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Subject: "Vision Statement" for South Pacific Strategic Sea Turtle Plan

Dear MTSG Executive Committee Members- For your information, the following resulted from the Strategic Planning Meeting for Sea Turtles convened by SPREP (South Pacific Regional Environment Programme) in Apia during June 1996. The formal document for this meeting still hasn't been issued yet, but I understand will be soon. I participated in this meeting as Technical Advisor (Col's counterpart). It is an eloquent and powerful statement as to the importance of sea turtles, and their need to be restored, throughout the Pacific islands of Micronesia, Melanesia and Polynesia. It also links very nicely to our MTSG Global Strategy. George

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VISION STATEMENT

"We see a future where generations of Pacific Island people will have choices about how they use and interact with sea turtles. This dream will come true if we take action now to ensure that sea turtle populations recover to become healthy, robust and stable. Sea turtles will be fulfilling their ecological role and be harvested by Pacific Islander people on a sustainable basis to meet their cultural, economic and nutritional needs.

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Post Note: There was some concern at the meeting as to how the above statement, forged in English, might come out when translated into the various languages of the Pacific. To test this important consideration, several of the participants proceeded to translate it into their native tongue, and then convert it back into English. The following resulted when this little exercise was carried out by the representative from the Solomon Islands:

"It's not here yet, but we see a time when people in the Pacific and turtles are living together in harmony. The turtles will live to support the people in their needs; also turtles will have their place in the Pacific."