

Meeting of the Pacific Steering Committee 2013

30 November 2013, USP Campus, Suva, Fiji

Participants

Members of the Steering Committee:

Clark Peteru, SPREP

Elizabeth Munro, Cook Islands

Patricia Parkinson, IUCN Oceania

Secretariat of the Initiative:

Andreas Drews, GIZ

Lena Fey, GIZ

Observers:

Olivier Rukundo, CBD Secretariat (SCBD)

Terence Hay-Edie, UNDP GEF SGP

Welcome and Introduction

Andreas Drews, manager of the ABS Capacity Development Initiative, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants.

Clark Peteru was elected to chair the meeting.

Progress Report 2013

Andreas Drews gave a brief presentation on activities conducted by the Initiative in (or relevant for) the Pacific in 2013:

29.-31.01.13	Expert Workshop "The International Treaty and the Nagoya Protocol: Supporting mutual supportiveness in the implementation of both instruments at the national level", Rome, Italy
04.-06.02.13	Participation in BIOPAMA Inception Workshop for the Pacific, Suva, Fiji
17.05.13	Participation in the 86 th Meeting of the ACP Sub-Committee on Sustainable Development, Brussels, Belgium
08.-09.08.13	National Stakeholder Consultations, Palikir, Federated States of Micronesia
12.-16.08.13	ABS and IPR Training, Nadi, Fiji
23.-27.09.13	Participation in Regional Forestry Meeting, Nadi, Fiji
01.10.13	Participation in BIOPAMA Steering Committee, Brussels, Belgium
18.-21.11.13	National Stakeholder Consultations, Rarotonga, Cook Islands
20.-22.11.13	State Stakeholder Consultations, Chuuk, FSM

- 25.-29.11.13 4th Pacific ABS Workshop, Suva, Fiji (Focus: ABS policy development; Nagoya Protocol ratification process; GEF-NPIF regional project)
- 02.-06.12.13 Participation in 9th Pacific Island Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas, Suva, Fiji (Parallel Session: ABS – Incentive for Conservation and Source of Livelihood?)

Additional comments/questions:

- AFD is expected to join the donors of the ABS Initiative next year, but their focus is solely on African countries
- Currently there is no realistic perspective for funds from Australia

Work Plan 2014

The main purpose of the Steering Committee Meeting was to discuss and decide upon activities for the coming year. Andreas Drews gave a brief introduction and a few initial ideas which were then discussed and developed further by the group.

The following events and activities were discussed and agreed upon for 2014:

- **Pacific Regional Workshop 2014: late November/ early December 2014**
As suggested by the Initiative, the regional ABS Workshop will take place back-to-back with the World Parks Congress in **Sydney** in mid-November. This would not only enhance cost effectiveness but would also encourage participants to attend the WPC.
Valorisation of genetic resources and business models was chosen as the main topic, with a particular focus on the **marine sector**. Researchers and business representatives will be invited as resource persons. USP and CI may be able to assist and present case studies from the region.
The **invitation process** for the regional workshop will be revised by ABS Initiative and SPREP; it was suggested to distribute invitations not only via governments in order to reach more NGO representatives.
- **ABS Contract Negotiation Training: June/July 2014**
The Initiative is currently developing its IPR training format into an ABS contract negotiation training which also addresses the management of multi-stakeholder processes. Feedback from workshop participants and during country visits suggested a high demand for this type of technical trainings in the Pacific. Andreas Drews pointed out that the **target group** should be the National Focal Points, as they need to be particularly aware of the key elements of ABS contracts.
The training was scheduled for June/July 2014. SCBD will provide support.
- **Awareness raising at upcoming major events**
The SC members agreed to jointly raise awareness on ABS at the three large conferences coming up in 2014:
 - **SIDS Conference, Apia, 1-5 September 2014 (Topic: Partnerships):** SPREP is supporting the Samoan government in organising the conference. SPREP and SCBD will jointly seek to get ABS on the agenda; SCBD is already in touch with the PNG ambassador in New York. Also, the ABS NFP of Samoa will be asked to provide support. *Clark Peteru* will keep SCBD and ABS Initiative informed on relevant communication.
 - **CBD COP 12, Pyeongchang, 6-17 October 2014:** *Olivier Rukundo* reported that the COP will be conducted in a new format which will allow more time for experience sharing on

CBD implementation; this should be considered when preparing for the sessions. For the Nagoya Protocol-MOP there will either be an extra week or it will be integrated in the overall programme. Andreas Drews stated that the ABS Initiative will organise side events at the COP.

- **World Parks Congress, Sydney, 12-19 November 2014:** Joint activities of the ABS Initiative and IUCN at the WPC are still to be discussed. Terence Hay-Edie suggested integrating ABS in the stream on governance which SGP is co-leading with SCBD.
- **GEF-NPIF projects**

Since the **regional GEF project** will not be operational before very late next year, the Initiative will continue its country support in the region.
ABS Initiative will not be involved in the **Fiji project**.
For the **Cook Islands project**, ABS Initiative can provide technical expertise e.g. on drafting the regulatory framework (still to be discussed). The Cook Islands will finalise a TK documentation bill this year which allows registered TK holders to enter into benefit sharing agreements with users.
- **SGP activities**

New SGP ABS projects have been approved in Vanuatu (supported by Daniel Robinson) and FSM, there are possibly more to come; Terence Hay-Edie will keep SCBD updated on this.
For **Cook Islands**, a new host institution is under negotiation (possibly Red Cross); SGP will finance a full-time position. Andreas Drews suggested conducting an **awareness raising/capacity building workshop for the SGP partner organisations** in Cook Islands before starting the project, as there is a lack of ABS awareness and understanding among local partners.
There will also be SGP projects in **Tokelau and Niue** (coordination from Samoa). Activities in the French territories are not possible.
- **Country support**

The Initiative's support to countries in the NP ratification process will be continued in 2014. Kabir Bavikatte and Morten Walløe Tvedt will be in **FSM** in early 2014 supporting ABS contract development. **Cook Islands and Vanuatu** will receive further support by Daniel Robinson in policy and legislation development.
During the regional workshop, **PNG and Marshall Islands** requested support for their ratification process from SCBD and ABS Initiative. In both countries there are also SGP projects which can provide support (Tamalis Akus, the SGP coordinator in PNG, is a lawyer).
Funding and timing of support by the Initiative is still to be discussed; possibly back-to-back with ICNP-3 in February.
- **Further research on Marine Bioprospecting**

The ABS Initiative will conduct further research on marine bioprospecting next year. Currently there are **studies** being conducted in the African context, developing a methodology for assessing countries' bioprospecting potentials, including the legal and economic framework and research capacities. A study of this kind could also be conducted for the Pacific countries. SC members pointed out that the **link to deep sea mining** should be further explored (the Cook Islands are already working on this).
SCBD provides **policy briefs** on different sectors and business models on its website; marine bioprospecting could also be addressed in this format.

AOB

- The **3rd ICNP meeting** will take place in February; before, there will be a one-day workshop on the CHM as well as a meeting for regional coordination → Olivier Rukundo can provide further details.

- Activities in **Timor Leste**: Timor Leste is trying to become an ASEAN member and is therefore not included in the Initiative's activities in the Pacific region.
- The **French Pacific Fund** has provided a small grant for experience sharing on NP implementation (especially green growth policies) between New Caledonia and Fiji; this may be interesting for the Initiative's negotiations with AFD → Patricia Parkinson keeps Andreas Drews informed.
- The **environmental association in Vanuatu** is finalising its constitution; they are part of the Coral Triangle Initiative. Key persons should be invited to the next regional ABS workshop; → Patricia Parkinson provides contact details
- There will be an IUCN-led side event on governance at the conservation conference: establishing environmental associations in the Pacific region. → Patricia Parkinson will provide further details.
- Supported by the Initiative, SPREP will advertise an **intern position** early next year. The intern will provide support on ABS issues to Clark Peteru and Easter Galuvao. → Clark Peteru will send the ToR to ABS Initiative before advertising the position.

11 December 2013 – Lena Fey and Andreas Drews