



GEF IW R2R/ RSC.5/ WP. 01

Date: 24 September 2020

Original: English

**Fifth Regional Steering Committee Meeting (Virtual) for the  
GEF Pacific International Waters Ridge to Reef Project entitled:**

*Ridge to Reef – Testing the Integration of Water, Land, Forest &  
Coastal Management to Preserve Ecosystem Services, Store Carbon,  
Improve Climate Resilience and Sustain Livelihoods in Pacific Island Countries*

Suva, Fiji 22<sup>nd</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020

**RSC.4 Meeting Report Action Items**

**Recommendations:**

1. The Committee is invited to **discuss and note** progress of implementing the action items of the RSC-5 meeting records.

### **Introduction:**

1. This paper presents a list of action items emanated from the RSC-5 meeting records. It also provides brief update of progressing those actions since the meeting last year (see italic texts below).

### **Action Items**

2. The Committee endorsed the Meeting Report of the 3rd Regional Project Steering Committee Meeting **noting the recommendations** by Cook Islands, Niue and PNG i.e.
  - 2.1 That the report reflects substantive discussions and deliberations on issues raised by countries during the meeting, and
  - 2.2 That the report clearly captures the key outcomes, agreements or decisions taken by the committee at the meeting.

*An outcome document was circulated shortly after the meeting was closed to all delegates. The recommendations have been considered and reflected in the final meeting report. This includes making it explicit what the agenda item and associated papers seek to achieve, and decisions taken following discussion.*

3. The committee acknowledged the results of the independent midterm review (MTR) mission **noting the overall implementation progress (IP) rating of moderately unsatisfactory**. The Committee also noted the management response highlighting the underlying assumptions and conditions for achieving the project development outcomes (see MTR management response matrix).

*An update of implementing the MTR recommendations will be provided to the meeting noting the overall IP rating changed to 'moderately satisfactory.'*

4. The committee considered and endorsed the revised strategy for island diagnostic analyses (IDA) and state of the coast (SoC) reports (theory of change), recognising the implications for both STAR and IW projects.

*A modified theory of change will be presented to the meeting taking into consideration changing circumstances and practical experiences rolling out implementation nationally. The preparation of IDAs, SoCs and SAPs/SAFs require commitment and collaboration on information sharing and reporting from both STAR and IW R2R child projects. Despite past decisions in support of sharing and collaboration, the mandates and governance structures of both child projects appear to hamper efforts in that direction.*

5. The committee reviewed and approved the *'Pacific Ridge to Reef Programme framework and recommendations for coordination and compilation of R2R lessons learned,'* including the RSTC inputs in Annex 1 and 2 and the proposed schedule for implementation. The approval was made subject to the Committee's decision on an extension for the Regional IW R2R project and national IW demonstration projects.

Action Point: The committee agreed to:

- Confirmation by the national STAR and IW projects on a date or period that they can convey a decision to the RPCU of the title and short summary of their specific lessons learned contribution using the regional framework as a guide. *Successfully completed.*
- It was agreed that the RPCU Communications and Knowledge Management Adviser will coordinate directly with all project managers (STAR and IW) on the dates, and the development and compilation of lessons learned. *Successfully completed.*
- Based on the confirmation of titles and timeframe, RPCU will consolidate and update the regional R2R lessons learned framework; *successfully completed.*
- All summaries and/or draft lessons learned reports to be submitted to the RPCU by 30 June 2020 for reporting at RSC5.

*The deadline was not complied with, and an extension was granted for submitting drafts to 29 September. This was also not complied with.*

*A final date for the submission of completed lessons learned, and publication will be determined at RSC5.*

*An update of this work will be presented to the Committee along with discussion on the details of publications.*

6. The Committee acknowledged the Jointly Implemented Activities outlined during the country presentations. This includes the recurring issue of limited interaction between STAR and IW projects at the national level, which is required towards mainstreaming R2R. The Committee further notes the constraints, opportunities and proposed action for the RSC. The Committee noted that SPC has no influence in selecting the project managers designated to manage the national IW R2R projects. Rather the IW project managers contracts are the business of the national governments.

*Mainstreaming R2R nationally requires interactions and collaboration between STAR and IW R2R projects. The success of the programmatic approach is largely dependent on the willingness and commitment to interact formally and informally through joint IMCs (or PSCs, Boards), sharing of experiences and information, jointly contribution to mainstreaming R2R in domestic ICM planning and development, and as deemed appropriate, joint advocacy on policy issuances based on the proven and innovative solutions.*

*Project Managers or Coordinators will reflect in their reports current status of delivering stress reduction targets and other related GEF focal area targets, including efforts in pursuing the programmatic approach to reaching those targets.*

7. The Committee noted and endorsed the 5<sup>th</sup>Regional Science and Technical Committee (RSTC) Meeting Report. The Committee also agreed that the revised TOR should provide for the participation (and not closed session) of interested RSC delegates as observers. noting the following:

Action Point: The TOR needs revising to reflect the above decision, allowing the participation of interested RSC delegates or officials in RSTC meetings;

Action Point: The RSTC to consider engaging scientific and technical expertise available in the region.

*In endorsing the RSTC 5<sup>th</sup> meeting report means the RSC also approved specific recommendations set out in that report. The science workplan and achieving deliverables using the theory of change are clearly detailed in the strategic framework of science to policy. In February 2020, the first technical consultation of the RSTC took place in response to a decision of the RSTC-5 meeting. Several national scientists from Fiji, Tuvalu, Tonga and RMI participated, in compliance with the RSC/RSTC decision to allow the participation of interested RSC delegates or officials in RSTC meetings. The report of the technical consultation is available and accessible to this meeting.*

*Moreover, the project is engaging scientific and technical expertise available in the region to circumvent challenges of COVID-19 and restrictions of movements. For instance, we are currently progressing delivering regional funded implemented national activities and this work will be led by national consultants with guidance from RPCU. These details are covered in update paper on the theory of change, GEF IW R2R/RSC.5/WP. 09.*

8. The Committee endorsed the 4<sup>th</sup> Regional Programme Coordination Group (RPCG) Meeting report and, noted;
  - The need for child projects under the GEF Pacific R2R Program to cooperate and accede to the programmatic approach to enable and facilitate the SPC RPCU reporting to the Program Framework Document through the M&E Harmonised Results Reporting process and through the lessons learnt framework and activity.
  - The RPCG recommended that the Child projects copy and include the SPC RPCU team when reporting to the SPC, UNDP or to GEF Implementing Agencies.

*The decisions taken by the RPCG as reflected in their report to the RSC premised mainly on the guiding documentations of the GEF Pacific R2R Program (Programme Framework Document, PFD), the child projects of STAR and IW (Regional IW R2R Project Document, national STAR projects), and GEF Implementing Agencies (UNDP, FAO, UNE) and Executing Agency (SPC) – including the UNDP-SPC Project Cooperation Agreement.*

*It is understood from the RPCG record that the PFD was not signed by participating countries, rather the signed documents were only that of the Regional IW R2R Project Document and National STAR R2R Projects.*

*There are Regional IW R2R project indicators requiring the involvement of child projects. These indicators will not be achieved if the R2R child projects will not proactively cooperate. The SPC RPCU offers the following reporting options by STAR and IW projects contrary to RPCG recommendation: -*

- *That GEF IA transmits a copy of all reports of the STAR projects to RPCU assuming that, these reports contain facts and figures useful for reporting contributions to the GEF Focal Areas; or*
  - *That STAR projects submit the accomplished GEF FA – Harmonised Results Reporting (HRR) to RPCU directly; or*
  - *That GEF IA accomplishes the GEF IA results reporting template (HRR) and submits to RPCU.*
9. The Committee noted the brief update of the status of the R2R for sustainable development Post Graduate Certificate (PGC) at the James Cook University. A total of 36 students have completed the PGC. These students will then continue the R2R Graduate Diploma.

10. The Committee acknowledged the presentation from the Caribbean IW-Eco project.
11. The Committee was informed of the final results on the Most Significant Change (MSC). The Fiji STAR project story was chosen as the MSC.
12. The Committee was informed of the Status (progress of development outcomes and financial aspects) of the Regional IW R2R project, including issues and risks.

*A status report of the project will be presented to the virtual meeting of the RSC, which includes brief notes on progress, issues, and risks.*

13. The Committee approved the Multi-year costed workplan, including a 15-month no-cost extension covering the period October 1, 2020 to December 31, 2021. The committee has been fully informed and has acknowledged that the project will implement the management response on the basis and assumptions outlined in the information paper GEFIWR2R/RSC.4/5, Annex 2.

*An update of implementation on the MTR recommendations will be presented to the meeting highlighting the approval of UNDP for a maximum of 12-month no-cost extension up to 30 September 2021. On the basis of the approved no-cost extension, all national IW R2R projects were also extended.*

14. The Committee welcomed the offer of Palau to host the next RSC meeting and noted the proposed dates put forward by Palau.

*An alternative venue and meeting by virtual platform were agreed out of session due to the COVID-19 pandemic and border closures.*

### **Recommendations**

15. The Committee is invited to **discuss and note** progress of implementing the action items of the RSC-5 meeting records.