



SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY

**RESOLUTIONS OF THE THIRTY-EIGHTH MEETING OF
THE COMMITTEE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
GOVERNMENTS AND ADMINISTRATIONS**

Noumea, New Caledonia
13-16 October 2008

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RESOLUTIONS OF THE THIRTY-EIGHTH MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF GOVERNMENTS AND ADMINISTRATIONS (CRGA)

(Noumea, New Caledonia, 13–16 October 2008)

The 38th Meeting of the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA 38) was held at SPC headquarters in Noumea, New Caledonia, from 13 to 16 October 2008.

It was attended by delegates from American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji Islands, France, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, United States of America, Vanuatu, and Wallis and Futuna.

CRGA 38 was chaired by Mr Toetasi Fue Tuiteleleapaga of American Samoa. Ms Romaine Kwesius of Australia was the Vice-Chairperson.

The meeting considered the work programme of SPC during 2008, as well as policy issues that the organisation is working on and financial and administrative issues.

At the conclusion of the meeting, CRGA 38 adopted the following resolutions in relation to each agenda item.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

CRGA:

- i. noted the Director-General's report;
- ii. endorsed the key policy directions presented in the report; and
- iii. agreed to assist the Director-General in his efforts to have ministers from all 26 member countries and territories attend the Sixth Conference of the Pacific Community in Tonga in 2009.

CRGA acknowledged the tremendous contribution of Falani Aukuso to the Pacific region and to SPC, noting that in his short time with SPC, Falani had left a lasting legacy. CRGA expressed condolences to Falani's family and the people of Tokelau.

REPORT OF THE LAND RESOURCES DIVISION

CRGA:

- i. noted and endorsed the decisions made by Pacific Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry at their second regional conference, 8–9 September 2008, Apia, Samoa, including their approval of LRD's strategic plan for 2009–2012;
- ii. welcomed the high priority accorded by Pacific Islands Forum Leaders in their Niue communiqué to food security, climate change adaptation, and land management and conflict minimisation, which was subsequently endorsed by the Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry at their regional conference in Apia;
- iii. acknowledged that LRD will require additional resources to implement the decisions made by Forum leaders;
- iv. endorsed the Secretariat's efforts to secure resources to implement effective responses to food security, climate change adaptation, land management and conflict minimisation as a matter of urgency; and
- v. requested development partners to support SPC's efforts to make a difference in the lives of Pacific people by enabling the organisation to implement the decisions taken by Pacific leaders.

REPORT OF THE MARINE RESOURCES DIVISION

- **Coastal Fisheries Programme (CFP)**
- **Oceanic Fisheries Programme (OFP)**
- **Regional Maritime Programme (RMP)**

CRGA:

- i. noted the challenges being faced by the Oceanic Fisheries Programme in continuing to provide the scientific support required by SPC members as more sophisticated tuna fisheries management regimes are adopted;
- ii. noted the challenges being faced by the Coastal Fisheries Programme in continuing to provide the scientific support required by SPC members as project funding support is discontinued, and also noted the financing requirements implicit in the Apia Policy, the Aquaculture Action Plan, and the Regional Aquatic Biosecurity Capacity Building Project;
- iii. noted the need for additional funding of 340,800 CFP units for the Regional Maritime Programme to sustain important maritime security services during 2009;
- iv. supported the augmentation of longer-term programme funding support for the core business of the SPC Marine Resources Division programmes; and

- v. noted the proposed terms of reference for the Future of Fisheries study, subject to comments to be submitted to SPC by 31 October 2008.

REPORT OF THE SOCIAL RESOURCES DIVISION

CRGA:

- i. noted the work of the Social Resources Division during 2008;
- ii. noted the substantial increase in funding for the Public Health Programme, much of which will be of direct benefit to members;
- iii. invited members to provide inputs to the proposed strategic plan for the Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) within the next six months; and
- iv. requested the SPC Public Health Programme to assist members through possible reviews of the capacity of their public health services, noting that in some countries this may already be part of a sector-wide approach.

FESTIVAL OF PACIFIC ARTS

CRGA expressed appreciation to the government and people of American Samoa for hosting a very successful Tenth Festival of Pacific Arts in 2008, and offered best wishes to Solomon Islands as the host of the next Festival in 2012.

FOOD SECURITY IN THE PACIFIC

CRGA:

- i. supported the priority given to addressing food security by the Forum leaders in their Niue communiqué;
- ii. recognised the importance of a multi-sectoral approach and encouraged a ‘whole of society’ and ‘whole of government’ approach to providing food security;
- iii. supported the work SPC is leading to assist members to address the food security challenges they face across a range of sectors; and
- iv. encouraged development partners to provide additional support to strengthen the capacity of SPC programmes to assist members to achieve food security by adopting the conclusions in Paper 3.1, paragraphs 25–36, that relate to:
 - a. boosting local production of crops and fish;
 - b. making agriculture attractive to youth;

- c. strengthening infrastructure for food distribution;
- d. reducing the burden of higher prices;
- e. providing incentives for economic growth;
- f. diversifying production systems to adapt to climate change;
- g. developing urban agriculture; and
- h. raising awareness of the nutritional value of local foods.

CLIMATE CHANGE: CONTRIBUTIONS FROM SPC TO REGIONAL AND NATIONAL ADAPTATION INITIATIVES

CRGA:

- i. recognised the long-term threat posed by climate change to the capacity of the agricultural, forestry and fisheries sectors to provide food security, livelihoods and economic growth;
- ii. endorsed the strengthened focus on climate change activities within the Land Resources and Marine Resources Divisions and the Public Health, Statistics and Demography and Human Development Programmes, particularly those aimed at helping rural communities adapt by diversifying methods for producing food and generating income;
- iii. noted the strong cooperation between SPC, SPREP and other CROP agencies to assist Pacific Island countries and territories to achieve the goals of the Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change, in line with the Niue Declaration on Climate Change; and
- iv. supported the efforts of SPC and its partners to obtain the resources needed to further develop strategies and implement effective demonstration projects.

SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND SECURITY

CRGA:

- i. noted the decision of Pacific Islands Forum leaders to prioritise land management and conflict minimisation in the Pacific Plan;
- ii. noted the findings of the study entitled 'Making land work' and the assistance that Australia planned to provide to support this initiative in the region;
- iii. endorsed the promotion by SPC's Land Resources Division of land zoning and mapping, economic analysis of land use practices and community-based consultation processes as tools for sustainable development and management of land resources for economic growth in Pacific Island countries and territories; and

- iv. endorsed the joint development by SPC and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat – with the support of national, regional and international partners – of a regional initiative on land management and conflict minimisation for economic and social development to be implemented by SPC, specifically by its Land Management and Resources Support Team.

REGIONAL MDG MONITORING SUPPORT FRAMEWORK FOR PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES

CRGA:

- i. discussed and endorsed the Secretariat's proposal to establish a regional Millennium Development Goal (MDG) monitoring support framework for Pacific Island countries and territories;
- ii. supported the consultation and development plan proposed by the Secretariat for establishing the framework over the next 12 months; and
- iii. requested development partners to support the implementation of the proposed MDG monitoring support framework for Pacific Island countries and territories.

SMALL ISLAND STATES AND TERRITORIES — SHIPPING SERVICES AND COMMODITY MAPPING

CRGA:

- i. noted the direction, progress and nature of SPC support for small island states and territories (SIS), and the assistance, advice and training provided by RMP to SIS maritime administrations, shipping companies and other maritime personnel, and noted the request by SIS for SPC's assistance in helping to solve their shipping service-related issues;
- ii. supported the review of feeder shipping services and commodity mapping for Pacific Island countries and territories, and acknowledged that they need to work as subregions to improve SIS shipping services and increase intra-regional trade;
- iii. acknowledged with appreciation the offer from Kiribati to commence a limited service to Tuvalu and Nauru using Kiribati Shipping Services Ltd vessels, and supported the facilitation by SPC of a meeting to resolve issues relating to the commencement of this service, subject to necessary funding being secured;
- iv. noted the need for training in commercial ship management in SIS and supported the delivery of risk-free simulation training by RMP; and
- v. encouraged additional financial support from donor partners for the establishment of an SIS Ship Management Unit within RMP to enable capacity supplementation, delivery of technical advice and increased support for shipping management services.

PUBLIC HEALTH — CHALLENGES AND DIRECTIONS

CRGA:

- i. noted the urgent need to address the ‘triple burden of disease’ in all PICTs;
- ii. further noted that many of the solutions to better health outcomes exist outside the health sector;
- iii. committed to advocating, at national government level, for a broad-based approach to health that involves all the sectors that impact on health; and
- iv. supported the development of a ‘Framework of Priorities for Health in the Pacific’.

REACHING OUT TO RURAL AND REMOTE COMMUNITIES THROUGH THE PACIFIC PLAN DIGITAL STRATEGY

CRGA:

- i. noted the Secretariat’s achievements in implementing the digital strategy;
- ii. noted the progress on the SPIN (South Pacific Information Network) initiative and the positive impact of PACRICS (Pacific Rural Internet Connectivity System) and OLPC (One Laptop Per Child) in the region to date;
- iii. encouraged continued facilitation of the wider roll-out of the PACRICS and OLPC initiatives; and
- iv. endorsed the Secretariat’s efforts to secure additional funding to ensure implementation of current plans to establish pilot roll-outs of both PACRICS and OLPC can continue in 2009.

JOINT COUNTRY STRATEGIES

CRGA:

- i. noted progress made in developing joint country strategies (JCSs) and country profiles in 2008;
- ii. welcomed feedback from members on the value of JCSs and country profiles; and
- iii. endorsed the Secretariat’s intention to complete JCSs for American Samoa, French Polynesia, CNMI, Palau, Samoa and Tonga in 2009, and to update the country profiles of all island members.

DECENTRALISATION — SPC REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE NORTH PACIFIC

CRGA:

- i. noted further progress in implementing the decision by Conference to decentralise SPC's services, through the strengthening and planned expansion of SPC's Regional Office for the North Pacific in Pohnpei;
- ii. thanked the government of FSM and Pohnpei State for their rapid response in providing alternative office space for the Secretariat after the loss of its office in a fire;
- iii. welcomed the intention of the government of FSM and Pohnpei State to explore the possibility of building a 'Micronesian Village' to accommodate the longer-term office needs of SPC and other agencies in Pohnpei; and
- iv. acknowledged the update from the representative of FSM on the government's plans for the Micronesian Village.

TAX SITUATION FOR FIJI NATIONALS WORKING AT SPC IN FIJI

CRGA:

- i. noted the progress made by the Secretariat in implementing the decision by Conference on the subject of taxation of Fiji nationals employed by SPC in Fiji;
- ii. thanked the Government of Fiji for its decision agreeing to a temporary cessation of this taxation;
- iii. supported the proposal put forward by the Director-General to the Interim Minister of Foreign Affairs that a new host country agreement be negotiated between Fiji and SPC, with the tax issue to be part of these negotiations;
- iv. noted the update provided by the Fiji delegation on the Government of Fiji's response to the proposal put forward by the Director-General; and
- v. requested the Secretariat and Government of Fiji to present the final outcome of this matter to CRGA 39 and the 6th Conference of the Pacific Community in Tonga in 2009.

OFFICE AND STAFF ACCOMMODATION, NOUMEA/SUVA

CRGA:

- i. noted the progress made by the Secretariat and the host governments of SPC's offices in Noumea and Suva in addressing SPC's office and staff accommodation needs;

- ii. thanked the delegates from New Caledonia and France for the briefings provided on plans to address the issue of staff and office accommodation for SPC in Noumea, and encouraged the Government of New Caledonia to continue to study solutions likely to meet these housing and office space needs over the long term, in line with the explanations provided by France and New Caledonia.
- iii. thanked the delegate from Fiji for briefing CRGA on plans to address the short- and long-term office requirements of SPC in Suva, acknowledged the Government of Fiji for providing more office space to meet the immediate needs of SPC's Suva regional office, and welcomed the Government's commitment to pursuing the Pacific Village project; and
- iv. noted that office and staff accommodation requirements in other SPC locations will be addressed in the context of individual host country agreements signed between the member and SPC.

PACIFIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION THREE YEARS ON

CRGA:

- i. acknowledged the Secretariat's major contributions to implementation of Pacific Plan priorities since the plan's adoption and noted that, to date, this has been done without seeking additional resources;
- ii. noted the priority areas being targeted by the Secretariat in 2009, which reflect the Pacific Plan priorities outlined in the Alofi and Vava'u Decisions;
- iii. requested development partners to provide the new resources needed to respond effectively to the priorities identified by Forum leaders for urgent action; and
- iv. requested that the Secretariat prepare and present to CRGA 39 a policy paper that details the status of ratification, implementation and reporting of human rights-related treaties, conventions, covenants and agreements by members in accordance with initiative 12.5 of the Pacific Plan, and that examines the development benefits to members of the ratification of those agreements.

REGIONAL INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

CRGA:

- i. noted the excellent progress achieved during 2008 in responding to the Regional Institutional Framework (RIF) review and decisions related to rationalising the activities of regional organisations;
- ii. noted that the CEOs of SPC and SPBEA (South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment) have agreed on a process for developing an implementation plan for the merger between the two organisations;

- iii. endorsed and adopted the approach agreed on by the SPREP (Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme) Meeting with regard to the RIF process; and
- iv. directed the Director-General to implement the decision of CRGA 38 as set out in Annex 3 of the addendum to CRGA paper 4.2 (see below).

Addendum — Decision by CRGA 38 on the Regional Institutional Framework (RIF)

1. At its 38th meeting held in Noumea, New Caledonia, from 13 to 16 October 2008:
 - recalling the decision made by the 5th Conference of the Pacific Community on the RIF in Apia in November 2007,
 - noting the decision by the SPREP Meeting in 2008 on the RIF,
 - wishing to establish one single mechanism between SPC, SPREP and SOPAC (Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission) to respond to the RIF review and the Forum leaders' decision on regional institutional arrangements, and
 - noting that the SOPAC Governing Council will meet after CRGA,
2. CRGA:
 - a. endorsed the process contained in the SPREP decision,
 - b. added three more parameters to the analysis proposed in the SPREP decision, including two that were approved by the 5th Conference of the Pacific Community in Apia in 2007.
3. CRGA also:
 - a. **directed**, the Director-General of SPC to engage collaboratively with the CEOs of SOPAC and SPREP immediately following the 2008 SOPAC Council Meeting to determine and jointly identify the new proposed institutional arrangement based on:
 - i. synergies and linkages between programmes
 - ii. optimising service delivery
 - iii. organisational capabilities
 - iv. maintaining the integrity of applied science and technical services
 - v. transparency and timeliness with respect to the process, and effective involvement of stakeholders
 - vi. cost-effectiveness, and
 - vii. analysis of the core function of each SOPAC programme to assess whether it is primarily (a) an environmental programme, or (b) an economic development programme.

- b. **directed** the Director-General of SPC, in collaboration with the CEOs of SOPAC and SPREP, to jointly commission an independent analysis of the legal, financial, administrative, and programmatic implications of the proposed new institutional arrangements;
 - c. **directed**, the Director-General of SPC to propose to the other CEOs that the proposed institutional arrangements and analysis of implications are circulated to all member focal points of SPREP, SPC and SOPAC with an invitation for a representative from each Member country to attend a meeting of all countries and territories for consideration by May 2009;
 - d. **directed**, subject to the guidance of the above-referenced meeting, the Director-General of SPC to work collaboratively to finalise and jointly recommend new institutional arrangements and implementation plans, to be provided to Members by July 2009, for consideration and decision by their respective Governing Bodies in 2009;
 - e. **agreed**, that the 39th meeting of CRGA and the 6th Conference of the Pacific Community in 2009 will consider the institutional arrangements and implementation plan recommended by three CEOs before the next Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' meeting in 2009;
 - f. **directed**, the Director-General of SPC to propose to the other CEOs to provide a joint quarterly update on progress and to seek and share the views of, and give due consideration to, all members of SPREP, SPC and SOPAC;
 - g. **noted**, the instruction by the SPREP Council to the Director of SPREP in his deliberations on the new institutional arrangements to take account of the ICR recommendations and implementation; and
 - h. **agreed** that an independent external consultancy would be commissioned, if necessary, to assist the three CEOs to achieve the objective of paragraph 3 (a).
4. To try and ensure the three governing bodies and their respective CEOs work together using one mechanism, CRGA requested the Chairperson of CRGA 38 to write to the respective Chairpersons of the SPREP Council and the SOPAC Council to inform them that CRGA has endorsed the process contained in the SPREP decision as outlined above.

AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND JOINT REVIEW

CRGA:

- i. noted that Australia and New Zealand have commissioned a joint review to look at their assistance to the region through Pacific regional organisations;
- ii. expressed appreciation to these two governments for their ongoing and important support to the organisation; and

- iii. further noted the information provided by the representative of New Zealand on the review process and on the time frame for negotiation of new funding agreements with Australia and New Zealand.

STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT, POLICY AND PLANNING FACILITY

CRGA:

- i. noted progress in establishing the Strategic Engagement, Policy and Planning Facility; and
- ii. endorsed the Secretariat's efforts to secure additional resources to further enhance the facility's capacity to support the membership.

CORPORATE SERVICES DIVISION STRATEGIC PLAN

CRGA:

- i. noted and endorsed the direction taken in the development of the Corporate Services strategic plan for 2008–2012; and
- ii. noted the requirement for resource input to enable Corporate Services to enhance its capability to move from providing routine administrative support to developing strategic and effective partnerships with programmes and development partners.

PROGRESSIVE ORGANISATIONAL REFORMS

CRGA:

- i. noted the Secretariat's planned implementation of a two-phase reform process over the next 15 months;
- ii. noted that the Phase 1 reforms are not likely to incur additional costs;
- iii. noted the Secretariat's plans to implement a composite-grade remuneration structure (a variation of the current harmonised CROP remuneration structure) effective from January 2009, in accordance with the provisions of the guiding principles and strategies for CROP harmonisation and remuneration;
- iv. further noted that there were no cost implications resulting from this change in structure in 2009; and
- v. supported the Secretariat's implementation plan for the reforms.

AUDIT REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2007

CRGA:

- i. considered and accepted the 2007 audited financial statements for SPC's overall finances and Staff Provident Fund;
- ii. noted that clean audit reports were received by SPC for the 12th consecutive year;
- iii. noted that in regard to the comment in the auditor's management letter on the fixed assets register, that the Secretariat accepts the auditor's recommendations and has begun implementing them;

and in regards to arrears in some members' assessed contributions,
- iv. endorsed the position of the Secretariat not to provide for arrears in members' assessed contributions, in line with its existing policy;
- v. noted the Secretariat's efforts to work with relevant members on arrears in contributions; and
- vi. requested members with outstanding arrears to work with the Secretariat to draw up a schedule for settling the arrears as soon as possible.

APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS FOR FINANCIAL YEARS 2008–2010

CRGA:

- i. considered and approved the Secretariat's recommendation to appoint PricewaterhouseCoopers, Noumea, to audit SPC's accounts for the financial years 2008–2010; and
- ii. thanked Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu of Papua New Guinea for their excellent work over the past six years.

FINANCIAL YEAR 2008: CORE BUDGET REVISION

CRGA noted the revised 2008 core budget.

TRIENNIAL REVIEW OF MEMBERS' ASSESSED CONTRIBUTIONS

CRGA:

- i. agreed with the Secretariat's proposal to present a detailed long-term budget strategy to CRGA 39 and the 6th Conference of the Pacific Community in 2009; and
- ii. agreed to deferral of the triennial review of SPC's assessed contribution funding formula to 2009.

CROP HUMAN RESOURCES AND REMUNERATION ISSUES: 2008 MARKET DATA SURVEYS

CRGA:

- a) In the case of staff recruited internationally:
 - i. approved the payment of the full increases recommended by CROP Heads with effect from 1 January 2009, i.e. Grade I, 9.5%; Grade J, 14.0%; Grade K, 14.0%; Grade L, 14.2%; and Grade M, 15.5%;
 - ii. noted that the resulting net increase in local currency salaries would vary according to location, being lowest in Noumea, and highest in Pohnpei due mostly to the weaker US dollar and increased cost of living there; and
 - iii. noted that the total increase was funded from savings on salary costs resulting from the weak SDR coupled with the lower cost of living in Noumea, and savings due to increased efficiency and other cost reduction measures.
- b) In the case of staff recruited under local conditions:
 - iv. noted that the Suva-based CROP agencies, PIFS, SPBEA, SPC and SOPAC, have jointly commissioned a job-evaluation exercise to standardise their methodology and facilitate comparison and standardisation of similar positions across the four agencies; and
 - v. noted that for SPC Noumea staff, the Secretariat was awaiting the outcome of the 2008 local market study before deciding on a course of action, and that any increases indicated by the Noumea market survey and approved by the government of New Caledonia for implementation in New Caledonia would be passed on to Noumea-based staff.

FINANCIAL YEAR 2009 BUDGET

CRGA:

- i. approved the proposed budget for financial year 2009; and
- ii. requested development partners and stakeholders to favourably consider providing bridging funds to sustain in 2009 important activities currently funded by the European Development Fund.

THIRTY-NINTH CRGA: VENUE AND MEETING CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON

CRGA:

- i. noted that Nuku'alofa, Tonga, will be the venue for the 2009 meeting of CRGA 39 and the Sixth Conference of the Pacific Community; and
- ii. noted that the Chairperson for CRGA 39 will be provided by Australia and the Vice-Chairperson by Cook Islands.

(Note: the 39th CRGA and Sixth Conference will be held from 6 to 13 October 2009.)

OTHER BUSINESS

CRGA noted that the Secretariat will:

- i. prepare a policy paper for consideration by CRGA 39 on:
 - a. associate membership of SPC;
 - b. guidelines for non-governmental (NGOs) and civil society organisation (CSOs) that do not have direct links with SPC but would like to attend meetings of SPC's governing body; and
 - ii. extend invitations to NGOs, CSOs and development partners that work with SPC to attend future CRGA meetings as observers.
-