



Partnership for
nature and **people**



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between

BirdLife International

and

**Secretariat of the Pacific Regional
Environment Programme**

SPREP
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Two handwritten signatures in blue ink, one larger and more stylized, and one smaller and simpler.

I. The PARTIES

BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL

c/o Pacific Secretariat
10 MacGregor Road,
GPO Box 18332,
Suva, Fiji

Represented by: Director Pacific, BirdLife
International

SECRETARIAT of the PACIFIC REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Avele Road
Apia
Samoa

Represented by: Director General, SPREP

II. PURPOSE and SCOPE

The purpose of this MoU is to formalize the desire between BirdLife International (the Pacific Secretariat) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) to protect the region's birds and biologically important sites (marine and terrestrial) through the restoration of islands including invasive species management, species recovery programmes, by-catch mitigation and building the capacity of communities, governments and national stakeholders to sustain Pacific islands biodiversity and way of life.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) provides a framework of co-operation between SPREP and BirdLife International (the Parties).

Within this framework the Parties will consult to collaborate on the activities they identify as requiring implementation

For the purposes of this MoU, the 'Pacific Islands Region' includes the 7 BirdLife Pacific Partners and the 21 Pacific island SPREP Member countries and territories.

III. BACKGROUND

Bird conservation is at the heart of biodiversity conservation priorities in the Pacific, but we are amid an extinction crisis and nowhere is this more apparent than on islands. Approximately 64% of known species extinctions since ~1600 have occurred on islands and today almost 40% of threatened species listed by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature depend on island habitats. Invasive animals have been a primary cause of insular extinctions and are recognized as a key risk to today's threatened species. Invasive animals also damage the social and economic livelihoods of island communities by acting as disease vectors and consuming agricultural crops.

Island nations of the Pacific Region have been particularly hard hit. Today the Pacific has more threatened bird species per unit of land area than any other region in the world and is home to around a quarter of the world's threatened bird species. It is recognized that the removal of introduced vertebrates from islands is not only possible but obligatory if further extinctions are to be averted and the livelihoods and lifestyles of island people sustained.

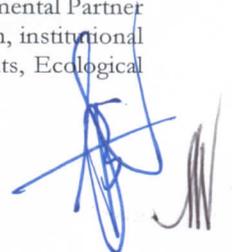
In 2001 SPREP in partnership with BirdLife International produced the first avifauna strategy for the region and at which time BirdLife also invested in the establishment of national BirdLife Partners and the identification of Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in the region. These IBAs are recognized global and regional conservation priorities. Working with BirdLife Partners, local communities and governments have taken action to protect these sites and the biodiversity inhabiting them.

In support of this action SPREP and BirdLife signed a MoU in 2007 and in 2018. The Parties will continue to maintain the partnership under this MoU.

IV. BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL

BirdLife International (BLI) is a global partnership of 120 national, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that cooperate to conserve wild birds, their habitats and global biodiversity. The Partnership is the leading global network for the conservation of birds and other biodiversity and is also, the world's leading scientific authority on birds.

BirdLife aims to achieve biodiversity conservation through a network of national and territorial non-governmental Partner organisations. The work of the Partnership is underpinned by a programme of research, advocacy, action, institutional development and training, and focuses on the four themes of BirdLife's work: Species, Sites and Habitats, Ecological Sustainability and Empowering People.



BirdLife Pacific Partners are represented in 7 countries and territories (Australia, the Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, New Caledonia, New Zealand, and Palau) and conservation programmes are also, supported by BirdLife elsewhere in the region including Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands, and Papua New Guinea. These efforts are coordinated by the BirdLife Pacific Secretariat located in Suva, Fiji.

BirdLife representation also occurs in other parts of the Pacific including Hawai'i and Pacific Rim countries of Indonesia, Taiwan, Japan, Canada and countries of Central and South America. Globally, the BirdLife Partnership is supported by an international secretariat based in Cambridge UK and five regional offices including Fiji.

V. SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

SPREP is a regional, intergovernmental organization comprising 26 Members consisting of 21 Pacific Island Countries and Territories (American Samoa, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, Northern Marianas, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Wallis & Futuna) and five other countries with direct interests in the region namely Australia, France, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

The purposes of SPREP are to promote co-operation in the Pacific region and to provide assistance in order to protect and improve its environment and to ensure sustainable development for present and future generations.

VI. TERM OF AGREEMENT

This MoU will become effective upon the date of the last signature and will expire five years from that date at which time the Parties may revise or renew the agreement upon terms and conditions to be decided.

This MOU may be amended by agreement in writing between the Parties.

Any Party may terminate this MOU by giving 30 days written notice to the other parties.

This MOU may be executed in counterparts, each of which shall be deemed to be an original and all of which together shall constitute a single document. The Parties acknowledge and agree that the exchange of electronic or fax signatures will have the same legal validity as the Parties' signatures would have if signed in hard copy form.

VII. REVIEW

Notwithstanding the provisions of Provision VI above, a review of the effectiveness of this MOU shall be carried out 12 months after signature by the Parties and annually thereafter.

VIII. OBLIGATIONS OF BOTH PARTIES

SPREP and BirdLife agree that:

- The Pacific region has more threatened bird species per unit of land area than any other region in the world and has suffered the most extinctions in the past 150 years.
- Birds have long been recognized as indicators of biodiversity condition and concerns.
- All efforts should be taken to ensure that no more bird species become extinct in the Pacific islands region.
- The conservation status of threatened birds must be improved.

And that stronger collaboration is needed between BirdLife Pacific Partners and SPREP Members in working together to achieve these goals, especially in the light of new initiatives being taken by both partners to mitigate the impacts of invasive species and by-catch in fishing operations.

In implementing this agreement, the Parties will:

- a) Consult each other on policy matters of mutual concern including and not limited to invasive alien species, marine and terrestrial protected areas, bird recovery programmes, flyways, fisheries seabird by-catch, climate change and ecosystem services.
- b) Share data and collaborate on the analysis, consultation, communications and advocacy of priorities.
- c) Exchange information on developments and current activities in relation to the conservation of Pacific birds and their habitats.
- d) Extend to each other standing invitations to be represented by observers at appropriate meetings, including the annual



SPREP Meeting and to co-sponsor relevant meetings.

- e) Collaborate and support communications, awareness raising efforts and capacity building initiatives in relation to the conservation of terrestrial and marine birds and sites of significance including the management of threats, species recovery and habitat restoration in the Pacific islands region.
- f) Collaborate on the creation of global and regional priorities and the implementation of such priorities in relation to the conservation of birds in the Pacific islands region.
- g) Keep respective memberships and leaders informed of co-operative activities undertaken pursuant to this MOU and each other of developments that may have a significant impact on activities covered by this Agreement.
- h) Annually review progress on implementation of this Agreement and Work and Funding Plans

IX. OPERATIONAL PROVISIONS

- a) This MOU constitutes an expression of a shared intention of the Parties to endeavour to develop foundations for achieving their shared objectives relating to the protection of the environment and developing and strengthening systems, institutions, organizations, and individuals concerned with environmental protection in the Pacific region.
- b) Each Party's actions under this MOU shall be that Party's sole and separate action for all purposes, including liability, and no Party shall claim to be acting on behalf of, or as agent for, any other Party to this MOU.
- c) Each Party will name and keep updated specific individuals to co-ordinate the cooperation called for in this MOU.
- d) In executing this MOU, no Party commits to any financial obligation in relation to activities to be carried out under this MOU. Such decisions will be made individually and at the appropriate time by each Party in its sole discretion.
- e) The Parties agree that each will comply with all applicable statutes, laws, and regulations in the execution of its objectives under this MOU including without limitation, the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. Nothing in this MOU shall be construed to authorize or permit any violation of any laws, domestic or international, imposed upon the Parties. Any dispute arising from the interpretation or implementation of this MOU will be resolved amicably and expeditiously by consultation or negotiation between the Parties or such other means as they may mutually decide.

X. COMMITMENT TO BOTH PARTIES PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

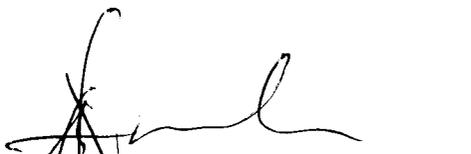
The Parties have mutually agreed to respect each other's constitutional principles and values, and each party is of the understanding that nothing in its governance or operational activities is incompatible with the spirit and tenor of this MOU.

XI. ANNEXES

Specific work once agreed to may be attached as an Annex to this MOU.

Such Annex shall form an integral part of this MOU and, unless expressly provided otherwise, a reference to this MOU includes a reference to any such Annex.

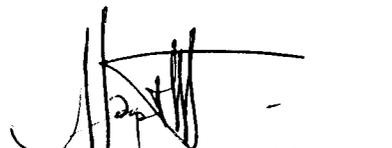
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the duly authorized representatives of the Parties affix their signatures below.



Sefanaia Nawadra
Director General,
SPREP

Date

5 September 2023



Margaret West
Director Pacific,
BirdLife International

Date:

5 September 2023

ANNEX I

SCHEDULE 2023-2027

Collaboration between the Parties will include but is not limited to:

1. Seabird and Marine
 - 1.1. Develop, coordinate, and implement research and monitoring programmes, outreach and education programmes or the mitigation of by-catch in fishing operations to benefit Pacific islands avifauna.
 - 1.2. Collaboration in the preparation and hosting of technical workshops to provide training to fishing skippers, crews, and fleet managers in techniques to mitigate by-catch of seabirds.
 - 1.3. The promotion of mutually supportive positions at annual meetings of the Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission and other relevant RFMO, including promoting the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures to mitigate seabird by-catch.
 - 1.4. Collaboration in the implementation of initiatives to mitigate the impacts of marine debris, in particular plastics, on seabirds.
 - 1.5. Collaborations may be operationalized under the By-catch and Integrated Ecosystem Management (BIEM) component of Pacific-European Union Marine Partnership (PEUMP).
 - 1.6. Collaboration on other projects, under funding such as BIOSCAPES, to promote seabird conservation, including a seabird colony and habitat restoration.
 - 1.7. Collaboration in advocating for the ratification of the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Treaty and development of proposals for high seas MPAs.
 - 1.8. Collaboration on improving capacity for SPREP Members on monitoring and management of seabirds.
 - 1.9. Provide support and inputs to the Pacific Seabird Colony Database.
2. Invasive Alien Species
 - 2.1. Support PRISMSS as a technical partner to the Predator Free Pacific Programme in accordance with the PRISMSS Declaration of Intent
 - 2.2. Develop, coordinate and implement research and monitoring programmes, outreach and education programmes, for the management of invasives species that impact adversely on terrestrial and marine avifauna in the Pacific Islands.
 - 2.3. Collaboration in planning, financing and implementing the eradication and control of invasive species that have an adverse impact on bird species in the Pacific islands including but not limited to sites in the Cook Islands, New Caledonia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Palau, Kiribati and the Solomon Islands
 - 2.4. Collaboration in the development, financing and implementation of biosecurity within and between Pacific Island countries protecting sites of high biodiversity significance.
 - 2.5. Collaborating in sharing data on invasive species and sites of high biodiversity significance.
 - 2.6. Collaborations may be operationalised under current and future Invasives Species initiatives including but not limited to the OCT EDF11 PROTÉGÉ Programme, BIOSCAPES Programme, MISCCAP and the KIWA INITIATIVE “INSPIRE” financing agreements.
3. Important Sites for Biodiversity
 - 3.1. Develop, coordinate, and implement research and monitoring programmes, outreach, and education programmes, for the identification of Key Biodiversity Areas in the Pacific Islands.
 - 3.2. Collaborate on effective means of conserving, sustainably managing and restoring priority sites, including but not limited to sites in Solomon Islands, Fiji, Vanuatu and Palau
 - 3.3. Collaborate in implementing programmes to assess the impact of Kava cultivation on Key Biodiversity Areas in Fiji and Vanuatu.
 - 3.4. Collaboration in establishing and maintaining Key Biodiversity Area National Coordinating Groups in the Pacific, concentrating initially on Fiji, Palau, and Vanuatu.
 - 3.5. Collaboration in the development and assessment of the Pacific region Marine Key Biodiversity Area priority areas.
4. Regional Collaboration
 - 4.1. Collaboration on the coordination team for Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas (PIRT) with Margaret West (BirdLife Director-Pacific Programme) the current Chair of PIRT (2021-2026), and SPREP the permanent Secretariat.
 - 4.2. Collaboration as co-chairs of the Species Working Group of PIRT.

