

WHAT IS RIDGE TO REEF?

- The Ridge to Reef (R2R) approach is a “whole-of-ecosystem’ or integrated management approach.
- In Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS), Ridge to Reef refers to integrated approaches to freshwater and coastal area management emphasizing the inter-connections between the natural and social systems from the mountain ‘ridges’ of volcanic islands, through coastal watersheds and habitats, and across coastal lagoons to the fringing ‘reef’ environments associated with most PSIDS.
- Given the close inter-connections between land, water and coastal systems in PSIDS, the integration of freshwater watershed management with coastal area management is essential to foster effective cross-sectoral coordination in the planning and management of land, water and coastal uses.
- Inherent in the Ridge to Reef approach is the philosophy of cross-sectoral coordination in the planning and management of freshwater use, sanitation, wastewater treatment and pollution control, sustainable land use and forestry practices, balancing coastal livelihoods and biodiversity conservation, hazard risk reduction, and climate variability and change.
- This integration of communities, stakeholders, and national governments within such a cross-sectoral planning framework is described by PSIDS as a ‘Community to Cabinet’ approach.
- The emphasis of the Community to Cabinet approach has been on the effective engagement and participation of stakeholders in the planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of initiatives aimed at fostering integrated approaches to natural resource and environmental management in PSIDS.

WHY IS R2R MANAGEMENT IMPORTANT?

The Ridge to Reef approach explores and targets ways to reduce the transfers of chemicals, nutrients and sediments from agriculture, forestry in catchments, and untreated wastewater to minimize the damage to coastal ecosystems, including coral reefs and coastal waters.

The distinct inter-connection between land, water and coastal systems in PSIDS, coupled with their high vulnerability to climatic changes and limited human resource capacity make a strong case for the R2R approach in the Pacific.

A “whole of ecosystem” and “whole of island” approach ensures that policies, multiple sectors, agencies and community interests are properly considered and integrated in the planning and management of resources.

WHAT IS THE PROGRAMME ABOUT?

- Is a global test case of the GEF aimed at achieving the sustainable development of Pacific SIDS within a truly integrated environmental and natural resource management framework.
- Is financed via a USD 91 million package of GEF grants and USD 333 million of co-financing from the participating countries and other development partners.
- Has a goal “to maintain and enhance Pacific Island countries’ ecosystem goods and services (provisioning, regulating, supporting and cultural) through integrated approaches to land, water, forest, biodiversity and coastal resource management that contribute to poverty reduction, sustainable livelihoods and climate resilience.”
- Supports and addresses national priorities and development needs of 14 Pacific Island Countries while delivering global environmental benefits by focusing on a more cross-cutting approach to water, land and coastal management.

- Is a GEF multi-focal area programme that guides the coordinated investment of GEF grant funding across its focal areas of biodiversity conservation, land degradation, climate change adaptation and mitigation, sustainable land, sustainable forest management, and international waters in Pacific Small Island Developing States.
- Is a multi-agency initiative involving the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as GEF implementing agencies
- Is provided coordination support by the Pacific Community (SPC), a regional intergovernmental organisation that works with Pacific Nations in a wide range of areas relevant to programme implementation
- Promotes results-oriented approaches to programme delivery and reporting, including the harmonization of GEF results reporting frameworks with the SAMOA Pathway and the Sustainable Development Goals
- Captures and shares examples of best practices and lessons learned to guide the uptake of locally appropriate and effective approaches to the sustainable development of the Pacific's Small Island Developing States
- Guides the mainstreaming of gender and culture issues, and the effective engagement of young people, in environmental and natural resource management
- Is supported in areas of science-based planning, human capital development, policy and strategic planning, results-based management, and knowledge sharing through a regional GEF International Waters project which is executed regionally by the Pacific Community.
- Has a Programme Coordinating Unit, hosted by the Pacific Community's Geoscience Division in the Fiji Islands providing technical, operational, reporting and monitoring support as requested by the participating Pacific Island Countries.

➤ WHERE DO YOU OPERATE?

- The GEF Pacific Ridge to Reef Programme activities are executed in: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia , Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea , Republic of the Marshall Islands , Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

➤ WHAT DOES THE PROGRAMME AIM TO ACHIEVE?

The programme was developed to provide an opportunity for PacSIDS to develop and implement integrated approaches for the sustainable development of island economies and communities.

The practical application of R2R principles* present PacSIDS with a unique opportunity to:

UPSCALE:

Test, refine, replicate and upscale effective mainstreaming efforts of ICM/IWRM/SLM/SFM concepts, practices and policies.

BUILD CAPACITY:

Build capacity of local professionals, new stakeholder groups, and community leaders to build sufficient human capital on the islands for leading adoption of integrated and participatory mechanisms to complement traditional measure and approaches.

SUPPORT LIVELIHOODS:

Introduced resilient measures in catchment pilot demonstrations to reduce economic losses, increase farmer income, and sustain drinking water supplies.

IMPROVE PUBLIC HEALTH:

Improve human health with continued access to safe drinking water during droughts and reduction of sewage pollution of groundwater supplies and shellfish.

The specific Global Environmental Benefits (GEBS) delivered through each national R2R demonstration project will be defined within each country's respective Project Identification Form.

Global Environmental Benefits

1. Protection and/or sustainable use of globally significant biodiversity, including agro-biodiversity, in Pacific Island forests, agricultural lands, watersheds, and coastal areas;

2. Improved provision of agro-ecosystem, forest, watershed, and coastal area ecosystem goods and services;
3. Reduced GHG emissions from agriculture, deforestation, forest and coastal degradation and increased carbon sequestration;
4. Enhance climate resilience of Pacific Island ecosystems and societies through R2R program support to low emission, climate resilient development pathways; and
5. Improved management of coastal and freshwater resources of SIDS consistent with the GEF 5 IW Strategy, including conservation of coastal 'Blue Forests' that complement MPAs under biodiversity.

National Benefits

Adoption of ICM policies and measures will involve planning for infrastructure investments to prevent high risk areas, and reduce emergency costs for national budgets in reaction to disasters.

Local Benefits

Improved ecosystem services related to:

- Food production
- Safe Drinking Water
- Productive Soils,
- Clean and healthy environments and resilience to impacts of climate change

Restoration and protection of mangroves

- Enhance local fishing incomes
- Reduce the vulnerability of coastal villages and urban areas from storm surges and sea-level rise

Sustainable forest management

- Secure livelihoods
- Enhanced food security

Drought management and drinking water contamination measures

- Improve public health

Cross-cutting

Gender

- Enhance women's engagement to optimize impact of interventions at all levels, improving livelihoods.

➤ WHAT IS THE SAMOA PATHWAY?

- Renewing commitment to the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States, world leaders agreed in 2014 to a landmark action plan at the conclusion of the United Nations Third International Conference on those nations held in Apia, Samoa.
- Unanimously adopting the outcome document entitled "Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action" — SAMOA Pathway — the Heads of State and Government and other high-level representatives also reaffirmed that SIDS remained "a special case" for sustainable development due to their unique and particular vulnerabilities (document A/CONF.223/3).
- The text set out new modalities of action on a range of issues, including sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth, climate change, sustainable energy, disaster risk reduction, sustainable use of marine resources, and means of implementing those objectives.

➤ HOW DOES THE PROGRAMME CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS?

- The SGDs provide a guide for action in the key areas where governments, the private sector and citizens will have to invest in order to sustainably transform their economies.
- Initiatives of the R2R programme aim to deliver tangible and quantifiable global environmental benefits by focussing on cross-cutting approaches to water, land and coastal management that captures the linkages across GEF focal areas which are aligned to SDG outcomes.

➤ HOW DO YOU OPERATE?

- The operation of the R2R programme is supported in areas of science-based planning, human capital development, policy and strategic planning, results-based management, and knowledge sharing through the GEF Pacific Ridge to Reef International Waters (GEF Pacific R2R IW) project which is executed regionally by the Pacific Community.
- Ridge to Reef pilot projects will be implemented through the GEF Pacific R2R IW project, are designed to strengthen Ridge to Reef integration by establishing synergies among the work of the various sector agencies and the GEF R2R STAR Projects, between governments and communities, civil society and the private sector.
- The Programme Coordinating Unit (PCU), hosted by the Pacific Community's Geoscience Division in the Fiji Islands, is tasked with the provision of technical, operational, reporting and monitoring support as requested by the participating Pacific Island Countries.
- The PCU also facilitates the consolidation and sharing of sectoral knowledge and expertise to support the uptake of best-practice management approaches in policy-making and planning.
- Led by the Regional Programme Coordinator, the PCU possesses multidisciplinary expertise, including administration and financial management officers, to support programme coordination.

➤ WHAT IS A GEF R2R STAR PROJECT?

- STAR is the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources.
- There are 13 GEF R2R STAR projects which address national priorities and development needs while delivering global environmental benefits in line with the GEF multi-focal area strategies.
- These projects are executed nationally on a bilateral basis, and implemented by UNDP, FAO and UNEP.

➤ WHAT IS A GEF R2R IW PROJECT?

- The R2R International Waters project is executed regionally by the Pacific Community (SPC).
- The projects are designed to strengthen R2R integration by creating synergies among the work of the various sector agencies and the GEF R2R STAR projects.

➤ WHAT IS THE PROGRAMMATIC APPROACH?

- It is an overarching vision for change that is best achieved through a series of interconnected projects under common objectives;
- Anticipated results are more than the sum of its components;
- Its interlinked projects aimed at achieving large scale impacts on global environment;
- Its overall objective is to secure larger scale and sustained impacts on global environment.

➤ HOW CAN I CONTACT THE PROGRAMME COORDINATING UNIT?

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