

Howorth in for another year with SOPAC

Written by Administrator

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Dr. Russell Howorth will continue as Director of SOPAC (Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission) for another year. He is an internationally recognized earth scientist, and retired as Deputy Director of SOPAC in 2005, after serving the region with the Commission for over 26 years.

Members of the SOPAC Governing Council confirmed the extension of his contract during their 39th Annual Session held in Nadi recently.

Dr. Howorth had initially accepted the Directorship at the beginning of this year in order to assist Council Members with the way forward to implement the decision by Pacific Island Forum leaders to integrate SOPAC into the operations of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Pacific Islands Environment Programme (SPREP).

SOPAC will continue to provide assistance to island countries and territories in the Pacific region. SOPAC presently has more than 100 employees, many of them scientists, producing essential data in three key areas of geoscience and technology specifically relating to oceans and islands, water and sanitation, and disaster reduction.

In the Pacific Islands Forum Meeting in Vila in August of this year, a fourth and final Letter of Agreement was signed by Dr Howorth and Dr Jimmie Rodgers, Director General of the SPC. This confirmed the transfer and integration of the core SOPAC work programme. By January 1, 2011 the integration process is expected to reach another milestone, when the SOPAC Division of SPC commences operation in Suva, Fiji.