Vainuupo Jungblut, the Ramsar Officer for Oceania visited Papua New Guinea from 14-18 April 2014 to assist the National Ramsar Administrative Authority (Department of Environment and Conservation) with issues related to the implementation of the Convention.

Vainuupo assisted the Department of Environment and Conservation in finalizing the Ramsar implementation workplan, including activities, responsibilities and timelines. Activities listed in the workplan include the establishment of a National Ramsar Committee, the development of a national wetland policy and the finalization of a list of priority wetlands for future Ramsar designation.

The first draft of Papua New Guinea’s national report to the Conference of the Parties (COP12) was completed and will undergo a round of internal consultation prior to its finalization, sign off and submission to the Ramsar Secretariat.
The Department of Environment and Conservation reviewed the updated Ramsar Information sheets prepared by WWF for Papua New Guinea’s two Ramsar Sites, Lake Kutubu and Tonda Wildlife Management Area. Comments from the review will be relayed back to WWF to support further revision of the two RIS updates.

With Mr Kafuri Yaro, Transfly Project Officer with the WWF Western Melanesia Programme, Vainuupo discussed WWF’s work in Papua New Guinea, especially their work at the two Ramsar Sites and their Ramsar nomination, the Kikori River Basin. Vainuupo also met Mr David Peter, a representative of the Sepik Wetlands Management Initiative (SWMI) to discuss the Ramsar nomination of the Upper Sepik River, which has high biodiversity values and cultural significance. Vainuupo will continue working closely with WWF and SWMI on their Ramsar Site nominations.

Vainuupo attended and co-chaired on behalf of SPREP the 4th Meeting of the Steering Committee for the Pacific Mangroves Initiative (PMI) held at the IUCN offices in Suva on Tuesday 22nd April. Discussions focused on the development of the draft Pacific Mangrove Charter, a mechanism to foster high level support, recognition, visibility for and commitment to the sustainable use and conservation of mangroves and their associated resources across the region.

Report by Vainuupo Jungblut, Ramsar Officer for Oceania

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