



## 5th France-Oceania Summit

Mr. Kosi Latu, SPREP Director General

### (Intervention)

M. President, Leaders, and Honorable Ministers, and Distinguished participants and colleagues of our Pacific region - Talofa!

During this time of great challenges and uncertainty, regional and international cooperation is crucial in addressing global environmental change for a “Blue Pacific” that will address climate change and the conservation and protection of the environment, for present and future generations.

The Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific, endorsed by Pacific Leaders in 2016, remains a key multi-stakeholder approach for governing joint implementation of climate and disaster risk management. This year and next are key for raising the level of ambition on climate change action:

- protecting the environmental integrity of the Paris Agreement in moving forward into effective implementation once the Paris rulebook is finalised at COP26.
- One CROP+ team led by SPREP is supporting the preparatory process of the Pacific Small Islands Developing States up to and beyond COP26. As part of the “Pacific Voyage”, key priorities include:
  - ✓ **Adaptation** that SPREP with other partners are helping with the preparation of National Adaptation Planning by supporting access to finance and technical advice. Access to climate financing for adaptation projects remains a big challenge for the Pacific.
  - ✓ **Mitigation**, with all PSIDS working to enhance their already ambitious NDCs, Leaders demand that all NDCs and long-term strategies are compatible with the 1.5 degrees pathway. The Pacific is unified in their message for COP26, that **ALL** Parties, **MUST** raise their level of ambition.

The role of SPREP with Members and Partners, is to assist Pacific island countries and territories address in practical and meaningful ways, the environmental and climate change challenges at the global, regional and national level.

As part of this mission, the Pacific Climate Change Centre hosted at SPREP since 2019, is the regional hub of excellence for climate change information, research and innovation, made possible with the support of the Governments of Japan, Samoa and New Zealand. The PCCC is a shared platform that provides technical assistance on



capacity building, innovation, applied research and knowledge brokerage targeted and tailor made for the Pacific to enable action on the ground.

The Vemööre Declaration and the Pacific Islands Framework for Nature Conservation, are key outcomes of the 10<sup>th</sup> Pacific Island Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas, hosted by the Government of New Caledonia in partnership with the Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation. As noted in the Declaration *'The health of our islands is intimately intertwined with that of our ocean and our people. We must work with our communities and partners to address multiple threats, and achieve multiple benefits, by working towards whole-domain environmental management across land and sea'*.

The Kiwa Initiative is one such example, with the delivery of capacity-building as well as support for regional projects implementing nature-based solutions, to respond to the broader environmental challenges of our Pacific region. Established two years ago, the Kiwa Initiative has been made possible through the funding support of France, the EU, Australia, Canada and New Zealand in close collaboration with SPC, IUCN-Oceania, and SPREP as key implementing partners under the secretariat of the French Development Agency.

Building back a resilient Pacific, highlights the critical role of coral reefs to the future of Pacific island people. Negotiations on emission reductions in the UNFCCC process are central to the survival of coral reefs. SPREP, in consultation with our Members, the coral reef science community and non-state actors, have developed the Pacific Coral Reef Action Plan, to be presented to the 30<sup>th</sup> SPREP Meeting in September for endorsement. We at SPREP welcome continued collaboration with France, Australia and other partners in fostering cooperation and building capacity to sustainably manage coral reefs in our Pacific region.

To address the challenges of climate change and for a more sustainable environment, for present and future generations, a resilient 'Blue Pacific' requires continued dialogue, commitment, and meaningful collaborations. May I extend the gratitude of SPREP to the Government of France as both a valued Member and Partner for your continued leadership and support.

SOIFUA

(19 July 2021)