

VERBATIM RECORD OF  
PROCEEDINGS AT THE SOPAC 36<sup>th</sup> SESSION UNDER  
AGENDA ITEM 11.1 – REGIONAL INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK (RIF)

[Rapporteur's annotations in parenthesis]

<superfluous words uttered by speaker>

Personal speech peculiarities like uhms and ers were mostly eliminated. Where they are left in, the speaker was having obvious difficulty articulating a particular train of thought; or was proceeding carefully while articulating ...

Transcription of bridging segments at beginning and ending of reel-to-reel tapes that were unaccompanied by speaking notes were provided from Voice Recorder audio files

[Council paused during hearing and discussing annual financial reports (Agenda Item 10) to hear an address by the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. The Secretary General had a flight to catch out of Nuku'alofa before the SOPAC Governing Council began their substantive discussions on the RIF agenda item (11.1). Below is the record of what transpired at this juncture]

Chair – At this point in time I would like to acknowledge the presence of the Secretary General <for> of Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Mr Greg Urwin. He's got a midday flight to catch up and he would like to make a presentation and I seek Council members' indulgence to allow at this point in time Mr Urwin to present to Council ...

[The Secretary General then addressed Council thus:]

Thank you very much Mr Chair and thank you colleagues. I hope this is not being too disruptive of the flow of your meeting ... but I regret to say that I've got to, as the Chair's mentioned, jump on to a plane again shortly ... and I'd come here <to> in an attempt to assist you as required in your discussion of this important item on the regional institutional framework and the outcome of the Leaders' meeting that was held here in Tonga just recently, so I'm grateful for the opportunity to do that. I hope this will be helpful in your subsequent discussions.

As you know the Leaders did take a number of quite significant decisions in respect of this regional institutional framework exercise at their meeting recently; and I'd like to just offer you a little comment on the background to that.

The Leaders' decision was, and you have the details in front of you in the documentation so I don't need to repeat that – but just by way of background to say that it was ... the decisions taken were really a direct outcome of the decision they took in 2005 to uhmm adopt the Pacific Plan, and as you know that's been one of the most important undertakings in the region over the last two or three years. In adopting the Plan the Leaders also adopted an aim of developing the appropriate regional institutional framework for the delivery of the elements of the Plan; and so the work that's been done on it is really founded on that <that> decision. Actually a little bit of preliminary work had been done prior to the taking of the decision by Tony Hughes in 2005, who conducted an exercise in which he came out with a recommendation actually that all of the regional organisations be in some way amalgamated – that proved too rich for everybody's blood for a number of reasons and so the work was further looked at in the subsequent years.

Following the Leaders' decision in 2005, a group of eminent people led by the former Foreign Minister of Fiji, Kaliopate Tavola, looked at the issue more closely. They presented to the Leaders in their 2006 meeting a proposal for a three-pillar structure – pillar one basically being the political functions that are required in the region; and pillar two really relating to the service delivery organisations and how they might best be associated with one another. Pillar three concerned the educational institutions.

Leaders in 2006 – the Forum Leaders – looked at those proposals and said, 'we'd like some more work done on them'; mainly as related to a range of administrative, legal questions

which underpinned the proposals; and this was done through the course of 2007, this time done by a group led by the former Director-General of SPC, Lou Pangelinan, reporting to a task force of members. They – basically that group, the consultants group led by Lou that is – recommended that uhmm uh uh... affirmed their belief that the pillar two amalgamation model – that is an amalgamation of what were defined as the service delivery organisations was the way to go – and they put that back to the task force members during the course of this year. In the event the officials making up that task force were unable to reach consensus on this – some members agreed with it, some didn't and some simply felt that they were not ready to make/come to a decision on it. In reporting this outcome to Leaders, the Chair of the task force (the RIF Task Force) also indicated that Leaders in considering this situation may also wish to consider some of the other options discussed in the RIF Two consultants report – this is what Leaders did and that's expressed in the decisions they took and which you have before you now.

It's really not for me / appropriate for me to attempt to provide an interpretative gloss of their decisions – they were taken by Leaders and they did so in their own way and partly as a result of discussions undertaken among themselves. But I would just say that while the Leaders did not, I think, have a particular overall model in mind when they took these decisions, they most definitely wish us to move forward with them in producing a more integrated, more efficient services to our members, which is after all the sole and only reason for the existence of any of our organisations. They want us to move forward deliberately, carefully, transparently; but they want us to move forward. And that ... and I think they also feel that after the better part of three years of discussion, it's time ... past time perhaps that we did so.

It's now my obligation to progress the Leaders' decisions and of course that is now what I'm seeking to do. I'd say in part that the Forum Secretariat, even though it's not mentioned in these decisions, is a party to these ... to this <to this> consideration. We've been conducting our own exercise for some months now in conjunction with the SPC, which will in the end see the transfer of some of our functions to the SPC. Uhmm this ... mainly because it'll pertain to something I just want to comment little bit on later ... pertains mainly to the fact that the Forum Secretariat, except in certain key areas which make up its core business is not a service delivery organisation and shouldn't attempt to be. It is a ... it's a policy, advice and coordination bureau and that's what it needs to focus on. So, over the next year or so we will see some of that transfer of functions where ... we're <where> also in a sense relevant to the exercise that's contemplated by the Leaders in their decisions – in that we have a sustainable development policy function at the moment, which obviously it is logical needs to be part of the <the> mix of discussion uh which will need to take place between SPC, SOPAC and SPREP.

To the end of getting that ... progressing the Leaders' decision I've made an offer to begin a process by facilitating discussions among the three CEOs concerned early in the new year. In that connection, I would note that the decisions of the Leaders and the subsequent suggestions about possible process are being considered, endorsed and indeed added to by the South Pacific Conference and the Governing Board of SPBEA; Aleki is here and he can certainly speak for the South Pacific Commission in that regard.

Beyond the guidance contained in the Leaders' decisions, I personally have no view as to where precisely and in detail this process will take us. All of that will need to be worked out in discussions that will need to take place. Suffice to say at this stage that I'll be required to report on progress back to the Forum Leaders at their 2008 meeting and I think that by that point they will be looking for a definite plan of action from us. In that regard, may I express my gratitude for the spirit in which the Director of SOPAC has considered all of this as expressed in the paper which has been prepared for the Council before you. If I may say, it seems to me that she has perceived the central issue in this whole regional institutional framework exercise – that is the proper working out of the interrelationship of the functions of those three organisations – SPC, SPREP and SOPAC, which are closely sit alongside one

another and clearly have close connections with one another bearing in mind all the time that more integrated services or efficient services to our members is our aim.

Could I just conclude these remarks by saying something about the CROP mechanism, because that sometimes comes up in terms of the <the> discussion and the kinds of alternatives we might pursue in taking this whole set of objectives forward. CROP certainly has had its successes as a body and no doubt would do so in the future. There is, I think you can perceive a growing amount of de facto cooperation among the organisations – that's pleasing but it's also what you as members oughta be expecting. But in terms of delivering that consistently and properly integrated set of services to our memberships – and we heard some discussion yesterday about the gap between regional frameworks and the ability of member countries to take up these services – that's an issue organisation by organisation but it's also a question of how the range of services is presented to members – how coherently, how <how> best they can make sense of the suite of services that are on offer. In those terms, CROP is, I think one has to conclude, a far from perfect instrument; and given the way it is set up, given the inherent limitations with which it must operate, I think it is bound to remain so. It's not the answer to the issues we confront, but properly fashioned and deployed it might help us along the way. Given that we have, in the Pacific Plan context, now made a good deal of progress in establishing our regional priorities and the regional frameworks to address them; how best do we maintain the momentum by building up our ability to deliver.

During the course of discussion last year I put forward a proposal that CROP should, in effect, be dissolved and reconstituted as, for want of a better title, a service delivery council. This would include those bodies envisaged as making up pillar two in the three-pillar structure which it seems to me the Forum Leaders accepted in making their decisions recently in Tonga. The Forum Secretariat would (as a proposal) move aside from such a body in order to concentrate it (the new body) on its technical delivery priorities. My view, and I really don't know frankly how widely this is shared (I'm sure there's a range of views) is that the Director-General of SPC is best placed as the head of the most comprehensive technical service organisation with the broadest membership across the region, is in the best place to chair such a body; but that will need to be worked out. The council, if constituted in that way, would follow something akin to an annual work programme based on the specific priorities identified each year by the Forum Leaders and other governing councils; and you'll see that certainly the Forum Leaders have, as a result of the adoption of the Pacific Plan, now adopted the process of highlighting a number of ... five or six priorities every year, which they want special attention paid to. That sort of thing would make up the work programme [...] every year; and armed with this programme the new body would report annually on progress as we in effect do now through the Pacific Plan reporting process and through the governing councils back to Leaders. All of this will require further discussion it's no more than a proposal at the moment; but I think that in coming months we should talk it through. Against the background of the decisions taken recently by the Forum Leaders and the work that will need to go on and go on for some time; it maybe the logical next step in improving our service performance to members.

Mr Chairman, I think that's as much as I'd care to say at the outset. I hope that will be helpful in the discussions that you'll have on this subject, thank you very much.

Chair – I would like to thank the Secretary General for his presentation and I would also like to advise Council members that clearly his presentation should be part of the consideration of item agenda 11.1, which will come up later on in the day. Thank you.

## AGENDA ITEM 11.1 – REGIONAL INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK (RIF)

[Verified against Voice Recorder wma audio (wma) records. The central tape system was not switched on at the beginning of this agenda item]

Chair – [...] We're now on item eleven point one (11.1) and I would like to advise delegates <that uh> ... to consider this item to be of critical importance to the Commission; and as such I wish to allow as much time as possible for all delegates to have several interventions, but at the same time let me request delegates to please be concise. I intend to complete the introduction to the item, and the first round of interventions and the discussions during the first afternoon session.

I also wish to advise and request the Secretariat to keep a verbatim report on this item; as such the summary record will include only the agreed outcome and the full record will appear in an appendix in the proceedings.

Now to start off our discussions I would firstly like to invite the Director to introduce the item and the accompanying papers. After that I would like to invite the Chair of RIF, the High Commissioner Eafeare of Papua New Guinea to report on the RIF process. Director ...

Director – Thank you very much Chair. May I draw Council's attention to paper AS36/11.1 and advise that there are three supplementary papers; in respect of this agenda item on the Regional Institutional Framework and they are AS36/11.1 supplementary 1, AS36/11.1 supplementary 2 and AS36 11.1 supplementary 3.

AS36/11.1 sought to provide an update to Council on the progress relating to the Regional Institutional Framework since the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of Council and up to the date that Council papers for this Council Session were circulated in early October; and that paper included (there were several parts to that paper or attachments to that paper ... and included [i] Council's letter to FOC on the RIF process as a consequence of Council's consideration of the RIF process at its 35<sup>th</sup> Session in Honiara; the second attachment was the outcomes of the RIF Task Force meeting of June 2007; the third attachment was the letter of the Chair of the 2007 RIF Task Force to the Chair of the 38<sup>th</sup> Pacific Islands Forum of September 2007; and a fourth and final attachment – the RIF Review Report of Pangelinan and others entitled 'The Pathway Towards Quality of Service from Pacific Regionalism'.

As outlined in that paper the Secretariat was fully engaged in the RIF process and attended all three RIF Task Force meetings in 2007.

If I could now take you to paper AS36/11.1 Supplementary 1. This paper was produced and circulated by the Secretariat after the Forum Communiqué was shared. The Secretariat takes the view that the Communiqué decision, particularly that part of the decision of Paragraph 19(b) presents an option that was not considered by the RIF Review Report nor was it discussed by officials of the RIF Task Force; and that it articulates a challenge for which the Council response must be positive and constructive.

For the benefit of informing Council for this agenda item paper AS36/11.1 supplementary 1 summarises the RIF process to date, as well as previous occasions when Council has had to consider similar institutional issues. The paper also provides guidance on how a strategic approach to "rationalisation" may be developed by Council and includes the establishment of some guiding principles and a mechanism for moving forward in 2008 and beyond.

The paper also describes the "SOPAC Brand" and examines briefly the reality that the visibility and effectiveness of SOPAC's core applied science and technology functions have emerged over recent years as a successful and secure catalyst for donor partners to pivot their support to the region on.

The paper Chair concludes by providing draft language for a Council decision which is prefixed with some supporting conclusions.

AS36/11.1 Supplementary 2 is a report from the STAR Chair (which was presented earlier in this Session) and relates to their perceived possible impacts of the Forum decision which they contend could well result in the loss of delivery of applied science and technology tools and services to the region. That paper also includes their estimate of the potential for loss of financial support.

AS36/11.1 Supplementary 3 (which was also presented earlier in the Session) is a commentary from the overall Chair of the three Programme Monitoring and Evaluation Groups (PMEGs) in regard to their perceived possible impacts on the SOPAC Work Programme and Budget.

Finally Chair, the Secretariat looks forward to the discussion of Council and the clear direction and decision by Council on this matter. I would urge Council to maintain “business as usual” and a “nothing is agreed until everything is agreed” approach until the correct way forward is determined and that a timeframe with clear milestones is agreed to. Such an approach is one which will minimise risk to service delivery and continued donor support whilst at the same time going some way to addressing the deterioration in staff morale as well as in the worst case the loss of staff due to the uncertainty. Thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Director. May I now invite the Chair of RIF, the High Commissioner of Papua New Guinea. Thank you.

Chair of RIF – Thank you Honourable Minister, I think this ... let me preface my comments I wish to reiterate that a Leaders' decision has been taken and in that [...] case I also would like to reflect also on your own statement in terms of how we should proceed from here on in. In that there has to be constructive and proactive dialogue on the process ahead of us and I thank you also for giving this opportunity for all Council members to in turn debate [...] to the point where we can reach a decision that is palatable for all. There is no doubt [...] and the Secretary General was accorded the opportunity to brief the Council this morning. In his briefing he basically went back and provided some historical highlights as to this whole process the Leaders have engaged in; and that is the regional institutional framework. We noted following the adoption of the Pacific Plan that was made at the Forum in Papua New Guinea the decision was then taken in the Nadi Forum to look at a three-pillared structure. Of course there are <there are> administrative, legal, conventional? and mandatory issues that need to be addressed.

I took up Chairmanship of this in June for the first time to guide discussions where we felt that there were issues where people made comments about 'if its not broke why fix it' – and tended to remain [...] that there was no need for us to go through this reform process. But commitment as civil servants [...] taken by our Leaders, sixteen of them represented in this Council. The decision by the RIF committee in September is reflected in my letter which is contained in your folder to Honourable Dr Feleti Sevele and in that position we arrived at, in fact [we referred ... to positions taken] ...some approved, undecided, positive and negative ... then we went to Vava'u. I know those options were contained in the task force recommendations [...] and that was amalgamation of pillar two... that was this year. [...] and those who were divided on SPREP, those who were divided on SOPAC and [...] PIFS and SPC – they are not out of the woods but are affected by the decision taken. But I don't really wish to go down that path because I believe we have a responsibility to respond to our Leaders [as the Director has alluded to] to take on the precautionary approach, to consider all elements, leave no stone unturned; so the future of the organisation, as some suggest, [would be recast or is it 'the task'] and it's done properly. It is a process that has now been suggested through affected organisations as SPC, SPREP and SOPAC to meet with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretary General, as he made mention of this morning, is the beginning of proactive engagement that should lead us to [...] a more palatable outcome. My brief is that we engage in this so that we can all mutually benefit from how SOPAC will re-emerge. I thank you Chair. **Sent for verification to PNG High Commissioner**

Chair – Thank you High Commissioner. Delegates I would like to open the floor for general discussions and in light of protocol I would like to ask the Honourable Minister from Fiji if he would like to take the lead before we continue.

Fiji – Thank you Chair. I wasn't envisaging taking the floor so early. I thought you would err the other way but I take your point of view and indeed I would like to contribute to this discussion on this agenda item.

[The following statement was then read by the Interim Minister from Fiji]:

Firstly, let me humbly remind Council of the sentiments expressed in Fiji's report to Council on Monday that we are very disappointed with the Forum Communiqué outcome on this issue and in particular what appears to have been the process by which it was reached. My delegation will never oppose our Leaders' decision and while we respect it, we still feel that it should be relooked at because of its far-reaching implications. We recognise however that this SOPAC Council is not the place to take up this matter, and we will certainly be doing that in due course at the next Forum meeting in Niue. But the situation is dire and such that a departure from the norm is warranted for the Leaders to hear the feelings of Council sooner rather than later.

Secondly, as I also mentioned on Monday that Fiji is prepared to work with SOPAC Council members in the spirit of the consensual Pacific Way to find the correct way forward for this organisation which does not put the delivery of services at risk, and more importantly looks for opportunities to improve on what currently exists.

Thirdly, let me however make it as diplomatically clear as possible that Fiji will not support any move for rationalisation which will lead to fragmentation of the current work programmes. Nor will we support any attempts outside of the Council control to undermine the integrity of SOPAC and its relationship with donors.

Fiji, as a founding member of SOPAC, and the host of its Secretariat, knows only too well of the enormous commitment over the past 35 years that has gone into building SOPAC as an institution of excellence in applied scientific and technical information and its vast knowledge of earth systems, and demonstrating how this knowledge contributes to sustainable development for its island members. The delivery of services to island members is currently packaged through providing integrated solutions in its three programme areas: Ocean and Islands management, Community Lifelines development and Community Risk management.

The Secretariat campus in Suva, has of course been a tremendous benefit to the Commission. Fiji not only acknowledges the direct benefits it has derived from it, but at the same time is also mindful that it was the lone island member that was able to offer a Secretariat campus as early as 1974 **[Centrally taped sessions start here – Tape 1]** when the first Secretariat scientist arrived to establish operations and launch the first field survey for the assessment of nearshore gold deposits off the north coast of Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands at the beginning of 1975. In the late 1980s, after SOPAC was established as a legal, independent intergovernmental organisation, the Agreement establishing SOPAC required a permanent secretariat location to be established. We were pleased that Council members decided that the most cost effective solution was to remain in Fiji. We ourselves looked at Nadi on the eastern side of the island of Viti Levu as an option to Suva. But at the end of the day, reason determined the retention of the Suva campus. The injection of funds and employment generated are a key feature for us, which I know is also the case for other countries that host such secretariats.

A particular concern to Fiji however is the provision of required specialist technical workshop facilities. The Secretariat has its own specialised workshop, manned by specialised staff who are Fiji nationals, supported as required by the private sector in Suva. It was established to support the equipment used across the programmes such as water level recorders, precision survey equipment, marine survey, and seabed mapping equipment. Not only is this equipment expensive, but it is maintained by the SOPAC workshop and its staff. These will have to be duplicated if

freshwater, marine surveys, and EEZ boundary work for example are fragmented through a rationalisation process that relocates these programmes to other regional organisation campuses.

Whilst on the issue of the Secretariat I wish to remind Council of the significant risk placed on service delivery that results from the stress placed on the staff (expatriate and Fiji nationals alike) that exercises or sudden departures such as this produce. A decade ago SOPAC imposed such a circumstance on the Secretariat. Good sense prevailed and in time, good fortune and with substantial effort combined with an expanding reputation for delivery, the Secretariat has grown in strength to a staff of over 100, and a secure substantial budget, which for 2008 is about FJD\$30million, which includes the non-traditional “new” money to support services delivery to its Council members. Yet once again the Secretariat is plunged into this stressful situation instead of consolidating and building further and providing an even more secure environment from within, where the staff can “get on with the job” of implementation. Tragically this latest situation has been determined by a process outside of Council’s control, I venture to suggest that perhaps SOPAC has been too successful, and is now at risk of suffering from the usual opportunists that emerge in such circumstances.

Fiji associates itself with the statement from Council’s Programme Monitoring and Evaluation group (PMEG) in that the fragmentation of SOPAC and its work programme into parts dispersed between two or more agencies, almost certainly will result in member countries losing, not gaining, services and products. To avoid this destructive fragmentation, any process for the rationalisation of SOPAC must be clearly designed and communicated by us – the Governing Council of SOPAC. We understand that this may take time, but we do not understand any need to rush into such action given the potentially dire consequences.

Fiji further acknowledges the PMEG concern in regard to fragmentation and its potential to disband and scatter valuable SOPAC resources, for Fiji views as unique and most beneficial the programmes SOPAC delivers for its Council members.

These and other aspects of SOPAC’s work programme are, in Fiji’s view, seriously at risk of being lost or compromised through the loss of capacity and capability if the right process for rationalisation is not prepared and implemented correctly. No such process has been presented to us the Governing Council and certainly does not appear evident from the Leaders decision. Nor do we support the notion that this process can be determined by the CEOs of relevant regional organisations under the facilitating umbrella of the Secretary General of the Forum Secretariat. Granted one of the most eminent international civil servants in the region, such a process is clearly one which verges on a conflict of interest. And SOPAC’s interest appears to be sidelined when it should be central to the process.

Chairman, I want now to turn to the issue of duplication as opposed to complementarity. Let us not allow ourselves to be confused over the meaning of “duplication” on the one hand, and “complementarity” on the other hand. Duplication has been in the past and remains today a key complaint for some, and underpins their argument for the need to rationalise the regional architecture. By way of example the Ocean and Islands Programme of SOPAC does nearshore surveys of current circulation systems and bathymetry, and provide and complement integrated technical solutions for members that address community lifelines and community disaster risk issues. These data also contribute to better pollution strategies and agriculture, forestry and coastal fisheries management plans. As such they complement those activities in SPREP and SPC. They do not duplicate them.

Chairman, Let me now say a few words about STAR, a network that SOPAC has developed over the past 25 years to support the delivery by the international scientific community of new and appropriate science and technology to the region.

Up to now, the scientists and technologists and other experts have not been abandoning ship; rather they have continued boarding and thus bolstering a successful regional ship that has an enviable international reputation which continues to grow. So why the a drastic move?

We are particularly supportive of STAR fully appreciating that the international community of scientists and technologists contribute freely to STAR. This constitutes a substantial “no fee for service” to the region which amounts to an annual basis to tens of millions of dollars when the costs of field surveys, including those for the deployment of large research vessels, institutional laboratory and library costs, and salaries are determined. We fear that this support will be lost as the STAR community has obviously developed an association with us island members of SOPAC through SOPAC’s work programme as a catalyst. The STAR community may **[Side A of Tape 1 ends at this point]** well look elsewhere to the small island states of the Caribbean, Indian or Atlantic areas if SOPAC’s work programme hub was to disappear.

Fiji most strongly contends that this working arrangement should not be disturbed.

Fiji also supports the STAR advice that in order to remain relevant, change is inevitable **[Side B of Tape 1 begins]** nonetheless for change to be least disruptive to the delivery of benefits to the region, change must be a deliberate and strategic ongoing process.

Chairman, I have said much. But it had to be said. So let me end by saying that in order to reach a Council decision on this issue, and manage strategically any emerging change that may be necessary, Fiji is prepared to work with the suggested language at the end of the Secretariat’s paper AS36/11.1 Suppl 1. We are however interested in looking for ways to strengthen that language, and we will be wary of supporting any attempt to weaken the language. We support the notion of communicating our decision to all relevant stakeholders and will have some suggestions in this regard in due course.

The correct way forward in our view is that Council must own and drive the process ahead, and if time is needed then time must be allowed. We believe this is possible as we know that in the past Council has responded positively to critical reviews, and emerged from them improved and strengthened enabling SOPAC to continue servicing its Council members. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you Fiji. Now delegates the floor is open for general discussion. Guam ...

Guam – Honourable Minister Tuita, Mr Chairman. Thank you for this opportunity to express a brief question that is important to Guam; it may not be so significant to other members here. But as you know Guam is not a member of the Forum and does not participate so far in Forum activities and lacks certain knowledge of the Forum and in particular we’d like to know if decisions by the Forum are binding on this body, this Council.

Chair – May I ask the Director to respond.

SOPAC Director – Thank you Guam. As you know, I mean, this Council and this organisation is a legal entity in its own right and Guam has full membership status of SOPAC. In terms of our Agreement we do not – within our current constitution we do not have any provisions which outline a relationship, if you like, between the decision-making responsibilities of the Forum and those decision making responsibilities of SOPAC within the Constitution. In saying that, though, clearly the Forum Communiqués that Leaders reach are communiqués ... and to my mind not as legally binding as multilateral agreements that are being signed by the various organisations, SOPAC included, but other regional organisations. But we’ve always looked to responding to the communiqué decisions of the Leaders there’s been a number of them taken in the past years that this organisation has paid attention and responded to in the best means and way possible. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you. New Zealand ... [New Zealand read the following words ...]

New Zealand – Thank you Chair. Through its programmes on Oceans and Islands, Community Risk and Community Lifelines, SOPAC makes a valuable contribution to sustainable development and the reduction of poverty and vulnerability in the Pacific. New Zealand’s investment in SOPAC

over the years has been considerable and we want to see SOPAC's work continue and develop. In October this year as we know, the Leaders of the Pacific Island Forum Countries agreed on a preferred regional institutional arrangement in response to the RIF process. The continuation of SOPAC's work is very much envisaged in the Leaders' decision. While recognising the challenges that the decision poses for SOPAC and without detracting from the high regard in which we all hold the organisation; New Zealand shares the view of the Director that Council respond positively and constructively to our Leaders' decision. A positive and constructive response involves accepting the decision and focussing our discussions on how best to move forward in implementing it. We would support the development of a detailed plan for implementing the Leaders' decision in a consultative manner through discussions between the CEOs of SOPAC, SPREP and SPC. Such discussions would be usefully guided by a small set of high-level principles, for example, a focus on the core RIF aims of creating an institutional framework that enhances service delivery to members; assists with the effective implementation of the Pacific Plan; and is cost-effective. Another principle could be addressing the full range of legal, organisational, administrative, governance, membership and financial implications. We would also be very interested in supporting other principles, for example, that SOPAC work programmes continue, and around the consideration of SOPAC welfare. We believe the process should reflect key good governance principles; namely that it should be transparent through information updates to key stakeholders and it should respect the accountability obligation that each of the three CEOs have to their governing bodies by ensuring that any proposed pathway agreed by CEOs goes back to respective councils for consideration.

Despite best intentions and planning, the process of rationalisation would be a significant change process for SOPAC in particular but also for SPC and SPREP. This will likely impact on service delivery. While we agree with the sentiments expressed by colleagues that the process should not be rushed, some momentum is needed if we are able to fulfil our duty as a Council of managing those risks to the delivery of services to Pacific Island Countries and if we are to achieve clarity and certainty for members, partners and staff in a reasonable time frame. We submit that it is high risk and creates uncertainty to members, partners and staff to wait until two thousand and ten [2010] for submission of a detailed implementation plan. With a focussed and constructive effort by the CEOs of all three affected agencies a well thought through plan should be able to be agreed between CEOs and in time for consideration by respective councils in two thousand and eight [2008].

We see three factors as key to achieving momentum and reducing risk:

Firstly, we consider it important that Council gives the Director of SOPAC, who knows the most about this business, a clear mandate to work closely with the CEOs of SPC and SPREP to deliver an agreed implementation plan in 2008 <that's a plan agreed by the CEOs of course, for Council consideration>.

Secondly, while it is useful for Council to seek to guide the process by proposing high-level principles and considering the implementation put forward by CEOs, it would not, in our view, be helpful for Council or a sub-group of Council to become more involved in that ... in the process of implementing or developing the plan <I should say>.

We also consider that momentum would be enhanced if another party separate from the three agencies facilitates the discussions. This morning we heard from the Secretary General of the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat on his proposal to facilitate discussions between the three CEOs, and we would support this.

SOPAC, SPC and SPREP are all unique entities with separate governing bodies that are obliged to consider issues and implications pertaining to their own organisation. It is also the reality that any consultative process to implement the Leaders' decision will involve coordination across the three bodies; and that processes put forward by respective councils need to be broadly compatible if CEOs are to be able to engage effectively.

Finally, we would just like to support the recommendation that was put forward by the Chair of STAR the other day, that going forward, the CEO consultation process should identify a mechanism for ensuring that the benefits of the STAR network continue. Thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand. Any other delegates wish to ... Samoa ...

Samoa – Honourable Chair. Thank you for the opportunity to take the floor once more. The Forum Leaders' decision in nineteen b [19b] of the Leaders' Communiqué called for the need to rationalise the functions of SOPAC with the work programmes of SPC and SPREP with a view to absorbing those functions of SOPAC into SPC and SPREP. Samoa respects the decision of the Leaders but Samoa needs to be assured that the process towards achieving this and the outcomes of that process of rationalisation will not affect the quality and effectiveness of the services currently delivered by SOPAC. We need to be assured that the quality, effectiveness and integrity of the work implemented by SOPAC are maintained if not improved substantially. It is of critical importance also that we maintain the confidence of the donor community. Honourable Chair, Samoa does not want to lose out on this. But if the decision to rationalise means that SOPAC's programme must go under the umbrella of another regional organisation for the sake of cost effectiveness and improved service delivery then we need to be assured that this will indeed happen for those reasons and not for any other reason. What we will not support is the carving up of the Commission which will result in fragmentation of its work programmes and affect service delivery to member countries simply because, as we have seen this week, the strong inter-linkages and co-dependency, which is why they work well together. Samoa needs assurance that SOPAC's technical and scientific functions are not submerged in any way by work programmes of other organisations. The bottom line should be: confidence that our needs will continue to be met with the same commitment from SOPAC and that we will receive the same if not better delivery. In order to maintain the integrity of the work carried out by this organisation and in light of the call for rationalisation, the only way forward without affecting delivery is to maintain the functions as one and not fragment the work and delivery by pulling apart thirty-five years of growth and success. Samoa supports the suggestion of Council working towards deciding on a way forward by using the text that has been provided by the Secretariat in the Supplementary one paper AS36/11.1, Mr Chairman thank you very much.

Chair – Thank you Samoa. Tuvalu ...

Tuvalu – Thank you Honourable Chairman. Firstly Mr Chairman, Tuvalu recognises that one of the strengths of SOPAC, which gives it its efficiency and effectiveness in its service delivery to member countries is the strong relationship that it has developed with the international scientific community over many years. SOPAC and therefore member countries, have received tremendous benefits from the independent and quality advice of its scientific technology and research group of scientists. The proposed rationalisation process Mr Chairman, needs to be seriously considered in terms of its implications on the current level of commitment of the scientific community to SOPAC programmes. Mr Chairman, listening to discussions and comments made during the last two days, it became apparent that there can be a real risk that this proposed rationalisation process would have negative implications on the commitment from an independent scientific advice and assistance. Tuvalu, who had always valued the work of SOPAC, and whom also lacks resources and capacity seeks that the implications on commitments of the scientific commitment is properly considered and that practical solutions are identified and agreed upon before any rationalisation process should commence, thank you Mr Chairman.

Chair – Thank you Tuvalu. Any other speakers would like to take the floor? Tonga ...

Tonga – Thank you Honourable Chairman. At this point in time Tonga would like to register our concern with the decision. As such we also do respect the Leaders' decision. However, as a member of this Council, we believe that we have a responsibility to ensure our decision do enhance the pillars proposed by the Forum Leaders; as well as more importantly that our decision also ensure a correct way forward <to echo Honourable Minister's Opening Speech>. In the 35<sup>th</sup> annual session last year, Tonga did express its concern with the service delivery. How such ... how

the way forward, if we do pursue it immediately, will affect the delivery of service at national level. This is the 36<sup>th</sup> session of the Council, and again we would like to raise our concern as such. It is still not sure to us, as has Samoa raised, if this ... if we do make a decision to proceed immediately, how it will be improve or decrease the services received at national level. We also do acknowledge the support of STAR ... and STAR/SOPAC partnership. After listening to presentations of the past last week's STAR Meeting, it is too obvious that such experience, expertise which is ready accessible to us more or less freely, I mean as a country we can't afford to access such scientific expertise if we ever proceed with our SOPAC and STAR partnership. So with that Honourable Chairman, we'll come back later on.

Chair – Thank you Tonga. Australia ...

Australia – Thank you Chair. I would like to commence by associating Australia with the comments, the very well considered comments of the New Zealand representative. I think we would also like to acknowledge the excellent work that is <has been> performed by SOPAC and continues to be performed by SOPAC. I think that in taking steps forward, our position needs to be based upon looking at some of the points that were made this morning, I think again reiterated by the Secretary General of Forum Secretariat when he talked about implementing the Pacific Plan in a way that is suitable and appropriate and the best way to implement the Pacific Plan for the future. As I think through how we need to do this, I think of how interconnected all the various strands of the work that is done by the organisations are and I think the Honourable Minister from Fiji talked about complementarity as opposed to duplication; and I would certainly support the issue that we need to focus on complementarity and avoid duplication.

Having made those introductory comments, I would like to just provide some further, more detailed comments. I think that Australia believes that the PIF decision or the Forum decision <decision by Leaders> is an agreed decision by Leaders and they are the Leaders of the very countries that we are talking about providing services to; they're not a group of Leaders from elsewhere, they are the Leaders of the Pacific countries – and it built on what was in fact an extensive regional consultation process aimed at improved regional service delivery. The Leaders' decision is clear and is modest in scope and it is doable. We believe that it is not up to officials <in our case> to revisit that decision – that decision has been made and we look towards implementing it in the most effective way.

We do note that the Leaders did not specify how precisely the CROP agencies should proceed with the amalgamation and we do note that it is very important for the CEOs, those who do know the organisations best, to work together to proceed with implementing the decision.

We would reiterate New Zealand's recommendation that it would be valuable to have with the CEOs an outside facilitator to move this process forward and we would agree with the suggestion that the Secretary General is the appropriate person to facilitate the process of consultation that needs to take place. It's a complex complicated process and it needs strong momentum to carry it forward.

I think that with regard to timing, we have the view that, in terms of bringing about clarity and certainty for the members, and for donor partners and also particularly for staff in SOPAC, a long drawn-out process is not going to make that process easier or more effective, it's going to increase uncertainty and exacerbate some of the problems that have been mentioned that come with uncertainty; so again I would support New Zealand's comments that we need to maintain the momentum of this decision so that the sooner we can get some clarity and understanding of how this would work, the better off all interested parties will be ... as I said members, donors and other partners and staff. I conclude my comments there Chair.

Chair – Thank you Australia for your comments. Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – Thank you for giving me the floor Honourable Chair. I now will be intervening as Papua New Guinea's representative to the Council. Papua New Guinea recognises that there is

no legally binding article within the agreement of SOPAC that should compel us to take a decision in support of the Leaders' decision that was taken in Vava'u. But by the fact that sixteen countries represented around in this Council whose Leaders took that decision is the basis upon which we should proceed.

The Director has pointed out in her offer to us a way forward; this morning we listened to the Secretary-General and we believe that that way forward, no matter how clear it is, is for a consultative, proactive engagement. In my intervention on Monday I mentioned that that was a momentous decision. Reform and change within any given organisation is something that we should always undertake to take with a positive outlook. I also wish to associate myself with statements by <the wise words of> the Honourable Minister in that we need to move forward in the correct way, with transparency and coming to an organisation or services that would be delivered in a consistent and coherent way, as the Secretary General mentioned this morning. I also wish to associate Papua New Guinea's <Papua New Guinea> with the very positive process that the New Zealand delegate has described which I feel if we move now, and as Australia has reiterated, we will see our way towards something, as I said in my earlier intervention as Chair of RIF, that will be palatable <that will be beneficial> to all; and I believe we should start now, the offer has been made by the Secretary General; that that consultative engagement takes place and if need be, an independent facilitator should also be co-opted so that there is transparency, clarity and coherence in the process ahead of us. I think it is crucial for us to look at those reforms in that light and also keep in mind the useful interlinkages that SOPAC has with STAR so that we do not lose that useful scientific technical engagement that we have with STAR. I thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea for your comments. If there are any other countries that would like to make interventions now, or if you wish to wait until after lunch; but I would like hear as many interventions from as many countries as possible on this item. So you can decide whether you intervene now or later on after lunchbreak. Palau ..... oh sorry Niue and then Palau.

Niue – Thank you Mr Chairman. Thank you for the opportunity to take the floor. Niue believes that the region and international community recognise and associate with the excellence of the science and technical services delivered by the SOPAC work programme to its members. We are a relatively new member of Council, having joined because we have watched the organisation grow and as such have come to recognise the benefits and significant contributions that SOPAC has made to Niue. It has taken thirty-five years to bring us to where we are today; and Niue will not support a plan for a way forward which puts at risk the benefits we currently enjoy. That said, dissecting the Commission will result in fragmentation of the three work programmes which no doubt will affect the delivery of services that we currently enjoy. Mr Chairman, regarding the call by Leaders for rationalisation, we need to be convinced that this is not going to diminish service delivery and effectiveness; on the contrary **[Side B of Tape 1 ends]** [that it will serve to enhance the service delivery. Rationalisation [ ... ] must not result in fragmentation; we must decide on a plan of action that does not allow this scenario to occur. Chair if I may conclude this brief intervention by associating Niue with the statement made.....] **[Side A of Tape 2 starts]** ..... by Fiji, and advise that we stand ready to work towards a Council decisions on this matter by working with the language provided by the Secretariat at the end of paper AS36/11.1 Supplementary 1. Thank you Mr Chairman.

Chair – Thank you Niue, Palau?

Palau – Thank you Mr Chairman, I will be very brief. The Republic of Palau fully associates itself with the statement by the Honourable Minister of Fiji; but Palau is really saddened that Forum Leaders had made that decision, and we some of us are here wondering whether it's a correct one. The event of last week and this week only reiterate Palau's position that we're not sure whether the rationalisation of SOPAC would benefit Palau. Also, the way the decision was made, Palau is wondering you know whether that was a wise way to do things, you know in fact ironically the decision which was made, most of the leaders of the Micronesia were absent and the issue was not clearly brought up to the officials who normally advise their governments; so sometimes you

know we are wondering whether the Forum is now being used just to advance the view of a few countries in the Forum, thank you Mr Chairman.

Chair – Thank you Palau. Kiribati ...

Kiribati – Thank you Mr Chairman. Kiribati would like to convey concerns about the RIF and at the same time propose a way forward as part of the RIF process. The three decades of existence of SOPAC has shown tremendous development and excellence in the delivery of its service through member countries and the assistance of the scientific community and the development partners. The [abrupt?] decision for the rationalisation is something that strike quite a number of members of the Council for the need for rationalisation that is pointed out by our Leaders in their recent meeting in Tonga and I quote it in 19b of the Communiqué: *'the need to rationalise the functions of the SOPAC with the work programmes of SPC and SPREP'* seems to Kiribati on a shaky ground in a sense that it is not clearly pointed out how the rationalisation should take place, in what manner, under what guidance and council and under what time frame. Not only that, but the current existence of the Council is very much undermined in a sense that very limited consultation has been made in the process and therefore the Council should have the time to make the right decisions <to make> so that what comes out from the decision will benefit all members in all. The essence of the RIF process underpinned by the claimed principles of *'improving quality of services, improving effectiveness of delivery, and more effective management of limited resources, and good governance'* are blurred in the moment <at the whole at the moment> in the eyes of the small island states. The principles are noble but the long term to achieve those may not, as has been the case in some other regional organisations. The way forward is what we all need but in a way that is properly planned and in a very constructive manner, I therefore, as the Kiribati delegation would like to support the recommendations which is highlighted in the paper <the recommendation of paper> AS36/11.1 Supplementary.

Chair – Thank you very much Kiribati. [very long pause as Chair waits for other delegates] Well we'll have our lunch at 1 o'clock so we still got a bit more time for any more interventions if there are any other countries ... Cook Islands...

Cook Islands – Thank you Chairman. Cook Islands sort of supports the views of Fiji, Niue and Palau in expressing some of their [...] the decision that has been made by Forum Leaders especially transparency was not done or wasn't [...] since there was no consultations with the working arm of the ring of services, particularly in <the> those areas; however only in the political arena through our minister of foreign affairs. But with respect to that Chairman we have to abide according to the decision that has been made by the Forum Leaders. In terms of going forward I would strongly support the recommendations as stipulated in the AS36/11.1 Supplementary paper but with additional comments on the, specially during the consultative process for the three agencies <regional agencies> that an independent facilitator should be part of that team. And also we strongly support the STAR and SOPAC interlinking working relationship to be strongly maintained. Thank you Chairman.

Chair – Thank you Cook Islands. [another long pause] Well delegates this is only the first round. You'll have an opportunity for further interventions after lunch. So if there are no more requests for interventions I suggest we break for lunch, and resume again at 2 o'clock this afternoon. Meeting's adjourned.

[LUNCH BREAK]

Chair – Delegates as I suggested before we broke for lunch, I would like to open the session by inviting those countries who have not spoken to please do so. According to the list I have here there are still about five members who have not made any comments and we really appreciate it if those members would be able to make any interventions to start this afternoon's session. Guam, thank you.

Guam – Thank you Mr Chairman and Council members for this opportunity to express our views on the issue. As already expressed by many other Council members Guam highly values the scientific and the technical resources that SOPAC provides to all of us; and also SOPAC's unique service of in-house expertise being able to conveniently tap the very specialised scientific knowledge provided through the STAR Network. While directly responding to our individual national needs, we wish to note that SOPAC also provides regional services and even global services that benefit all of our islands and can only be accomplished through such an organisation receiving the support of all of its members. The support has been earned over the many years of SOPAC's work in the Pacific, evolving as it has to address new needs appropriate to special sectors of capabilities. Without going into any detail on the benefits of maintaining and strengthening the provision of services and values we have realised over the years from SOPAC, we wish to note our alignment with the sentiments that had been expressed by the honourable representative of Fiji in his opening statement this morning.

In regards to the response to the Communiqué of the Forum Leaders calling for the rationalisation of SOPAC functions, we are prepared to support the way forward indicated in the paper provided [AS]36/11.1 Supplement provided by the Secretariat. But we want to include any specific modifications that are agreed on in Council this week. We recommend that assistance to the CEOs of SOPAC, SPREP and SPC be provided by a facilitator with proven expertise and experience in SOPAC matters with a good understanding of the value of the STAR system. We request that in this process, the Director and her peers of SPC and SPREP provide progress in this rationalisation effort in an open and transparent manner while at the same time safeguarding the continuity of the ongoing functions of SOPAC and promoting the strengthening of the STAR Network and PMEG process as is possible with consideration even of expanding these features of SOPAC to functional areas of other regional agencies. Thank you Mr Chairman.

Chair – Thank you Guam. Vanuatu ...

Vanuatu – Thank you Honourable Chair. Vanuatu respects the Leaders' decision on the rationalisation of SOPAC services and we share the sentiments echoed around that the process should be allowed to take its course without jeopardising the current ongoing service delivery to member countries. SOPAC has over the last thirty-five years <has> grown from an initial geoscience-focussed programme to where it is today, seeing more programmes being added to its mandate. As such there is wealth of information and other work generated which we as a member, have and will continue to benefit from in order to add value to our sustainable development planning. As a member of this Council, we feel due process should be allowed in developing a plan together by SOPAC, SPC [and] SPREP paving the way forward. This process must allow consultation with member countries so that we have ownership and responsibility over this process and action. As such, we recommend to this Council to consider establishing a working group comprising of selected Council members to be part of this process. Last, but not least, we wish to reiterate that this process must in no way dilute or disintegrate the current quality service provided and the close association with STAR members. Thank you Mr Chair.

Chair – Thank you Vanuatu. Solomon Islands ...

Solomon Islands – Thank you Chair. Again Solomon Islands would like to associate ourselves with the comments raised by Vanuatu and Fiji. As we know, Mr Chair, we respectfully respected the decisions that the <our> Leaders have made in this regard; but again considering the important services SOPAC has delivered to the region and especially Solomon Islands, we're a bit concerned about this drastic idea for the rationalisation of these work programmes. We fully associate ourselves with the recommendations as presented in the paper – that it should take time and process so that it allows all the issues that are yet to be clarified to be <to be> cleared. We are concerned, Mr Chairman, about the legal process as well – having some informal discussions with some legal people as well, the rationalisation would mean the amendments to some of the articles in the legal framework that establishes these organisations; and therefore the process will take a long time considering the ratification by countries as well. So in this regard we would really want to

see the due process taken in this regard. But again, Mr Chairman, we would associate ourselves with the recommendations as per stated in the paper, I thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Solomon Islands. I would also like to invite those associate members who may not have made interventions if they would like to do so. New Caledonia ...

New Caledonia – Regarding the Leaders' decision, New Caledonia feels that any change of the regional institutions should improve efficiencies and enable better use of resources. New Caledonia sees four key principles that need to be considered : first one is that the headquarters of regional institutions should be preserved in their current locations; second one – the participation rights of parties, especially for non-self-governing territories should be maintained. Number three – the proposed change should improve consultations and dialogue between partners and stakeholders. Number four, finally – New Caledonia has always seen SOPAC as a strong and reliable scientific and technical organisation – that is essentially why we decided to apply for associate membership; and since our admission as the first Associate Member of SOPAC in ninety-one [1991], New Caledonia has been assisting the Secretariat in both hosting four international conferences in Noumea and participating in the Ocean and Island[s] Programme in sharing outputs and outcomes from our [...]disciplinary ZoNeCo Programme that aims at assessing both living and non-living resources of New Caledonia lagoons and EEZ. We really wish that this 16-year long scientific cooperation could be maintained under the proposed rationalisation process, thank you Mr Chair.

Chair – Thank you New Caledonia. Nauru...

Nauru – Thank you Honourable Chair. I would like to again state Nauru's position in regard to the Leaders' decision. Nauru in support [...] respects the Leaders' decision and recognises that the intention is not to minimise the services but hopefully in the long term the region would benefit more from the remaining organisation in pillar two and I hope that Council would respond positively to this decision, thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Nauru. French Polynesia ...

French Polynesia – Thank you Honourable Chair [accident with mic] Sorry, thank you for allowing the associate members to take part in this debate. First of all I would like to say that French Polynesia highly values the work done by SOPAC and French Polynesia respects the decision made by the Leaders at the last Forum meeting. French Polynesia was fully part of the RIF task force and we have already had the occasion <the opportunity> to make our voice heard. We want to maintain the quality and continuity of the services delivered by SOPAC and on the same time we want to improve the rationalisation of the activities performed by all the regional organisations, especially the technical ones. French Polynesia associates itself to the comments made by some delegates earlier this morning and we associate ourselves especially to the comments made by the delegate of Samoa. So concerning the process we agree with the recommendations presented in the Secretariat paper, thank you Mr Chairman.

Chair – Thank you French Polynesia. American Samoa ...

American Samoa – Thank you Mr Chairman for the opportunity. This is my first Forum meeting, but uhmm 'scuse me Council meeting, and I'm thankful for the opportunity. I've sat this whole week and I've learned a lot; and the value that the Pacific island countries place upon SOPAC. And the bottom line here is the end user – this is the heart and I believe the very nature that SOPAC was established to benefit the common man or islander. Let me quote from the SOPAC constitution – “recognising the importance of the development of non-living resources of the Pacific to the maximisation of benefits to the peoples of the region” – there's our people: our fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, sons and daughters, cousins, nephews, friends and relatives – this is the main reason we are all here and the well being of our people with the limited resources available to us should be above all other political and scientific or technical agenda. I restate our Governor's instructions that American Samoa is against the proposal 19b and we are deeply concerned with

the fragmenting of SOPAC into separate functional groups which may unnecessarily complicate the management of the programmes and hurt the end product service to the users in the islands. We feel there is no need to tinker with a system that is working very well as evidenced by the support of donors and the output of the professional staff. We also echo the concerns of the other Pacific island countries and also we'd like to note that not all island countries were represented in the Forum and therefore we also align with Fiji that this issue should be brought up again at the next Forum meeting, thank you.

Chair – Thank you American Samoa. Federated States of Micronesia ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you Mr Chairman. I must say that some people have said that the decision of the Leaders is clear. To me it's not clear but I would note that the decision as is – I'd like to make two points regarding them: one is the use of the term 'rationalise' meaning that we are being asked to rationalise or the CROP agencies are being asked to rationalise their activities. To me that means that we have to carefully consider the way forward ensuring that the outcome is rational and it makes sense, and that it does not negatively impact the services that we expect from all regional agencies. Second point is that I noted that there is no timeline given in the decision – again, pointing to the need for carefully looking at a way forward <to again> to ensure that we do not lose the services that are provided to countries. I guess the bottom line in both the wording of the decision is that we have to make sure that the process in arriving at the rationalised outcome will ensure that island member countries as owners and beneficiaries must be assured that any action taken will indeed lead to improved service delivery, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Federated States of Micronesia. I think delegates we've had interventions from all member countries and just about all associate members. I'd like to invite any comments from CROP agencies. I'd like to ask the Director of SPREP if he had any comments to make.

SPREP Director – Thank you very much Mr Chairman. Honourable Ministers, distinguished delegates ... thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak to this very sensitive issue and I wish to first advise the Council that according to the SPREP Agreement, only the members, the parties to the agreement can make any changes to its existence whether they are any changes or improvements. In any case, the decisions rest with the Council. Mr Chairman, as I've stated in my opening statement I am here to listen and learn the sentiments of this Council; its members including the participants around this table ... and I have.

Mr Chairman it is clear that there is much work to be done, I heard in terms of the rationalisation mandate or the decision of the Forum. Clearly the decision for SOPAC rests with you the Council, as it is with the Council of SPREP. The SPC has reached a decision on that and they are looking to the CEOs, the CROP agencies, the members to map out a way forward. I have listened to the concerns that while time should be provided, that care should be taken so that there is no disruption; there is no **[Side B of Tape 2 ends]** [... unnecessary fragmentation and there's no set back in the process. As well we note that [the] care should be given to the people in the organisations themselves, in particular SOPAC if there is going to be any structural changes as decided by the councils. We also need to take on board the parameters of the Pacific Plan in the ... ] **[Side A of Tape 3 starts]** context of national and regional aspirations as well the organisations themselves. Mr Chairman, what I am trying to articulate is that while, on its service, the decisions of the Leader is to rationalise, the components to be rationalised are not simple. And that the services of SOPAC which is under review not only should be preserved but as I hear round this table it is in the interest of the region that they in fact be improved. The important component of the scientific community that come <that comes> to this meetings is extremely important to the region and we recognise that, and so I have taken into advisement and it will be fed to the decision making process for my council.

Mr Chairman, on the issue of when, I am not free to decide as the Council itself normally meets in September. There have been some suggestions that perhaps this could be moved ahead. That is strictly up to the decisions of the Council and I'm sorry that I am not able to speculate on that issue.

I believe Mr Chairman that this is <the> as far as I can help in contributing to the deliberation on this very important issue, thank you very much.

Chair – Thank you Director of SPREP. I would like to ask the representative of SPC if he wishes to make any comments.

SPC Representative – Thank you Mr Chairman for giving me this opportunity to again address the Governing Council of SOPAC. The Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat gave a comprehensive background to RIF <and RIF2?> so it is not my intention to touch again on some of the background development that went into this; but I feel it is important that I inform SOPAC Governing Council of what went on after the decision of the Leaders last month.

The Conference of the Pacific Community convened in Apia earlier this month and comprehensive deliberations went on and in the end the decisions and I quote: “Conference:

- i. notes the decision taken by the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) leaders on their preferred institutional arrangement for the Forum Fisheries Agency, Secretariat of the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC), South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA), SPC and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP);
- ii. endorses the position taken by PIF leaders as the basis for a detailed draft roadmap for the consideration of CRGA 38, while recognising that although the United States and American Samoa support the goal of improving coordination, efficiency and service delivery, they were not able to endorse the position taken by PIF leaders without additional information concerning the proposal’s implementation and associated implications;
- iii. notes that the matter will also be considered by the governing bodies of SOPAC and SPBEA and SPREP;
- iv. accepts the offer by the Secretary-General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat to facilitate consultations between the CEOs of the four organisations concerned, including appropriate involvement of member representatives, development partners and other CROP agencies, and recommends that the discussions between the CEOs be usefully guided by a set of principles; including for example:
  - a. transparency and timeliness with respect to the process, and effective involvement of stakeholders; cost-effectiveness;
  - b. a focus on the RIF objective of creating an institutional framework that further improves service delivery to PICTs and assists with the effective implementation of the Pacific Plan;
  - c. the need to address the full range of legal, organisational, administrative, governance, membership, and financial implications;
- v. instructs the Director-General to work closely with the CEOs of the three organisations to map out a draft plan to implement the institutional arrangements outlined by leaders for Pillar 2 organisations and to present the plan to CRGA 38;
- vi. notes the intention of the Secretariat to involve the membership at various stages of the development of the roadmap through provision of regular updates.”

Mr Chairman, following on the heels of the Fifth Conference of the Pacific Community, the Governing Board of the SPBEA at their Annual General Meeting, made the following resolutions:

- i. The Board has accepted the decisions that have been made by the Pacific Forum Leaders, and is now focusing on the steps that need to be taken to effect the merger.
- ii. A sub-committee, which is the Executive Committee, is being tasked to look into this and bring its findings to the full Board.
- iii. The Director has been mandated to hold discussions with SPC and other relevant organisations to establish a way forward, with consultations with the Executive Committee.

Mr Chairman, from SPC's perspective we can only say at this important juncture that SPC is ready, using the Tongan community concept of "*fofola e fala kae kamata e talanga*" or rolling out the mat and start useful consultations between families within the extended family of the Pacific. Discussions that will take us closer to making the vision of the PIF leaders, a reality. The Secretary-General of the Forum Secretariat is expected to take a leading role in facilitating the discussions that we do look forward to in the very near future.

Mr Chairman, I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to again make a statement on behalf of the Secretariat of Pacific Community, thank you very much.

Chair – Thank you very much representative of SPC. Delegates given what's being said and all members have had their first intervention, are there any other delegates that wish to make a second intervention given what you have heard? New Zealand ...

New Zealand – Just a point of clarification for me Chair, will there be an opportunity to comment on the recommendations because if so, I'm happy to wait until then? Thank you ... [after Chair's reply] ... thank you very much Sir.

Chair – Yes, there will an opportunity to comment. [long pause] Delegates as you are aware there were a lot of comments which made reference to STAR and PMEG. I would therefore like to ask if the Chairman of STAR and Chair of PMEG would like to make comments before we proceed on. Chair of STAR ....

Chair of STAR – Thank you Sir. I'm very appreciative of this opportunity to speak and of the previous opportunities that this Council has given us. STAR is a guest here and uh ... but nonetheless we have heard a number of very kind comments from distinguished delegates today about STAR. We've seen the intermixing of STAR and SOPAC's work both in the STAR conference and in the presentations about the work programmes; and understand that a number of the organisations that now send people to these meetings have a budget item labelled 'for STAR' so I guess at least in a small way we could consider ourselves stakeholders in these issues.

I'm also very conscious that STAR is a voluntary and informal organisation and there are considerable constraints on my mandate to speak on behalf of the rest of the scientists. Nonetheless from the considerable volume of e-mails that I've received and from the discussions I've had I think that the supplementary document that we prepared could be considered a fair representation of the views of at least most of those scientists.

I've emphasised before that the organisation and governance of SOPAC is not the concern of STAR. We're solely concerned with the efficiency of scientific work in the region and its benefits to all the people of the region. I'm also conscious that I don't want to take up much of your time; you've many other things to discuss ...

So I'd just like to make brief comments about the last three bullet points on that supplementary document that's been circulated. The first of these is with regard to change and I'll emphasise again that STAR supports any positive change that will enhance the benefits of science flowing through to the peoples of the region. We've also expressed the very strong desire that some mechanism be found that enables the STAR/SOPAC relationship in some form to continue. Although we're voluntary we're all committed to helping in the region; and I don't think there's any member of STAR who would want to see that relationship lost. I've mentioned the strength of STAR before but I've also mentioned its fragility given that it's a totally voluntary organisation. And the final point there is the one where we've offered our assistance to Council in any way that we can either at this Meeting or at any time from here on. If we can help we would be more than happy to do so. I'd also appreciate, given that scientific programmes and plans, conferences ... and so on for scientists are now organised several years in advance, being advised by Council with any information that it feels it can pass on to me of how its deliberations are going in the future in order that I can convey those to our members. Thank you Sir.

Chair – Thank you Chair of STAR. Can I ask the Chair of PMEG if you'd like to make any comments.

Chair of PMEG – Thank you. I appreciate you asking for our input. As you know PMEG has been appointed by Council for the review of the organisation and earlier in the week we did present the review to the Council and noted SOPAC strengths and weaknesses. Our concern of course at that time was that there was a possibility of some impacts from fragmenting the organisation and we were hopeful that this fragmentation – destructive fragmentation – would not take place. In our view the paragraph 19b was not clear to us nor did it present a formula for the way forward – in fact it allowed for a lot of questions – and one of the questions was ‘why SOPAC?’ However, given those questions, we’ve heard here that this is your organisation. You have an opportunity now to improve upon those weaknesses and to move ahead and strengthen the organisation and the work programme as you see it; and I would encourage you to take that opportunity to do so. SOPAC should meet, we think, with the other organisations; but it should be equal in its negotiations and whatever takes place. This is a critical exercise that you will undertake and PMEG feels it would not be to your advantage to rush into the process of reorganising yourself. You just heard about the latest paragraph 19b last month; so we would encourage you to do this in a timely manner but because of the consequences of your decisions that you take the time necessary to do the work. PMEG is here as your advisers and reviewers and we certainly are happy to help in any fashion possible and we wish you good luck in your deliberations. Thank you Mr Chairman.

Chair – Thank you Chair of PMEG for those comments.

Fiji – Honourable Chair, thank you for giving me the floor for the second time. Honourable Chair I hear from the interventions that there is consensus on some substantial issues. I also hear that there is agreement on the need to maintain the unique science and technology focus of SOPAC and the delivery of scientific services. I further hear support for the retention of the STAR network which will enable the scientists, technologists and experts to continue their valued contribution for use by the member countries. Now many of the esteemed delegates who have spoken expressed strong agreement that rationalisation must not mean fragmentation; and that there be no tolerance position where risk to planned and ongoing activities are concerned. Honourable Chair, what is not of consensus concerns the way forward. I therefore wish to return to two points I made earlier in my first intervention on this crucial agenda item and these are ownership and timelines.

First in regard to ownership, may I repeat that as owners of the Commission, we cannot divest ourselves of the very important responsibility of determining the process by which to move forward to the three CEOs facilitated by the Secretary General of the Forum Secretariat. I know those CEOs personally, they are good personal friends of mine but I would rather on this occasion, when it's a reputation and the way forward for SOPAC that you Ma'am are in the Chair. It's <it's> the most, I believe, normal way in a situation such as this. The others can be there to help with the process.

Next, in regard to timelines, this issue is of such importance that we must get it right now. We contend that a clear statement from this Council that intends to take direct control of the way forward, step by step in order to ensure the correct way forward is indeed found and followed because such a process will in turn serve to reassure our Leaders, donor partners, the scientific community and the Secretariat staff. Chair I ... that is all I wish to cover on this second intervention. I will reserve my other comments [for] when we look at the recommendations. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you Fiji. [Extra Long pause much waiting for delegates to volunteer to speak] Delegates I think everybody has made their interventions and no further requests for second interventions. I would just like to advise that listening to comments that have been made, I get a sense that most of the speakers have made reference to the recommendations in the paper as perhaps a basis to start with <as a starting point>. And what I have in mind is, perhaps as a way to move forward, by using the United Nations method of convening Council as a drafting committee of the whole and taking the starting point as the conclusions and recommendations in paper

AS36/11.1 Supplementary one. That's a suggestion I'd like to make on how we can move forward. If delegates agree to that we can easily set up two screens with the conclusions and recommendations in the paper and perhaps work through with amendments as suggested by members.

So in order to set up the equipment I suggest we can take an early tea break and then come back and proceed as proposed. In that case I adjourn the meeting for fifteen minutes before we resume. Thank you.

[AFTERNOON TEA]

Chair – One of you could start ... oh before I go on to outline what we're gonna do I've been asked by the High Commissioner of Papua New Guinea if he could make some comments before we proceed, thank you.

Papua New Guinea – I thank you Chair and I seek the indulgence of Council members that I'm actually taking the floor now to cover some points that I need to make in a statement so that I can go to hospital to check on what's actually wrong with me. I have an appointment at 4 o'clock is basically what I am saying. Mr Chairman we must consider the Leaders' decision and do so in a constructive and positive way, in a rational and meaningful way to ensure the strategic and collaborative partnership that exists between SPC, SOPAC and SPREP is maintained and enhanced. Considerable concerns have been expressed about fragmentation of SOPAC and the possible disintegration in its relationship with STAR. However, if we abide by the principles that have been identified within the SOPAC paper and that which are – improving quality of service; improving effectiveness of delivery, more effective management of limited resources, good governance, and using your words – underpinned with rationalisation process an essential and appropriate exercise can be undertaken. I note also the Director of SOPAC's earlier comments that in the past Council has respected and adhered to decisions by PIF Leaders and I believe this is no different; even old members sitting here (PIF Members) have had initial difficulties with the Pacific Plan, but now it seems we have subscribed to it and come on board. The same is true for this process that we are now embarking upon. Specifically I agree with Fiji's comments about ownership and time line to move this forward; in <from> cognisance of that Council should be encouraged to maintain the momentum as articulated in conclusion seven, nonetheless and it is here : [vii] "Nonetheless, is fully cognisant of the need to maintain the momentum established by the Leaders decision, in order to ensure the continuity in both the quality and effective delivery of service in meeting the needs of the people."

In endorsing that, delete five [v] as being an erroneous representation of the Leaders' decision on Vava'u <and giving it a positive reflection> and in doing so gives it a positive reflection of Council's willingness to engage.

PNG considers the way forward is to stress the time line in as far as it relates to the process and that would be through the heads of SOPAC, SPREP and SPC to meet under the facilitation of the Pacific Island Forum Secretary General, as the process we are undertaking relates to a decision taken by Leaders. Notwithstanding, the absence of a legal basis for compliance to it, but more in adherence to the fact that whether Leaders were present or not, a decision was taken.

The process has been identified Mr Chairman, to discuss the involvement of the affected CEOs. They will provide the framework of analysis that will be the basis upon which Leaders can endorse at the 2008 Pacific Islands Forum with a view to consolidating on the details as articulated in recommendation two [ii]; and its there for you in the three bulletin points.

I will reserve the right to discuss, if I come back quickly, other substantive matters in the specific recommendations, I thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea for your comments.

Now I would like to perhaps outline how we might proceed this afternoon. The suggestion is that we proceed to look at the conclusions and recommendations in the paper from the Secretariat and perhaps go paragraph by paragraph. If we agree on one then we proceed to the next; if there are any amendments or changes then we go on to the next and then come back again to those paragraphs that need amendment and change. **[Side A of Tape 3 ends]** So one of you can start ... the conclusions and recommendations are on the screen [and I expect] you all have copies of the paper [some stalling going on here as scribe doesn't seem to be ready]. **[Side B of Tape 3 starts]** it's also pages 12 and 13 of the paper .... we just have a little technical problem we're trying to sort out here.

Thank you delegates can we start with the Conclusions, paragraph one [i] ... if you have any amendments or changes please raise your plaque. If not, do I take it that we agree on paragraph one [i].

Paragraph two [ii], any amendments? If not, do we agree on paragraph two [ii].

Paragraph three [iii]? New Zealand ...

New Zealand – Thank you Chair. Just a small suggested drafting amendment for clarification. The recommendation reads “recognised that partners currently identify with SOPAC to the extent that the Commission now enjoys a substantial, secure annual budget which includes the attraction of non-traditional “new” money” – I would propose that we just take out the word ‘secure’ just for clarification given that the new money is perhaps less secure than the contributions that members around the table make. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand ... that's being inserted. Any other amendments before we go on ... ok.

Paragraph four [iv]? If there are no amendments, agreed.

Paragraph five [v]? [whispers at the head table] This is the paragraph that the High Commissioner for Papua New had suggested be deleted. So we will insert that.

Paragraph six [vi]? New Zealand ...

New Zealand – Again just a very small suggested drafting amendment; the recommendation starts with “acknowledged with concern that circumstances such as this increase demands on the Secretariat, and cause stress on the staff, that will impact current levels of service delivery”. Our suggestion would be to change “circumstances such as this” to “change processes.” Thank you.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand. We will insert that change.

Paragraph seven [vii]? If there are no amendments, are we agreed? Agreed.

Next paragraph ... [reading] “Council therefore agreed to accept the challenge offered by the 2007 Leaders' Communique ... et cetera.” Any amendments? New Zealand?

New Zealand – Sorry Chair have we finished with recommendation eight [viii]?

Chair – Er ... you're right New Zealand. Paragraph eight [viii] is shown in the paper but not on the screen. [few seconds pause] We will add that paragraph eight [viii]. [longer pause while text being inserted].

Thank you. Paragraph eight [viii] ... and I'm sorry for the omission, but thank you New Zealand for bringing that up. Any amendments to paragraph eight [viii]? New Zealand ...

New Zealand – Thank you Chair. Just wanted to raise a small dilemma that we have as a Council to perhaps work through. New Zealand supports the four principles here but we're also conscious that SPC has agreed to a set of guiding principles for the process; and I mean I think they're not too dissimilar but I guess it's ... if we're going to be able to move forward effectively, the one thing that we probably need to be certain about is the guiding principles. In terms of how we might address it, one option is to have the SPC principles made available to people and to think about what else we might want to add to them. That's probably the only practical way I can think of of going forward but others may have other suggestions.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand, any other suggestions on that? Otherwise the Secretariat can issue copies of the SPC document. [Slight pause] Thank you, we have taken note of that on that paragraph, thank you. We move on. [some whispers] Any amendments to this paragraph? Agreed. [more whispers] ... the next line? any amendments? Australia ...

Australia – My comment was on point number one is that where we've moved to now?

Chair – Yes point number one [i, under recommendations]... Australia?

Australia – I would like to just propose a couple of changes and I will read it out: [i] “a consultative process be established between the CEOs of SOPAC, SPC and SPREP, to prepare a draft implementation plan mutually agreed upon by the three CEOs, to be submitted for consideration ...” the rest of it, you'll see it's down there ... “consideration by the Council in 2008” .... and then that would mean a meeting from the end of the blue part to the end, would be my proposal. And can I say that in proposing that I would also like to add another part to that, but perhaps that's to do with the facilitation of the meeting; but perhaps we can make that an extra point. And in <in> proposing that ... it <it> again when I look at what the SPC – the process the SPC looked at as outlined earlier today that is similar to the kind of approach that was used at the SPC meeting.

Chair – Thank you Australia. That amendment is included. Are we agreed? Palau ....

Palau – Thank you Chair. I think the 2008 is really rushing this process you know and you want to take time to <you know> really look at it <you know> I think. What we've been trying to say is we'd like to take time and look at the process, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Palau ... perhaps when we .... can move on and come back and discuss that point Palau. Can we move on to point two [ii]. Any amendments to bulletin point one – the first bulletin point, New Zealand?

New Zealand – Sorry, I've jumped the gun, mine's the second bullet point, apologies Chair.

Chair – Are we agreed to bullet point one? Agreed. Bullet point two? New Zealand ...

New Zealand – Thank you very much Chair. Just a suggestion that instead of examining the costs and benefits of the Leaders' decision, we could <we could> perhaps examine the costs and benefits of the options that are considered during the process. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you. Any comments on that? No? Are there any more amendments to that? Ok are we agreed? If not we'll come back to it later. Thank you. Bullet point three, any amendment? Are we agreed? We are agreed. [slight noise from the side] Oh Australia ...

Australia – I think this just relates to the same issue ... uh a progress report. I think if <if> the Council finds it acceptable to <to> look at the implementa ... to make ... <to to> ... to make ... to pro ... a draft implementation plan ... uh to be submitted to the three governing councils and the Forum in 2008.

Chair – Can we ... can you please just repeat that Australia ...

Australia – ‘a draft implementation plan to be submitted to the three governing councils and the Forum in 2008.’ And I would just seek a clarification on the draft final report in 2009, I think that ... I’m not sure how that fits with <with>having already presented it to the <to the> Council in 2008. Perhaps if I could just get a bit of clarity from the Secretariat on that.

Chair – Director?

Director – Thank you, thank you Chair. The way in which the consultative process is actually outlined at the moment is in fact, in 2008 there would be uhmm <a> draft ... you know some progress made in terms of various things that would need to be exempt [examined] and so on, that would go before the councils of the various ... of the three organisations with a view obviously to getting, you know, er ... or elaborating those further and getting some agreements around further development. The idea then being that in fact that would be worked on in the year from the next Council session to the second Council session with a view to actually providing a final draft, meaning you know obviously a near final implementation plan which would need to go before the various councils for their <for their> consideration and endorsement. [from the side “Hmmm?”] I guess what your suggestion, or the suggestions at the moment are that in fact this final draft report would in fact be going before Council in less than twelve months time; and so therefore from listening to some of the discussion in fact what’s being suggested is a compression uhmm of <of> the time line ... and that what goes before Council in September or when councils meet, not in September of 2008, but when councils meet that in fact they would be uhmm in a position where they would need to be considering and endorsing a near-final draft. [“Yes”, says a female voice in the background].

Australia – Yes ... thank you sir, thank you Chair. Um ... Yes I think <I think> the reason I <I> put that, is obviously I think that <you know> for a whole range of reasons that were mentioned this morning in my earlier presentation ... for reasons of certainty and to reduce risk, I am of the view for <for> for the sake of the members and the donors and the staff and other stakeholders in this, it is to everyone’s benefit to have certainty as soon as <as> they can. And I think that to prolong the process will reduce that certainty and will in fact bring about the very problems of <of of> falling away of morale and certainty that <that> people have identified as a risk. And <I I> I’m wondering whether uhmm the Council wouldn’t be prepared to go along with the approach that the SPC used which was to do as I suggested in the/in my previous intervention to suggest that the <that the ...that ... that> ... a draft implementation plan be brought back to the Council next year for consideration; uhmm and then, uhmm rather than uh specify what it is exactly that will proceed uhmm in the other governing councils, because after all we don’t uhmm <we don’t> uh uh dictate what the other governing councils do ... uhmm that we just simply keep at specifying what we want for our next <our next> Council meeting. So uhmm there’s a sense in which uhmm uh ... I think that we could even omit that particular recommendation because uh we’ve <we’ve> really made a recommendation for our own Council in the previous dot point uhmm above ... [slight pause] ... point number one is the one I was referring to.

Chair – Ok Australia. Guam?

Guam – Thank you Mr Chairman. Excuse me, but in my experience in writing development plans and implementation plans over the years – an implementation plan we’ve always treated (and this maybe US influence that leads to this) ... but that’s always been after you’ve got an approved plan and the implementation plan says this amount of money and these people will be doing this and this; but first you have the master plan and I’m a little confused in the recommendation in calling it a draft implementation plan upfront. Perhaps we could discuss that, Australia?

Australia – Ok. I’d be happy not to use the term ‘implementation plan’; I’d be happy to use <to use> some other <some other> terminology.

Chair – Thank you. Samoa...

Samoa – Thank you Mr Chairman. In no way are we trying to delay this process deliberately but I think we do need to proceed with the course of action very cautiously and in a transparent manner; and I feel that if we need time, we should give it time but the fact is we have to be realistic with our timing as the issue of this rationalisation process is a very critical one. I wonder whether we can – because we are now constantly referring to the SPC record – they refer to a draft roadmap <so> as opposed to a draft implementation plan – can we, for recommendation three can we look at an initial draft roadmap to be submitted to the three councils and the Forum in 2008, and then the final ... final report or final roadmap, in 2009 and this will take into consideration any further recommendations or deliberations arising from the Council meeting in 2008, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Samoa. Fiji ...

Fiji – Thank you Chair. Chair, I agree with what's being discussed but I think if we look at the <the that the> dates that are being set out there, there are three dates – two thousand and eight [2008], two thousand and nine [2009] and two thousand and ten [2010] and we're dealing with three councils and a forum at the same time, which meets every year. Now, the Forum and the Leaders' Communiqué have made a decision. They have not said when they would want that decision be carried out – there's an open ended ... Now, as I see it, two thousand and eight [2008] would be the first year for consideration by each of the councils regarding this the Communiqué. Two thousand and nine [2009] comes into play and the presentation of it as in paragraph one – that it be presented to uhmm to the Forum in two <two> thousand and ten [2010]. I think that's a much more comfortable passage dealing what is ... we're dealing with now through those three councils and <and the , and > the Forum and I <I> believe what will take place at the Forum of two thousand and eight [2008] is an update of <of> what has already taken place. A final report <in> given in two thousand and nine [2009] and then in two thousand and ten [2010] it comes into play to the Forum. I think we might ... it might be wise for us to look at that uh uhmm ... passage.

Chair – Kiribati?

Kiribati – Thank you Mr Chairman. I think we feel the consensus that a ... the rationalisation is agreed in general, but it has to be taken into cautious the time frame and I do agree with what already been stated here as I already previously alluded in my earlier statement – time is very important – we don't have to rush. Thank you Mr Chairman.

Chair – Thank you Kiribati. Niue?

Niue – Thank you Mr Chairman. I think ... **[Side B of Tape 3 ends]** [... a lot of concerns have been raised in the last couple of days about what we're discussing here; I will tend to agree with the delegation from Fiji and Kiribati's position [on the need for time]. Thank you.]

**[Side A of Tape 4 starts]**

Chair – Thank you Niue. Federated States Micronesia ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Yes Sir, thank you Chairman. I guess I just wanna raise a point that we gotta keep in mind that SPREP Council actually met before the decision was made, so that Council itself has not even considered this decision made by the Forum so I wonder if we are forcing the ... by <by> giving this deadline of next year when the SPREP Council will meet for the first time to consider the issue, we're saying that we're gonna present the roadmap.

Chair – Yes, thank you Federated States of Micronesia. Australia ...

Australia – Thank you Chair. I'm sorry to intervene one more time but I would just like to make the point that I think in our <in our> three organisations, SOPAC, SPREP and SPC, we have three very competent administrators, we have <we have> in those people <those three people> embodied the knowledge of the three organisations. And I think that we need to be able at least invest in them a modicum of trust that between them they can come up with some very firm and

very practically-based suggestions about how we might do this. Now, with <with> due respect to everybody around the table, I don't think that there is ... there can be a more suitable set of people to examine the way forward than those three CEOs and to come up with some very clear suggestions as to how we might go ahead. Now I think that get three people around the table who know their organisations very well; who know where the likely connections and synergies lie – they are in a position – I don't think that they need two years to come up with a suggestion with some suggestions for us as councils to look at. They know the organisations – it's not a matter of getting more consultants to look and give their views – we're asking the people who are at the centre of the organisations, the CEOs, who know the organisations to provide us with their combined wisdom on how we can do this. Now, I am ... I <l> would like the Council to consider that this is not a process that needs to take two years – it can be done with those people sitting together in a <in a a> a shorter time, which would at least start to provide us with some of the certainty that I think that we are all agreed we need if we are to protect the very important functions of SOPAC that we've been talking about. Thank you.

Chair – Australia ... New Zealand ...

New Zealand – Thank you Chair and just echoing the comments that my colleague from Australia made just to draw Council's attention once more to recommendation 6 that the Secretariat has put to us “acknowledged with concern that change processes such as this increase demands on the Secretariat, and cause stress on the staff, that will impact current levels of service delivery”. So if <if> we're going to be proposing a time line that goes out beyond a year for a document to come back for our consideration, then <then> we do need to make that conscious decision that we're also accepting that that risk level on our organisation – on our benefits to members also extends – and <and> we just need to be conscious of that, we need to bear that in mind when we're making our decision, thank you.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand. Papua New Guinea ....

Papua New Guinea – I too wish to ... thank you Chair ... I too wish to add my voice to the recommendations by Australia and New Zealand. The fact being, time is of essence; a Leaders' decision has been made; SOPAC's, SPC and SPREP CEOs are best placed to recommend a framework of analysis on how we can fit in the details – this is how we went through with the Pacific Plan, if I may remind Council members who are members of the Pacific Islands Forum. And as I said in <in> my recommendation in my statement before I left – in the conclusion seven – that we need to maintain momentum and I think it would be I guess uhmm ... we would be doing a disservice if we don't because of the cumulative effect of considerations <that would amount> that it would amount to in terms of the delay if we do not at least embark on a process that would involve the three CEOs – initial discussions – thank you.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea, Fiji ...

Fiji – Thank you Chair. I'm glad to see that the High Commission[er of] Papua New Guinea has come back revived from his consultation with the doctor. I don't want to delay this discussion Honourable Chair, the thing is I was just putting those dates up for consideration – 2008, 2009, 2010 – because they are reflected in the document that was given to us. Now, going on experience from what has happened in the Forum over the many years regarding decisions such as this – taking HIV AIDS for one – the decision was made and it was implemented three or four years down the line. So the passage of <of> time regarding decisions in the Forum has been over a period of time –and I know that for a fact, HIV AIDS <it> was mooted in <in> Nauru and didn't come on line until the <the uhmm> Forum in Papua New Guinea – some three years later and yet that was an imminent decision that should have been made, because of the effect of HIV AIDS in the Pacific. That's all I'm <l'm> saying, I'm <l'm> not fighting the dates but that has been the pattern over a period of time. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you. I think we probably need a bit more discussion on the time line. Maybe we can move on and come back to that paragraph – and so we go on to paragraph four (iv). Any amendments? New Zealand?

New Zealand – Thank you very much Chair, just again another small drafting suggestion, that the recommendation as I understand it is asking the three organisations to begin a new process of designing and developing all regional projects – uhmm I <l> guess all that the Council is able really to do is to make a recommendation to the other two councils that they might like to consider this – we can't instruct them to – so <so> my suggestion would be to change the beginning to “recommend to the CEOs of SPC and SPREP that the three organisations design and develop” – something along those lines – just to get in that flavour, thank you.

Chair – Thank you, we'll take note of that ... that amendment. Are we agreed? French Polynesia?

French Polynesia – Thank you Honourable Chair. I just want to have a clarification concerning the reference to the SIS summit – is there any particular reason to mention the SIS summit decision? Thank you.

Chair – Thank you French Polynesia. I'll ask the Director if she can uh ...

SOPAC Director – In fact, at the recent SIS summit there was a decision taken that SPREP and SOPAC should work closely together on addressing the strengthening of national and regional met. and climate services; and so therefore the suggestion in this paper is that this provides an opportunity to start to explore how you would look at joint programming and addressing some of the issues wherein there is complementarity of technical advantage between the two agencies. So that that part of that recommendation alludes to the fact that there was a decision taken and just giving an example of an area in which we would and we could start to proceed in this fashion.

Chair – Thank you. Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – I think that there's merit in what French Polynesia is suggesting and <and> therefore, without trying to highlight a particular summit we might as well put a list of summits – because there's quite a .... [this decision?] that will be taken will affect a whole range of issues across the board. There may be a special decision in relation to SIS but I think this sentence should actually end [at] “as a starting point”, period, thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. Can we add that amendment ...? Are we agreed, paragraph four (iv)? Paragraph five (v) ... any amendments? New Zealand ....

New Zealand – Thank you Chair, just a <a> thought for people's consideration, uhmm bearing in mind I guess that uhmm uh that <that> the consultative process will involve three organisations uh that with similar membership, uhmm – perhaps rather than a sub committee of <of of> each Council being set up, uh another option is <is> a <a> committee that includes members of <of> all of the three agencies that can be a committee that comes together during the process to be informed and if necessary offer <offer> guidance along the way ... uhmm that that committee uhmm perhaps could usefully be based in Suva ... uhmm as a <as a> thought just to sort of have a central hub where we can uhmm uhmm conduct a sort of efficient process bearing in mind we're working <working> across three different councils, but with <with> very similar membership ... uhmm ... just a <just a> suggestion.

Chair – Can you suggest a form of wording on that New Zealand ... uh?

New Zealand – Will I be able to have a bit of time to perhaps come up with some wording, perhaps during a break or uh? Thank you.

Chair – Right, thank you. Niue ...

Niue – Thank you Mr Chairman. I think this recommendation is a very important one and I would like to recommend that we move that to number one [i] ... please. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you Niue ... suggestion to move paragraph five (v) to number one (i). Australia, and then Samoa ... Samoa ...

Samoa – Thank you Niue, uhmm thank you Mr Chair sorry Honourable Chair and thank you Niue for that. I was also going to call uhmm to ask that that recommendation also come first because this sub committee will actually give direction to SOPAC, as to how it should engage with SPC and SPREP. Just uh ... I also uhmm feel Honourable Chair that the committee should have a terms of reference drawn up, so that it will be clear on the exact tasks that it has to take on board, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Samoa. Australia ...

Australia – Chair it's just uh seeking clarification really ... uhmm paragraph five (v) I think there was a suggestion for an amendment uhmm so I assume ... I was just seeking clarity really from Niue and Samoa on the reference that they were making to paragraph five (v)?

Chair – Yes, the suggestion by Niue was to move paragraph five (v) to paragraph ... to be paragraph one (i) ...

Australia – In its? my question was, in its amended form or as it is now?

Chair – Niue?

Niue – Sorry Mr Chairman, thank you. In its <in its> form as it is, thank you.

Chair – Thank you. Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – Well a slight variance to the distinguished delegate's of Niue's suggestion; I think if it were amended it would make sense to place it as a new paragraph three (iii) – reason being, we need to acknowledge that there is a consultative process that will take place; and then paragraph two (ii) what that consultative process will entail; and then immediately following that a recommendation would be made that the ... they have a council meeting ... a <a a> joint council SPREP, SOPAC and SPC – we have to also think about the <the> governance of each of these councils and how they will meet – whether they <they> meet as was suggested by the Secretary General in the revised service <services> council form or whether they meet as we ... how we currently have CROP – but reduced specifically to these three organisations that are affected – so with the new language that New Zealand will provide, it will give us clarity as to how we would move but I would suggest that we place it after paragraph two (ii) as it currently exists. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. Niue? ... do you have anything to comment on that?

Niue – I <l> stand with my uh proposal actually, Mr Chairman, thank you.

Chair – Can we move on to paragraph six (vi). Any amendments? New Zealand ...

New Zealand – Thank you Chair. I guess <l guess> this recommendation raises the point that the <uh the> representative of Papua New Guinea brought up before he <he> left to go to the doctors around who was going to facilitate the discussions because currently, I guess, we're inviting SPC and SPREP to engage in a process but as I understand it – or well as I know in fact – SPC has accepted the offer of the Secretary General of the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat to facilitate the process and uhmm and I think the <the> representative from Papua New Guinea was inviting us to consider that also, thank you.

Chair – French Polynesia?

French Polynesia – Thank you Mr Chair for giving me the floor again. It seems to me that paragraph six (vi) duplicates what is currently in paragraph one (i), and furthermore if paragraph six (vi) refers to the governing bodies; uhmm it might be a problem. We might consider to refer to SPC and SPREP CEOs, because I don't see why we should have a double consultative process at the level of the governing bodies and at the level of the uhmm directions ... so I would like to have clarification on the need to keep paragraph six (vi) as it is, and have your view on that, thank you.

Chair – Thank you French Polynesia. Can I ask the Director for comment on the seemingly duplication of paragraph six (vi) and paragraph one (i).

Director – I can understand why you would see that there is duplication there. I guess the reason for paragraph six (vi) at this stage is the fact that you're a governing body unto yourselves and you really cannot dictate to other governing bodies you know what they can do as legal entities unto their own right and so I guess in paragraph six (vi), the suggestion is 'be invited'; but rather than ... you know so therefore the invitation to those governing bodies uhmm to actually be engaged in ... to be fully engaged in the consultative process.

Chair – French Polynesia?

French Polynesia – Yes, thank you, <it's> but it's quite obvious that the governing bodies will be involved as they are sovereign bodies – so that's why I have this interrogation concerning the need to refer to the <govern> governing bodies in the consultative process; knowing that at the final stage it will be the responsibility of the governing bodies of SPC, SPREP and SOPAC to decide about uhmm ... about the reform, but I thank you for your clarification.

Chair – Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – I think there's merit in ... thank you Chair ... there's merit in what French Polynesia is saying but may be it is really an appeal to the governing bodies to remain fully engaged in the consultative process and more to the point that they must remain interested in what <what> the CEOs would be engaging in <in the> for the future. I think that's probably the way in which this current formulation of the paragraph seems to suggest to be. Thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you. We've noted those amendments ... uhmm ... can we? If we can move on and come back and discuss paragraph six (vi). [long silence] Alright? [some lively discussion going on off the mic system] ... this is how the Secretariat understands the amendments that were made; but we can come back to it after the ..... can we move on to the next paragraph, any amendments? If not, are we agreed? Next paragraph ... Australia ...

Australia – Thank you Chair. Uhmm I <I> would uhmm ... I would be concerned that, in its efforts to "secure resources for sustained service delivery", uhmm that this be done in the context of the RIF uhmm discussions ... of the consultations on the <on the> uh – shall we call it consultations of the <the> CEO in the context of the CEOs consultations because I think we <we> made the point earlier that uhmm the pursuit of <of> uhmm of resources uh that not in the <in that> context will <will> ... could have the <the> the chance of undermining the process or working contrary to the process; so uhmm ... perhaps the words that I would suggest is uhmm ... 'and secure resources for sustained service deliveries in the context of CEO consultations', uhmm yeah get rid of the rest yeah [referring to the editing on the screen].

Chair – Thank you Australia ... are we agreed on that paragraph? Oh we'll come back to it ... the last paragraph. Any amendments? If not, we are agreed. Australia, did you want to? Yes, I take it that we all agree to that last paragraph. Ok agreed. **[Side A of Tape 4 ends]** [Australia do you want to ... ? I take it you all agree to the last paragraph, ok [much stalling here] ... while we start to [collate] the changes and amendments to the paragraphs we might as well take a ten-minute break and come back and ...]

**[Side B of Tape 4 starts]**

Chair – [...] give it to you to have a look at, it might make it easier so would you please just bear with us for a little while longer, thank you. [short break] ... running off more copies to be distributed to uh other members who have not received it, but I think all representatives have received copies each ... so can I suggest we go through starting with first paragraph again ... paragraph one (i) was agreed. No amendments was made to that. No? Paragraph two (ii), we agreed with no amendments. Agreed. Paragraph three (iii) – an amendment by New Zealand to delete the word 'secure' – is everybody fine with that? Are we agreed? Agreed. Paragraph four (iv) – no amendments. Fiji?

Fiji – Thank you Chair. Paragraph four (iv) as it is reflects what we want to say, but I don't think it's being said properly. I <l> think we need to look at the wording there, it's a bit hazy; and I suggest the experts in this look at that.

Chair – Any particular suggestion Fiji that you might ...?

Fiji – Chair, the way it reads ... "recognised further that throughout its existence the Commission has regularly been "reviewed" in regard to its future, its role, and its direction, to which it has responded positively and emerged with improved and strengthened of services to its members" – I think 'strengthened of services to its member' ... that could be done better.

Chair – New Zealand ... oh Papua New Guinea and then New Zealand ....

Papua New Guinea – I agree with the Honourable Minister from Fiji. I think what we need to reflect here is what uh PMEG does for the organisation [plus] STAR, because they are set up by Council – that arrangement – that's where the basic uh review process takes place and I think if you want to leave it as it is, it's very uh ... using uh Ratu Epeli's language ... hazy, ambiguous, hanging in the air, or nebulous ...

Chair – New Zealand did you want uh...?

New Zealand – I was hoping that maybe if we just took the word 'of' out, it might solve the problem, but <but but> perhaps not ... it will solve one problem anyway. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you. Could the Secretariat review that language as suggested by Fiji. Ok, Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – Thank you Chair. Maybe along the same line as New Zealand, probably leave 'of' and add 'delivery' straight after 'strengthened'. Alright ... well ... Ok Director ...

Director – Thank you. In actual fact under paragraph four (iv), what that paragraph is actually referring to is some text <in> on page ten of the paper that was provided to you; and that is on ... under paragraph five, as well as <and then> paragraph six in the bullet points below of that. There were two cases uhmm if you like, in <in> recent <in the recent> history of SOPAC wherein there were two occasions where SOPAC was comprehensively reviewed – the first was in 1996 and 1997; and then again in 1999 when there was ... when CEOs of SOPAC and SPC in fact undertook to pull together a uhmm a study exploring integration of the two organisations – so that is what that review in paragraph four (iv) refers to.

Chair – Does that addition meet your needs Fiji?

Fiji – Chair, do you mean the explanation by the Director or the ... or the amendment by Cook Islands?

Chair – The amendment by Cook Islands ...

Fiji – [loud silence] ... Chair I could go along with that, although I ... although ...

Chair – Thank you Fiji ... are we agreed on that? Thank you. Agreed. Papua New Guinea.

Papua New Guinea – Uhhh I think the order of the way in which .... 'Recognised further that throughout its existence the Commission has been regularly "reviewed" ...' ... I think that should be the order it should come; and is there any reason 'reviewed' is in brackets, uh inverted commas, sorry?

Director – Certainly at the moment it has emphasis on it but in fact you could remove the emphasis.

Chair – Are we agreed on those changes? Ok next paragraph. Do we agree to that being totally deleted? Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – Lemme maybe take a little more time to explain why I suggested its deletion. I did refer to it as being an erroneous representation of the Leaders' decision; it also points towards trying to second guess or if you like ... infer too much into what the Leaders have said. In order to move positively on it, let it reflect in the conclusions that we're actually proactively engaged on a consultative process, hence the reason why I suggested to Council that this could be removed – but if Council doesn't agree PNG won't stand in the way, thank you.

Chair – Thank you. Palau?

Palau – Thank you Mr Chairman. Palau would like to reinstate the whole paragraph. I think that was the subject of our intense discussion today; and <and> I feel that ... you know ... that was what happened. Now the ... and that is why we've been discussing this for so long, thanks.

Chair – So we retain the whole paragraph as ... are we agreed to that? New Zealand?

New Zealand – Uhhh perhaps a way forward maybe to say that some members believe this is the case, but certainly New Zealand would not be able to associate with <with> that, we <we we> heard today from the Secretary General about the process; we also heard from uhhh the former chair about the process so I think it's <it's> quite ... uhhh it's not factual at all to say there's been no due diligence ... there's been quite a lot [finds the 'no due diligence' claim humourous]... thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand. Niue ...

Niue – Thank you Mr Chairman. I think the point that Palau is trying to say here, and I would like to support his proposal, is that the report that we are doing here is actually reflective of what has been discussed without the meeting in the past couple of days and I would like to support what he is saying, thanks.

Chair – So we retain that paragraph? Australia ...

Australia – Excuse me Chair, I think that I heard New Zealand say that they would not ...uhmm they <they> needed a change; and as long as we have the ... some members ... 'cause <because> I would certainly associate Australia with uh ... with the comments that a very serious process of <of> consultation has taken place and uhhh we have had some of that outlined for us today. So I would agree that it is <it is> not factual to make that comment, and I think that uh uh ... for uh ... for us to make the comment that our Leaders haven't exercised due diligence is quite a long way to go and I'm certainly not prepared to make that comment when I know that there has been a three-year process of consultation and discussion uhhh uh ... which has involved members uh of every uh <uh uh> visitation uh <uh uh> of member countries ... so I would certainly at least ... at the very least associate myself with it being some members uhhh; and would in fact be happier if it were out but I can live with it as 'some members'.

Chair – Thank you Australia. Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – Papua New Guinea joins New Zealand and Australia in that position. Thank you.

Chair – So we include the word ‘some members’ ... uh Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – Thank you Honourable Chair ... uhmm with the current paper and section that we’re looking at at the moment, I think we have a leeway in this particular section; and I may not go with the whole set of language, but certainly the <the> issue of ‘due diligence’ is the important factor here and I take on board Australia and New Zealand’s point in that regard. Why I said there’s leeway there is that because the Secretary General of PIFS today established as such, as New Zealand mentioned, some members agreed, some didn’t and some didn’t know; so there are three points of reservations in that regard. And I believe we all took note of the comments made by the Secretary General; however, uhmm, in noting Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea’s position on <on> this particular uh section uhmm ... I’d just like to highlight, as alluded to earlier by my colleague, that in-country transparent process of the consultation uh never really got to a stage of bringing on board the <the> doers as I <l> would call – the actual implementers of the programmes to date – hence my request that maybe the language in this section be uh rehashed to articulate uh in fact ... the ... maybe to seek to in country from around the table here – whether the whole stakeholder, whole island approach was consulted to this programme in terms of programme delivery. Uhmm however noting the issues ... the interventions by my colleagues of New Zealand and Australia; and Papua New Guinea – the leeway as I mentioned are in ... to start of this sentence ... the paragraph ... “some members” ... therefore I <seek to> seek the experts around the table or around the room to look at another language to reflect the views of Council – this I believe is a <a> unique process that we come together as Council ... Council members here to first of all, to have dialogue or maybe to sus out what is in-country ... what’s happening in-country to see whether a full consultation has taken place. And there are, I believe my colleague also in his intervention uhmm stated earlier that uhmm the political arm of the process has taken over without the other arm ... uh not knowing what has transpired, thank you sir.

Chair – Thank you Cook Islands. Federated States of Micronesia ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Mr Chairman just uh ... I should just uh suggestion put on the table ... if we can, maybe shorten that statement to read, ‘noted further that the Leaders’ Communiqué does not necessarily call for total disintegration of SOPAC’ ... period.

Chair – Thank you. That’d be reflected in the paragraph. Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – Thank you Chair. I’m a little bemused as to why we want to refer to words like ‘total disintegration’ – we’re trying to reflect on a decision with ... sorry, with due respect to my colleague from FSM – we’re trying to reflect on a decision that was taken. Stemming from that decision we’re now suggesting that these ... that they’re radical <radical> changes are likely to take place and that; however, it was not supported by evidence. There’s two things that go here: one, there was a process involving consultants – they brought these reports to us; we had all the time – uh I mean I had considerable difficulty understanding why, as Chair in the June meeting, the people were still undecided; and whether they were actually carrying out national consultations or not, that’s an issue for them to account to; however, I do feel that if with the retention of this paragraph in the way in which we originally amended it through New Zealand’s suggestion would easily tell us that there remains that division through the RIF process of the three – undecided, positive, negative – and might I also remind Council members who are members of the Forum that when my letter went, we did ask for an alternative option to be provided by Leaders. None of us were in the retreat, except the Secretary General. He alluded to the fact that Leaders considered it – we were at a drafting committee – I was initially shocked that this process did not go through – but who am I to question my Leader’s decision. And that’s the brief with which I come, because I’m also past Chair, through my Leader, Interim Chair and Chair; and we’ve been doing it for the last

two years. I know the pains we went through – the difficulties with the legal constitutional mandate issues that we went through; but these were all articulated for all members to consider and I think the retention of ‘some members’ would go a long way in satisfying the concerns that at least Papua New Guinea has uh ... and without the new amendment introduced by my colleague from FSM. I thank you Chair.

Chair – New Zealand and then FSM ...

New Zealand – I just wanted to uhmm ... I guess, what I heard earlier Chair was <was was> pretty much consensus around the table that people wanted to respond positively and constructively to the Leaders’ decision ... uhmm, and I mean, I, like Australia, can live with the words ‘some members’ but it really would be nice, I think, if we could <we could> move past that issue and <and> focus again on the process that we’re trying to construct to take <to take> it forward ... uhmm ... thank you.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand. FSM ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you Mr Chairman. Actually ... sorry I was not there at the meeting of course ... the Forum meeting; but I’m just reading the statement b) it says ... ‘with a view to absorbing those functions of SOPAC into SPC and SPREP’ – perhaps the term ‘disintegration’ might not be <accept> acceptable there, but you know, there might be a better word that would reflect the language of uh nineteen bee [19b] – the way I read it – it does not say that all functions of SOPAC will be integrated into SPC and SPREP – it says ‘rationalise functions of SOPAC programmes with SPC and SPREP, with a view to absorbing those functions of SOPAC into SPC and SPREP.’ To me that means that they are not saying that ‘let’s eliminate SOPAC’ and put all the functions into SPC; I’m saying this because I’m mindful of the fact that we’re talking earlier that, you know with the STAR that we have ... there would be, no matter how we do it, SPREP is a regional environmental programme; SPC has a whole host of areas that they handle – and SOPAC as <as> it started ... geoscience ... and then we agreed – we realised that from the beginning in <in> our conclusion. To me, I’m afraid that in the process we’re gonna lose out ... the countries are gonna lose out in some of the services that are provided by SOPAC; by eliminating SOPAC entirely.

Chair – Thank you FSM. So we need to amend ‘some members’ ... and remove ‘total disintegration’, thank you. Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – Thank you Chair, uh ... I think in this particular section it does reflect the <the> views that we’ve shown, however we, as I understand the Council, to be ... where we are today is the uhmm ... on issues as such, we would normally come to a general consensus and go forward on this; however I can’t uh ... I don’t think we’re can go past what Niue and Palau has established in their interventions. Therefore, in <in> view of this I think, you Sir, have established a <a> language forward and taking note what New Zealand and Australia has also put forward. But I’d like more in <in> terms of what the colleagues from Palau and Niue has <has> in their interventions – uh we need to ask those two whether they agree with the uh <the uh> with the new changes or the language that we have there now. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you Cook Islands. Niue, do you want to comment?

Niue – Thank you Mr Chairman. I fully support what the Cook Islands have suggested, thank you.

Chair – Ok so basically we retain the wording, with the words ‘some members’ in front. Ok, agreed? Can we move on to the next paragraph. I think this paragraph New Zealand had some suggestions in form of wording for this? I think this is the new paragraph five (v) that was suggested. [after some whispers at head table] Yeah sorry, this is paragraph six (vi) as paragraph five (v) has been retained with some amendments ... so this is paragraph six (vi). Are we agreed on this paragraph? FSM ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Mr Chairman I'd like to suggest that ... deleting the whole paragraph. I'm ... not that I'm [not] mindful of the stress on the staff, which I guess would be from job security ... but I'm also uh would like to call in the process of any organisation or re-organisation, considerations are given for job security or placement of staff in you know ... that's always a consideration in any re-organisation and I wanted to flag that as part of the re-organisation to take the security of the staff into consideration in the process.

Chair – Thank you FSM. New Zealand ...

New Zealand – May I suggest that we could take the delegates' point forward as a principle, to guide the discussions and retain the paragraph. **[Side B of Tape 4 ends]**

**[Mostly silence]**

**Chair – Thank you. Are we agreed to that?**

**[Side A of Tape 5 starts]**

Chair – [...] Agreed. Next paragraph [long pause] paragraph seven (vii) was agreed. We move on. Are we agreed to the ... oh New Zealand.

New Zealand – Oh thank you very much Chair. Just a small suggestion that perhaps the ordering of this paragraph could be changed? uhmm because it refers in fact to the consultation process, so uhmm I think it should come after the first recommendation that actually talks about the consultation process. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you. You referring to paragraph eight (viii), New Zealand?

New Zealand – Sorry I was referring to paragraph seven (vii); were we still on eight (viii)? Er ... seven (vii), yeah, beginning "recognise the need to adhere to at least four principles..." that would become I guess recommendation two (ii) ... is that right?

[Lengthy pause after much whispering at head table]

Chair – Alright the old paragraph eight (viii) has been deleted and replaced by a new paragraph seven (vii) or eight (viii) ... these two need to be reworded? uh is that right New Zealand?

New Zealand – Thank you Chair, I'm just looking at the first three words say, uhmm, talk about the ... I beg your pardon ... we're talking here about the principles I think that are going to guide the consultative process so I think it's <it's> perhaps in the wrong place. It needs to come after the first recommendation referring to the consultative process; so we <so we> agree to a consultative process; and then we agree to some principles for guiding that process – because currently we're just ... they just appear but not related to the process in the ordering – so my suggestion was to take it down to uhmm ... the recommendation after the one beginning "a consultative process be established between ..." Thank you.

Chair – Alright, we'll move that to be after recommendation two (ii) ... Australia ...

Australia – ... in fact would it help Chair if I said that what's designated line one oh seven [107] in the left-hand margin; is that what; is that where you mean to have it? one oh seven? you look at the left hand on <on> page six? ["Yup", from New Zealand in agreement].

Chair – Yes, yes that's right. Yes Director ...

Director – I guess, again, just a suggestion to Council that New Zealand ... I mean I ... where it goes in the text clearly is <is> important and I <I> agree with that but uhmm ... er paragraph eight (viii) which is line sixty eight – the suggestion is that those principles be deleted and in fact be replaced by paragraph starting at line seventy seven ... uhmm and so therefore I would <I would>

suggest that perhaps we do need to look at those two paragraphs together to see that in fact uhmm members agree to the uhmm you know believe that that paragraph starting line seventy seven in fact strengthens the principles uh in respect to the process; uhmm and then obviously the placement of that paragraph uhmm, you know, then clearly becomes important in terms of its logic. But I would suggest that in looking at this you look at line sixty eight to seventy five; and then seventy seven to eighty five – the suggestions by New Zealand uhmm to look at whether the language from line seventy seven in fact strengthens the principles that uhmm <you know that> will be upheld during the process, thank you.

Chair – Thank you. New Zealand ...

New Zealand – Thank you very much Chair. And Director, yes you're quite right. Just to clarify the ones from seventy seven on are the ones that were agreed at the SPC meeting, so uhmm, the <the the> suggestion was we have a look at those because they're already out there ... uhmm with a preface that said something like ... "guiding principles that could include ..." and then we make a decision on whether we're happy with those or whether we need to add to them. Thank you very much.

Chair – Thank you. Fiji ...

Fiji – Thank you Chair. The word after 'transparency' is that ... should that be 'timelines' or 'timeliness'?

Chair – Yes it is timeliness. New Zealand ...

New Zealand – There was just one extra point uhmm ... that was in the SPC one that we might want to consider and it was: "and effective involvement of stakeholders". So the first one reads, "transparency and timeliness with respect to the process, and effective involvement of stakeholders." Thank you.

Chair – Thank you. Are we agreed to that? No further comments ... uh Cook Islands.

Cook Islands – Thank you Chair. I have no problems with the current language except maybe to have a rehash after 'timeliness' to read – this is just a suggestion here – this is just the starting ... "recognised the critical need to adhere to at least the four principles of transparency and timeliness; cost-effectiveness; focus on the RIF process of creating ..." and then the other language to the end. And taking out the objective. Er ... sir for ... again I'd just like to repeat that bit there "recognised the critical need to adhere to at least the four principles of transparency and timeliness; cost-effectiveness; focus on the RIF process of creating an institutional framework that further improves [...] the service delivery." Thank you.

Chair – Thank you ... try and include that. Cook Islands and Australia, then FSM .... Cook Islands ... [FSM then snuck in]

Federated Stated of Micronesia – Thank you Chair. I was gonna suggest in line eighty one to perhaps put a semi-colon after 'PICTs' and eliminate the word 'and'.

Chair – Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – Thank you Chair. I uh ... I also forgot to mention that when I made that intervention to take on board also the <uh the> language after that by <by> New Zealand.

Chair – We include the suggestion by New Zealand as well. Australia ...

Australia – Oh Sorry, beg your pardon ... uhmm Chair I would just seek a clarification from my colleague from the Cook Islands ... I'm not sure that a principle is to focus on the RIF process. I think uhmm ... the RIF process is behind us. I think .... <I I I> I'm not quite sure that I'm

understanding uhmm ... uh the uhmm ... what it adds. I'm a little bit concerned. I wouldn't want a focus on a process as a principle; it's <it's> really <it> ... as I see it, it really is that objective of uhmm a framework that improves service delivery to Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs).

Chair – Cook Islands can you comment on that ...

Cook Islands – Thank you Chair. And I would just like to reply to my colleague from Australia ... uhmm I think ... by my way of thinking at this point is that the process will always ... will continue – and mindful of the intervention by Samoa, in her intervention earlier. And by way of uh uh the roadmap that we intend to take as Council, until implementation. Thank you.

Chair – Does that answer the query Australia? or New Zealand ....

New Zealand – Uhmm ... uhmm ... we do just <just> run the risk if we change that word of departing from what's been decided at SPC, so I think we <we> probably ought to just take a little bit of care in doing that because we could end up two different uhmm sets of words and then we'll have some <some some> difficulty in sort of interpreting what that means. So <so> my suggestion really is we try and stick as closely as possible with <with> if we're happy, with the principles. We stick <stick> with them and then if we need to add a new principle we <we> do that in its entirety. Just <just> so we <we> we don't start our process with <with> debate around what the principles are that are going to guide it. Thank you.

Chair – Australia ...

Australia – Chair I just wonder whether it would help if we just said something like “focus on creating an institutional framework that further improves services to the PICTs”, rather and then just left out altogether that section from ... that 's highlighted on the board there. So, “focus on creating an institutional framework ...” Is that satisfactory?

Chair – Cook Islands?

Cook Islands – Thank you Mr Chair. I apologise to my colleagues around the table for taking up this time; however, in line with the suggestion by Australia, I ... I think I will go with it; however, the uh ... maybe the uhmm ... the wording uh uh ... add consultation ... consultative [having difficulty pronouncing this word] process sorry before 'process'. So I really, at this point, if that is as mentioned by New Zealand, if we're all happy with that then we go with it ... otherwise Australia has a good point but I <I> would still ... I still see this process by way of consultation carrying on until then, thank you.

Chair – Thank you. So are we clear on that paragraph? Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – I don't want to belabour the issue, thank you Chair, but I think what we're <what we're> ... we've got now is if we're gonna take transparency and timeliness together, then that's one set of principles; and we've only got three principles up there. But I think the original formulation where it stated clearly to focus on the RIF objective was really the <the uh the> punch line as it were because you state the principles and then you bring in the focus on the RIF objective ... in creating a regional institutional framework ... that was the original formulation, which I didn't see any difficulty with, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. Can uh ... delegates read through that ... uh Kiribati ...

Kiribati – Thank you Mr Chairman. I think I agree with Papua New Guinea; I think the ... we have to emphasise the main idea behind this RIF and I think the four principles has to be stated and it was well stated out in the one that has been deleted; and so I do agree it is uh <it is> the guiding principles that has to be stated also and that the process has been stated in line seven, thank you Mr Chairman.

Chair – Thank you Kiribati. Yes Director.

Director – It is just a small comment because it is grammatically incorrect at the moment; but just after ‘to PICTs’ ... it then says ‘assists with effective implementation’ ... I mean I don’t know whether in fact that was meant to go with the previous ... so “improved service delivery to PICTs to assist with effective implementation of the Pacific Plan ...” ... but as it stands at the moment ‘assists with effective implementation of the Pacific Plan’ is kinda sitting out there on its own and doesn’t really make a whole lot of sense at the moment; uh but if it’s taken with ... immediately after ‘improved service delivery to PICTs’ ... ‘to assist with effective implementation of the Pacific Plan’ uhmm that kinda hangs together a little bit better ... just a suggestion.

Chair – Agreed to that? Right ... ‘to assist’ ... New Zealand ...

New Zealand – Sorry to have to come in, I ... just uh draw your attention to the fact that it’s an ‘and’ in the SPC decision; so it <it it> ‘further improves service delivery to PICTs ‘and’ assists with effective implementation of the Pacific Plan’ ... uhmm ... just a small point.

Chair – Are we agreed to that paragraph as a whole ... [calls from the floor that they can’t see parts of the paragraph, so Chair to scribe] ... can we move the paragraph up? [long pause] ... you able to read the paragraph? FSM?

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you Mr Chairman, with due respect to my colleague from New Zealand, the reason why I proposed to separate those is, the way I’m reading it, is that we’re to improve services delivery to member countries in accordance with the Pacific Plan; but if that’s not the way its ... so long as we understand that doesn’t mean that we have to connect those two, because service deliveries and then Pacific Plan implementation, to me are separate.

Chair – Thank you. Are we agreed on ...? after this latest amendment? French Polynesia ...

French Polynesia – Yes thank you Mr Chairman. Um English <English> is not my first language, not even the second one; so I apologise in advance if I may say something stupid but uhmm, but as I read the text, I recognise five principles and I don’t understand why transparency and timeliness are together as one principle. So maybe we should reword the paragraph saying ‘adhere to at least five principles’ ... then ... ‘transparency, timeliness, cost-effectiveness’ ... and so on; ‘cause I ... it doesn’t make sense to me to have one principle including two principles in fact, thank you.

Chair – Thank you French Polynesia. Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – I’m just echoing what Samoa said, there’s a set of principles but – I think the important fact to note here is that we have to agree that there must be a flow-on – once we state those principles then the RIF, as it was originally formulated by New Zealand, follows. When you read it: ‘focus on the RIF objective of creating an institutional framework that further improves service delivery to PICTs and assists with effective implementation of the Pacific Plan,’ ... it’s not to assist – there’s two different things here – it assists ... and it also assists with the implementation ... ‘effective implementation of the Pacific Plan’. One is a larger process; the other is a subset. I thank you Chair ... I hope that’s clear.

Chair – ‘and assist’ ... alright. Are we agreed with that as <it> amended? [Long pause] Do you agree to that delegates? Agreed? **[Side A Tape 5 ends]** **[Agreed. Move on. [Mostly silence] ... ]**

**[Side B of Tape 5 starts]**

Chair – This paragraph had been agreed to, any comments? If not, are we agreed and move on to the next one. Agreed? New Zealand ...

New Zealand – Thank you very much Chair. I just wanted to make a small suggestion in the paragraph above, just seeing everything running together now. I wonder if we really want to say ‘recommends’ because it begs the question ‘to whom?’ and instead we want to say ‘agrees the following course of action’ ... so the Council’s ‘agreeing the following course of action’; and <and> we may just have to make some small changes at the beginning of <of> the other uhmm ... recommendations as we go through just to <to> follow on from that if people agree.

Chair – Thank you ... [reads] ‘agrees the following ...’ Agreed? Agree to that change? ... fine? Agreed to that ... ok. Now, paragraph one of the recommendation ... of the uh, I mean ... Australia?

Australia – Chair I think Samoa made the suggestion that instead of ‘implementation plan’ we might use the term ‘roadmap’; and I wondered whether that had been omitted.

Chair – ‘Roadmap’ was suggested by Samoa. Samoa?

Samoa – Thank you Honourable Chair; and if I can just turn back to a statement made by Australia earlier that the three CEOs are competent professionals who understand fully the functions and operations of their respective organisations which they are leading; but uhmm Samoa would like to remove from this particular paragraph reference to CEOs ... to the word CEOs on line a hundred; and reference to the word CEO on line a hundred and two. Uhmm but the reference to CEO on line a hundred and two to be replaced with the original wording, which is ‘three organisations’. I think Honourable Chair, we have to be reminded that this should be a Council-driven process. It is our organisation and we make the decisions as a body; especially as it is going to affect us and <and> the future of SOPAC, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Samoa for that reminder that uh ... Palau and then New Zealand ...

Palau – Thank you Mr Chairman. Palau would like to reinstate the original wording. Palau is too, is a have a full confidence on the CEOs but I think this should be driven by the country. Also the Communiqué didn’t provide a timeline; and as people ... many people mention, if we need time, time should be allowed, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Palau. New Zealand ...

New Zealand – Pardon me Chair, thank you. I wonder if the member of Samoa appreciates that this was the <the> process again agreed at the SPC meeting that the three CEOs uh would come together in a consultative uhmm ... a consultative process to agree an implementation plan or <or> roadmap. I just wanted to <to> check that with <with> Honourable member, thank you.

Chair – Thank you. Samoa?

Samoa – Thank you Honourable Chair. Uhmm what I’m tryin’ to say is this has to ... these decisions have to be made by Council; it has to come to Council as opposed to just the CEOs making the <the> decisions. And whilst it has been an issue that was heavily debated at the recent SPC meeting; I don’t think that we should be driven by what SPC uhmm comes up with. We are an independent body, we make our own decisions; and we don’t have to go by uh <by> ... for instance ... some of the wording that they’re proposing uhmm uhmm ... I think that’s all I have to say for now, thank you.

Chair – Guam, and then Papua New Guinea, then Niue ...

Guam – Thank you Mr Chairman. I’d just briefly like to strongly support what Samoa has just provided us, thank you.

Chair – Thank you. Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – I think the Australian delegate had her flag out before me so if I can defer to her and then I'll take the floor Sir ...

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea, Australia, then PNG, and then Niue ...

Australia – Uhhh Chair just in response to the comment made by Samoa, uhhh I <l> would like to know how the consultative process can be taken ahead when we have three councils uhhh made up of a number of people that you see around the table here and more ... a number of countries ... uh I would like to know what sort of process she is proposing because obviously I wasn't saying that the CEOs should make any decision at all – the point I was making was that the CEOs should talk and based upon their understanding of their organisations, make proposals for their councils to consider for decision making. Uh ... I think the reason we have Secretariats after all is because of the impossibility of all of us doing what we're doing here today around organisational issues. I <l> cannot see how we could have a process that would move anywhere unless we were prepared to entrust it to our CEOs.

Chair – Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – Lemme also piggy back on what Australia has said; but more important to the point that this uhhh; one – the chapeau of that reads "Council therefore recommends the following course of action as a way ..." so that in fact takes account of Samoa's concerns about it being driven by Council <... if you look at the preambular part of it the chapeau reads "Council therefore recommends the following course of action as a way forward in responding the Leaders' decision ..." > ... and then you have a sub-set which asks for a consultative process to be established between the CEOs. Now you could call them the heads of SOPAC, SPC and SPREP; but I think that really is where it takes account of Samoa's concerns about Council-driven and the fact that Australia has articulated, which I endorse, that the CEOs need to consult, thank you.

Chair – Thank you. Niue and then Tonga ...

Niue – Thank you Mr Chairman. I'd like to echo and support the proposal by Samoa actually. As <as> a Council member we need to ... this is our process – it needs to be driven by the Council, and no other councils – so I'd like to support that Mr Chairman, thank you.

Chair – Thank you. Tonga ...

Tonga – Thank you Honourable Chairman. Tonga would like to concur with what Samoa has proposed, and to make things more complicated, can we add on the suggestion from Niue earlier on, to uhhh ... for the new first recommendation. I think they go hand in hand, in terms of ownership and having a say in what's ... uhhh the consultative process.

Chair – Thank you Tonga. New Zealand ...

New Zealand – I was just a uhhh ... just <just> wanting Chair, thank you, to <to> reflect again on how we would <we would> implement that. Effectively we might have a situation where we have three big tables of people like this ... different people from different ... from the same ministries but on the same council or how would we literally get three councils together to uhhh ... to drive this process forward, I wonder? Thank you Chair.

Chair – French Polynesia ...

French Polynesia – Thank you Honourable Chair. May I suggest uhhh language in order to reconcile the points of view – 'a consultative process be established between the CEOs of SOPAC, SPC and SPREP to prepare a draft <a draft> roadmap to be submitted for consideration by the SOPAC Council in 2008' – I think it will reflect clearly the power of the Council and of course the consultative process must be held at the level of the secretariats; it can't be otherwise, thank you.

Chair – Thank you ... French Polynesia, could you please just repeat that suggestion ...

French Polynesia – Yes, so the first line stands as it is ‘a consultative process be established between the CEOs of SOPAC, SPC and SPREP’ – so we keep the wording of the Australian delegation – ‘to prepare a draft road map’ – and you delete “mutually agreed upon by the three CEOs” – ‘to be submitted for consideration by the SOPAC Council in 2008’, full stop. Thank you.

Chair – Niue <Niue>, and then Cook Islands ...

Niue – Thank you Mr Chairman. Maybe as a way forward, may I recommend that the uhhh ... the process could be chaired by the three chairs of the councils ... the three councils ... and that way the process could be seen as Council driven. Thank you Mr Chairman.

Chair – Thank you Niue. Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – Thank you Honourable Chair. I concur with the intervention by French Polynesia; and maybe to add ‘governing’ before ‘Council’. And uh ... but seeing that they are to meet as the three CEOs and uh ... I was thinking maybe we could uh ... along the same lines as French Polynesia, ‘to be submitted for consideration by their respective governing councils in 2008’ – uh I am not really clear as to whether <we> they can all meet at the same month in council .... but like this year ... SPREP already met, we <we> meeting now; but I <I was> thinking that because/of the meeting together they need to go back to their respective councils to get their uh decision, endorsed; or carried, for that matter. And I also like to also be mindful of the intervention by Palau, earlier in this particular section in uh ... trying to retain the last ... the language in the last part, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Cook Islands. The suggestion by the Cook Islands was to include the chair of <three> the three governing councils to chair the consultation ... [Director in an aside, saying it was a Niue suggestion] Oh that was Niue, yes. Palau ...

Palau – Thank you Mr Chairman. Palau will support the proposal from Niue; and we request that the CEOs should be advising the three chairs of the three organisation.

Chair – Thank you Palau. Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – Thank you Honourable Chair. I’m just what’s being allowed here, whether we’re creating uh different layers of bureaucracy when we know that we’ve employed Secretariats that are responsible for carrying out those mundane duties ... I wonder <I wonder> how the chairs of these three governing councils will, you know, be of ... will avail themselves to constantly meet with the CEOs to discuss matters that needs to be fleshed out at the technical, scientific, advisory levels and brought to them and that they, as governed by their rules and procedures, carry out their tasks with uh ... in the rules ... in the respective governing councils’ rules and procedures. Secondly, we’ve just gone through and adopted ... uhhh ... in relation to transparency and timeliness, and now we want to seek the retention of a mutually agreed-upon report to be submitted to Forum by twenty ten (2010); so what definition are we giving timeliness, in this regard, I thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea, New Zealand ...

New Zealand – There is also another question which <is> doesn’t need to go to the Forum at all; and unfortunately I don’t know the answer to that question. Would be nice if the Secretary General was <was> still here, able to answer that but ... I’m not sure that that level of detail would need to go back to the Forum – we may need to seek clarification at some point. The other associated comment I guess, is that, in a sense we don’t need to make a decision at this stage on what the next steps are. All we’re suggesting is keeping our eye on the next milestone – the next key milestone, which is for this Council here in a year’s time to be able to consider the work that the

three CEOs have done. So, my suggestion is that we don't really know what the next steps are; we can only really see as far into the future as we can <we can> reasonably see; and that is really our next time to meet, in a year's time; and I guess it would be nice to know that when we do meet together, we'll have something to <to> be able to consider and discuss that gives us some more clarity and certainty about where this thing's going. But I <I> don't think we need at this point to <to> map out a process beyond that because it'll become very apparent when we receive uhmm ... the uhmm <the> document ... what needs to happen next. We'd be much betterer informed about where we go to from there. Thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand. The paragraph one (i) as amended is on the screen. [Long pause] Guam ...

Guam – Thank you Mr Chairman. In proceeding with this type of wording, uhmm I would like ask or note concern that uhmm the SPREP Council has not met to discuss whether the CEO would be involved like this; isn't that part of the process, that we need that approval of that Council? Thank you.

Chair – Yes that's right Guam. Australia ...

Australia – I think we, just in answer to the question from Guam, I think that that's right we did hear from the CEO of SPREP this morning who gave us an outline of <how> how he saw the situation; uhmm so that's why I think that uh the wording that says that this "should be submitted for consideration by respective governing councils" maybe us overstepping the mark a little and that what we're <we're> agreeing is to be submitted to us – uhmm to the <this> Council in 2008. Uhmm And ... so that <that that> would be my er response to that question but uhmm ... uhmm that's just my opinion so I don't want ... but the other thing that I would like to draw to your attention uhmm ... in the uh <in the> wording there ... in <in in in> the square brackets in black where it says "in the final report mutually agreed upon by the same" ... I'm not sure what is meant by the 'final report' 'cause this is a draft road map that we're talking about.

Chair – Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – Thank you Honourable Chair, I think we're <we're we're> being straight jacketed on a conveyor belt into a decision that we should really not be an approach, and I <I> do concur with New Zealand the important fact to note is a process has to be started; and I take note of Australia's point that the governing council of SPREP has not met – he's informed us also – uh and therefore we should be reporting to ourselves or getting our CEO to report to ourselves and leave it at that. Thank you.

Chair – Cook Islands ....

Cook Islands – Thank you Honourable Chair. I think I'll concur with the latest intervention; and uhmm however, I'd just like to echo one of the earlier interventions by one of my colleagues around the table ... uh that we <we uhmm> I suppose we do not ... we are not responsible for the other councils or we don't direct the other CEOs to come to the floor. However, I think it will be a smooth process just by themselves organising themselves and uh ... but the language as it stands uh ... by the interventions, is fine with the Cook Islands. Keyoo.

Chair – Keyoo ... so as the paragraph stands uhmm, with those amendments ... does it need to be further amended or are we agreed on that as it stands now. [long silence] Are we agreed? Guam, then French Polynesia ...

Guam – Thank you Mr Chairman. I find it a bit confusing in the first two lines. We're talking about 'between' ... when we say 'between' that's two parties; it should be 'among' ... aren't we talking about among SOPAC, SPC and SPREP instead of looking like it's the chairs of the three versus the CEOs of the three, if you say 'between'; uh maybe chairs shouldn't be there? Uh can I ask for further discussion.

Chair – ‘Among’ ... change that to ‘among’ [directed at the scribe] the chairs and CEOs. French Polynesia and then Papua New Guinea ...

French Polynesia – Honourable Chairman, I’m sorry to take the floor again ... but I really wonder if there is a need to involve the chairs knowing that at the <at the> end, the draft road map will be submitted to the Council; so it’s clear that it’s the Governing Council that will have the final uh say. So ... and as far as French Polynesia is concerned, my delegation was asked to be consistent with its position two weeks ago at the CRGA and SPC conference, so the more we can ... we stick on the uhhh the resolution adopted by the SPC the better it is for French Polynesia, it doesn’t mean that this body is dictated by another one. But I think that for the consistency, uhhh I really don’t see why we should involve the chairs – it doesn’t add anything on the substance and it will complicate the whole process, thank you.

Chair – Thank you French Polynesia. Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – I’m sorry Chair and I also beg the indulgence of Council members ... uhhh I <I I> endorse and I did say earlier on that the involvement of the chairs will only clutter up the whole process; because we really need to differentiate between the role they play in providing uh policy guidance through the Council and <their rules> the rules of procedures that govern their role. And may I also reiterate that the CEOs have been charged by us to carry out the mandate of looking at what affects each of our ... **[Side B of Tape 5 ends]** [ ... or each of the organisations therefore it would really not add value if the chairs were in there; and the process is already driven by Council – we’re taking a decision here to direct the CEOs to do what they’re supposed to do. I thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. Niue ...

Niue – Thank you Mr Chair. I think that the suggestion of including the Chairs to lead the process is because it needs to be seen that it is being driven by Council. I think that the direction of the process should be seen as being] ... **[Side A of Tape 6 starts]** ... from the Council. I hope that explains why the proposal was put forward, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Niue. FSM ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Sir, Thank you Chair ... Honourable Chair, I wonder what we’ve been saying all along is that we should not tell the Council of SPREP and SPC what to do. So I wonder what we are saying is that we establish a consultative process, and of course will be submitted to us the Council here, but then we’re saying the CEO of SPREP and SPC should submit to their Council also in 2008. So I thought ... I wonder if we can reword it to mean that “the consultative process and roadmap will be submitted to this Council at the earliest opportunity” rather than locking in a time frame and saying that the Director of SPREP and the Director of SPC have to submit to their councils the roadmap; when earlier we have also heard that SPREP has not met and of course I don’t wanna tell SPC that they have to consider the roadmap in 2008.

Chair – Thank you FSM. Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – Thank you Honourable Chair. That’s one of the points I was alluding to earlier, however, I would just like to take on board what we’ve got as established on the screen and to .... with the question of the chairs being present, I concur with my other colleagues here, that the chairs are not at the meeting with their specific CEOs. However, the CEOs must keep their Chairs abreast of every step of the way in developing the roadmap and then finally submitting it to the councils, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Cook Islands. New Zealand ...

New Zealand – I think ... thank you Chair, I would endorse the suggestion made by the representative from the Cook Islands. We could perhaps amend one to say, “agrees that the Director of SOPAC engage in a consultative process with the CEOs of SPREP and SPC ...” <I’m getting my acronyms confused ...> and then perhaps have another ... “and provide regular briefings to the Chair of SOPAC” on how that ...you know ... regular progress briefings to the Chair of SOPAC, thank you.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand. Kiribati ...

Kiribati – Thank you Chairman. I’m not quite sure <because English also is my second language> but if I try to think deeply about it, we are originally ... bring back again where we are losing the ownership which we have to drive against this with [this] process by leaving out the chairs of our councils, thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Kiribati. Niue ...

Niue – Thank you Mr Chairman. As a way forward I’d like to agree with the proposal by New Zealand, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Niue. Did you get the amendment by New Zealand?

Director – New Zealand could .... [into microphone] could New Zealand just ... perhaps just uhmm .... repeat what you said.

New Zealand – I’ll have a go ... “agrees that the Director of SOPAC engage in a consultative process with the CEOs of SPC and SPREP and provide regular briefings to the Chair of SOPAC” ... on the process, we could add, thank you.

[long pause as meeting watched scribe enter words into text under review]

Chair – New Zealand, and then Samoa ...

New Zealand – Thank you very much Chair, the bottom bit has now dropped off which we still need to slot in somehow relating to submission of a plan for consideration by governing councils in 2008, so at the risk of making this very long we could say .... “agrees that the Director of SOPAC engage in a consultative process with the CEOs of SPC and SPREP, providing regular briefings to the Chair of SOPAC Governing Council and with a view to submitting a roadmap to SOPAC Governing Council for consideration in 2008” ... or a draft roadmap, thank you.

Chair – FSM ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you Honourable Chair, I was just wondering if we can eliminate the timeline of 2008 considering that we’re asking other CEOs to consult and I’m not sure what the process will be and perhaps we can leave the date out with [the] understanding that of course because of the time [inaudible] we’d like to get it as soon as possible, but not necessarily locking in that date.

Chair – So FSM’s suggesting we take out the timeline ... New Zealand?

New Zealand – Just to mention Chair that the SPC Council has already instructed their CEO to report back with a draft roadmap in 2008, and just to say also, again going back to that issue of uncertainty and risk to our core business and services that we all enjoy and we want to preserve ... I really do feel very strongly, it’s a strong position for New Zealand that we do have something to aim for in the foreseeable future and we do our very best to get there ... we may not get there but we do our very best to get there, thank you.

Chair – FSM ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you Honourable Chair, I again we keep referring to SPC and I thought we had agreed that this is a Council in itself. Yeah I think we understand the timeliness of it, and I agree with New Zealand that we have to keep the momentum and of course what she's saying <what my colleague from New Zealand is saying> can work on the other side too ... if we rush it then we stand a risk of losing and maybe disrupting the services ....[...] what I was trying to refer to is without specifying a timeline, because once you specify a timeline then we're stuck with that timeline. The understanding that we wanna consider is that we want it in a timely manner and I think that should take care of any concern that we have, but not necessarily saying that by the meeting of the Council which could be August next year.

Chair – Thank you FSM. Tonga ....

Tonga – Thank you Honourable Chairman. I just want to bring to the Council members' attention that we should be very conscious of directing other council bodies. As I understand it, the SPREP Council meeting will be late next year and we don't have to pre-empt that they gonna agree to the same as we do today; so in that regard I would like to ask other Council members to reconsider putting on a timeline.

Chair – Thank you Tonga, Australia ...

Australia – Chair, I think the wording says “for consideration by the SOPAC Governing Council in 2008” ... now it's only for consideration, it's not saying that we have to make a decision one way or the other, it's just there for us to consider at that point. Uhhh make a decision ... make a number of decisions one way or the other, but it is only for consideration in 2008 and it gives at least something that we can work on rather than leaving it in limbo. So it's not putting us in a strait jacket about timing but it is setting that time as a time when at least that Council can consider it again and that they would have something to consider. And I think that we are actually now just talking about our own Council, SOPAC Council.

Chair – Thank you, Samoa and then PNG, then FSM and then Tonga ...

Samoa – Thank you Honourable Chairman, I wonder if we can just put a note, some stronger wording or some stronger language in terms of the wording that is on the screen at the moment, in terms of line one-two-four “with the view to submitting ...” I think the intention is that we have to submit, we MUST submit the ... yeah it has to be submitted to Council, so if we just put in some stronger wording there, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Samoa, PNG ....

Papua New Guinea – Thank you Honourable Chair. I think Tonga's intervention did bring out the fact that we're now suggesting that the CEO of SPREP has a mandate to meet with the CEO of SOPAC ... I think we have to be careful here. His consultations would have to be dependent on what his governing council tells him to do, so probably in brackets after SPREP we can say “(pending SPREP Governing Council decision)” ... it's important that we make that distinction ... but for the timeline I think there is some merit in what Australia is suggesting in that we get some initial ... because SPC's governing council has already authorised the CEO to meet with SOPAC and if we take that decision now Cristelle can meet with Jimmy and talk about some way forward pending Asterio coming on board after his governing council has made a decision; so that covers Asterio and that covers the fact that mandate issues ... governing council issues are addressed. But by the same token I think all of this is tentative and we have to at least agree on some integrated milestone process roadmap initially before we move on ... it's really a framework at the moment, I thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. FSM ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you Mr Chairman. I thought we had changed the language to say that we are directing the Director of SOPAC to engage in consultative process, we're not saying that SPREP has to be in that process, we're asking, directing our Director to engage in the consultative process. As to the timeline, you know, if we do put a timeline considering ... in view of what my colleague from PNG has said, then we're saying that if SPREP does not engage or any body else then the Director of SOPAC will come up with a draft herself and submit it for our consideration in zero-eight, I don't think that's a point. The point is that we want engagement with all the councils at that level and then if there is a roadmap ready, and if it could be ready for oh-eight then let's do it; but let's not tell 'em that they have to do it by oh-eight ... in view of the fact that again, as referred to by the delegate from PNG, we don't wanna tell the other councils our timelines because they have their own.

Chair – Thank you FSM. Your suggestion was “as early as possible” ... or some wording like that “as soon as practicable” ... Tonga ...

Tonga – I'm sorry Mr Chairman, I'm ... my delegate from Papua New Guinea has answered my question, thank you.

Chair – Fiji ....

Fiji – Thank you Chair, I could go along with that I don't see any problems whatsoever there. The thing to remember is the Leaders gave the instructions at the last Forum. By doing this we would have covered enough ground to give a report. They would like to see a progress report at the next Forum, that's the normal procedure for Forum; you get a progress report, it's not a final report then it goes on again. But the base there, from my experience, is rather pedestrian. And I say that very sincerely, but we have to be prepared that at least at the next Forum something goes forward, whether we are marking time or progressing with vigour or whatever, so the wording there covers it amply.

Chair – Thank you Fiji. New Zealand ...

New Zealand – ... just wondering if I could try a compromise which would be to re-insert the words “with a view to submitting” and reinsert the date; and that just means that at this stage in time we're asking people to enter into it ... oh sorry our Director to enter into a process “with a view to submitting” a draft plan in 2008; and of course if she can't because the other councils aren't engaging then so be it. But at least we would have something there that we could be aiming for if other things go well ... hopefully that would meet the concerns that my colleague from FSM has raised. Thank you.

Chair – FSM ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you Honourable Chair. I'm sorry to take on the floor again. Yeah I understand “with a view”; I mean “with a view” is to submit something to the Council for consideration. I'm again mindful of the fact that I really don't wanna rush into this process, because there's too much at stake, therefore rather than locking myself in into a timeline which I may not be able to meet, I'm not ... you know ... I don't consider time as critical to this process, what is more important to me is services are delivered, they're improved and so forth ... I don't have to lock myself into oh-eight or oh-nine or oh-ten; what is more important is the services that are gonna be received as a result of the process is improved, or maintained; and not worse.

Chair – Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – Thank you Honourable Chair. I think as important as it is, it's attracting a lot of very good discussion but I'm not going to throw a spanner into the works I'm just gonna rise and, through you Chair, seek from FSM whether the formulation provided by New Zealand and I quote “and with a view to submitting a draft roadmap for consideration by SOPAC Governing Council ...” well the suggestion was in 2008, “as soon as practicable” is his formulation; but if we took on

board the Honourable Minister from Fiji's suggestion that it ... you know, it's really ... what I'm getting to is that this is all a tentative process ... "for consideration" does not lock you in on a timeline; "for consideration" would mean that you can have as basic a draft as to what progress has been achieved in terms of the consultations that took place ... and I think I would respectfully beg the indulgence of (through you Chair) the colleague from FSM to consider that in that light so that at least we have some tentative report given to our Governing Council oh-eight, I thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. Cook Islands and then ....

Cook Islands – Thank you Chair. Maybe also just like to re ... maybe a bit of rehashing also ... Sir such as New Zealand's views ... I'd just like to highlight maybe ... "agrees that the Director of SOPAC engage in a consultative process with the CEOs of SPC and SPREP providing regular briefings to the Chair of SOPAC Governing Council in the preparation of a draft roadmap to be submitted to SOPAC Governing Council for consideration." In other words she ... the Director will be engaging her staff to assist with the preparation of the roadmap and I believe the others will also come on board in that regard, thank you.

Chair – FSM ....

Federated States of Micronesia – Yes I understand from what my colleague from Samoa proposed agreed to the elimination of the oh-eight timeline, I fully support it.

Chair – Cook Islands could you repeat the amendment you made.

Cook Islands – Thank you Mr Chair ... "agrees that the Director of SOPAC engage in a consultative process with the CEOs of SPC and SPREP providing regular briefings to the Chair of SOPAC Governing Council in the preparation of a draft roadmap to be submitted to the SOPAC Governing Council for consideration."

Chair – Papua New Guinea ....

Papua New Guinea – Thank you Chair. Can I ask whether the distinguished delegate from the Cook Islands is aware that the chapeau it says "Council therefore ..." and why are we therefore repeating "and agrees that Council ..." it becomes pedantic.

Chair – Thank you. Tonga.

Tonga – Thank you Honourable Chairman. As I've raised earlier on in a ... proposed by the Honourable Delegate from Papua New Guinea, the wordings in brackets (pending SPREP Governing Council's decision). I would propose that we bring that back on because we don't wanna sort of pre-empt the SPREP's Governing Council.

Chair – Thank you. Cook Islands.

Cook Islands – Thank you Chair I concur with the comments by Tonga to bring back that particular section, I forgot ... I mean to say to bring that out too, thank you.

Chair – Australia.

Australia – I'm sorry to make another intervention Chair but I think by putting the words "pending SPREP Governing Council's decision" ... is actually pre-empting SPREP's Governing Council. We are told this morning by the CEO of SPREP that he wasn't aware of what process there would be. I am not sure that it's helpful to put in "pending SPREP Governing Council's decision." **[Side A of Tape 6 ends]** I ... I will be frank in telling you why I think that that is not a good er ... contribution; one obviously is that it would be pre-empting SPREP's Governing Council if you put it in, but secondly I am concerned that one of our principles **[Side B of Tape 6 starts]** of timeliness can

very easily be undermined if we keep on inserting clauses that give us reason not to get started on moving the process forward and I think that in our discussions this morning I don't think that there was anyone who was saying that we shouldn't be moving the process forward. Clearly if it turns out the SPREP Council has issues, and the consultation can't take place with SPREP well it won't take place, but we shouldn't pre-empt that and we shouldn't put in a clause that has got every potential to delay taking this process forward.

Chair – Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – Thank you Honourable Chair, I do agree with Australia. It would mean then that we do not even put SPREP up there. That's what it basically means, because we're already pre-empting, whether we qualify that with "pending SPREP's Governing Council decision" or by the fact that we just leave [it] as SOPAC, SPC and SPREP ... that reference alone also means that we're trying to suggest an engagement should take place. But you know this is ... this is forward looking rather than ... but I do agree that it does give us [mumbling] ... I was only trying to respond to Tonga's intervention, but maybe we shouldn't even have it, thank you, including SPREP.

Chair – Australia ...

Australia – I thank Papua New Guinea for that comment but frankly again I think that SPREP is one of the agencies concerned so perhaps we could put something like "as appropriate" or some qualifier of that sort. I think it would be unfortunate to leave them out.

Chair – ... [reading] "consultative process as appropriate," Niue ...

Niue – Thank you Mr Chairman. I think this process has been taking quite a long time; you're not getting anywhere. May I suggest that we adjourn and get a fresh text in the morning, clean, and move from there. Thank you Mr Chairman.

Chair – Thank you Niue. Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – Thank you Mr Chair. I think the only area we have a problem is the brackets and I think Australia has established an appropriate language there using "as appropriate". However I was thinking to maybe have a bit of humour in dialogue with the word "pending" and change it to "in anticipation". As I had a dialogue with the SPREP Director this morning and we talked about the Bible, it meaning "hope", and in that regard I just [stretch that out for humour]. I think the language "as appropriate" is ok with the Cook Islands and I think we should finish this off tonight and for us to have a new agenda item tomorrow morning, thank you.

Chair – Thank you. Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – I concur with Niue, thank you Honourable Chair, and I would, through you, ask if Secretariat can provide the current ... whether it just be this portion and those ones that we need to look at so that delegations can have an opportunity to mull over the issues overnight, and we can go by Niue's suggestion to adjourn, I thank you.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. Well we have one suggestion to return back in the morning and let everybody have a rest and another suggestion that we continue to try and finish this item and start with a new item tomorrow morning ... uhmm ... oh Samoa ...

Samoa – Thank you Honourable Chair, I think we've had a fairly long day and I go with the suggestion by the representative from Niue, thank you.

Chair – New Zealand ....

New Zealand – Just another thought Chair, thank you, is uhmm that we go through the remaining recommendations and find out how close or not we are and then mull over the whole suite of recommendations overnight, thank you.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand. FSM?

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you Chairman. I would go along with the recommendations from Niue; at the rate we're going we might go until 10:30 and I'm really not prepared to go that far because I understand the restaurants close at 9:30 I gotta find something to eat.

Chair – Well delegates, if delegates are feeling rather tired, it might mean we start earlier in the morning at about 8 o'clock. If that is what Council wishes we adjourn our meeting and return at 8 o'clock in the morning. Australia? you wanted the floor?

Australia – Thank you Chair, No.

Director – Just a quick announcement. We will need a little bit of time to clean up the text and so on for the parts that have been agreed and so we'll leave copies of those at the Dateline Hotel as well as ensure that they are delivered to the other places of rest for yourselves, so whichever hotels you're at if you could leave a note with us here at the Secretariat, but I'm sure we've got most of your details anyway so we'd actually ensure that we have a text that you can work with tonight but we'll just need a bit of time for that. Uhmm ... the other announcement is for those that volunteered for the Drafting Committee, and as you know it is an open-ended process so 6:30 tomorrow morning and as the Chair has advised, an 8 o'clock start ... I would hope that we can keep to time and start promptly at 8 o'clock because outside of this agenda we still have a number of other agenda items that we would like decisions on before we leave Tonga either tomorrow afternoon or Friday, so if we can be here promptly at 8 o'clock and promptly at 6:30 for those that have so kindly agreed to be part of the drafting committee, thank you.

Chair – Thank you delegates. The meeting is adjourned until 8 o'clock tomorrow morning. Thank you.

[END OF DAY, Wednesday, 28 November 2007, 8 pm]

[Resumption of Agenda Item 11.1 on Thursday, 29 November 2007, 8 am]

Chair .... have a good rest and hopefully reflect what we discussed last night. As you know today is the last day of our Council meeting and I'm hoping we can move quickly through the rest of this agenda item as we have other items to complete before the meeting is finished. So if I can go on to where we were last night, on the screen is the wording which we believe we arrived at last evening and I would hope that we can agree to that quite quickly and move on to the remaining paragraphs, so if you could please have a look at what's on the screen. New Zealand ....

New Zealand – Thank you very much Chair. I apologise for having to raise this in a way, but there was a recommendation that was amended before this one and I don't think it quite reflects the point I was trying to make last night; and I do apologise if I wasn't very clear. But it was the original recommendation that noted the risk around change processes; it was originally recommendation six [vi] and it read "acknowledged with concern that change processes such as this increased demands on the Secretariat and caused stress on the staff that will impact current levels of service delivery." This was a recommendation put forward to us by the Secretariat. We had a discussion, as I recall last night where my colleague from FSM raised the concern around staff security and my suggestion at the time, although I appreciate I may not have made it clear was that we retain the recommendation around risk, because that is a reality that the Secretariat has put to us and we need to keep that in mind and manage that risk as best we can, but to perhaps address the comment that my colleague from FSM was making in the principles – whether there was

something we can put in the principles to manage the concern around staff/staffing. And so I guess my proposal would be that we do retain that original paragraph on the risks and we think about a new ... have a look at the principle around staffing that's there now under the principles; with a suggested change because currently I think the principle refers to job security, which perhaps isn't quite what we mean because many staff of SOPAC are currently employed on contract. My suggestion would be that we instead focus on staff welfare; that we bear staff welfare in mind as we're going through this process. Thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand. Just include that in the principles. Thank you New Zealand. Can we now turn our attention to paragraph two [ii] on the screen to see if we can clear that up ... Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – I don't want to sound pedantic here but I think we should try to stick to formal language that's used in most resolutions because when ... there's already a preambular paragraph that says "Council agrees ..." and then we're now saying in two 'Council agrees ...' we can remove the reference to Council ... that's normal sort of processes ... it's an operative paragraph, I thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. We can remove "Council" and just start "agrees".

Director – Good Morning members ... I'd just really like to make a comment, again under this paragraph, I mean, yes my title is 'Director of SOPAC', and I would suggest that in fact, for accuracy, we actually describe the SPC Director General as the Director General of SPC and the Director of SPREP. If not, if we call all of us CEOs then let's just go with that but I think that it would be quite useful to be more accurate, thank you.

Chair – Is that paragraph ... oh New Zealand ...

New Zealand – Thank you Chair. New Zealand is still very concerned I think about the absence of some form of timeline. We had a lot of discussion last night on this matter and on this recommendation endeavouring to reach a compromise and we were unable to do so unfortunately. But uhhh ... there are risks to be managed and we do need to be conscious of that, and if we don't have some form of timeline there to work within ... really I don't think we're fulfilling our role as a Council to adequately manage risk. As you know, our preference was to focus on the next feasible milestone really, taking into account that we meet annually, and that was 2008. But I heard very clearly from many colleagues around the table yesterday that that's not something that they can sign up to. So with that in mind, I was wanting to propose that we revert to the wording that was in the original supplementary paper proposed to us by the Secretariat, and that reads "the final report mutually agreed by the three organisations be submitted for consideration by the Forum in 2010 for final agreement and implementation to begin." I'm hoping that that will be acceptable to other members of Council. I would just also propose some small amendments to that for consistency with the rest of our document. Firstly, that we would be talking about a 'road map' rather than a report; and that we would instead of saying "submitted for consideration in 2010", we could say 'by 2010' which just leaves us that opportunity, should it arise ... and should things appear to the CEOs when they start engaging to be able to be advanced more quickly than 2010, it gives us that opportunity to take it; but it also has that original wording that the Secretariat proposed. Thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand. If we're agreed we can return to the original wording in the paper and insert that. Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – Thank you Chair. In view of the intervention by New Zealand, I think when we go back to that one we will never get past this particular section; however, I just wanted to highlight on the current set up as it is – it's just changing that part of the text that says 'which may be submitted to SOPAC Governing Council'; that that be changed to what we were talking about last night "to be submitted to SOPAC Governing Council for consideration". <Could we just bring that up?> [to top table]

Chair – [to scribe] Could we bring up the proposed paragraph ...

Cook Islands [continued] – Anyway, the text looked like “agrees that the Director of SOPAC engage in a consultative process with the CEOs of .... <as alluded to earlier by the Director ... [i.e.] the right acronyms> providing regular briefings to the Chair of the SOPAC Governing Council in the preparation of a draft roadmap to be submitted to SOPAC Governing Council for consideration.” And in view of the intervention by New Zealand it’s uh ... we will now have to rethink the whole process in trying to come to a final decision on this. However, in light of what we already have when we left off last night, is in my view, sufficient for us to go forward ... and that’s my view from the Cook Islands, thank you.

Chair – FSM ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you very much Mr Chairman. I’m really not ... sorry to say but I really would not be comfortable putting in a timeline in this, simply because, as we’ve said before, this is too important for us and if time is what we need then we should give us time to do it to ensure that we come up with the correct response and not rush it. And I might call your attention to item two or the next one, which says that during the consultative process some of the issues to be considered will include: bullet point number three – “proposing a realistic timeframe <timing> for implementation that would need to be taken into account practical, legal, contractual obligations and/or any problems that might require prior resolution as a results of absorption.”

Chair – Thank you FSM. New Zealand ...

New Zealand – Thank you very much Chair. I think it’s really important that we bear in mind the distinction between a road map for implementation and the implementation process itself. All we’re really talking about here is actually the plan for implementation, the actual process is something that will be included in that plan, including the timeline for that implementation process. So really we’re not saying that it’ll all be done and dusted by two thousand and ten in any way shape or form – we’re simply talking about the plan to begin the next stage.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand. FSM ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you for that clarification from my colleague in New Zealand, but actually I was gonna bring up another point too because my understanding of the Forum procedure is that they do have what they call a FOC, which actually decides on what the agenda would be during any particular year. It’s all actually prepared by countries and they have to agree on any agenda items that would be there. To me that essentially we’re telling FOC that they should put that on the agenda – it’s not up to us, it’s up to that [final word inaudible].

Chair – Australia ...

Australia – I’d just like to make the comment that seeing as we’re talking about procedure and what countries require, I would just like to remind delegates that we are representatives of countries and we come here as representatives of countries and not representatives of particular departments we come as representatives of countries and I think this is ... in a way gets to the nub of part of difficulty – in understanding what our role is. And certainly it does take me back to the decision of Leaders – where Leaders did talk ... did actually give us an instruction – they are the Leaders of our nations. They gave us an instruction that we needed to look to commence the process and carry it forward and I think that it’s important for us to remember that.

Chair – So can we go back to the paragraph ... sorry did somebody ask for the floor ... Oh Fiji ... [no response from Fiji] Can you all read the paragraph on the screen? [long pause while delegates read] Cook Islands and Australia ....

Cook Islands – Thank you Chair. I would uh ... in order for us to go forward, I will concur with the current text except to finish ... er full stop behind ... after 2010.

Chair – Australia ...

Australia – I would endorse that comment.

Chair – Alright paragraph ends at 2010. Are we agreed to that? If we are then paragraph is agreed to. Thank you. We move on ... the next paragraph is line one twenty-two on the paper that was distributed, beginning “during the consultative process ...” This paragraph was agreed to and we’re just looking at it again. The first bullet point was also agreed. **[Side B of Tape 6 ends]**  
**[...when we looked at it earlier ...[rest mostly silence]]**

Chair – **[Side A of Tape 7 starts]** Okay we move on to the next bullet point. There was one amendment by New Zealand to this bullet point, is that acceptable? Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – Sorry just a point of procedure, I think there are a number of delegates who are raising this [indicating the country name plaque], I think the Secretariat should at least be alert to who is raising their plaque for the floor, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea ... should try and take note of those who wish to speak. So bullet point two – “Examining the costs and benefits of the options considered during the process, the technical programmes, the memberships, and the external supporting agencies, identifying opportunities for improved service delivery.” Are we agreed to that? Agreed, thank you.

Move on to the next bullet point ... there’s no change to this one “Proposing a realistic timing for implementation that would need to be taken into account including practical, legal, contractual obligations, and or any other problems that might require prior resolution as a result of absorption.” Are we agreed to that? Agreed.

Next paragraph with amendments by Australia and Samoa. We have [whispers] ...

Director – The suggestion here is to delete that paragraph because it is taken up in paragraph ... uuhm what is now the opted paragraph two [ii].

Chair – Right we delete that paragraph. Next paragraph, with amendments ... Australia ...

Australia – I’m sorry Chair but I’m having real trouble just working out where we are in the document and I <l> I was given two documents last night, one which has tracked changes in it and one which didn’t. I assume we’re working from the tracked changes document. I’d find it very useful if we <if we> err .... at each instance gave the line number, I don’t know whether that’s <that’s> possible ... but I’m finding a little confused because for instance that tracked document – that tracked change document that we have has got one paragraph <that> noted as agreed on page five that is then repeated on page seven as agreed and my understanding is that neither of them were agreed so I’m feeling some consternation that something on page five that we didn’t even look at to start with is there; <which> so I think there’s a few things that uhhh worry me and I’d like to be assured that we can get to those in due course.

Director – Thank you Australia, uhhh, in actual fact in discussions yesterday there was a suggestion from a number of countries to move, and I refer to that particular paragraph on page seven, line one-four-five – to move that paragraph – Niue in fact made their intervention errr ... earlier on that <well later yesterday afternoon> – and the suggestion was to move that to be the first recommendation; the first operative recommendation following “Council therefore” ... that was in fact supported by a number of members around the table. Subsequent to that there was a suggestion from the delegate from Papua New Guinea that in actual fact in could be better placed at paragraph three, so ... as paragraph three of the recommendation. So, clearly there would need

to be some discussion here as to where that particular paragraph would need to be placed, thank you.

Chair – Australia ...

Australia – Thank you. I accept that, but I think also there was a <a> another recommendation that was also put on the table by New Zealand about those words, and my recommend ... my recollection is that there was no agreement about the particular words.

Chair – FSM, Papua New Guinea ....

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you Mr Chairman, I sympathise with the comment from Australia because I was gonna suggest that maybe after we've gone through all this mess that we go back and quickly review the whole paragraph.

Chair – Sure, thank you FSM. Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – Well I'd rather paragraphs than this, thank you Honourable Chair ... I had discussions with Niue, Samoa and Palau and we felt that ... I think what they were proposing in terms of elevating what I initially amended to a proposed three [iii], to be brought up to one, I thank you.

Chair – Thank you PNG. So that paragraph will be elevated to one. So we're now at page eight ... oh Samoa?

Samoa – Thank you Honourable Chair, are we now looking at that new paragraph one .... ? I'm just a bit lost here ...

Chair – Yes, we just decided to move it to number one.

Samoa – Okay, but will we be touch ... going back to it again, or is it agreed? [Chair replies "Yes"] Okay thank you.

Chair – We're now on line one-five-zero on page eight. [pause while delegates read] Kiribati ....

Kiribati – It is only a little comment Mr Chairman, for consistency purpose because there it is recommended to the CEOs of SPC and SPREP, whereas before we actually mentioned the Director General and the Director of SPREP, so it's only a little comment on that.

Chair – Thank you Kiribati, can we make that amendment? Thank you. FSM ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you Chairman, I was gonna suggest that we delete the last sentence.

Chair – Director.

Director – If I <if I> may Council, I'm at the moment the way I actually read it is that we're actually directing to other organisations to do something, when in fact we're quite silent on the fact that SOPAC is not in fact involved in that process, so the idea behind it all was the fact that the three organisations would start to get to work very closely together on any new initiatives that were emerging or new opportunities to look at the ways in which we could each bring our various technical competitive advantages to bear, so uhmm, right at this moment, the way in which I read it, is in fact that SOPAC will not be involved in this, and we're directing two other agencies on how they should do their work; but that's just my interpretation, and English is my first language.

Chair – New Zealand ...

New Zealand – Uhmm just bearing in mind the point that we all agreed yesterday that we shouldn't be directive to other agencies .... uhmm just a small suggested change – the suggested time frame for this is early 2008, I mean I wonder whether we even need a time frame because in a sense it is up to the agencies to make that decision but if we have to then <then> I would caveat it certainly with a suggestion because it really is not something that we can determine ourselves, thank you.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand. I think we <we> uh it's been suggested we delete the timeframe. Australia ...

Australia – Chair while I'm <I, I, I> I won't uh... I'm prepared to accept the amend ... the issue of deleting the time frame. I would wonder why SOPAC, as an organisation, would want to be worried about getting immediately onto the job of developing new regional projects to demonstrate complementarity, a higher quality of work and more effective delivery through cooperation and sharing resources ... I would wonder why any organisation wouldn't want to do that at the earliest possible opportunity if they are interested in attracting donor resources. I don't think that it's a very good message to send to those people who are key supporters and partners that we don't want to get on to doing that at the earliest opportunity. Having said that I leave it to the Council to reach agreement and I won't uhmm stand in the way of it, but that would be my view.

Chair – Thank you Australia. Tonga ...

Tonga – Thank you Honourable Chairman, I would like to suggest that to insert the wording, after "SPREP, that the organisations" and insert "in consultation with SOPAC." On that note Mr Chairman I would like to raise again the point that I raised yesterday that we don't wanna dictate other council such as SPREP who hasn't met on the issue.

Chair – Thank you Tonga. Fiji ....

Fiji – Chair I'm just wondering whether that paragraph is really necessary?

Chair – So we? Are you suggesting that we delete that paragraph Fiji? New Zealand ...

New Zealand – I would support that suggestion as well Chair, I think really the more concise and clear we can be around this the better, thank you.

Chair – Yes, alright. Council feels like that we can delete that paragraph. [lengthy pause as delegates read and absorb] we move on to line one-six-five, page eight ... delete "Council" and start with "agreed." Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – I move that we endorse this paragraph, thank you.

Chair – Are we agreed? Agreed ... oh Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – Thank you Mr Chair, uhmm, I concur but maybe have a look at that language for a little bit ... "agreed that a committee comprising of members of governing bodies .." should we have bodies or councils? "of the three agencies be established and adequately..."... blahlahlah to the end, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Cook Islands. The paragraph is endorsed. Agreed? Thank you. Line one-seven-zero, page eight ... Papua New Guinea ....

Papua New Guinea – Thank you Honourable Chair, I think I may have been misunderstood. I was only trying to explain that the original language as it was uuhmm, which is the original four ... sorry five ... six, "SPC and SPREP governing bodies be invited to fully engage in the consultative process," – I was just trying to infer from that that that's what it meant, it was an appeal. But I think the Secretariat were ahead of me, considered it an amendment to the text, I wasn't suggesting any amendment, I thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. [long pause] Australia ... [long pause] we've .... Tonga ....

Tonga – Thank you Honourable Chairman. In light of the fact that we've taken out the previous paragraph, which to me sets the principle for this one, we suggest to remove this paragraph as well.

Chair – Do we delete this paragraph? Are we agreed to delete? Agreed? Alright then we delete that paragraph. Line one-seven-five on page nine. [long pause] Kiribati ....

Kiribati – Thank you Mr Chairman, I'm not quite sure what it's really meant in the context of the CEOs consultation as proposed by Australia, because I think the consultation is only the roadmap that will be discussed and planned, but the context of the paragraph is quite different, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Kiribati. Australia ....

Australia – Thank you Chair, the reason that I asked that that be inserted was that I think that given that we will be in consultations about the rationalisation of SOPAC functions, it is important for us to keep that consultation in mind as we seek new resources.

Chair – Thank you Australia. Does that clarify the question, Kiribati?

Kiribati – Thank you Chair, but ...uh well ... in my understanding it could have been stick there if we come back to .... I'm not quite sure on that which paragraph would emphasize the efforts to try to improve the services and somewhat to continue on the donor fundings and to somewhat start a bit on the rationalisations of the services of the SOPAC, yeah I'm not ... I cannot really go back to which paragraph that stated before with this also mentioned by Australia; but what I'm trying to say is it could be more appropriate if we stick to that and we match it with this one because in my thinking this is a completely different context, well English is not my first language, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Kiribati. Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – Thank you Chair, I think we're all proficient in English so nobody should claim first or second ... uhmm, maybe Kiribati ... Kiribati's ... the connection is made to ... in relation, sorry in relation to the delegate of Kiribati's comments that connection is made, apart from the explanation Australia has given, to line one-six-five, when you're talking about members of governing councils of three agencies being established, that's taken in line with that and I think the emphasis that Australia has made is relevant because we're responding to a decision by leaders of the Forum; and in the same context whilst we're talking about resource acquisitions and you know technical support – this is <this is> .... we should keep in mind that the CEOs will be consulting, thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. So we keep the amendment? Kiribati?

Kiribati – Thank you Mr Chair, I'm still worried because I think we have to emphasise the fact that having too much burden the Secretariat, because I mean to me it's only the roadmap that has to be concentrated with the other and the ... in this paragraph, that's a different role for the Secretariat on its own for the sake of us as members of the governing council to continue its role in its interim period. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you. New Zealand ...

New Zealand – I wonder if I can suggest an alternative wording perhaps, uuhmm, that we have a full stop after "delivery" and we say something like "any efforts to secure new resources to be managed by the Director in a way that is consistent with the change process." That might help just [to] clarify the point, thank you.

Chair – Could you read that out again New Zealand ....

New Zealand – “efforts to secure new resources to be managed by the Director in a way that is consistent with the change process.”

Chair – Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – Thank you Mr Chair. From the Cook Islands’ view on this I think we just in ... where it is bracketed by the Australian intervention that we look at inserting “in collaboration with the” ... just using “in collaboration” with the CEOs consultants ... consultations. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you. Tonga ....

Tonga – Thank you Honourable Chairman. I would like to suggest that uh ... to remove “change” and insert “review”.

Chair – How does that look? New Zealand ....

New Zealand – I just think it’s a little ... perhaps not quite consistent with language we’ve used elsewhere around “change process”, I mean it almost seems that’s the sort of environment we’re in now and perhaps <with> for consistency with other aspects of the text, it would be clearer to use those <those> words, thank you.

Chair – FSM ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Sir, Thank You Mr Chairman, actually I would suggest that we just remove everything following “sustained service delivery” and then ... in other words go back to original language yeah, with the amendment from the Cook Islands “in cooperation” ... and continue from there.

Chair – So the suggestion is do we end after the word “delivery”? In collaboration? [some whispered clarification by Director at head table] .... Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – I know we’re enga ..... Thank you Honourable Chair, I know we’re engaged in a collaborative process but contextually it takes out ... what we’re trying to do here is that whilst we’re undergoing this change process we must do it within the context of the consultations that’s being carried out by CEOs, I think that’s the important fact here. Business as normal for SOPAC, however, it has to be done within the context of the consultations we’ve agreed to that all three agencies will be engaged in ... that is the crux of the issue as Papua New Guinea sees it, I thank you Chair. **[Side A of Tape 7 ends]**

**[Nothing but silence in this bridge segment]**

Chair – **[Side B of Tape 7 starts]** [whispered consultations at head table, Chair being briefed about something] Okay, Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – What I am actually saying is going back to the original language but retain the original amendment that Australia introduced, I thank you Chair.

Chair – Do we have agreement on that ? going back to original language ? Kiribati; and Cook Islands ...

Kiribati – Sorry Mr Chairman, with due respect to my colleagues, I still have that understanding in my own, this is my personal view, that we don’t have to pre-empt that we are now on the way of doing the <the> rationalisation, we are on just the roadmap and the ... this paragraph is only securing us as Council members of the <the> role of SOPAC to continue in the interim, thank you Mr Chairman.

Chair – Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – Thank you Chair. Uhhh my intervention was [...inaudible ...] the intervention by Kiribati in trying to come up with a uuh more, maybe a more sound ... aligned language <to> to the intervention by Australia; however, in this regard I uhm I suppose it's the same thing from the understanding of the text – if everybody is in agreement with the original text, then we'll go with that ... but I ... in more ... for the whole ... this <this> section is really uhhmmm talking about, I mean in terms of the delivery, we will still be in consultation with the CEOs up until the time for the <the> next step up from what we are doing right now, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Cook Islands. Papua New Guinea ....

Papua New Guinea – Uhhh, quickly Honourable Chair would it help if rather than using the original lang ... uh the amended language introduced by Australia, whether we say, “keeping in mind the CEOs consultations” – if it would allay Kiribati's concerns, I thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea, [reading] “keeping in mind the CEOs consultations”. Do we agree to that wording ... original wording with the amendment as suggested by Papua New Guinea? Samoa ...

Samoa – Thank you Honourable Chair, we're happy with the wording as proposed by Papua New Guinea, thank you.

Chair – Thank you, are we agreed to that? Agreed. Thank you. Next one is line one-eight-two, page nine. We agreed to this paragraph during the first reading. Samoa ...

Samoa – Thank you Honourable Chair, can we also include donor partners in the list of those uh who would be advised of the outcome of the Council meeting ... this Council meeting. Thank you Samoa.

Chair – Thank you Samoa, that will be included. Are we agreed? Thank you. New Zealand .....

New Zealand – Thank you very much Honourable Chair, uhhh, we raised a – I raised a suggestion yesterday that ... uhhh ... that ... uhhh ... for Council consideration that we developed some words along the lines proposed by the Chair of STAR committee in recognition of the science community. The wording was something like – that we ask our Director to take into the negotiations [and] the discussions with the other CEOs an interest to find a mechanism to take forward the benefits of the STAR network – to have that issue in mind during the negotiations or the discussions. Thank you Chair.

Director – ... uhhh and possibly the place to actually put that in would be “during the consultative processes some of the issues to be considered will include” – and that in fact could be one of the bullet points underneath that so we'll get that wording in ... inserted into the text, thanks.

Chair – Cook Islands ....

Cook Islands – Thank you Mr Chair, with the ... maybe to also ask my colleague from Samoa whether we should include the other ... uh ... stakeholders apart from just the donor partners, as we've articulated the donor partner we may as well insert the inclusion of the other partners that we have in this Council, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Cook Islands, yes we'll include that as well. Uh delegates I think what we need now is to uh ... Secretariat to uh ... oh Australia ...

Australia – I'm sorry Chair, there's one more point that I would ... another point that I would like to put into the uhhh ... into the uh ... the ... the agreed recommendations and I will read out the

words – I think it hasn't been covered as yet – uhmm it's following our discussions yesterday about the uh ... the consultations between uhmm the two directors and the director-general – the CEOs, uhmm and I'd like to propose uhmm the/this wording "requires .... <so under the chapeau "Council ... Council [consulting with colleagues in an aside <what's the chapeau?> ...] "Council therefore" ... I think we got "Council therefore" – and so it begins – no leave off the "Council therefore" cause this is just a further point. I'd actually recommend that this come under our discu.... under the paragraph where we have talked about uhmm the process [rustling paper and talking under the breath <which paragraph is that> searching for place in the paper being referred to ...] the process of discussion between the CEOs ... er uh uh [speed reading some text ...] ... yes dot point three, under there – that reads "requires that the process be a consultation among equals under the auspices of the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat." I ... I, in making that proposal I uhmm, I note the absolute importance of the comment by members around the table, the interim minister from Fiji made the point that this needs to be a consultation among equals, and I think this is extremely important. Uh I also note that, uhmm we as a Council, have one of other uhmm er .... conclusions that uhmm the er ... that our Director be supported by a ... a Committee of the Whole uhmm and an adequately resourced team .... uhmm to provide support in that. I further make the point that we need a uh facilitator to bring this together to ensure that it happens, uh uh uh in <in in in> the manner that the uh ... that the leaders have have set out for us; and that therefore makes the Secretary General uhmm the appropriate person to facilitate the process; and I make the point that this is a facilitation process; or actually he doesn't even need to fila ... facilitate, but he needs to be there as part of the ... uh ... the auspicing process.

Chair – Thank you Australia. FSM and Tonga ....

Federated States of Micronesia – Sir, thank you Chairman. I would suggest that we delete that entirely.

Chair – Thank you. Tonga ....

Tonga – Thank you Honourable Chairman. Uhmm I would suggest to put the uhmm ... the full stop after "equals".

Chair – FSM ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you. I would go along with that, thank you.

Chair – Kiribati ...

Kiribati – Thank you Chairman, I think we agree with the where it full stop after "equals".

Chair – Thank you. Australia ...

Australia – Uhmm ... I would just like to ask how the Council proposes that the process will be carried forward?

Samoa – Thank you Honourable Chair. Uhmm ... the Secretary General of the Forum Secretariat made an offer to facilitate the discussions, and our view is that ... if we can sort of leave it open. We have the three ... the three CEOs who can actually come together; who know the organisations; who know the functions and operations of their respective organisations and I feel ... we've also suggested and which we'll be touching on later – there will be a committee that will be established to provide guidance to the CEO, and they can call on the Secretary General if need be; but he has made the offer and they can take up the offer if they see fit, or if they see necessary, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Samoa. Somehow there's a feel that we should put a full stop after "equals"? Are we agreed to that? New Zealand? Oh Australia and New Zealand?

New Zealand – Thank you Honourable Chair. I'm not sure we can leave that hanging actually ... uhmm ... to me it's quite critical that there is a process that is facilitated by the Secretary General ... for many reasons, including quite practical reasons of bringing people together and you know providing the sort of normal support for a process that a facilitator can provide so that the three director-generals can focus on the issues. But also, it will be the Secretary General who'll be reporting back to Forum leaders, as directed, in 2008 on progress. And the Secretary General will need to be somehow engaged in that process in order to be able to make that report back to our leaders. And, well I could go on, but I'll just leave it at that .... Thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand. FSM ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you Honourable Chair. I think as pointed out by Samoa, those, we're saying, they would meet as equals, and I think they can work it out among themselves how they [are] facilitated but it should not be up to us to say who should be the facilitator, who should be the chairman or vice-versa ... whatever. I think the process is they'd consult and report back to the respective councils for consideration. So, you know whether it's one or the other ... I'm just not comfortable with the idea of saying, that one of them should be ... we're saying there, meet as equals and then one of them is gonna be facilitator ... and we're essentially telling them, you know they should choose the director-general of PIFS as their facilitator; why not leave it open – up to them – as pointed out by Samoa.

Chair – Thank you FSM. Tonga and then PNG.

Tonga – Thank you Honourable Chairman. Uhmm ... to use a much more simple language, I think all CEOs are big boys and girl ... they can handle the job. In terms of reporting, they have to report back. Any report that goes to the Forum should be ratified by Council.

Chair – Thank you Tonga. Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – Thank you Honourable Chair. Let me suggest some language ... “requires that the process be a consultation amongst equals, with the option to engage the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum as appropriate.” That's being suggested in the interest of uhmm ... taking account [of] all the concerns that have been raised, keeping in mind also that we are responding to a Leaders' decision; and whilst the process requires that Council will endorse anything that we do before it goes, the Secretary General remains the person who will report back to [the] Forum, I thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. FSM?

Federated States of Micronesia – Sir, Thank you Chairman. I noted the comment by my colleague from PNG but we have plenty of options, and that's only of 'em. And if we are gonna give 'em options, why not just list a whole slew of options that are available to them, there have a lot of options such as – I would just take it out – and fullstop after “equals”.

Chair – Papua New Guinea ....

Papua New Guinea – Honourable Chair, without wanting to engage in a war of words I think the suggestion here is that this is the only option .... Why? Because it relates to a decision that our leaders took at the Forum that relates to a reform process we have underta ... we're undertaking now; and if we do not recognise the fact that the Secretary General will be the person that will report back to the Forum, then who would? I thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. Australia ...

Australia – Thank you Chair. I would just like to add to the words from my colleague from Papua New Guinea, uhmm I think that in addition the ... the ... in response to the comment from FSM regarding to a meeting of equals, obviously I was referring to the three organisations who are part

of this .... uhmm ... whom the Leaders have asked to consult, to rationalise the functions. Now the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat is not one of those agencies, it sits outside – but that apart – we have a <a, a> current institutional framework for our regional organisations in the Pacific that puts the CROP ... that makes us a member of the CROP. And at the moment the Head of the CROP is the Chair of the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat, so that is another reason why we need to use the institutional framework that we have. We're not an organisation that sits outside. I've heard suggested around the table uhmm, that one, we don't have to pay attention to the decision that our Leaders have made; two, that we don't need to operate within the regional institutional framework that we have been a part of for very many years. Now, I know that this is a difficult process but I <l, l, l> just don't think it serves us well to leave behind those years of organisational operational principles at this time. I think we need to be able to trust in our regional institutional framework as it has been in operated to carry us forward; and we're talking about some well-established practices, so I ...and I think in conclusion I would agree with the member from Papua New Guinea that I don't think we do have any other options ...uh in this case.

Chair – Thank you Australia. Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – Thank you Mr Chair. I would like to uh add my comments on this one and go along with the intervention by my colleague from Tonga – is that this process, as we've already established in the other bullet points that – it must come back to Council before we move forward on the established process or format that we intend to go forward on this. On the uh ... I mean in terms of the ... just preparing the roadmap. In terms of the CROP, I think we all know where we stand in this regard; however, uhmm at the moment I believe the end product will have to come back to us as Council, before we go forward on [this], thank you.

Chair – Thank you. Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – Honourable Chair, thank you ...Uhmm “requires that the process be a consultation among equals with the option to engage the ... with the Secretary General of the PI[F] as appropriate and ensure that any decision in relation to this must be approved by Council,” ... or words to that effect. So it ... I mean it takes account of concerns that a reference to the Council must be made, thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. New Zealand ...

New Zealand – [Clearing throat] Thank you Honourable Chair, I think we're mixing up a couple of issues here. I think it is very very clear in our recommendations that any roadmap comes back to this Council for consideration. I don't think there's at all any dispute about that. So I think this recommendation is really trying to get at who will facilitate [the] consultative process ... so I think we should focus on that. With respect to my colleague from Papua New Guinea, uhmm and take it as absolutely read that any roadmap most certainly comes back to this Council for consideration, and therefore we could delete that latter part of that sentence beginning “and ensure any decision ....” Thank you.

Chair – FSM ....

Federated States of Micronesia – Yes Sir, if its ok by my colleagues then I would suggest that we just delete the whole paragraph eh? No, as far as the process of consultation is concerned I was supporting the fact that they should meet as equals. The way I envision it, is that they will discuss with each other on bilateral basis and then perhaps somehow agree to meet together ... not always in groups. So you know so there is that option also to move forward. I am just not comfortable saying that one of 'em should be the lead facilitator, taking of course [undecipherable] comments. We understand what the process at the Forum is and we know that the Secretary General is [the] one reporting to the Forum, but at [the] same time ... and I think we should leave that to the CEOs themselves to carry it forward in the best way possible, clear, transparent – and best way possible – to arrive at the correct response.

Chair – So the suggestion is to delete the paragraph ... Australia ...

Australia – I think that I can't agree to deleting it. I would like to ... I believe that we have to have some reference to the engagement of the Secretary General of the PIFS; I think that without this we haven't got a process to carry it forward. I would be comfortable with the wording as put on the board by Papua New Guinea and Samoa ... "consultation amongst equals <under the auspices of the sec [under the breath]> with the option to engage the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum as appropriate." Yeah ... but I <l, l, l> do believe that we need a process that engages the Secretary General at some ... in some way so that we have a conduit to the Leaders.

Chair – FSM ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you Chairman. I really, I would not really feel comfortable saying that one of 'em should be the lead facilitator, given understanding if what PNG and Australia are saying that's the only option, then maybe that's what the CEOs will arrive at. Maybe that's the only option, I don't know, but they're ... but they're ... we wanna do is to make it open, transparent and ensure that it moves forward under the auspices and the approval of the councils – because they do have to report to the councils; and then we will move forward from there. I noted the comments from Australia that we do have the CROP organisation format right now; but in my mind that's exactly why we're dealing with this issue here because the CROP has not worked in the past fifteen, twenty years, or however long it's been around.

Chair – Thank you FSM. Papua New Guinea and then Samoa ...

Papua New Guinea – Thank you Honourable Chair. I don't wish to belabour the issue but the reference to facilitator was ... came about when we said "under the auspices of the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum." We've now relegated him to being an option that can be called upon if the CEOs feel that they should. That in a sense allays somewhat FSM's concerns about somebody taking the lead in all this; but the fundamental issue here is that this is a decision that all Forum Leaders, including FSM's President, took. And it came out from that, and that relates to a process, and I recall what the Director of SOPAC said yesterday that in the past we have taken into consideration all Leaders' Communiqués within the Governing Council as a way of maintaining that linkage with the Pacific Island Forum; after all that is the premier body, political body we respond to regardless of how we feel within Council on decisions that they take which could affect us in a different way. But I think the point was made by Australia – we are representing countries – and hence we should reflect what our Leaders put as their decision. That's fundamental to our discussions on this ... and that finally I would want a retention of that taking into account the fact that Council retains the right to say "Ay" or "Nay"; and secondly, that that fundamental link with the Pacific Island Forum through the Secretary General of the Pacific Island Forum should not be negated in our discussions, I thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. Samoa and then FSM ...

Samoa – Thank you Honourable Chair, just wondering if we could add to that that we're mindful that any decision .... **[Side B of Tape 7 ends]**. [... will need to come back to Council. I think, uhmm, Mr Chair, we need to respect that Guam is not a member of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat; so we will need to report back to Council first for comments. Thank you.

**Chair – Thank you Samoa, FSM ... ]**

**Federated States of Micronesia – Sir, thank you Chair ...] [Side A of Tape 8 starts]** ... I thank my colleague from PNG for reminding me that my President's agreed to that and I am fully aware of that but I think we're looking at the process on how to do this; and I think as I pointed out from day one my interest would be to move this forward and ensuring that we do not jeopardise the services that we are getting at this point, in other words if we're gonna improve it then that's better; but if we're gonna make it worse then we should probably not even submit it to the leaders because their decision was to rationalise.

Chair – Guam and then Cook Islands ....

Guam – Thank you Mr Chairman, I'd like to thank Samoa for that intervention too and I think it is important to remind everyone that we are in this situation where we do not have any direct influence or input to the Forum.

Chair – Thank you Guam, Cook Islands ....

Cook Islands – Thank you Mr Chair. At this juncture my intervention would be on the issue of whether we should keep text or take it right out. In view of the interventions just now, from what I gather here in terms of the additional after “equals” ... is that we've already made, or the assumption is that the review or the process has already been established. And hence my view on ... most probably to have ... to agree with the other colleagues that we finish at “equals” in light of the issue of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. And we/I would just like to maybe highlight that in view of facilitator ... maybe 'facilitator' or 'facilitators' one or three to facilitate the dialogue that we've got now. It could well be that the three chairs of the three councils could be the facilitators of the outcomes of this process and at one stage – not to directly have on the outcome on the document to say “with the option of engaging the Secretary General”; but that is their decision when the time arrives for them to engage, or to have the option of engaging the Secretary General of PIFS at that time. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you Cook Islands. Australia. Australia, then Fiji ....

Australia – I wonder whether .... I know that we are separate from SPC, we are SOPAC we are not SPC however, as members – member governments – we ... the ... many of us did agree to the following wording at the SPC Council meeting and in it it put a number of caveats that I think could be useful. What the SPC Council did is that they “accept the offer by the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat to facilitate consultations between the CEOs of the organisations concerned, including appropriate involvement of member representatives, development partners and other CROP agencies and recommends that the discussion between the CEOs be usefully guided by a set of principles” and I think that brings in the concerns that Councils be fully consulted, but it accepts the offer and that is what our ... those of you who ... I recognise that not every single government that is here may have been around the table at SPC but that is what governments accepted at the SPC meeting. I put it on the table as a suggestion.

Chair – Guam and then Cook Islands, I mean Fiji, and then Cook islands ....

Fiji – Thank you Mr Chair. With regard to the concern raised by Australia and New Zealand about a link between the decision or the consultation; or the result of the consultations between or among the CEOs, I think that's sufficiently covered in item one and two; plus the fact that the Chair of the SOPAC Council also reports directly to the Forum. That's another way. But I understand where Australia is coming where the Forum Secretariat being the ... being required to report on the progress. Perhaps the Chair could just, after consultations write to the Secretary General conveying the decisions or the progress of the consultations amongst the CEOs. Thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Fiji. Cook Islands, and then Guam ...

Cook Islands – Thank you Mr Chair. In view of what my .... in my earlier intervention that is to say I have every confidence in you as Chair, and our Director in capably taking this forward in view of this Council as SOPAC. And we all agree just recently, just a while ago that our/the CEOs are more than capable to handle this process; therefore I have every confidence in our Chair in delivering – as part of my earlier intervention. And I would just like to highlight that having dialogue around the table is very good for us to go forward because if we just sit and not talk about this then it becomes a stagnant approach to how we intend to go forward on this document. And therefore every dialogue and interventions that we have, I believe, is healthy for this organisation in the development of its programmes and its processes as well. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you Solomon ... uh Cook Islands. Guam ...

Guam – Thank [you] Mr Chairman. I am sad to say but unfortunately Guam at the last minute was not able to attend the SPC meeting and once again we were not represented in such decisions; but however, I think the important issue is that we're working here with this Council and not to bring in the other organisations as influencing our decisions. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you Guam. [whispering by D that New Zealand wanted the floor and the need to summarise discussion up to this point] New Zealand ....

New Zealand – I accept both the comments of the representative of the Cook Islands about the importance of good healthy discussion here. That's a comment well [made] I think honourable Chair. Also, acknowledge the point made by Guam that the SPC is a separate Council; however, we are all grappling with the same; the very very same issue and we're all required to coordinate to find a resolution to that issue. And if we can't at this point agree a process that is compatible with each other; and frankly 'rational' then nothing will happen, and I think it's really important to bear that in mind. We do need to be conscious of what other Councils have decided in the same way that we will need to be conscious of that when we consider other issues on this agenda; the CROP remuneration issue will be coming up shortly, where decisions have been taken at different Councils about the remuneration of staff at SOPAC and its important that we have information about what other Councils have decided on that matter so that we can make an informed decision about the use of the resources for this Council. In the same way when we're sitting here today trying to positively and constructively come up with a solution/a process for taking forward our Leaders' decision on one single issue it is absolutely relevant that we bear in mind the need to design a process that is compatible across the three agencies that will need to take this forward. Thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand. Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – Thank you Mr Chair. I thank New Zealand for her comments on the issue; however; I still have and I think we're all in agreement, that the final or the roadmap process or consultation will come back to us as Council hence my emphasis on the chairs of the councils to be the facilitators of this process. And take up on the intervention by Fiji to maybe then have the option of writing to, or engaging, the Secretary General after Council. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you Cook Islands. Well delegates it seems to me that there's quite a large number who wish to stop the text at "equals". And about three members wish to make the additional amendment. And as has been stated this Council makes its own decisions, so the consensus seems to be to stop the text at "equals". How do you ... How does Council feel about that? Papua New Guinea ....

Papua New Guinea – Honourable Chair thank you, I feel a little uncomfortable that we're going to leave the sentence hanging in the air, but I respectfully also suggest to you sir that there is no consensus on this because the strong point that I have expressed to you sir, is that there must be that fundamental link made with the Leaders' decision and the involvement of the Secretary General as Australia has suggested, a conduit to put forward Council's decision on the outcomes of the consultations. I really wish to beg the indulgence of Council members that we must not lose sight of that. Whilst we continue as a body; and that's the reason why I suggested language which I thought would capture both the sentiments of those who did not wish to involve the Secretary General and at the same time having him as facilitator; but as I suggested earlier relegating him to being an option that is available but noting also that the linkage he has to our Leaders in the context of the Pacific Islands Forum. And I would respectfully ask that a consideration be given in looking at that option in that light so that we can move forward on it because really I must stress on Papua New Guinea's point, that if we leave it at "equals"; it would not take account of why we should make that linkage to the Pacific Island Forum, I thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. Tonga ....

Tonga – Thank you honourable Chairman Tonga would like at this point to (aside ... “oh you changed it again”) in light of what Australia and Papua New Guinea has raised I would go with “requires that a process be a consultation amongst equals with the option to engage the Secretary General of the Forum as appropriate,” and period.

Chair – So the proposal by Papua New Guinea, that was the wording. Samoa ...

Samoa – Thank you honourable Chair, I think in the interest of trying to move forward with this we also support what has been suggested by Tonga to full stop after the word “appropriate”; and I don’t recall supporting the first sentence “requires that a process be a consultation amongst equals” period, thank you. But I’m glad to see that the option is given so that the CEOs and the consultations can determine whether there is ... or the option is with them anyway, so its fairly flexible and whether they will be using the services of the Secretary General, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Samoa. The .... American Samoa ...

American Samoa – Thank you Mr Chairman. I know all my member/our member delegates want a positive outcome of this rationalisation and I can also understand the feelings by our colleagues from FSM and the smaller island countries because I know we, even though we hope for a positive outcome, but if this process is not handled properly it is the small islands countries with their limited resources that stand to lose out the most and American Samoa we agree with Tonga and Samoa and also the language there as proposed by my colleague from Australia ... you know we don’t want any outside influence to affect the consultation. The consultation process should be carried out first and any outcomes should be reported to the Forum. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you American Samoa, so the suggestion which has been made is to include the words “with the option to engage the SG of the PIFS as appropriate” full stop. Can we ... uh Fiji ...

Fiji – Sorry Mr Chairman to take up the floor at this late stage I’m just wondering if there should be a little definition of what “equals” is? It could be misinterpreted, what “equals” is yeah; perhaps we can be more specific and say the directors, or the CEOs of SPREP, SOPAC and SPC, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Fiji, Papua New Guinea.....

Papua New Guinea – Thank you honourable Chair, may I suggest through you to the Fiji delegate that this is language that was taken from the Honourable Ministers’ intervention, I thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. [long pause] So the suggestion .... uh Fiji ...

Fiji – I’m suggesting the deletion of “equals”; it’s used in a different context to the way we used it in our opening statement, thank you.

Chair – So the paragraph now reads “consultation amongst the director of SOPAC, the DG of SPC and the Director of SPREP, with the option to engage the SG of the PIFS as appropriate.” Is that acceptable to Council? Tonga ...

Tonga – I’m sorry honourable Chairman but I understand that Fiji moved to delete “equals”.

Chair – Alright we can delete “equals”; is that acceptable to everybody? Kiribati, Cook Islands ...

Kiribati – Thank you Mr Chairman, with due respect to my colleagues I just want to offer a suggestion that I think in the original text to “equals” it says “to encompass everyone” if I’m right (or if I am wrong) and then another thing that we are puzzled about is the fact of the “under the auspices of the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat” with the option that has been given by our colleagues from PNG ... I think that’s ... its only a suggestion whether in the

consultation process; if there is a need for the Secretary General then they can do so with this I think "as appropriate," thank you.

Chair – Thank you Kiribati, Cook Islands ....

Cook Islands – Thank you Mr Chair. I think my intervention is the same as what my colleague from Kiribati has just established; however if it's a way forward for us as the intervention by my colleague from Samoa, the end product will be after the chairs or the councils have met and engaging the Secretary General. However, I can't go any further without having to capture the chairs of the councils, especially our Chair and to be captured in this dialogue somewhere in there to say, I mean at this point in time we are not showing confidence in our chairs in that regard. It is therefore my wish to insert somewhere; maybe someone can come up with the language, to include the respective chairs of council ... maybe then could this be a way forward for us to finish this sentence at this time? Thank you.

Chair – Thank you Cook Islands. We'll work on some wording to reflect that. How does that sit?

Cook Islands – Thank you sir, I propose that we move forward and I'm in dire need of a caffeine intake.

Chair – Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – Honourable Chair thank you very much for the floor again. I think in my intervention yesterday about chairs being engaged there's a clear rule/engagement of where the chairs can get engaged and that it relates to providing advice, guidance and presiding over our Council meetings; and once you get them engaged with the directors and director generals you know it just clutters up the whole process. They will consider in their judgement what will come out from the consultation amongst the directors and that'll be when they preside over our Council meetings. In including them here, I mean you're introducing new functions and responsibilities that they are not empowered to do, I thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. Cook Islands and Australia ....

Cook Islands – I take onboard the intervention of my colleague from Papua New Guinea. Maybe the text to ... maybe rehash the word "including"; maybe some other word to maybe sound as if we're capturing the progress ... kind of progress report, I mean the directors will have to make that intervention or dialogue with their respective chairs as the way forward. Now if ... with the same view that my colleague from Papua New Guinea has established, the same could be said with the last sentence in the "option of engaging the <solicitor general, sorry the> Secretary General" ... <solicitor general> I'm so used to using that word back home. But in this regard maybe the text of .... the word including could be rehashed to reflect my views in engaging the chairs in the dialogue or the process of coming up with the product ... end product, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Cook Islands. Australia then New Zealand ....

Australia – Chair thank you, I think that we ... if we have some words that are similar to involving ... appropriate involvement; but can I make the point that I really wanted to take up the point that was made by the representative from FSM about our endpoint here is not to disrupt the functioning and the effective service delivery of SOPAC; and I really fear that if we're not careful in our deliberations here today by stepping right outside processes, accepted processes; we're going to do just that. And I think we need to think very carefully before we walk away from accepted process. If we're talking about our credibility, if we're taking about our being an organisation that attracts strong support, I think that's absolutely right but if we continue down a path that takes us right out of established practice, I for one am going to have real difficulty within my own government context in maintaining that credibility and I think it is something that we need really and truly give very serious thought to. We've got a process that is proceeding and I think we need to make sure that we don't set up something that is really going to stop it from happening.

Chair – Thank you Australia. New Zealand ....

New Zealand – Thank you honourable Chair, I echo the sentiments of Australia; our credibility as a Council is very much on the line here to design a process with an appropriate role for council and an appropriate role for the managers of our organisation. As a way forward, if we must, but I really don't think we need it because we have a [it] well caveated elsewhere but if we must, we do have some wording in recommendation 1, that the director of SOPAC will provide regular briefings to the chair of SOPAC and if we must repeat that then we could do that, but really when I set out my opening comments I really wanted us to provide a clear direction forward for our Director so that she could move forward empowered and able to take our thoughts forward and we do have a lot of words in here and I would submit that many of them are redundant; they're belts and braces and sort of reflecting people's nervousness and so forth but you know let's put it in for now, but maybe we could come back and really think about whether we need to have quite so many belts and braces and because we're going to be wanting to provide a clear mandate for our Director, thank you.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand. Tonga .... **[Side A of Tape 8 ends]**

Tonga – Thank you Honourable Chairman. In light of Australia and New Zealand raising the process, I would have thought that the initial meeting of this process should be the three chairs, and then from there the CEOs will take it up ... the process of the whole consultation process [...wording of recommendation...][the initial meeting should be the three chairs, or three councils ... the rest is hardly audible]

**[Side B of Tape 8 starts]**

Chair – Thank you Tonga. [long pause] Kiribati, then Cook Islands ....

Kiribati – Thank you Mr Chairman, I think we have done quite a lot in the process and most of the stuff has been there; and its only, to myself, the last that get us stuck with it; and I think most of the things has been stated, and as I proposed earlier, the option to consult the Secretary-General I think that's the way forward and that's all, thank you. That's in my opinion thank you, due respect with my colleagues around the table.

Chair – Thank you Kiribati, Cook Islands ....

Cook Islands – Thank you Chair, I am comfortable with the current language and [as] established by Tonga that, you know, in recognising our chairs in these respective councils, but most importantly our SOPAC Council Chair, as being consulted. And along the same lines as the intervention from my colleagues in New Zealand, in providing progress with the review, as Chair. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you Cook Islands. FSM ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you Honourable Chair. I've just kinda looked back to what we agreed already and there seems to have ... item two [ii] – “Council agrees that the Director of SOPAC engage in a consultative process, with the CEOs of SPC and SPREP,” and I am wondering whether we are just repeating ourselves here?

Chair – Thank you .... Papua New Guinea ....

Papua New Guinea – Thank you Honourable Chair. What goes round comes around, I think what has happened here is that when the original language was formulated by Australia and introduced it was really to reflect the role of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretary General as facilitator; however, based on the discussions we relegated him to just be an option to be there to engage

with. Now, we're repeating the language that appears in one [i] – so I think let's go back to the original intention and look at it as I stridently spoke on earlier in that we maintain that linkage taking into account the need to report ... if it's reflected already in one, then there is really no need to reflect it again; and that is the requirement to keep the Council informed [aside to scribe – sorry, if you could just maintain the paragraph that I'm speaking on please, yes, thank you]; and then we can then agree whether we maintain the original language which requires that the process be a "consultation amongst equals with the option to engage the SG of the Pacific Island Forum." The reason why "equals" was brought in was to ensure; and to also address concerns that the Director of SOPAC may have that she is not entering into this discussion as an equal; and I think that this is fundamental, that when we maintain ... when we introduced the language "equals" it meant that all of them will be sitting at the same table as equals and discussing this ... point? Thank you.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. Cook Islands ....

Cook Islands – Thank you Mr Chair. Uuh with due respect to my colleague from Papua New Guinea, I'm uh .... as I alluded to earlier, I'm comfortable with the current language as we've got there now, and as Australia has also intervened in the last ... and I think we're in agreement and to my colleague from Papua New Guinea also alluded to being a way forward "with the option to engage the Secretary General of the Forum and the SOPAC Chair, as appropriate." And we finish there; and to take us forward again Honourable Sir the caffeine level is getting low, thank you.

Chair – So, if I am correct; is there general agreement around the wording? Is that palatable or which could be tidied up .... ? New Zealand ...

New Zealand – Thank you Honourable Chair. Yes, I think there is. The way we could get round the repetition, although we would have a long recommendation; but we could get around it by including the language "with the option to engage the Secretary General of the PIFS as appropriate" within recommendation two [ii], which also talks about the consultative process and talks about the regular briefings of the SOPAC Chair. So we would be able to capture all of those elements of the consultative process in the single recommendation and therefore avoid the repetitions. Thank you Chair.

Chair – Well delegates, if the Secretariat can have a chance to tidy up what we've discussed this morning, and in the meantime, we'll take the morning tea break and come back and have a look at the document. We'll break for morning tea.

[RESTART AFTER MORNING TEA]

Chair – Thanks for your patience, I hope you've all received the clean copy, and I suggest that we look at it page by page, so start with page two ... was agreed. No further amendments ? Page three?

Director – Thank you Chair. Just a suggestion in terms of consistency of language ... under ... on line fifty just to insert "noted that some members expressed concerns ... <concern> that whilst the" ... just to keep the language consistent ... "noted that some members expressed concern that whilst" ... and then the rest of the paragraph.

Chair – Thank you. Take note of that. Page four [iv]? was agreed. Page ... Director ....

Director – I'm sorry, again maybe on page four, part seven [vii], rather than having "nonetheless" again for consistency "is fully cognisant".

Chair – So delete "nonetheless". The paragraph will start "is fully cognisant." Page five? Samoa ...

Samoa – Thanks Honourable Chair, just going back to page four; there's reference there to at least five principles but I note that there are now six principles. Does it matter? But I thought that uhm; I think yesterday there was mention that maybe we could look at a set of principles rather than give a number, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Samoa.... Use a “set of principles.” Thank you. Page five? Agreed? Page six? We have here on line ninety four, a paragraph which we haven't cleared yet. New Zealand and Samoa ...

New Zealand – Thank you Honourable Chair. I'm not sure we need this paragraph in here because I think we've already managed in the next paragraph to secure a very strong level of Council ownership of this process through the regular briefings that the Director will provide to our Chair; and also because the roadmap will of course come back to Council. So my suggestion is that we could, we could do without that paragraph, I'm not sure what it adds, and it seems like perhaps there's too much process going on. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you. Samoa ...

Samoa – Can I just uhm ... just reserve my comments ... I'll get back to it later.

Chair – Thank you. FSM, and then Fiji ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Yes, thank you Chairman. I, I would support leaving that paragraph in because I think that is the ownership of the process by the Council even though in the next paragraph it says that they will report, as appropriate to the Chair of SOPAC Governing Council. In preparing the roadmap, the ownership part is that, actually the process is embodied in number one [i].

Chair – Thank you, Fiji ?

Fiji – Thank you Mr Chair. I think this paragraph is quite important. It sort of sets the parameters for how the process should proceed and I would suggest that this paragraph remains as is, or with a little bit or few amendments if countries around the table feel strongly on this point. I think it also covers the general consensus of countries around the table today so I would suggest that this paragraph remains as it sets the parameters for the process. Thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Fiji, Samoa ....

Samoa – Thank you Honourable Chair, I think its important that this whole process shows ownership by the Council and so we support the recommendation by FSM and Fiji; and I recall yesterday that there was a call for a terms of reference for this sub-committee or this team, including the director, and I wonder if the Secretariat has managed to put together a terms of reference and if they can circulate it to the Council. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you Samoa. I've been advised that a terms of reference has been drafted and can be circulated. Palau, then Cook Islands and then Kiribati ...

Palau – Palau likewise would like to support the previous speakers. Thank you Mr Chair.

Chair – Thank you. Kiribati and then Cook Islands, Australia and Vanuatu ...

Kiribati – Thank you Mr Chairman. I think this is an important paragraph that should be included and like my other fellow colleagues this is the paragraph that state ownership of the RIF or the ongoing process and it will be amiss for us if we do not include this and stated earlier so that we as the Council drive the process behind this. Thank you Mr Chairman.

Chair – Thank you Kiribati. Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – Thank you Honourable Chair I also echo the interventions by my colleagues in retaining this section here, and for obvious reasons, and now just being produced a terms of reference, I was going to allude to that however, in saying ... in one of the previous councils, a sub-committee of such nature was convened and chaired by Niue. This was to really look at the appointment of the Director at the time, and the composition of the Committee was : Cook Islands, Australia, Tonga, Niue and the Suva-based missions. We were able to come to a conclusion in consultation with the Suva-based missions by e-mail and finally getting a endorsed document by the end of the process, and that took nearly a year for us to produce that for acceptance by Council year after. And hence one of the important points of retaining this and establishing a committee to / or like Samoa has mentioned to have a composition of members of Council. And/but up the top of the terms of reference it just defines the Suva-based members, however I think it should be extended to council members in other countries via e-mail and not necessary have to be in Suva to undertake the task. And therefore I concur with my colleagues to keep/retain this particular section.

Chair – Thank you Cook Islands. Australia ....

Australia – Thank you Chair. I recall the comments of the Papua New Guinea member who made the point that we ought not be in the business of establishing a process that is really so cumbersome that we get/don't get anywhere. Now, I am all in support of this Council having ownership of the work as it moves ahead, but I fear that with the terms of reference we have here, we're again undermining the value of the three organisations getting together to understand how they can best bring about the most sensible synergies regarding how they may/they might join their operations. Because as much as our CEO and our Council know about SOPAC's operations, they are not so familiar with the operations of the other two organisations. So if we set up a position whereby we want to pre-set the way the organisations will be / will work together, again we undermine that sense of cooperation and the sense of working together to build something new rather than holding on to a set of arrangements as they exist now. I ... so I believe that with these terms of reference we have our Council examining how these activities of priority may be delivered more effectively and efficiently; and how the absorption should take place, but that's not taking on board the knowledge and the understanding of the other programmes. Now, I am not saying that we shouldn't have a group of people from our Council doing it but I wouldn't want that group of people always having to be there to approve the next step, because if you do that you're again setting up a process that doesn't allow the CEOs to bring together their collective wisdom and to work out a creative way forward. So I would ask that the members of the Council think about how we can / we can have this involvement, but we can have it in a way that supports a creative process. I haven't had a chance yet to look at the terms of reference in detail and I'd hope to be able to do that before proceeding, But that would be my request that we don't set up a process that doesn't allow that creative getting together of organisations to seek how those synergies that exist can really be used in – to get the best opportunities for moving forward for service delivery for the region.

Chair – Thank you Australia. Vanuatu ...

Vanuatu – Thank you Honourable Chair, I think Vanuatu would like to support the intervention made by FSM, Fiji and Samoa. It basically refers back to our intervention made yesterday, so that we ... so that the Council can take ownership and responsibility over the process. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you Vanuatu. Tuvalu, then New Zealand.

Tuvalu – Thank you Honourable Chairman. Tuvalu would also like to have this recommendation retained again emphasising the importance of ownership and the driver of this process. If I may just refer to the concerns raised by Australia with regard to the consultation process and the cooperative manner that should be emphasised in this process; would that? I'm sure that will [be] taken care of in other recommendations. If I may also refer that to recommendation two [ii], that follows this first recommendation could make reference to that cooperation and having all the CEOs of the three bodies fully engaged and consulting. Thank you Chairman.

Chair – Thank you Tuvalu. New Zealand...

New Zealand – Thank you Chair. I feel really unable to consider this matter further without some time to look at the detail of what's being proposed since its just arrived for us. I don't think we can really proceed further until we've had that opportunity, thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand. Guam ...

Guam – Thank you Mr Chair, I just wish to echo our agreement with Vanuatu and [the] suggestion by FSM originally, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Guam. Cook Islands ....

Cook Islands – Thank you Honourable Chair. As a way forward I suggest that we deal with the / with this particular component and deal with the terms of reference at a later stage on a separate agenda, because as I ... as I see around the table there's a general concensus as to how we want to move on this, and that is to ... taking ownership of the <of the> discussions, therefore I move that we deal with this one; and deal with the terms of reference at a later stage, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Cook Islands. Vanuatu ...

Vanuatu – Supported by Vanuatu, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Vanuatu. New Zealand ...

New Zealand – Thank you Chair, it's not supported by <by> us. We see the terms of reference and the clause as not being able to be separated out, and so we want to consider them together if we may sir to be able to comment, thank you.

Chair – FSM and Australia ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you Chairman, just wanna echo and register our support for the intervention by Samoa, I mean Cook Islands.

Chair – Thank you FSM, Australia ...

Australia – Thank you Chair. Like New Zealand I'm not able to agree to the <to the> point until I am comfortable that we all understand ... and that I'm not comfortable with <with> the terms of reference. I think that there are <there are> questions that need <need> to be answered before I can join Australia with this recommendation and I uumm <I, I, I> believe that er uh .... unless it's resolved we've left in the air something that is <that is> quite fundamental to the whole discussion that we've been having up to this point.

Chair – Thank you Australia. Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – Thank you Chair. I uh, I take on board the comments by my colleague from Australia; however, I'd just like to point out that what we have on here is the same as what we have agreed in the statements that we've had [with] maybe some small amendments to the language I suppose; however, I can see all these have been reflected in the documents that we have all agreed to just a while ago, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Cook Islands. New Zealand ...

New Zealand – Thank you Chair, with respect we all want to proceed in this matter in an appropriate way reflecting good governance principles of allowing people time to consider issues and we've just received some very important information on our tables, uuhm and we really would

respectfully ask sir that we have the opportunity to consider the detail before a decision is made on the recommendation, thank you Sir.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand. What sort of time do you need New Zealand, any idea ... any ?

New Zealand – Up to an hour would be useful, if possible, certainly yeah perhaps 45 minutes we could perhaps think it through, thank you.

Chair – In that case, perhaps we can move on to the rest of the record and come back again to allow New Zealand time to consider this paragraph. So can we move on and come back ...? Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – Sorry Chair to [come?] back to the table ... I uh ... with due respect to my colleagues from New Zealand and Australia; in this regard how we are developing the latest interventions have <have> uh err... in other words I'm not comfortable because there are around the table general concensus as to move forward and if we have to reflect one or two then it defeats the purpose of us being around the table, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Cook Islands. Papua New Guinea ....

Papua New Guinea – Thank you Honourable Chair, it's <it's>the nature of how we proceed and I think if two members wish to seek a deferment of the consideration of this, that should be respected. So let's allow that time and then once they come then we can proceed debate to adoption on this, I thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea .... [long pause] ... in that case I would like to .... Fiji ....

Fiji – Thank you Mr Chair, uuhm I don't want to intervene but I think in the name of moving forward perhaps I think all members ..... **[Side B of Tape 8 ends]** ... **[[from notes] have been given the same document at the same time, and if we could just agree on item one (i), and defer consideration of the ...]**

Fiji – .... **[Side A of Tape 9 starts]** ... terms of reference. Perhaps after agreeing to the items here before us and obviously there is some concensus, there is concensus on maintaining this paragraph. If Australia and New Zealand could consider that in the name of progressing the meeting today, you know it will be highly appreciated by all members here. Thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Fiji. New Zealand ...

New Zealand – We certainly have no wish to duly delay the process, however there is consensus on the question of ownership of the process by Council but there is not consensus on this recommendation. And well I'll leave it at that, but really respectfully your indulgence for us to have some time to think about that would be much appreciated.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand. Well as has been mentioned delegates; there is a large number of delegates who wish to retain this paragraph. I think I have to accept that as the decision of the majority to retain this paragraph one [i]. We move on to the next, thank you. FSM ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank [you] Mr Chairman, are we on number two right now, Mr Chairman? [Chair replies "yes number two now"] two, ok I was gonna suggest language in line one-zero-four ... "preparation of draft roadmap that maybe submitted to the SOPAC Governing Council for consideration...." but I'm kinda confused if we gonna say "by the Forum in 2010" doesn't seem to flow from there? SOPAC Governing Council .... for consideration by the Forum in 2010?" maybe we just need some clarification with that language.

Chair – Can I ask the Director to clarify that?

Director – I'm just trying to recall the extensive debate on this particular paragraph and at the time ... I'm just trying to go back to the actual wording. In the original paper, Supplementary 1, Part 1 after the recommendations, at the time New Zealand was providing some suggested wording as a way forward in terms of timelines and the notion is introducing "by 2010" was made. The wording in the Supplementary Paper was "to be submitted for consideration by the Forum in 2010," but then in fact that "in" was changed to "by". But at the time, it was "and the final road map" so at this stage I can understand FSM's point, in the way that it's worded, is that the draft roadmap to be submitted for consideration by both the SOPAC Governing Council and then by the Forum by 2010, so there would be a need to tighten up that language a little.

Chair – Thank you Director. New Zealand ....

New Zealand – Thank you Director I agree with you. We were suggesting that we revert to the recommendation that you put forward yourself which was "a final roadmap to be submitted to SOPAC Council..." well really it was "submitted to the Forum in 2010" with the assumption that it had been approved by the Governing Council before that time. Maybe we could just revert to the wording that was in your recommendation.

Chair – Thank you New Zealand. FSM ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you Chairman. Actually my confusion here is that it says "to be submitted to the SOPAC Governing Council for consideration by the Forum". No other than that. That's my concern, it says submitted to the SOPAC Governing Council for consideration by the Forum; maybe we just delete SOPAC Governing Council and say "submitted for consideration by the Forum," with the understanding that it has cleared through the SOPAC Council of course.

Chair – Thank you. Guam ...

Guam – Thank you Mr Chairman, One way of looking at this as I am interpreting it; maybe we could insert after "consideration" wording that 'it would be submitted to SOPAC Governing Council for consideration, and then insert 'with the intent of a final draft (or report) to the Forum by 2010.' I think that was the intent.

Chair – Thank you Guam. We can insert that wording on the screen. Is that agreed? New Zealand ...

New Zealand – Sorry Chair but may I just take a minute to read it through.

Chair – Sure. [pause] New Zealand ....

New Zealand – Thank you sir, I'm not sure it does capture where we were in our original recommendation, if I may read it out, "roadmap submitted for consideration by Forum in 2010."<sup>1</sup> So that was quite clear and obviously before that there would be discussions with Council along the way. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you. Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – I am in alignment with the current language, with the option of maybe inserting after "consideration" 'in 2008', "with the intent of .....lah lah lah..." right to the end. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you Cook Islands. Papua New Guinea ...

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<sup>1</sup> While this text was read out by New Zealand at this juncture, the Drafting Committee received a submission later from them at its final meeting in Suva early in December that the reading should have been – "a final road map submitted to the Forum by 2010" – as agreed by Council during the RIF discussion. Council accepted that reading when clearing the finaldraft of the Summary Record of the 36<sup>th</sup> Session in late December.

Papua New Guinea – Thank you honourable Chair, just a slight variation to Cook Islands...”preparation of a draft roadmap to be submitted to the SOPAC Governing Council for consideration and approval with the intent of a final roadmap being submitted to the Forum in 2010.”

Chair – Thank you. FSM ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you Chairman. With due respect to my colleagues, I think we had taken out the timeline of 2008 simply because we are asking the Director of SOPAC to engage in the process with SPREP and SPC; and I think we heard already from the SPREP Director that he cannot engage until after he’s had his meeting; which may not be until after our meeting next year, and we cannot of course ... we requesting and we telling our Director to engage them but of course it is up to them to engage and I think the other point I was trying to make earlier is that we cannot of course demand our Director to come with a roadmap I guess if the directors don’t wanna engage. We’re asking her then to come up with a roadmap on her own without the consultation process.

Chair – Thank you FSM. Cook Islands .....

Cook Islands – Thank you Mr Chair. I concur with the intervention by Papua New Guinea and on the timeline being taken out I concur with the final text as it is.

Chair – Thank you. Samoa ....

Samoa – Thank you honourable Chair, Samoa has no difficulties with the text as it is, thank you.

Chair – Agreed. Guam ....

Guam – Mr Chairman, thank you. I think I’d feel better on approving or deciding on this paragraph if there is a brief explanation ... perhaps the Director could explain what the view of the roadmap would be.... what is that entailing that we’ll be receiving, just very briefly ... what the roadmap would be, what sense? Thank you.

Director – Well clearly under Part three (iii), it does actually outline quite a number of areas that will need examination; and so I would suggest that the three CEOs would need to look at the various areas that you as Council, and I’m sure their councils will instruct us to examine in greater detail. I would suggest as well that our discussions would likely need to result in various options being presented, and so therefore the roadmap would need to be able to outline the most effective way forward with that genuine intent of what is the best arrangement for improved service delivery of regional services to yourselves as members of the various organisations that currently exist. But I’m you know, very much thinking out loud at the moment, I wish I did have a vision of what that roadmap looks like right now; but I suspect that it would comprise a number of elements but clearly with some indications of just what the new arrangements would look like as well as how we would travel that path to achieve the new arrangements. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you. So are we happy with the paragraph as it stands now with those amendments? Are we agreed? Agreed. Paragraph three (iii). FSM ....

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you Chair. I feel that the main thrust of the paragraph there has been covered already. I would suggest that we delete the whole paragraph.

Chair – Suggestion that we delete the paragraph, are we agreed on that? New Zealand; and then Guam ....

New Zealand – No we wouldn’t agree with that honourable Chair, I think the addition of the SOPAC Council as a whole and the possibility that we would also have a SPREP council as a whole and

an SPC council as a whole, if anything, strengthens the need for an option of facilitation to be available; so we would certainly not want to see this recommendation being deleted, thank you Sir.

Chair – Guam, and then Papua New Guinea ....

Guam – Thank you Mr Chair. We'd support the deletion of this paragraph. I think previous paragraphs are sufficient to cover the need, it could be looked at as being a bit repetitive, thank you.

Chair – Papua New Guinea ....

Papua New Guinea – Honourable Chair I think I belaboured this issue for quite some time because of the original language that was introduced; however, towards the end the suggestion that was made by Cook Islands was not opposed so I don't see any reason why we're trying to delete this. But I stand to be corrected, thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. So the feeling is to retain this paragraph as amended. FSM ...

Federated States of Micronesia – Thank you Chairman I feel that we are repeating ourselves because actually if you'd recall that we had actually come to the end of the recommendations, and the only reason why we're back to this is because of the suggestion from Australia that we put in the option to engage the SG. I think the original language was "under the auspices of SG of PIFS."

Chair – Australia ...

Australia – I would endorse the comment by Papua New Guinea. I think we agreed this, and I don't know how we're ever gonna end this meeting Chair if we keep on coming back to items that we've agreed. I don't know how long we can keep on re-opening subjects that we've agreed.

Chair – Thank you Australia. Yes I think that we've agreed on this paragraph. [Whispers at the head table] Yes we have agreed but the wording there is being proposed on whether it is acceptable or palatable to Council. Papua New Guinea ....

Papua New Guinea – I think let's get our facts correct. Under the auspices of the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat no longer exists as per the suggestion by Cook Islands, that's my recollection. That's the reason why the language "with the option to engage the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat" was offered by this delegation. I thank you Chair.

Chair – Yes, I think the suggestion ... the amendment was made by Papua New Guinea as a compromise to include "with the option to engage the Secretary General of the PIFS." Yes. FSM ....

Federated States of Micronesia – Because it seems like actually a different point from all others, so perhaps I could suggest to move that language "with option ...." somewhere in item two (ii).

Chair – Sorry to move? You suggest to move where?

Federated States of Micronesia – For example "with the option to engage the SG of PIFS" can be moved up to item two (ii) after "as appropriate".

Chair – Thank you, so the suggestion is we move "with the option to engage the SG of PIFS" up to paragraph two (ii) ... have a look at the new paragraph two (ii). [extra long pause] Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – Thank you sir. Just reviewing the document, I didn't agree with the movement of "with the option to engage the SG of PIFS" .... yeah, just where yeah ..... yes! over there ... sorry

I'm talking over the microphone I'm looking also at the ... [this is directed at the projector screen where text is being moved]. And I think my colleague from Australia will agree with me, because that's what she had yesterday, thank you.

Chair – Thank you. Guam ...

Guam – Thank you Mr Chairman. I view this as removing some of the redundancy of this two different paragraphs. I approve of this. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you. Are we happy with that? Can we accept that? Agreed. Thank you. If we go to paragraph three (iii), that makes it redundant, and we might as well delete it. Cook Islands ....

Cook Islands – That is correct sir, thank you.

Chair – Delete paragraph three (iii). Paragraph four (iv) was agreed. Bullet point one agreed. Bullet point two was agreed; and bullet point three was agreed. There's a new language bullet point four – "finding a mechanism that will enable the benefits of STAR to be continued", we agreed? Fiji ....

Fiji – Thank you Mr Chair, I beg the indulgence of delegates around the table. Just going back to the other point in the previous para. "it might require prior resolution" line one thirty four (134) and the use of [the] word "absorption." Could that word be replaced with "rationalisation"? Thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Fiji. Rationalisation .... We agreed? OK. Are we agreed on that final bullet point for STAR ... including? We are? Thank you. Agreed. Next paragraph. We agreed to retain line 94, so .... So we need to have a look at paragraph five (v) to see if we retain it or delete it since we have approved line ninety four (94). Palau ...

Palau – Thank you Chair, I think we should delete that one. Thank you.

Chair – Thank you. Samoa ...

Samoa – Thank you honourable Chair. We have called for the establishment of the sub-committee, a small sub-committee comprising of the Director and a small team under the suggested new one (i) and this is basically to provide direction and guidance by the team to guide the work of our Director. I wonder whether it is within our mandate to actually call for a committee comprising of other governing bodies and whether we should just leave it to SPREP and SPC to see whether they feel that there is a need to establish a sub-committees to advise their respective directors. Thank you honourable Chair.

Chair – Thank you Samoa. Papua New Guinea ... and then Kiribati.

Papua New Guinea – Honourable Chair I fully endorse Samoa's point here in terms of how they engage, letter can be exchanged between CEOs on the modus operandi. Thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea, Kiribati ...

Kiribati – Thank you I take in consideration what has been echoed by my colleagues but we need (in my opinion) to tie up that paragraph with the one that you mentioned in ninety four so that it doesn't repeat itself and consistent in the flow.

Chair – Thank you Kiribati. It's been suggested that maybe we do away with one thirty, paragraph five (v). I suggest we delete that, alright? Agreed? Delete! Can we move on to line one four four, which has been agreed. Are we happy with that? Agreed. Thank you. Line one fifty was agreed as well. Fiji ....

Fiji – Thank you Mr Chair. I thought in discussions prior to this a lot of concern was raised with regard to STAR and I was just wondering if we could please include that the Chair of STAR could be included in the organisations that will be informed of the outcomes of this Council.

Chair – Thank you Fiji, yeah we can include that ... Guam ....

Guam – Mr Chairman I'd just like to support that idea and suggest we do it.

Chair – Thank you, we'll include that Chair of STAR as informed as well. Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – Thank you Mr Chair, I concur with my colleagues; however that is why we established a key stakeholder component there because we actually have a large number of partners in this regard, and if we articulate one then we probably have to articulate the whole lot and bring up the ones with the MOUs etc etc. Thank you.

Chair – Is key stakeholders sufficient Fiji, or do you need to specify 'Chair of STAR'?

Fiji – Thank you Mr Chair, I think STAR plays a pivotal role during Council and since they perform a very valuable service and a free service to this Council and to SOPAC I think it is important we show our appreciation by including their name here. Thank you Chair. PNG, Samoa then Cook Islands ...

Papua New Guinea – Thank you honourable Chair. The distinguished delegate from Fiji mentioned a voluntary service and I take the point that Cook Islands made, there are those key stakeholders that have formal arrangements with us and there are those like STAR that are voluntary; now if we gonna do it we're gonna be listing everybody so I would rather that we truncate that to donor partners and key stakeholders, STAR is a key stakeholder within that context, and I thank you Chair.

Chair – Samoa ....

Samoa – Sorry honourable Chair my intervention is not related to this ... just going back to line one four eight, and just for consistency purposes if you could just change the word CEO to what has been used throughout the document thank you.

Chair – Thank you Samoa, Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – Thank you Mr Chair, I ..... **[Side A of Tape 9 ends]**. [Missing part supplied from notes as no Voice Recorder record of this segment's bridge] The Chair of the STAR is an important part of our organisation and I commend the work, but I think that if we articulate one partner we have to do them all. So maybe leave the words at 'key stakeholders' but have a supplementary paper on who they are.

New Zealand – Alternatively we could just say 'including the Chair of STAR'.

Chair – Sounds reasonable. Agreed?

Cook Islands – Agreed but can we still have a separate list articulating other partners?

Chair – Yes .....

**[Side B of Tape 9 starts]**

Chair – ...agreed on the conclusions and recommendations. The terms of reference that was mentioned, I think New Zealand needed more time, and perhaps we can look at that after lunch. I

also remind delegates that we also have quite a few items left on our agenda. Maybe if we take our lunch and be back at 1:30 to try and complete our business today. Meeting's adjourned.

[LUNCH BREAK]

[Reconvening after lunch on the last day, some delay occurred while New Zealand and Australian reps engage the Director in conversation. Meeting re-opens half an hour later than intended]

Chair – We apologise for the delay. We have received another proposal, a proposed amendment to paragraph one (i). As it appears up on the screen there it reads... [reading] 'agreed that a Committee of the SOPAC Council as a Whole be established and adequately resourced to guide and advise the Director during the consultative process with a terms of reference to be agreed at its first meeting.'

That will shorten discussions as the terms of reference can be agreed later at its first meeting. [Pause to gauge reaction] ... Papua New Guinea ...

Papua New Guinea – I think that formulation meets with Papua New Guinea's agreement. We can at least reflect inter-sessionally on this to the first meeting of that committee. Thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you Papua New Guinea. Other delegates happy with that? ... Fiji ...

Fiji – Fiji agrees with that text, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Fiji. Samoa ....

Samoa – Thank you honourable Chair, we also agree with the text, thank you.

Chair – Thank you Samoa. Tonga ...

Tonga – Tonga would like to concur, thank you honourable Chairman.

Chair – Thank you Tonga. Cook Islands ...

Cook Islands – The Cook Islands would also like to concur with this. I would like for this text to also capture what Papua New Guinea has established. The consultative process, by way of inter-sessionary process.

Chair – Thank you Cook Islands. Could we ask Papua New Guinea where we'd like to insert "inter-sessionary"?

Papua New Guinea – I think what I was suggesting was that it's inferred there, not unless you want to be particular about inserting it so you could say "with the terms of reference to be agreed at its first meeting prior to which discussions can take place inter-sessionally." But I think it's too .... I think it's already inferred because there will be discussions. Thank you Chair.

Chair – Thank you. Ok, is that agreed? Agreed? Fine. Thank you. Agreed [to scribe]. Delegates that completes eleven point one [11.1], thank you for your discussions on this item, which is of crucial importance to the Commission.

**[the end]**