Samoa joins the Ramsar Convention

3 December 2004

Samoa

The Secretariat is extremely pleased to announce that UNESCO, the treaty depositary, has received the instrument of accession from Samoa, and the Convention, as amended by the Paris Protocol (1982) and the Regina Amendments (1987), will enter into force for Samoa, as our 142nd Contracting Party, on 6 February 2005. The first Wetland of International Importance designated by Samoa is the "Lake Lanoto'o", the largest freshwater lake in the country amongst few remaining still in pristine natural form. It is located in the central highlands of the Island of Upolu and forms the core part of the watershed area for the township of Apia, the capital of Samoa. The site apparently comprises two other small lakes as well, rainforests of native hardwood tree species and secondary forests of shrubs and other vegetation, but Ramsar datasheets on the site have not yet been received, and more information will follow later.

Ramsar's Assistant Advisor for Asia-Pacific, Ms Liazzat Rabbiosi, notes that the Secretariat would particularly like to acknowledge the support offered by Bill Phillips (Mainstream) and the WWF Global Freshwater Programme, whose assistance has been extremely helpful in moving the accession process forward. Mr Vainuupo Jungblut, the Ramsar Officer in the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP) in Apia, adds: "A big Congratulations to Faumuina Pati LIU and his staff at the Samoa Division of Environment & Conservation of the Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment for their hard work and effort." Samoa joins Papua New Guinea, Palau, and (newly) the Marshall Islands (with Australia and New Zealand) in carrying the objectives of the Ramsar Convention forward in the Pacific Islands region. [01/12/04]

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