

Written by Administrator

Friday, 16 January 2015 06:55 - Last Updated Thursday, 19 March 2015 12:59

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*Wednesday 4 December 2014, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) headquarters, Noumea, New Caledonia* - The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) strengthened their commitment in building their capacity to meet the needs of disabled persons with the official opening of the Publications and Library Section at the Geoscience Division (GSD) – GSD's first facilities with disabled access.

In conjunction with an official visit to the Division by SPC's Director General on Wednesday 24 November 2014, Dr Colin Tukuitonga officially opened the newly refurbished facilities with a ribbon cutting and a strong commitment by SPC to enable those with disabilities through improving SPC's facilities to meet their needs. Speaking to staff and honoured guests, Dr Tukuitonga recognised the efforts of GSD.

'What you've done in effect is give meaning and a concrete example and acknowledgement of the fact that we somehow need to be much more practical in our thinking about enabling people with disabilities,' Dr Tukuitonga said.

The facilities were refurbished to include wider spaces for wheel chair access, a disability door, ramp and railing and accessible books and computer stations for those with disabilities.

'There are still improvements we wish to make for a more disabled person-friendly environment such as an automated door and a second entrance but we are encouraged by the response to our efforts so far and are motivated to make it a place where disabled persons feel welcome and comfortable,' said Professor Michael Petterson, Director of GSD.

## **SPC Ramps Up its Disability Capacity at the Opening of SPC Geoscience Division's Publications and Libr**

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Joining the Director General as honoured guests were Mr John Davidson, Minister Counsellor for Development of the Australian High Commission, an advocate for the Commission for the inclusiveness and benefits of those with disabilities, and Ms Naomi Navoce, Gender and Youth Officer of the Pacific Disability Forum, a regional body that aims to achieve an inclusive Pacific society that is responsive, culture sensitive and gender equitable.

For more information, contact Nicole Daniels (Email: [nicoled@spc.int](mailto:nicoled@spc.int)) or visit the GSD website: [www.gsd.spc.int](http://www.gsd.spc.int)