

# STAR 2016: The Pacific Islands Science, Technology and Resources Conference

## FIRST CIRCULAR and CALL FOR PAPERS

### STAR 2016: The Pacific Islands Science, Technology and Resources Conference

is now confirmed for 6-8 June 2016. The conference will be held in Nadi, Fiji, at the Tanoa International Hotel.

#### ***Conference Theme***

The overall theme of the **STAR 2016** will be:

#### **“Geosciences, Geo-engineering and the Ocean in the Pacific Islands Region”**

Although the conference theme is broad, sessions will focus on the following four areas of prime importance to the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) and the region:

**Renewable Energy Resources for Pacific Communities:** This theme will draw together all aspects of renewable energy resources applicable to the PSIDS. Resources will include issues relating water, solar, wind, wave, OTEC (ocean thermal energy conversion), biological, and geothermal resources.

**Deep-sea Geoscience:** This theme will concentrate on the resource potential and environmental and social monitoring and management issues that need to be determined in regard to deep-sea mineral resources in the EEZs of PSIDS and the Area (international waters under the jurisdiction of the International Seabed Authority).

**Science of Natural Hazards and Risks to Pacific Communities:** This theme will concentrate on the underlying science and technological aspects that provides the basis for the reduction of risk from natural hazards and adaptation to climate change in PSIDS.

**Land Use and Infrastructure at the Oceanic Interface on Pacific Islands:** This theme will concentrate on the on-shore, coastal, and nearshore areas of PSIDS and is expected to include examples of on-shore resources, soils, agriculture and the application of GIS and Remote Sensing to the on-shore, coastal and nearshore environment.

However, issues on **any** topic related to the overall conference theme or the Pacific region in general will also be welcome and will be included in the **STAR 2016** Programme where possible.

**STAR 2016** draws attention to opportunities for the PSIDS that can be realised from the new global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2016-2030 in particular SDG14 on oceans. It provides a new focus for PSIDS in their national sustainable development agendas. PSIDS will need to develop targets that can be measured and tracked that are based upon good scientific principles and data and for which progress can be reported every 3 years.



## ***Abstract Submission***

Delegates intending to participate in the **STAR 2016** are hereby invited to submit titles of papers and abstracts under the focus areas and an indication of whether it will be an oral presentation or a poster paper. Abstracts should be limited to 300 words.

Abstracts can be submitted via email to [redit.mlb@gmail.com](mailto:redit.mlb@gmail.com) (contact Lala Bukarau).

Early submission is strongly encouraged with a deadline of 31 March 2016.

## ***Conference Format***

Oral and Poster presentations sessions will be available during **STAR 2016**. However, there will be limited opportunities for oral presentations; therefore more than one poster per participant will be permitted.

Projection facilities will be available for presentations. Daily sessions will be held during the hours 09:00 – 12:30 and 14:00 – 17:30; over two days of the three-day event.

**Working Groups** under the four focal areas (or others depending on interest) will be convened during **STAR 2016** to facilitate discussion of specialist topics and issues important to the region.

**Two One-day Field Trips** are also being planned (possible dates to be confirmed are Tuesday 7 June and Thursday 9 June). Details will be announced in the Second Circular.

## ***Conference Publications***

A **STAR 2016** Abstracts Volume will be provided to all delegates as part of the registration pack.

It is also intended to publish a **STAR 2016** Conference Proceedings Volume that will contain details of the presentations and poster papers, together with recommendations and advice for PSIDS.

## ***Second Circular***

The **STAR 2016** Second Circular which will provide final details for the conference, registration arrangements, information on accommodation and a provisional programme will be forwarded in March 2016.

## ***Background***

**STAR (SOPAC's Science, Technology and Resources Network)** was founded in 1985 as a collaboration between the UNESCO/IOC (Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission) and SOPAC (The Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission) now the Geoscience Division of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC).

STAR was formed as a vehicle to assist the international research community to provide advice to SOPAC member countries. This long-established working relationship between SOPAC and the international research community was a vital element in this endeavour, and one which STAR was charged to nurture. This relationship stimulated a major change in the geoscience database in the SOPAC region during the 1980's.



Initially, STAR was primarily concerned with "blue-water" marine geoscience, tectonics and resources. However, in response to Pacific Island Countries changing needs and priorities, STAR expanded its scope to cover several other technical fields. STAR actively seeks a broad spectrum of participation to ensure that Pacific island countries and their forward planning processes were influenced by international science and technology that is both excellent and relevant. STAR's track record demonstrates that this approach was synergistic, forwarding both national needs and fundamental research.

With the integration of SOPAC into the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) in 2011, the mechanism for STAR to continue to provide Island Countries with an avenue for scientific and technological input has been inhibited. However, in early 2015 delegates from a number of Pacific Island Countries re-affirmed that STAR had been and still was a valuable resource for them and needed to be remobilised. A partnership with the Circum-Pacific Council (formerly Circum-Pacific Council for Energy and Minerals) has been initiated to assist with remobilising STAR. The delegates elected Mr Malakai Finau, Director of the Fiji Mineral Resources Department (MRD) as the new Chair of STAR and he was tasked with driving STAR into the future.

As part of **STAR 2016** a meeting will be convened for the international scientific community to discuss with PSIDS representatives a way forward for the future of STAR.

Malakai Finau

10 December 2015

**STAR** Chair

*[The island motif used here is a reproduction of a Samoan Siapo runner. Individual motifs are based on the hibiscus flower. Image downloaded from the "Tapa Cloths from the Pacific and Artwork" website: [www.tapapacific.com](http://www.tapapacific.com), accessed 10 December 2015. The use of the image is gratefully acknowledged.]*

