

DÉCLARATION DE TAHITI NUI

SECRETARIAT OF THE
PACIFIC COMMUNITY

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DÉCLARATION DE TAHITI NUI —

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I ntroduction



The *Déclaration de Tahiti Nui* was adopted in December 1999 by the First Meeting of the Conference of the Pacific Community. It is a companion document to the Corporate Plan and describes the operational policies of the organisation (SPC) and any changes to it. Like the Corporate Plan, the *Déclaration de Tahiti Nui* is a living document; it is revised regularly in order to incorporate relevant policy decisions of the Conference of the Pacific Community and of CRGA in years when the Conference does not meet.

I dentity



1. As decided by the 37th South Pacific Conference, Canberra 1997, the South Pacific Commission has been renamed the Pacific Community — in brief, the Community.
2. A new logo and flag were adopted by the First Meeting of the Conference in Tahiti, November 1999.



3. The organisation's governing body is known as the Conference of the Pacific Community — in brief, the Conference.
4. The Conference may, as required, be represented by a committee of the whole — the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA).

5. Members' delegations are usually drawn from their governments' foreign ministries, with Conference meeting at the ministerial level and CRGA at the level of senior officials.
6. Conference and CRGA are served by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). SPC is also commonly referred to as the Secretariat, particularly when its administrative role is the subject of reference.
7. SPC is a technical assistance, training and research organisation that serves 22 Pacific Island countries and territories. SPC operates in two official languages, English and French. Its headquarters is located in Noumea, the seat of government of New Caledonia.
8. There is a major outposting of staff to SPC's Nabua offices in Suva, using buildings provided by the Government of Fiji Islands. SPC's Community Education Training Centre (CETC), has a permanent site at Narere on the outskirts of Suva. The Forestry programmes are leasing a wing of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat's Suva headquarters. Small teams and individuals may be located at additional island sites depending on changing programme needs. Modern communication technology is a valuable aid in maintaining the cohesion of one organisation with its headquarters in Noumea.

Membership



9. The Community has 26 member governments and administrations as listed in paragraph 10.
10. American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji Islands, France, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, United States of America, Vanuatu, Wallis and Futuna.
11. The Community is prepared to receive expressions of interest in membership from both returning members and new parties. Decisions on all matters relating to new membership, including the associated financial arrangements, rest with the Conference.
 - Admission of new members to the Pacific Community is a matter of policy on which a decision can only be made by Conference and by consensus.
 - Until decided otherwise by Conference, the Pacific Community is open to enquiries from interested governments regarding application for new membership.

- The Director-General is empowered, when directed by CRGA and Conference, to enter into negotiations on financial details of membership with potential new and returning members, consulting with particular Community members as appropriate.
 - The Director-General must keep the Community fully informed of the progress of any such negotiations. The final formal offer on terms of entry must be relayed to all Community members for comment.
 - There should be no agreement to either new or returning membership by Conference before the financial terms have been settled.
 - The question of whether or not a new member's assessed contribution is additional to existing contributions should be decided before acceptance of membership.
12. Members may withdraw from the Pacific Community after providing 12 months' notice of intent to Conference.

Executive Structure



13. **Conference.** Conference is the Community's governing body; it meets every two years, usually hosted by invitation from either a member country or territory.
14. Conference is charged with establishing the policies of the organisation, either on its own behalf or reacting to recommendations for change submitted by the Secretariat through CRGA. SPC's annual budget is approved by Conference on the recommendation of CRGA in Conference years, and approved by CRGA in years between Conferences.
15. Conference must appoint the Director-General, who is the Chief Executive Officer of SPC, and evaluate his or her performance in relation to contractual arrangements. Conference may decide not to renew a Director-General's contract if the evaluation process yields evidence of unsatisfactory performance.
16. The position of Conference Chairperson is held for a period of two years. When the Conference is held outside headquarters, the host country nominates the Chairperson. When Conference

meets at headquarters in Noumea, the Chairperson is appointed, according to past practice, on a rotational basis, in alphabetical order, involving all member governments and administrations, giving preference to those that will not in the foreseeable future be in a position to host the Conference. The Vice-Chairperson is normally chosen in alphabetical order of members from among the Pacific Island countries and territories.

17. Both Conference and CRGA arrive at decisions through a process of debate, based on the concept of Pacific consensus. On very rare occasions voting may be employed after concerted attempts to achieve consensus have failed. Each member country or territory may cast one vote, with procedures ruled on by the Chairperson.
18. Official observers, the public and the media are welcome to attend all meeting sessions unless Conference and CRGA decide otherwise.
19. **CRGA.** This Committee is empowered by Conference to meet annually, in the “between Conference” year in Noumea as the governing body and the following year in association with Conference. CRGA’s key role is to review and approve SPC’s work programme considering changing priorities and new initiatives. In fulfilling this role, CRGA receives advice on sectoral needs and priorities from triennial Technical Meetings of Island Governments’ Heads of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, Health and from others as required.
20. The positions of CRGA Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are held for periods of one year on a rotational basis in alphabetical order of CRGA members involving all members. The Vice-Chairperson becomes the Chairperson of the succeeding meeting.

21. CRGA deals with the audit and approves amendments to the Staff and Finance Regulations. SPC's annual budgets are approved by CRGA in those years when Conference does not meet. CRGA is also empowered by Conference to establish organisational policy at its "between Conference" meetings.
22. As with Conference, CRGA must also evaluate the performance of the Director-General. In the year a new Director-General is appointed, CRGA must deliver a shortlist of superior candidates and recommend the leading contender to the attention of Conference.
23. Proxy votes are not allowed.
24. **The Chief Executive.** The Director-General, the Chief Executive Officer of the organisation, is appointed by Conference on the basis of the following selection criteria relating to the qualifications and managerial experience required to lead SPC in fulfilling its regional role as described in the Corporate Plan:
 - a) Understands technical and regional issues;
 - b) Is sensitive to the needs of the organisation and the region;
 - c) Has technical experience in areas relating to the purpose of the organisation;
 - d) Understands the geopolitical aspects of the region;
 - e) Is a good manager of research, technical and administrative staff;
 - f) Has leadership qualities;
 - g) Is a good communicator both within and outside the organisation;
 - h) Can work well with donors;
 - i) Can formulate a vision for the organisation.

25. The Director-General may hold office for a maximum of six years involving three consecutive contracts, two years each. Contract renewal is dependent on sound performance.
26. The Director-General has the authority to appoint Deputies through a selection process that allows for consultation with member governments and administrations. Given satisfactory performance, Deputies may serve for a maximum of six years through two, three-year contracts. Their performance is appraised annually by the Director-General.
27. In essence, the Director-General has full responsibility and authority to manage SPC within the guidelines provided by established policies determined by CRGA and Conference. He or she develops the vision, sets the goals, makes the decisions, and in so doing, is fully accountable to CRGA and Conference for any failure to meet the organisation's objectives.
28. The Director-General may modify the structure of the organisation from time to time, in order to maintain organisational efficiency. However, the approval of CRGA and Conference is required where a planned structural change is of a major nature, involving considerations of policy direction and/or cost increase.
29. In managing organisational change the Director-General is responsible for developing a policy and reviewing programme outputs including recommendations to CRGA and Conference.
30. By regular reporting, the Director-General must keep member countries and territories well informed about the state of SPC's administration and work programmes.

The Secretariat



31. SPC is a technical organisation with approximately 280 staff. Staff are selected on merit, without restriction as to nationality, but with due attention being given to gender equity and the maintenance of strong representation from island-based professionals. Preference is given to Pacific Islanders, given equal qualifications and experience. All staff are employed on term contracts, usually of three years' duration. Sound performance will earn a professional staff member a second three-year term, but all such positions are readvertised every three years after the initial six years. Support staff are locally recruited and enjoy greater security of tenure.
32. The salary levels and allowances of SPC professionals are, after due consideration by CRGA and Conference, harmonised as part of a remuneration policy across all the relevant CROP organisations, while retaining flexibility in each organisation. This regional policy is now referred to as CROP harmonisation of terms and conditions of employment, the acronym being derived from the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific, the meeting ground of the heads of Pacific regional agencies.

33. SPC has three divisions. The Social Resources Division is led by the Deputy Director-General (DDG) (Noumea); the Land Resources and Marine Resources Divisions are led by their respective Directors. The Senior DDG (Suva) is responsible for Social Resources and Marine Resources Programmes based in Suva, in addition to his overall responsibility for the SPC Regional Suva Office. Besides overseeing the Social Resources Division, the DDG (Noumea) has other extradivisional responsibilities.
34. In addition, SPC has Programme Support Services, a Communication Office, a Planning Unit, and a Corporate Services Department.
35. There is a structure of programme heads within divisions following a modern approach to the management of technical organisations. Coordination within divisions is the responsibility of their divisional leaders supported by key staff as focal points in major sectoral areas.
36. **Functions.** As outlined in the Corporate Plan, SPC is tasked by Conference to undertake research, technical assistance and training in support of the economic and social development of the region's 22 Pacific Island countries and territories. The Pacific Community expects SPC to demonstrate a special quality of guardianship in relation to the wise, long-term utilisation and management of the region's natural resources.
37. SPC's scope of work is essentially unlimited in terms of sectoral content. However, there are practical restrictions on programme content through the critical need to work cooperatively in the region, avoiding activities that either duplicate or infringe upon the role of other regional and international agencies active in the Pacific.

38. From early on, it was established that SPC must avoid activities of a political nature; politics are the province of the Pacific Islands Forum. There is a natural integration of regional roles between the political focus of the Forum and the technical assistance focus of the Community.
39. SPC's formal communication channels run from the work programmes to members' focal points usually located in foreign ministries. Strong informal networks are maintained sectorally. Most of SPC's training and technical assistance is directed to government agencies but, with approval, there is an increasing outreach to the private sector and non-governmental organisations.
40. SPC's budget has traditionally been divided into "core" and "non-core" components.
41. Core income is derived from assessed annual membership contributions and other sources such as bank interest, project management fees and miscellaneous income. Core income in 2005 is about CFP units 8.7 million (approximately USD 9 million¹).
42. In addition, members and donor partners make voluntary contributions (commonly referred to as "non-core" funding) that are normally earmarked for specific technical programmes or projects. Currently, the non-core budget is about double the size of the core budget. These monies are provided by a number of aid donors.
43. With regard to assessed contributions, it is Conference's desire to maintain the contributions by current members at the preceding year's level without adjustments for inflation. Budgets are

¹ At current exchange rates (February 2005)

therefore prepared on this basis. Increases are possible but require the Secretariat to submit appropriate requests for consideration by Conference and/or CRGA. Australia, France, New Zealand, and the United States currently provide around 90 per cent of the total assessed contributions, with the Pacific Community's island members funding the remaining 10 per cent. The funding formula is reviewed every three years.


44. With regard to income from sources other than members' assessed contributions, Conference has directed the Secretariat to maximise income from such sources.
45. SPC's expenditure budget will be no greater than the projected income and any approved transfers from the Secretariat's reserves and funds, requiring the Secretariat to present a balanced or surplus budget to its governing body. During the course of the year, the Director-General may revise the budget in accordance with the guidelines of the organisation's Financial Regulations.
46. **Inter-organisational Relationships:** It is incumbent on SPC's Executive and staff to cooperate fully and to the limit of their capacity with all regional and international development agencies operating in the Pacific.
47. Although the Secretariat's primary partners and first points of contact are its constituency of members, there is an imposing list of agencies that are potential regional associates of SPC. These agencies can be classified into four main groups:
 - The many aid donors operating in the Pacific who, as discussed, contribute most of the funds supporting SPC's technical services;

- The international agencies including the UN family, the development banks, the research organisations and the Commonwealth Secretariat;
 - The family of Pacific regional organisations brought together by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat in its role as Chair of CROP. SPC gives particular attention to areas of coordination and cooperation and harmonisation with the CROP agencies in order to increase efficiency and avoid costly duplication in delivering regional services; and
 - The non-governmental organisations, including churches, welfare and volunteer agencies.
48. SPC has signed Memoranda of Understanding with numerous international and national agencies and regional governments.
49. **Privileges and Immunities:** Community members, including the host government of SPC, have the responsibility of ensuring that the Pacific Community's Secretariat is granted privileges and immunities that are generally in line with the international conventions that apply to organisations of similar nature throughout the world. There are formal agreements and legislation in a number of member countries relating to this requirement. Importantly, these include the 2003 Immunities and Privileges Agreement with France, relating to the SPC headquarters located in Noumea, New Caledonia.

The Pacific Islands region



Our Vision and Mission



Our Vision for the region is a secure and prosperous Pacific Community, whose people are healthy and manage their resources in an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable way.

Our Vision for the Secretariat is a highly professional and dynamic bilingual organisation, working in partnership with other international and regional organisations and our donor partners to serve our island members

Our Mission is to help Pacific Island people make and implement informed decisions about their future.

Corporate strategies 2003-2006

- 1 Putting People First –
Human Resource Development
- 2 Achieving the International Community's
Development Goals in the Pacific
- 3 Placing Greater emphasis on Sectoral
Policy Analysis and Advice
- 4 Communicating and Collaborating
effectively with Stakeholders
- 5 Enhancing the Organisation's Planning
and Quality Assurance Systems





SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY