



## SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

**Eighteenth SPREP Meeting***Apia, Samoa*11-14 September 2007

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**Agenda Item 8.1.3: Pacific Year of the Reef 2008: a plan for action****Purpose of paper**

1. To present to the SPREP Meeting for consideration and approval the Secretariat's proposal for 2008 to be the Pacific Year of the Reef (PYOR 2008) and the regional campaign plan to support this initiative.

**Background*****International year of the Reef 2008***

2. In response to the declining health of coral reef ecosystems worldwide, 2008 has been designated the International Year of the Reef by the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI). ICRI is a partnership among governments, international organizations, intergovernmental organizations (including SPREP), and non-government organizations. It strives to conserve coral reefs and related ecosystems by implementing Chapter 17 of Agenda 21 and other relevant international conventions and agreements. ICRI's Secretariat is currently co-hosted by the governments of the United States and Mexico. SPREP is a member of the IYOR 2008 Ad-Hoc Committee.

***Pacific Year of the Reef 2008 (PYOR 2008)***

3. SPREP ran a successful campaign on the Year of the Reef in 1997, which received international support and is still seen as a model by many. The Pacific Region has again the opportunity 10 years on to show leadership in coral reef conservation with the proposed Pacific Year of the Reef 2008.

4. The Secretariat has prepared a regional campaign plan (**Attachment 1**). The 2008 proposes to build on the 1997 campaign where much efforts were placed on raising awareness and understanding of coral reef ecosystems with decision makers and communities by focusing on action to address the issues and challenges of today to reverse the current degradation of coral reef ecosystems and build their resilience to factors such as climate change. The proposed campaign objectives are to:

- promote action to conserve coral reefs at the regional, national and community levels;
- entail a change of behavior; and
- raise awareness on coral reef value to the economy and adaptation to climate change.

5. The proposed outcomes to be achieved or significantly advanced at the completion of the campaign period are:

- Communities and governments are supported to better protect their reefs through information sharing and marine protected area establishment;
- Communities and government are aware that the best adaptation to climate change is to build resilience of coral reefs and mangroves;
- Framework for governments and NGOs to conserve their reefs is developed; and
- Governments are aware of the economic value of conserving their reefs.

6. The proposed PYOR 2008 slogan and logo is **Strong reefs, strong islands**. It aims to convey that reef ecosystems play a critical role as an island protector and provider, that their conservation is key to island communities and in need of renewed action. Key target audiences for the campaign will be policy makers, donors, the private sector and local communities, with messages targeted accordingly. The campaign will badge activities as well as existing relevant material produced by partners to be included as campaign material, to be packaged and disseminated together with new material

### ***Launch***

7. It is proposed that the regional campaign launch take place between October 22<sup>nd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, 2007 during the Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in Alotau, PNG. The international launch will be held in conjunction with the ICRI meeting the week of the 21<sup>st</sup> of January in Washington DC.

### ***Funding***

8. The PYOR 2008 will be mostly funded under the Coral Reef Initiative in the Pacific (CRISP) programme as part of SPREP role of develop and implementing a CRISP communication strategy. SPREP and partners will endeavour to seek funding before and during the campaign period for the implementation of specific campaign activities during and beyond the campaign period. It is also envisaged that the campaign framework will provide guidance for partners on priority activities in efforts to seek funding for activities in a concerted manner.

### **Recommendations**

9. The Meeting is invited to:
- **endorse** the Secretariat proposal for 2008 to be the Pacific Year of the Reef;
  - **consider** and **endorse** the Secretariat on the proposed campaign plan;
  - **note** the date of the Launch of the PYOR 2008 at the Conference on Nature Conservation in Alotau (PNG) between 22 – 26 October 2007; and
  - **encourage** members to fully participate in the PYOR 2008 and nominate a contact point for the campaign.
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