Project Highlights

1. The Pacific Deep Sea Minerals Project, which is a fully-funded legal and regulatory capacity development programme for Pacific island countries, is looking for up to 30 months to hold the DSM project legal and fiscal situation. The project is helping Pacific island countries to design and implement their national regulations for the exploitation of deep sea minerals, and to ensure that their implementation is in line with international best practices.

2. The Project Communication Strategy was finalised in February 2015 and is currently being implemented with the assistance of a Communications Specialist.

3. The PNG country taskforce, which was established in 2013, is working on the development of the PNG national deep sea minerals regulatory framework. The taskforce is working on the development of a PNG national deep sea minerals regulatory framework, which will be submitted to the PNG government for approval in late 2015.

4. The 2012 DSM Project Annual Report has been completed and sent to representatives of Pacific ACP States.

Upcoming Events


2. Pacific ACP Stakeholder Regional Workshop on Environmental management for Deep Sea Minerals (to be held in partnership with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) in September 2015, in Fiji).

3. Pacific ACP Stakeholder Regional Workshop on Fiscal regimes and the responsible investment of revenues from Deep Sea Minerals (to be held in partnership with the IMF’s Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Centre (PFTAC) in the Cook Islands, in the first quarter of 2014).

The Last Word on the Tonga Workshop

"Thanks to all presenters who shared so much wonderful things with us. Thanks to Mary Louise Vitelli for your evidence and experience to explain legal impacts and sectorial roles that have been evolving over recent years, and for helping us understand the adult and genuine participation from all sides, (catch, treaty, industry) and government. I learnt a lot and should like to commend all the speakers for their efforts and commitment to this very important issue. Thank you very much for your time and efforts in the preparation of this conference. Here as listener, I am very interested in the negotiation skills of multi-stakeholders and in the development of national regulations for deep sea mining. This is an urgent business. There are money incentives on all sides including Government and NGOs who want to see their regulations and contracts based on best practice.

Professor Mike Petterson, Director, SOPAC"
international experts including Mary-Louise Vitelli, an international expert for the Pacific Islands, says that one of the main objectives of the project is to enable Pacific Island countries to develop their legal framework for the sustainable management of deep sea minerals. "I think that this is the first time that a workshop like this was organized in a Pacific country, and the time for action has come. We need to take the initiative and develop our countries' legal frameworks, regulations, and development contracts that are necessary to ensure that our countries get a fair share of the benefits from the resources that are under their jurisdiction."

Ms Christine Swift, Deputy Parliamentary Counsel, Attorney-General, Fiji says, "I want to thank SPC for taking the lead in setting up this workshop. I believe that this is the first time that such a workshop has been organized in a Pacific country. We need to take this opportunity to develop our countries' legal frameworks, regulations, and development contracts that are necessary to ensure that our countries get a fair share of the benefits from the resources that are under their jurisdiction."

Dr Jimmie Rodgers, Director of the Pacific Islands Marine Minerals Programme, says that "The issue is urgent because multinationals are not going to wait for Pacific Island countries to come up with a legal framework to deal with this important resource management issue over the next centuries. The Project is not saying, 'go and do mining' - it is saying, 'you have to develop a legal framework to deal with this issue.' The Project is not saying, 'go and do mining' - it is saying, 'you have to develop a legal framework to deal with this issue.'"

Miss MacKenzie believes that governments must ensure there is community engagement and accountability on the part of Governments and Civil Society Organizations. "You're interested in my resource - this is the minimum we're getting something. I think governments need to move away from that and ask the question, 'How can we ensure that the resources are shared in a way that is sustainable and protects the environment?'"

The workshop helped to build much-needed skills in areas such as law, arbitration, and legal and political consultation. These skills are critical for Pacific Island countries as they are working to develop their legal frameworks, regulations, and development contracts that are necessary to ensure that their countries get a fair share of the benefits from the resources that are under their jurisdiction. The workshop provided a great opportunity for Pacific Island countries to learn from the experience of other regions and to develop their legal frameworks, regulations, and development contracts that are necessary to ensure that their countries get a fair share of the benefits from the resources that are under their jurisdiction.

Tonga Workshop Highlights Need for Greater Integration between Government & Civil Society Organisations

Miss MacKenzie says the recent workshop in Tonga was crucial in helping the Pacific Islands to understand the importance of developing a strong legal framework for the sustainable management of deep sea minerals. "We need to make sure that the legal framework we develop is robust and that it is inclusive of all stakeholders. We need to make sure that the legal framework we develop is robust and that it is inclusive of all stakeholders."

The ideal situation will be to have all the assessments completed and then move on to the next step. We need to move into the practical zone and ask the question, 'What's the best combination of options we need to look at and implement?' The answer is, we need to move into the practical zone and ask the question, 'What's the best combination of options we need to look at and implement?' The Project is not saying, 'go and do mining' - it is saying, 'you have to develop a legal framework to deal with this issue.'

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Many governments in the Pacific have a huge problem transacting economic growth and this is a resource that they see that they can benefit from. We need to move into the practical zone and ask the question, 'What's the best combination of options we need to look at and implement?' The Project is not saying, 'go and do mining' - it is saying, 'you have to develop a legal framework to deal with this issue.'

As part of wider the consultative process there will be some people that do not want the deep sea mining, even though they are in the same country. But, that is not realistic. We need to move into the practical zone and ask the question, 'What's the best combination of options we need to look at and implement?' The Project is not saying, 'go and do mining' - it is saying, 'you have to develop a legal framework to deal with this issue.'

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