



**FORTY-NINTH MEETING OF THE  
COMMITTEE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF GOVERNMENTS AND ADMINISTRATIONS**  
(18–20 June 2019, Noumea, New Caledonia)

---

**AGENDA ITEM No. 6.1: Framework for Pacific Regionalism and CROP cohesion and coordination**

(Paper presented by the Secretariat)

**Summary**

1. This paper provides an update on the 2018 review of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism (FPR) and initiatives to further strengthen the cohesion and coordination of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP).

**Review of the FPR**

2. As called for by the Forum Officials Committee (FOC), the FPR was independently reviewed in 2018. A review report, and the Forum Secretariat's organisational response, were considered at the 2018 budget session of the FOC. In response, the FOC agreed to establish a subcommittee to provide direction on taking forward the findings and recommendations of the review. The FOC subcommittee will seek the input of CROP agencies, including SPC, to inform its work.
3. The subcommittee will report to the FOC in July 2019 on the proposed approach to take forward the review recommendations, particularly regarding an implementing strategy for the FPR, and the role and mandate of the Specialist Sub-Committee on Regionalism (SSCR).

**CROP cohesion and coordination**

4. At the 49th Pacific Islands Forum in Nauru, and in response to a review of the 2012 CROP Charter, Forum Leaders endorsed a revised Charter to ensure full alignment with the FPR and to strengthen CROP cooperation, coordination and collaboration.
5. Under the directive of CROP Heads, CROP agencies have begun implementing the new Charter, including holding the 1st Annual Meeting of CROP Heads and Governing Council Chairs on 21 November 2018, to promote stronger regional governance, coherence and collaboration. The 2nd Annual Meeting is scheduled for October 2019.
6. The 1st Annual Meeting of CROP Heads and Governing Council Chairs agreed on a *2019 CROP Strategic Work Agenda*, which sets out the collective priorities, expected outcomes and mechanisms for CROP to deliver on the decisions of the 49th Pacific Islands Forum in Nauru. Given SPC's technical remit and expertise, it has a key role to play in delivering on the *Work Agenda*.
7. CROP Heads will collectively report to the FOC and Forum Leaders in 2019 on the progress, outcomes and further action required against the *2019 CROP Strategic Work Agenda*.

## Recommendations

8. CRGA is invited to:
  - i. recognise SPC's ongoing engagement in working alongside other CROP agencies to fully implement the 2018 CROP Charter;
  - ii. note the Secretariat's commitment to support for delivery of priorities under the *2019 CROP Strategic Work Agenda*, as relevant to its mandate and expertise, to progress decisions from the 49th Pacific Islands Forum;
  - iii. acknowledge the Secretariat's ongoing engagement with the FPR and CROP and urge that it continues to contribute proactively to strong and effective Pacific regionalism.

## **Framework for Pacific Regionalism and CROP cohesion and coordination**

### **Purpose**

9. This paper presents an update on the 2018 review of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism (FPR) and initiatives to further strengthen CROP cohesion and coordination in support of strong and effective Pacific regionalism.

### **Background**

10. The FPR represents Forum Leaders' political commitment to working collectively to achieve the region's key sustainable development aspirations. To deliver on this commitment, the FPR articulates an approach to priority setting that requires inclusivity, political ownership, and a focus on issues and areas where it makes sense to work collectively. Based on this, successful implementation of the FPR requires that the regional architecture – principally CROP – is a true partner at all stages of the priority-setting process.
11. CROP agencies have a crucial role to play in the implementation of the FPR, primarily through:
  - providing technical and policy advice to guide and inform the development of regional policy;
  - implementing the decisions of Leaders in areas where they have a comparative technical advantage;
  - supporting monitoring and reporting on regional priorities.
12. The FPR was reviewed in 2018 and CRGA 48 agreed that the Secretariat should continue to support engagement in and implementation of Leaders' priorities through the collective efforts of CROP.

### **Review of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism**

13. At the 2016 budget session of FOC, members called for the FPR to be reviewed in 2018 to ensure it was fit for purpose and delivering on member's expectations.
14. Members subsequently endorsed the terms of reference for the review and an independent team of consultants, KAS Partners, was engaged to carry it out. The review team consulted with members, CROP and other key stakeholders from June to October 2018 and reported their key findings and recommendations.
15. The review report, and the Forum Secretariat's organisational response, were tabled for members' consideration at the 2018 budget session of FOC. In response, members agreed to establish a FOC subcommittee to provide direction on taking forward the review recommendations for consideration by FOC at the 2019 Pre-Forum Session, and by Forum Leaders at their forthcoming meeting in Tuvalu.
16. The FOC subcommittee first met on 15 February and decided on three actions:
  - a. Provide a comprehensive report on the work of the Forum Secretariat in delivering on the recommendations of the review.
  - b. Prepare an options paper on recommendation 4 of the review report, i.e. 'Develop a time-bound Implementation Strategy for the FPR that articulates policy priorities, strategy, key deliverables, and measures for success'.

- c. Prepare an options paper on recommendation 9 of the review report, i.e. 'Consider re-aligning the terms of reference of the Specialist Sub-Committee on Regionalism in accordance with the intent set out for the 'Board for Regionalism' in the Pacific Plan Review'.
17. The FOC Subcommittee will meet at least twice more before finalising their report for the consideration of FOC in July 2019. Subsequent meetings will draw on the input of CROP agencies.

## **CROP Cohesion and Coordination**

### *CROP Charter*

18. At the 49th Pacific Islands Forum in Nauru, and in response to a review of the 2012 CROP Charter, Forum Leaders endorsed a revised Charter to ensure full alignment with the FPR and to strengthen CROP cooperation, coordination and collaboration under the oversight of the CROP Chair. Leaders also directed CROP agencies to strengthen collaboration and effectively implement commitments reflected under the revised Charter.
19. The revised Charter includes several changes to CROP's mandate and ways of working including:
- a. revising the CROP mandate, role and guiding principles to align with the FPR;
  - b. committing to a joint meeting between CROP Heads and Governing Council Chairs;
  - c. committing to establishing a CROP Deputies Group to guide implementation of the CROP work programme;
  - d. establishing theme- or issue-based 'CROP Taskforces' to replace the current CROP Working Group mechanism;
  - e. reporting annually to Leaders on progress made in implementing their decisions on the regional priorities under the FPR.
20. Under the directive of CROP Heads, CROP agencies have begun implementing the new Charter, including establishing an Annual Meeting of CROP Heads and Governing Council Chairs; establishing the CROP Deputies Group; and producing an annual written report to Forum Leaders.
21. In 2019 and onwards, CROP agencies will need to continue collaboration to ensure full implementation of the new CROP Charter. A key commitment still to be implemented is the shift from CROP Working Groups to CROP Taskforces.

### *Annual Meeting of CROP Heads and Governing Council Chairs 2019 CROP Strategic Work Agenda*

22. CROP Heads have initiated an Annual Meeting of CROP Heads and Governing Council Chairs to promote stronger regional governance, coherence and collaboration.
23. The 1st Annual Meeting (21 November 2018) focused on strengthening CROP cohesion and coordination; progressing work on CROP harmonisation and remuneration; and agreeing to a *CROP Strategic Work Agenda* for 2019, to deliver on Forum Leaders' decisions (Summary Record, Attachment A).
24. The 2nd Annual Meeting will be held in October 2019. It will focus on assessing implementation of the new CROP Charter and strengthening regional governance and financing.

25. A key outcome of the 1st Annual Meeting of CROP Heads and Governing Council Chairs was agreement on the *2019 CROP Strategic Work Agenda* (Attachment B) to ensure clarity and agreement on the collective work priorities required for CROP to deliver on the decisions from the 49th Pacific Islands Forum in Nauru.
26. As set out the in CROP Strategic Work Agenda, CROP's seven work priorities for 2019 are:
  - a. combatting climate change and building disaster resilience;
  - b. ensuring the long-term sustainability and viability of the region's fisheries resources;
  - c. strengthening cooperation on regional security through supporting implementation of the Boe Declaration;
  - d. supporting sustainable ocean management, use and conservation;
  - e. promoting sustainable development through supporting the delivery of the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development;
  - f. tackling childhood obesity, non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and promoting early childhood development;
  - g. strengthening arrangements for regionalism, including through implementation of the new CROP Charter.
27. Given SPC's technical remit and expertise, it has a key role to play in delivering against all seven work priorities. Examples of SPC's current collaboration with CROP agencies and other stakeholders to progress regional priorities include its commitments to:
  - genuine partnerships;
  - ocean governance through the Blue Pacific identity;
  - safeguarding the region's resources and security;
  - the economic potential and sustainability of the region's fisheries resource;
  - addressing climate change and disaster resilience;
  - education and health (specifically NCDs);
  - gender equality;
  - the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development, including data.
28. CROP Heads collectively report to FOC and Forum Leaders through their annual written report on the progress, outcomes and further action required against this Strategic Work Agenda.

## **Conclusion**

29. This paper has provided an overview of current key initiatives to further strengthen Pacific regionalism, including implementation of the recommendations of the FPR review; the new CROP Charter, and the 2019 CROP Strategic Work Agenda. Given SPC's mandate, expertise and membership of the CROP, it has a key role to play in supporting such initiatives, in support of strong and effective Pacific regionalism.

## **Recommendations**

30. CRGA is invited to:
  - i. recognise SPC's ongoing engagement in working alongside other CROP agencies to fully implement the 2018 CROP Charter;

- ii. note the Secretariat's commitment to supporting the delivery of priorities under the *2019 CROP Strategic Work Agenda*, as relevant to its mandate and expertise, to progress decisions arising from the 49th Pacific Islands Forum;
- iii. acknowledge the Secretariat's ongoing engagement with the FPR and CROP and urge that it continues to contribute proactively to strong and effective Pacific regionalism.

**Annex A**

**CROP Heads and Governing Council Chairs Meeting – Outcomes summary**

**Annex B**

**CROP Strategic Work Agenda 2019**