programme and the MDG's
 - 8.4.6 2004 Review of Barbados Programme of Action for SIDS
 - 8.4.7 Draft SOPAC Gender Policy
- 9. OCEAN AND ISLANDS PROGRAMME
 - 9.1 Report on the Ocean and Islands Programme for 2003
 - 9.2 Issues Arising in the Ocean and Islands Programme
- 10. COMMUNITY LIFELINES PROGRAMME
 - 10.1 Report on the Community Lifelines Programme for 2003
 - 10.2 Issues Arising in the Community Lifelines Programme
- 11. COMMUNITY RISK PROGRAMME
 - 11.1 Report on the Community Risk Programme for 2003
 - 11.2 Issues Arising in the Community Risk Programme
 - 11.3 Draft Pacific Islands Regional Policy for Communities at Risk
- 12. PROGRAMME REVIEW, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

GOVERNING COUNCIL POLICY SESSION

(Items in this session could be restricted to Member Countries and CROP Organisations if the items require only Council consideration. Otherwise this session will be open).

- 13. CORPORATE SERVICES PROGRAMME
 - 13.1 Report on the Corporate Services Programme for 2003
- 14. ESTABLISHMENT AND ADMINISTRATION
 - 14.1 Director Position
 - 14.2 Deputy Director Position
 - 14.3 CROP Remuneration Implementation Update
 - 14.4 Staffing Issues
 - 14.4.1 Proposed New Secretariat Staffing Structure
 - 14.4.2 Staff Regulation 25: Director's Entitlement
 - 14.4.3 SOPAC Recruitment Process
 - 14.5 SOPAC/SPC/SPTO Headquarters "Pacific Village"
 - 14.6 Secretariat Draft Risk Management Plan
 - 14.7 Status of Ratification of SOPAC Constitution
 - 14.8 Status of MOU's with other organisations
- 15. 2004 WORK PLAN AND BUDGET
 - 15.1 Reserve Fund Ceiling
 - 15.2 Funds Generated from Income Earning Activities
 - 15.3 Appointment of Auditor
 - 15.4 Business Plan 2004 for implementation of the Corporate Plan, 2002-2004
 - 15.5 Approval of 2004 Work Plan and Budget
- 16. OTHER BUSINESS
- 17. VENUE AND DATE OF 33rd ANNUAL SESSION
- 18. ADOPTION OF AGREED RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
- 19. CLOSING

APPENDIX 3

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APPENDIX 4

STATEMENTS BY DELEGATIONS

PART I: STATEMENTS FROM MEMBER COUNTRIES

AUSTRALIA

Mme Chair, Representatives of Member Governments of the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission, Representatives of regional and international organisations, Mr Director, Colleagues.

May I first thank Nauru for chairing SOPAC over the past year. I would also like to congratulate Niue as the incoming Chair and thank the Government and people of Niue for hosting this meeting. I commend the Secretariat's work in preparing the meeting's agenda, for their usual excellent organisation and for the timely circulation of papers.

I wanted to take this opportunity, as the Director's last Council meeting, to thank Alf Simpson for his commitment to the organisation and the region over the last six years. Mr Simpson has contributed in a significant way with his plain speaking and inspirational style. He has constantly reminded us that the stakes are high in the region, that we need to be clear about where we are headed and he challenges us not to go soft on the difficult issues. This is the leadership and vision we need to guide our work for the betterment of the lives of all our people and the long term benefit of the region.

In SOPAC itself, Mr Simpson has led the organisation through a period of major change. His guidance and support for his staff has greatly assisted the move to a strategic and holistic approach to SOPAC's business. We thank you for your commitment and tenacity Alf, and wish you well in your future career. We also look forward to Council's appointment of a new Director and their contribution to the achievement of SOPAC's strategic goals, building on the solid foundation now established in the organisation.

Since we last met, the Secretariat has commenced implementation of the new approach to its work. Through the agreed umbrella of strategies that were endorsed by members last year, the organisation now has a longer term, more comprehensive approach to addressing the needs of the region. The strategies identify

clear, measurable indicators of progress and impact in the region, as a solid basis for assessing the organisation's progress. I congratulate the Director and his staff on the development and now the implementation of these strategies.

Mme Chair, it is with great pleasure that this year Australia has also been able to demonstrate its support for the programmatic approach by signing a three year MOU with SOPAC. The MOU provides funding on the basis of programs rather than projects. It gives more certainty in funding, more flexibility in how the funding is directed and reduces the administrative and reporting arrangements involved. We are hopeful that other donors will also recognise the value in funding the organisation in this way.

Thank you.

COOK ISLANDS

Madam Chair, Your Excellencies, Distinguished National Representatives, Donor Governments and Agencies, The CROP Agencies and your Representatives, The SOPAC STAR Community, Ladies & Gentlemen

The Cook Islands is certainly very pleased to be represented here in Niue, to participate in this 32nd Annual Session of the SOPAC Governing Council.

The Cook Islands wishes to affirm its strong support and continued support for SOPAC and highly values the work of SOPAC in relation to:

- Resources Development and Management
- Energy
- Water
- Coastal and Maritime Management
- Disaster Management
- Information, Communications and Technology
- Marine Resources
- Technical Advise

Of which we fully endorse as it continues to improve the lives of the People of the Pacific and includes the quality of life for the people of the Pacific.

With the written instruments approved by Council in 2002, namely the Corporate Plan and the Oceans Policy, and further restructuring the Work Outputs of SOPAC to three main Core Functions;

- Community Lifelines
- Community Risk and,
- Oceans & Islands

The Cook Islands notes the achievements established to date by the SOPAC Secretariat in particular the performance of the Director, Alf Simpson and his management and technical staff in visualizing the needs for changes to accommodate the trends that we are now up against globally.

It has also shown that the focus and direction of the organization is with the aspirations of our people in the Pacific in ensuring that a sustainable mechanism is placed properly within the framework to ensure that our people are catered for, as having the biggest ocean area, to mention one component, and that, it is protected to improve our qualities of life.

The Cook Islands recognizes and appreciates the many valuable contributions that SOPAC was able to undertake over the past year, for which we express our sincere gratitude.

We would also like to acknowledge with sincere appreciation the continued support of the Donor Governments and Agencies, and the Chair of STAR with the Scientists and Technical Experts, in supporting the work of SOPAC and what has been extended to the Cook Islands and other member Countries, and of importance is the benefits derived from the results of National and Regional activities undertaken by SOPAC.

Task Profiles

The Cook Islands in its extracted Task Profiles show that some of the tasks are still outstanding and or uncompleted. These are tasks and projects that the Government of the Cook Islands has identified to supplement National Projects. The Cook Islands would welcome an opportunity for further dialogue where appropriate.

Marine Resources

Amongst the areas mentioned above the Cook Islands was fortunate to acquire funding and mobilized a SOPAC Team to assist with Lagoon Mapping project in the atolls of the Cook Islands.

SOPAC has completed the bathymetry mapping work in Penrhyn one of our pearl farming lagoons and it was useful in terms of facilitating a better management "approach" of the lagoon, pertaining to space, for farming.

This is similar to the lagoon bathymetry work carried out in Manihiki.

The next task is to assist island councils in the development and implementation of pearl farming management plans and the implementation of lagoon monitoring systems.

SOPAC has provided immense technical assistance in helping the Cook Islands identify an up to date system, which will allow near real time monitoring of lagoon parameters, which affect the production of pearls.

The Cook Islands are grateful for the continued interest, advice and commitment that SOPAC has provided and would like to maintain this excellent bilateral arrangement.

This said, Madam Chair, the Cook Islands would like to join with the other delegations in congratulating you as Chair of Governing Council, and to thank you and your Government for hosting this unique organization. We are most confident that under your able guidance and leadership, we will be able to accomplish our aims set out in our Working Agenda Items for 2003.

May I also, on behalf of the Government of the Cook Islands, acknowledge the valuable contribution and guidance that we have had from the outgoing Chair, that of the Government of Nauru.

Lastly, the Government of the Cook Islands would like to extend and acknowledge an "icon" in the person of Alf Simpson, as we draw near to his "retirement" from SOPAC as Director, for his continued leadership qualities in ensuring that the aspirations of the people of the Pacific are protected, and establishing new systems and changes according to the Global Changes of the World, in alignment with the view of sustainability.

On behalf of the people of the Cook Islands and the Government of the Cook Islands, We say

Kia Manuia (Good luck) to you Alf, and may the future hold firm on your aspirations.

With those remarks Madam Chair, the Cook Islands looks forward to working with you and the Secretariat in achieving the best for the Pacific Islands.

Meitaki Maata

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

Madam Chair, Honourable Minister, members of Governing Council, Ladies and Gentlemen

Madam Chair, our delegation wishes to congratulate you in assuming the Chairmanship of the 32nd Governing Council of SOPAC and to convey our government's appreciation to you and your Government for hosting this Session here in Alofi, Niue. Our sincere appreciation also goes to Nauru as the outgoing Chairperson for her leadership during the last year.

Madam Chair, once again we have come to the Annual Session with a renewed sense of dedication and commitment to work closely with SOPAC Secretariat to carry out the responsibility that has been identified and placed before us by our people. We wish to commend SOPAC for its continued commitment and dedication in working closely with our government in implementing project/ work programmes that are significant in nation building in the Federated States of Micronesia.

In the spirit of letting everyone have the opportunity to make their statements, we will be brief and have submitted a prepared statement for the record. We will however, have intervention on aspects of the Work Programme and policy issues as we move along the agenda. Our delegation looks forward to fruitful discussion during the Session on how best to chart out a more practical course of action on the Work Programmes for the upcoming year for the region.

Federated States of Micronesia continues to regard SOPAC as an important partner in sustainable development projects in the Federation. SOPAC has been an efficient conduit of effective transfer of technologies in past at various capacity trainings. It is our hope that SOPAC will continue in this role in the future as we continue to place more emphasis on work programmes that require advance technologies. The multi-beam mapping which has recently completed in YAP and Chuuk harbours demonstrated this reality. The reality is that we do not have the capacity to implement such a

technology. The capacity to understand and implement such technologies require capacity training.

The theme for STAR last year was " Geosciences and Sustainable Development in Pacific Island States, 2002 -2012". As a Pacific Island State and member of SOPAC, we continue to look at the scientific community at SOPAC to address the vulnerability issues that have been our major concern for all of us in the region. FSM has been concerned about coastal erosion, drought, landslides, continued threat of low-lying atolls with sea-level rise and related climate change issues. These are real problems that affect sustainable developments for all Pacific islands and need to be addressed by our scientific and technical experts at SOPAC.

FSM has confidence that through SOPAC, member countries can achieve this challenge of sustainable developments through concerted efforts by all players, SOPAC needs to continue to assist member countries in capacity building throughout all that do for member states is through capacity building that sustainability may be achieved.

It will be remised at this delegation if we not underscore that work at SOPAC Secretariat cannot be successful without the generous support of donor countries that have shown great interest in our island developments and have provided invaluable human and financial resources to effectively implement incountry projects. Together, FSM will continue to exercise more active role as partner in SOPAC work programmes. WE will continue to liase with the Secretariat in pursuing projects which have priorities in our nation building.

Madam Chair, in conclusion we would like to take this opportunity to thank you and express our Government's gratitude to Mr Alf Simpson for his services to SOPAC and in particular to the Federated States of Micronesia. We wish him well in his future endeavours.

Thank you

FIJI ISLANDS

Thank you Madam Chair for allowing us to make a few comments during this opening session. First of all, may I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your appointment as Chair and thank the Government and people of Niue for their warm welcome. It is always interesting to visit a new country, and particularly one in the region. Our appreciation also goes to the outgoing chair, Nauru for excellent work over

the previous 12 months. I will be brief and leave detailed comment on aspects of work programs and other matters to the relevant sessions of our deliberations over the next few days.

This has been an interesting year for SOPAC and one that has seen it consolidate its strategic focus under the Corporate Plan and the development and approval out-of-session of the programs and strategies of the key 3 focal areas. The new program structure is well in place, and the program managers appointed. However, it is now the end of the 2nd year of the Corporate Plan and time to think of the review process. Let us begin now and not make it too complicated. 2003 has also seen the actual implementation of the European Union funded project "Reducing Vulnerability of Pacific ACP States through Island Systems Management". Project implementation in Fiji is now well underway and would be consolidated over the upcoming year. We are indeed grateful for this project and particularly the skills it will and is developing in the area of acquiring and integrating various data information sets necessary to see that whole picture.

Fiji is also happy to note certain other SOPAC initiatives including those dealing with water and the ocean. Collaboration with ADB and ESACP at the Pacific Regional Consultation on water in Sigatoka last year led to the development of a Pacific Regional Action Plan on Water and culminated in presentations at the 3rd World Water Forum in Kyoto in March of this year. The development of a national water policy has been recognized as a key need by the government and is currently in process, albeit slowly. We are also delighted to note the work that has commenced on the development of a Marine Scientific Research/Cruise database, something that we have persistently requested for.

As stated last year Fiji considers itself still to be in recovery mode. This recovery was partly offset early in the year due to Cyclone Ami and its impact. Our thanks and gratitude for the many offers and delivery of assistance from nations and agencies, including SOPAC. Policies and strategies established over the recent past, combined with a recovery in commodity prices have meant an upsurge in mineral exploration investment. Several prospects are currently being drilled and one or two of these we hope will move to the feasibility stage in 2005. Emperor Mines Limited continues to be the only producing mine and has committed capital investment of over \$40 Million towards a major expansion program to see gold production move from the current 120,000 oz/yr to

around 180,000 oz by 2005. The Namosi porphyry copper prospect is currently being drilled to move it to feasibility stage by early 2004. Whilst modest by international standards, these trends show a marked recovery in exploration investment from those in 1999-2000.

Fiji intends over 2004-2005 to strengthen its mines inspectorate, complete the revision of mining legislation and geological maps as a means towards attracting (and retaining) further exploration investment. Much of this will be internally funded.

Resource constraints do not allow us as individuals to carry out the many varied tasks required to effectively assess and manage our natural resources. In this regard assistance provided by intergovernmental agencies such as SOPAC, and donor nations assist considerably. With regard to assistance in the minerals sector we are appreciative of the assistance provided by Japan through the Metal Mining Agency of Japan (MMAJ), which has assisted mineral exploration activities in Namosi, and in Southern Viti Levu and undertaken marine scientific research activities within the North Fiji Basin. We are eagerly anticipating the commencement of surveys under the "Japan-SOPAC Cooperative Study on Mineral Resources of the South Pacific Region" which would see additional work being carried out in the North Fiji Basin in 2004.

In closing, I would once again like to take this opportunity to welcome you as Chair.

Vinaka Vaka Levu

KIRIBATI

Madame Chair,

May I take this opportunity to congratulate you Madame Chair and also for continuing the trend of women chairing the sessions. Let it not be said that SOPAC is a male organization but one that supports gender equity. That being said rest assured that you have my delegation's full support throughout this meeting. Madame Chair, may I, through you, thank the Government of Niue for agreeing to host this 32nd Annual Session and for the warm welcome and pleasant hospitality accorded us since our first arrival on this beautiful and unique island.

As we will be discussing the various projects in detail under TAG and Council I would just like to like to briefly touch on the main priority areas for my country.

Water, still a high priority in our islands and has been for the last decade. Kiribati places great emphasis on the training component in order to enhance the national capacity to be able to manage this very important resource. In saying that we continue to look towards SOPAC for the technical and financial support in this area and would stress to development partners sitting around the table that this is still the major area that Kiribati and other low lying countries continue to require support and assistance, as this is our livelihood.

Constraints of resources and technology in our country have made it quite impossible for us to carry out mineral research in our waters and we continue to look to donor support in this area in order to fulfill our national objectives. With the current developments in this area especially with the outcome of some studies which were presented in STAR has made the research in the Kiribati waters more attractive as it has set criteria's that will assist in narrowing down the research area, and on that note I wish to encourage Japan and other interested researchers and donors to assist in this area. It would be remiss of me not to thank Japan for its continued assistance in the area and that being with the upcoming cruise in our waters in November this year, which we look forward to. We are very grateful for this assistance and with that being said may I point out that we do have remaining, a very vast EEZ which still needs exploring.

I note that the EU program has been taken a major part of the work program of SOPAC and I wish in particular to commend them for the really positive approach that the project has taken in implementing its program. I particularly want to highlight that it has succeeded in integrating multi stakeholders at the national level in discussing a common issue and also that the training on the GPS and GIS/Access Data handling has been very good that it has sparked a great deal of interest in the various Ministries and companies in Kiribati. At this meeting I have been instructed to request another round of training on the same subject for Kiribati, and the success of the project clearly speaks for itself.

Madame Chair, it would be remiss of me if I did not note the generous support of our development partners who have made it possible for our work program to be achieved. Thank you and we continue to look forward to your continuing support in the region.

Lastly but not the least, I would also like to extend our appreciation to the Director and his

support staff for their efforts in making this meeting possible once again. Given this opportunity I would like to convey to the Director my Government's sincere appreciation for the leadership and guidance that he has given towards this organization. Without your dedication and hard work we would not have reached this stage where SOPAC is now recognized as one of the leading regional organization. It is now noted for its efficient delivery of work programs and also how advanced it is in technology, thus the increased interest in both Pacific and donor countries in the organisation. Mr. Director, you have set a very high standard which we look forward to continuing, in the years ahead with your successor. Before I conclude I place upon you the Kiribati traditional blessing Te Mauri, Te Raoi and Te tabomoa to be with you in your future endeavours.

Kam rabwa.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA (PNG)

Madam Chair, On behalf of the Government and the people of Papua New Guinea, PNG delegation wishes to extend to you all our greetings on this special closing occasion of the 32nd SOPAC Annual Session.

PNG recognizes SOPAC as an important regional geoscientific organization and encourages SOPAC to continue to work towards meeting member country needs and to remain in tune with the donor funding requirements and concerns. PNG reiterates that capacity building, both in human resources and institutional is its major priority and has assisted Vanuatu's in her manpower development in Mining and Exploration related fields in 2003.

PNG is experiencing a downturn in exploration and related decrease in receipt of the worldwide exploration dollar than it had experienced in the 1980-90s and has been the unfavorable destination for Mining Explorations. However, recent trends are encouraging, as we adopted new incentives for investors.

Activities on Misima Mine currently relate to mine closure and rehabilitation. Misima Mine Closure Committee has already produced and completed and circulated a draft Mine Closure Plan, which includes sustainable economical activities for the people.

Lihir Gold Mine has constructed the first 6MW geothermal plant in PNG to supplement electricity power generation for its mining operations and 35 MW plant is being looked at for

the future mining operations. A number of Provincial Governments are thinking of investing in this renewal industry and a survey is being planned to tie in the gaps in our records.

World Bank- Mining Sector Institutional Strengthening project aimed at strengthening institutional capacity for Department of Mining (DoM) and the Internal Revenue Commission (IRC) is under way in PNG and we expect the SYSMIN Project to continue thereafter.

PNG has rectified the UNCLOS some time in the past and more recently has formed a Delimitation Working Group and the first task was to undertake the survey of the base line points, part of the Extended Continental Shelf Proposal. The Working Group meeting has proposed resurvey for the base points and is awaiting funding from the donor.

The EDF8-SOPAC is an interesting Project under which PNG hopes to achieve a number of outputs for a number of our internal customers. A number of Proposals have been submitted in the past and have been approved but never been undertaken.

PNG has received considerable assistance of SOPAC in efforts to mitigate the effects of natural disasters. There is a need to increase awareness to save cost in all sectors in order to bring real development to the rural population. It is sincerely hoped that this co-operation will continue and the EDF8-SOPAC Project appears an exciting proposal for linkages.

Finally on the subject of 2004 Annual Session, PNG delegation firstly confirms the interest in hosting the Annual Session in PNG and wishes to invite you all in 2004. As you all depart the shores of Niue in the coming days we say farewell and welcome you in 2004 and say *lukim yu*.

Statement at Agenda Item 17: Venue and Date of 33rd SOPAC Session

Before I announce the venue of the annual session, firstly let me express my sincere gratitude on behalf of my delegation for the warm hospitality extended to us by you and your friendly and lovely people of Niue, and your conference organising committee for making sure our personal requirements were attended to.

Madam Chair, the Director of SOPAC and his staff deserve to be mentioned for attending to our travel logistics and facilitating our attendance in Niue. Commitment by some SOPAC staff

reflect nothing less than quality service and professionalism. I am impressed.

To my brother Director, Alfred Simpson, PNG thanks you for your contributions to Pacific regional geoscience, and in particular your assistance to my country, PNG, in the last five or so years. I had found contacting SOPAC, during your governance, like contacting an office next door to my Port Moresby office, because of the ease to obtain information from SOPAC. My brother Director, thanks for the memories, dating back to 1985 in Honiara.

To the Director Designate, my friend Ms Cristelle Pratt, I congratulate you personally, and convey to you our best wishes. My fellow delegates Kuike Numoi and Joe Buleka have personally conveyed their congratulatory remarks.

Cristelle, welcome on board the management team of the various South Pacific geoscientific organizations. Perhaps, like me, you may realise that personal geoscientific interest may play second fiddle to management. Management of this professional organization requires total quality management (TQM). Leadership is a component of TQM. I congratulate you once again and may the Heavenly Father guide you.

Madame Chair, I am sorry to delay my announcement. Finally, let me announce to you and my good members of the Council, that PNG plans to hold the 33rd Annual Session, in Fiji, Fiji-willing.

Madam Chair, our reasons are, that PNG will be chairing both the SOPAC and CCOP, and our ability has been inconvenienced by circumstances beyond the Department of Mining's control.

Madam Chair, I wish you on behalf of my delegation, best wishes, and my fellow SOPAC participants a safe trip home.

Thank you and may God Bless.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

Madam Chair, distinguished representatives of the Government of Niue, distinguished representatives of SOPAC member countries, visiting scientists, good people of Niue, ladies and gentlemen. Warm greetings from the Government and people of Solomon Islands.

At the outset we wish to thank SOPAC for the kind sponsorship extended to the Solomon Islands which allowed the participation of two representatives at the 20th Session of the An-

nual Conference of SOPAC held at Niue. Also it would be remiss of us not to acknowledge at the outset the kind hospitality and warm reception extended to our delegation since we arrived in Niue.

Madam Chair, our country is now starting to recover from the domestic events of the last five years which not only set us back many years in our development aspirations but as well our impaired our commitment to remain united as one country. Now thanks to the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI), things are looking brighter with hope and confidence gradually returning on the back of strengthening law and order and improving governance in our Government institutions. Since the arrival of RAMSI about a months ago, we have witnessed a huge improvement in our law and order situation while the placement of advisors and even expatriate technocrats in line positions in vital Government institutions such as the Department of Finance, is gradually strengthening our financial management. The assistance will of course move to other areas, offering hope that may be in a matter of time we could see a significant improvement in our governance system.

However, the road ahead continues to be cloudy as there is still a lot of work to be done to repair damaged infrastructure, restore confidence and build nationalism. While RAMSI is laying a good foundation for us to tread on, the future of our country really lies in our hands. We have to take responsibility to carry-on the good work that is being built through and by RAMSI. We must be responsible to make sound policies that would advance our national interest, in partnership with our development partners, our regional agencies and local civil networks, many of whom have continued to support us in various ways. In this regard, Solomon Islands acknowledge support extended to us by SOPAC and its partner organizations in the various the activities and programs that have benefited and continue to benefit us

We understand that SOPAC activities in as far as these concern Solomon Islands have sort of slowed down a bit during the sad events our country endured in the last five years. We believe there is justification for this as the environment in our country then of course did not offer encouragement to SOPAC to come in. Now with our country's fortunes changing for the better, we look forward to further assistance from SOPAC. There are many areas ranging from geological surveys to disaster management

that Solomon Islands can collaborate on with SOPAC to ensure that we as a member country can better understand our geological potentials as well as the disaster risks and threats we are exposed to. We see value in engaging and collaborating with SOPAC as it holds valuable information as well as has the expertise to assist member countries productively exploit their mineral resources and also better deal with disasters. In this regard Solomon Islands pledges it support to the work program of SOPAC.

Finally Madam Chair, congratulations on your appointment as Chairman of the SOPAC Governing Council and may you have a successful term as Chair.

Thank you.

TONGA

Madam Chair, SOPAC Governing Council members, Representatives of Governments and Institutions supporting SOPAC, Distinguished Scientists and SOPAC Advisors, Director and Staff of the Secretariat, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is indeed a great pleasure and a singular honour for me and my delegation to be here in the Island of Niue, representing the Government and the people of the Kingdom of Tonga to the 32nd Annual Session of the SOPAC Governing Council.

On this important occasion, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you Madam Chair on your appointment and express my confidence in your leadership which will obviously guide us through this important meeting and the next twelve months to come. I would also wish, through you Madam Chair, to convey my delegation's sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Government and people of Niue for hosting this 32nd Annual Session of SOPAC and for making our stay in this most beautiful Island a memorable one.

Madam Chair, this 32nd Annual Session of SOPAC Governing Council is considered highly significant since the leadership of SOPAC Secretariat will be decided during this Session. The Government and people of the Kingdom of Tonga is very much aware of the significance of this issue which will obviously dictate the future roles and direction of SOPAC. It is anticipated that any failure to adopt acceptable standard of selection criteria for the Director position, during our deliberation on the issue,

may lead to disruption on the cooperative efforts and commitments that had been mutually established amongst us over the last thirty-one years. It is therefore important that the selection criteria and other mechanisms used for the appointment of the new Director must be fair and acceptable to majority of members of the SOPAC Governing Council.

At this point, Madam Chair, on behalf of the Government and people of the Kingdom of Tonga, I would like to pay special tribute here to Mr. Alfred Simpson for his excellent and outstanding leadership that we have witnessed and cited on various developments that the Secretariat has achieved over the last six years. Mr. Simpson, I hope the fruits of

your labour may not be going wasted but to be used wisely by your successor, as a platform to initiate new developments that will specifically address the issues and concerns of smaller island nations, like ourselves in the Pacific. Anyway, I wish you well and every success in whatever plans you have for the future.

Madam Chair, during the past twelve months or so, several small developments took place in Tonga in terms of the SOPAC Work Programs 2002 - 2003. There were activities partly implemented in connection with rain water harvesting project, disaster management and risks assessment, renewable energy planning, human resources development and the first national stakeholders' consultation meeting on the EDF8 Project for reducing vulnerability of Pacific ACP States was also made during the stated period. The second national stakeholders' consultation meeting on the same project is scheduled to be held in Nuku'alofa on 3rd of October, straight after this Session.

It may be worthwhile noting here that Mr. Alf Simpson, Director of SOPAC, briefly visited Tonga during the period - to discuss issues related to SOPAC work programs and also matters relating to attendance at the 3rd World Water Forum which was later held in Kyoto, Japan in 2002. During this brief visit Mr. Simpson had the opportunity to meet His Royal Highness the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Works & Disaster Relief Management, the Minister of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources and other senior Government Officials.

The SOPAC Secretariat is hereby duly commended for implementing of the aforementioned works and commitments.

Madam Chair, I wish to make it clear here that Tonga's priority had been placed in the traditional areas of geoscience, such as coastal erosion (geomorphological studies), geo-hazards studies (earthquakes, volcanic activities, storm surge & tsunamis), hydro-geological investigation, marine aggregate investigation and deep sea minerals & hydrocarbon prospecting etc. Although these traditional areas of geoscience are of vitally importance to planning of the economic development of the Kingdom, Tonga has recently revised its priority to suit specific requirements of the financial institutions (through bilateral sources) and of the current work programs of SOPAC (or other regional and international institutions).

Madam Chair, I do not intend to prolong my statement any longer, since there is a more appropriate time later when we go through each of the agenda items. However, it would be remiss on my part, not to thank various donor agencies and the scientific organizations (and communities) that have generously contributed and continued to provide assistance in some way or another to SOPAC work programs. Without the sustained support, it would be difficult to expect the Secretariat to fulfill its mandate from the Council.

However, on the pipeline for immediate implementation, Tonga places its national priority on the following highlighted tasks:

1. Maritime Boundary Delimitation & Extended Continental Shelf Claims:

A Cabinet approved National Committee and a Consultant to undertake a full desktop study on matters relating to the above claims are now in placed. The Consultant fees of about US\$50,000.00 and his travel expenses are fully funded by the New Zealand Government on bilateral agreement.

2. Offshore Sand Dredging: TO 2001.006

This is still one Tonga's top priority projects. This project needs re-activation. SOPAC is requested to revise the original project document thus including current costs for various components of the dredging operation and the equipment and facilities to be procured for the whole process. SOPAC Secretariat may wish to assist the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources (MLSNR) in securing financial assistance for this long requested project.

3. *Review of Tonga Water Master Plan & Water Resource Management Legislation: TO 2001.007*

SOPAC Secretariat is requested to assist the MLSNR in finding a Consultant and secure financial assistance – for the review of the outdated Tonga Water Master Plan and also the review of the Water Resource Management Legislation that had been drafted for the MLSNR.

4. *Assessment of Coastal Erosion Problems: TO 2000.005*

Coastal erosion has always been a concern and now become threatening problems to those who are residing in coastal villages (and low-lying areas) in the Districts of Tongatapu, Ha'apai and Vava'u. SOPAC Secretariat is respectfully requested to continue its current assistance rendered for assessment of the problems associated with coastal erosion throughout the Tonga islands.

5. *Review of the Mineral Act and Petroleum Act:*

Tonga has recently received a number of applications for licenses, from commercial companies, to prospecting for minerals and petroleum in the Tonga's offshore areas. Since the current Mineral Act is limited and considered inadequate for the purpose of issuing licenses for the applications, the SOPAC Secretariat is requested to help reviewing and updating the current Mineral and Petroleum Acts. The SOPAC Secretariat may also wish to assist Tonga in the assessment of those applications.

6. *Cyclone Emergency and Risk Management Project (CERMP):*

This project is funded under a Tonga Government loan from the World Bank. The MLSNR is one of the implementing agencies and its involvement will be restricted only to Component B2 of the project. Tasks involved within Component B2 of the MLSNR will be focusing on the "establishment of a high-resolution land and geographic information system within the MLSNR for support of risk management." Major phases of this component are as follows:

- Aerial photography of 10 main islands;
- Establishment of geographical information for national use; and

- Development and implementation of a national risk management strategy for national hazards and climate change effects, including risk assessment for key hazards in vulnerable areas.

The expected budget allocation for the above tasks is US\$1.2 million.

In view of the importance of the above project for the capacity and capability building of the MLSNR, SOPAC is also requested to consider providing assistance, when and where required by the MLSNR, during the implementation of this project and likewise the SOPAC/EU (EDF8) funded project.

Malo

TUVALU

Madam Chair, Members of the Governing Council and your Delegations, representatives of CROP agencies and supporting institutions, distinguished scientists, staffs of the secretariat, ladies and gentlemen.

It is a pleasure to attend the SOPAC Governing Council Meeting here in the beautiful island of Niue. On behalf of the Tuvalu delegation I would like to congratulate you on your accession to the Chair of SOPAC for the next 12 months or so. I look forward to working closely with you during your term in office. I would also like to thank the out-going Chair of SOPAC in Nauru for the remarkable stewardship during her term of office.

Without his dedicated service and support, the secretariat and its designated programs would have not been able to attain satisfactory levels of progress.

Through you, Madam Chair, may I also register and acknowledge my delegation's thanks to the people and the government of Niue for hosting this meeting and especially for the hospitality my delegation has received since arrival in your very beautiful country.

Tuvalu values its membership in SOPAC as enhancing regional cooperation and working together for the benefit of all the member states of SOPAC. We will continue to lean upon the support provided by SOPAC and resort to it in terms of assistance in areas beyond our scientific, technical and economic capability.

Therefore, I would like to thank SOPAC in the three Programme Managers and all the support staff who have assisted in the work programme and projects for Tuvalu. I recognise

that many a times our efforts to push ahead on some projects are faced with a lot of challenges and constraints (financial, organisational or otherwise). Specially, I would like to see progress and implementation of the various projects for Tuvalu in the Task Profiles:

- Energy sector studies
- Water and Sanitation
- Disaster Management
- Maritime Boundary Project
- The Reef Channels Project

I will try and speak to the Programme managers to clear some concerns and misunderstanding on work progress, however look forward to further implementation work being carried out in the year ahead. We thank SOPAC also for assistance under its disaster management, energy, ocean and near-shore surveying and mineral prospecting, fisheries' and environmental programmes etc, are also acknowledged with appreciation.

Notably Madam Chair, the agenda before us is quite extensive and encompasses some significant issues, which needs the Council's decisions in order to provide clear guidelines and directions to the Secretariat. Without clear directions, one cannot expect expeditious implementations and performance of programs to fall comfortably in place

Last but not least, I would like to thank the Director and all staffs of the secretariat for their prompt and timely effort in coordinating this meeting.

With the foregoing remarks, Mr Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your attention.

VANUATU

Madam Chair, Fellow National Representatives, Distinguished Donor Representatives, Technical Advisors, Staff of SOPAC, Ladies and Gentlemen

Madam Chair

I would like to begin, since this is my first time to attend the Council meeting as the New Representative for Vanuatu, to present my compliments and very warm greetings to you all. I

should also wish to associate myself, and that of my delegation to the sentiments expressed by the previous speaker on your appointment as Chair and through you, to voice our special thanks to the Government of Niue for having graciously accepting to host this meeting in your lovely country.

It goes without saying, Madam Chair, that the past year has witnessed, as we did in the previous years, the continued support and endless efforts on the part of Secretariat to implement the assigned work programmes in spite of the shortcoming in certain areas. We know that it has not always been easy to take certain programmes in spite of the shortcomings. It has not always been easy to take all work programmes through to implementation but we are pleased to commend the outgoing Chair, Director and his staff for the outstanding work they have done over the year in steering SOPAC to achieving some of the goals set out by member countries.

Madam Chair, since we have a long agenda to deliberate on over the next few days and the fact that we will also have the opportunity to discuss in greater detail specific work programmes over the next day or so, perhaps it would be wise for me to touch very briefly on these activities we feel warrant special mention at this meeting.

EU Project

- ITC Centre establishment
- IKONOS imagery
- Stakeholders meeting
- Coastal aggregates survey
- CHARM Implementation Project

Given the opportunity I wish to take this opportunity on behalf of my Government to express our deep appreciation to the Director of SOPAC, Mr Alfred Simpson who will be leaving the Secretariat soon. Vanuatu Government wish to express our sincere thank you for your assistance in Vanuatu both personal and in your official capacity. Vanuatu wishes you and your family well in whatever you do in future.

Before I conclude, I also wish to express Vanuatu's deep appreciation and sincere gratitude to our donors for their continued support and generous support to SOPAC activities which benefited the region.

PART II: STATEMENTS BY CROP ORGANISATIONS

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT

Madam Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates

On behalf of the Forum Secretariat I am indeed grateful for the opportunity, as an observer, to address the SOPAC 32nd Annual Council meeting. May I first bring you greetings from my Secretary General, Mr. Noel Levi and his best wishes for a successful meeting. I also join others that have spoken before me in thanking the Government of Niue for the excellent hospitality and the arrangements provided to us.

SOPAC as you all know is a member of the Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific (CROP) of which we now have ten members. As a family member of CROP, the Secretariat is happy to report that SOPAC has fully participated in the CROP process and contributed to regional policy initiatives.

In the past year these initiatives have included the development of the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy (PIROP), endorsed by Leaders in 2002 and now the preparations for the Ocean Forum to develop a regional action framework on ocean governance, the Pacific Islands Information and Communications Technologies Policy and Strategic Plan (PIIPP), and the Regional Energy Policy and Plan (REPP).

SOPAC has also been instrumental in taking up the water issue and in developing a regional action plan on sustainable water uses. The Forum Secretariat has been working closely and providing assistance with regards to the water initiative resulting in successful recognition of SIDS water issues at the 3rd World Water Forum. Leaders at the 2003 Forum Meeting endorsed the outcomes of the "Water in Small Island Countries" theme, and including the Joint Caribbean-Pacific Programme for Action on Water and Climate Session Statement and priority actions therein.

These policies and initiatives are due in part to the respective CROP working groups, namely the CROP Marine Sector Working Group, ICT Working Group, and the Energy Working Group, of which SOPAC is an active member. And today SOPAC continues in its efforts with the CROP working group members to work toward viable strategic plans of the PIROP, PIIPP and the REPP.

SOPAC has also actively participated in the WSSD process and now the BPOA+10 review through the CROP Sustainable Development Working Group. As you may be aware that the Pacific has embarked on its preparation for the BPOA+10 review with assistance from the CROP SDWG, of which SOPAC has been actively engaged in assisting member countries.

Inter-agency cooperation with SOPAC was evident in the 8th and 9th European Development Fund (EDF) Pacific Regional Indicative Programme and this work led directly to the approval of the FJD15million "Reducing Vulnerability through Island Systems Management" – an important initiative that aims to address water, aggregates and hazards in Pacific ACP States. The RAO has also submitted a proposal for the 9th EDF extending the project to the 6 new Pacific ACP countries with a budget of approx. Euro 2.5 million. The RAO has been advised that this is to be considered by the EDF Screening Committee in Brussels in September 2003.

Madam Chairperson, it would be remiss of me not to say something about the Director of SOPAC, as this would be his last formal meeting. Mr. Simpson has been not only inspirational to CROP members but also dedicated to actively serving the CROP membership. He has been a person that promotes innovative ideas and may I quote from my Secretary General's Statement at the last CROP Heads' meeting that, "he is not afraid of pointing out when he feels his colleagues are wrong, and a strong proponent of the value of our organizations – individually and collectively – to the region and its Leaders".

Madam Chairperson, on behalf of the Forum Secretariat, may I say that we will miss Mr. Simpson's contribution to CROP process and his ability to push the frontiers that he has brought to the CROP and the Forum Secretariat. On behalf of the Forum Secretariat, we wish Mr. Simpson the very best in whatever endeavor he may pursue in the future.

Madam Chairperson, on the same token, the Forum Secretariat looks forward to working with the new Director of SOPAC and hope he or she will continue the legacy of Mr. Simpson's vision and contribution to the CROP process.

Thank you.

16 September 2003

SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (SPREP)

Progress on Implementation of regional strategy to address Marine pollution from World War II Wrecks and the Outcomes of the 14th SPREP Meeting on the Issue

Purpose of Paper

1. To inform the Meeting of progress made by the SPREP Secretariat in implementing the Regional Strategy and to inform the Meeting of the decision of the 14th SPREP Meeting on this Issue.

Background

2. At the 12SM, the Delegation of the Federated States of Micronesia raised concerns about an oil spill incident that occurred during July and August 2001 from a sunken World War II US Navy oil tanker the USS Mississinewa at Ulithi Atoll, Yap State. This concern was shared by a number of other members some of whom also had requested the SPREP Secretariat to work with other regional agencies to formulate a regional strategy to address World War II Wrecks for presentation at the 13th SPREP Meeting.

3. The SPREP Secretariat formulated and presented the Regional Strategy as instructed and it was endorsed at the 13SM. The Strategy has 5 broad components:

- (i) Data collection on location and particulars of wrecks;
- (ii) Examining generic risk assessment models that could be used as a rapid assessment of the identified wrecks to group them into high, medium and low risk sites;
- (iii) Agreement on the types of intervention that would be applicable for each risk type;
- (iv) Carry out site specific assessments by order of priority based on the generic risk assessment results; and
- (v) Facilitation of agreed intervention

4. The 13SM approved the implementation of the first 3 steps. The Meeting also approved that the SPREP seek funding for implementing these steps and that the USS Mississinewa be the first wreck addressed.

5. (Step 1) – Data collection on Location and Particulars of Wrecks:

- A GIS database has been developed to map the location and tabulate the particulars of WWII wrecks in the Pacific. To date there are 3852 WWII wrecks within the Pacific region, 857 of these wrecks are located within the EEZ of SPREP Members.

Table 1: Number of WWII Wrecks by EEZ.

SPREP Member EEZ	Number of Wrecks
FSM	150
Fiji	3
Kiribati	6
Marshall Islands	49
Nauru	4
New Caledonia	10
New Zealand	2
Northern Mariana's	64
Palau	77
Papua New Guinea	279
Solomon Islands	158
Vanuatu	6
Total	857

A CD containing data and maps developed from the GIS database will be distributed at the Meeting to country delegations.

6. (Step 2) – Generic Risk Assessment- The Strategy recommends that the implementation of activities to address WWII wrecks be carried out within a comprehensive risk assessment framework and provides guidance on these recommended activities. A number of appropriate risk assessment models have been identified. Risk categories will be limited to high, medium and low based on the probability and consequence of pollution.

7. (Step 3) – Appropriate Risk Based Interventions – The regional Strategy had proposed 3 simple interventions types based on risk:

- High Risk – Direct Intervention such as salvage and oil pump-out;
- Medium Risk – Institute management measures such as site management and contingency plans; and
- Low Risk – Leave alone and monitor.

8. USS Mississinewa – The Federated States of Micronesia and the United States of America bilaterally agreed on the high risk posed by the USS Mississinewa and that the pump-out of oil from the USS Mississinewa was necessary.

SPREP on request from the FSM provided technical advice and review of the EIA and operational plans for the oil pump-out.

9. The US Navy and contractors undertook the oil pump-out operation from the 2nd to the 28th of February 2003. A total of 2 million US Gallons (9 million litres) was pumped out and transported in barges to Singapore for reprocessing. The cost of the operation was borne by the United States and is estimated at between 4-6 million US dollars.

10. Funding – To date all funding for the above SPREP Secretariat activities have been sourced in house by carrying out the above activities in conjunction with programmed activities under SPREP's Pacific Ocean Pollution Prevention Programme (PACPOL). Appreciation is given to PACPOL's funding agencies, the Canada South Pacific Ocean Development Programme (C-SPOD) and the International Maritime Organization for approving the use of funds to these activities.

11. The SPREP Secretariat encountered two major problems when carrying out initial discussions on funding. The first was politically sensitive nature of the issue and the second was the lack of awareness of the issue. The SPREP Secretariat decided that it would be more effective to try and first raise awareness of the issue.

12. Awareness – This was carried out through:

- Papers and presentations at the International Conference such as the UNEP-IMO Forum on Marine Pollution (London, September 2002); SPILLCON (Sydney, September 2002) and the international Oil Spill Conference (Vancouver);
- Media – 60 Minutes Australia feature, articles in The Bulletin and New Scientist and there is a short article forthcoming in the October issue of National Geographic with interest in doing a full feature, newspaper reports and radio interviews; and
- Opportunistic discussion – Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs while attending PALM Preparatory Meeting (Tokyo, March 2003).

Next Steps

13. The SPREP Secretariat has essentially completed implementation of the first three steps of the Regional Strategy as approved by the 13th SPREP Meeting. We have produced a

GIS Database that provides the location and particulars of wrecks; identified appropriate risk assessment tools and recommended the appropriate risk-based intervention.

14. It is recommended that the next two steps of the strategy is undertaken bilaterally between the relevant SPREP member as the Coastal State and wreck owners as the Flag State – as in the case of the USS Mississinewa (between FSM and USA). The SPREP Secretariat is available on request to provide advice and technical assistance.

15. The members feel strongly that multilateral implementation at the regional level on this matter should continue, a pilot assessment of a priority site that has a high concentration of wrecks could be considered for implementation. Two sites, Chuuk lagoon in FSM and Iron Bottom Sound in the Solomon Islands are the best suited for this purpose. If this is the wish of the Meeting it is recommended that Chuuk lagoon be addressed initially because all wrecks belong to one Flag State (Japan), the past experience of the FSM with the USS Mississinewa and the current situation in the Solomon Islands. The SPREP Secretariat could assist the FSM to put together a funding proposal and approaches to funding agencies.

Decision of the 14th SPREP Meeting

16. The Meeting

Noted progress on the implementation of the strategy;

Agreed that future steps for the Strategy be undertaken bilaterally between the relevant SPREP Member and the wreck owners.

Agreed that the Secretariat would take no further action on the strategy.

17. It must be noted that two of the countries that have substantial number of WWII wrecks – Palau and the Solomon Islands were not represented at the 14SM

18. The Meeting also agreed as a result of a request made by the FSM that the SPREP Secretariat continue to respond to requests for assistance from island country members on the issue of WWII wrecks including independent assessment advice, as countries did not possess this expertise.

10 July 2003

UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC

Mr. Chairman, Director of SOPAC, Mr Alfred Simpson, Distinguished SOPAC National Government Representatives, Distinguished representatives from other Governments, Representatives from Fellow CROP Agencies, and from other Regional and International Organisations, Participating Geoscientists, Ladies and gentlemen ...

The University continues to work in close collaboration with the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC), and this working relationship has been welcomed by both Organisations. The Vice-Chancellor, Mr. Savenaca Siwatibau, University senior management, and the USP Heads of Sections, who directly interact with SOPAC, wish to record their appreciation for this long-standing co-operation, and wish this 32nd. Annual Session of Council in Niue, fruitful deliberations. Our presence on this scenic upraised limestone island of Niue makes the 32nd session of Council even more exciting, and a new learning experience for many delegates, and the University thanks the Government of Niue for its welcome and hosting of this Session of SOPAC Council.

In the area of undergraduate and postgraduate geoscience studies, the University offers the Region several programmes of university study. Bachelor of Science programmes in Earth Science, Marine Science, and Environmental Science show a pleasing level of enrolments. The Bachelor of Arts in Marine Affairs also includes an Earth Science component. Three years ago, new postgraduate diploma programmes in Environmental Science and in Environmental Studies were inaugurated; each of these programmes include major earth science components; a postgraduate diploma in Marine Science is also a popular programme serviced through the Marine Studies Programme, the School of Social and Economic Development, and the School of Pure & Applied Sciences.

The University is very pleased indeed to see a growing number of its own graduates from Fiji and the region entering the ranks of SOPAC staff, and wishes to express its appreciation to SOPAC for providing these opportunities. Many of these young SOPAC staff personnel have chosen to continue their own postgraduate studies at the USP.

This year, 2003, SOPAC again supported teaching and other services at USP: the third year Applied Geology course in the Earth Science BSc (Staff of the Water Resources Unit), and the Ocean Resources Management courses in

the School of Social and Economic Development School. The University is grateful to the SOPAC Director and Deputy Director for offering the services of Commission staff to assist with teaching.

With respect to the Earth Science and Marine Geology Certificate Programme, the University continues conferring the award for as long as SOPAC should require this. The Certificate studies continues this year with the second year of the current cycle; a group of new graduates were awarded their USP Certificates at the recent September 5th graduation ceremony in Suva. The University, as of course SOPAC, is indeed grateful to CFTC for the continued funding of the Training Coordinator's position.

The University's Marine Studies Programme is involved with SOPAC in several major initiatives, and this collaboration will continue:

- Involvement in the CROP Marine Sector Working Group with SOPAC as one the major players. The Marine Studies Programme has been involved with the development of the Oceans Policy for the Pacific Islands; and the University seeks to strengthen its participation and representation on all CROP Working Groups, including the (newest) Group on Sustainable Development.
- SOPAC is represented on the USP Marine Studies Advisory Group;
- SOPAC staff were an important part of the Global and International Waters Assessment (GIWA) conducted in the region in collaboration with the USP Marine Programme. The final report on Sub-Region 62 will be the subject of an article to be prepared for *Ambio* early in 2004; this will be peer reviewed, and one of a series that GIWA wishes to publish.
- Marine Studies Programme and SOPAC collaborated in the last SOPAC boundaries meeting conducted in Nadi last year, and looks forward to further collaborative discussions and activities.

The Pacific Centre for the Environment and Sustainable Development (PACE-SD), established in 2001 as a new University initiative continues collaboration and inter-change with SOPAC in Climate Change and Variability, and Disaster Management. The following will be of special interest to SOPAC member countries:

- A 16-week postgraduate-level programme, on Climate Change, Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment, is currently in progress at the University. This face-to-face, full-time programme will afford the completing student two postgraduate courses which

may be used for a postgraduate diploma. Twelve (12) students from 10 of the regional countries are currently enrolled; SOPAC has been assisting with the coastal profiling part of the training.

- The Pacific Island Community-based Conservation course commenced in semester 1 of 2003, and is being repeated in the second semester. This will equate one postgraduate course credit, and will involve face-to-face and in-country research/field activities; this programme trains in conservation practices for the region, and will be coordinated by both PACE-SD and the Institute of Applied Science (IAS).
- The GEF-funded AIACC Project: USP is negotiating with SOPAC's Vulnerability assessment team for closer interaction with a similar project which is ongoing (SOPAC).
- USP has worked closely with SOPAC's EVI Project, and during the development of SOPAC's strategy document for sustainable development.
- The Director SOPAC is a member of the PACE-SD Advisory Board.

The University has been strongly represented alongside SOPAC in the CROP Energy Working Group (EWG) and,

- Has been heavily involved in the formulation of the Regional Energy Plan and Policy (PIEPP). USP continues to emphasise a focus on education, training and R & D. A strong interest exists in establishing a Centre of Excellence in Energy, and the University is to discuss this with donors under the Type 11 initiatives;
- SOPAC-DANIDA funded project on capacity-building for wind energy is now under way; the PG course is currently being offered with an enrolment of 5. The wind turbine is to be located in the MRD Compound, Suva, near the SOPAC Secretariate. A UNESCAP Pilot training activity is scheduled for November, and the activity will be collaborative with SOPAC. A small grant has been received for "Mobile Hut Demonstration RE Systems", but more funds are being sought to bolster this activity.
- The Department of Physics will soon appoint a Senior Lecturer in Renewable Energy, which will add to the regional strength in expertise; a growing interest in postgraduate studies in the energy area is evident, and there is scope for further scholarships for regional studies in renewable energy;
- Associate Professor M. Kumar, the USP rep.

on the PSA Council successfully convened a session on energy at the Bangkok Science Congress in March; invitations had been extended to technical and policy experts to present papers at this meeting highlighting the energy issues pertinent to small island developing states. SOPAC was represented at these sessions.

- Two Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) have been signed between SOPAC and the University: Collaboration in the technical areas of water quality, and Preparation with the Second High Level Adaptation Consultation.

Staff of the USP Department of Geography have been involved in research and publications activity closely related to SOPAC's applied research and consultancy: Dr James Terry and Professor Patrick Nunn continue to research in the hydrological responses of tropical Pacific island rivers to large storm events, at landscape responses in the region to climate change (Terry), and island tectonics, sea-level changes, and the significance of environmental details in Pacific Islander myths (Nunn). Four recent publications are available by these authors are available (USP Website).

SOPAC, in 2001, formally invited the University to participate in its Disaster Management programme development, with a possible view to eventually formalising undergraduate and postgraduate course components to already-existing degree programmes which will help train skilled personnel in this area. Development on this is still continuing, and the University, in principle, remains supportive of future collaborative moves

On a final note, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of the South Pacific wishes to thank most sincerely the SOPAC Governing Council for the invitation to be represented at this, and past council meeting(s). The University also adds its words of appreciation to the outgoing Director, Mr. Alf Simpson, for his tireless efforts in steering and managing the Commission for the past six years; Mr. Simpson's dynamism, his efficiency, and his desire to see SOPAC become a focussed and very proactive regional Organisation, will long be remembered. The University wishes Mr. Simpson all the very best for the future. The University continues to note, and highly commends, the excellent contribution the Commission is still making to geoscience research and sustainable development in the Region, and wishes it all the best of success in its future endeavours.

PART III: STATEMENTS FROM SUPPORTING GOVERNMENTS AND INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES

TAIWAN/ROC

Mr Chairman, Honourable Delegates, Observers, the Director and Staff of SOPAC, Distinguished Guests: the Government of Taiwan/ROC wishes to congratulate SOPAC on this occasion of the 32nd Annual Session of the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission [SOPAC].

Besides bilateral assistance to individual Forum Island Countries, the Government of Taiwan/ROC has contributed over 10 million US dollars since 1993, to regional organisations including SOPAC, under the umbrella of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, for the development of the region in areas such as agriculture, fisheries, food processing, health, youth, women's development, culture, marine industry and various other Programmes. This is in addition to the annual funding of US\$500,000 for the Taiwan/ROC-PIF Scholarship Scheme, launched in the year 1999, which now amounts to a total funding of US\$2.5 million. So far, 77 awardees from 14 Forum Island countries have benefited from this scholarship scheme.

Taiwan/ROC looks forward to working closely with SOPAC, to promote scientific development and collaboration among the countries and peoples of the Pacific Island region, and the Government of Taiwan/ROC is proud to have substantially assisted SOPAC's projects, which has contributed significantly to the development of our Pacific region.

The Government of Taiwan/ROC wishes to extend to the Governing Council and to the Director and Secretariat Staff of the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission, our gratitude for the close co-operation, between the Pacific Island region and Taiwan/ROC. We look forward to continuing our partnership of friendly collaboration in the months and years ahead.

Taiwan/ROC would also like to take this opportunity to express its appreciation to the people and Government of Niue, for the overwhelming assistance and hospitality given throughout the meeting.

Thank you.

UNITED KINGDOM

1. The UK continues to support the efforts of SOPAC in the Pacific region. This has been specifically through UK support, provided by its Department for International Development (DFID), to SOPAC's Water Resources Unit (WRU). The WRU, under SOPAC's broader regional mandate of engagement has contributed to the development of the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management which was endorsed by the Leaders of Pacific Island States at the Forum in Auckland in August this year. The recognition of the importance of Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) at the 3rd World Water Forum are all issues on which SOPAC's WRU has been able to advise and support Pacific Member States.

2. These efforts contribute to others being made by the Commission on Sustainable Development to improve its ability to deliver CSD 11 and 12 and the biannual cycle focus on water. Water and sanitation, in this the International Year of Freshwater, is critical, and it is appropriate to mention these issues in the context of the theme for this year annual session of "linking geoscience and policy for Pacific Small Islands Sustainable Development". This is why the UK supports the development of the Pacific Islands Regional Oceans Policy Forum, as its emergence is a direct result of the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The UK sees the oceans as a shared resource and we believe that only by working together can we protect the marine environment. We have adopted the same approach in the North East Atlantic.

3. Our other efforts include taking on board, in partnership with the Government of Seychelles, the Secretariat of the International Coral Reef Initiative, and we look forward to working with countries in the Pacific to sustain reefs and the livelihoods that are dependent upon them. We are also leading an international Ministerial Taskforce that aims to develop a concerted approach to tackling the problems of illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing, which is a major threat to the sustainable development of the world's oceans.

4. The UK continues to encourage all countries to commit themselves to the full imple-

mentation of the WSSD objectives and we have welcomed the participation of other countries in UK led partnerships on, especially the Renewable Energy, and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP), which has implications for Pacific Islands States as they are among the first to be affected by climate change. We strongly support the integration of the environmental needs of countries to be fully integrated into their national development strategies.

5. Following the Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting in Apia, Samoa this August in preparation for the Barbados Plan of Action 10-year review, the UK would like to express its commitment to a thorough review of the Barbados Plan of Action for Small Island Developing States. We will be working hard to ensure a productive and action oriented outcome. And, furthermore, welcomes through SOPAC, and other regional bodies in the Pacific, the views and expectations of Pacific Island States at the Small Island Developing States Mauritius Conference planned for August 2004.

6. The UK's relationship with Pacific Island States, although based on historic and traditional linkages, does not rest in the past. Our commitment remains strong and forward looking and we welcome the continued engagement with SOPAC as through it, we are offered the opportunity to have focussed discussions with Pacific Island Countries on those key areas of community risk; community lifelines and the Oceans and Islands Programmes in which it works.

7. As we made clear at last year's session, the UK's approach to development assistance in the Pacific has now changed with the focus on engagement with regional bodies and multilateral partners. Since this decision was taken we have continued to work with other development partners in the Pacific where we can have a particular impact in the Pacific region. We will continue to maintain a development interest in the Pacific region and we are currently exploring how this will work in practice from April 2004. We have discussed this with some of our partners in the region and will share details of our proposed approach with Pacific

Islands States, regional bodies and development partners later on this year.

8. We wish SOPAC fruitful deliberations at this annual session, and look forward to the outcomes, which will set out the priorities and the way forward over the next year.

9. Thank you for very much for listening.

UNESCO/IOC

Distinguished Delegates and Fellow Colleagues and participants, on behalf of Dr Patricio Bernal, the Assistant Director General of UNESCO and Secretary of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission I would like to extend UNESCO's and IOC's best wishes for a very successful meeting.

Over the past twenty years or so in which I have been associated with SOPAC it has been a pleasure to meet and interact with the people of the South Pacific. I now feel complete in that I have been able to visit this wonderful country of Niue with its warm, hospitable and friendly people.

SOPAC has proposed over this period of time in leaps and bounds. The IOC is grateful that it has been able to contribute in some small ways including the launching of the STAR process and in more recent times the co-development of Pacific Island GOOS with SOPAC. PI GOOS is in general terms the equivalent of sustainable development and it should help SOPAC in meeting its goals in this area.

Finally Madame Chair, I hope to have more to say later in the meeting about the contribution of your Director, Alf Simpson. This cannot easily be done in a few small words, but if I had to say something now, I would say that Alf Simpson should be viewed not as a "national treasure" but rather as a "regional treasure". He is much too young for us to build a monument in his likeness- but who knows what lies ahead in Alf's future? In any case- all the best to Alf- he deserves it. Thank you Madame Chair for this opportunity.

PART IV: STATEMENTS FROM NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

AUSTRALIAN MARINE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY (AMSAT)

Madame Chair and members of the Council, please accept our support and on the appointment of the Niue Government as Chair to the SOPAC Meeting.

On behalf of the AMSAT Management and its CEO, I would like to express our appreciation and thank yous in inviting us to attend the 32nd SOPAC Annual Session, and report on the progress, implementation and management of the Phase III of AusAID South Pacific Sea level and Climate Monitoring Project and its benefits to the Forum countries/governments and its CROP partners, such as SOPAC, Forum, SPREP and USP.

In closely analyzing the new SOPAC work programme and its developments, we look forward to working very closely with the Secretariat in implementing its programmes and this important regional project and in addressing the objectives of your Oceans and Islands programme, training, human resources and not forgetting our contributions to STAR process and especially in improving the science of climate change, variability and sea level rise for our governments in developing no-regrets policies.

Our presence here is to reiterate and emphasize the important partnership that we have forged with SOPAC Secretariat, CROP Partners and our member governments in implementing this multilateral project funded by AusAID.

As we continue to monitor sea level rise, variability and climate changes in the region for more than 12 years, in detecting possible threats of global warming or Greenhouse signals; this year the project has completed the following activities:

- Monitor and provide maintenance to the tide gauges;
- So far Installed 10 Continuous Global Positioning System (CGPS) as a network, whilst Marshall Islands and Solomon are yet to be completed.
- Completion of Niue and Palau Feasibility Studies;
- Completion of the Mid Term Review of the project;
- Conducted Modelling and Policy Training workshops in June, for the 14 Governments and CROP partners.- SPREP, SOPAC and

USP, Fiji Meteorological Services were the main resource people.

- Contribution to work of the Information and Training Working Group
- Continuous production and distribution of reports, data, newsletter and fact sheets to the stakeholders;
- Provide technical presentation/reports to the Forum Leaders Meeting in Auckland and SOPAC in Niue; and
- Provide resources and contribute to the 3 months - USP V & A Training course in Fiji.

Madame chair and SOPAC Council members, thank you for your patience and we look forward to your continual support, partnership and understanding in progressing this project for the benefit of our governments and region.

BRITISH GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Madam Chairman, distinguished representatives, delegates, ladies and gentlemen, the British Geological Survey presents its compliments to the 32nd Annual Session of the SOPAC Governing Council and expresses its sincere regret at this year being unable to participate. Notwithstanding, we send our best wishes to the meeting and look forward to hearing of its deliberations, that we are confident will result in further progress of SOPAC and success in its programmes.

The BGS has been working in the Pacific region for many years and until the late 1980s contributed directly to the development of several national geological surveys within the region, including those in Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. In these countries we worked closely with local geologists both on and offshore, usually funded by the UK overseas aid/development programme. With the development of local expertise and the expansion and success of SOPAC, coupled with the decline in funding for the geosciences by the UK Department for International Development (DfID), our role has diminished, but we still take a keen interest in the region and contribute whenever the opportunity arises, over recent years mainly in Papua New Guinea. Our Memorandum of Understanding with SOPAC constitutes a mechanism for co-operation, but we are also required to recover our costs and therefore external funding sources must be identified.

We note the continued development of the SOPAC programme and, in particular the EU funded project 'Reducing vulnerability in the Pacific ACP States', and are pleased to see the continued implementation of this project with technical staff now recruited and in post. Resource assessment in the region, particularly in the field of bulk aggregates, is an ongoing important aspect of the SOPAC programme. We note the increasing awareness and concern the threat associated with global climate change, in particular on the low-lying island nations. We recognise that all of the Pacific intergovernmental organisations have a role to play here, but the physical impact on the land-masses of any sea level change in our view needs particular focused study. In the Earth sciences SOPAC is well equipped to make a significant contribution on this issue.

BGS has won four contracts in Papua New Guinea under the World Bank supported Technical Assistance Programme in the mining sector. The projects will assist to develop and support the Department of Mining, thereby enhancing its ability to attract interest and investment from the international mining sector. The BGS projects cover:

- a training needs analysis for staff of the DoM,
- the design of a new IT infrastructure and database system,
- a geophysics project to develop a database systems for the country's various geophysical datasets, and
- a remote sensing project which provides the DoM with a state of the art image processing system plus national data sets.

The projects form part of an institutional development programme with staff training as a key element of all projects. Work on these contracts began in January 2001 and will continue into 2004.

BGS continues where possible to collaborate with SOPAC directly. During 2003 the BGS, funded by the Commonwealth Secretariat, in collaboration with SOPAC Technical Staff and with the active support of the Ministry of Lands, and Resources in the Kingdom of Tonga, carried out a study of severe coastal erosion on Tongatapu. We learn with pleasure that the results of the survey have been reviewed and the recommendation that the major breach in the coastal defences be repaired, have been acted upon. Also during the year, BGS continued to work on the offshore data acquired to investigate the causes of the catastrophic tsunami that struck the north coast of Papua New Guinea in July 1998 that resulted in 2,000

deaths. This study has been a major collaborative effort carried out by JAMSTEC, SOPAC and the BGS. BGS co-organised the meeting in Namibia, in September 2002, of the Forum of Commonwealth Geological Surveys, which received attendance by representatives of the SOPAC region.

Finally, we wish to recognise the imminent retirement of the present Director, Alf Simpson, and the major contribution he has made to the region both as Deputy Director and, more recently over the past six years, as Director. We wish him well in the future and further success to SOPAC under the guidance of his successor.

David Ovadia, Director, BGS International, Keyworth, UK

September 2003

JAPAN MARINE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY CENTER (JAMSTEC)

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, first of all, I would like to convey, on behalf of the Japan Marine Science and Technology Center (JAMSTEC), our congratulations in organization to this 32nd Annual Session of SOPAC in Niue and to express our wishes of all the success of the Session. It is very unfortunate that we are unable to participate in this Session due to other commitments and heavy tasks at home.

JAMSTEC has a long history in cooperative works with SOPAC member countries in the equatorial Pacific. Our first involvement in the region was a comprehensive geological/geophysical studies in the Rabaul Bay by JAMSTEC's research vessel: NATSUSHIMA in early 80's. Since then, a number of cooperative research cruises are carried out by our research vessels: YOKOSUKA for geology and geophysics, and KAIYO and MIRAI for physical oceanography. We also operate manned submersibles Shinkai 6500 and Shinkai 2000 for biological and geological studies in the region.

Remarkable joint survey and research was a series of cruises after the Siksano tsunami occurrence in the north of PNG coast. Although one could express the research is not completed, we did out utmost cooperation with SOPAC on the event and fully understand further study is required. We really hope this ambitious research should be completed through international cooperation with strong guidance of SOPAC member countries.

Current tendency in geoscientific research is inclining more and more towards environmental sciences in particular to ocean sciences. In this regards, JAMSTEC installs large oceanographic observational buoys named TRITON in the west part of the SOPAC seas, and deploys a number of ARGO floats in the central Pacific. Oceanographic and meteorological data obtained by them are transmitted via satellites on near real-time bases to worldwide communities. Naturally, SOPAC member countries would enjoy in utilizing them.

The purpose to strengthen member countries' capabilities in oceanographic data application for countries' benefit, JAMSTEC has already organized three training courses on establishing a network on oceanographic observation in the western Pacific and Asia in which 15 young SOPAC experts participated. This is our honor to inform you that we received favourable indication from funding organization to our proposal for three years plan in organizing a series of JAMSTEC-SOPAC Training Workshop on Capacity Building for Oceanographic Data Utilization in the Region of Equatorial and South-western Pacific Ocean. This new series of training activities will start its first course in coming October at the SOPAC Secretariat as a joint venture between SOPAC and JAMSTEC.

Organizing such a training activity outside JAMSTEC facilities is the first attempt for us. In this regards, close cooperation with SOPAC is indispensable to lead the workshop success. We intend to exchange an official letter for cooperation with SOPAC in due course and strengthen further cooperation. We will make every effort to encourage marine scientific activities in the region together with member countries.

At the end of this statement, we would like to express our sincere thanks to Mr Alf Simpson for his continuous collaboration with us, and his energetic and dynamic guidance in leading marine scientific research and marine affairs in the region. Finally, we wish Alf, your bright future.

KOREA INSTITUTE OF GEOSCIENCE AND MINERAL RESOURCES (KIGAM)

Honorable Madam Chair, Director of SOPAC, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of our institute, KIGAM, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to the government of Niue for hosting this 32nd SOPAC Annual Session in this beautiful and lovely country. I would like also to give heart-

deep respects to the director, Mr. Alf Simpson, and other secretariats of SOPAC for their invaluable efforts to keep this international conference continuously and successfully running.

KIGAM has been undertaking several work programs, especially for Samoa, for last few years in this Pacific Region. Through these works, although not completely, KIGAM as well as the government of Korea, has become understood on the ocean and islands, the community lifelines and the community risks of this region. Moreover, while the works being arranged and carried on, the relationship between SOPAC and KIGAM has become more concrete. In these regards, we have strong confidence that KIGAM will make continuous support in order to make this relationship sustainable, which is also embedded in the Memorandum of Understanding agreed several years ago.

At the 20th STAR Conference closed yesterday, we could exchange many scientific results and opinions so that, at least in our part, many substantial steps could already be made not only to improve our future works but also to satisfy the community's demand. During this 32nd Annual Session, again, we hope new developments, either in strategic side or in practical side, can be achieved to reinforce those 'forward-steps'. We firmly believe that all these sincere steps will lead us to the sustainable development of the Pacific Island Countries, whenever we make them all together in harmony.

Thank you very much again Madam Chair for allowing us to make this statement and we look forward to a successful and productive session.

METAL MINING AGENCY OF JAPAN (MMAJ)

Thank you Mr. Chairman, on behalf of Metal Mining Agency of Japan (MMAJ), I would like to express our sincere appreciation to the Secretariat of SOPAC and SOPAC member countries.

At the request of SOPAC, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and MMAJ have been conducting surveys of deep ocean mineral resources in the EEZs of SOPAC member countries since 1985. The first stage of this joint project concluded in March 2000 having seen exploration in the EEZs of Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kirikbati, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. It was successful in discovering valu-

able deep-ocean mineral deposits in several areas of the ocean floor of the Pacific and also identifying promising sites for further investigations.

The second stage covers surveys to be carried out over a six-year period commencing in April of 2000. The surveys are carried out using the research vessel Hakurei-Marun No. 2, focussing on detailed ore prospecting in the promising areas found through the first stage and environmental baseline survey for future marine mining activity. The EEZ of the Cook Islands, Fiji and the Marshall Islands have been investigated so far in the phase I of the second stage, which concluded in March of this year. Surveys in the phase II will be carried out in offshore waters of Kiribati, Niue, Fiji and Federated States of Micronesia. This year the research cruise will be carried out in the EEZs of Niue and Kiribati from November 8 to December 5.

Besides the Deep-sea Mineral Resources Joint Project, JICA has been despatching experts to the SOPAC Technical Secretariat in Fiji since 1987. They have been involved in offshore mineral programmes, construction of databases, the related data management, cruise co-ordi-

nation and various works in the field of offshore programmes. Some MMAJ staff have been working at the SOPAC Secretariat as JICA experts, and I think their work contributed greatly to the steady development of the South Pacific countries.

MMAJ hopes for further potential areas of cooperation with SOPAC countries in various fields.

Thank you

**(NZ) NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF WATER
AND ATMOSPHERIC RESEARCH (NIWA)**

On behalf of NZ Government's National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research we welcome the opportunity to be present at this 32nd Session of SOPAC. My presence together with that of my colleague Dr Doug Ramsay, demonstrates NIWA's committed to a strategic focus in the Pacific and we look forward to intensifying our interactions with SOPAC over the coming year.

Manager Pacific, Statement by Dr Andrew Matthews, NIWA, Wellington

APPENDIX 5

SUMMARY OF INFORMAL BRIEFING SESSION

The Deputy Director introduced the the two parts to the informal briefing session. He advised Council that to ensure that they could complete their 32nd Session business in the time allocated it was felt prudent that two items be introduced to them in an informal briefing session prior to the meeting. These would be pervasive throughout the meeting and could slow Council down and were the:

- the new SOPAC structure and work programmes and strategies way of doing business; and the
- beginning of a substantive phase of EU funding for a project aimed at reducing vulnerability for 8 ACP countries under its EDF8 process, with a highly likely extension to other countries through the EDF9 process.

PART 1: SOPAC WORK PROGRAMMING UNDER THE NEW CORPORATE STRUCTURE

The Deputy Director introduced the documentation on work programming under the new way of doing business that was before Council for the first time. He displayed the SOPAC Corporate Plan 2002-2004; the SOPAC Business Plan 2003; the Work Programmes and Strategies document explaining that these three along with the yearly Work Plan and Budget document were the four driving documents for the Commission and its Secretariat.

He explained how the Corporate Plan being a 3-year statement of corporate goals, was accompanied by an annual Business Plan (2003 issue before Council), to help the Secretariat deliver on the goals of the Corporate Plan. Furthermore, the Corporate Plan outlined how SOPAC intended to make meaningful contributions to sustainable development in its member countries within the three pillars of sustainable development, namely: environmental; economic and the social pillar.

Drilling down further from the Corporate and Business Plans, the Work Programmes and Strategies document showed the new arrangement for delivery on the mandated responsibilities of the organisation using a programmatic approach that was member-country demand driven and aligned with global concerns. The strategic programming approach also took full advantage of SOPAC's uniqueness and competitive (or rather, 'comparative') advantage within CROP and other regional country support mechanism. Furthermore, that the Work Programmes and Strategies was "work in progress" - to be monitored and refined over time.

The Deputy Director then introduced the SOPAC programme areas along with their managers: the Ocean and Islands Programme managed by Cristelle Pratt; the Community Lifelines Programme managed by Paul Fairbairn; the Community Risk Programme managed by Alan Mearns and the Corporate Services Programme managed by Mohinish Kumar. Cross-cutting through all the programme areas are issues that include advocacy, awareness and capacity building and all continue to be bound by the rules and regulations of the organisation as administered by the corporate support services.

The Deputy Director presented the new format of work programme reporting using the Community Risks Programme as sample - a deliberate choice as it was the easiest to follow. He stated that one of the advantages with the new approach was that staff were working within particular components although staff may be assigned multiple activities. Additionally, when looking at distribution of financial resources, it was easier to allocate staff to components.

The Deputy Director ended his presentation and comments by reminding Council of the intent of the informal briefing - which was to present the documentation on the new arrangement for work programming under the new structure and to allow for general questions on the proposed "new way of doing business".

Tonga asked about the overall structure and the link between different programmatic levels as well as where the position of Director sat within the whole structure. He pointed out that

he couldn't see the connection between the operational structure and the "circle-of-life" diagram used in the presentation.

The Deputy Director drew attention to agenda item 14.4.1 (Proposed New Secretariat Staffing Structure) and referred to the new SOPAC staff organogram. Council had decided the previous year that the Directorate sit above the overall organisation staffing structure supported by the Executive Management Team, a process developed to advise the Director as far as his responsibilities as chief executive officer are concerned.

Tonga asked about the process of internal communication within the Secretariat as well as with the outside SOPAC community.

The Deputy Director admitted that there was no "one-size-fits-all" process. He explained that although there were designated national representatives for each member country, the present setup for the Secretariat's communication with countries was flexible with each country stipulating to the Secretariat their preferred arrangement. He further explained that usually communication was addressed to the national representative and copied to those required on the more technical issues or vice versa. He acknowledged that there had been occasions where the Secretariat has been at fault in this regard and apologised for this. He proposed that if Council was able to suggest a better system the Secretariat would relook at the whole issue.

The Director suggested that matters on an operational level should be left to the programme managers and matters of policy should be directed to the Director and Deputy Director, given that the main objective for communication was to facilitate programme implementation.

Solomon Islands wanted to know the difference between the new approach for doing work to how it was done previously.

The Deputy Director explained that the old system was organized as 10 units giving a brief history of the UNDP Project that eventually evolved into SOPAC. He pointed out that the impetus for devising the new way of working was external to SOPAC but also captured the evolution on the ground. This present strategic approach packages the demands of the member countries in such a way to clearly show where current global targets are being addressed.

Solomon Islands posed the question: in terms of priority setting "which has the greatest in-

fluence" the national, regional or global agenda?

The Deputy Director highlighted the wish list mentality of member countries in the past way of programming work for the Secretariat, explaining that the restructuring was now taking into account regional strategies as well as global, driven by country needs. Given the region's dependence on outside help, it was prudent to link any member-country need to those strategies.

The Director gave an assessment of the new work programming arrangement by suggesting the business perspective of viewing it. He suggested that Council imagine itself as the Board of Directors of a company with the member countries as the clients. He suggested the Business Plan was his Performance Evaluation System, with key performance indicators set up to measure how successful he was in achieving the business goals set by Council. The work programme tasked him with doing what he was best at, for the benefit of his clients. He voiced a particular hope that the review of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat would recognise its role as unique in defining regional priorities which could be enhanced and made more efficient with respect to the other organisations within CROP, bearing in mind that we all work in and for the region, together.

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat reinforced this statement by mentioning that the Terms Of Reference for the Forum review included a section on lessons learned, strengthening linkages amongst all regional organisations within CROP, and that the term 'competitive advantage' might be a misnomer.

The Director stated that Council needed to identify how much information was required to make informed decisions. The whole process had been consultative with Council, emerging in the new programme structure with external support to package the whole idea. The issue of accountability, he admitted, might be better addressed under the Work Plan and Budget agenda item of the main meeting.

Manager, Community Lifelines interjected to place on record that the work on bringing the Task Profiles System in line with the new work programmes and strategies was not completed in time for this Session. Member country representatives finalising 2004 work plan needs with the Secretariat were asked to keep this in mind.

Papua New Guinea raised again the issue of channels of communication between the Secretariat and countries, cautioning the Secretariat against its technical staff making bind-

ing commitments without the knowledge of the national representative. He also wondered at the consistency of the new SOPAC Structure with the current Staff Rules and Regulations?

The Director acknowledged the Papua New Guinea point of contention. The Deputy Director confirmed that the new arrangement was compliant with existing rules and regulations, however finessing at the operational level was in order and that this was being undertaken at present.

The Deputy Director rounded off this part of the briefing session by reminding Council that SOPAC's mandate was broadening, and there was a subsequent change in work programme requirements. The mandate had inevitably evolved and changed over time and he urged member countries to return to their capitals and do what has to be done to capture this for the period of the next Corporate Plan.

ENDS

PART II: EU-SOPAC EDF8 PROJECT

The Deputy Director introduced the EU-SOPAC EDF8 Project as the single largest Project hosted at the Secretariat to date. The total package was 7 million Euros (~15 million FJ\$) for a period of four years. Due to its size, its impact at the Secretariat level is significant. The Secretariat acknowledged the enormity of the tasks of bringing the Project to full speed, and integrating it fully with the SOPAC Work Programme given the new strategic way of doing business that the organisation has adopted.

Council was informed of the donor requirement of keeping the Project stand-alone in terms of its administration and that the European Union was not interested in being seen as picking up un-funded SOPAC activities.

The seemingly oxymoronic exercise of keeping such a huge pervasive entity separate but integrated has stretched the executive management team's ingenuity to the limit. It also seems to have borne fruit as the donor requirements have been successfully met to dock the EDF8 Project with an extension into the EDF9 period for the countries not covered in the EDF8 phase showing enormous promise of being approved.

The Deputy Director introduced the Project Leader, Stephen Booth, who rounded off the Project briefing by presenting the June 2003 Progress Report of the EU-SOPAC EDF8 Project.

New Zealand sought clarification on the link between the Project and SOPAC programmes.

The Deputy Director explained that the integration of the EU Project with the existing SOPAC work programmes – Community Lifelines, Ocean and Islands and Community Risk was cross cutting, citing the examples of the aggregates component of the Project linking with Ocean and Islands; the water and sanitation and ICT components being linked to Community Lifelines; and the hazard and risk as-

essment component to Community Risk. Though the Project is administered separately with its own bank account, it does not physically stand alone within SOPAC. The staff of the Project are spread out within the Secretariat, sitting within SOPAC Programmes that have the strongest link to their Project position, e.g. Stephen Booth the Project Leader, as the Project Water Resources Specialist sits with the water section of the Community Lifelines Programme, and the Project administrative assistant sits in the SOPAC Accounts Department. Although the EU Project also funded the construction of a building in response to the expressed need for more floor space to accommodate the Project staff, it actually houses the Ocean and Islands Programme.

According to the administrative reporting requirements to EU (Brussels), the Project is standalone. This applies to other regional organizations that were administering EU projects as well. It has been noted that this will need to be discussed with EU for future projects to ensure better reporting.

American Samoa raised the issue of implementation, and if there was a second phase to address country vulnerability.

The Deputy Director replied that though the EU had not fully committed all its regional resources at ACP level to EDF9, future funding would be dependent on national commitment to current national projects.

Vanuatu sought clarification on the availability of a budget to assist the work to be carried out by the country intern.

The Deputy Director explained that the arrangement was covered in the overall annual budget. The Project budget line item for country interns, has an allocation for 8 interns, one each for the countries covered in the EDF8 Project. The

resources to support the country interns do their work was embedded in other budget line items such as in-country workshops.

Papua New Guinea noted that for the Fiji and Vanuatu marine surveys, a vessel from Fiji was chartered and asked if there were plans to use services within countries.

The Deputy Director replied that there was a need for a vessel to deploy and test new equipment and that they had initially chosen a boat that had a charter outside of Fiji. However, for regions more distant from Suva, such as the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea, there would be a tender for a suitable vessel to charter out of closer ports. Vessels chartered for EU Project survey work also become vessels of opportunity for other SOPAC activities deployed at no additional cost to SOPAC should there be SOPAC programmed work within or enroute to Project sites.

Tonga was supportive of the Project and commended SOPAC's involvement in the eight Pacific ACP countries however, they queried how the remaining funding that had not been committed to Project work would be divided amongst the eight countries.

The Deputy Director explained that the EU was a significant donor in the region; therefore it has separate and direct bilateral business links under national indicative programmes with each country individually through a national authorising office. The EU support through regional indicative programmes are administered by the Regional Authorising Office (RAO), a role currently undertaken by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. Therefore regional funding through the RAO to support regional programmes are not for channeling into national budgets but rather to undertake activities best undertaken at the regional level, e.g. swath mapping. The very real costs of accessing and deploying swath mapping equipment was best absorbed regionally while benefits were accrued at national level.

Solomon Islands asked if there was a termination trigger clause in the Project agreement and how this would bear on remaining SOPAC member countries who were coming on board for the EDF9 phase of EU funding.

The Deputy Director confirmed that there was a termination clause and that it was connected to an end-of-Project negotiated date and whether Project funds were expended within 18 months of receipt or not (to be confirmed).

Six new countries were confirmed to be beneficiaries of the extension into the EDF9 process of EU funding. SOPAC resources had been utilised at the inception of the EDF8 Project. The same principle would be applied to the EDF9 project.

The representative of the RAO (John Low of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat) reported that the project commenced in February 2002 upon signing of the Financing and Grant Agreement. It was important for Council to note that implementation under the Grant Agreement as with other regional projects, is recognition from the EU, that SOPAC and other CROP organisations are reputable organisations able to deliver EDF-funded programmes. As the RAO for this project, "we are pleased to see that the Grant Agreement is working without major problems, and we will continue to work together to ensure that this is maintained throughout the duration of the Project."

He continued, "The Project has progressed satisfactorily over the first 12 months with the first Steering Committee held in June 2003. The Project was also the subject of two reviews by the EU over the first 12 months. The Project is slightly behind schedule due to the lengthy recruitment process that covered most of the first 12 months." Now that all the members of the Team have taken up their appointments it was important that the Project makes up for lost time as budgeted for in the 2003 Work Plan.

The representative of the RAO stressed the importance of the national stakeholders being aware of the activities to be delivered to their countries. This is because they played an important role, together with SOPAC, in ensuring that Project results are delivered to targeted beneficiaries such as the local communities. The EU has always stressed this point at project meetings, especially in this case, where scientific and technical data was being produced.

He reported that the RAO had also submitted a proposal for the 9th EDF extension of the project to the 6 new Pacific ACP countries with a total budget of approximately €2.5 million. The RAO has been advised that this was to be considered by the EDF Screening Committee in Brussels in September 2003. The RAO did not expect any problems and again stressed the importance of moving quickly, as the timeframe for delivery of the new project, was the same as the 8th EDF Project. SOPAC was advised to begin advertising staff positions immediately.

ENDS

APPENDIX 6

STAR CHAIR'S REPORT TO COUNCIL

Madam Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished National representatives and Delegation members, representatives of Institutions and Organisations, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I. Introduction

Thank you for this opportunity to formally report on STAR's activities. As many people are here for the first time and may not be familiar with STAR, I will briefly outline its role.

STAR is SOPAC's Science, Technology and Resources Network and it acts as an interface between the SOPAC Secretariat and its member nations and the international scientific community. It does this in several ways. Every few years, an international scientific workshop or meeting is either convened by STAR, or held under its auspices, on a broad theme relevant to the SOPAC region. STAR members also correspond and tender advice during the intervening periods.

Each year, a meeting at which scientific papers are presented and discussed, and thematic Working Groups meet, is held in prior to this Annual Session of the SOPAC Governing Council. This year, the 20th meeting of STAR was held from September 19th to 22nd at the Niue Sports Club, and I thank that organisation for the use of their facilities.

II. STAR Presentations

The theme of this year's STAR meeting was "Towards linking geoscience and policy for Pacific Small Islands sustainable development".

During the meeting, 29 scientific papers and one longer lecture were presented orally and a number of others by the posters you see displayed upstairs. Abstracts of these are published in SOPAC Miscellaneous Report 549. As is always the case for STAR meetings, and despite many members being unable to attend this year, the information presented covered a very broad range and participants included representatives from disciplines other than earth science. I recommend the volume of abstracts as a guide to the range of material covered and

as a source of much useful information. (Editor's Note: A CD-Rom of all presentations at the STAR 2003 Session is available from the SOPAC Secretariat on request).

In deference to the wishes of our hosts, the STAR Meeting commenced with a session devoted to Water and Other Non-living Resources and then papers were grouped into the themes of Tectonics & Geology, Hazards, Information Technology & Remote Sensing, Habitats, Oceans & Coastal, and Science & Policy. The eight sessions were chaired by John Collen, John Bonato, Baskar Rao, Paul Fairburn, Gary Greene, Loren Kroenke, Keu Mataroa and Naomi Atauea.

Let me briefly outline the scope of the presentations for you, to indicate the variety. During the session on fresh water and other resources, speakers examined community participation in the SOPAC Community Lifelines Programme, the impacts of cyclones on drinking water and means of extracting water from humid atmosphere. Deep-sea mineral exploration and the controls on the formation of deep-sea minerals were discussed.

During the Tectonics & Geology session, papers covered aspects of the geology of Hawaii, the Hawaii-Emperor chain, and mid-ocean rises. Hazards papers summarised the CHARM project, looked at climate change in coastal regions, and discussed the relevance of climate forecasts to water resource management. As has been the case in recent years, the applications of Information Technology permeated much of the meeting but the time specifically devoted to this concentrated particularly on the application of GIS techniques for mapping for a range of civic purposes.

The Habitats, Oceans & Coastal papers were also, as usual, wide-ranging and included papers on habitat investigation, study of lagoon food webs using stable isotopes, measuring sea level change, discussion of the sediments and frameworks of atolls, and aggregate utilisation.

An innovation this year that was foreshadowed in the theme for the meeting was the inclusion of two sessions devoted to Science & Policy. These were intended to summarise aspects of past and ongoing scientific research in the re-

gion and to suggest how this might be of value to policy-makers. Papers included the sustainable use of aggregates, uncertainties in our knowledge of aggregate formation, the future development of PNG, discussion of policies regarding water management, Global Ocean Observing Systems and ocean policy management, and finally the status of geoscience research as related to development.

Finally, the STAR meeting finished with a lecture dealing with global resource issues. This presented a chilling scenario of what may lie ahead in the very near future and gave suggestions as to how Pacific island nations might act to mitigate the worst effects of global resource depletion.

III. Working Groups

In addition to the scientific presentations, three working groups also met. These working groups offer an opportunity for STAR delegates to bring to the attention of Council items of particular scientific and technical importance to the region.

This year the Water, Energy, Hazards, and Habitats & Coastal working groups met. I will report briefly on their main recommendations here and the full reports with supporting arguments for the conclusions are appended.

The Water Working Group made the following recommendations:

- that CLP build upon its initial activities with the US-NZ Climate Accord Partnership, which has now developed into the US-NZ-Aus Tri-lateral Climate Partnership Programme.
- that the recent G8 decision to support an Earth Observation Summit provides a global driver for the implementation of such regional programmes as Pacific Islands Global Climate Observation System (PI-GCOS) and its sub-components relevant to the CLP including Pacific Hydrological Cycle Observation System (Pacific HYCOS). SOPAC is recommended to remain engaged in PI-GCOS and actively develop the Pacific HYCOS initiative.
- The working group acknowledged the initiative taken by Papua New Guinea in using the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management as a framework to develop a national level strategic approach to sustainable water management, and recommends to other SOPAC Member Coun-

tries that, as appropriate, they note the potential contribution that the Plan could make to the preparation of individual national development plans.

- The WWG identified the Caribbean regional water initiative known as the White Water to Blue Water Partnership Programme as having considerable value to the Pacific region. The WWG recommended the CLP use the Joint Caribbean-Pacific Programme for Action on Water & Climate (JPfA) to strengthen the existing partnership with the Caribbean on integrated watershed and coastal area management (IWCAM) approaches, including knowledge, data and capacity building transfer. Specific opportunities were recognised for the development of such a programme in the US affiliated north Pacific.
- The WWG expressed its concern at the existing low levels of staffing and capacity within the CLP Water Team. It recommended the CLP to maximise opportunities to increase CLP capacity during the Commission on Sustainable Development two year focus on water in 2004-2005. It further recommended the CLP to explore alternative approaches to augmenting capacity including secondments, job-sharing and outsourcing arrangements.
- WWG raised concerns over the lack of water specialists present in STAR sessions and the lack of input therefore available to contribute to programme review.
- WWG mindful of the CSD 11 decision to focus on Water & Sanitation in the years 2004-2005 recommends to CLP and to Member States the need to use this period of increased opportunity to secure future water initiatives at the regional and national level.
- The WWG recommended to CLP to explore opportunities of linking wastewater and sanitation activities to the new regional waste initiative, announced at the recent Pacific-Japan Leaders Summit (PALM) meeting in Okinawa, and currently implemented by SPREP.

Members of the Energy Working Group:

- Noted the urgent need for PICs to consider and plan for the design, development, integration and use of alternate sources of energy as the currently available resource of transportable fuels (in particular fossil fuels) are likely to become increasingly uneco-

nomical and, in some cases, will become depleted within the near future.

- Noting the technical publications already prepared and published by SOPAC and those in final draft, requested that SOPAC further take a lead role in the identification and dissemination of information on new and developing technologies including information where research is being carried out on relevant alternate energy sources and development that are relevant for adoption within the region.
- Endorsed the proactive approach that SOPAC has taken in respect to the ongoing resource assessment in wind, wave, ocean thermal, geothermal and biomass, and encouraged aggregation and publication of information on coconut fuel.
- The EWG recommended that SOPAC continue to monitor the progress with the research and development of hydrogen fuel cells and other potential developing energy technologies.
- Identified the need for Pacific Island Countries and Utilities to work collaboratively with SOPAC and other CROP organizations and other associations such as the Pacific Power Association (PPA) in providing information that can be circulated either through the Pacific Islands Newsletter (PEN) or other appropriate media and e-mail.
- Encourage PIC's to promote and implement demand and supply side management and sustainable energy developments to reduce wastage and improve efficiency.
- It was noted that the EU Project proposed to convene a central workshop to bring technicians from PICs together that will assist in providing training and support to EU/ACP Member Countries in GIS and Remote Sensing and encourages a particular emphasis for the utilities (power / water / telecom / PWD).
- The EWG recognised the need for SOPAC to strengthen links with the Utilities and the PPA, in particular in the dissemination and sharing of technical information.
- Finally the EWG noted the need to increase the participation of technical and scientific component at STAR relating to energy.

The Hazards Working Group recognised that Comprehensive Hazard and Risk Management, or CHARM, is an important decision-making tool to assist sustainable development and risk management in developing countries.

The group recommended:

- That a whole-of-government comprehensive hazard and risk management approach be integrated into national sustainable development planning processes. This broader holistic approach goes beyond the traditional disaster management focus and offers the opportunity for more robust forward investment decisions for sectors impacted upon by natural and human-induced hazards.
- Greater government commitment is needed in utilising relevant science to guide decisions, and multi-criteria tools need to be refined and promoted for national usage.
- That the next step to ensure successful implementation and evaluation of the CHARM regional initiative requires the model to be successfully piloted in a selected member country. The Working Group suggested that the island of Efate in Vanuatu would be appropriate.

The Habitats and Coastal Working Group discussed the usefulness of marine benthic habitat mapping and the necessity of this methodology for addressing the ecology component of SOPAC's Cooperate Plan of 2003-2004. Biologists participating in this working group pointed out that ecology includes the interaction between the living and non-living processes, thus demonstrating connectivity between geosciences and biology. The group recommended that:

- A marine benthic habitat-mapping workshop be organized for the SOPAC region.
- Effort be made to process SOPAC backscatter data.
- A pilot marine benthic habitat-mapping project be done in Kiribati using multibeam data collected by SOPAC and including the processing of backscatter data and interpretation of marine habitats from these data.
- SOPAC geologists and biologists coordinate when undertaking coastal mapping to facilitate holistic science and increase the benefits of the surveys.

IV. STAR Business Meeting

Officers: As already reported, the STAR Business Meeting elected myself to continue as Chair of STAR for the coming year and gave me their approval to co-opt one or more persons as Vice-Chairs of STAR following this meeting.

TAG: The role of TAG was discussed during the Business Meeting. The Pacific community has an invaluable resource in the many experienced international scientists who attend the STAR and SOPAC meetings and form the Technical Advisory Group (TAG). TAG is a body established in the SOPAC Constitution (Article 8) with a "responsibility to provide advice requested by Council on the technical, scientific, training and research and other relevant aspects of the work of the Commission".

I believe that this resource is not always used to its fullest during the Annual Sessions, partly because of the short amount of time available for participants to digest and comment on the highly detailed work programmes.

This has particularly concerned me as Chair of STAR for two reasons – first is the advantage to the Pacific community of obtaining such advice and second is the desire of TAG scientists themselves to use their skills for the benefit of the region. The latter is one of the important factors motivating delegates to attend the annual meetings.

A suggested mechanism to facilitate the provision of advice of TAG members to Governing Council will be addressed in Agenda Item 12 later this week. It should be stressed that STAR sees this as related to technical and scientific oversight only, and in no way affecting the programme review and approval process that is the prerogative of the member states. The aim is simply to enhance the work accomplished by SOPAC during the year and by Governing Council during its Annual Sessions.

The meeting agreed to the following statement:

- STAR scientists reaffirm their commitment to contribute timely scientific and technical advice on SOPAC's work programmes to Governing Council by means of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG).
- They recommend that Council approve the instigation of a formal process whereby TAG members evaluate SOPAC's work programmes in advance of the Annual Sessions, confer with programme managers, and make their conclusions available at the following joint TAG/Council sessions of the Annual Session.

Retirement of Director of SOPAC.

The Business Meeting took the opportunity to thank the retiring Director of SOPAC, Alf Simpson, for his efforts on behalf of STAR and

its scientists over many years. The link between STAR and SOPAC is a fragile one and Alf's breadth of geoscience knowledge, vision of the usefulness of all aspects of science, leadership and counsel have been a major factor in keeping the relationship alive. We all wish him well for the future. Thank you, Alf, and we hope for a similar relationship with your successor.

V. General Comments from Chair of STAR

At this point, I would appreciate this opportunity to convey some personal impressions of this STAR meeting. The first is that this meeting has shown even more than previous ones the clear link between geology and biology in Pacific science. This has always been apparent to those of us studying the nearshore sediments and reefs, where we have living organisms building on a geological framework and then being affected by a mix of biological and geological processes to produce non-living resources. This year this concept was extended when we heard, and I use one example only here, of the biological controls on deep-sea metal deposition.

I would also like to mention that the clearly applied direction to much of the research that has always been a particular feature of STAR continues and is increasingly directed towards the provision of quality technical advice to member governments.

My final, and related, observation is one that I also made last year, when it was prompted by a remark from a colleague. He said, and I quote: "One of the reasons I trained as a scientist was a desire to help society. As a young scientist, I assumed that if I did good science, it would automatically end up in policy. But of course that didn't happen".

Anyone who attends STAR/SOPAC/Council cannot fail to be aware of the interaction between policymakers, planners, managers and scientists. What you have here is something that is quite unique but it is not necessarily permanent. However, given the nature of many of the issues and problems that will beset us all in the Pacific in the years to come, and of course given the nature of SOPAC as foremost a technical geoscience organisation, it is something that it is essential to nurture. In this respect, I have already mentioned the change of direction of STAR research presentations and I would also like to acknowledge the attendance of many members of national delegations at the

STAR meeting. We trust that you found the experience worthwhile and we welcome you to next year's meeting.

I had planned to make some of STAR accessible to all Council members by scheduling the Science and Policy sessions for Monday afternoon, after the arrival of the flight from Samoa. Unfortunately, the fates conspired against us there.

As usual, STAR is indebted to staff of the SOPAC Secretariat for their cheerful and untiring efforts that make the meeting possible. The STAR meetings are organised over a much shorter time frame, and with fewer staff, than any other conferences with which I have been associated. The success is due to the efforts of the Secretariat. And finally, Madam Chair, may I take this opportunity as Chair of STAR speaking on behalf of all the scientists to thank our hosts, the Government and people of Niue, for the hospitality shown to us. Our reception up to and including last night has been truly memorable.

That concludes my address. Thank you.

John Collen, Chair

Science Technology and Resources Network (STAR)

Niue, 24 September 2003

APPENDICES - MINUTES OF STAR WORKING GROUPS

I. Hazards Working Group Report

Participants

Doug Ramsey (NIWA), Andrew Matthews (NIWA), Joe Buleka (PNG), Purnima Naidu (SOPAC), Alan Mearns (SOPAC), Atu Kaloumaira (SOPAC), Litea Biukoto (EU-SOPAC Project), Craig Pratt (EVI Project, SOPAC).

Summary

Comprehensive Hazard and Risk Management (CHARM) is recognised as an important decision making tool to assist mainstreaming sustainable development and risk management in member countries. However, it was noted that

its success depends on the selection of an appropriate office to drive it in country. In addition the working group suggested that the use of the latest applied science is used to support 5 - 10 year national development plans.

Recommendations

The Working Group recommended:

- That a whole of government comprehensive hazard and risk management approach be integrated into national sustainable development planning processes. This broader holistic approach goes beyond the traditional disaster management focus and offers the opportunity for more robust forward investment decisions for sectors impacted upon by natural and human-induced hazards
- Greater government commitment is needed in utilising relevant science to guide decisions. Newly established coordination groups like GIS user groups in several countries have successfully encouraged the integration of science and traditional knowledge; demonstrated better collaboration between different sectors of the community and government and highlighted sector inter-dependency of decision-making. Multi-criteria tools (e.g. EVI, cost-benefit analysis, risk rating) need to be refined and promoted for national usage as they provide relevant scientific information with linkages to all levels of decision-making.
- That the next step to ensure successful implementation and evaluation of the CHARM regional initiative requires the model to be successfully piloted in a selected member country. It is suggested that the island of Efate in Vanuatu would be appropriate for this initiative with the outcomes and lessons learnt from the comprehensive trial of CHARM to be reported through the new Programme Technical Advisory Group to Council next year.

II. Habitats And Coastal Processes Working Group

Participants

Gary Greene (Moss Landing Marine Labs), David Garton (Georgia Institute of Technology), David Kennedy (Victoria University of Wellington), Seong-Pil Kim (KIGAM), Se Won Chang (KIGAM), Cedric Mortimer (James Cook Uni-

versity), Naomi Atauea (Kiribati), Keu Mataroa (Cook Islands), Aumalaga Tiotio (Electric Power Corporation, Samoa), Lameko Talia (Samoa), Robert Smith (SOPAC).

The working group met on Monday September 22, 2003 at the Niue Sports Club, Niue. Eleven scientists participated in this working group.

- The group discussed the usefulness of marine benthic habitat mapping and the necessity of this methodology for addressing the ecology component of SOPAC's Cooperate Plan of 2003-2004. Biologists participating in this working group pointed out that ecology includes the interaction between the living and non-living processes, thus demonstrating connectivity between geosciences and biology. Therefore, the activities that SOPAC is charged with, including coastal geophysical mapping for aggregate assessment, hazards analyses, and effluent discharge, applies as well to the living resources. Therefore, habitat mapping is an appropriate mechanism for applying geoscientific studies to marine living resources evaluation.
- In light that it has been several years since a regional workshop on marine benthic habitats was held (the 1997 Noumea, New Caledonia workshop), the working group recommended consideration of developing a habitat-mapping workshop for the SOPAC region in the near future. The participants encouraged the seeking of funds, perhaps through the EU-EDF 8 program, to convene a workshop specifically focused on marine benthic habitat mapping in the SOPAC region. Such a workshop was viewed as timely given the recent increase in multibeam mapping projects completed in recent years, and the number of such projects contemplated for the near future.
- The working group noted that considerable multibeam and backscatter data have been collected in the SOPAC region that can be used to map marine benthic habitats. Although backscatter data has not been processed, it has been collected and could be processed once methodologies and funds needed to support software are identified.
- The working group suggested that SOPAC facilitate coordination between geologists and biologists when involved in coastal mapping so that habitat information beneficial to ecological assessment can be collected at no, or little, extra cost. The benefits of such

coordination is that sensitive ecological habitats may be identified in areas that, for example, may be earmarked for aggregate mining. Thus the mining activity may be shifted or selected elsewhere to prevent adverse impact to a critical habitat. In addition, participants at the working group noted that habitat mapping would be very beneficial in properly locating Fisheries Attraction Devices (FADs), thereby optimizing their effectiveness as well as minimizing the risk of loss.

- In regard to SOPAC's present activity of geomorphological mapping in Samoa for sand and gravel replenishment, the working group suggested that this activity being supported by Korea continue.
- To initiate a SOPAC marine benthic habitat mapping effort, the working group suggested that a pilot project be undertaken, preferably in an area where SOPAC has been collecting geophysical data useful in habitat mapping. Since SOPAC has several mapping operations ongoing in Kiribati, the working group recommended that a pilot project be undertaken in Kiribati.

Recommendations:

- A marine benthic habitat-mapping workshop be organized for the SOPAC region.
- Effort be made to process SOPAC backscatter data.
- A pilot marine benthic habitat-mapping project be done in Kiribati using multibeam data collected by SOPAC and including processing of backscatter data and interpretation of marine habitats from these data.
- SOPAC geologists and biologists coordinate when undertaking coastal mapping to facilitate holistic science and increase benefits of surveys.

III. Water Working Group

Working Group Members:

Fonoto Perelini (American Samoa), Andrew Matthews (NIWA, New Zealand), Andre Siohane (Niue), Kelepi Mafi (Tonga), Bhaskar Rao (Fiji), Rhonda Bower (SOPAC), Luke Mosley (SOPAC), Paul Fairbairn (SOPAC), Clive Carpenter (SOPAC), Facilitator/Rapporteur.

Working Group Report & Recommendations:

The members of the Water Working Group (WWG) agreed the following recommendations should be submitted to Governing Council for the benefit of the Community Lifelines Programme (CLP) and individual Member Countries:

The WWG recommended the CLP build upon its initial activities with the US-NZ Climate Accord Partnership, which has now developed into the US-NZ-Aus Tri-lateral Climate Partnership Programme. Specifically the climate programme provides valuable opportunities to enhance data collection, as well as data capture, storage & retrieval, and capacity building, directly relevant to all three CLP component areas (resources, assets and governance).

The WWG agreed that the recent G8 decision to support an Earth Observation Summit, provides a global driver for the implementation of such regional programmes as Pacific Islands Global Climate Observation System (PI-GCOS) and its sub-components relevant to the CLP including Pacific Hydrological Cycle Observation System (Pacific HYCOS). SOPAC is recommended to remain engaged in PI-GCOS and actively develop the Pacific HYCOS initiative.

WWG recognised the immediate complementarity between the 3 thematic areas of: Water Resources & Climate; Water Utilities; Water Awareness & Governance; in the SIDS global water position agreed at the 3rd World Water Forum in Kyoto in March 2003, the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management, and the CLP component areas of Resources Management, Asset Management and Governance. The CLP structure is therefore considered to reflect the needs of the water sector.

WWG acknowledged the initiative taken by Papua New Guinea in using the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management as a framework to develop a national level strategic approach to sustainable water management, and recommends to other SOPAC Member Countries to review the potential contribution of the Regional Action Plan in contributing to their national development plans.

The WWG identified the Caribbean regional water initiative known as the White Water to Blue Water Initiative as having considerable value to the Pacific region. The WWG recom-

mended the CLP use the Joint Caribbean-Pacific Programme for Action on Water & Climate (JPfA) to strengthen the existing partnership with the Caribbean on integrated watershed and coastal area management (IWCAM) approaches, including knowledge, data and capacity building transfer. Specific opportunities were recognised for the development of such a programme in the US affiliated north Pacific.

The WWG expressed its concern of the existing low levels of staffing and capacity within the CLP Water Team. It recommended the CLP to maximise opportunities to increase CLP capacity during the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) two year focus on water in 2004-2005. It further recommended the CLP to explore alternative approaches to augmenting capacity including secondments, job-sharing and outsourcing arrangements developed through improved partnership with other regional stakeholders eg. Pacific Water Association (PWA), American Samoa Power Authority (ASPA) and the National Institute for Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA).

WWG raised concerns over the lack of water specialists present in STAR sessions and the associated lack of input therefore available to contribute to CLP programme review. WWG recommended SOPAC seek opportunities for strengthening the capacity of STAR such as joint or piggy-backing of sector stakeholder meetings in parallel or in advance of STAR, eg the PWA Annual General Meeting.

WWG mindful of the CSD 11 decision to focus on Water & Sanitation in the years 2004-2005 recommends to CLP and to Member States the need to use this period of increased opportunity to secure future water initiatives at the regional and national level to augment national capacity.

The WWG recommended to CLP to explore opportunities of linking wastewater and sanitation activities to the new regional waste initiative, announced at the recent Pacific-Japan Leaders Summit (PALM) meeting in Okinawa, and currently implemented by SPREP.

IV. Energy Working Group

Working Group Members:

Fonoti Perelini Perelini (American Samoa), Keu Mataroa (Cook Islands), Ambassador Mack Kaminaga (RMI), Lameko Talia (Samoa),

Taule'ale'ausumai Toitoti (EPC - Samoa), Dr Charles (Chuck) Helsley (STAR), Gordon Chang (PPA), Wolf Forstreuter (SOPAC), Paul Fairbairn (SOPAC), Facilitator/Rapporteur:

Working Group Report & Recommendations:

The members of the Energy Working Group (EWG) agreed the following recommendations should be submitted to Governing Council for the benefit of the Community Lifelines Programme (CLP) and individual Member Countries. The key issues were as follows:

- Noted the urgent need for PICs to consider and plan for the design, development, integration and use of alternate sources of energy as the currently available resource of transportable fuels (in particular fossil fuels) are likely to become increasingly uneconomical and, in some cases, will become depleted within the near future.
- Noting the technical publications already prepared and published by SOPAC and those in final draft, requested that SOPAC further take a lead role in the identification and dissemination of information on new and developing technologies including information where research is being carried out on relevant alternate energy sources and development that are relevant for adoption within the region.
- Endorsed the proactive approach that SOPAC has taken in respect to the ongoing resource assessment in wind, wave, ocean

thermal, geothermal and biomass, and encouraged aggregation and publication of information on coconut fuel.

- The EWG recommended that SOPAC continue to monitor the progress with the research and development of hydrogen fuel cells and other potential developing energy technologies.
- Identified the need for Pacific Island Countries and Utilities to work collaboratively with SOPAC and other CROP organizations and other associations such as the Pacific Power Association (PPA) in providing information that can be circulated either through the Pacific Islands Newsletter (PEN) or other appropriate media and e-mail.
- Encourage PIC's to promote and implement demand and supply side management and sustainable energy developments to reduce wastage and improve efficiency.
- It was noted that the EU Project proposed to convene a central workshop to bring technicians from PICs together that will assist in providing training and support to EU/ACP Member Countries in GIS and Remote Sensing and encourages a particular emphasis for the utilities (power / water / telecom / PWD).
- The EWG recognised the need for SOPAC to strengthen links with the Utilities and the PPA, in particular in the dissemination and sharing of technical information.
- Finally the EWG noted the need to increase the participation of technical and scientific component at STAR relating to energy.

APPENDIX 7

REVISED GUIDELINES FOR ENGAGEMENT IN COST-RECOVERY ACTIVITIES

The Secretariat engages in several activities on an ongoing basis which lead to income being earned on a cost recovery basis, and duly credited to Miscellaneous Revenue in the Regular Budget.

Activities typically include: (i) the sale of publications, maps and data holdings: (ii) carrying out of work in the field for a particular country.

In considering activities to be carried out under these guidelines the Director, in consultation with the National Representative of the country concerned will ensure that the public good character of the Commission is protected, the Commission is not exposed to a conflict of interest and the Commission is not engaging in work which detracts from cost effective opportunities for the national private sector.

Sale of publications, maps and data holdings
Income should be on a cost-recovery basis as

determined by the Director in consultation with others as necessary, and on a "case-to-case" basis.

Carrying out of work in the field:

- Any request, verbally or written coming direct to the Secretariat must be referred to the National Representative of the country concerned for consideration.
- The formal request for the work must be in writing from the National Representative to the Director.
- An agreed detailed work plan including deliverables be drawn up in the form of an MOU between SOPAC, the National Representative, and the party providing the funds.
- In approving the activity the Director must ensure that carrying out this activity does not impact on the ongoing activities in the current Approved Work Plan and Budget.

APPENDIX 8

LIST OF CONFERENCE ROOM DOCUMENTS

AS 32/1/Info 1	Information Circular
AS 32/1/Info 2	Programme for Official Opening (To be circulated at Registration)
AS 32/3.1 Rev. 2	Provisional Agenda
AS 32/3.1/Info 1	Draft Working Schedule
AS 32/3.1/Info 2	Working Procedures
AS 32/3.1/Info 3	List of Conference Room Documents
AS 32/3.1/Info 4	Provisional List of Participants (To be circulated at Registration)
AS 32/4.1	Designation of SOPAC National Representatives
AS 32/6.1	Introduction to Director's Annual Report to Council
AS 32/6.2*	Issues Arising from 31 st Annual Session
AS 32/6.3*	Report on Implementation of the 2003 Business Plan for the 2002-2004 Corporate Plan
AS 32/7.1*	Summary Report of 2003 Donor Support
AS 32/7.2.1*	2002 Audited Financial Statements, Auditors Report and Management Report
AS 32/7.2.2*	Report on 2002 Budget Variance and Virement of Funds
AS 32/7.2.3*	Report on Assets and Inventory written off for the year ended 31 December 2002
AS 32/7.3.1*	Financial Accounts for the 6-month period to 30 June 2003
AS 32/7.3.2*	Membership Contributions
AS 32/8.1	European Union Projects
AS 32/8.2	CROP Summary Record and Report
AS 32/8.3	STAR Chair Report (To be circulated)
AS 32/8.4.1	2002 Annual Report Summary
AS 32/8.4.2	Review of Country Profiles
AS 32/8.4.3	Summary of New Project Proposals
AS 32/8.4.4	SOPAC Gender Policy
AS 32/8.4.5	SOPAC Work Programme and the MDGs
AS 32/8.4.6	Preparations for the 2004 Review of Barbados Programme of Action for SIDS
AS 32/8.4.7	Report on SOPAC Activities Concerning Climate Change, Climate Vulnerability and Sea Level Rise
AS 32/9.1	Report on the Ocean & Islands Programme for 2003
AS 32/9.2	Issues Arising in the Ocean & Islands Programme

AS 32/10.1	Report on the Community Lifelines Programme for 2003
AS 32/10.2	Issues Arising in the Community Lifelines Programme
AS 32/11.1	Report on the Community Risk Programme for 2003
AS 32/11.2	Issues Arising in the Community Risk Programme
AS 32/11.3	Draft Pacific Islands Regional Policy for Communities at Risk
AS 32/12	Programme Review Monitoring and Evaluation
AS 32/13.1*	Report on the Corporate Services Programme for 2003
AS 32/14.1	No Paper
AS 32/14.2*	Deputy Director Position
AS 32/14.3*	CROP Remuneration Implementation Update
AS 32/14.4.1*	Proposed New Secretariat Staffing Structure
AS 32/14.4.2*	Staff Regulation 25: Director's Entitlement
AS 32/14.4.3*	SOPAC Staff Recruitment Process
AS 32/14.5*	SOPAC/SPC/SPTO headquarters "Pacific Village"
AS 32/14.6*	Secretariat Draft Risk Management Plan
AS 32/14.7*	Status of Ratification of SOPAC Constitution
AS 32/14.8*	Status of Agreements with other organisations
AS 32/15.1*	Reserve Fund Ceiling
AS 32/15.2*	Income from Cost Recovery Activities
AS 32/15.3*	Appointment of Auditor
AS 32/15.4*	Draft Business Plan 2004 for Implementation of the Corporate Plan, 2002-2004
AS 32/15.5*	Draft 2004 Work Plan and Budget

** Restricted distribution to Council only*

APPENDIX 9

ACRONYMS

AAPG	- American Association of Petroleum Geologists (Tulsa, USA)	ASEAN	- Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ACDP	- Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler	ASLR	- accelerated sea-level rise
ACIAR	- Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research	ASPA	- American Samoa Power Authority
ACP	- African, Caribbean and the Pacific countries of the Lome Convention	ATP	- authority to prospect
ACTEW	- Australian Capital Territory Electricity and Water Corporation	AUD	- Australian Dollar
ADB	- Asian Development Bank	AusAID	- Australian Agency for International Development
ADCP	- acoustic doppler current profiler	AUSLIG	- Australian Surveying and Land Information Group
ADITC	- Australian Drilling Industry Training Committee	AVI	- Australian Volunteers International
AGC	- Atlantic Geoscience Center (Canada)	AVHRR	- Advanced Very High Resolution Radiometer
AGSO	- Australian Geological Survey Organisation	AWA	- Australia Water Association
AIACC	- Assessments of Impacts and Adaptations to Climate Change	AWWA	- American Water Works Association
AIDAB	- Australian International Development Assistance Bureau	BAC	- Climate Alert Bulletin
AMSAT	- Australia Marine Science & Technology Limited	BGR	- Bundesanstalt für Geowissenschaften und Rohstoffe (Germany)
ANU	- Australian National University	BGS	- British Geological Survey
AOSIS	- Alliance of Small Island States	BIO	- Bedford Institute of Oceanography (Canada)
AOPC	- Atmospheric Observing Panel for Climate	BOM	- Bureau of Meteorology (Australia)
APAN	- Asia Pacific Area Network	BPoA	- Barbados Plan of Action
APEC	- Asia-Pacific Economic Commission	BRGM	- Bureau de Recherche Géologiques
APPEA	- Australian Petroleum Production Exploration Association	BSc	- Bachelor of Science
APPL	- Application of Petroleum Prospecting Licenses	CalCOFI	- California Cooperative Fishery Investigation
ARGO	- Array for Real-time Geostrophic Oceanography	CalTech	- California Institute of Technology
ARGOS	- A satellite location and data collection system (CNES/NOAA)	CAR	- Communities At Risk
AS	- Annual Session (SOPAC)	CBD	- Convention of Biological Diversity
		CCCC	- Climate Change Carrying Capacity
		CCCCC	- Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre
		CBO	- Community-Based Organisations

CCAMLR	-	Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources	CNRS	-	Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (National Center for Scientific Research), France
CCOP	-	Committee for Coordination of Joint Prospecting for Mineral Resources in Asian Offshore Areas (ESCAP)	COE	-	Corps of Engineers (properly USACE) (USA)
CCOP/SOPAC	-	Committee for Coordination of Joint Prospecting for Mineral Resources in South Pacific Offshore Areas (now SOPAC)	COLA	-	cost of living adjustment
CD-ROM	-	Compact Disc Read Only Memory	COM	-	College of Micronesia (of FSM)
CEA	-	Commissariat à l'Energie Atomique (Atomic Energy Commission), France	COMBAS	-	a joint Japanese-French project to study active marginal basins in the Southwest Pacific (followed the STARMER programme)
CEHI	-	Caribbean Environmental Health Institute	COMSEC	-	Commonwealth Secretariat (UK)
CELT	-	Centre for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching	COOP	-	Coastal Ocean Processes Programme
CEO	-	Centre for Earth Observation	CORA	-	Canadian Ocean Resource Associates Inc.
CEO	-	Chief Executive Officer	CP1	-	Core Project 1, the Global Description of the World Ocean
CEOS	-	Committee on Earth Observation Satellites	CPCEMR	-	Circum-Pacific Council for Energy and Mineral Resources
CERMP	-	Cyclone Emergency and Risk Management Project (Tonga)	CPPS	-	Permanent Commission for the South Pacific
CFTC	-	Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation	CPWC	-	Collaborative Programme on Water and Climate
C-GOOS	-	Coastal-Global Ocean Observing System	CRGA	-	Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (of South Pacific Community)
CGPS (cGPS)	-	Continuous Global Positioning System	CROP	-	Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (formerly SPOCC)
CHARM	-	Comprehensive Hazards and Risk Management	CROP ICT WG	-	CROP Information and Communication Technologies Working Group
CIDA	-	Canadian International Development Agency	CRP	-	Community Risk Programme (SOPAC)
CISNet	-	Coastal Index Site Network	CSA	-	Cambridge Scientific Abstracts (USA)
CLIPS	-	Climate Information and Prediction Services	CSC	-	Commonwealth Science Council
CLIVAR	-	Climate Variability and Predictability	CSD	-	Commission of Sustainable Development (of United Nations)
CLP	-	Community Lifelines Programme (SOPAC)	CSI	-	Coastal Regions and Small Islands (of UNESCO)
C-MAN	-	Coastal Marine Automated Network	CSIRO	-	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (Australia)
CMM	-	Commission for Marine Meteorology	CSO	-	Civil Society Organisation
CNES	-	Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales (National Center for Space Studies)			
CNMI	-	Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands			

CSP	- Conservation Society of Pohnpei	EMT	- Executive Management Team (SOPAC)
CSPOD	- Canadian South Pacific Ocean Development Programme	ENSO	- El Niño Southern Oscillation
CTD	- Conductivity/Temperature/Depth Device	ENVISAT	- Environmental Satellite
DANIDA	- Danish International Development Agency	EPC	- Electric Power Corporation (Samoa)
DBCP	- Data Buoy Cooperation Panel	EPC	- thermal graphic recorder used in mapping (probably after company founder: Edward P. Curly)
DDSMS	- Department of Development Support and Management Services (of UNDP)	EPCS	- Electronic Particle Counting System
DFID	- Department for International Development (UK)	EPM	- Environmental Programme for the Mediterranean
DGMWR	- Department of Geology, Mines and Water Resources (Vanuatu)	ER	- Internal SOPAC Secretariat abbreviation for EU-SOPAC Project reports
DGPS	- Differential Global Positioning System	ESCAP	- Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN)
DMA	- Defence Mapping Agency (US)	ESMG	- Earth Science and Marine Geology (SOPAC certificate course)
DMU	- Disaster Management Unit (SOPAC Secretariat)	ESSI	- Earth Search Science Incorporation
DO	- Dissolved Oxygen	EU	- European Union
DoM	- Department of Mining (PNG)	EUMETSAT	- European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites
DOALOS	- (UN) Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea	EVI	- Environmental Vulnerability Index
DORD	- Deep Ocean Resources Development Co. Ltd, Japan	EWG	- Energy Working Group (CROP)
DOS	- Disk Operating System	FADS	- Fish Aggregation Devices (FADS)
DSDP	- Deep Sea Drilling Project	FAO	- Food Agriculture Organisation (UN)
DSM	- Demand Side Management	FAU	- Finance and Administration Unit (of SOPAC Work Programme)
DTM	- Digital Terrain Modelling	FAUST	- French-Australia Seismic Transect
DWC	- Dialogue on Water and Climate	FCCC	- Framework Convention on Climate Change
EC	- European Community (now EU)	FEA	- Fiji Electricity Authority
ECOSOC	- Economic and Social Council (UN)	FEMA	- Federal Emergency Management Agency (US)
ECU	- European Currency Unit	FEMM	- Forum Economic Ministers Meeting
EDF	- European Development Fund	FFA	- Forum Fisheries Agency
EEZ	- Exclusive Economic Zone	FFEM	- Fonds Française pour l'Environnement Mondial
EFH	- Essential Fish Habitat		
EIA	- Environmental Impact Assessment		
EMA	- Emergency Management Australia		
EMP	- Ecosystem Monitoring Programme		

	(French Funds for Global Environment)	GIS	- Geographic Information Systems
FEMS	- Fiji Forest Export Marketing System	GIS/RS	- Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing
FICs	- Forum Island Countries	GIWA	- Global and International Waters Assessment
FINNIDA	- Finnish Department of International Development Cooperation	GLI	- Global Imager
FINTEL	- Fiji's International Telecommunications Provider	GLOBEC	- Global Ocean Ecosystems Dynamics Programme
FIT	- Fiji Institute of Technology	GLOSS	- Global Sea-Level Observing System
FJD	- Fijian Dollar	GODAE	- Global Ocean Data Assimilation Experiment
FLIS	- Fiji Land Information System	GOES	- Geosynchronous Operational Environmental Satellite
FMS	- Fiji Meteorological Service	GOOS	- Global Ocean Observing System
FNPF	- Fiji National Provident Fund		
FOAM	- Forecast Ocean Atmosphere Model	EuroGOOS	- European GOOS
FOC	- Forum Officials Meeting	I-GOOS	- Intergovernmental GOOS
FRI	- Fisheries Research Institute	NEARGOOS	- North East Asian Region GOOS
FSM	- Federated States of Micronesia	MedGOOS	- Mediterranean GOOS
FSP	- Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific	PI-GOOS	- Pacific Island GOOS
FTIB	- Fiji Trade and Investment Board	GOSSP	- Global Observing Systems Space Panel
GCOS	- Global Climate Observing System	GPA	- Global Plan for Action
GCRMN	- Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network	GPF	- General Purpose Fund
GDIN	- Global Disaster Information Network	GPS	- Global Positioning System
GDP	- Gross Domestic Product	GSC	- Geological Survey of Canada
GEBCO	- General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (IOC-IHO)	GSJ	- Geological Survey of Japan
GEF	- Global Environmental Facility (World Bank-UNEP-UNDP)	GTOS	- Global Terrestrial Observing System
GEOHAB	- Global Ecology of Harmful Algal Blooms	GTQ	- Gas to Queensland Project (Papua New Guinea)
GERIS	- Geological and Earth Resources Information System (PNG)	GTS	- Global Telecommunications System (of WMO)
GEST	- Group for the Export of Services and Technology (of New Caledonia)	GTSP	- Global Temperature-Salinity Pilot Programme
GII	- Geophysical Institute of Israel	GTZ	- German Technical Cooperation
GIPCO	- GOOS Integrated Panel for the Coastal Ocean	GWP	- Global Water Partnership
GIPME	- Global Investigation of Pollution in the Marine Environment	HAB	- Harmful Algal Blooms
		HAU	- Hazards Assessment Unit (SOPAC Secretariat)
		HDI	- Human Development Index
		HIG	- Hawaii Institute of Geophysics (of UH)

HLC	- High-Level Consultation	IGNS	- Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences (of New Zealand)
HOTO	- Health Of The Oceans (IOC)		
HOTS	- Hawaii Ocean Time Series Station	IGODS	- Interactive Graphical Ocean Database System
HPLC	- High Performance Liquid Chromatography	I-GOOS	- Intergovernmental Committee for GOOS
HRD	- Human Resources Development Unit (of SOPAC Work Programme)	IGOSS	- Integrated Global Ocean Services Systems
HURL	- Hawaii Undersea Research Laboratory (of UH)	IHO	- International Hydrographic Organisation (of IOC/ UNESCO) French Oceanographic Research Institute
HYCOS	- Hydrological Cycle Observing System	IHP	- International Hydrological Programme (of UNESCO)
IAEA	- International Atomic Energy Agency	IISSE	- International Institute of Seismology and Earthquake Engineering
IAS	- Institute of Applied Science (USP)		
IAVCEI	- International Association of Volcanism and Chemistry of the Earth's Interior	IKONOS	- High Resolution Satellite Imagery
IBTS	- International Bottom Trawl Survey	IMA	- International Market Allowance
ICES	- International Council for the Exploration of the Sea	IMO	- International Maritime Organisation
ICM	- Integrated Catchment Management	INET	- Internet Conference organised by ISOC
ICOD	- International Centre for Ocean Development (Canada)	IOC	- International Oceanographic Commission (of UNESCO)
ICOGS	- International Consortium of Geological Surveys	IODE	- International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange
ICRI	- International Coral Reef Initiative	IOS	- Initial Observing System of GOOS
ICSU	- International Council of Scientific Unions	IPCC	- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ICT	- Information and Communication Technologies	IRC	- Internal Revenue Commission (PNG)
ICU	- Islands Climate Update (NZAID)	IRETA	- Institute for Research Extension and Training in Agriculture (USP)
ICZM	- Integrated Coastal Zone Management	IRIS	- Incorporated Research Institution for Seismology
IDNDR	- International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction	ISC	- Interim Sub-Committee (of SOPAC Governing Council to deal with future role and direction of SOPAC)
IEDS	- Integrated Exploration and Development Services Limited (Australia)		
IETC	- International Environmental Technology Centre	ISDR	- International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
IFREMER	- Institut Francaise de Recherche pour l'Exploitation de la Mer (Formerly CNEXO)	ISM	- Island Systems Management
		ISOC	- Internet Society
		ISP	- Internet Service Provider
IGBP	- International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme	ISPRS	- International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing

I-SSEP	- Interiors-Science Steering and Evaluation Panel	LEO	- Long-term Ecosystem Observatories
IT	- Information Technology	LITHP	- JOIDES Lithosphere Panel
IT-Pacnet	- Annual meeting of the CROP ICT Working Group	LME	- Large Marine Ecosystems
ITIC	- International Tsunami Information Centre	LMER	- Land-Margin Ecosystem Research Programme
ITSU	- International Coordination Group for the Tsunami Warning System in the Pacific	LMR	- Living Marine Resources
ITTO	- International Tropical Timber Organisation	LOA	- Letter of Agreement
ITU	- Information Technology Unit (SOPAC Secretariat)	LOICZ	- Land-Ocean Interactions in the Coastal Zone
IUG	- International Union of Geographers	LOIS	- Large Ocean Island States
IWCAM	- integrated watershed and coastal area management	LTER	- Long-Term Ecological Research
IWP	- International Water Programme	LUCC	- Land Use and Cover Change Programme
IWRM	- Integrated Water Resources Management	MBSM	- Multi-Beam Swath Mapper
IYO	- International Year of the Ocean (also YOTO)	MDG	- Millennium Development Goals
JAFOOS	- Joint Australian Facility for Ocean Observing Systems	MERIS	- Medium Resolution Imaging Spectrometer
JAMSTEC	- Japan Marine Science and Technology Centre	MIMRA	- Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority
JCOMM	- Joint WMO/IOC Technical Commission for Oceanography and Marine Meteorology	MITI	- Ministry of International Trade and Industry (Japan)
JGOFS	- Joint Global Ocean Flux Study	MLML	- Moss Landing Marine Laboratory
JICA	- Japan International Co-operation Agency	MLSNR	- Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources (Tonga)
JNOC	- Japan National Oil Corporation	MMAJ	- Metal Mining Agency of Japan
JPfA	- Joint Caribbean-Pacific Programme for Action on Water and Climate	MMTC	- Marine Minerals Technology Center (University of Hawaii)
KIGAM	- Korea Institute of Geology, Mining and Minerals	MNRD	- Ministry of Natural Resources Development
KMPC	- Korea Mining Promotion Corporation	MODIS	- Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer
KOICA	- Korea International Cooperation Agency	MOMAF	- Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (Korea)
KORDI	- Korea Ocean Research and Development Institute	MONBUSHO	- Ministry of Education and Science (Japan)
LADS	- Laser Airborne Depth Sounder	MOU	- Memorandum of Understanding
LAN/WAN	- Local Area Network/Wide Area Network	MRD	- Mineral Resources Department (of Fiji Islands)
LDG	- Less Developed Countries (UN)	MRU	- Mineral Resources Unit (SOPAC Secretariat)
		MSR	- Marine Scientific Research
		NAML	- North American Marine Laboratories Network

NAO	- North Atlantic Oscillation	OBS	- ocean bottom seismometer
NASA	- National Aeronautics and Space Administration (US)	OCEANOR	- Oceanographic Company of Norway AS
NDMO	- National Disaster Management Office (various countries)	OCT	- Overseas Countries and Territories (which are associated with the European Union)
NEDO	- New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organisation (of Japan)	ODA	- Overseas Development Agency
NEMS	- National Environmental Management Strategy (various countries by SPREP)	ODI	- Overseas Development Institute
NGCC	- National GOOS Coordination Committee	ODP	- Ocean Drilling Programme
NGDC	- National Geophysical Data Center (US)	OECD	- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
NGO	- Non-Governmental Organisations	OECS	- Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
NIO	- National Institute of Oceanography (India)	OEDC	- Ocean Engineering Development Company (Japan)
NIRE	- National Institute for Resources and Environment (of Japan)	OHP	- Operational Hydrology Programme (of WMO)
NIWA	- National Institute for Water and Atmospheric Research (New Zealand)	OJP	- Ontong Java Plateau
NLTB	- Native Land Trust Board (Fiji)	OOPC	- Ocean Observations Panel for Climate
NMFS	- National Marine Fisheries Service	OOSDP	- Ocean Observing System Development Panel
NOAA	- National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (US)	OPCs	- Optical Plankton Counters
NODC	- National Oceanographic Data Centre	ORAP	- Ocean Research Advisory Panel
NOPACCS	- Northwest Pacific Carbon Cycle Study	ORI	- Ocean Research Institute (University of Tokyo)
NORAD	- Norwegian Agency for International Development	ORMP	- Ocean Resources Management Programme (of USP)
NSF	- National Science Foundation (US)	ORSTOM	- Institut Francaise de Recherche Scientifique pour le Développement en Coopération (formerly Office de la Recherche Scientifique et Technique Outre-Mer) (French Institute of Scientific Research for Cooperative Development)
NURP	- National Undersea Research Programme (US)	OTEC	- Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion
NZAID	- New Zealand Agency for International Development (formerly known as NZODA)	PACE-SD	- Pacific Centre for the Environment and Sustainable Development
NZIGNS	- New Zealand Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences	PacESD	- Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development
NZODA	- New Zealand Overseas Development Assistance (now NZAID)	PACPOL	- Pacific Ocean Pollution Prevention (Programme)
NZWWA	- New Zealand Water and Wasterwater Association	PALM	- Pacific Island Leaders Meeting (acronym used to refer to Japan-PIFS Summit Meetings, begun in 1997, 2 nd Summit in 2000, and 3 rd in May 2003)

PAR	-	Photosynthetic Active Radiation	PIIPP	-	Pacific Islands Information and Communications Technologies Policy and Strategic Plan
PAYE	-	Pay as you Earn			
PCGIAP	-	Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific	PIMD	-	Pacific Institute of Management and Development
PCM	-	Participatory Watershed Management	PIMRIS	-	Pacific Islands Marine Resources Information System
PDC	-	Pacific Disaster Center	PIRATA	-	Pilot Research Array in the Tropical Atlantic
PDF	-	Portable Document Format	PIREIS	-	Pacific Island Resource and Environment Information Service
PDL	-	Petroleum Development Licenses	PIREN	-	Pacific Island Renewable Energy Network
PDO	-	Pacific Decadal Oscillation	PIREP	-	Pacific Islands Renewable Energy Project (SPREP)
PDWBC	-	Pacific Deep Western Boundary Current	PIRMBIS	-	Pacific Islands Regional Maritime Boundaries Information System
PEAC	-	Pacific ENSO Application Center	PIROF	-	Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Forum
PEACESAT	-	Pan-Pacific Education and Communications Experiment by Satellite	PIROIS	-	Pacific Islands Region Ocean Information System
PEAMIS	-	Pacific Environment Assessment and Management Information System	PIROP	-	Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy
PEG	-	Pacific Energy and Gender Network	PLU	-	Publications and Library Unit (of SOPAC Work Programme)
PEN	-	Pacific Energy News (SOPAC)	PMEG	-	Programme Monitoring and Evaluation Group(s) (SOPAC)
PESA	-	Petroleum Exploration Society of Australia	PMEL	-	Pacific Marine Environment Laboratory (of NOAA)
PET '98	-	Pacific Exploration Technology (conference of 1998, Nadi, Fiji Islands)	PNG	-	Papua New Guinea
PIAS (DG)	-	Pacific Institute for the Advanced Studies in Development and Governance	POC	-	Physical Oceanography Committee
PIBA	-	Pacific Islands Broadcasting Association	POGO	-	Partnership for Observation for the Global Ocean
PIC	-	Pacific Island Country	PPA	-	Pacific Power Association
PICCAP	-	Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Programme	PPB	-	private post bag
PICES	-	North Pacific Marine Science Organisation	PPL	-	Petroleum Prospecting Licenses
PICHTR	-	Pacific International Center for High Technology Research	PNG	-	Papua New Guinea
PICISOC	-	Pacific Islands Chapter of the Internet Society	PORTS	-	Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System
PIEPP	-	Pacific Islands Energy Policy and Plan	PRAP	-	Pacific Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management
PIFS	-	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat	PRC	-	People's Republic of China
PIG	-	Pacific Island Gold	PRDMM	-	Pacific Regional Disaster Management Meeting

PREA	- Pacific Regional Energy Assessment	SEACAMP	- Southeast Asian Centre for Atmospheric and Marine Prediction
PREFACE	- the Pacific Rural Renewable Energy France-Australia Common Endeavour project	SEAFRAME	- Sea Level Fine Resolution Acoustic Measuring Equipment
PREP	- Pacific Regional Energy Programme	SEREAD	- Scientific Educational Resources and Experience Associated with the Deployment of Argo profiling floats in the South Pacific Ocean
PRIP	- Pacific Regional Indicative Programme	SeaWIFs	- Sea-viewing Wide Field of View Sensor
PTWC	- Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre	SEI	- Special Events Imager
PUB	- Public Utilities Board	SIDS	- Small Island Developing States
PWA	- Pacific Water Association	SIEA	- Solomon Islands Electricity Authority
PWD	- Public Works Department	SIO	- Scripps Institute of Oceanography (University of California, US)
PWP	- Pacific Water Partnership	SIS	- Small Island States
RAC	- Regional Analysis Centers	SIWIN	- Small Islands Water Information Network
RAMP	- Rapid Assessment of Marine Pollution	SLH	- Sea Level Height
RAMSI	- Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands	SM	- SPREP Meeting
RAO	- Regional Authorising Office (EU)	SOA	- State Oceanic Administration (China)
RB	- Regular Budget	SOC	- Southampton Oceanography Centre
REEEP	- Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership	SOEST	- School of Ocean and Earth Science Technology (of UH)
REM	- Regional Energy Meeting	SOI	- Southern Oscillation Index
REPP	- Regional Energy Policy and Plan	SOOP	- Ship-of-Opportunity Programme
RMI	- Republic of the Marshall Islands	SOPAC	- South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission
ROC	- Republic of China	SPAS	- School of Pure and Applied Sciences (USP)
ROV	- remotely operated vehicles	SPaRCE	- Schools of the Pacific Rainfall Climate Experiment
RS	- remote sensing	SPBCP	- South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme
SAP	- Strategic Action Plan for International Waters	SPBEA	- South Pacific Board of Educational Assessment
SAPHE	- Sanitation, Public Health and Environmental Improvement (Project)	SPC	- Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SAR	- synthetic aperture radar	SPDRP	- South Pacific Disaster Reduction Programme
SBSTA	- Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice	SPILLCON	- Asia Pacific marine environmental pollution prevention & response conference
SCOR	- Scientific Committee on Ocean Research		
SDI	- Sustainable Development Indicators		
SDR	- Special Drawing Rights		
SDWG	- Sustainable Development Working Group (CROP)		

SPM	- Sustainable Project Management	TOPEX	- Typhoon Operational Experiment
SPREP	- South Pacific Regional Environment Programme	ToR	- Terms of Reference
SPOCC	- South Pacific Organisations Coordinating Committee (now CROP)	TQM	- total quality management
SPPO	- South Pacific Programme Office (of UNDHA)	TRITON	- Triangle Trans-Oceans Buoy Network
SPREP	- South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme	TWAS	- Third World Academy of Sciences
SPSLCMP	- South Pacific Sea Level and Climate Monitoring Project	TWB	- Tonga Water Board
SPT	- Station Polynesienne de Teledetection (Papeete, Tahiti)	UFP	- Universite Francaise du Pacifique
SPTO	- South Pacific Tourism Organisation	UH	- University of Hawaii
SST	- Sea Surface Temperature	UK	- United Kingdom
STA	- Science and Technology Agency (of Japan)	UN	- United Nations
STAR	- Science, Technology and Resources Network	UNCED	- United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
START	- (Global Change) System for Analysis Research and Training (IGBP)	UNCLCS	- United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf
SWA	- Samoa Water Authority	UNCLOS	- United Nations on the Law of the Sea
SYSMIN	- A special financing facility intended for ACP States whose mining sector plays a major role in their economy and is faced with known or foreseeable difficulties	UNCTAD	- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
TAF	- The Asia Foundation	UNDESA	- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
TAG	- Technical Advisory Group	UNDHA	- United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs
TAO-IP	- Tropical Atmosphere Ocean Implementation Panel	UNDP	- United Nations Development Programme
TCSP	- Tourism Council of the South Pacific	UNEP	- United Nations Environment Programme
TCWUP	- Tropical Cyclone Warning Upgrade Project	UNESCO	- United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
TEMA	- IOC Training, Education and Mutual Assistance programme	UNFA	- United Nations Fisheries Agreement
TEPB	- Tonga Electric Power Board	UNFCCC COP	- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Conference of the Parties)
TESL	- Teaching English as a Second Language	UNICEF	- United Nations Children's Fund
TNA	- Training Needs Analysis	UNIFEM	- United Nations Development Fund for Women
TNC	- The Nature Conservancy (Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia)	UNISPACE	- United National Conference on Outer Space
TOGA	- Tropical Ocean Global Atmosphere Research Programme	UNU	- United Nations University
		UoG	- University of Guam

UPNG	-	University of Papua New Guinea	WHO	-	World Health Organisation
USACE	-	United States Army Corps of Engineers	WHOI	-	Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (US)
USAID	-	United States Agency for International Development	WIOMAP	-	Western Indian Ocean Marine Applications Project
USD	-	United States Dollar	WMO	-	World Meteorological Organisation
USGS	-	United States Geological Survey	WPSs	-	Work Programme Strategies (SOPAC)
USP	-	University of the South Pacific	WRU	-	Water Resources Unit (SOPAC Secretariat)
VISSR	-	Visible and Infrared Spin-Scan Radiometer	WSIS	-	World Summit on the Information Society
VMS	-	Vessel Monitoring System	WSSCC	-	Water Supply & Sanitation Collaborative Council
VOS	-	Voluntary Observing Ship	WSSD	-	World Summit on Sustainable Development
VPA	-	Virtual Population Analysis	WWF	-	World Wide Fund for Nature
VSAT	-	Very Small Aperture Terminal	WWF-SPP	-	World Wide Fund for Nature - South Pacific Programme
VUW	-	Victoria University of Wellington	3 rd WWF	-	Third World Water Forum
WAGIS	-	Wide Area Geographic Information System	WWG	-	Water Working Group (STAR)
WCRP	-	World Climate Research Programme	WWII	-	World War 2
WERI	-	Water and Environmental Research Institute of the Western Pacific (of University of Guam)	WWSSN	-	World Wide Seismic Network
WESTPAC	-	IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific	XBTs	-	Expandable Bathy-Thermographs
WGNE	-	Working Group on Numerical Experimentation	YOTO	-	Year of the Ocean
			YPR	-	Yield-Per-Recruit