

## **SOPAC NewsUpdate #004, 25 March 2002**

- 1) A confirmation was received from the Government of the Republic of Nauru mid-March, that it is their intention to host the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of SOPAC in Nauru, from 23 September 2002. Tentatively, given the current flight schedules, this means the STAR Session will begin on Tuesday, 24 September, and Council will convene on Friday, 27 September to be able to finish all its business by Wednesday evening, 2 October.
- 2) A multibeam survey of Apia harbour, Samoa, was completed in the second half of February. The detailed shallow-water bathymetry survey covered the inshore area of Vaiusu Bay, Apia Harbour and surrounding offshore areas. The work was carried out to support a government initiative to develop a more secure anchorage for the country's growing fishing fleet. The Reson 8101 SeaBat shallow-water swath mapper was used in the survey. Also deployed were two Aanderaa current meters and a Sontek triton tide gauge with ADCP and wave-measuring capabilities to collect background information to calibrate modeling of the circulation and flushing of the proposed marina. Conductivity-temperature-pressure profiles of the water column were collected for post processing of the multibeam data. The department of fisheries provided excellent support to the project. SOPAC News # 1 (2002) has more details.§
- 3) Frans Baan, Head of Delegation of the European Commission for the Pacific signed a financing agreement with Noel Levi, Secretary-General of the Forum Secretariat, for SOPAC, USP and FSM to receive grants from the European Union. The signing ceremony took place at the Forum Secretariat on Wednesday, 13 March and SOPAC was represented by the Director, Alf Simpson. SOPAC's grant is to address vulnerability reduction in the Pacific ACP states through the development of an integrated planning and management system in three key areas: (1) hazard mitigation and risk management; (2) aggregates for construction; and (3) water and sanitation resources management. Following the signing, the SOPAC Secretariat has also been given the green light to advertise 7 new professional positions and 3 support positions. The Project is therefore online for up to 10 new staff here by the third quarter of 2002. Full story in SOPAC News 1 (2002).§
- 4) The SOPAC – 2002 Earth Day competition "Energy Wizards of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" is scheduled to begin on 02 April with the final project reports due at the country Energy Offices on 05 July 2002. Prizes will be awarded on a national basis with the top national entries competing for a regional prize. So far eight (8) SOPAC member countries have confirmed their participation in this energy conservation project competition. International Earth Day is celebrated on 22 April. Entry forms available from the Secretariat and also in SOPAC News # 1 (2002).§
- 5) SOPAC published a set of country profiles in October 2000 where all the SOPAC island member countries were analysed for the value of SOPAC as a technical utility supporting the sustainable development responsibilities/goals of each individual nation. The profiles were released and deemed 'living' documents and we gave them a shelf-life of three years. We've had useful feedback from most countries and our supporting governments and plan to carry out the first update on them beginning June 2002, for publication early in 2003. You can view these profiles at the address below on the Internet or write to us for paper copies. We welcome more comments on how these country profiles might be further improved.  
<<http://www.sopac.org.fj/Secretariat/MemberCountries/index.html>>.§
- 6) Click on this link for the latest issue and all the back issues of SOPAC News:  
<http://www.sopac.org.fj/Data/virlib/reportsindex.html?ss=type&vv=SN>