



GEF IW R2R/ RSTC-TC.2 WP.08

Date: 12 February 2021

Original: English

Second Series Technical Consultation of the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee for the GEF Pacific Ridge to Reef Programme

Radisson Blu Resort, Denarau, Fiji 15th to 17th February 2021

Session 2 – National R2R Demonstrations

IW R2R National Demonstrations – An update

Summary:

Outlined in this document are currently active National IW Project countries and their progress to implement specific activities towards achieving their current stress reduction targets in five key areas namely;

- i) Municipal Waste Pollution Reduction
- ii) Aquifer Pollution Reduction
- iii) Habitat Restoration
- iv) Catchment Protection
- v) Conserved/Protected Fish Refugia

The original targets highlighted as per the GEF IW R2R Project Document (2015) has since changed to suit national priorities, sites, personnel and opportunities. This paper details the latest documented efforts to achieve the above-mentioned stress reduction measures.

Recommendations:

The R2R Technical Consultation is invited to discuss the paper and, in consideration of the unique issues that face each project country, to review this document and provide strategic and technical advice in reporting stress reduction targets in a scientifically robust manner within the remaining duration of the project implementation period.

IW R2R National Demonstrations – An update

Purpose & Intent

1. Component 1 of the GEF Regional International Waters Ridge to Reef Projects, National IW Projects will be contributing to benefits of stress reduction measures. The original anticipated benefits as a result of the implementation of the identified pilot activities include municipal waste pollution reduction of 5,775 kg N/yr (6 sites); aquifer pollution reduced by 23 kg N/ha/yr (2 sites); 6,838ha of restored habitat (4 sites); 290ha of conserved/protected wetland (2 sites) and 25,860ha of catchment under improved management (7 sites).
2. Over the years to suit national priorities, sites, change in personnel and opportunities, changes were made to the above-mentioned figures to deliver realistically on the [stress reduction targets](#) (also see Attachment 1). This paper presents the latest documented progress of the IW R2R national demonstrations, in the process of achieving their stress reduction targets.
3. The UNDP recent assessment of the project results and performance gave a rating of “moderately satisfactory” noting project goals and outcomes still not achieved, hence a rating of “moderately unsatisfactory.” Against this backdrop this paper provides the current state of national demonstrations stress reduction targets, and the contributing influences for such relatively poor stage of achievements.
4. Notably there are several participating countries that have not collected baselines and having no or minimal periodic monitoring and measuring of relevant priority indicators. This would make it difficult to determine end of project stress reduction achieved. Participants will discuss and explore alternative ways to determine end of project stress reduction targets achieved by the project.

Rationale

5. The GEF Pacific Ridge to Reef (R2R) Program Initiative is working with project countries in the Pacific region to test and mainstream innovative solutions, integrated and climate resilient approaches to land, water, forest, biodiversity, and coastal resource management. Establishing baselines is important to understand the condition prior to implementation and the attributable intervention of the project is a key step in the monitoring and evaluation process. This supports good governance, accountability, adaptive management and generate knowledge to support future evidence-based decisions.
6. Participants are invited to provide scientific and strategic advice in reporting against the updated targets for the countries and remaining project period.

Scope

7. The implementation to achieve stress reduction targets differs for each of the project countries. To determine a strategic and scientific response in the remaining project timeline by this Committee, it is important to understand the context of each country and the unique setbacks that each have faced in the implementation period of the project.

Status of IW R2R National Demonstrations

8. Below are the brief updates of the current status of IW R2R national demonstrations, with particular focus on working towards meeting stress reduction targets.

Table 1: Documented IW R2R national demonstrations in progressing towards achieving stress reduction targets (as of Q4 2020).

Fiji
In achieving the stress reduction measures of 500ha in catchment protection measures, the consultancy for the assessment and the management plan has been vetted and approved to be advertised in the media. While the actual impact of protection measures and the plan on the Waimanu catchment covering the above target, it is unlikely the implementation will take place within the life of this project. The next step involves consultants to undertake the work of Fiji's target of 500ha through the Waimanu Catchment Management Plan. The local procurement process has taken over 4 months to recruit local consultants to do the work.
Federated States of Micronesia
For catchment protection measures of 200ha, the development of the Tofol Integrated Catchment Management Plan was initiated. Like Fiji, the implementation of protection measures in the plan is unlikely going to have full impact known within the life of this project. It was also reported a reduction of effluents released into the Mutunnenea Channel due to the dry litter piggery technology. Upon extension of the project, there are plans to establish another dry litter piggery unit. Like Fiji, local procurement is taking close to 4 months and still no consultants.
Kiribati
<p>Currently the project is in the progress of engaging with a local consultant on the design and production of the dry litter pigpens for the reduction of municipal waste pollution of 955 TN kg/yr. The construction and operation of 30 DLT piggery units would correspond to achieving the above-mentioned stress reduction target of municipal waste pollution.</p> <p>The monitoring of bore holes and household wells have commenced following its environmental monitoring plan. The baseline data is available and monitoring would allow the determination of the end of project stress reduction target, and see if the R2R interventions contributed to stress reduction and minimize underground contamination. At this stage, there appears to be slow progress to agree on a design and construct of DLT piggery units. This also means it is getting difficult to establish clear determination</p>
Nauru
<p>Initial steps taken in the identification of relevant sites to be revegetated with endemic salt and drought tolerant species including the identification of nursery areas for the hardening of collected planting materials prior to field planting. This is to achieve 10 ha of restored habitat through vegetation.</p> <p>Relevant planning documents, policies and regulations have been collected that will be needed to assess priority areas for actions in integrating coastal revegetation. A documentation report was made available; however, there were delays during the reporting period. Initial interviews conducted with the Nauru Utility Corporation regarding power pole regulations and policies along coastal shorelines for rehabilitation and vegetation.</p> <p>A lot of time appears wasted on planning but little actions seen on revegetation efforts by IW R2R project.</p>

Niue
<p>IW R2R Niue project have been in close and active communication with the RPCU to guide the revision of the MYCWP to ensure that activities must still contribute to achieve stress reduction targets i.e. ICM planning</p> <p>Although the focus of IW R2R Niue stress reduction measures is Catchment Protection Measures of 200 ha through ICM Planning, there is ongoing effort to develop a concept note that focuses on the protection of the water quality and supply from the impact of climate change. Consultations were held to develop the Water Use Efficiency Plan and Cost Recovery which supports proposals for a concept note funded from the Green Climate Fund (GCF).</p> <p>Slow progress with too much planning and minimal actions to get things coordinated and done. No serious activities have started that help stress reduction measures and ICM planning to impact an area of 200ha. Unless there is quick turnaround in project implementation it is likely the above will not be met.</p>
Papua New Guinea
<p>A total of 13,867 ha of terrestrial and marine areas comprising of mangroves, estuaries, grassland, rocky shores and sea areas covering seagrass, mudflats and reefs have been secured under the Bootless Bay National Marine Sanctuary which is now a National Government Project under the Sustainable Environment Programme (SEP) (under CEPA). CEPA is seeking potential donors/partners to advance implementation of the BBNMS Management Plan for the next 5 years.</p> <p>Project activities are largely completed with few policies and bye-laws left to complete as well project closure.</p>
Republic of the Marshall Islands
<p>The IW R2R RMI Project and EPA have initiated a meeting with a potential consultant to discuss data gaps, funding availability and management strategies to wrap up work on the ICM plan and related management strategies and regulations for Laura. The catchment protection measures of 255 ha are targeted to be achieved through ICM planning.</p> <p>Progress is slow and require lots of help. Unless there is change in current efforts to mobilise resources and implement project activities, the management plan work will drag and the actual protection measures contributing to stress reduction target would be somewhat beyond the scope of this project.</p>
Samoa
<p>Planned activities implemented were riparian zone protection, planting of vetiver grass in critical areas and buffer zones of the Fagali'i river, river cleaning and widening for flood control and prevention, deepening and clearing of the river ways at Vaivase-tai, and carrying out an awareness campaign towards 1648 ha of revegetation</p> <p>This is one of the projects where actual planning is done, RapCA is done and catchment measures are implemented. The only support from RPCU that is needed is to ascertain the effectiveness of this measures. Final assessment can be made with support from technical staff (USP, RPCU and MNRE).</p>
Solomon Islands
<p>The formulation and development of the Mataniko River Catchment Integrated Watershed Management Plan is close to completion. Baseline data has been acquired in 2014 and 2018, the</p>

current project also carried out baseline studies in reference to the 2014 study. In achieving stress reduction targets of 575 ha of catchment protection measures, after the final reports are endorsed by the regional office and the Ministry of Environment, the implementation of the plan will begin.

The Honiara coastal assessment report and the integrated catchment plan for Mataniko are at their final draft stage. All the technical streams of work have been completed and used in the preparation of the above policies. Next, local consultants will be hired to do regionally-led activities on diagnostic, and SAF. While the implementation of protection and management measures in the above policies and plans are already in motion, the full impact and therefore achievements of stress reduction target would be fully realized beyond the life of this project.

Tonga

Tonga's stress reduction target is 104 TN/kg/yr which corresponds to conversions of 6 households sanitation systems to compost toilets. There is also the target of 90ha of wetland that has been protected and conserved. The latest report from the Project Manager is that 3 units closed to complete. Also, the ICM planning is closed to finish, and the activity was jointly prepared in collaboration with the Ministry of Fisheries.

Parliament passing of the Water Resources Bill 2020 in which IW R2R Tonga contributed to its awareness through Tonga's Most Significant Change Story. This Bill reached 38 years of development as of 2020 due to the opposition by commercial farmers. Upon media coverage in Q2 of the IW R2R Tonga project, particularly a water quality test which showed *E. coli* presence in the water, this awareness led to consultation from the public and decisions to be made regarding the passing of the bill.

All the above efforts work towards achieving stress reduction targets in municipal pollution and protection of coastal habitats and wetlands, but also respond to domestic development priorities.

Vanuatu

The pilot project has achieved 5% of its 30 ha habitat restoration stress reduction target. However, towards achieving this particular target, the project initiated the development and implementation of the "Tagabe Catchment Restoration Project" with efforts to restore a native forest with Water Protection Zones 1 and 2 as part of its rehabilitation programs. The ongoing efforts by the TCRP is shown to restore 14.6 ha degraded site within WPZ 1.

The pilot project has achieved 4% of the 5598 ha of buffer areas along Tagabe river under the Tagabe River Restoration project. This 26 ha is part of the Tagabe River Restoration Project that has only resumed early last year by the SPREP PEBACC Project. The IW R2R Project signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Forestry Department to foster its support to rehabilitate the riparian areas of Tagabe River in early March of 2020. The catchment management plan provides locations of the restoration sites.

Vanuatu is one of the sites where actual interventions (revegetation, restoration/reforestation) are done. The only issue here whether the target of 2570 and 20 hectares are achieved until project is closed. Moreover, Vanuatu is very advanced and project work close to complete but current protection measures already manage and restore 30ha of habitats with endemic plant species.

The project is currently progressing work to hire local consultants to do diagnostic analyses and SAF. The fee levels appear to be a contributing factor.

Conclusion

27. In consideration of the uniqueness of the aspects of each IW R2R project demonstrations implementation period, the successes and setbacks in achieving stress reduction targets provide the RSTC Technical Consultation the opportunity to provide constructive, strategic and advice for the remainder of the implementation period.

Attachment 1: Revised and Updated Environmental Stress Reduction
of Targets of the Regional IW R2R Project

Country	Stress Reduction Measures	Specific Activity	Original Target	Updated Targets	Unit of Measure
Cook Islands	Catchment Protection Measures	Improved catchment management	8,018.00	600.00	Hectares
Fiji	Catchment Protection Measures	Mangrove Management	606.00	500.00	Hectares
FSM	Catchment Protection Measures	Improved catchment management	1,905.00	200.00	Hectares
Kiribati	Municipal Waste Pollution Reduction	Orig: Dry Litter Piggeries New: Conversion of 30 wash down piggeries to dry litter technology	229.00	955.00	TN kg/yr
Nauru	Municipal Waste Pollution Reduction	Constructed wetland	749.00	0	TN kg/yr
	Restored Habitat	Revegetation	10.00	10.00	Hectares
Niue	Catchment Protection Measures	ICM planning	4,608.00	200.00	Hectares
	Municipal Waste Pollution Reduction	Septic system	1,623.00	0	TN kg/yr
	Pollution Reduction in Aquifer	On site sanitation treatment	0.32	0	TN kg/yr
PNG	Catchment Protection Measures	Conserved/protected	7,151.00	220.00	Hectares
RMI	Catchment Protection Measures	ICM Plan	544.20	255.00	Hectares
Samoa	Catchment Protection Measures	Catchment Management Plans	12,740.00	12,740.00	Hectares
	Restored Habitat	Revegetation	1,200.00	1,648.00	Hectares

Solomon Islands	Catchment Protection Measures	Improved catchment management/ Sustainable Land Use Strategy	3,027.00	575.00	Hectares
	Conserved/Protected Wetland	ICM Plan	200.00	200.00	Hectares
Tonga	Conserved/Protected Wetland	CFM Plans	90.00	90.00	Hectares
	Municipal Waste Pollution Reduction	Orig: Onsite waste water treatment New: Conversion of 6 HH sanitation systems to compost toilets	2,255.00	104.00	TN kg/yr
Tuvalu	Municipal Waste Pollution Reduction	Dry-litter piggeries	1,422.00	536.00	TN kg/yr
				150.00	TP kg/yr
	Pollution Reduction in Aquifer	Dry-litter piggeries	7.60	11.00	TN kg/yr
Vanuatu	Restored Habitat	Planted with Endemic Species	30.00	30.00	hectares
Vanuatu	Restored Habitat	Revegetation	5,598.00	2,570	Hectares