



Government of Samoa

**Keynote address: Honourable Minister for Natural Resources, Environment and Lands
Afioga Toeolesulusulu Cedric Posē Salesa Schuster**

**Launching of the Fourth State of Environment Report 2023 and National Environment Sector Plan
2023 – 2027**

Friday 13th September 2024, Taumeasina Island Resort

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- Lau Susuga Faifeau Faiaoga, Rev. Dr. Alesana Palaamo
 - Lau afioga ile Sui Palemia, Afioga i le Saoalii, Tuala Iosefo Ponifasio
 - Afioga i Minisita o le Kapeneta
 - Pule Sili o le SPREP
 - Sui o Malo mai Fafo
 - Le paia ma le mamalu o le aofia ua sasao nei

Ae oute leí laasia le atupué, ma ou ulufia le Falepunaoa, oute faapea atu, taoto ia le Uluulutoa i paia faalanugata o Samoa, ua e'e ma papapao i le tatou taeao ua atoa usu, ma ua mamalu. E iai pea le lagona e le toe tuliloaina pei o le tamaloa nai le taua o le paegauo, aua o lea ua maea ona fatiseuseu e le fofoga o le aso. Malo faafetai Taalolo ia.

O lenei foi ua tu malie le lau, pei o le upu i le taulafoga, aua le taulaga momoli i le Atua, e pei ona tapufogaina e lana Susuga i le Faafeagaiga Faiaoga. Oute talitonu la, ua atoa tupe i le fafao, aua tu'uta o le taulafoga. E le toe tulituafuluina, ae o le a tapulalaga loa le mafuaaga o lenei taeao ma lona faasinomaga.

1. O le asō ua faalauiloa ai le Lipoti o Suesuega o le Siosiomaga 2023 faatasi ai ma le Fuafuaga Autu mo Galuega Faatino a le Vaega Maoti o le Siosiomaga 2023 – 2027.
2. O le lona fa lenei o lipoti e faailo ai le tulaga o iai lo tatou siosiomaga. O nei lipoti e tai sefulu tausaga ma faatinoina, na amata mai i le 1993. Aemaise ia o gatasi ma le Taiala o le Atinae o Samoa 2022 – 2026 ua faataoto e le Malo.

3. O faafitauli ogaoga ua afua mai ona o aafiaga o suiga o le tau e aofia ai le faaititia o le ola faanatura o meaola ma laau, faatasi ai ma le afaina mai faaiuga soona fai a le tagata, ua mautinoa ai le moomia ona faaauauina pea suesuega nei I totonu o ni vaitau puupuu, e fautuaina ai faaiuga fai, aemaise Taiala a le malo ma Vaega Maoti. O le ala lea ua manatu ai o le a faia le iloiloga ma le suesuega lenei mo le tai lima tausaga e amata atu I le lipoti lenei.
4. Ua manino mai i lenei lipoti, o lo o i se tulaga feololo le maloloina ma le saogalemu o lo tatou siosiomaga, pe a fua i faailoilo ua faaogaina e iloilo ai le siosiomaga faanatura, siosiomaga fausia faa le tagata, o le tulaga o le tau, li’o ola o le lalolagi ma faalavelave matautia faanatura, suiga o le tau, faaititia o aafiaga o suiga o le tau faapea le faafoeina o lo tatou siosiomaga ma galuega faatino.
5. Ua mautinoa foi, o lo o tele le aafiaga o lo tatou siosiomaga ona o le faatupulaia o laau ma meaola faalafuā, suiga ma’ale’ale o le tau, faalavelave matuiā ma le faatupulaia o kasa kaponi oona e afua ai suiga maaleale o le tau. E ui lava ina ititi ma faatauava le sao o Samoa i iai kasa oona pe a fua i le lalolagi, peitai ua siitia lava lo tatou sao I lea vaega.
6. O le aotelega o suesuega faapenei, o le maua lea o se tala fiafia ua mafai ona siitia ma faaleleia le siosiomaga ma soifua o tagata nuu. O le upu a le atunuu, o le limalima faatasi e māmā ai se avega. E nanamu foi le lolo pe a osaosa le su’iga o fugalaau .
7. O le Fuafuaga Autu o Galuega a le Vaega Maoti 2023 – 2027, o lo o faataatia ai le alafua o faatinoga ma faamuamua e ao ona tatou galulue ai, ina ia foia faafitauli, faaleleia atili galuega faatino, ma ia puipua le saogalemu ma le lelei o le siosiomaga I ona vaega eseese e pei ona faailoa mai ile lipoti o Suesuega.
8. E avea foi lenei avanoa taua e momoli ai le faafetai tele i paaga totino ma paaga galulue uma e le gata I Matagaluega ale Malo, pisinisi ma faalapopotoga tumaoti seia oo lava i le loaloa o nuu ma afioaga, ona o la outou lagolago sua I taimi uma i so o se itu. Ua mafai ai ona taunuu lenei faamoemoe taua, aemaise foi o isi galuega ma faatinoga e

tele sa faia. O le faafetai faapitoa ile Afioga Sefanaia Nawadra o le Pule Sili ma le aufaigaluega ale SPREP faapea le Faalapotopotoga o le Siosiomaga a Malo Afaatasi (UNEP) mo le lagolago faapea le faatupeina o lenei galuega. E muliai se faafetai tele ile susuga a Dr. Posa Skelton o le konesale sa gafa ma le galuega tele lenei. Malo le galulue ma le faatoatoa.

9. Le aofia e, ou te fiafia tele e faalauiloa atu le maea ai mo le faaaogaina o le Lipoti lona Fa o Suesuega o le Siosiomaga o Samoa 2023, faatasi ma le Fuafuaga Autu o Galuega mo le Vaega Maoti o le Siosiomaga 2023 – 2027.

Agalelei mai le Alii I le faatinoga o nei fuafuaga mo se manuia o Samoa ma ona tagata.

Soifua

- Rev. Dr. Alesana Pala'amo
- Honorable Deputy Prime Minister,
- Honorable Cabinet Ministers
- Director General of SPREP,
- Members of the Diplomatic Corp
- Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

1. Producing State of the Environment reports are supposed to provide an overview on the status of the environment in-country and secondly, to be an important monitoring and evaluation tool to assist countries plan appropriate actions. As such, SPREP has been a critical partner in advocating and supporting the production of these reports for all Pacific Island countries.
2. It is indeed therefore my privilege to stand here today, for the launch of Samoa's 4th State of the Environment Report 2023, with the first report produced in 1993 and done in 10-year cycles.
3. Coupled with the SOE is the launch of our National Environment Sector Plan 2023 – 2027, that is supposed to be the outcome of issues identified in the State of the Environment as needing government and country's immediate attention over the next five years.
4. A country's SOE report is supposed to reflect the work that has been undertaken in-country from its policies, technical and financial capacity of the implementing stakeholders, and outcome of the work for the past 10 years.
5. But for small island developing states such as Samoa, the impacts on the environment are heavily influenced by outside factors such as climate change, accidental alien species introductions, imported goods and services, and the drive for national economic development. As such, addressing the problems are almost always very difficult as less resources are available compared to the mounting problems.
6. With SOE only produced in 10-year cycles, it can be skewed depending on issues that occur within the reporting period such as cyclones, pandemics, or economic crisis. More often than not, the SOE become just shelf reports that are more useful to consultants, and donors, researchers and reporting writing for quotes, rather than the

actual country. As was also noted in this 4th SOE for Samoa, several of the needed data were outdated, thus making a factual SOE difficult and cumbersome.

7. Having identified these issues, and noting the importance of having up to-date and accurate data, Samoa will embark on improving its monitoring system for its SOE by publishing in 5 year cycles in line with National Environment Sector Plan, as well as our Pathways for Development of Samoa.
8. Additionally, Samoa through the environment sector of MNRE and hopefully with support from a generous partner, develop an environmental dashboard that will be updated annually for a more accurate annual outlook of the environment and better address emerging concerns.
9. The escalating challenges posed by climate change, including declining biodiversity and increasing pollution from unsustainable production and consumption behaviors call for more regular and timely reporting. This adaptive approach reflects our proactive stance in addressing environmental challenges and the importance of evidence-based policymaking for a resilient future.

So, how have we fared over the past decade according to the latest SOE Report?

10. Our natural environment presents a complex picture, with terrestrial, marine, and coastal areas showing a mix of good, fair, and poor conditions. While some trends show improvement, others are deteriorating. There are increased risks of environmental degradation due to climate change, invasive species, and unregulated, unsustainable development. Despite ongoing conservation efforts, biodiversity remains under growing threat, indicating a need for more robust protection measures. Of particular concern is the marine environment, which is at risk from land-based pollution caused by unsustainable land development practices. This situation underscores the interconnectedness of our ecosystems and the urgent need for comprehensive, integrated sustainable management strategies across all sectors.
11. The SOE also points to Samoa facing significant environmental challenges, with waste generation and management being a key concern.
12. While access to water has improved including access to sanitation, the widespread use of non-compliant septic tanks and pit latrines poses risks of groundwater

contamination. The Apia urban area, with its high population density, presents ongoing threats to environmental and ecological services crucial for flood and coastal management. In light of these challenges, sustainable development planning and robust environmental protection measures are essential for creating a resilient built environment that can withstand these pressures without compromising our nature based resilience.

13. Samoa's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions remain low and negligible by global standards, and the country has successfully phased out CFCs, with ongoing efforts to eliminate HCFCs and HFCs. However, Samoa is experiencing higher temperatures (temp. rise of approximately 0.60°C from 1980 to 2018), unpredictable and irregular rainfall patterns, rising sea levels (averaging 5.2 mm per year).

14. Samoa's commitment to multiple Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) underscores the government's priorities. Gender equality in environmental management is fairly strong, and community engagement alongside legislative support is vital for sustainability. However, there is an urgent need for increased resources and attention to enhance the implementation and enforcement of environmental management plans and legislative tools.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the National Environment Sector Plan 2023 – 2027 is the Response Framework which completes our SOE 2023.

15. While significant progress has been made over the past decade, the SOE 2023 highlights with urgency that much more needs to be done. The updated National Environment Sector Plan offers a revitalized roadmap for the sector, emphasizing the need for accelerated action in partnership with stakeholders to address the escalating threats to our environment and well-being identified by the SOE Report.

16. The NESP is a valuable tool, but it alone cannot achieve our goals. It requires our collective efforts, inputs, and contributions to be effective. For our joint efforts to make a lasting impact, we must work together with trust and respect for one another.

17. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge our partners and stakeholders from government, the private sector, and civil society. Without your support, this undertaking would not have been possible. Your perseverance and commitment carried us through the pandemic and numerous setbacks, demonstrating your

dedication to Samoa's environmental and sustainable development goals. A special thanks to Sefanaia Nawadra and your team at SPREP and UNEP for your invaluable guidance and financial support. Lastly, I extend my gratitude to Dr. Posa Skelton for his technical assistance in developing Samoa's Fourth SOE and the updated NESP. Faafetai tele lava.

18. Ladies and Gentlemen, I am very much pleased to officially present and launch Samoa's Fourth SOE 2023 and National Environment Sector plan 2023 – 2027.

Faamanuia mai le Atua i le faatinoga o nei Fuafuaga, aua se lumanai manuia o Samoa ma ona tagata.

Soifua