



26th September, 2018 In preparation for the 14th Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), a preparatory meeting was conducted for the Pacific Islands Region over three days from the 24-26 September 2018 in Samoa.

The meeting was hosted at the Secretariat to the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) headquarters in Vailima, and was being coordinated by the Island and Ocean Ecosystem Services Programme (IOES), with support from UN Environment and the Secretariat to the Convention for Biological Diversity (CBD).

Honorable Taefu Lemi, Associate Minister for Environment of Samoa, in his opening statement, acknowledged the continued support of SPREP, UN Environment and the CBD Secretariat in building Pacific island capacities and efforts to meet countries obligations to the CBD Convention.

SPREP Director, Mr. Kosi Latu welcomed participants, and said that SPREP have achieved notable achievements in the last 25 years which include results and achievements delivered through the IOES Programme to strengthen and enhance the capacity of Pacific member countries to effectively implement the CBD and meet their reporting obligations. The meeting will also strengthen and support countries engagement and participation at the CBD negotiation processes.

The main objective of the Preparatory meeting is to provide a forum for the region in particular those countries that are parties to the CBD to come together and discuss key regional priority issues and prepare regional positions, as appropriate. A key part of the meeting is to strengthen engagement at COP meetings and continue with the One Pacific Voice which has

been a very effective approach adopted by Pacific Island Countries at past COP meetings.

There are 14 Pacific Island Countries who are party members to the CBD, and represented at this Preparatory meeting include Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

As part of the technical support project for the Sixth National Reports (6NR) to the CBD, UN Environment and UNDP are holding a regional workshop, back-to-back with this meeting from 27-28 September 2018, to assess the status of the reports preparation and to offer technical assistance where needed.

Tonga is represented at the CBD Pre-COP by Mr. Paula Ma'u, CEO of MEIDECC, Ms. Lupe Matoto, Director of Environment, Ms. Mafile'o Masi, Chief Environmentalist and Ms. Ta'hirih Hokafonu, Principal Biodiversity Officer.

ENDS

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