

- Noumea-based position
- Attractive expatriate package
- Join the principal development organisation in the region

The Pacific Community (SPC) invites applications for the position of **Legal Counsel**. This position will be located at its headquarters in Noumea, New Caledonia.

Description

The **Pacific Community (SPC)** is the principal scientific and technical organisation in the Pacific region, supporting development since 1947. We are an international development organisation owned and governed by our 27 country and territory members. In pursuit of sustainable development to benefit Pacific people, our unique organisation works across more than 25 sectors. We are known for our knowledge and innovation in such areas as fisheries science, public health surveillance, geoscience, and conservation of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

The **Legal and Governance Team** plays a critical role in overseeing governance, legal and risk management support and advice to SPC. The Team is heavily involved in improving the effectiveness of systems, policies and management to provide high-quality customer-oriented services and improve operational compliance.

The role – the **Legal Counsel** will play a key role in maintaining the integrity of SPC's governance framework and SPC's internal legal functions through provision of advice on employee relations, contracts, funding arrangements, matters of international law and other legal issues. The Legal Counsel plays a critical role in improving and embedding SPC's internal regulatory framework, working collaboratively with SPC staff members in all SPC locations to help achieve SPC's strategic objectives, implement operational policies and manage organisational change.

The key responsibilities of the role include the following:

Research and Advice

- Provides specialised legal advice to all SPC divisions on SPC's internal governance and legal framework.
- Prepares and reviews memoranda, instruments, contracts, templates and other legal documents.
- Handles a wide range of issues relating to international law, international administrative law and the relationship between international and domestic law as it impacts SPC's operations.
- Performs extensive legal research and analysis and prepares legal opinions, briefs, reports and correspondence.
- Provides advice on any dispute or litigation across the organisation.

Policy, Guideline, Contract Development and Review

- Contributes to mitigating SPC's legal risk through continued development and improvement of policies, guidelines, templates and processes.
- Contributes to components of the review, design and updating of SPC governance documents, policies and guidelines.

Outreach, Education and Training

- Provides outreach, education and training and raises awareness of SPC's governance framework, legal obligations and responsibilities to SPC staff and members.
- Mitigates SPC's legal risk through education and training.
- Contributes to the development and presentation of training on governance and legal issues, processes and policies to multi-level audiences across SPC.

Collaborative Working

- Builds strong collaborative relationships internally throughout SPC and with external stakeholders. Participates in the development of "One OMD for one SPC".
- Participates actively in a collaborative and supportive environment within the Governance and Legal Affairs Team and across SPC.

For a more detailed account of the key responsibilities, please **refer to the online job description**.

Key selection criteria

Qualifications

- Postgraduate degree of Laws (LLB) or equivalent body of knowledge and experience.
- Meets the professional requirements to practice law in one (1) or more jurisdictions of an SPC member country or territory, or similar legal system.

Technical expertise

- Demonstrable experience and understanding of legal issues facing inter-governmental agencies.
- At least 5-6 years PQE in providing legal advice on legal, governance, and organizational issues.
- Experience in a development organisation.

- Strong analytical and conceptual skills.
- Excellent legal analytical skills.
- Demonstrated experience and knowledge in the legal systems of the member countries and territories of SPC.

Language skills

- Excellent verbal and written communication and negotiation skills in English.

Interpersonal skills and cultural awareness

- Ability to work well in a multi-cultural and gender-sensitive environment.

Salary, terms and conditions

Contract Duration – 6 months (maternity cover).

Ideally, the successful candidate will be expected to start on 1 July 2025; however, a later start date may be considered depending on availability.

Remuneration – The **Legal Counsel** is a band 10 position in SPC’s 2025 salary scale, with a starting salary range of 3,568–4,364 SDR (special drawing rights) per month, which currently converts to approximately XPF 521,491–637,777 (USD 4,745–5,804; EUR 4,370–5,345). An offer of appointment for an initial contract will normally be made in the lower half of this range, with due consideration being given to experience and qualifications. Progression within the salary scale is based on annual performance reviews. SPC salaries are not presently subject to income tax in New Caledonia.

Benefits for international staff employees based in New Caledonia – SPC provides subsidised housing in Noumea and will reimburse excess accompanied luggage of up to two additional bags. Airfares, medical and life insurance are available for eligible employees. Employees are entitled to 25 days of annual leave per year of contract and access to SPC’s Provident Fund (contributing 8% of salary, to which SPC adds a 10% contribution).

Languages – SPC’s working languages are English and French.

Recruitment principles – SPC’s recruitment is based on merit and fairness, and candidates are competing in a selection process that is fair, transparent and non-discriminatory. SPC is an **equal-opportunity employer**, and is committed to cultural and gender diversity, including bilingualism, and will seek to attract and appoint candidates who respect these values. Due attention is given to gender equity and the maintenance of strong representation from Pacific Island professionals. If two interviewed candidates are ranked equal by the selection panel, preference will be given to the **Pacific Islander**. Applicants will be assured of complete confidentiality in line with SPC’s private policy.

Application procedure

Closing date: 8 June 2025 – 11:00 pm Noumea time

Job Reference: KK000083

Applicants must apply online at <http://careers.spc.int/>

Hard copies of applications will not be accepted.

For your application to be considered, you must provide us with:

- an updated resume with contact details for three professional referees
- a cover letter detailing your skills, experience and interest in this position
- responses to all screening questions

Your application will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed at shortlisting stage if all the above documents are not provided.

Applicants should not attach copies of qualifications or letters of reference.

Please ensure your documents are in Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format.

SPC does not charge a fee to consider your application and will never ask for your banking or financial information during the recruitment process.

Screening questions: (2.000 characters maximum per question)

1. Provide insights into your experience with contract negotiations at an international level. Tell us about a time you negotiated legal terms with an external party, such as a donor, partner, or government. What approach did you take to secure your organisation’s interests while maintaining a constructive relationship?
2. What legal challenges do you think are specific to intergovernmental organisations, particularly in relation to their governance, mandate, and relationships with member states and external partners? Can you provide examples of your experience or understanding of these challenges?
3. Give an example of a situation where you had to provide legal advice in a context with competing operational and legal priorities. How did you help the organisation balance legal risk with its strategic or programmatic objectives?