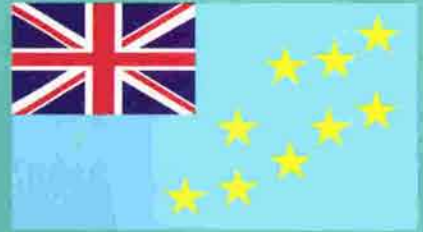


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State
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Report



Tuvalu



Tuvalu

**State
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Environment Report
1993**

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*Cover photograph: Traditional culture is central to Tuvaluan
life. Part of the 'passing out' celebrations for graduating students
of the Tuvalu Maritime School, Funafuti Atoll.
(photo: John Lane)*

Tuvalu

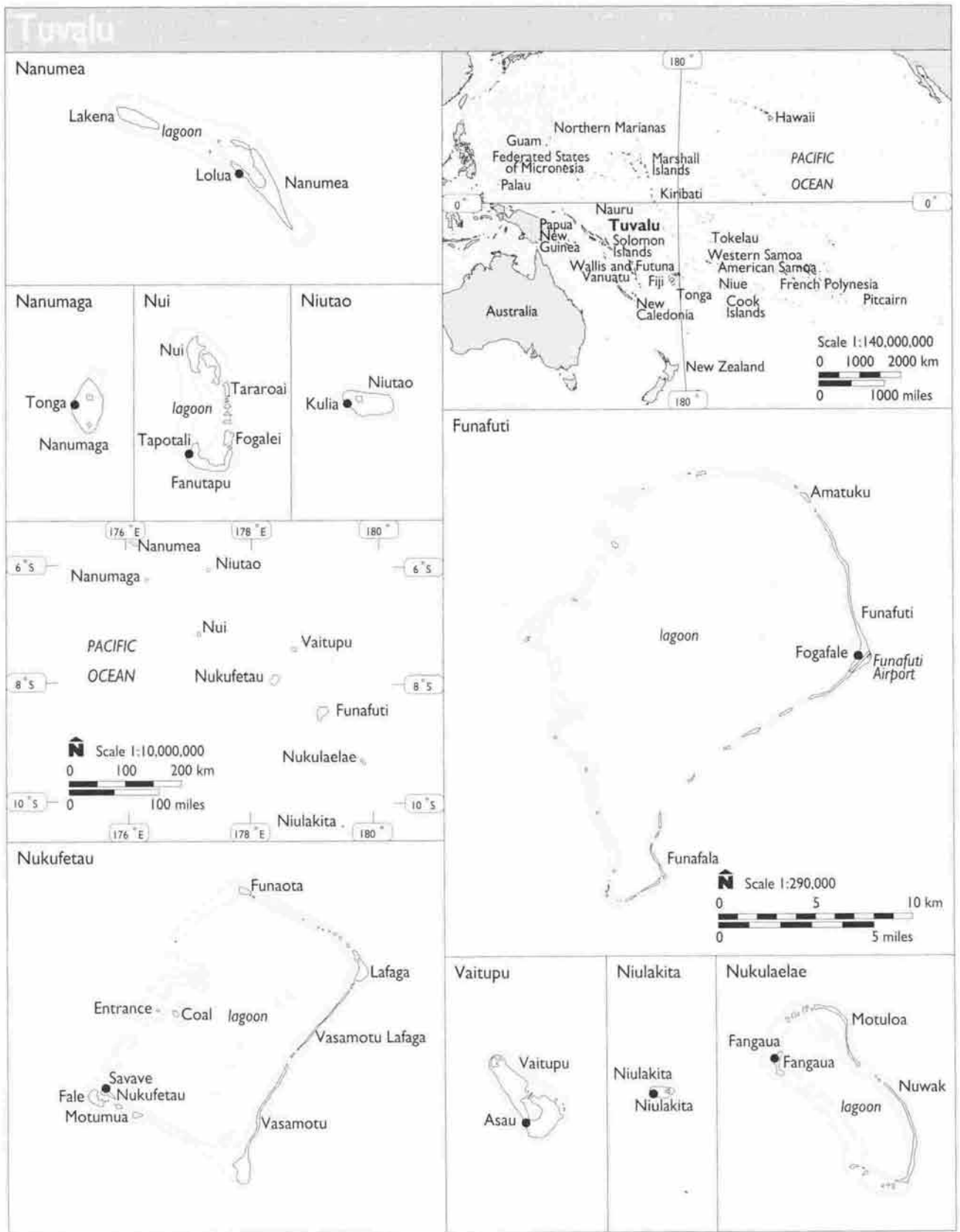
State Of the Environment Report 1993

Prepared by John Lane

Report for the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) as documentation in support of the Tuvalu National Environmental Management Strategy (NEMS)

**Produced with financial assistance from the
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and the Australian International Development
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Foreword

This document represents a concise report on the State of the Environment for Tuvalu. It was prepared as a major component of the National Environmental Management Strategies (NEMS) Project. The NEMS project was instigated to address sustainable environmental development and planning issues in a number of Pacific Island countries, namely, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Tokelau, Tuvalu and Western Samoa. It has been funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and implemented through the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) as part of a broader UNDP assistance programme called Pacific Multi Island (PMI): Planning and Implementation of Pacific Regional Environment Programme which concentrates on regional and in-country institutional strengthening and training of environmental managers. In Tuvalu, the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB) also provided financial assistance for the NEMS process.

The State of the Environment Report for Tuvalu was a major background document for the preparation of the draft National Environmental Management Strategy (NEMS) and formed an important reference document for the National Seminar held in Tuvalu during November 1993 to refine

and develop the NEMS. The report summarises the current state of marine resources, cultural and archaeological resources, socio-economic environment, and outlines environmental challenges facing Tuvalu. The State of the Environment Report also provides an important vehicle for raising community awareness of the importance of environmental issues and how these issues should be integrated into future decision-making processes.

I would like to thank John Lane who worked with the Tuvalu Environment Officer, Alefaiio Semese, for three months during 1993 and who has prepared this State of the Environment Report.

SPREP looks forward to working with Tuvalu and other regional and international organisations in tackling the environmental issues identified in this State of the Environment Report.



Vili A. Fuavao
Director
South Pacific Regional
Environment Programme

Message from the Prime Minister

In the impetus to establish our country since we gained independence in 1978, successive governments have placed emphasis on economic and material development. Resources were employed to expand services, build infrastructure and turn from traditional subsistence activities to commercial enterprises. In this period of rapid change, the issue of maintaining our newly acquired level of development over the long term and the impact of economic growth on cultural and environmental values have not been fully addressed. In the environment sector, we are now experiencing some negative effects of the economic development model we have been following. This is particularly the case on Funafuti where much of the development and change has occurred.

I am pleased to be able to say that the government has, over the last few years, begun to change the emphasis of past policy by assigning a high priority to sustainable development and environment protection. The government is now committed to a two-tier environmental policy. The first deals with the question of climate change and possible sea-level rise induced by the actions of developed countries pursuing their own material

be an opportunity to integrate our economic development planning and policies with our environmental management programme. The government will also be using the NEMS as a basis for discussions with development partners in order to allocate funding to priority environment management projects.

This State of the Environment Report is an important step in the development of the NEMS. It is a welcome collation of the large amount of information about our environment that has been collected over many years. Unfortunately, this information has become dispersed and inaccessible, and has therefore not been used to our advantage in past development planning work. The report also identifies some significant gaps in our knowledge that we should aim to fill in the short term.

The scheduled NEMS national conference will provide an opportunity for government officers, business managers and community leaders to use this information as well as their own ideas and insights to formulate a national strategy. The government looks forward with anticipation to receiving the advice of the conference.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the

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