**“Our Living Memories and Living Libraries: National Traditional Knowledge workshop kicks off in Tuvalu”**

A two-day national workshop currently underway in Funafuti, Tuvalu is bringing together traditional knowledge holders, government representatives and community leaders to raise the critical role of Traditional Knowledge (TK) in understanding and predicting Tuvalu’s weather, climate, and extreme events.

In officially opening the workshop, the Assistant Secretary of the Ministry of Public Works, Infrastructure Development and Water, Ms. Lanieta Faleasiu, acknowledged the vital role of traditional knowledge in supporting scientific efforts. *“We are hearing directly from communities whose lived experiences are now being translated into effective responses to climate extremes. This knowledge is not just complementary to science. It is essential”*

Facilitated by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) in collaboration with the Tuvalu Meteorological Office (TMO), the workshop is creating a shared space for dialogue, data gathering, and planning around how traditional knowledge can enhance modern climate and weather forecasting.

As the first sessions progress, participants are sharing environmental indicators passed down through generations, such as the early blooming of specific trees, changes in animal behavior, shifts in wind direction, and the alignment of stars all of which have long been used to anticipate cyclones, droughts, or high tides. These insights, deeply rooted in Tuvaluan culture, will be systematically recorded to form a national Traditional Knowledge and Indicators (TK) Database. This effort goes beyond enhancing forecast accuracy and reach.

*"This national workshop reflects our commitment to building a more resilient Tuvalu through collaboration and knowledge-sharing with our traditional knowledge holders and communities*” said Mr. Tauala Katea, Director of Tuvalu Meteorological Service. This week’s dialogue also recognises the value of local terminologies, especially in the Tuvaluan language for directions, timekeeping, and interpreting environmental cues. For instance, indigenous directional terms carry nuanced meanings tied to geography and wind patterns that are often lost in Western frameworks. Preserving these expressions is vital not only for cultural continuity but also for improving the clarity and relevance of climate communication between national meteorological services and local communities. This growing knowledge base will serve both as a scientific asset and a cultural learning tool for future generations.

*“This initiative ensures that the wisdom of our people in the region informs national resilience. The power of traditional knowledge indicators when aligned with science, creates a bridge for science that our people understand and trust. That’s what will keep our communities safe.”* said Mr Salesa Nihmei, SPREP Officer in Charge of Climate and Information Service Programme

The workshop highlights a growing regional movement to recognise the central role of traditional and local knowledge systems in climate adaptation and disaster preparedness. Communities are working together to ensure that traditional forecasting indicators are not lost but rather strengthened and protected in an era of rapid environmental and technological change. The workshop continues through the week, with further sessions focused on methods for data collection, community training, and strategies to maintain the integrity and security of TK data.

*The Traditional Knowledge workshop in Tuvalu is supported through the UNEP funded CISPac5 project, which focuses on Climate Information and Knowledge Services for Resilience in five island countries, along with additional support from the Climate and Ocean Support Program in the Pacific (COSPPac project).*