

Christmas Issue - December 2007 SPREP Monthly Highlights

As we approach the end of 2007 and embark upon a New Year we reflect back on achievements and highlights for the Programme Staff of SPREP in 2007. Part of this issue comes from the Programme staff of SPREP themselves, and part of this issue has been written from interviews with the Programme staff that have looked back over 2007.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Seve Paeniu

Sustainable Development Adviser

“SPREP continues to take a leading role on sustainable development issues in the Pacific and providing advice on internationally agreed development goals and targets, including the Millennium Development Goals. This support work has involved providing Pacific briefings for the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-15) as well as providing inputs to guide the environmental and sustainable development priorities under the Pacific Plan for 2008. To operationalise the various commitments with respect to these international and regional sustainable development initiatives, SPREP along with relevant Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) agencies have begun to undertake an integrated country focused CROP partnership approach. The aim is to strengthen national sustainable development based decision-making process to facilitate effective and coordinated use of national and development partner resources to meet priority national development goals.



Photo L - R: Seve Paeniu planting a tree during the 'Play it clean and green' campaign, Peter Murgatroyd during PEIN training at SPREP

Peter Murgatroyd

Information Resource Centre Manager

In January Peter Murgatroyd, replaced Satui Bentin as Pacific Environment Information Network (PEIN) Coordinator and along with the SPREP Assistant Librarian, Miraneta Williams-Hazelman, embarked on an ambitious 2007 programme.

Upgrading of the PEIN database and website in March laid the foundation for the provision of digital access to more than 600 Pacific environment documents, and the introduction of a raft of new online resources including: the PEIN Country Profiles Directory, the PEIN Regional Frameworks and Strategies Directory, the PEIN Digest of Pacific environment news and developments, and the creation of a regional PEIN virtual library comprising full text documents from SPREP, SOPAC, SPC and other CROP agencies, Pacific environment departments, regional institutions and NGOs active in the area of environment conservation.

Tepa Suaesi
Environment Officer

Began with SPREP in May

“I was charged with two reviews – ‘Approaches to the State of the Environment’ and the ‘Status of Environmental (SoE) Impact Assessments (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) - in the region’. Preliminary findings on the first study on SoE was presented in the 18th SPREP Meeting in Apia, Samoa in September and in the 8th Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in Alotau, Papua New Guinea in October. For the second study its terms of reference was completed in July and is ready for the recruitment of a competent consultant to implement it at the beginning of 2008. For the SoE study I visited Fiji and Kiribati in July and August respectively and conducted consultations with wide audiences of governmental and non-governmental technical experts and administrators who are involved in one way or another with environmental management in the region.

I also completed the Trainers course in Thailand on the UNEP's Global Environment Outlook's Integrated Environment Assessment and Reporting Process in July. Finally I organised in collaboration with UNEP and SPREP staff the Pacific regional launching of the UNEP's Fourth Global Environment Outlook Report (GEO-4) that was held in Alotau as part of the 8th Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas. GEO-4 is the latest information on the changes in the state of the global environment since the last five years.

I also helped recruit participants from Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, FSM, and Tuvalu for a Pacific representation in the International Conference on Impact Assessments titled 'The Art & Science of Impact Assessment' that will be held in Australia in 2008. This initiative is in collaboration with Australia's Department of the Environment and Water Resources (AusDEW). In addition to that I've also started joint work in DEW for the trial of a consolidated national reporting template to biodiversity related Multi-lateral Environment Agreements (MEAs) with AusDEW that was approved in the 18th SPREP Meeting.”



Photo L – R: Tepa Suaesi plants a tree with the former Miss South Pacific, Nirupa Ram and John Talagi the Niue Environment Officer

Nirupa Ram
Associate Ozone Depleting Substance Officer

The four main achievement for Nirupa in 2007 were –

1. Completion of Customs Training in the Solomon Islands, Kiribati and Niue.
2. Passing of Ozone protection legislation and similar policies in Niue and the Solomon Islands.
3. Improving the delivery of services to Pacific islands countries and territories through legal advice and technical assistance

comprehensive background note on regional activities on climate change that could be utilised in discussions of issues of key importance to PIC's in Bali. The action plan for PIFACC was also significantly revised.

In late November, SPREP's Climate Change Adaptation Officer and CCA traveled to Bali to attend the 'Expert Group on Technology Transfer' meeting and the 'Adaptation Fund' consultations. A series of preparatory meetings preceded the Conference itself that ran from the 3rd to the 14th of December, with an unexpected overflow into the 15th. The PIC group participated actively through the AOSIS, and was able to achieve significant gains. The Pacific had very good representation and was very active and vocal, they were successful in getting a hearing for their climate change concerns. The Pacific group negotiated actively through the Alliance of Small Island States. Together they were instrumental in getting the 'Adaptation fund' launched with good participation in and access by Small Island States. They also ensured that the future negotiations on long-term commitments be based on the best available science. Through their active participation they also ensured that meaningful decisions were reached on technology transfer, capacity building and research and science.



Photos L – R: Espen Ronneberg makes a presentation at the first Environmental Hub Meeting, WHO Health Care Waste Management Workshop at SPREP

Waste Management Division

Their highlights can be read in the Waste Update e-newsletter which can be downloaded from the [Waste page](#) or click [here](#). Other highlights for the 'Waste team' are;

- The development and distribution of the "Rubbish is a Resource" DVD kit
- 3 in-country workshops convened to develop national waste management strategies and proposals for landfill upgrading
- Samoa being assisted with the development of a unitary set of laws for the management of waste (and may also include chemical management)
- Pacific regional awareness raising workshop on the SAICM process conducted
- World Health Organisation Health Care Waste Management Training held in Samoa

Dean Solofa

Pacific Islands Global Climate Observing System

This year the Cook Islands hosted the 12th Regional Meteorological Service Directors Meeting, (see photo below) Dean Solofa, played a coordinating role in the Conference. More PI-GCOS highlights and achievements can be found in their newsletter www.PI-GCOS.org



The Samoa National Workshop on Regulation and Management of Waste in Samoa introduced participants to international, regional and national legal frameworks relevant to waste management with illustrations of waste projects currently being implemented in the country. The workshop proposed comprehensive management of the different types of waste in Samoa ideally through a single law.

Clark participated in 3 related workshops in Nadi in June on intellectual property rights (IPR) relating to biological traditional knowledge. Benefits, including money, can be derived from the use of such knowledge highlighting the need for legal protection. The workshop discussed a work plan for 2008 as well as proposing the establishment of a regional institution specifically for protecting traditional knowledge relating to biodiversity and culture.

He also attended the 26th Pacific Islands Legal Officers Meeting (PILOM) in Rarotonga, where a change of name to the Pacific Islands Legal Officers Network (PILON) was approved. The meeting formalised the status of PILON and expressed the view that as the annual meeting of the region's senior law officers it should be more proactive in advising on pressing regional legal issues.



Photos L – R: Ruth Towa Pune in red at the Alotau airport for the 8th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas, Clark Peteru attending the 8th Pacific Island Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas.

Ruth Towa Pune

8th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas coordinator

Ruth participated in the Pacific Future Environmental Leadership Forum that was hosted by SPREP in April this year and the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) Workshop for Pacific Least Developed Countries held in May. She was also very active in the Environmental Awareness Activities such as Tree Planting, and her biggest achievement for this year, is the 8th Pacific Island Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas that took place in Papua New Guinea, where she worked on the Coordination and Implementation of the conference activities.

The forum has helped Ruth understand many things such as, the amount of work spent on drafting climate adaptation measures for Pacific Island Countries.

She's grateful for the knowledge gained on biodiversity negotiations during the Conference of the Parties (COP), and enjoyed networking with young environmentalists of the Pacific, the value of working with young minds and building their capacity for future environment work in the region.

Jill Key

Coordinator of the Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN)

Jill Key coordinates the Pacific Invasive Learning Network (PILN), based at SPREP. PILN has been very active this year. the 2007 annual meeting the network was held in September, hosted by the government of

Another workshop held at the request of the PILN participants was to build capacity in social marketing, and 19 people from 8 countries spent 3 days developing their skills on public awareness in a workshop held in September in French Polynesia after the annual meeting. In addition, the first multi agency workshop was held in Fiji, hosted by the Ministry of Tourism and Environment, with the aim of identifying opportunities for collaboration within Fiji on invasive species work. This is seen as the first step towards the development of a national coordination committee.

For Dr Key, the main achievement of PILN for this year was the advances made in the invasive species strategic action planning process. Multi-agency and sector committees in 6 countries and states have drafted strategic action plans by identifying the invasive species priorities and developing a realistic collaborative “road map” to tackle them. 3 have received official endorsement.



Photos L – R: Jill Key in Alotau for the 8th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas, Alan Tye showing locals photos during the 8th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas.

[Alan Tye](#)

Invasives Species Officer

Alan Tye started working for the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) as the Invasive Species Officer in July this year.

His main achievement for this year was continuing the work on the Regional Invasive Species Strategy. This strategy will be his main task for the next few months, so that it will hopefully be ready to present to the SPREP meeting for endorsement early next year.

He is also working on better integrating the work that SPREP, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), the Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN) and Pacific Invasives Initiative (PII) do on invasive species in the region.

Another major and continuing effort has been to bring together proposals for elements of an invasive species project to be funded under the GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability programme.

[Ana Tiraa](#)

Island Biodiversity Officer

For Ana Tiraa, Island Biodiversity Officer for the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP), her main highlights would be the region’s Premier conservation conference, the 8th Nature Conservation and Protected Areas that was held in Papua New Guinea in October this year. Within the conference there were a number of side events and she was part of a team that organised 4 of them.

The 1st event was the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) Meeting, which was a 1

According to Ms Tiraa the conference was an awesome experience. The side events and conference revealed there is a lot of good conservation work going out there, especially at the grass roots. “This year has been really amazing.”



Photos L – R: Ana Tiraa at the Capacity Building Training on the Convention on Biological Diversity at SPREP in May this year, Lui Bell (on the left) in Tuvalu.

Lui Bell **Marine Species Officer**

One of the main achievements of the Marine Species Programme (MSP) during the year was the region-wide revision of the Marine Species Action Plans for the next 5 years, 2008-2012. The revised action plans were subsequently endorsed by the SPREP meeting in Apia, September 2007.

In an effort to improve data and information on marine turtles in the region, turtle nesting monitoring programmes were initiated in 3 member countries during the year. Lui Bell, Marine Species Officer for SPREP traveled to Tonga, Tuvalu and Kiribati for these activities, which included training for local

According to Bell, “This year has been very successful.”



Fa'fetai Lava for reading this E-Newsletter

We wish you a very Merry Christmas and an exciting New Year! SPREP Highlights will continue again in January 2008, see you then!

Please send your comments to [SPREP](#) or

by phone: (685) 21929, fax: (685) 20231 or mail: PO Box 240, Apia, Samoa.