



PACIFIC SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY AND RESOURCES NETWORK (STAR)

STAR Steering Committee Annual Report July 2015 – June 2016

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Prepared by Lala Bukarau (Secretary to STAR Interim Steering Committee)

December 2016

1 – FOREWORD BY THE CHAIR OF STAR

We geoscientists of the Pacific face many challenges in our efforts to use “sciences” to solve problems we have in our part of the world, and to learn from the various experiences that international scientists will share with us.

Regarding issues of the oceans, we are reminded by SDG 14 – *Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development*, as we may be small islands with small land areas but we have big oceans so it is critical that we care and protect our ocean and use it sustainably.

Topics such as Oceans & Governance, Sciences and Policies, Natural Disasters such as Cyclones, Volcanoes, Earthquakes & Renewable Energy and other areas that were presented at STAR 2016 challenge us to apply science in solving our problems in the Pacific. Problems relating to the topics I have mentioned above in disaster preparation and risk reduction, problems of infrastructure, problems relating to improving our economies e.g. in the deep sea minerals all have potential to affect our economies one way or another.

We also have issues with capacities in our sciences. For example, in the Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources in Fiji we have only one fully qualified geologist, one mining engineer, two environmental scientists, and not many land valuers; land and marine surveyors; geospatial officers; to name a few.

There is also a need for younger scientists to step up to roles of leadership in these areas but also to be involved in our STAR Network and to progress it forward. These are issues I would like to challenge us in our efforts to invigorate and resurrect and to sustain STAR in many years to come and to contribute to improving the well-being of our people.

We should not be resting on our laurels but we should continually take advantage of opportunities as this to increase and improve our knowledge for better decision making. Not only do we need to surround ourselves with smart people, we need to improve our “smartness” as well.

As the current chair, I also look forward to hosting the next STAR Conference in Fiji, in 2017 and request your kind support and participation.

Malakai Finau
CHAIR OF STAR
Permanent Secretary, Fiji Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources

June 2016

2 – INTRODUCTION

This Annual Report is reporting on the activities of the STAR Steering Committee in organizing the STAR 2016 Conference to reinvigorate the STAR Network.

The sub-surface consideration while walking through the organizational processes for the STAR 2016 Conference was to explore the options for a sustainable STAR.

These were the overall objectives set by the STAR Network senior members for an Interim Steering Committee that was formed at a regional geoscientific meeting in April 2015. The Fiji Government (accepted the appointment of Malakai Finau as Interim Chair); agreeing to work with the Pacific Community through its Geoscience Division with the task of exploring the different options for taking the STAR Network of the Pacific into a more independent model, that would enable the STAR Conference to become a self-funded event. A partnership with the Circum-Pacific Council (formerly Circum-Pacific Council for Energy and Minerals) to assist the STAR network explore options was also discussed at the same regional meeting although no final agreement was made.

The STAR Conference is the only event of its kind among Pacific island countries that gathers scientists and practitioners who apply scientific techniques to the national development agenda. Furthermore, the STAR Network, in between conferences acts as an informal buffer and advisory board for any Pacific island decision maker that seeks a second opinion or multiple counsellors to vet proposals and evaluate itinerant consultants in a technical area that can be daunting for them. We know of no Pacific island nation that has a national science council; and by default this role falls to the Pacific Community (SPC). The STAR Network as a loose association of professionals dependent fully on the former SOPAC as the Secretariat to convene its meetings and act as clearing house for its projects has not been able to get a grip within the greater SPC, because of its already packed agenda. The time for an independent STAR had arrived.

A good measure of the success of the STAR is how many new projects would emerge from the collaborations formed among the participating professionals and their technical agencies. Also, how many young scientists would emerge into the Pacific mix of expertise who would commit to the vision of raising up the standard of scientific education and practice in the Pacific island nations – so that new industries may emerge from these applications and thereby complete the cycle of improving the earnings of individual scientists at the national level so that more of them do not seek better paying opportunities outside of the Pacific island nations.

STAR Interim Steering Committee Members

Chair – Malakai Finau, Permanent Secretary, Fiji Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources

Members –Michael Petterson (GSD-SPC), Paul Taylor (GSD-SPC), Raijeli Taga (MRD), Robert Smith (GSD-SPC), Litia Waradi (GSD-SPC), Akuila Tawake (GSD-SPC), Christine Prasad (GSD-SPC), Russell Howorth (Matadrevula Advisory Services), Lala Bukarau (Secretary)

Contact email addresses of the committee members can be found in Annex 1.

3 – ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES IN THE REPORTING PERIOD

One of the first items on the Interim Committee's to-do list was to coax the former Senior Advisor – Technical Editor of SOPAC, Ms Lala Bukarau, to come out of retirement and help it organise the STAR 2016 Conference according to a model that is envisaged would start the journey to a self-sustaining STAR. She formally joined the Interim Steering Committee in August 2015.

The primary focus of the STAR Steering Committee was to organize the STAR 2016 Conference and Field Trip to reinvigorate the STAR Network.

The secondary focus was to explore options for a business model for the Network whereby it could

run independently and sustain itself for the purpose of organizing STAR annual conferences as a meeting place for geoscientists and practitioners who work and live in the Pacific.

3.1 – Set up of Website and E-mail Group List

Top on the list of preliminary tasks to clear the ground before start of organizing the conference could get under way was a purge of the old STAR Group email list that had been maintained at the SOPAC. It was last used in 2013, and had over 300 subscribers. The purge resulted in a list of just over 50 people who responded to the Committee's message from email addresses that were still valid. The STAR will not be adding people to the Network email group list without a specific personal request from the interested party; therefore to get on the list an email must be sent to any STAR Steering Committee Member requesting subscription (see Annex 1). After the STAR 2016 the number of subscribers has risen to 76.

The next task was to build a STAR website so it could serve as virtual library/office to be consulted by STAR Network members and participants to conferences for information and documents on the Network and its activities. The tasks were completed by a team consisting of the Secretary with support from designated IT personnel at the GSD (SPC).

The STAR website address is: star.gsd.spc.int. All documents referred to in this annual report can be downloaded directly from the website.

To subscribe to the STAR Group email list send an email to any of the committee members listed in Annex 1, or to [<geoscience.spc@gmail.com>](mailto:geoscience.spc@gmail.com).

3.2 – Committee Meetings

In 2015 there were 6 Steering Committee meetings and in 2016 there were 6 prior to the STAR 2016 Conference and one during the Conference, which discussed, prepared and released meeting announcements. Four STAR 2016 Conference circulars were released: A Meeting Announcement announced the conference theme with tentative dates and was distributed to as many networks as possible all of which were maintained by the various units at the Geoscience Division of SPC (October 2015); the First Circular went out in December 2015 confirming meeting dates and out the Call for Papers; the Second Circular was the full conference package of registration and accommodation forms; and fleshed out the theme as well as set out the conference fee structure and field trip cost (April 2016); and the Third Circular was more of a press release settling the major sponsors and gave details on the final arrangements for the field trip which were missing in the Second Circular (June 2016) was sent just before the Conference. See the Meetings page of the STAR website for timelines for release of all meeting documents, aside from the official conference circulars.

Many meetings by a logistics subcommittee (consisting of GSD Staff and the Secretary of the Steering Committee) were also held, mostly at the Geoscience Division of SPC, from where the bulk of the organizational aspects of the conference proper were handled.

Interim Chair of STAR, Mr Malakai Finau, changed jobs from Director of Mineral Development in 2015; to Permanent Secretary of Lands and Mineral Resources in 2016. Venues for the meetings moved around Suva and included Mineral Resources Department Mead Road, Nabua, the Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources headquarters at Nasova, Suva; and SPC Geoscience Division. The task of chairing of Interim Steering Committee meetings was shared between the Chair and the Acting Director of Mineral Development, Ms Rajjeli Taga.

3.3 – Fund Raising

The major sponsors for the STAR 2016 Conference were the Government of Fiji and the Pacific

Community's Geoscience Division. They provided the funds to enable the logistical arrangements to proceed smoothly through the organization processes.

Conference fees were charged for the first time and this was for the purpose of exploring options for financial independence for the STAR Network.

Further, small donations were received from the Korea Institute of Ocean Science & Technology (KIOST), the Chinese miner *Aurum* and the global geotechnical company *Fugro* (through the Circum-Pacific Council) toward the catering for the STAR 2016 event.

3.4 – STAR 2016 Conference and Field Trip

The STAR 2016 Conference was held over 3 days from Monday, 6th June to Wednesday, 8th June. It was preceded by the SPC/EU Deep Sea Mineral Project final steering committee meeting on Friday, the 3rd of June; and a NIWA/CPC Deep Sea Mining Workshop on Saturday, 4th June.

The STAR 2016 overall theme was 'Geosciences, Geo-engineering and the Ocean in the Pacific Islands Region'. Papers were received that addressed 'Ocean: Science, Technology, Management and Governance'; 'Pacific Volcanoes: science, hazard and impacts'; 'Pacific Volcanoes and their Impacts'; 'Dredging and Reclamation'; 'Geothermal and other Georesources'; and 'Hazards: Science and Management'.

The conference consisted of two days of presentations (6th & 8th June); and one day devoted to the field trip (7th June). The final programme featured 55 oral presentations and 13 poster papers. Abstracts received in response to the Call for Papers numbered 78; of which 9 were formally withdrawn and the remainder was no shows.

Two Working Groups for Deep Sea Minerals; and Geothermal Resources, respectively were convened. The only Deep Sea Minerals Project in the Pacific region is terminating at the end of 2016, and it is hoped this working group can gestate some ideas for a new project to continue the work completed and keep well-informed awareness of this matter a priority in front of Pacific island managers. Many Pacific islands, given their locations within the ring of fire have exploitable renewable resources such as in geothermal. Only Papua New Guinea has harnessed this resource in its mix of power generation at a localised site, and has a very active programme in the State's minerals authority to map the resource and set up similar models for communities that have geothermal resources. It is hoped the Geothermal Working Group can mobilise ideas and support to investigate the potential of harnessing this resource in other Pacific states that are so endowed.

The final list of participants can be found on the Meetings page of the STAR Website. The total number of participants to the STAR 2016 Conference proper was 125; about 60 of whom were Pacific island nationals.

This was the first STAR Conference to charge a Conference Fee; an aspect which the Steering Committee was most nervous about; and that it was accepted by all who participated without a single complaint meant this was an acceptable mode of operating such a scheme. A number of larger Pacific Island nations (Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands along with Fiji as host) sent extra delegates at their own cost to present papers. A fair number were present just to hear the talks and interact with other professionals in attendance. This augurs very well for the future of STAR, that interest within Pacific island governments is strong, and from certain states backed by national governments to engage fully.

The Field Trip to the Yasawa and Mamanuca groups of islands – a well-marketed tourist thoroughfare – was a boat roundtrip to the end of the chains of islands (dotted with hotels and resorts) and back down to base at the Denarau Marina in Nadi. We had initially envisaged a stop off at one of the

islands to explore the geology and take in lunch and wait for the ferry's return to ship us back to base, but this arrangement fell by the wayside due to circumstances beyond our control, and running out of time to organize the protocols that are a requirement prior to visiting any area that remain in the jurisdiction of traditional land owning units. Even though the per-head cost to take the field trip was nearly double the conference fee – it was already overbooked by the time the conference began.

There were only 52 spots allocated by the company operating the Yasawa ferrying service – the number of seats inside the Captain's Lounge. About 70 booked and paid for a berth and 62 people actually took the trip.

Participation

The breakdown of participation by country, agency or company is given in the table below:

Country	Agencies/Companies
Australia	CS Energy Geoscience Australia Commonwealth Scientific & Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) University of New South Wales
Cook Islands	Office of the Prime Minister Seabed Minerals Authority (SBMA)
Federated States of Micronesia	Department of Resource & Development
Fiji (Republic of)	Fiji Navy Meteorological Office Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Lands & Mineral Resources MWH Global – Fiji Branch 3S Prospect
France (Republic of)	Institut de Recherche pour le Développement – Université Paul Valéry Montpellier 3 – Gouvernance, Risque, Environnement (IRD – UMR GRED)
Kiribati (Republic of)	Ministry of Fisheries & Marine Resources Development (MFMRD)
Korea (Republic of South)	Korea Institute of Ocean Science & Technology (KIOST)
Marshall Islands (Republic of)	Ministry of Resources & Development
New Zealand	Institute of Geological & Nuclear Sciences Limited (GNS Science) National Institute of Water & Atmospheric Research (NIWA) Tonkin & Taylor Ltd University of Auckland Massey University Victoria University of Wellington
Niue	Crown Law Office
Papua New Guinea	Mineral Resources Authority Consultative Implementation & Monitoring Council Divine Word University
Samoa	Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment
Solomon Islands	Ministry of Mines, Energy & Rural Electrification
Tonga	Ministry of Lands, Environment, Climate Change & Natural Resources
Tuvalu	Ministry of Natural Resources
United States of America	Circum-Pacific Council California State University – Tomboolo Centre of Habitat Studies University of Hawai'i
Vanuatu	Department of Geology, Mines & Water Resources Meteorology & Geohazards Department

Regional and International Agencies/Companies
Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and Southeast Asia Technical Secretariat Technical Secretariat (CCOP), Thailand
DigitalGlobe
Fugro
IUCN/GIZ – MACBIO Project
Pacific Community – Geoscience Division
World Bank

The full list of participants for all three meetings can be downloaded from the STAR website (star.gsd.spc.int); and a list of participants to the STAR 2016 can be found in Annex 1. The breakdown of participation in the table above is also only for the STAR 2016 Conference portion from 6th to 8th June 2016.



STAR 2016 Conference participants at the Tanoa International Hotel, Nadi, Fiji – 125 participants attended the talks.

3.5 – 2016 STAR Business Meeting/First Annual General Meeting of STAR

Given the underlying process of exploring options for independent modalities for STAR, the STAR 2016 Business Meeting at the end of the conference was conducted and designated as its First Annual General Meeting; just in case a decision emerges to register the STAR in Fiji as a non-government organization; the minutes of the annual general meeting is part of required documentation for the opening of a bank account for such type of organisation in any bank in Fiji. The minutes of the 1st AGM of the STAR Network is attached as Annex 2.

STAR 2017

The business meeting has already decided the date and venue for the STAR 2017 – and these early decisions were motivated by the desire to feed into the UN Oceans conference that would also be held in Nadi, Fiji, in early June 2017.

The dates will be announced by Chair after the submission of a Cabinet Paper to the Fiji Parliament to report on the STAR 2016 event.

4 – FINANCIAL REPORT

Initial planning for the STAR 2016 estimated that the operating budget that would be required for conduct STAR 2016 based on 130 participants would be approximately

FJD105,000.00

Income:

Income for the 2016 session of STAR came from a number of sources* including:

- Donations from SPC (GSD), the Fiji Govt and other partners; and
- Participant registration fees (120 people)

The total income amounted to

FJD82,741.14

Expenditure:

The overall expenditure was considerably less than expected thus lowering the overall costs involved. Expenditure involved direct expenses including:

- Communication costs;
- Operating and other costs;
- Transport and travel costs; and
- Conference venue charges.

The total expenditure amounted to

FJD49,181.31

Surplus:

FJD33,559.83

***Note:** The field trip was cost neutral as fees covered the full costs of the field trip, so field trip details have not been included in the above financial report.

5 – ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF DONORS AND SUPPORTERS

As mentioned under fundraising – the Government of Fiji and the Pacific Community were the major sponsors for the STAR 2016. The Circum-Pacific Council picked up the air fares of a number of their directors and scientists from their crop of international scientists, and they were instrumental in pulling in some global players from the private sector, like Fugro, which also made a donation to the catering for the event.

All participants paid a registration fee – the fee structure can be found in the STAR 2016 Second Circular up on the website.


Private sector donors from Fiji were the Chinese mining company Aurum; and the Korea Institute of Ocean Science & Technology (KIOST). The latter, at this time has a local office based in Suva, and was heavily represented at STAR 2016. These donations also went toward the catering.

Last, but definitely not least, the STAR Steering Committee acknowledges with deep gratitude the role of the SPC/EU Deep Sea Minerals Project, and its Team Leader (Akuila Tawake) and the Geoscience Division of SPC for the convening of the Final Steering Committee Meeting of the Project alongside the STAR 2016. Without this most Pacific island states would not have been able to attend the STAR 2016 – Very big Vinaka Vakalevu!

6 – FORWARD THINKING

a) FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF STAR

The incorporation and registration of STAR as a non-profit organisation in Fiji is currently being



investigated and it is expected to be completed in time for reporting to the Second Annual Meeting to be convened at the time of the STAR 2017 Conference planned for late-June 2017. This will require substantial procedural work and may well extend to other substantive issues such as the drafting of a charter, by-laws and establishment of a bank account ready for consideration and approval at the next annual meeting (see also para b)6 below).

Other higher order considerations that would add value and relevance to the reinvigoration of the STAR are recorded below for those that that will come after the interim committee to chart the course for STAR into future.

1) Working Group protocols/Keeping track of new Projects on the STAR Website

Given that a number of key processes of the “old” STAR Network (as an appendage of SOPAC) had become redundant (e.g. STAR Chair reporting to Governing Council); the Interim STAR Steering Committee was reluctant to carry forward other processes; hence STAR working group formation and reporting at STAR 2016 were left very much to the devices of those participants and groupings that were compelled and had the energy to take advantage of the presence of similar-minded professionals at the same venue. It did emerge at STAR 2016 that “project development” is a worthy cause for the formation of individual STAR working groups – some guidelines should now be put on paper on the anatomy of working groups (what type of members), requirements that need to be met before the formation of one, the driving interest being the development of Pacific island nations. The suggestion by Director GSD on keeping track of project development online at the STAR website to avoid duplication and to aid fund raising by drawing attention of donors to a tracker on the website is a good one, but this should be a shared responsibility among the different working groups; and their designs.

2) Gaining Future Involvement of Young Scientists

The former Chair of STAR suggested that STAR look to offer scholarships to promising science students in the future. This is a sure way of gaining a following and greater commitment for STAR from the younger scientists of the region. The handful of geoscientists, who by and large were a by-product of the existence of SOPAC, are hardly enough to service the Pacific region, therefore further resources will be required to move forward. This is a Pacific priority – to educate, give experience and retain Pacific-grown scientists.

3) Conversations to Enliven Interaction between STAR meetings


There is a need to enliven the interaction of the STAR Network and the website is a perfect place to do this, hence a blog page had been created to canvas your views. We all have pet interests – these drive human endeavor but they are not borne in a vacuum. Interest in the Pacific is VERY REAL and this needs to be harnessed – LEADERSHIP is required.

b) SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS OF CONFERENCE

Suggestions for improvements were collated from feedback received from participants to the STAR 2016; and what was gleaned from Interim STAR Steering Committee members’ observations throughout the process of organizing the conference; up to and including the conference period itself. Small-ticket items to do with back-room organization during the conference are not included in this narrative.

1) Collection of Conference Fees/Criteria definitions

Mode/method of payment – on line and by credit card payments are preferred by delegates; and if possible, NOT to handle the collection of cash at the Secretariat office is the preference.



Definition of the Qualification Criteria of Fees structure – generally there were no issues, but there were a couple of delegates who insisted on paying a lower fee invoking flimsy reasons for qualifying for the lower rate, due to the absence of specifics.

2) Poster Papers need more Exposure/better presentation

A special dedicated poster session must be a feature of STAR 2017 – justice was NOT done to the Poster papers in 2016. A last or pre-lunch session of a day with finger food or lunch on offer is a good model to try in 2017 – with room arranged like an art gallery and people stand next to their posters, and participants walk around and have food and drinks.

Also HD equipment is the ideal due to the high-resolution imagery in many presentations that lost quality during presentations due to inferior projection equipment.

3) Field Trip

The field trip to the Yasawas was beautiful but became really long and the latter part became a little rough. It was suggested that if this trip is taken again, that it be broken by a stop off at one of the islands as it would be more interesting if people were able to get off the ferry and spend a few hours on an island, like it was initially envisaged to get off at Waya Island. With more time to organize it – there should be no problem to arrange lunch with a hotel; and to clear the island protocol for access to the geological features of interest. That said, it is understood that this could turn out to be quite expensive exercise because logistically a larger boat than what are currently used by island resorts would have to be on hand to ferry people from the Yasawa Flyer to the stop off island and back to the Flyer later in the day, should numbers of participants be high.

4) Guidelines/templates/instructions to Conference Participants

Templates for Abstracts, and other STAR documentation and instruction for authors of abstracts need to be prepared for upload to the website, as guidance for future conferences.

5) Miscellaneous

Set up mechanism on website for post-conference evaluation by members of the Network and conference participants.

Again, the flexibility of the medium of the website could be further utilised to register participants online for STAR conferences, which can be part of the trigger for payment of conference fees (i.e. at the point of registration, see also para b)1 above).

6) Administrative Issues

Administrative issues which can be addressed by the Steering Committee during the preparations for STAR 2017 Meeting include the following:

- Secretariat activities: fundraising, who
- Appropriate acknowledgements of sponsorship
- Logo & Island motif for STAR
- Letterhead
- Contact addresses: standalone email, phone, P.O. Box ...

ANNEX 1

STAR 2016 Participants List:

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ANNEX 2

STAR 2016

Minutes of Business Meeting & 1st Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, 08 June 2016
Tanoa International Hotel, Nadi, Fiji

1 Call to Order

The Interim Chair of STAR, Malakai Finau of Fiji, called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

The following Interim STAR Steering Committee members were in attendance in support of the Interim Chair – Michael Petterson (GSD, SPC), Robert Smith (GSD, SPC), Raijeli Taga (MRD, Fiji), Paul Taylor (GSD, SPC), Lala Bukarau (Secretary to Interim STAR Steering Committee).

The full list of participants that attended the 1st Annual General Meeting of the STAR is attached¹. (Attachment 1)

2 Adoption of Agenda

The proposed meeting agenda below was adopted.

1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Election of Chair
4. STAR Steering Committee
5. Chair's Report
6. Technical Working Groups established/re-established at STAR 2016
7. Date, Venue and Theme of Next STAR Conference
8. STAR Website
9. Other Matters

3 Election of Chair

The representative of Samoa, Lameko Talia, was pleased to see the STAR conference running well. He thanked the Geoscience Division of SPC (GSD) for the support to the steering committee in the logistics for the STAR 2016.

The representative favoured that Fiji remain as Chair of STAR; and this was seconded by the representative of the Cook Islands, Keu Mataroa.

The meeting adopted that Fiji (Malakai Finau) was confirmed in the position of the Chair of STAR.

¹ Of the 125 registered participants of STAR 2016, 37 attended the 1st STAR Annual General Meeting

4 STAR Steering Committee

The meeting agreed to the Chair of STAR's proposal to retain the members of the interim steering committee, consequently the 'Interim STAR Steering Committee' was confirmed as the STAR Steering Committee.

The members of the STAR Steering Committee supporting the Chair of STAR are Michael Petterson (Director GSD, SPC), Paul Taylor (DRP Manager, GSD, SPC), Raijeli Taga (Acting Director of Mineral Development, MRD, Fiji), Robert Smith (GSD), Litia Waradi (GSD), Russell Howorth (Matadrevula Advisory Services), Akuila Tawake (GSD), Christine Prasad (GSD) and Lala Bukarau (Secretary to STAR Steering Committee). Staff of the Fiji Mineral Resources Department and the Geoscience Division of the SPC are co-opted when required, upon the advice of the respective heads.

5 Chair's Report

The Chair of STAR (Malakai Finau) tabled a verbal report on behalf of the steering committee that worked to convene the STAR 2016 and raised the seed funds for the event. Chair highlighted the dire situation in Fiji earlier in the year with TC Winston and a couple of other cyclones that caused flooding events and the subsequent 60 days 'State of Emergency' declared by the State to redeploy Government resources into disaster relief operations.

Chair expressed deep appreciation to all the participants and all the other agencies (particularly the CPC) that had given assistance to the Committee in its work to put together the conference.

The Chair promised that a formal report would be written and would be made available from the website.

6 Financial Report

Interim STAR Steering Committee member, Russell Howorth, informed the meeting that historically the STAR Network had been dependent fully on SOPAC for the convening of its annual conference. He said that the desire behind the reinvigoration of the STAR was to start a process whereby the STAR could become independent, even financially; and that this would require a transition period of a few years starting in 2016.

The report on the financials tabled informed the meeting of the input into the budget from: the Geoscience Division of SPC; the Government of Fiji; the registration fees collected from participants; sponsorship from the private sector (KIOST, Aurum and Fugro) and the CPC; and last but not least the SPC-EU Deep Sea Minerals Project, which brought the bulk of the Pacific island representatives into Nadi for the final steering committee meeting of the Project and extended their stay to take in the STAR 2016 Conference.

The meeting heard that it could easily cost FJ\$75,000 to purchase return tickets for one representative each of the 22 Pacific island states to assemble in one place. The committee member felt that in the near foreseeable future the only way to assemble island nationals to a STAR conference was to piggy back the STAR Conference onto a regional meeting that was already occurring; as was done this year with the STAR 2016 latched on to the Final SPC-EU Deep Sea Minerals Project Steering Committee Meeting.

The total income was estimated to be about FJ\$65,000; and the expenditure was anticipated to be about FJ\$60,000, with the small surplus expected to be carried forward

into the 2017 event. This would be further clarified in the final financial report.

7 Technical Working Groups established/re-established at STAR 2016

Chair of STAR reported that there had been two working groups that were established during the STAR 2016: first was a Deep Sea Minerals Working Group, given that the DSM Project was terminating at the end of 2016; and secondly, a Geothermal Working Group was exploring the potential of this source of renewable energy in the region.

8 Date, Venue and Theme of Next STAR Conference

Chair of STAR announced the dates for STAR 2017 to be from 29th May to 1st June 2017 – one week before the big UN oceans meeting which is also to be hosted in Nadi, Fiji, from the 5th to the 9th of June 2017. However the final dates would be confirmed in the First Circular for STAR 2017.

Chair also proposed the Tanoa International as the venue.

9 STAR Website

The Chair gave the online address of the STAR website as: star/gsd.spc.int/

All the documentation generated; the papers received for the STAR 2016 conference; and the post-conference reporting will be posted on the website [which is the virtual administration and information block for the STAR Network].

10 Other Matters

Steering Committee member Paul Taylor of GSD urged all who were in attendance at this business meeting to ensure that their names were written on the sheets that were being circulated around the meeting place for that purpose.


Since there was nothing further under Other Matters, Chair invited the Director of Geoscience Division (SPC), Mike Petterson, to make closing remarks.

CLOSING REMARKS

Director of SPC Geoscience Division, Michael Petterson, expressed the hope that participation at the STAR 2016 Conference had widened the horizons of those in attendance and that there were intellectual takeaways and good gains enough to retain an interest to return to future STAR events.

Director GSD repeated sentiments from his opening speech that one of the biggest success indicators for STAR was if people got together and came up with new projects to involve the Pacific islanders on the appliance of science that is relevant to the development of the Pacific.

On the business model for the STAR going forward, Director GSD was advising exploration of all options before a decision is made; and his view on a long-term 'sustainable STAR' was to see more involvement of young scientists, that it be more inclusive and be even more appropriate to the Pacific islanders. He encouraged more people to get involved because he pointed out there was a lot of not so glamorous and arduous work that are part



of involvement in projects, and the STAR Steering Committee will need help with this background work.

The former Chair of STAR, John Collen of New Zealand, took time to thank the ladies; because he said he knew what was involved in organising a STAR meeting; and he invited all to join him in congratulating the Chair and the Steering Committee for the 'enormous success' of the STAR 2016 Conference.

The representative of the Kingdom of Tonga, Taaniela Kula, emphasized the trust invested in Fiji to continue advocating and imposing the science that was for the benefit of the Pacific island countries. He encouraged the younger generation to commit and step up because they were the ones to carry on the work of the few remaining senior geoscientists still in the room.

One of the directors of the CPC, Mick McWalter of Papua New Guinea recorded that at a CPC meeting in Winchester a few weeks earlier, the directors were worrying about STAR, but he congratulated the STAR for its 'splendid rebirth' and recognized the attributes of a sustainable model. He assured that the CPC remained committed to assist STAR, whenever it could.

Chair acknowledged the former Chair of STAR, John Collen; the CPC directors, in particular Gary Greene for all that was being done; and the senior STAR member from the Cook Islands, Keu Mataroa, who surprised the meeting by turning up to the Tanoa venue for a different meeting and was in time to sit in at the final afternoon sessions of the STAR 2016. He concluded his final remarks by acknowledging the hardworking steering committee members before adjourning the meeting.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment 1

Participants to STAR 2016 that attended the 1st AGM (Business Meeting)

- 1 Malakai Finau (Chair of STAR, PS Lands and Mineral Resources, Fiji)
- 2 Mike Petterson (Director, Geoscience Division, SPC)
- 3 Paul Taylor (Chief Geohazards Scientist, GSD, SPC)
- 4 Raijeli Taga (Acting Director of Mineral Development, MRD, Fiji)
- 5 Russell Howorth (Matadrevula Advisory Services)
- 6 Robert Smith (Marine Geophysicist, GSD, SPC)
- 7 Lala Bukarau (Secretary to Steering Committee)
- 8 Martyn Namorong (CIMC, Papua New Guinea)
- 9 Mick McWalter (CPC)
- 10 Shane Cronin (University of Auckland)
- 11 Taaniela Kula (Kingdom of Tonga)
- 12 Willie Kilamanu (Papua New Guinea)
- 13 Keu Mataroa (Cook Islands)
- 14 Matt Blacka (University of New South Wales)
- 15 Cyprien Bosserelle (SPC)
- 16 Gary Greene (CPC)
- 17 Gary McMurtry (University of Hawaii)
- 18 Moira Lunge (Papua New Guinea)
- 19 Maxine Lahan (Papua New Guinea)
- 20 Kim Picard (Geoscience Australia)
- 21 Lameko Talia (Samoa)
- 22 Dan McConnell (Fugro)
- 23 Shaun Williams (NIWA)
- 24 Litia Duikoro (MRD, Fiji)
- 25 Menuka Anandani (MRD, Fiji)
- 26 Apete Soro (MRD, Fiji)
- 27 Semi Bolalailai (MRD, Fiji)
- 28 Rigieta Ravuiwasa (MRD, Fiji)
- 29 Iliesa Bacita (MRD, Fiji)
- 30 Sandip Chand (MRD, Fiji)
- 31 Maraiya Vata (MRD, Fiji)
- 32 Sakuisa Waqanisau (MRD, Fiji)
- 33 John Collen (Victoria University of Wellington)
- 34 Christine Prasad (GSD, SPC)
- 35 Emma King (Fiji)
- 36 Niko Bukarau Jnr (Fiji)
- 37 Darryl Woo (GSD, SPC)