

PIP3 (2022-2023) High Level Summary Report: Crosscutting Issues and Lessons Learnt

Introduction

This segment of the PIP 3 (2022-2023) High Level Summary Report highlights key crosscutting issues which includes innovation, strategic linkages, gender mainstreaming, risk management, and lessons learnt.

I. Innovation:

Innovation and flexibility in delivering services to Members remained paramount to SPREP achievements with key highlights as follow:

- i. Sustained connectivity and interaction through interactive hybrid learning using virtual platforms delivery ensured regional presence, similarly, reaffirming SPREP's commitment in responding to critical environment issues even after borders were opened.
- ii. First Artificial Intelligence (AI) use case for improved searchability and presentation of SPREP information and resources, promoting effective and efficient access of information on critical environmental issues through the SPREP website (www.sprep.org)
- iii. Webinars and virtual events were successfully organised and delivered by SPREP Programmes and Departments in 2022-2023
 - The Pacific Climate Change Centre (PCCC) at SPREP hosted high level events:
 - First Pacific Virtual Climate Innovative Exhibition hosted from 4 – 6 October 2022. Over 2,000 people engaged, consisting of both daily webinar sessions and virtual exhibitions. The Exhibition connected people to learn of potential innovative solutions to climate change challenges faced in the Pacific region.
 - The key outcome of the exhibition was the development of the Framework for Climate Change Innovation which was showcased at a side event at COP27. A consolidation of information on new and innovative technology and techniques for climate change adaptation and mitigation that are not yet trialled and or used in the Pacific have been developed to guide future investment in pilot projects.
<https://www.sprep.org/news/pacific-climate-change-centre-committed-to-supporting-the-pacific-to-access-climate-innovative-solutions-cop-27-sharm-el-sheikh>

- In addition to the impacts of COVID 19 to the ways of doing business at SPREP in sustaining the lives and livelihoods of the vulnerable communities, the Pacific region is continuously experiencing the most severe impacts of climate change. The speed and severity of these impacts are such that the business-as-usual responses are insufficient. Adaptive approaches and the implementation of adaptation actions are highly critical. Similarly, the transition to low carbon economies requires pioneering approaches that bring together the latest science and technology with locally determined needs and contexts:
 - The PCCC's Online platforms recognised as a learning gateway for Pacific Island members by fostering innovation and promoting the development of new climate services and products; holding 'challenge events' to bring together researcher, policymakers and practitioners to find solutions to key climate-related challenges; and supporting the implementation of the Pacific Roadmap for Strengthened Climate Services. <https://www.sprep.org/pacific-climate-change-centre>
 - Increase in the number of users of PCCC's Open Learning portal utilising online courses on a) Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction through structural approaches; b) Ecosystem-based Adaptation and Mitigation; c) Enhancing Climate Resilience and Safe Water Access in rural areas in the Pacific; d) Enhancing Climate Resilience in Tourism in the Pacific; e) Health Systems and Climate Change: Enhancing Resilient and Low-carbon Development in the Pacific; and f: Understanding Access to Climate Finance: Project planning and management. <https://spreptraining.moodlecloud.com/>
 - The Pacific Climate Change Centre Virtual Innovation Exhibition brought together those with climate solutions and those with climate challenges in collaboration with partners at the regional and global levels. This supports innovative solutions that are creative and new, turning ideas into solutions including the application of ideas that are novel, useful for our Pacific region and relevant to the needs of our people. The virtual climate innovation exhibition showcased successful innovations and solutions on a regional and global level as well as articulating a framework for partnership between the PCCC and stakeholders to support initiatives related to climate change innovation whilst bringing awareness.
- EMG-led approach on the Digitisation of Environmental Impact Assessment systems and processes to support electronic permitting or 'e-permitting' geared towards streamlining and enhancing the efficiency of EIA processes. The EMG Programme has been widely promoting Cook Islands EIA e-permitting system, which has so far generated active interest to adopt/replicate this innovative approach in two SPREP member countries.
- The EMG programme in collaboration with World Bank to develop a new funding modality which will position SPREP as a regional partner to deliver a project aimed at enhancing social consideration in project risk assessment and management across the Pacific region. This partnership would lead to more robust project implementation and increased capacity to manage environmental and social risks effectively. It also reflects SPREP's growing influence and recognition as a major player in regional environmental assessment initiatives.

- The PNEA online a portal of EIA resources has grown to a mailing list over 300 members from government and donor agencies linked to EIA implementation and approvals with now close to 190 registered portal members who can access exclusive regional relevant EIA content and guidance.
- One Pacific Voice amplification at the 28th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Working in partnership with Climate Change Resilience Programme, an intensive communications campaign with five different branches was conducted. It focussed on working with our Pacific Small Islands Developing States to amplify our One Pacific Voice at COP28 noting over 100,000 registered delegates the event that is pivotal to our survival in the face of climate change impacts. Activities included Moana Blue Pacific Pavilion for 11 days, over 75 events, over 35 high level side events, and over 430 speakers from the Moana Blue Pacific Pavilion Platform of which 310 were Pacific Islands voices; Mana Moana Pasifika Voices (Poems); Pasifika TV on training for 32 media workers across the Pacific; media coverage and resource development where high-level statements delivered by all Pacific Islands leaders were covered by SPREP Media; and Legacy Poem (An interactive campaign at COP29 saw over 100 Pacific Islands Voices collected to develop and form a single poem – “Breathe 1.5”).
- Transactive banking platforms and significant digital transformation in various platforms used in financial operations supported ease in financial and procurement processes, which lead to:
 - Total procurement activity as linked to Programme expenditure increased significantly in the past 2 years, more particularly USD\$33 mil in 2023 and USD\$19.4 in 2022 (2021: \$15.9 mil)
 - Linked and aligned to the significant improvement in related income from Programme management charges which increased to USD\$2.4 mil in 2023 compared to USD\$1.8 mil in 2022 (2021: USD\$1.3 mil).
- People Strategy as the workforce centered organisation paves opportunities for rapidly evolving people and employment policies, and practices globally.

Strengthened implementation modality with the engagement of sub-regional partners

- The EU funded Pacific BioScapes Programme being implemented in 11 countries has engaged SPREP regional partners as an implementation modality to provide the best support to addressing the needs of Pacific Island Members.
- Through the work of GEF ISLANDS and UNEP work is progressing on the Moana Taka Partnership Plus, a partnership between SPREP and Swire Shipping, for the disposal of non-commercial waste from the PICTs to Swire destination within the Asia Pacific network. Over the last 2 years (2022 and 2023) the network has moved around 100 containers (over 1000 tonnes) of waste (99% plastic waste). The MTP-Plus refers to the expanding of the existing MTP to other shipping agents in the Pacific and to other SIDS.
- Strengthening community resilience to impacts of climate change through the management of disaster waste by way of improving access to landfills in Tonga and Vanuatu, as well as the abatement of asbestos containing materials that become hazardous to disaster responders and volunteers.

- Maintaining the MoU with the New Zealand Association of Impact Assessment (NZAIA) continued to foster the relationship of NZAIA members with SPREP, contributing their expertise to undertake training in areas identified by SPREP. There is not cost on NZAIA expert engagement in delivering training for member countries.
- The SPREP GIS Team secured funding from the Ensuring Resilient Ecosystems and Representative Protected Areas (EREPA) project in the Solomon Islands from IUCN GCF funding. The GIS team provided support on the development of protected areas geospatial information for the 5 provinces in the Solomon Islands.
- The integration of the Secretariat of the Noumea Convention functions as part of the ACPMEAIII Programme has further raised the visibility of the Noumea Convention as well as the ACP MEA III in the Pacific region through publications, trainings and Noumea Convention COP preparations and negotiations.
- The successful implementation of the Pacific Learning Partnership for Environment and Social Safeguards (PLP/ESS) has resulted in initial discussion between World Bank and SPREP on a longer-term relationship to strengthen EIA/ESS in the Pacific region.
- SPREP's People Strategy is an organisation strategy for all staff. The implementation approach sees the Director General leading on the strategy with the Senior Leadership Team taking lead on implementation of the specific outcomes. The Staff Advisory Committee takes an active role with all staff involved in different working groups for its implementation.
- Strengthening safe circular economy in the conservation, protection, and use of natural resources to build resilience through implementation of the zero-waste hierarchy which adds Refuse, Rethink, and Redesign to the top of the pyramid followed by Reduce, Reuse, Recycle plus Return.
- Supporting the PacMet Desk through joint development with partners NIWA and BOM in migrating Early warning tool from SCOPIC to CliDesc.

II. Strategic linkages

SPREP continued to operate and deliver its work and services in a more integrated and cohesive manner through key internal coordinating mechanisms which were established since 2018. Examples of key results achieved through intra and inter programme and department collaboration include:

- CCR
 - Coordinated with PCCC Programme with IOE to promote with ecosystem-based adaptation and nature-based solutions through the PACRES project, KIWA, and co-organisation of the "Adapting Cities and territories to sea-level rise in the Pacific".
 - Provided support to Pacific CBD Parties through technical advice on the climate change elements of the proposed text for Pacific Parties consideration during the hybrid preparatory meeting to ensure climate change text is in alignment with the adopted decisions under UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement and the Pacific SIDS climate change priorities.

- Provided support to IOE through PRISMSS in developing their business case and framing of the climate change rationale to access climate finance to support implementation of invasive species eradication and management programmes in Pacific SIDS.
- Collaborated with Project Coordination Unit in co-designing project proposals to the GCF and Adaptation Fund and implementation of approved projects.
- Collaborated closely with the Communication Unit to profile PSIDS at the UNFCCC negotiations, and profile achievements under various CCR including PCCC-led initiatives.
- Engaged staff from other programmes and units of SPREP to provide administrative, IT and logistics support and negotiation support at the UNFCCC COPs. For example, IT, WPMC, IOE, PCU, Finance and EMG. These provided them the opportunity to be exposed to international engagement and build relations with National Climate Change Focal Points, donors and partners.
- Climate Change Coordination Committee (4Cs) continue to ensure streamlined and coordinated approach to supporting PICTs in implementing their national climate change agenda. The 4Cs continue to facilitate and coordinate through an integrated approach on climate change resilience-related programmes, projects, and activities across the work of SPREP.
- IOE
 - The IOE Threatened and Migratory Species (TAMS) sub-programme continued to engage with Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission meetings on the issue of bycatch of threatened and migratory species.
 - The TAMS sub-programme also supported the Waste Management and Pollution Control Programme and Members in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.
 - The NZ MFAT funded PRISMSS Restoring Island Resilience Project implemented by the IOE Invasive Species sub-programme addresses the inter-relationship between the combined threats of climate change and invasive species.
 - The IOE coastal and marine team has been working jointly with the Pacific Climate Change Centre (PCCC) and the Climate Change and Resilience Programme to promote nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based adaptation for climate resilience in Pacific Island countries and territories, in particular through the joint organisation of a regional workshop on “Adapting cities and territories to sea-level rise in the Pacific” (together with the Ocean & Climate Platform through the Sea’ties Initiative) as well as a targeted support to SPREP and Pacific delegations at UNFCCC COP 28 in Dubai.
- WMPC
 - Strengthening safe circular economy in the conservation, protection and use of natural resources to build resilience through implementation of the zero-waste hierarchy which adds Refuse, Rethink, and Redesign to the top of the pyramid followed by Reduce, Reuse, Recycle plus Return.

- Strengthening community resilience to impacts of climate change through the management of disaster waste by way of improving access to landfills in Tonga and Vanuatu, as well as the abatement of asbestos containing materials that become hazardous to disaster responders and volunteers.
- Negotiating a global plastic treaty that addresses the triple planetary crisis impacts.
- **EMG**
 - Noumea Convention Secretariat: The EMG Programme continues to serve as the secretariat for the Noumea Convention and continues to coordinate and work closely with various SPREP programmes (specifically the IOE and WMPC Programmes) to support implementation of the convention. A notable outcome of this collaboration was the successful convening of the Ad Hoc Meeting of the Parties to the Noumea Convention in June 2023.
 - ACPMEAs3 Project: Through the ACPMEAs3 project, the EMG Programme has and continues to co-ordinate with IOE and WMPC to deliver a range of activities across the region. For example, a notable outcome of this collaboration include the gaining of practical skills and knowledge of SPREP member countries in utilising protected area management effectiveness tools.
 - EU-OACPS BIOPAMA phase II project – the EMG Programme has continued collaborating with the IOE programme through linkages of the BIOPAMA phase II project and the Inform Project. A notable outcome of this collaboration is creation and maintenance of automated integrations and information sharing between the Pacific Environment Portal (PEP) and the Pacific Islands Protected Area Portal (PIPAP) which has facilitated an enhanced user experience and provided users with access to a larger set of environmental data and information to support decision making. Furthermore, the BIOPAMA programme provided technical contributions towards designing and delivering the GIS e-learning platform/course highlighted in section 1 above.
 - VanKIRAP Project: The EMG Programme has also provided support to the VanKIRAP project by assisting in the preparation of an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) for a C-Band Radar installation in Vanuatu. This collaboration underscores the commitment to enhancing environmental assessments and risk management in the Pacific region, contributing significantly to disaster preparedness and response capabilities. The ESMP was well received by donors and has provided a proper environmental and social safeguards (ESS) framework for identifying and mitigating risks from the project.
 - PACRES Project: The EMG Programme provided crucial support to the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change and Resilience Building (PACRES) project on the application of Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) for community water supply projects in Timor Leste. This collaboration benefitted two communities in Timor-Leste in facilitating community access to a regular supply of potable water.

- Knowledge Management, Communications, and IT Services
 - Ensured the mitigation of technical glitch for continuity of meetings provided to high level meetings Monitor; assist with patch management of systems for ensured security; and delivered in-house capacity building on IT training on IT tools and cybersecurity, IT policy development consultations
 - Expanded reach for SPREP's social media platforms through Facebook and LinkedIn while ensuring information available for users anywhere, and anytime.
 - Progressed work in developing data policies ensuring information portals are linked to each other and not operating in silos.

- Technical advice on technology safeguarding and security provided to Programmes at high level meetings
 - CCR: PMC, UNFCCC COP meetings, partners such as WMO, COSPPAC project, ClimSA, PACRES
 - WMPC: INC and Waigani COP meetings, JPRISM with development of PIDOC
 - IOE –Partners and webinars, Invasive Species team and TREDS
 - EMG- Partners and webinars

- Financial management
 - Finance continues to play a crucial function to support productive partnerships and collaborations given its active role in the entire programme cycle through valued participation at the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages through to the final reporting phase for all its Programmes. This is done through the various internal control processes, committees and task teams that the Finance & Administration Department (FAD) plays a crucial advisory and monitoring role to ensure all programme areas operate with confidence and in compliance with the donor accredited processes for SPREP.
 - Finance conducts regular monitoring and advisory functions actioned via timely reports and advice provided to Directors through Senior leadership team meetings and whenever requested, to ensure that they are well updated with their programme implementation and performance to help facilitate appropriate actions for resolving or bridging any gaps and issues in delivery and implementation.
 - Bolstered overall delivery in programme implementation in the past year which saw exceeding performances for 3 out of the 4 programmes at the end of last year, and ultimately exceeded budget expectations for Programmes (Actuals of USD\$40.5 vs Budget of USD\$30.3 mil).
 - Continued confidence of members, partners and donors evidence to continuing partnerships and the increased donor portfolio which noted an increase in funding support received in 2023 of USD\$34.1 mil and 2022 of USD\$32.9 mil (2021: USD\$26.4 mil).

At the regional and global levels, SPREP continued to be engaged and actively participate in key processes working closely with key partners. Key highlights of results achieved are outlined below:

- SPREP continued to actively engage
 - CROP partners in the development of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and MEL Framework for the 2050 Implementation strategy led by PIFS providing technical advice and input particularly on strategic areas relating to

SPREP's core areas of work. The 2050 Implementation Strategy was endorsed by the SPREP Executive Board in 2022 and its subsequent implementation.

- In-country and PRP Taskforce regionals lead on the operationalisation of FRDP 2017-2030
- BBNJ negotiation process supporting Pacific SIDS and working closely with the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner (OPOC). SPREP's engagement is important as the lead regional organization on the environment and its key role as the Secretariat of the Noumea Convention.
- To ensure the voices of the Pacific are amplified in global negotiation processes and related forums, SPREP and Members were engaged in the following global events:
 - First, Second and Third sessions of the INC (INC-1, INC-2, INC-3) Pacific preparatory meetings as well as the INC, in Suva Fiji and at INC-1 in Punta del Este, Uruguay, in Rarotonga Cook Islands and at INC-2, in Paris France, in Koror Palau and at INC-3 in Nairobi Kenya.
 - Parties to the Noumea Convention in June 2023.
 - 5th Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly held virtually and in Nairobi, Kenya from 28 February to 2 March 2022;
 - Meetings of the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in 2023
 - Second UN Ocean Conference with the theme 'Scaling Up Ocean Action Based on Science and Innovation for the Implementation of Sustainable Development
 - Goal 14: Stocktaking, Partnerships and Solutions' held in Lisbon, Portugal from 27 June to 1 July 2022;
 - Fourth and Fifth Sessions of the Intergovernmental Conference negotiations for a Treaty on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea in New York, United States of America;
 - 27th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 27) to the United Nations Framework for the Convention on Climate Change to be held in Sharm el-Sheik, Egypt from 6 to 18 November 2022;
 - 28th session of the Conference of Parties (COP 28) to the UNFCCC held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates
 - Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Egypt in 2023

III. Gender mainstreaming

Gender equality is critical to the achievement of SPREP's Strategic Objectives and is core to the delivery of SPREP's Strategic Plan (2017-2026) and vital to SPREP's overall response and mandate to support Member country's environmental priorities and sustainable development goals.

At the institutional level, two gender champions have been established, for SLT-DDG, and PCCC Manager for staff; and active GEIM Team with representations from across Programmes and Departments. GEIM-led the review of the SPREP Gender Policy 2016 (in final stages) aimed to support SPREPs contributions to gender equality at both a project level as well as an organisational level towards contributing to SPREP's vision for 'a resilient Pacific environment sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures'.

The expected outcome of the review led to updating guiding principles on gender equity, social inclusion, disabilities, and mainstreaming; relevant gender-related indicators for reporting; gender justice in climate change, among others. To date, continued significant efforts achieved which promoted gender equality- empower women, empower disability, and social inclusion and empower marginalised communities through programmes and projects that are implemented.

Women participation in various activities across programmes and departments is reaching the average between 50 to 60%. Integration of gender mainstreaming at Programmes and Departments levels are shown below:

Programmes/ Departments	Gender Mainstreaming actions
CCR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PCCC through its Project for Capacity Building on Climate Resilience for the Pacific trained more than 600 participants (between 2019-2022) from Governments, Civil Society, NGOs, and private sector of which 54.25% of the total participants were women. • Nature-Based Solution for climate change adaptation in the Pacific undertook gender segmentation in its reporting. It also ensures women groups in the Pacific can effectively access NbS funds through capacity-building activities. • Gender equity, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) continued to be addressed at project level through the projects that CCR is implementing. GEDSI specialists have been engaged under projects to undertake GEDSI analysis and develop plans to guide mainstream across project outputs and activities. • SPREP through the PACRES project integrated human rights, and GEDSI into strengthening climate change resilience through Ecosystem-based Adaptations to Pacific communities. Support has been provided to countries like Niue and Kiribati to include gender equity in their mainstreaming strategies and frameworks. • 57% of 500 participants who attended 12 executive courses through the PCCC were women. • GEDSI is one of the thematic priorities of the PSIDS under the UNFCCC negotiation process. 14 PSIDS have been provided significant support including through the Pacific Political Champion for GEDSI – Hon. Mona Ainu'u of Niue. • Participation of women, and people with disabilities in trainings, workshops, and consultations at regional and national level. • CCR continued to work with Women's Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO) to training new women negotiators from PSIDS. • CCR also partnered with the Youth Negotiators Academy to coordinate participation of youth from PSIDS at the Climate Youth Negotiators Programme in 2022. Five PSIDS - Tonga, Niue, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and RMI benefited from this programme.
IOE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented projects and programmes through specific activities and also by direct engagement of gender specialists to ensure compliance in activity implementation. • SPREP through the Kiwa initiative integrated human rights, gender equity, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) into strengthening climate change resilience of Pacific communities through Nature-based solutions. This also includes developing tools, guides and providing training and capacity building to support the implementation of GEDSI.

<p>WMPC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PWP, SWAP, POLP implemented their gender plans through inclusion and awareness of impact on all gender as well as marginal Pacific communities. • In Solomon Islands Government, women presence participation on GEDSI is from different the government agencies e.g MECDM, Honiara City Council, Western Province Government, Customs Authority, Chamber of Commerce, Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs • Technical Working Group (18) – The composition of the 18 member TWC reflected gender diversity women (10), men (8). • The Regulation was drafted with GEDSI guidelines in mind ensuring the language is gender neutral. • Awareness materials developed (i.e. billboards, banners, posters, radio and TV messages, interviews) also considered GEDSI guidelines. • Stakeholder Consultations - National and provincial consultations (100 men and women) were well represented by community representatives including women and men. All participants were allowed to express their views freely from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Government – 43 (W-17; M-26)</i> ○ <i>Private Sector – 22 (W-7; M-15)</i> ○ <i>NGOs – 18 (W-9; M-9)</i> ○ <i>Community – 17 (W-5; M-12)</i> <p>TOTAL – 100 (W-38; M-62)</p>
<p>EMG</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender mainstreaming as a major focus of its program delivery and initiatives. EMG capacity-building initiatives have been designed with strong gender outcomes in mind, which when aggregated, demonstrate an overall actual participation rate of between 40 to 60 percent for females. • The UNJP-SESS project executed for Samoa supported the development of policy and planning, and data collection to support development of scenarios for future reporting against Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and build a case for investment in ecosystem services given their centrality to human wellbeing. In recent terrestrial and marine biodiversity field surveys conducted for Samoa through the project, it was confirmed that 58 percent of females participated in the surveys while 42 percent were males. • On the Inform e-learning platform, female participants accounted for 52 percent of the platform's users, while males represented 48 percent. This rise in female engagement showcases the platform's effectiveness in bridging the gender gap in data management, encouraging and empowering more women to actively participate and benefit from the platform's self-paced courses. Over the course of the Inform project, participation records of capacity building trainings confirmed a slightly higher representation of women. • Through the Pacific Learning Partnership for Environmental and Social Sustainability (PLP-ESS), SPREP and its partners developed a range of modules and training materials focused on preventing gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment in infrastructure projects. • The PNEA portal, which is an initiative of the EMG program for environmental assessment practitioners has demonstrated commendable gender parity. About 44 percent of members who regularly participate in the capacity building programs hosted through the portal are female.
<p>IT/KM/Comms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of eLearning platform to promote gender equity and inclusivity of marginalised groups • Developed a specific collection on Gender via the Virtual Library to ensure easy access to up-to-date gender information. • Two journalists were women, and the training undertake saw stronger numbers of women than men.

Programme integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision of Gender Policy 2016 (final stages) addressed women participation including disabilities • PIP 3(2022-2023) reporting provided gender disaggregation of data whenever feasible for in-country implemented activities by Programmes which recorded and average between 45-65% women engagement. • Gender disaggregation when appropriate is undertaken in PIP reporting by strategic goals. • Narratives of women engagement in capacity building are highlighted e.g women in the adaptation project in FSM, women in sector activities (Fishery, Tourism, Water, Agriculture, and Land)
Finance and Administration (FA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender equity and mainstreaming considered in all recruitment and procurement activities completed for both 2023 and 2022.
Human Resources (HR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end of 2023, there were equal numbers of women and men employed in internationally recruited staff positions while 71% of staff employed in locally recruited positions were women.

At the regional level, gender mainstreaming continues to be at the forefront of dialogues and conversations:

- Recognizing that climate change will nevertheless continue, albeit hopefully at a reduced rate, the Pacific Climate Change Centre through its function on Capacity Building hosted a series of workshop on Climate Change Gender and Social Inclusion for the Samoa Fa’afafine Association, the Brown Girl Woke and the Samoa Office of the Ombudsman.
- SPREP is a member of the Women of the Wave (WOW) Network a network which aims to support and inspire women in the international governmental organizations of the Pacific to further their career and leadership aspirations, and to expand the connections and opportunities in a sector where numbers of women in senior positions are lagging.
- Mainstreaming of gender equality in SPREP is visible in the communications products and services shown in guidelines, checklists, and reporting form” being aligned to 2016 Gender Policy (currently reviewed). Mainstreaming of gender equality is also evidenced in panels for side events, webinars, launch events or any other event which facilitates a panel of presenters or speakers for example, assisted women leaders in the Pacific during COP 27 (Minister of Environment Niue, Special envoy to Marshall Island, Director General Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation, Ministry climate Change and Adaptation, Vanuatu)

IV. Risk Management

Risk management continues to be an integral component of on-going corporate governance and decision-making to improve resilience, accountability, and the achievement of strategic objectives. Risk Management is a priority of SPREP across Projects, Programmes, and Organisational levels of work.

- At the organisational level, Priority Enterprise Risks (PERs) have been regularly monitored and managed at SLT level by updating the senior management on the identification, mitigation, and reporting identified PERs through the Risk Committee. The Enterprise Risk Management Plan (ERMP) 2024 completed. Risk Management Reporting (RMR) established. The Risk Committee initiated risk communication tool as a platform for staff awareness on the management of organisational risks.

- Risk management is integrated into the SLT monthly meetings as one of the standing agenda items.
- Enterprise Risks are categorized as PER led by RC members. At enterprise level, risk categories were identified, assessed, and reported as:
 - PER 1 (Disasters - man-made and natural including global pandemics)
 - PER 2 (Inadequate funds for operations both core and non-core budget)
 - PER 3 (Delayed project implementation)
 - PER 4 (Human resource capacity)
- At the Programme and project level, risk reviews are carried out for on-going projects as outlined below:
 - For CCR, risk management is built into projects implementation and is continuously monitored and evaluated throughout the lifetime of the project. The Environmental and Social Safeguard Assessment continued to be undertaken at project level. The assessments identify risks and proposed mitigation measures to prevent and or minimise these risks. These risks are built into the risk management matrix under each project. The Environmental Management Plans were also developed at project level to ensure impacts on the environment, society and culture are minimised and or prevented at all costs.
 - For IOE, risk management is built into its project and programme implementation. SES - Social and Environmental Safeguard Assessment is included in Kiwa Initiative funded PEBACC+ project.
 - For WMPC, risk management started with the conduct of annual reviews in all its projects (PWP, SWAP, POLP, GEF ISLANDS) with regular updates to their project steering committees and governance groups. Risks identified in 2022 specifically overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic were managed through the contracting of national project officers.
 - For EMG, risks identified, and measures undertaken
 - Programme Level
 - i. Capacity may be limited to deliver on projects and achieve expected outcomes. This was managed by strengthening the capability and capacity of the EMG Programme, including bringing on board additional support staff and through improvement of programmatic processes and systems, where needed.
 - ii. Recruitment of key positions delayed or takes significant time to undertake. This was addressed by advance preparation for recruitment to minimise or avoid any delays to actual implementation, however, at times these processes are beyond the programme's control due to unforeseen delays etc.
 - iii. Small Environment department with multi responsibility and high staff turnover. This was addressed by working closely with those SPREP members concerned to provide timely training and technical assistance to narrow the gaps in implementation of national priorities.

- Project Level
 - i. Small national environment departments with multi responsibility and high staff turnover. This was managed by working closely with SPREP members on the constraints arising through timely advisory and technical assistance on implementation issues to put project activities on course in meeting their objectives.
 - ii. Government commitment to regional collaboration is reduced due to changes in the political environment. This was addressed by having high level support being maintained for EMG projects through SPREPs bi-annual meeting of officials.
 - iii. Lack of cross-sectoral communication and coordination between agencies. This was managed by stakeholder workshops, liaison, networking and validation processes undertaken to ensure full engagement of stakeholders e.g. development of the national State of Environment reports development, review and update process. Key stakeholders do not agree to national strategies or participate in these strategies. This was managed by awareness and mainstreaming of activities for all EMG-led projects and have been implemented with key messaging tailored to different target audiences in each country – politicians, school groups, communities, NGOs etc. and strategically delivered through annual national environment commemorative days (eg – national forests and water resources awareness day,) and other key national events (national environment and climate change awareness weeks).
 - iv. Changing policies, laws, and regulations may be difficult or time consuming. This was managed by enabling better understanding of the issues and need for adoption of proposed policy and law changes at the national level.
 - v. Unforeseen financial pressure due to current economic climate- Addressed through discussion with partners at length, agreed to and committed with all project partners.
- Increased cyberthreats and potential for security incidents mitigated by conducting in-house sessions with staff including Top Priority Cybersecurity program (policies, measures, training).
- Financial risks were consistently and continually monitored and managed in the past two years as attested to positive audit reports for all audits and verification/assurance engagements completed in 2023 and 2022 which provides assurance to not only the efficient and transparent management of funds by SPREP but also the sound fiduciary and internal control systems as well as governance structures that SPREP has in place.
- Human resource risks include dedicated budget for the implementation of People Strategy as well as meeting deadlines. These were mitigated through prioritisation of work areas and proposal for a dedicated budget to meet many of the requirements of the People Strategy including capacity and remuneration issues as well as key activities for implementing the People Strategy.

V. Lessons Learnt

In the full implementation of the PIP3 (2022-2023) across the organisation, critical lessons learnt as follows:

Partnership engagement and regional coordination

- Having PSIDS negotiators to lead and coordinate PSIDS following different thematic priorities have significantly helped in building their confidence in and knowledge of the negotiation process. Some of the PSIDS coordinators are now AOSIS Lead Negotiators. For example, the PSIDS coordinator for mitigation is also the AOSIS lead negotiator at COP28 on the same thematic stream.
- Coordination with other regional organisations is essential to address major environmental issues at a regional scale, such as regional fisheries bodies, SPC FAME and national fisheries agencies about bycatch of threatened and endangered species.
- The OneCROP approach to support Pacific Island delegates at CBD COP15 increased the level of technical support provided, as well as the additional funding provided by Australia which ensured a high level of Pacific participation
- Partnerships and synergies crucial in achieving positive and lasting outcomes. Successfully demonstrating the value of project outputs/outcomes will attract interest of potential donors and raise the likelihood of further funding support.
- Continuous effort in collaborating with partners adds value to SPREP's programme delivery.
- Establishing positive and lasting relationships (for example with NZAIA, SPTO, IAIA, UNEP, ADB, World Bank and USP) increased programme and project implementation delivery of capacity building and training on EIA and ESS.

Programme coordination and implementation at country level

- Projects with multiple regional executing agencies e.g. PACRES and SUPA have encountered challenges in coordinating timely delivery of activities as some project activities are inter-dependent and inter-linked and reporting. It is important to undertake inter-agency implementation planning and constant communication with all executing agencies and national focal points to ensure project delivery is timely.
- Importance to link biodiversity focused initiatives to climate change adaptation strategies.
- Contracting of National Project Officers is difficult due to non-availability of staffs and lack of competencies which has the same level of salary as that of a staff in a national ministry.
- Re-opening of borders enabled travel to countries by project teams and consultants, however, this also puts pressure on the real state time of National focal points.
- Coordination of work at the national and regional activities remained a challenge, however more efforts should be provided through the CTSPF.
- Removal of waste out of countries is expensive, thus, not sustainable for Pacific states. However, establishing a financial mechanism through an advanced recovery fee and deposit is critical.
- Expand the Moana Taka Partnership to other shipping companies that can cover the Pacific states not serviced by Swire Shipping in removal of waste out of countries.
- Early mapping of project resourcing through a sustainability strategy was needed for the Inform project to support a follow-on phase, given the great level of support received from PICs for the continuation of the project.
- Sustainable budget was not attained in the past two years. Whilst Programmes generally met its budget expectations, there is a shortfall of IM in Core budget. This affected the pressures of limited staffing capacity and resources for core departments and terms.
- With delays and impact on programme implementation, strict and regular monitoring controls over core expenditure, management of foreign exchange exposure and the implementation of cost recovery efforts had proven effective to deliver the breakeven

results of 2022 which was while a surplus performance of USD 26,261.00, ensured that reserves continue to be maintained at a positive level by the end of the year.

- Cost recovery process undertaken wherever relevant and appropriate as per Donor Agreements to which noted funds credited from cost recovery measures of USD 651k in 2022 (USD 610k in 2021) which is evidence of continued effectiveness in cost recovery measures by the Secretariat.
- CTSPF sets high level strategic priorities and facilitates greater SPREP engagement with Member States and strengthens coordination, alignment and integration across SPREP programmes and projects.

Continuous learning

- Need for continuous capacity building sessions or learning development platforms for SPREP staff to undertake professional development such as: IT training and awareness sessions to enable them to be enhance their skills and knowledge on digital technologies and programmes to minimise security risks and ensuring that any risks to the organisation are prevented and/or mitigated.
- Upskilling of IT staff is a necessity to keep abreast of fast evolving technology landscape and advanced persistent threats. This will contribute to building security awareness culture within the organisation.
- Digital transformation as an impetus for streamlining and re-engineering processes designed for operational efficiency and effectiveness as comparative advantage of the organisations e.g. improving online payment and banking capabilities to support digital transformation and shift to doing business online.

Governance and operations

- The nature of SPREP's work requires its operations and personnel to be highly adaptive and agile to changing business environment. This includes strengthening capacity to ensure compliance and consistent application of approved governance policy frameworks for example, the financial management procedures, procurement manual, staff regulations and related HR policies, risk management policy, IT Policies, KM Strategy, Gender Policy, Child Protection Policy, Fraud Prevention and Whistleblower Protection, and ESS.
- Sustainable Funding for SPREP is reliant on collective efforts by many players including members and donor partners to ensure sustainability of SPREP in the long run.
- Significant increase in programme portfolio annually but with the same core capacity highlights the need to address inadequate core funding support through membership contributions which remain generally unchanged over the years, inadequate Programme Support Fees level compared to the increased costs of doing business in the current environment and inadequate financial support under limited partners providing unrestricted donor funding for the Core.
- A dedicated budget for the People Strategy activities is now incorporated as a key component of the personnel budget. This strengthens the commitment of the Senior Leadership Team and the Secretariat to its people and the implementation of the People Strategy.
- Whilst the implementation of the People Strategy approach through the People Strategy Implementation Group (PSIG) has made some progress in one or two outcomes, this has been challenging given the different mandates and priorities of SLT and staff engaged in the Staff Advisory Committee (SAC).
- SPREP HR takes the lead in the implementation of People Strategy with engagement of staff at all levels.

Ends