



MEMORANDUM of AGREEMENT Between the CEOs of SPC, SOPAC, and SPREP In Regard to the Regional Institutional Framework Review

- 1 This Memorandum of Agreement is made to record the consensus reached between the CEOs of SPC, SOPAC and SPREP, in regard to the regional institutional framework review, as reflected in the Leaders decisions and decisions of our respective governing bodies. It also recognises the desire of the SOPAC members that the “core” of the current SOPAC work programme be retained rather than fragmented.
- 2 The consensus position of this agreement reflects a common understanding that is underpinned by mutual respect and trust, to ensure that anticipated gains are not eroded.
- 3 In regard to defining the new institutional arrangements the CEOs **agree** to analyse and develop implementation plans consistent with the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1. The ICT-Outreach component of SOPAC’s work programme be coordinated and absorbed by SPC. The CEOs of SOPAC and SPC work bilaterally to develop an implementation plan to ensure this transfer of ICT-Outreach work takes place as soon as practicable, and is presented to the July Meeting.

Recommendation 2. The CEOs of SPC, SOPAC and SPREP work trilaterally to develop an implementation plan to ensure the transfer of regional energy responsibilities takes place as soon as practicable, and incorporates the decision of the recent Pacific Energy Ministers Meeting in Tonga, and is presented to the July Meeting. The PEMM recommended that regional and donor coordination delivery of energy services to Pacific island countries be strengthened and delivered through one energy agency (SPC) and through one programme contributing to the development of a stronger energy sector and improved service to member countries.

In this context it was noted that there was a need to ensure that energy policy and climate change policy remained separate where environmental aspects are managed by SPREP and energy sector activities by SPC so as to ensure that the socioeconomic aspects of energy were adequately addressed.

Recommendation 3. A re-branded regional environment and resource management organisation (notionally called the “Pacific Islands Environment and Resources Management Commission”) be established by integration of the ‘core’ functions and programmes of SPREP and SOPAC, while taking into account the recommendations of the SPREP Independent Corporate Review (ICR). The CEOs of SOPAC and SPREP, will work bilaterally to develop an implementation plan and report to the Joint Meeting.

4 The CEOs **agree** in respect of Recommendation 3, that this is a timely and rare, if not unique, opportunity to significantly reform the regional profile for the environment and sustainable management of natural resources. This recommendation articulates the necessary action required to take full advantage of this opportunity, the outcome of which will be improved service delivery to members. This significant reform is in-keeping with the Leaders call for reform of the regional institutional framework.

5 The CEOs also **agree** in order to achieve the full potential in respect of Recommendation 3, that the members of SPREP and SOPAC, supported by the full commitment of their CEOs and Secretariats, must support (i) an integration of the current work programme of SPREP with the “core” work programme of SOPAC, and (ii) the establishment of a re-branded regional organisation governance arrangement, notionally called the Pacific Islands Environment and Resources Management Commission.

6 Furthermore, the CEOs **agree** in respect of Recommendation 3, that the recommendation does not mean that SOPAC will be absorbed by SPREP. SPREP does not have the capacity to absorb SOPAC given the current realities with respect to: (i) the current size difference in terms of secured financial resources and staff, (ii) the need to address the recent SPREP Independent Corporate Review and, (iii) the need to address the outcome of the audit of SPREP by the EU.

7 The CEOs **agree** that while the Consultants were initially tasked to focus the second part of their work on developing an implementation plan for Recommendation 3, as a result of work undertaken, CEOs have a greater appreciation of the range and magnitude of the issues involved including legal issues, timeframes, risks, and cost implications. CEOs have requested the Consultants to analyse and develop an implementation plan for the alternate option that they addressed in their Part One report. That option is the establishment of the SOPAC core work programme as a division of SPC.

8 It is expected this MOA will be superseded when the new institutional arrangements and related implementation plans are agreed upon.

Dated: 7th May 2009, Suva, Fiji



Signed: Jimmie Rodgers, Director General of SPC



Signed: Cristelle Pratt, Director of SOPAC



Signed: Kosi Latu, Acting Director of SPREP