

## From the Desk of the Director

**GREETINGS** from the *UNESCO Office for the Pacific*. This Issue brings to you an article from Mr Shahbaz Khan – Director of the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Sciences in Asia and the Pacific, and Mr Hans Dencker Thulstrup, Senior Programme Specialist for Water and Environmental Sciences at the UNESCO Office in Jakarta.

Apart from what our two experts have to inform you about, we are taking the opportunity to bring to you issues around Tsunami; Culture; Science, Technology and Innovation; Access to Information and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and more.

The topic of ocean in the Pacific countries and territories is connected to almost every social, cultural, and economic aspect of life. Issues like Tsunami and other ocean hazards, therefore, have cross-age, cross-culture, and cross-economic status significance. The efforts by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC-UNESCO) has been focused on outreach plans and products and traditional and new technologies to accomplish the Pacific Tsunami Warning System’s objectives.

Work on Science, Technology and Innovation by the partner organizations in Samoa brings out the need to establish bridge between science education and wider understanding of science for advancements in social and economic life. On this note, it would be also good to remember that culture, including arts, have always used multidisciplinary means, including science and technology, to innovate and express ideas and issues.

This quarter we saw Tuvalu proffering an excellent example of bringing together communities for policy-making. Their work on Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) and Culture Policy has benefitted not only from UNESCO’s technical assistance but also from the support extended by the Rei Foundation Limited (RFL). We take the opportunity to thank Ms Reiko Fukutake, RFL’s Founder and Executive Director, and Ms Shizuka Arao, Programme Coordinator of the RFL for their support to UNESCO’s work and commitment to see sustainable human development from a broader perspective of tradition, culture and science. Culture sector work saw increased intensity this quarter with the Steering Committee Meeting of Pacific Heritage Hub (PHH) and Pacific Heritage Workshop in Palau. The Steering Committee decided to request the University of the South Pacific (USP) to host the PHH for another two years and the Pacific Heritage Workshop participants delved into environmental aspects of heritage as well as into the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, 2001. While these were Programme and Budget of the Organization (document C/5) related activities, the decisions and issues raised in these two activities demand closer analysis of partnerships and future areas of work. They also present an opportunity to thank the USP for close collaboration with the UNESCO, in particular, in Education, Natural Sciences, and Culture programme sectors.

Hope you will enjoy reading this issue. We bid adieu, until December 2017 when the next issue is due.



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# 'no sustainability without water'



*"Water must be considered and integrated across the breadth of the development agenda if the Sustainable Development Goals are to be attained".*

## REGIONAL BUREAU FOR SCIENCES IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

This message – and the urgency of its realization – was heard repeatedly across the hundreds of sessions, meetings, summits and exchanges that made up the 1<sup>st</sup> International Water Week (AIWW) and 2017 Korea International Water Week (KIWW).

Drawing more than 15,000 participants from academia, government agencies, the private sector, civil society and the development community to the ancient Shilla capital of Gyeongju in the southeastern corner of the Republic of Korea, the two events were held concurrently during 20-23 September 2017.

From the High-level Experts and Leaders Panel on Water and Disasters to the Governing Board of the newly-established International Centre on Water Security and Sustainable Management (i-WSSM - a Category 2 Centre under the auspices of UNESCO), the event also attracted a number of significant associated meetings and side events, serving to strengthen the profile of water-related issues in the regional development agenda – and to approach a unified position on the centrality of water for long-term human sustainability, equity and prosperity.

The centrality of water sustainability was reflected in the "Asia to World Statement", a formal document arising from high-level discussions among representatives of governments as well as international organizations and development banks.

UNESCO through its International Hydrological Programme (IHP) took part in a wide range of discussions and events throughout the two events, with particular emphasis on the launching of a new ten-year research project financed through a Funds-in-Trust agreement with the republic of Korea. Under the heading "Sustainable Water Security for Human Settlements in Developing Countries under Climate Change", the project will develop policies and countermeasures to support member states in Africa and Asia and the Pacific reduce the vulnerability of their water and other sector to climate change and enhance their water security; as well as strengthen related human resources capacities.

the Pacific, as well as develop tools for identifying interested partner countries. This will be followed by the

The first six months of the project will oversee a fact-finding exercise of the water sector in Africa and Asia and the Pacific, as well as develop tools for identifying interested partner countries. This will be followed by the identification of two partner countries for the next year; one in Africa and one in Asia and the Pacific. With an annual-based cycle, further partner countries will be identified as the project is implemented. In each country, the project will yield water security guidelines in the form of a roadmap to achieve water security based on national priorities.

Given the critical importance of water security in the Pacific, the discussions and conclusions of the AIWW and KIWW were of urgent relevance to the Pacific island countries. With numerous technical presentations on water sustainability solutions relevant and applicable in small island context, participating Pacific island delegates would have found both inspiration and practical ideas for strengthening implementation of water-related services at home. However, participation from the Pacific in the event was relatively limited – perhaps due to the limited visibility of the events among Pacific water networks.

With the second Asia International Water Week scheduled to be held in 2020 in Jakarta, Indonesia, an opportunity now presents itself for UNESCO and its partners to help ensure that the water security needs of small islands are placed front and centre as preparations begin for the hosting of the event in a country that is itself comprised of more than 17,000 islands.

Find full biographies of

Shahbaz Khan Director

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/jakarta/about-this-office/whos-who/director-office/>

Hans Dencker Thulstrup

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/jakarta/about-this-office/whos-who/water-and-ecological-sciences/>

# Samoa moves forward with ST & I policy



**THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SAMOA** together with the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture, the Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries completed a workshop on developing the Policy on Science Technology and Innovation (ST&I) for Samoa was held in Apia.

Results of the workshop included the formation of a cross-ministerial and cross-sectoral working group which will draft the policy; the identification of key issues to be addressed in a policy; a framework to support further consultations and drafting; and an increased awareness of the benefits of a coordinated approach to ST&I across Samoa's sectors amongst key stakeholders.

The workshop was facilitated by Professor Stephen Hill, Professor Emeritus of Wollongong University, with the active participation of ST & I experts in Samoa's Ministries, State-Owned Enterprises and the Private Sector. These experts are engaged in science, technology and innovation activities every day, but they are not labelled as such.

This workshop provided a fresh lens to view the activities that the whole of Government and the Private sector are engaged in from a ST & I perspective to make links with the Strategy for Development of Samoa, the UN Sustainable Development Goals as well as synergies that enhance economic growth and the livelihoods of our people.

The workshop that was held on the 26 to 27 September 2017 was supported by the UNESCO Office for the Pacific States through its Natural Sciences programme. As the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO assists its Member States in formulating their ST & I policies, strategies and plans as well as in the reform of their science systems, by bringing to light policy options for the governance of science systems in new contexts and supporting participatory policy formulation and/or reviews to improve science management at the national level.

# Big ocean states commit to protect Pacific Heritage



**A PACIFIC HERITAGE WORKSHOP** was organized in Koror, Palau from 30 August to 1 September 2017 by UNESCO, in cooperation with the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs of Palau, bringing together government officials from eight Member States in the Pacific who are in charge of heritage safeguarding, as well as the representatives of the Pacific Heritage Hub (PHH) at the University of the South Pacific (USP), regional NGOs and observers.

The objectives of this Workshop were to provide an opportunity to enhance the capacity of stakeholders through sharing information on progress in the implementation of the Pacific World Heritage Action Plan 2016–2020 and to gain a better understanding of the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflicts (1954) and its two Protocols (or the Hague Convention) and the Convention for the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage Convention (2001), promoting an integrated approach to the safeguarding of land-based and underwater heritage in the Pacific.

Participants updated information on progress in the implementation of the Pacific World Heritage Action Plan at the national level. The discussions highlighted the need to learn and understand the cultural and socio-economic context in order to address issues related to heritage preservation for sustainable development in the region. They also addressed several issues on heritage protection in Pacific island states including buffer zone determination, property rights in

relationship to heritage management, and costs and benefits of tourism in relation to heritage protection. They also discussed the mutual reinforcement between traditional customary law and formal state law, sustainable funding mechanisms for heritage management and cultural policy development.

With regard to underwater cultural heritage (UCH), delegates agreed to several measures to enhance the UCH protection, for example, the use of a Marine Park system, community engagement, partnership with diving operators and dive guides to enhance data collection, and application of Annex of the UCH Convention as international recognized good practice while strengthening the promotion of the UCH Convention in the region.

Lively discussions and evolving views marked Session on the Hague Convention and its Protocols. Issues addressed included more urgent need for preparedness for natural disasters (including climate change impact) rather than human-induced disasters, prioritization on ratification among different UNESCO Conventions, complementarity and synergy among different UNESCO Conventions. Delegates agreed to the importance of establishing national systems before ratifications, need for awareness raising and stakeholder consultations on the Hague Convention both at the national and regional levels, possible training on International Humanitarian Law in the Pacific countries contributing to UN Peace Keeping Operations (PKO).



## ***Bringing UNESCO International Hydrological Programme to the Pacific***

**THE 4<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE PACIFIC METEOROLOGICAL COUNCIL (PMC-4)** was an opportunity for UNESCO to inform the Pacific, that it is undertaking a scoping and consultation study to determine how it can support Pacific Island Countries and Territories to meet their water needs and priorities.

UNESCO Office for the Pacific States briefed the PMC-4 on its programmes and activities in water, with particular emphasis on the UNESCO International Hydrological Programme (IHP).

The PMC-4, held in Honiara, Solomon Islands this year, included a session on the need to better coordinate hydrological and meteorological services at the regional level, particularly in the area of flood and drought warning and management.

The meeting called for further collaboration between the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), UNESCO, the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the Pacific Community (SPC) to increase support for operational hydrology as part of the Pacific Meteorological Desk Partnership.

As part of this effort, UNESCO was invited to share information on its new initiative and invite input and feedback from members of the PMC. UNESCO also shared information about its global network of water institutes, programmes and initiatives, including the [UNESCO International Hydrological Programme's 2014-2022 strategic plan](#), which focuses, amongst other things, on water-related disasters and hydrological change.

The initial results of UNESCO's scoping study will be shared at the "UNESCO Conference on Water Security in Pacific SIDS" to be held in Nadi, Fiji on 23 and 24 October 2017. Professor Ian White of Australia National University is undertaking the study on behalf of UNESCO and invited PMC members to provide feedback and guidance to UNESCO during the meeting in person or at a later date via email.

For more information, see the UNESCO Apia website: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/apia/natural-sciences/freshwater-in-pacific-sids/>



Rajendra Prasad UNESCO –IOC during his presentation





**FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE PACIFIC**, the International Day for Universal Access to Information was celebrated with a 'Day of Dialogue and Exchange' on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The dialogue, called IPDC Talks, was initiated by UNESCO on 28 September 2016 to celebrate the International Day for Universal Access to Information. It is celebrated around the world and for the Pacific region, this event was held in Suva Fiji.

"The main goal of the event is to highlight the importance of Access to Information and to address core issues around this access which are crucial for a sustainable development and future as well as good governance," said the Director of the UNESCO Office for Pacific States, Nisha.

She added that this platform would bring to us inspiring stories on inclusiveness, governance, economic growth and many more but all connected to access to information.

The IPDC Talks linked the role of Access to Information to the realisation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), such as, the impact of access to information on climate change action, strengthening gender equality or combating poverty.

The one day Pacific IPDC Talks comprised of a series of attractive and dynamic talks from public leaders, prominent journalists, young intellectuals and community leaders. Some of the speakers elaborated on the key role of Access to Information for the achievement of a particular Sustainable Development Goal, others reflected on the essential role of Access to Information for our society and future.

The event had exciting line of up Pacific speakers who discussed their work in influencing change through access to information.

The one-day event was a collaboration between UNESCO's Pacific Office, the University of the South Pacific-Journalism Programme and the Pacific Islands News Association (PINA).



Nisha during her remarks



Inoke Bainimarama, the host for the event.



Delegation from the Pacific (Samoa, Tuvalu, Palau and Fiji) with UNESCO SHS Programme Specialists, Thanh Nguyen Van.

**PROMOTING SPORTS** as key to physical and mental wellness, creating fit and healthy populations that can contribute to social, economical and sustainable development is now also a very important development agenda item for most Pacific small islands developing states.

A delegation of sports ministers and officials from the Pacific participated in the Sixth International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport, MINEPS VI, that was held in Kazan, Russian Federation, from 13 to 15 July 2017.

The Pacific representation of Sports Ministers and Senior Officials from Fiji, Palau, Samoa, Tuvalu delivered and emphasized the message that sports in the Pacific ensures the physical and mental well-being of young people through physical education, and in promoting the inclusion of persons with disabilities, and in the empowerment of women and girls.

In the keynote speech, Hon. Baklai Temengil, Minister for Community and Cultural Affairs of Palau and Vice President of the Oceania National Olympic Committee shared the outcome of the consultation that UNESCO and ONOC held in 2015 which resulted in the “Pacific Sport Compass” advocacy initiative promoting sport for development policy among Pacific Islands Countries. Hon. Temengil acknowledged UNESCO’s technical expertise in the first step to promote the sport for development policy agenda and emphasized the commitment of the Minister in advocating for the Kazan Action Plan in the region.



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*The UNESCO Office for the Pacific States based in Apia, Samoa covers 16 independent countries and one territory in the Pacific:*

*Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.*

*In line with UNESCO's global priorities, the UNESCO Office for the Pacific States sets a local programme of action in consultation with the 17 member states and territories.*

UNESCO Member States in black.





