

SPC/CRGA 54 (2024)

Decisions
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**DECISIONS OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
GOVERNMENTS AND ADMINISTRATIONS**
(5–6 November 2024, Papeete, French Polynesia)

DECISIONS

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: OPENING OF CRGA 54

1. The Fifty-Fourth Meeting of the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA) opened on 5 November 2024 in Papeete, French Polynesia.
2. The meeting was chaired by Tokelau, with Tuvalu as Vice-Chair. The following SPC Members attended: American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Fiji, France, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand (NZ), Niue, Papua New Guinea (PNG), Pitcairn, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, United Kingdom (UK), United States of America (USA), Vanuatu and Wallis and Futuna. The European Union (EU) attended as the Permanent Observer.
3. The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) attended as observers from the Council of Regional Organisations for the Pacific (CROP).
4. The Representative of Tuvalu delivered the opening prayer.
5. The Chair, Mrs Margaret Pedro of Tokelau, offered warm Pacific greetings to members and partners and expressed her heartfelt gratitude to French Polynesia for hosting CRGA 54, to Solomon Islands as outgoing Chair and to Tonga for assuming the Vice-Chair of CRGA 53 in Tokelau's place. She emphasised the importance of taking an innovative and collaborative approach to achieve the collective vision of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, while also respecting the diverse priorities of SPC's member countries and territories. In forging a Pacific path of unity through diversity, SPC, alongside its sister CROP agencies, was a critical partner in achieving prosperity, health and well-being for all Pacific peoples.

6. Members thanked French Polynesia for its hosting of CRGA 54 and the warm hospitality afforded to delegations.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

7. Fiji moved that the agenda be adopted. Vanuatu seconded its adoption.

ELECTION OF THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE

8. The Drafting Committee comprised Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, France, French Polynesia, FSM, Solomon Islands and Tonga. Tuvalu, as Vice-Chair of CRGA 54, assumed the Chair of the Drafting Committee.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

9. The D-G updated CRGA on SPC's progress in 2024 within the wider regional context where increasing climate, health and economic challenges in the region called for collective transformation and collaboration through the 2050 Strategy. He thanked New Caledonia and the Government of France for their support through the New Caledonia crisis, which had tested the resilience of SPC's Noumea-based staff and the organisation's operational capacity. He also extended his gratitude to SPC's other members and partners, in particular Australia and New Zealand, for their solidarity and assistance.
10. Members and the Permanent Observer thanked the D-G for his presentation and acknowledged that, despite significant challenges, his report brought confidence in SPC's progress and innovation. SPC's scientific and technical capabilities along with its regional convening power and strengthened sub-regional office network were critical to supporting and advancing efforts towards scaled-up climate action and justice. Members welcomed a continued focus on health and education as well as ongoing efforts to strengthen the organisation, in particular, improvements to operational capacity and efficiency; integrated programming through the four Flagships; and CROP cooperation and harmonisation. Members expressed support for a proposed Digital Transformation Flagship but requested research be undertaken to assess diverse member contexts and needs in the digital space. Members and the Secretariat recognised the importance of timely provision of CRGA working documents in both SPC's official languages.
11. Members acknowledged the important role of Regional Offices in decentralising SPC's services to members and the opportunity they presented for stronger in-country support. Members suggested that SPC place Desk Officers in member governments to enhance SPC project coordination and outcomes, similar to the PIFS SIS Officer model. Another suggestion from France was that representatives of member countries and territories would be hosted at SPC headquarters or regional offices.

12. Members commended the D-G and Staff for embodying SPC's values throughout the crisis in New Caledonia and acknowledged SPC's hosting of the recent PIF Troika plus Leaders information mission on the said crisis. In this regard, they also assured New Caledonia their continued support and solidarity.

13. CRGA:

- i. welcomed the Director-General's report for 2024; and
- ii. commended SPC's Executive and Secretariat Staff for their resilience and hard work.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3: CROP COOPERATION AND COORDINATION: 2050 STRATEGY FOR THE BLUE PACIFIC CONTINENT AND THE REVIEW OF THE REGIONAL ARCHITECTURE (RRA)

14. The PIFS Deputy Secretary-General, Esala Nayasi, updated CRGA on SPC's contribution to the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan's progress and the development of reporting mechanisms and tools for Forum Leaders, including the Executive Summary of the 2050 Strategy Baseline Report and the High-Level Summary of the prioritised Regional Collective Actions endorsed by Forum Leaders at the 53rd PIFL Meeting, the 2050 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan and the Blue Pacific 2050 Dashboard. Members were briefed on Phase 3 of the RRA, which focused on four key aspects: i) implementation of Phase 2 recommendations; ii) mapping exercise of other partners beyond CROP; iii) elaboration of a partnership dialogue mechanism; and iv) a potential rationalisation of the regional architecture. Members heard that implications would include an updated CROP charter, stronger coherence on thematic issues across agencies, efficiencies within CROP agencies, coherent partnership arrangements driven by regional priorities, and updated PIF governance arrangements, including harmonising convenings and agenda setting Ministerial and Leaders' engagements across sectors.

15. Members emphasised the importance of inclusivity and partnership in the implementation of the RRA's Phase 3 noting the differing memberships across CROP agencies. They acknowledged the importance of this process in promoting deeper regional integration, facilitating greater inter-agency efficiencies and strengthening the link between SPC's technical work and PIF political processes.

16. CRGA:

- i. recognised the concerted efforts undertaken to continue to implement the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan and key deliverables for reporting to Forum Leaders, which include the High-Level Executive Summary of the 2050 Strategy Baseline Report with the detailed report to be finalised and the High-Level Summary of the 2024 Regional Collective Actions;
- ii. acknowledged the work underway on the Blue Pacific 2050 dashboard that will inform annual reporting to Forum Leaders and guide the implementation of the 2050 Strategy

- for the Blue Pacific Continent, encouraging reflection on advancements towards regional integration; and
- iii. recognised and encouraged the continued support and contribution by SPC in the implementation of the 2050 Strategy and Review of the Regional Architecture work.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4: SPC STRATEGIC PLAN 2022–2031

17. The CRGA Subcommittee for the Strategic Plan, led by its Co-Chair, PNG's Acting High Commissioner to Fiji, His Excellency Bill Olmi, provided an update to CRGA on SPC's results achieved in 2023 and progress towards the implementation of the Strategic Plan, in particular sectoral reforms through key convenings, divisional business plans, the four Flagships, the implementation of strategic evaluation findings, strengthening institutional effectiveness through Goal 4 and KFA 7 and enhanced CROP coordination.
18. The CRGA Subcommittee proposed the following suggestions to strengthen SPC's implementation of its Strategic Plan: i) increase visibility of SPC's annual programme of work to members, especially Smaller Island States; ii) improved coherency between sectorial and regional priorities; iii) secure sustainable and flexible funding mechanisms; and iv) engage with the entire membership and diverse stakeholders in the IIR process and ensure that the IIR Report include a defined list of high-impact recommendations.
19. CRGA:
 - i. noted the work of the Subcommittee in their role of oversight of the implementation of the Pacific Community Strategic Plan.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5: UPDATE FROM SECTORIAL MINISTERIAL AND HEADS OF MEETINGS CONVENED BY SPC

20. The sectorial panel featuring the Representative for the Chair of the Youth Ministers Meeting, Mr John Tamani [Fiji], the Representative for the Chair of the Triennial Conference of Pacific Women and Ministers for Women Meeting, Mr Winder Loeak [RMI] and the Representative for the Chair of the Culture Ministers Meeting, Mr Emile Kairua [Cook Islands], discussed how sectorial interventions align with the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan to leverage regional cooperation through a One CROP approach, anchor people-centred development approaches and ensure an integrated approach to gender equality, youth empowerment and culture as vital enablers of sustainable development. It was important that sectorial ministerial priorities continued to be brought to the attention of regional leaders.
21. Members welcomed the inclusion of Youth Ambassadors in the culture space and hoped to see the same initiative in the gender space. It was proposed that meetings like CRGA and

Conference, and any regional meetings, should have youth included not only at the National Youth Council Representative level but also through faith-based organisations. Funding remained a critical barrier to enabling youth to attend meetings and be part of decision-making processes in the region.

22. France announced that it would consider entrusting the Secretariat with a call for projects dedicated to the safeguarding of Pacific audiovisual heritage and encouraging creativity to promote youth expression, free speech and economic opportunities for Pacific creatives. They welcomed other metropolitan members to join this initiative.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6: INDEPENDENT INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW (IIR) OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY

23. Under the stewardship of the Co-Chair of the CRGA Subcommittee for the Strategic Plan, CEO of Samoa's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Peseta Noumea Simi, an Overview of Emerging Findings from the IIR was presented by the IIR consultants for CRGA's consideration, including a summary of the inclusive, member-led process and progress to date. Members considered seven emerging themes for the IIR with several change areas identified to inform potential future IIR recommendations, including: the need for continued investment in sub-regional decentralisation; scaled resourcing in partnerships and strategic communications; formalised technical line ministry engagement in SPC governance processes; strengthened internal risk ownership and accountability; a strategic pause on growth/expansion ambitions; the removal of structural barriers in SPC's recruitment policies and processes; continued CROP coordination and collaboration; and a strengthened, more accountable Senior Leadership Team with stronger connections to the Executive and the wider organisation. Members were invited to submit further feedback by 18 November 2024 noting that the IIR was in its final two phases and findings and recommendations would be communicated early 2025.
24. Members acknowledged the work of the CRGA Subcommittee and the consultants in facilitating the IIR and reiterated the need to see tangible and substantive changes emerge from this review in early 2025. They also thanked the Co-Chairs, PNG and Samoa, for their leadership.
25. CRGA:
 - i. noted the member-led process to engage and guide independent consultants with their review;
 - ii. considered the guiding questions within this paper for validating the Overview of Emerging Findings;
 - iii. requested that the final IIR report address a) how SPC was attracting and retaining Pacific talent, including specific data on staff and SLT composition; b) how SPC could

- better partner with and support regional academic institutions; and c) how to better coordinate SPC-facilitated ministerial meetings and outcomes with PIF processes; and
- iv. noted that some members would provide additional comments or suggestions on the Overview of Emerging Findings directly to the Secretariat or the consultants.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7

UPDATE ON PARTNERSHIPS AND RESOURCE MOBILISATION

26. Members welcomed an update on SPC's resource mobilisation and partnerships work, including the finalisation of SPC's first Resource Mobilisation Strategy, the renewed 10-year Strategic Partnership Framework (2024-2033) with the Government of Australia as well as an updated 10-year Partnership Framework with New Zealand. They heard that SPC's project pipeline stood at approx. EUR 199 million (September 2024), which proved that partner confidence in SPC remained high. Major investment initiatives were highlighted to Members, including the co-design work and timeline for launching Unlocking Blue Pacific Prosperity (UBPP), the operationalisation of the Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Programme for enhanced disaster risk resilience and the progress towards the Pacific Ocean Research Vessel for sustainable regional fisheries management.
27. Members acknowledged SPC's strengthened resource mobilisation and partnership frameworks and warmly welcomed the continued efforts to operationalise programmes like the Pacific Research Vessel, Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Programme and UBPP. Members underlined that UBPP was a critical opportunity for climate finance and a paradigm shift to unlock financing. It was important to leverage diverse financing options, including through public-private and philanthropic sources, in a way that was sustainable and suited to Pacific needs. The Great Barrier Reef Foundation's commitment of AUD 15 million to the region was also welcomed by Members.
28. CRGA:
 - i. noted the progress update on strengthening SPC's partnerships and resource mobilisation agenda, including the final Resource Mobilisation Strategy and new 10-year Partnership Frameworks with Australia and New Zealand;
 - ii. noted progress on the co-design of Unlocking Blue Pacific Prosperity, including the establishment of a member-led UBPP Working Group to guide the development of UBPP and upcoming subregional consultations to further develop the draft UBPP design document; and
 - iii. invited members to engage in the UBPP design process, including participation in the subregional design workshops and provision of written feedback on the draft UBPP design.

UPDATE ON THE CLIMATE CHANGE AND GENDER EQUALITY FLAGSHIPS

29. Members were updated on the programmatic approach and strategic intent of SPC's Climate Change Flagship, which sought to clarify SPC's value-add to regional climate action by leveraging climate finance to deliver the transformational change that PICTs were calling for. NZ's flexible funding through the anchor investment in the Flagship was commended to capitalise opportunities alongside the ongoing work on UBPP, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) programmatic approach and pipeline advancement, Australia's commitment through the NDC Hub and further partnerships within CROP and other regional accredited entities.
30. Members were also updated on the Gender Equality Flagship and its transformative approach to integrating gender considerations into SPC's work, including through strengthening regional and sub-regional mechanisms to advance gender equality (e.g. MIF and MSG), taking a OneCROP approach to gender equality, and institutional strengthening within SPC to mainstream gender equality. The flexible anchor investment from the Government of Australia through the Pacific Women Lead and Women in Leadership programmes have been instrumental in supporting key actions. Continued resource mobilisation was essential to respond to ongoing commitments.
31. Members perceived a gap between SPC's Flagship ambitions and members' own status or work in these areas, especially in terms of climate finance needs. Flagships also needed to ensure they were linking to member priorities and the Secretariat was requested to consider how its Strategic Plan could better respond to the needs of Smaller Island States. In response, the Secretariat acknowledged that an ambitious body of work had been undertaken since the Flagship concept was first called for at CRGA 44 and ongoing structural issues to realising gender equality and accessing climate finance and readiness capability in the Pacific made this work even more urgent. These challenges also inevitably increased pressure on flexible sources of funding through existing bilateral partners. The Flagships were about creating visibility for the work that SPC had already been doing for several years and ensuring that members' needs and identified gaps could be addressed in a coordinated manner.
32. CRGA:
 - i. welcomed the Climate Change Flagship and the Gender Equality Flagship;
 - ii. committed to supporting their successful implementation and refinement in line with the 2050 Strategy, in strong collaboration with the regional architecture, and ensuring the ultimate beneficiaries are PICTs;
 - iii. invited donor partners to commit to flexible programmatic investments to bolster the Flagship initiatives, including through the Green Climate Fund in an effort to reduce complex transactions and the administrative costs of multiple project-based interventions;
 - iv. requested the Secretariat continue to report on the Climate Flagship and Gender Equality Flagship implementation and outcomes; and

- v. acknowledged the value proposition of the Gender Equality Flagship in implementing the ambitions and strategic actions outlined in the Revitalised Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration, the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan, the Pacific Platform for Action, and regional sectoral plans.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8 INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

- 33. Members were updated on progress towards Goal 4 and KFA 7 (Transforming Institutional Effectiveness) of SPC's Strategic Plan. Efforts were ongoing to strengthen internal 'One SPC' practice and external CROP cooperation in order to boost support for SPC's scientific and technical work, enhance resource and partnership mobilisation, support the well-being of staff and guarantee business continuity through crisis. Members heard that under KFA 7, SPC was prioritising an Operational Transformation Programme, which was currently in its scoping phase and would ensure operational alignment to SPC's Flagships and large-scale integration programmes as well as enhanced responsiveness to the region's priorities.
- 34. Members acknowledged the importance of institutional strengthening and re-emphasised the importance of tangible outcomes that were aligned with the needs of members and reflected the outcomes of IIR consultations. In particular, the decentralisation of SPC through its Regional Offices was critical.
- 35. CRGA:
 - i. acknowledged the progress made towards strengthening SPC's key support functions to improve institutional effectiveness under KFA 7, despite the challenges faced throughout 2024; and
 - ii. encouraged continued focus on internal improvements that enhanced SPC's institutional effectiveness.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9 FINANCE

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

- 36. Members heard from the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), who noted an unqualified opinion for SPC's 2023 Financial Statements from the external auditors.
- 37. Members were assured that SPC had made progress in 2024. With the support of the Internal Audit and Risk Unit, the ARC was carefully monitoring key risks, especially around new partners (Adaptation Fund (AF), GCF and philanthropic funds), subgrants and ineligible, but was satisfied, from a risk perspective, that mitigation measures were being implemented in a timely manner. The New Caledonia crisis would continue to be a priority

area for the ARC as well as any findings from the major review exercises currently underway.

38. The Chair expressed the ARC's appreciation to the Director-General and the Secretariat for their support of the ARC's work programme and for their dedication to the organisation over the past year. He noted that two members of the ARC would be concluding their tenures in May 2025 and the process to identify and appoint new members was underway.
39. Members commended the continued leadership of the ARC in 2024.
40. CRGA:
 - i. noted the report from the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC); and
 - ii. accepted the unqualified audit opinion for SPC's 2023 financial statements.

UPDATE ON 2024 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

41. Members were updated that SPC's financial outlook remained generally positive with a project pipeline of EUR 199 million as of September 2024 and continued efforts to strengthen the central and supporting divisions as well as transversal and structural processes, such as the budget process. They heard an update on the 2024 revised budget, which resulted in an improvement of the financial result of EUR 1.7 million and growth of available resources by EUR 6.2 million. Project implementation remained behind target by -9% (6.85 million) but above Previous-Year-To-Date (2023) by 4 million. The last estimate for FY 2024 an execution rate on projects and programmes of 93% and a positive financial result of approx. 0.8 million to be versed into SPC reserves.
42. CRGA:
 - i. noted the revision of the 2024 budget, in accordance with paragraph 39 of the Pacific Community Governance Arrangement; and
 - ii. noted the results of the financial performance as of August 2024, compared with the 2024 revised budget.

PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET

43. Members heard that SPC's proposed 2025 budget of EUR 131.4 million was conservative but included a deficit of EUR 1 million, which would be funded by a drawdown from reserves. This would be invested in enhancing corporate services, including the Procurement and Grants, Finance and Legal teams. The CAPEX budget would increase to EUR 8.53 million due to increased building costs on SPC's Nabua Campus, ongoing office refurbishments in Noumea and investment in SPC's website and finance systems. Members were also updated on SPC's changing risk profile as a result of new donors' differing levels of compliance (e.g. GCF and AF), the growth of SPC's flagships and projects/programmes

that had their own different sustainable business models. SPC's project/programme delivery was being challenged by its rapid organisational growth as well as the capacity and availability of implementing partners.

44. Members also heard that, in the context of a globally uncertain geopolitical landscape, inflation and employment market challenges were creating staff retention challenges. To mitigate these, the budget proposed a 1.5% salary increase for inflation alongside a 2% performance-based increase. SPC's FTE would likely increase to 850+ by 2025 based on new projects and programmes coming online and infrastructure investment was required to house incoming staff.
45. Members acknowledged SPC's positive financial picture despite clear challenges, in particular, the rapid growth of the organisation in recent years. They expressed support for increased investment in SPC's core functions and re-emphasised the importance of maintaining the 15% management fee target, which CRGA had agreed upon to enable the back-office capability of SPC within the specific operational context of the Pacific region. The Secretariat noted that some donors were unable to pay the 15% management fee, especially GCF/AF projects that SPC were not executing entities on, but that the organisation was attempting to recover the relevant costs from donors in other ways, including via timesheets and direct charges of services into project costs. Measurements of operational efficiency were evolving through the SPC Strategic Plan and Result Reporting process, and this would also be reflected in future KFA 7 and institutional strengthening initiatives.
46. CRGA:
 - i. approved the proposed 2025 budget, inclusive of market increase of 1.5%; and
 - ii. encouraged all development partners to adopt multi-year unrestricted programme funding and 15% management fees.

MEMBER AND PERMANENT OBSERVER CONTRIBUTION MATTERS

47. Members heard about the importance of timely payment of assessed contributions and host country contributions (AC/HCC) as a critical source of core funding. After several years delay, Members considered recommendations from the CRGA Working Group regarding a fair, transparent and equitable process to assess appropriate levels of assessed contributions (AC) and host country contributions (HCC) and repartition between members.
48. Members commended the work of the CRGA Working Group and stressed the importance of making timely contributions to the organisation. Indeed, it was emphasised that the same fair, transparent and equitable approach be applied to project/programme delivery to ensure all members had equitable access to SPC's services.
49. CRGA:

- i. recognised that timely payment of Assessed Contribution and Host Country Contribution was important for the proper functioning of SPC and its governance model as well as its capacity to continue to provide services and programmes to members;
- ii. urged members to pay their outstanding contribution to SPC; and
- iii. acknowledged the work performed by the CRGA Working Group as per CRGA 53 guidance; and
- iv. noted that discussions would continue in the CRGA Working Group with the aim of reaching an out-of-session decision.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 10

REPORT ON HUMAN RESOURCES

50. Members noted significant progress made by the Human Resources (HR) department in 2024 to align its work with SPC's Strategic Plan and KFA 7 with a specific focus on effective recruitment, addressing Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) risk areas, equitable representation of women and Pacific Islanders, appropriate remuneration as well as talent management.
51. Members thanked the Secretariat for its hard work towards improving the HR function and for reflecting the membership in all its diversity. They also acknowledged the work of the remuneration reference group. Members also noted that including staff perspectives in HR processes could benefit decision-making and encouraged the Secretariat to maintain up-to-date staff data.
52. France requested that bilingual competence be considered in SPC's recruitment policies and processes and requested that a French-speaking officer be located within every major administrative, division and regional entity of SPC to avoid excluding a fifth of SPC's membership from critical work and engagement.
53. CRGA:
 - i. welcomed the HR report;
 - ii. endorsed the proposals and strategies outlined by the Secretariat.

REPORT ON REMUNERATION

54. Members considered the various challenges to the Secretariat's remuneration structure, including slow general market increases, inflation and rising living costs in Noumea and Suva—the global trend indicated that SPC's salaries and benefits, including a comprehensive retirement plan, would have to be increased to remain competitive.
55. Members noted the importance of harmonising remuneration across CROP agencies and noted that out-of-session approval would be sought from CRGA should the remuneration reference group agree on a remuneration increase.
56. CRGA:
- i. noted that the Secretariat has given a general market increase for salaries for 2024 of 1.5% and 2% increase in employer pension contributions;
 - ii. agreed to reconvene the Remuneration Reference Group before April 2025 to review SPC's salary scale, benefits and allowances so that they are comparable with other CROP agencies; and
 - iii. acknowledged that SPC has implemented allowances for Solomon Islands and an internship stipend for Tonga under the authority of the Director-General to approve allowances.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 11: DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (CLOSED SESSION)

57. CRGA:
- i. endorsed the Standing Committee's assessment that the Director-General has, over the past year, performed in the High Performance Zone ('Outstanding');
 - ii. noted that the implementation of any salary increase for the Director-General is effective from the beginning of the year following this review, in this case, 1 January 2025;
 - iii. endorsed the CRGA Standing Committee's desire that, for the coming year, the Director-General's area of focus should be building strong capability in the immediate-to-long-term future, so that a clear pathway can be initiated and discussed with members under the current Director-General's leadership, and in preparation for the incoming Director-General;
 - iv. noted that the Standing Committee will relay the outcome of this performance assessment to the Director-General following CRGA; and

- v. formally recognised the Director-General's excellent stewardship of SPC during the civil unrest, and requested that the Standing Committee, on behalf of CRGA, express members' gratitude for his leadership during this time.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 12: CRITERIA FOR THE RECRUITMENT FOR THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY (CLOSED SESSION)

58. CRGA:

- i. appointed the following 8 members to the Selection Advisory Committee (SAC): New Zealand (Metropolitan Member), Vanuatu (Melanesian Member), RMI (Micronesian Member), Wallis and Futuna (Polynesian Member), New Caledonia (Francophone) as well as Solomon Islands (past Chair), Tokelau (current Chair), Tuvalu (incoming Chair);
- ii. endorsed the recruitment timeline;
- iii. endorsed that the position will be advertised for at least 2 months;
- iv. endorsed the use of an external recruitment firm to conduct the initial candidate search process;
- v. endorsed that the selection of the Director-General will be based on merit, qualifications and requisite experience; and
- vi. recognised that SPC is an equal opportunity employer and that due attention must be given to gender equity and the maintenance of strong representation from Pacific Island professionals.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 13: CRGA 55 AND 14TH CONFERENCE

59. CRGA:

- i. noted that the 14th Conference of the Pacific Community would be held in Nuku'alofa, Tonga, and the Chair would be provided by Tonga, and the Vice-Chair by Palau;
- ii. agreed that the Chairperson for CRGA 55 would be provided by Tuvalu and the Vice-Chair by Tonga;
- iii. approved the proposed date for CRGA 55 and Conference 14, to be held in the week 13-17 October 2025 in Nuku'alofa, Tonga in accordance with the decision of the 13th Conference of the Pacific Community and the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Pacific Community and the Rules of Procedure of CRGA; and
- iv. welcomed the offer from FSM to host the CRGA 57 and 15th Conference of the Pacific Community in Pohnpei in 2027.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 14: OTHER BUSINESS

60. Members were updated on the state of Pacific education via the annual Subcommittee Report from the Pacific Board for Educational Quality (PBEQ). They also received an update on progress towards implementing CRGA 53 and out-of-session decisions.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 15: CLOSING REMARKS

61. CRGA 54 adopted its decisions on 6 November 2024.
62. The Representative of Tonga delivered the closing prayer.