



**Second Meeting of the SOPAC Division
Noumea, New Caledonia, 6-9 November 2012
(SOPAC-2)**

AGENDA ITEM	TITLE
7.	ADOPTION OF STATEMENT FOR CONSIDERATION BY CRGA

CHAIR'S OUTCOME STATEMENT

1. The second meeting of the Applied Geoscience and Technology Division (SOPAC) of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) was held at the Jacques Iekawe conference hall at the SPC Headquarters in Noumea, New Caledonia, from 6 to 9 November 2012; and chaired by the representative of the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia. The meeting was preceded by the 29th Meeting of the Science, Technology and Resources Network (STAR).
2. The meeting acknowledged with acclamation the presence of the Prime Minister of the Cook Islands and Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum the Honourable Henry Puna. His Keynote Address to STAR and his Outgoing Chair's Report to the Division Meeting contained sentiments of strong support for STAR and the work of the SOPAC Division. He urged that these continue to be developed and strengthened in the future.
3. The second meeting (SOPAC-2) while again acknowledging the visibility of early benefits of the merger of SOPAC into SPC reiterated to CRGA that it ensure that through the current transition phase and into the future, the best of the former SPC and former SOPAC is retained and if possible improved on.
4. The meeting further reiterated the importance of the work programmes of the SOPAC Division and acknowledged that this has been confirmed by the findings of the reviews during the past year which focused on defining the SPC core business for the future.
5. The meeting acknowledged the excellent work programme service delivery to members over the past year. Furthermore, the meeting noted that several elements of the SOPAC-1 Meeting Chair's Summary Report had been accomplished. Nonetheless, much of the SOPAC-1 Meeting Chair's Summary Report remained work in progress or was yet to be addressed. The meeting agreed that many of the elements of SOPAC-1 remained relevant and should be considered in the future along with the Chair's Summary Report of the SOPAC-2 Meeting.
6. The meeting acknowledged the new meeting agenda format which focused attention on presenting 12 key highlights from the past year's work and recommended it be continued, noting that a full narrative and a summary report was provided for the work

programme and that from these 47 key activities had been identified against the Key Result Areas of the Strategic Plan.

7. The meeting expressed urgency to CRGA in taking forward the long term sustainable financing strategy for the organisation and acknowledged that the SOPAC Division continues to operate at capacity at the current levels of funding and noted the increasing non-programmed demands by island members on the work programme and services delivered by the division.
8. The meeting acknowledged with gratitude the past, continued and future support given to the work programme by development and donor partners.
9. The meeting noted that the Chair's Outcome Statement took into consideration the views of the Programme Monitoring and Evaluation Group (PMEG) that reviewed the reports of work programme implementation prior to the meeting.
10. The following Member countries of the Pacific Community were represented: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, France, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.
11. In addition to the Member countries and territories, the following supporting agencies were represented at the STAR meeting during 3-5 November 2012: University of the South Pacific, European Union, WMO Office for the South-West Pacific, Australian National University, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, EcoSTEPS – Sustainability Partner, (NZ) GNS Science, Geoscience Australia, Institut de Recherche pour le Développement, Institut Louis Malarde, (NZ) Institute of Environmental Science and Research Ltd, International Bureau of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research at the Project Management Agency c/o German Aerospace Center, Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology, Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology, Landcare Research, National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, Service Géologique de Nouvelle-Calédonie (SGNC), University of Canterbury, University of Hawai'i at Manoa, University of New Caledonia, Moss Landing Marine Laboratories, Victoria University of Wellington, Yale-NUS College and ZoNéCo program (ADECAL). A number of these agencies also attended the SOPAC-2 meeting.
12. The meeting recognised and expressed appreciation to Dr Russell Howorth, the Director of SOPAC, for his leadership and contributions to SOPAC and to the Pacific region over the past 34 years from the CCOP to SOPAC the Commission to where it is now as a division of SPC. The meeting noted the arrival of the incumbent Director in the new year.

Science, Technology and Resources Network (STAR)

13. The meeting expressed its appreciation to the Chair of STAR Professor John Collen and the scientists of the STAR Network for their continued support to the SOPAC Division work programme.
14. The meeting noted the advice from the Director General that it was his intention to seek the support of CRGA that the STAR Network, which is an independent body, extend its traditional geoscientific focus to cover other relevant areas of the SPC work programme.
15. The meeting noted for the first time the inclusion of papers on topics other than traditional earth science. This expansion is something that is seen as especially important in the Pacific, where research has to be multi-disciplinary and where the results of that research are often of immediate benefit to the nations of the region.

16. The meeting expressed its appreciation for the contribution from colleagues at IRD, noting that this engagement needs to be encouraged.
17. The meeting noted the formation of STAR working groups on Marine benthic habitats, Ocean acidification, Water and sanitation, Seismic hazard and tsunami early warning systems and information sharing.

WORK PROGRAMME DELIVERY

18. The meeting acknowledged that in the context of impacts and benefits derived by members from outputs delivered by the Division – these by necessity must be determined collaboratively with the members. Furthermore, it was noted that some benefits are immediate such as the saving of certain lives due to provision of communication equipment to the communities on the remote atoll island of Pinglap in FSM; whilst alternately some benefits are realised in the longer term such as the decade of effort put into maritime boundaries activities which resulted in the signing of eight boundaries treaties at the recent Pacific Islands Forum.
19. The meeting acknowledged the cross-sectoral, integrated, and multi-disciplinary work being carried out both across the division programmes and increasingly occurring with the other divisions of the SPC.
20. The meeting highlighted the importance of ensuring that appropriate training opportunities are available to the region at a range of levels, from vocational to professional, in order to support productive career paths and maximise the contribution of local expertise to the region. Members recognised the value of past programmes offering entry-level technical and vocational training in earth sciences, marine geology and hydrology, and agreed on the need for these past programmes to be reviewed and opportunities identified to reintroduce a similar programme on a sustained basis.
21. The meeting endorsed the Joint Outcome Statement of the 4th Session of the Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management and the Pacific Regional Water and Sanitation Consultations held in Noumea, New Caledonia from 17th to 21st September 2012.

Ocean and Islands Programme (OIP)

22. The meeting recommended the continued development and expansion of the OIP's hydrodynamic modeling capacity and the collaborative development of a new high performance computing facility with the University of the South Pacific.
23. The meeting supported the efforts relating to the "Changing Waves and coasts in the Pacific (WACOP) Project, to develop improved understanding of coastal inundation risk in PICTs.
24. The meeting supported the development of a regional hydrographic surveying and charting capacity in the Division; and recognised the potential benefits to be gained by members sharing their bathymetric data with regional charting authorities for inclusion and updating of regional nautical and chart products. The meeting agreed in principle that the Division can make countries' bathymetric data available and on a case-by-case basis check with members prior to release.
25. The meeting acknowledged that maritime boundaries development for PICTs requires a coordinated approach between; technical, legal and diplomatic sectors, and few PICTs have taken full advantage of the technical /legal solutions developed by the Division,

partners and the country technical/legal teams. Furthermore, high-level support is crucial to completing maritime boundaries work in the region and the successful completion and defence of PICTs ECS claims and complete maritime boundary solutions. These solutions that are ratified domestically and declared internationally are crucial to the economic development of PICTs; fisheries management, deep sea minerals exploration, marine research, conservation, transportation and security (refer Attachment A).

26. The meeting noted that a Steering Committee meeting for EU EDF10 Deep Sea Minerals Project for Pacific-ACP States met in the margins of the SOPAC-2 meeting. The country delegates agreed to seek discussion with their EU National Authorising Officer in order that there is a successor project under the EDF 11 regional indicative programme, and reiterated the importance of the Division's role as the custodian of relevant data (past and future) on behalf of the Pacific-ACP States. The Steering Committee further agreed that the following were new high priority requests and requested SOPAC and the EU to consider their inclusion in the project.

- The convening of a negotiation skills workshop.
- The engagement of a consultant to prepare and support the implementation of a communication strategy.
- The supplementation of the existing project team including through consultancies and/or additional staff.
- Securing a "no cost" extension to the duration of the project in order to be able to meet increasing demands from the project by members.
- The translation of project information materials into local languages.
- The provision of preliminary advice in relation to deep sea minerals fiscal matters in 2013.
- The provision of assistance to develop and/or review deep sea minerals policy and legislation. Provide support to countries to engage with partners to secure additional deep sea minerals assessments noting opportunities through the 11th EDF.

27. The meeting acknowledged the potential crisis in the current funding modality for the OIP which is not sustainable and supports a mixed response by OIP to seek strategic solutions which may include scaling back the OIP work schedule and/or more aggressively pursuing "cost-recovery" options.

Water and Sanitation Programme (WSP)

28. The meeting acknowledged the advice provided by the Director General that an internal analysis has been completed and that the Water and Sanitation Programme was best placed at the SOPAC Division, and that this would be his recommendation to CRGA42. As a result of this advice this meeting did not consider this matter further.¹

29. The meeting commended the Division's efforts in harnessing a variety of data sources and communication tools in order to better inform members' response to serious risk, as demonstrated by the integrated approach to water resources and flood management currently being progressed in the Nadi Basin, Fiji.

30. The meeting acknowledged the complex connections that exist between geological processes, water resources, natural hazards and Pacific communities, and encouraged the continued use and development of integrated and multi-disciplinary approaches, such as those utilised to address coastal threats and community adaptation on the island of Lifuka in Tonga.

31. The meeting commended the efforts of the Division in the development and adaption of

¹ With the exception of France

alternative water and sanitation technologies, such as eco-sanitation options, and encouraged the application of such technologies as an important tool in strengthening resilience and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

32. The meeting commended the collaborative work of the Division in supporting the development of water governance frameworks appropriate to country needs, including through the recently concluded EU-funded Pacific IWRM National Planning Programme.
33. The meeting acknowledged the critical importance of effective water governance frameworks to national resilience and sustainable development, and recognised the importance of ongoing support from the Division to further strengthen these frameworks.
34. The meeting was encouraged by the success of the Post Graduate Certificate Programme in IWRM and tasked the Division to work with development partners to secure sustainable resourcing to carry forward current graduates to the next phase and to enable a new cohort of students to commence.
35. The meeting acknowledged the significant results achieved to date by the countries in the GEF Pacific IWRM Project in particular through the use of innovative knowledge development and sharing, and committed to actively support the further development and strengthening of these approaches including the ongoing development of National IWRM Plans.
36. The meeting highlighted the critical importance of continuing the momentum of successful IWRM approaches in the region, and tasked the Division to urgently progress the development of a successor GEF IWRM Pacific regional project to support National level IWRM Plan implementation.
37. The meeting supported the existing and emerging efforts of the Division to engage with members and partners in order to revise and reinvigorate the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management, including through the Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management.
38. Members acknowledged the Division's response to member requests to support sub-regional initiatives in water and sanitation, including for example water initiatives being progressed by sub-regional groups of countries such as the Pacific ACP Group, the OCTs, the Micronesian Chief Executives Summit and the Melanesian Spearhead Group.

Disaster Reduction Programme (DRP)

39. The meeting acknowledged the robust cross-programmatic technical support to develop storm surge models to underpin urban planning in French Polynesia and recommended that the techniques used to extract shallow water bathymetry from satellite imagery be used for other PICTs, and emphasised the importance of baseline data to underpin the modelling work.
40. The meeting commended the technical advice and support given to members in the construction of emergency operations centres and operational capacity development.
41. The meeting acknowledged the importance of building capacity for disaster risk management through training, and in particular the value of institutionalising disaster risk management training in existing formal education programmes at the tertiary level.
42. The meeting emphasised the critical importance of underpinning vulnerability and risk reduction efforts of PICTs with sound scientific and technical advice, and noted the outputs delivered through the Pacific Catastrophe Risk Assessment and Financing

Initiative (PCRAFI) in providing PICTs with disaster risk modeling and assessment tools through the Pacific Risk Information System (PacRIS) to help inform disaster risk management and climate change interventions.

43. The meeting recommended that PICTs realise the importance of mainstreaming of risk information such as provided through PacRIS in planning and budgeting systems at national, sectoral and sub-national levels.
44. The meeting acknowledged the commitment by Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu to participate in a pilot project to assess the feasibility of establishing a Pacific catastrophe risk insurance pool under the auspices of PCRAFI.
45. The meeting commended the investments made by the donors and technical partners and countries in progressing the PCRAFI noting the commendation made by Geoscience Australia in the quality of the models developed.
46. The meeting agreed to share risk information developed from PCRAFI in the public domain to enhance partnerships and collaboration and approved the sharing of the regional exposure database for use in the Global Earthquake Model to improve earthquake risk estimations and inform risk reduction activities.
47. The meeting commended the support given in developing applications to improve disaster response and recovery planning through the pre- and post-disaster loss calculations, the analysis of climate change impacts on tropical cyclone losses and the use of risk information to inform urban and infrastructure planning.
48. The meeting supported the development and strengthening of the strategic alliance between National Disaster Management Offices (NDMOs), Pacific Islands Fire Services Association (PIFSA) and Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council (AFAC), and the provision of adequate resources to support it, noting further consultations are planned with key stakeholders before the end of 2012.
49. The meeting acknowledged the opportunity for PICTs to actively engage in the process to develop a post 2015 global framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and in doing so the meeting noted the strategic importance to PICTs of the appointment of Dr John Schneider of Geoscience Australia as a member of the Advisory Group of the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction selected by the Special Representative for the UN Secretary General for Disaster Reduction tasked with providing advice to the ISDR on the development of the post-2015 global framework.
50. The meeting noted the progress made and challenges faced by PICTs in integrating their respective efforts in disaster risk management and climate change within the context of their respect sustainable development priorities.
51. The meeting commended the commitments made by SPC, SPREP and UNISDR in progressing the development of an integrated regional strategy for disaster risk management and climate change with the agreement to conduct a joint meeting of the Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management and the Climate Change Round Table in July 2013.
52. The meeting supported the need for a review and development of a strategy to guide the future development of disaster risk management training and capacity building in the Division in connection with the transition of responsibility for this training from The Asia Foundation in mid-2013 and the provision of financial and human resources to ensure the sustainability of this training in the longer term.

53. The meeting recommended SOPAC assist in establishing MoUs between Pacific countries (VU, NC, SB, PG, WS, TO, FJ) and IRD to share seismic data with all SOPAC members through ORSNET to help improve tsunami and earthquake risk reduction, including warnings, response and mitigation.
54. The meeting recognised the fundamental importance of geological studies to inform tsunami and tropical cyclone hazard and risk assessments and recommended that SOPAC through the STAR network explore potential partnerships with research institutes and donor funding to conduct studies of historic and prehistoric tsunami and cyclone deposits in the region.

Technical Support Services

Natural Resource Economics

55. The meeting acknowledged the great value of the Division's natural resource economics analysis in translating scientific research to policy, and that the volume of this work is growing while the team to deliver the service remains small. Considering the likely volume of demand for these services in the future, the meeting recognises the need to explore the possibility of expanding this work both in the Division and to the development of similar services in other divisions

GIS and Remote Sensing

56. The meeting recommended that the GIS capability of the Division be expanded to meet the continually increasing demand from PICTs where staff members of national departments receive on-the-job training at the GIS&RS unit and at the same time a network is established to support the GIS units in PICTs particularly with respect to forest and land cover mapping.
57. The meeting acknowledged the unique services currently being provided by the GIS&RS unit for the purchase of image data in PICTs and where advice is given on which image data is available and which data is the most suitable for the application. Recent preferential agreements with image data companies allow the GIS&RS unit to provide data more cost effectively for PICTs. The data pre-processing service enhances the image data to specific PICTs needs including atmospheric correction and pan-sharpening of additional spectral bands.

Data Management

58. The meeting strongly urges that the Division continue to support, maintain and extend its existing open source analysis and data management tools and systems for PICTs noting the cost of proprietary or commercial software to manage the holdings and for developing platforms for access by members are prohibitive.
59. The meeting reaffirmed the increasing demand from PICTs for access to scientific data and information, including the division products; and acknowledged the Division is committed to making its data and products as open and freely available as possible, in line with international best practice for dissemination of public domain data. Equally, this process must accommodate the need to protect or limit certain access in recognition of, for instance, confidentiality, privacy, or national security. The division must endeavor to make its information freely available, with provision to charge only for costs associated with additional processing and administration when necessary.

Publications and Library

60. The meeting notes the progress in the efforts by the Division to digitise, collate and catalogue the SOPAC Compendium of SOPAC Commission data holdings and information to improve security and access.
61. The meeting acknowledged that the STAR scientists highlighted the "SOPAC Compendium Project" as being an outstanding international initiative by the Division to secure the information within its core by translating it into electronic form; and that this major initiative will place the wealth of information within an electronic archive that is more readily accessible in the near future. The meeting recommends that this could be a model that other divisions of SPC follow.
62. The meeting urged that the Division special library of geoscience material be located in closest proximity to its users, and in the case of the Division, the heaviest users of the library services are the technical staff.

Programme Monitoring and Evaluation Group (PMEG)

63. The meeting noted the intervention from the Director General that it was his intention to seek the support of CRGA to expand the principles and operation of the PMEG process across the other divisions of the SPC in the coming year together with the establishment of nationally based evaluation teams.
64. The meeting noted that the recommendations of the PMEG reports from the individual work programme areas have been incorporated into the relevant sections above of this Chair's Summary Report.
65. The meeting received the PMEG report on issues relating to the Division work programme delivery that are crosscutting in nature and common to all three technical programmes within the Division, including support functions that have impacted the transition of the SOPAC into SPC.
- **Morale** – Generally, morale continues to be high with positive attitudes. Productivity within the Division is very high, with positive attitudes, an exceptional quality given the many distracting activities associated with the merger into a new organisation. However, banding and promotion issues still exist and there is a persistent feeling of lack of equality in job descriptions and pay scales is of concern.
 - **Human Resources** – A need still exists within the Division to have an HR person available to handle the multitude of problems occurring during the transition period and in the future. Such recurring problems as the perception of inequality within pay scales of the Division and SPC in general and a lack of understanding how promotions are given needs to be addressed in a standard manner. This is a critical communications problem.
 - **Communications** – Substantial progress in communications has occurred in the past year internally within the Division with regular staff meetings and with other SPC Divisions.
 - **PMEG Improvements** – Last year the PMEG suggested action items that would be helpful in improving the PMEG process. These action items included the following: 1. work programme to be sent to PMEG two months ahead of time; 2. PMEG construct questions to be asked during the interviews; 3. Organise the review based upon country outputs; and 4. Encourage country representatives to be available for discussions of country outcomes. PMEG reported substantial progress on these action items.

Consideration for 2013 Work Plan and Budget for the SPC/SOPAC Division

66. The meeting recognised that across the whole of SPC's programmes, the broader, long-term sustainable financing initiative is endeavouring to work towards a secure core budget of around 35% of current total funding over the next two to three years. This will in itself be good for the SOPAC Division, which currently has only 10% of funding secured, mostly from members' contributions. Nonetheless, delivery of the division work programme will remain heavily dependent on project proposals for which the division has had a long and successful history in raising the greater part of its yearly budget through competitive proposal development. Nonetheless, it is acknowledged that this requires a huge amount of time commitment by technical staff. Though successful, this reality still generates a high risk of negative impact on service delivery.
67. The meeting recommends to CRGA to approve the 2012 Revised Budget of CFP units 14,292,800 (FJ\$26,967,547) and the 2013 Proposed Work Plan and Budget of CFP units 10,808,306 (FJ\$20,393,030) together with funds dedicated for national projects of CFP units 4,360,094 (FJ\$8,226,592) which totals CFP units 15,168,400 (FJ\$28,619,622).

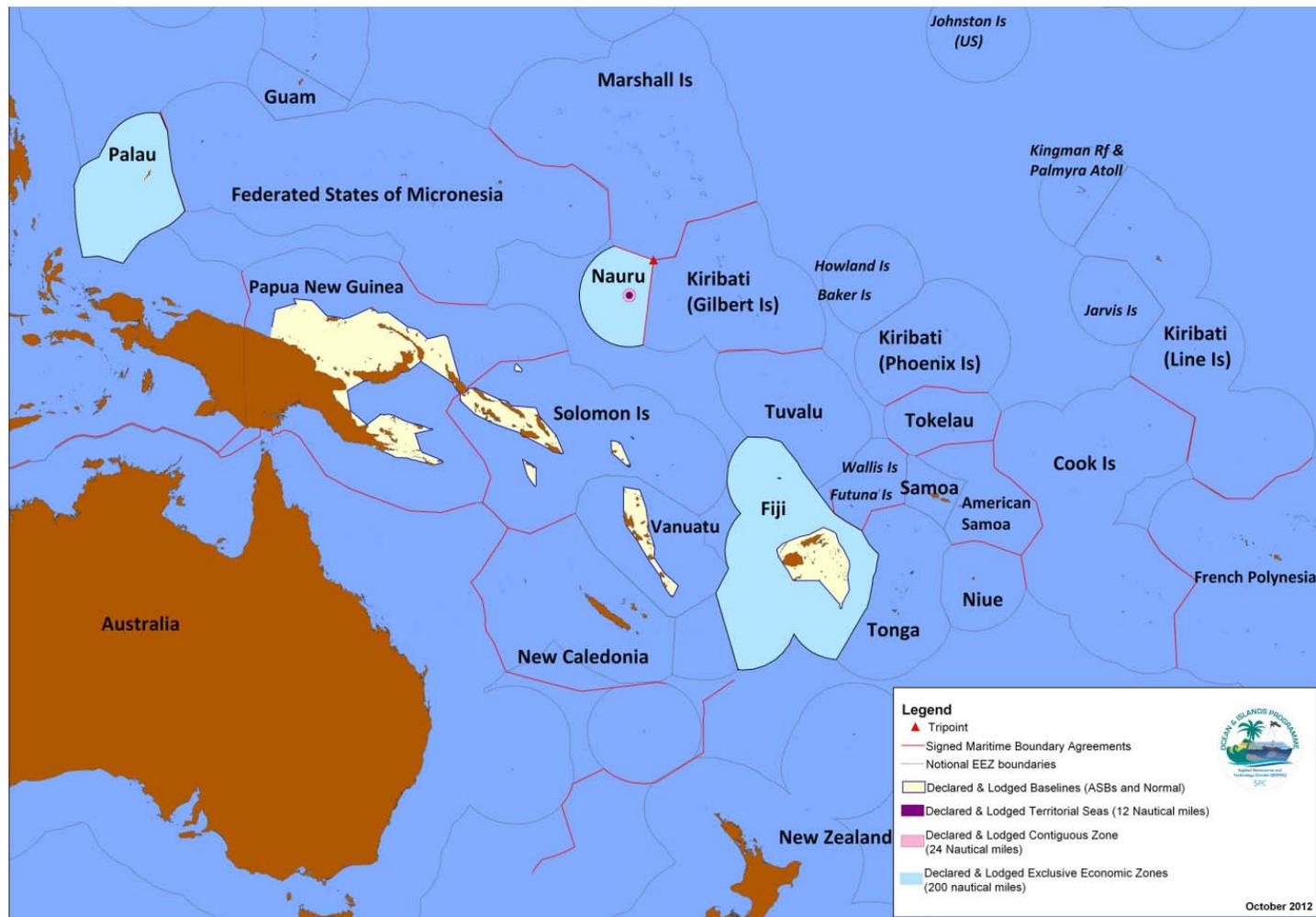
Strategic Planning

68. The meeting acknowledged the opportunity of the SOPAC-2 meeting to initiate early engagement with members in the lead up to the mid-term review of the current Division Strategic Plan (2011-2015); to validate its core services and/or map the trends that were likely to effect change. The meeting thanked the Facilitator Mr Julian Crawford for his efforts; and noted that a report on the strategic planning workshop will be available in due course.

SOPAC-3 Meeting Date and Venue

69. The meeting accepted the offer of the Cook Islands to host the next meeting of the SOPAC Division in Rarotonga, in October 2013.

ATTACHMENT A



Current status of Pacific Island regional maritime boundaries including the recent 7 new bilateral agreements. The grey lines which indicate the outer limits of the 200 nautical mile EEZ zones of each PI country are notional, these have not been domestically or internationally declared or defined unless they are shaded in light blue (Fiji, Nauru and Palau). This situation hinders resource management in PIC marine spaces as there is huge ambiguity about the position and limits of respective jurisdictions. Nauru is the only PIC and indeed one of the few coastal States in the world with completed and declared maritime boundary solutions.

The table below gives a summary of maritime boundaries status understood by the Ocean & islands Programme in each PIC at the time of writing. It is a summary and is not intended to try and articulate the many details which underlay the status of each country. However, there are useful lessons here in that those tasks which can be progressed by the SPC are mostly either underway or complete (unless the country does not work with SPC on boundaries). Note that many of the tasks where the country has principle responsibilities are not yet complete. It is often difficult for SPC to ascertain status of ratification and declaration and hence these details are tentative until a definitive public declaration is made.

	Tasks	CK	FJ	FSM	KI	RMI	NR	NU	PW	PG	SI	TV	TN	VU	WS	
																
SOPAC Division Responsibility	Baseline Reports developed	Yes	Yes	Status unknown/ own arrangements ?	Work in progress	Work in progress	Yes	Yes	Own arrangements – being reviewed at PW request.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Status unknown/ own arrangements ?	Yes	Work in progress	
	Achiapelagic Status defined report developed	NA	Yes – being reviewed at FJ request	?	Work in progress	Work in progress	NA	NA	Yes – being reviewed at PW request	Yes	Yes	In progress	?	Yes	NA	
	Boundaries computed & reports developed	Yes	Review in progress	?	Work in progress	Work in progress	Yes	Yes	Yes – being reviewed at PW request	Work in progress	Work in progress	Yes	?	Work in progress	Yes	
	ECS claims complete	Yes	Yes - work in progress	Yes - work in progress	Work in progress	NA	NA	NA	Yes - work in progress	Yes	Yes - work in progress	Work in progress	Yes - work in progress	Yes - work in progress	Yes - work in progress	NA
Country Responsibility																
	Baseline ratified domestically	No	NA	No	No	No	Yes	No	NA	NA	NA	No	No	Yes	No	
	Achiapelagic Baseline ratified domestically	No	Yes – being reviewed	No	No	No	NA	NA	Yes – being reviewed	Yes – being reviewed	Yes – being reviewed	No	No	Yes	NA	
	Limits / Zones ratified domestically	No	Yes – being reviewed	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes – being reviewed	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Baselines deposited with UNCLOS	No	Yes – being reviewed	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes – being reviewed	Yes – being reviewed	Yes – being reviewed	No	No	Yes	No	
	Outer limits deposited with UNCLOS	No	Yes – being reviewed	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes – being reviewed	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
ECS claim deposited with UNCLCS	Yes - work in progress	Yes - work in progress	Yes - work in progress	Deadline March 2013 - work in progress	NA	NA	NA	Yes - work in progress	Yes - work in progress	Yes - work in progress	Yes - work in progress	Deadline January 2013 - work in progress	Yes - work in progress	Yes - work in progress	NA	