

Recommendation of Sasakawa Peace Foundation towards the 5th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting

Recognizing that healthy marine environment is necessary to ensure economic sustainability, social welfare and overall human security across the Pacific region, we share the view of a “Pacific Environment Community”, as suggested by Japanese Prime Minister Aso, is an option worthy of our collective support. It is a vision that brings to fore the natural unifying bond that Japan has with the rest of the Pacific as we are all dwellers of the same Ocean.

Presently, our Ocean is bombarded with a myriad of threats, including open dumping of solid and liquid wastes resulting in unnecessary degradations of marine ecosystems. Thus we request that the Pacific Island Leaders and the Japanese Government demonstrate progress in addressing these serious threats.

The following recommendations are a result of discussion with partners* from various government and non-government representatives from the Pacific region at the symposium on Marine Pollution and Environmental Protection in the Pacific Islands held on the 14 May 2009, in Tokyo which the Sasakawa Peace Foundation had organized.

15 May 2009

Sasakawa Peace Foundation
Sasakawa Pacific Island Nations Fund

***Partners:**

1. Ambassador Yoshiyuki Ishi, Professor, Tokyo University of Agriculture
2. Ms. Charlene Mersai, Regional Coordinator, Micronesian Challenge, Palau
3. Dr. Jane Mogina, Executive Director, Mama Graun Conservation Trust Fund, PNG
4. Ms. Ulamila Wragg, Coordinator, Pacific WAVE Network, Fiji
5. Ms. Naomi Auvae, Senior Development Officer, Ministry of Natural Resource & Environment, Samoa
6. Mr. Ricky Carl, Deputy Director for External Affairs, The Nature Conservancy

Partners: who did not attend symposium, but express their support for this recommendations.

1. Ms. Jacqueline Evans, Health Planner at the Community Health Service Directorate, Cook Islands Ministry of Health
2. William Kostka, Executive Director, Micronesia Conservation Trust

Recommendation: 1

Solid and liquid waste in many Pacific island countries is increasingly becoming a threat to marine ecosystems and human health. Urgent and concerted effort is

needed to address the proper management of solid and liquid waste across the Pacific.

- Japan to take a leadership role in ensuring responsibility over the proper disposal and removal of non-biodegradable goods exported to Pacific island countries.
- Japan to take a leadership role and assist Pacific island countries with an appropriate and sustainable scheme for waste management and disposal, such as monitoring through a coast watch program.
- Japan and Pacific islands to collaborate and support the implementation of Pacific island national action plans and efforts to identify and remove banned chemicals such as pesticides and other toxic chemicals that remain on all Pacific islands.

Recommendation 2:

Restricted government resources in many Pacific island countries limits their capacity to establish and effectively manage marine protected area. Protected areas remain the most effective measure for conservation of biological diversity. Current efforts are limited in their effectiveness due to their fragmentation by political boundaries that does not recognize connectivity between natural systems and interdependence over larger geographical areas.

- Need for the establishment of Japan and Pacific-wide marine protected area network to compliment the Program of Work for Protected Areas (POWPA) as required by the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD).
- Acknowledge and support existing regional efforts through formally established regional and international forums.
- Support existing financial mechanism schemes including existing trust funds that supports the sustainability of marine conservation efforts.

Recommendation 3:

Capacity building is a cross cutting feature across all sectors relating to marine environment. In this sense urgent action is required to address capacity building needs to ensure sustainability and resiliency of community efforts in marine conservation.

- Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) programs need to be innovative to accommodate technical, training and financial needs of all sectors with particular focus on community empowerment.
- To support the improvement of information access and dissemination through all forms of media.
- Japan and Pacific island countries to collaborate to support and improve awareness targeted to strengthen the link between resource management and human security/community livelihood.