

## **SOPAC NewsUpdate #012, 25 October 2002**

### **1. SOPAC Council Endorses Targets on Renewable Energy**

Pacific Islands countries would work together to achieve a regional target of increasing the share of renewable energy to at least an average of 15% of the primary energy supply in the island States by 2010. This was agreed to at the joint meeting of the SOPAC Governing Council and its Technical Advisory Group at the recently concluded 31st Session of SOPAC. This is particularly relevant given the failure to set any global targets at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. It is also a significant milestone for collective action among island nations of the Pacific and would require SOPAC member countries to link closely with currently proposed global and regional programmes like the Global Environmental Facility and the Pacific Islands Renewable Energy Project. (See SOPAC News 2002(3) for full story).§

### **2. Disaster Awareness Week 2002 in Fiji**

SOPAC Director, Alf Simpson, replaced the Australian High Commissioner to Fiji at the last moment, as Chief Guest at the opening of Fiji's National Disaster Awareness Week on Monday, 14 October 2002. While Fiji organisers had been preparing for the week since the beginning of the year; Australia was not expecting the horrific act of terrorism carried out in Bali, Indonesia, the weekend before, that claimed many Australian lives. It has been termed the worst act of terrorism in Indonesian history. While the Fiji Disaster Week completed its programmed activities this week, the major sponsor of the activities of the Week, the Australian Government began dealing with a national crisis that shall have a bearing on the whole security or community risks issue in the Pacific region.§

### **3. Joint SPC/SOPAC Regional Consultation on EU EDF8 Project Implementation**

A regional consultation between SPC and SOPAC was held at the Nadi, Fiji, during 8-9 October to establish and/or strengthen linkages between the two organisations that would ensure a stronger delivery of project interventions to the beneficiary countries within the EU-funded projects: SPC PROCFISH and SOPAC's Reducing Vulnerability of Pacific ACP States. The regional consultation was a requirement at the inception phase of the implementation of the EU-funded projects administered by the two organisations.§

### **4. SOPAC attends Caribbean Water Meeting**

Outcomes of the recent Pacific Regional Consultation and Dialogue on Water and Climate were taken to the Caribbean region and presented at the Caribbean Water and Wastewater Association Conference and Caribbean Environmental Forum held 7-11 October 2002 in St Lucia. As a result of the meetings in Fiji and St. Lucia a joint small island countries contribution on Water and Climate will be prepared feeding into a Synthesis Workshop that will be organised by the International Secretariat of the Dialogue on Water and Climate on 17 and 18 December in Dhaka, Bangladesh in preparation for the Third World Water Forum in Kyoto, Japan, March 2003. See SOPAC News 2002(3) for more details.§

### **5. New Cycle for SOPAC Certificate in Earth Science & Marine Geology Course**

Following the confirmation by the Commonwealth Secretariat for funding of the Training Coordinator staff position at the SOPAC Secretariat, a new three-year cycle of the Certificate in Earth Science and Marine Geology Course commenced 2 September 2002, under the overall supervision of the new SOPAC Training Coordinator, Russell Maharaj of Trinidad and Tobago. There are seventeen students in attendance in this first year of the current cycle, of which five are local. The following countries also have students taking part in the Course: Federated States of Micronesia, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Tonga, Nauru, Niue, Cook Islands, Kiribati, Tuvalu and Samoa. The course is in its 25th year and was re-prioritised by member governments as a useful bridging course specifically for providing technical training at a certified post-secondary, non-degree level for personnel who provided in-country geotechnical support. The Course is a joint undertaking with the University of the South Pacific, with USP conferring the Certification and providing access to its training facilities. Story in SOPAC News 2002(3).§

### **6. SOPAC News back issues**

For the latest and all the back issues of SOPAC News, check our website <<http://www.sopac.org>>.§

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