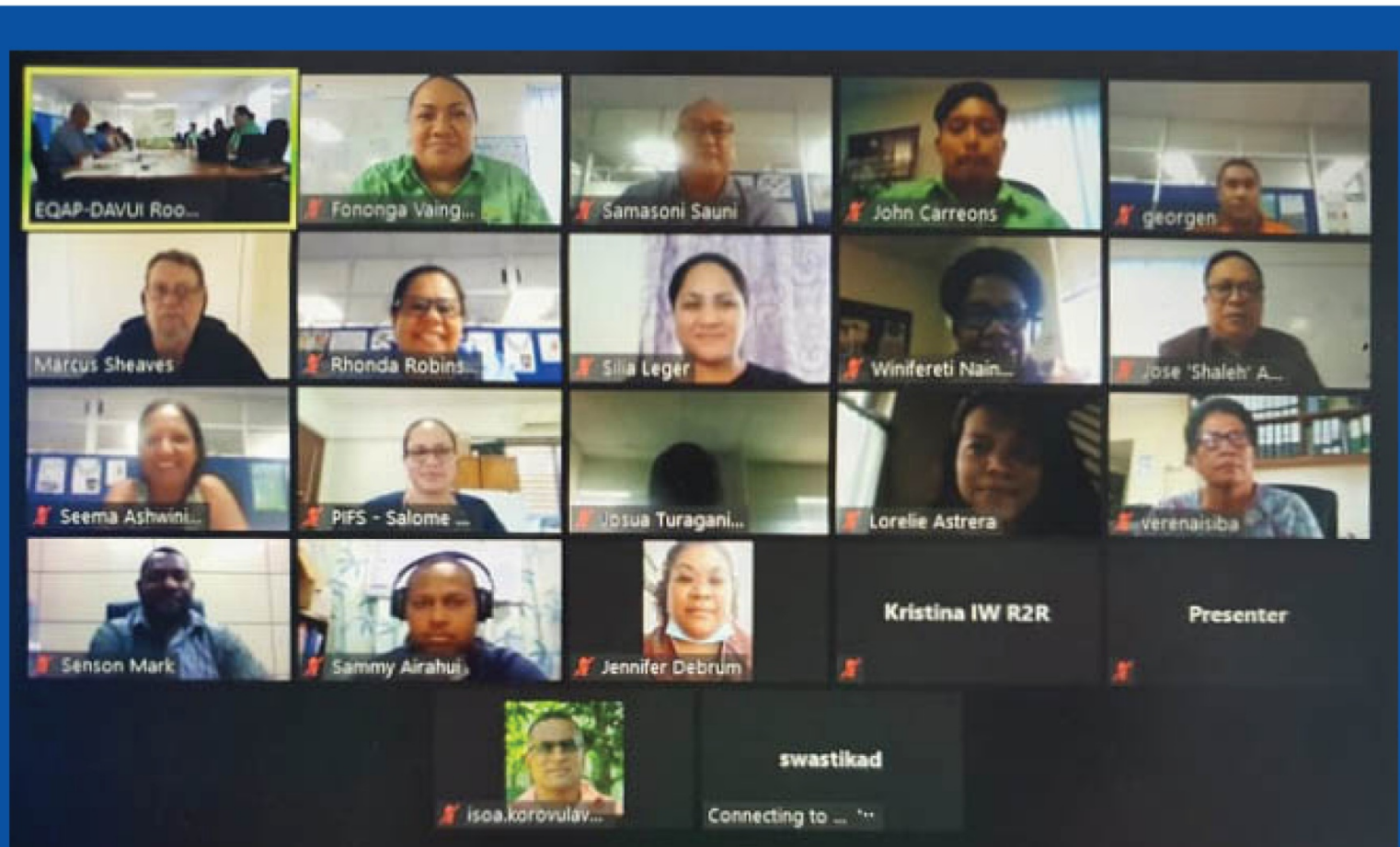




Sixth Meeting of the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee for the GEF Pacific Ridge to Reef Programme



MEETING REPORT

Suva, Fiji 19th and 20th October 2020

Abbreviations

BioRAP	Biological Rapid Assessment
DCRP	Disaster and Community Resilience Programme (SPC)
DPSIR	Drivers, Pressures, State, Impact and Response model of intervention
EGS	Ecosystem Goods and Services
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GEM	Geoscience Division (Pacific Community)
HRR	Harmonised Results Reporting
IA	Implementing Agency
ICM	Integrated Coastal Management
IDA	Island Diagnostic Analysis
IW	International Waters
IWRM	Integrated Water Resource Management
JCU	James Cook University
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTR	Mid Term Review
MYCWP	Multi-Year Costed Work Plan
RPCG	Regional Programme Coordination Group
PFD	Programme Framework Document
PGC	Post Graduate Certificate
PNG	Papua New Guinea
R2R	Ridge to Reef
RaPCA	Rapid Priority Coastal Area Assessment
RMI	Republic of the Marshall Islands
RPCU	Regional Programme Coordinating Unit
RSC	Regional Steering Committee
RSTC	Regional Science and Technical Committee
RSTC-TC	Regional Science and Technical Committee Technical Consultation
SAF	Strategic Action Framework
SAP	Strategic Action Plan
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SOC	State of the Coast
SPC	Pacific Community
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Programme
STAR	System for Transparent Allocation of Resources
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
USP	University of the South Pacific

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Introduction

1. The Sixth Regional Scientific and Technical Committee for the GEF Pacific International Waters Ridge to Reef Programme (IW R2R) was held on 19 and 20 October 2020. The meeting was conducted virtually. The provisional agenda is attached as **Annex 1**.
2. Thirty-six (36) participants from GEF R2R implementing agencies in Fiji, Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI), Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, UNDP Pacific Office, Suva, UNDP Bangkok Office, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), James Cook University (JCU), University of the South Pacific (USP), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the Pacific Community (SPC) attended. The list of participants is attached as **Annex 2**.

Agenda Item 1: Meeting Preliminaries and Opening Prayer

3. Mr John Carreon of SPC GEM, delivered an opening prayer.
4. In the absence of RSTC Chair Prof. Marcus Sheaves, Co-Chair, Dr Isoa Korovulavula of the University of the South Pacific (USP) chaired the meeting. He welcomed the members, noting this was the first time the meeting was being held virtually. He acknowledged Prof Sheaves for his efforts in strengthening the RSTC and recognised the partners and donors.
5. Dr Korovulavula thanked SPC for hosting the R2R programme over the years and acknowledged the various partners in the region. He acknowledged UNDP and GEF as the cornerstone of R2R and noted the project constraints not just regionally, but globally due to COVID-19.

Agenda Item 1.1: Organisation of the meeting

Appointment of Officers

6. Chair explained that the RSTC meeting rules and procedures require annual appointment of officers, after which he called for nominations. Dr Winifereti Nainoca of UNDP moved to retain current Chair and Deputy Chair for the purpose of continuity towards the end of the project. Dr Salome Taufua of PIFS seconded the motion.

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">7. <i>The Committee reappointed Prof. Marcus Sheaves and Dr Isoa Korovulavula into their current positions as chair and co-chair, respectively.</i> |
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Agenda Item 2: Opening remarks

8. Ms Rhonda Robinson, Deputy Director of SPC's Disaster and Community Resilience Programme in the GEM Division welcomed participants to the first virtual RSTC. She reiterated the role of the Secretariat as the principle scientific and technical

organisation in this region, and the effort put towards robust scientific and technical contributions that help member countries and government agencies plan for their improved resilience on the ground. Ms Robinson further noted that it was not always about science and technical effort provided, but what countries can do with that effort building on from the R2R and the predecessor, IWRM. She emphasised that mainstreaming and management efforts are as important as the science and this integration comes together to work on solutions on the ground which is seen now in R2R mainstreaming and the science-policy continuum as well as the spatial prioritisation procedures and modelling.

9. Dr Winifereti Nainoca (UNDP Pacific Office, Suva) acknowledged the partnerships between SPC, USP, PIFS and the countries and noted their resilience in this time of COVID-19. She highlighted the portal on scientific knowledge and requested that it continue to be available to all (beyond the project), noting the need for scientific evidence in determining activities. She commended SPC as a leader in scientific gathering and noted that valuable information is being collated through the R2R work. She further stressed that SPC has a mandate to report to GEF on the regional outputs as well as on the country GEF 5 STAR R2R programme and urged countries to provide feedback to the Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor.

Housekeeping

10. Dr Mangisi-Mafileo of the Secretariat advised the participants on basic housekeeping rules such as the “raise hand” function on the Zoom platform as well as leaving relevant messages in the chat box.

Agenda Item 3: Adoption of agenda

11. Mr Samasoni Sauni of the Secretariat, advised participants on the working papers and information papers available online ([RSTC6](#)) on the R2R portal (www.pacific-r2r.org). The outcomes of discussions during the preparatory sessions held in the previous week were the basis for the scientific topics in panel discussions over the week.
12. Dr Jose Padilla (UNDP Bangkok Office) suggested that consideration be given to the compilation of lessons learned from the technical and scientific perspective, drawing from experiences of both the IW and STAR projects, in addition to what is highlighted in agenda items 5.1 and 5.2. He explained that this compilation would go beyond progress and implementation of the mid-term review (MTR) recommendations and perhaps lead to an electronic compilation of case studies based on what works and doesn't work in R2R interventions in the Pacific. He acknowledged that at this point it may not be possible but may be feasible if the no-cost extension is allowed.
13. The meeting agreed to include discussion on this under Agenda Item 7 on Mainstreaming, noting also that 5.1 and 5.2 would address lessons learnt in progressing MTR recommendations.
14. Mr Sauni stated that Agenda items 5.1, 5.2 and 7 are dedicated to all aspects of lessons learned that include compilation and populating the regional framework

document, responding to the MTR recommendation and progress thus far. He explained that the current work on lessons learned is imperative to guide broader and strategic planning and drafting of a next phase R2R (and possibly the island to island proposal). Mr Sauni requested patience and allow the Secretariat to report back on progress to date specific on the work on lessons learned.

15. *The meeting adopted the provisional agenda with amendments.*

Agenda Item 3.1: Meeting Record and Action Items

16. Chair invited comments from the Committee on the current draft record of the last RSC meeting. Mr Samasoni Sauni, Regional Programme Coordinator, presented the action items arising from the last RSTC meeting ([RSTC-6 WP.01](#)) and discussed the progress to date, noting that several items would be elaborated in subsequent agenda items. The record of the RSTC first technical consultation (RSTC-TC) is also available for reference, as information paper [RSTC-6 Inf. 05](#).
17. Mr Sauni briefed the meeting on current progress of key action items outlined in the meeting records, several of which are provided below.
- (i) Water quality training in Kiribati was completed in Feb/Mar 2020, while similar works planned for FSM and RMI have been deferred due to COVID-19. The meeting noted that technical support from the RPCU will be provided to implement remaining technical activities in national demonstration sites in FSM and RMI.
 - (ii) The first RSTC technical consultation was held in February 2020 in Nadi, and scientists and technical stakeholders from Fiji, Tonga, Tuvalu and RMI attended. The consultation was a success, and it was agreed to have another one towards end of this year or early next year.
 - (iii) The standards used in the estimation of nutrient offloads from human and animal wastes were taken from outside this region.

The aim now is to encourage local research in this region that would allow for the development of standards, and as such can be the focus of studies from this region for MSc, PhD and post-doctorate studies to determine these standards.

Environmental stress reduction targets were approved by the RSC last year in view of participating countries revising targets to more realistic estimates that can be achieved over remaining periods of projects. Targets also relate to the no-cost extension of the project. Log frames were changed because of that exercise.

Research institutions including JCU and USP agreed to take up research topics on establishing standards however unsure if this has started.
 - (iv) Mainstreaming ecosystem goods and services (EGS) has been attempted for Fiji and Solomon Islands. In Fiji, the Consultant is not yet confirmed yet, but it is expected that work will be completed by the end of the year for both countries.

- (v) As agreed in the past the Regional IW R2R project will have hybrid implementation of DPSIR and EGS frameworks, recognising the pros and cons of each. With the project winding down, the RSTC/RSC agreed not to have EGS replacing the DPSIR process.
- (vi) The meeting noted certain specialised areas of ecosystem goods and services, resource and habitat assessments or modelling, environmental assessments, water quality assessments, socio-economic and traditional ecological knowledge, of which all need to build the JCU course and other similar modalities in support of capacity building and training.
- (vii) The Science to Policy Theory of change approved last year is slowly progressing in implementation, although not everyone agreed to implement with complete faith steps 1 to 6. This is in recognition of parallel processes such as the State of the Environment (SOE) work led by SPREP, and that several countries opted to use R2R results and resources to support that process.
- (viii) Spatial prioritisation procedures and trialling in Vanuatu is now completed, and two technical reports will be soon become available and accessible online. Work is also under way to publish these in peer-reviewed journals.

18. Dr Nainoca commended efforts in responding to the MTR recommendation on ecosystem goods and services (EGS). She further suggested that the team holds talks with Conservation International based on their EGS work in Fiji (payment for ecosystem goods and services), which will benefit future EGS work of the R2R in Fiji. Mr Sauni of the Secretariat responded that the team would consult with CI and at this time, EGS is progressing in Fiji and Solomon Islands, recognising similar past EGS works, which been done by others including STAR R2R projects.

19. The Committee noted the responses corresponding to the decisions and recommendations of the 4th meeting of the RSTC. The Committee further noted that details of specific action items would be considered and discussed as separate agenda items during the meeting.

Agenda Item 4: Looking ahead post R2R and COVID-19

Agenda Item 4.1: Project closure and terminal evaluation

- 20. Chair briefed the meeting that COVID-19 changed the game plan globally and the impact is felt across the board including delivery and implementation of this project. Chair invited UNDP Pacific Office to introduce the paper and presentation on this agenda item.
- 21. Mr Josua Turaganivalu of UNDP provided brief outline of the Regional IW R2R project in terms of execution through SPC as the Executing Agency, highlighting the role of UNDP as GEF Implementing Agency, details on the project life and budget and signing of project document. He explained that the terminal evaluation is an independent

review and that it is mandatory for all GEF-financed full-sized projects (FSPs) to undergo terminal evaluations.

22. Mr Turaganivalu also explained that terminal evaluations aim at assessing and documenting project results, and the contribution of these results towards achieving GEF strategic objectives aimed at global environmental benefits. It promotes accountability and transparency and synthesises lessons that can help improve future UNDP-supported GEF-financed initiatives. The meeting was advised that the terminal evaluation guidelines can be found at http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/GEF/TE_GuidanceforUNDP-supportedGEF-financedProjects.pdf.
23. The Committee considered information of the Regional IW R2R Project closure and terminal evaluation. The UNDP outlined key areas of the TOR including fees, timelines, and consideration for the engagement of local consultants to support terminal evaluation work. It supported revisiting discussion of timelines for the terminal evaluation, following the RSC decision on the proposal for a no-cost extension. The Committee endorsed the outcomes and recommendations of the Pre-RSC panel discussion on this presentation and recommended transmitting to the RSC for consideration and approval.
24. The Secretariat noted that there was a proposal on the table for a no-cost extension and that the pre-RSC meetings the previous week provided a placeholder until a decision (on the no-cost extension) is made by RSC-5. Discussions were also held on the need to consider national consultants due to current circumstances.
25. Dr Korovulavula commented on the evaluation process and suggested that there may be value in considering political aspects and how/whether projects impact on implementation of international policies (at national level). He asked how far this would be taken into consideration in the evaluation.
26. Dr Nainoca commented on reallocation of funds, noting that in cases where projects are close to their end, but delivery of outputs is delayed due to (for example) delay in delivery of materials or the need for offshore manpower, then there could be a reallocation of funding to help complete the activities. She added that extensions have been granted due to COVID-19. Dr Nainoca further noted that because of border restrictions, consultants are working virtually and would need on-ground support not only from IW R2R project managers and local consultants, but also from UNDP, FAO, and UNEP project management units on the ground. This would be particularly necessary where there will not be any on-ground national consulting for the terminal evaluation. She highlighted the need for precision and clear presentation of information to the international consultants so that the report will paint a true picture of what is happening on the ground.

27. Having discussed and deliberated on the critical issues of the GEF Pacific Ridge to Reef Program and its 15-child projects that need focused discussion at the RSTC and RSC meetings, the participants resolved and agreed to the following decisions: -

(i) That the composition of the Terminal Evaluation Consultants extends and includes local consultants in six (6) participating PICs. Participants recognized that during the mid-term review, the consultants visited 6 participating countries representative of sub regions, advanced and poorly performed countries and related criteria. These lessons are useful in planning for the terminal evaluation.

(ii) That the fix amount of US\$50,000 earmarked for the terminal evaluation be revised given change of strategy to include local consultants. Participants noted that savings from travels would be utilized to support local consultants.

(iii) That UNDP will prepare the TOR with consideration of the outcome of discussions particularly specific to its application and treatment of international and local consultants. Participants noted the independence of the consultancy team to avoid bias and the team leader plays an important role in this regard.

(iv) That the proposal for up to 12-months no-cost extension is discussed and agreed at the RSC as precursor to confirming dates, timelines, and related details of the terminal evaluation. Participants recognize the current challenges and changing circumstances in project implementation as influenced by COVID-19 and related challenges justifies need for more time to deliver on milestone targets but also ensure quality of products.

(v) That the extension proposal is subject to UNDP policies and must correspond with change in strategy that include more streamlined process of delivering the 'modified' science to policy theory of change on countries that are committed and demonstrably active to mainstreaming R2R in domestic policies, planning and enabling governance reforms.

Agenda Item 4.2: What's next, post R2R and COVID-19?

28. Mr Sauni of the Secretariat, introduced the working paper [GEF-R2R-RSC-5-WP.15](#) and referenced [GEF IW R2R/RSTC.6/wp.02](#) (RSTC Chair's Report). The critical question relates to whether or not there is support and interest to progress further into the next phase of R2R investments centred on climate sensitive and inclusive ICM planning. The paper proposed four options that can be considered moving forward with R2R investments and ICM planning, targeting GEF-8 or other interested donors

29. Dr Jose Padilla of UNDP sought clarification on the disbursements of funds over the years as these details of the MYCWP were not presented. He asked if the MYCWP paper that would be tabled at the RSC covers a proposal seeking an RSC decision for a no-cost extension period of 6 to 12 months in accordance with UNDP policy. Dr

Padilla explained that UNDP policy can only accommodate a maximum of 6-months extension in the current COVID-19 situation. He further elaborated that this decision is evolving, and he was not sure if the 6-months allowable period could be extended. He suggested it would be best to look at 6 months rather than 12 months. Dr Padilla stated that a 6-month extension would mean spending USD2.6 million from July 2020 to presumably March 2022. He advised to explore ways to spend the rest of the funds in this project to fully utilise those funds.

30. Mr Sauni acknowledged UNDP policy would only support 6 months though the paper is proposing approval of the RSC for another no-cost extension is 12 months. UNDP advice is well noted though it would be ill conceived to do anything now because the paper has been circulated some time back and the RPCU-SPC intends to present the paper and proposal as currently worded. Mr Sauni also stated that SPC financial systems operate in 12-month cycle and it is impossible to accept any lesser periods.
31. Mr Sauni suggested that the RSTC considers and endorse the paper and provide appropriate recommendations to the RSC on the proposal recognising interventions and advice from as stated earlier. Mr Conway encouraged stepping away from operational matters but looking into the positive to join future science objectives through a COVID-19 lenses. He reckoned it is a good opportunity from a science perspective for the project that we talk about human environment interactions, but potentially promote future activities and extensions of project through a COVID-19 lens potentially. Mr Conway considered this might not be the right forum or the right agenda item but thought raise it since talking about COVID-19 responses.
32. Dr Padilla stated that as Regional Technical Advisor he has advised about limited/strict flexibility initiated by UNDP for existing projects to possibly address COVID-19 concerns within existing objectives and outcomes of project. There could be some opportunities for including activities to address COVID-19 concerns perhaps from the perspective of communications, perspective of improving further natural resource managements and other areas from health perspective that could be tagged on to existing outputs and outcomes of project. Dr Padilla also explained that the reason for such strict flexibility is that the project is still governed by GEF policies and rules. Therefore, if we can accept the changes, then funding at late stage of project might be limited to pay for emerging concerns. UNDP would encourage understanding of everyone as this is the direction we will take until closure next 18 months or so.
33. Ms Robinson responded to the previous interventions stating that across SPC, activities are being “pivoted” within projects if donor agreements allow and that these don’t take away from original intentions, goals, outcomes and results under current achievement. She noted that usually pivoting involves the methodology or approach of an activity (for example, virtual/remote meetings over face to face). She further stated that changes are not regarding content unless there is a specific COVID-19 response type project. Accordingly, the revised MYCWP changes relate to pivoting the mode of delivery. Ms Robinson added that SPC’s focus is on addressing pandemic hazards in general in future programming and to re-programme existing funding. She emphasised that it is different in the books for R2R programme, at least

in the context of how we deal with such matters at the SPC. She believed this to be the case in other CROP agencies as well.

34. Mr Conway acknowledged the issue of committed funding and outcomes and that opportunities to redirect resources are limited. He noted the point that instead of scientific refocus, it is more related to communications. Therefore, any opportunity to use the global attention to showcase local/regional impacts and lessons should be given some thought. He suggested that there may also be ways to rebrand current communications and activities to take advantage of the significant resources currently available in this area.

Agenda Item 4.3: Chair's report 2020 – Highlights, Challenges and Opportunities

35. The RSTC Chair, Prof. Marcus Sheaves introduced the meeting paper [GEF R2R/RSTC.6/WP.02](#), which outlines the highlights, challenges and opportunities specific to all scientific and technical aspects of the R2R Programme or Regional IW R2R project. Prof. Sheaves emphasised the importance of science development into the future, and how the region can use science and technology to drive efficiency and improve productions and productivity.
36. The meeting noted the need to review survey methods and sampling designs with a view to standardise and harmonise for comparability of indicators within and across spatial areas and regions of the Western and Central Pacific. The decisions for future upscaling ridge to reef investments and ICM planning would require quality science- and evidence based approaches and processes – this includes comparability of trends in the state of ecosystem goods and services across landscape-seascape continuum in atoll and high island countries of the Pacific.
37. Prof. Sheaves stressed the Importance to start the conversation on how we will influence funding support for future investment. Obviously support for research and technology development is an important area for future R2R investments, particularly ensuring balancing ecosystem-based approach and valuation covering science, social-economic, and traditional ecological knowledge. He encouraged the publishing of all project knowledge products recognising that publications, especially those in international journals are the simplest assurance of quality in the science.
38. The meeting considered that the discussion of these papers during the Pre-RSC panel discussion had already covered in detail specific points important to inform and guide future directions post-R2R. Key to the discussion was the ability to monitor trends using baselines established in various demonstration sites across participating countries during the IWRM, and to assess the impacts of R2R interventions through innovative technologies and testing methods and measures that deliver on tracking environmental stress reduction targets.

39. Mr Sauni shared with the Committee an intervention by the Cook Islands participant at the pre-RSC session, which is relevant to this agenda item. Ms Maria stated that the programmatic approach was never really observed or implemented and there is disconnect between STAR and IW R2R projects. That said, she supported technological and scientific advances to inform policy and decision making particularly in ecosystem goods and services from ridge to reef and beyond to EEZ and high seas.
40. The Secretariat observed that while the IWRM baselines would indeed be useful in terms of monitoring, unfortunately not all IW R2R demonstration sites are the same as the previous IWRM sites.

Agenda Item 4.4: Discussion and Decisions

41. The Committee endorsed the outcomes and recommendations of the Pre-RSC panel discussion on the theme looking ahead post R2R and COVID-19, as follows:

- (i) Participants considered and reflected on key points in the paper relative to progressing project implementation within the current Programme scope and the supporting role of the RSTC in the remaining life of the project ending in September 30th, 2021.**
- (ii) Participants discussed a broader vision and strategic directions and agreed for a follow up streamlined next phase post R2R. Participants recommended that the Committee endorse a next phase of future upscaling R2R investments and ICM planning relative to post-R2R and COVID-19.**
- (iii) Participants recommend that the next R2R project focuses only on priority focal areas supporting research and development, capacity building, and replicating innovative technologies and development measures that upscaled and replicated thereby securing ecosystems goods and services following the R2R-climate resilient approach and inclusive green economic pathway.**
- (iv) Participants considered and endorsed a further no cost extension of up to 12-months from September 30th 2021 subject to UNDP policies to deliver on the project outcomes, and use the opportunity to explore further concept note for phasing in strategy to be considered at the next meetings of the RSTC and RSC in 2021.**

Therefore, the Committee recommends further consideration and approval of the RSC on a next phase project post R2R, and a no-cost extension beyond September 30th, 2021 of the current project.

Agenda Item 5: A stock-take of the work so far

Agenda Item 5.1: Update progress on implementing MTR recommendations

42. Mr Jose Antonio of the Secretariat introduced the working paper [GEF R2R/RSTC.6/WP 03](#), which provides an update of the progress on implementing the eighteen (18) MTR recommendations approved by the RSC last year. The Committee was invited to review the management response and corresponding status of implementation as basis for providing strategic focus and advice. The meeting was advised the management responses were presented following the UNDP format indicating the tracking status as of August 2019. An additional column labelled Status as of September 30, 2020 is added to capture the status of implementation. The meeting discussed implementation of each of the 18 recommendations, with a summary of status provided (Figure 1).

MTR Recommendations	Actions	Status
1 – Review and update of national IW logframes	Done	Completed
2 – Review of lessons learned and best practice from previous IWRM	Consultancy	Ongoing
3 – Re-evaluate project linkages with other national activities & processes	Consultancy	Ongoing
4 – Mainstreaming Ridge to Reef	Consultancy	Ongoing
5 – Adopting an Ecosystems Goods and Services approach	IW Fiji	Ongoing
6 – Reassessing the Science to Policy Continuum (IDA-RapCA-SoC-SAP/F)	Modified S2P	Ongoing
7 – Mapping Ridge to Reef contributions to SDGs	HRR	Ongoing
8 – Website structure and purpose	Consultancy	Ongoing
9 – Reassessing multi-focal website features	Consultancy	Ongoing
10 – Delivering outcome 4.2 – Pacific R2R Website (also in relation to Recommendations 8 & 9).	Consultancy	Ongoing

MTR Recommendations	Actions	Status
11 – Compiling lessons learned	Consultancy	Ongoing
12 – A no-cost extension	Done	Completed
13 – Reporting links and information sharing across the Regional R2R Programme	RSC 4 & RPCG	Ongoing
14 – Clarifying RPCU’s programme role and programmatic implementation modalities	RSC 4 & RPCG	Ongoing
15 – Capacity building focus – ensuring effectiveness and scientific results	Consultancy	Ongoing
16 – Reassessing the role and structure of the RSTC	RSTC 5	Ongoing/Completed
17 – Communication strategy based on clearly defined Theory of Change	Guidance documents	Ongoing
18 – Gender issues	Budget allocated	Pending

Figure 1: MTR Recommendation Implementation Status

43. Mr Antonio stated that the RSC paper on the MYCWP takes into consideration allocations and workplan to be implemented that would cover the proposal for another no-cost extension for all national projects. As part of the renewed COVID-19 strategy, shift towards using local consultants to carry out technical assessments and deliver on science deliverables. At this time, the RPCU has commissioned three (3) consultancies that would support MTR recommendation on mainstreaming R2R, lessons learned, science-policy framework and capacity needs. The details of these specific consultancies are available and accessible online the R2R website.
44. Dr Winifereti Nainoca of UNDP Pacific Office acknowledged progress on lessons learned work, stating there must be reporting back to SPC under PFD under which the Regional IW and STAR R2R projects were all approved. She reiterated earlier remarks that SPC is mandated to report against the PFD and GEF tracking tools, therefore it is important to submit reports to SPC for this purpose. There is continued misunderstanding of the contractual roles of the RPCU-SPC both as executing agency for the Regional IW R2R project and as well, the coordination unit for the GEF Pacific R2R Programme. It is impossible for the RPCU-SPC to perform its core function of reporting back to PFD and GEF tracking and harmonised reporting tool if the STAR R2R projects are not submitting their reports and data.
45. Dr Nainoca further encouraged that STAR projects commit to meeting with Mr Antonio and provide the required data. She stressed that this was a serious concern because the matter is repeatedly raised and discussed each year. The RSTC Co-Chair, Dr Korovulavula, shared sentiments raised by Dr Nainoca particularly on lessons learned and how this can be shared and improved in future.
46. Mr Antonio thanked UNDP and others for supporting the call for programmatic action in sharing data and information. He explained that the matrix and the harmonised results reporting (HRR) tool was provided and made available to everyone in July 2018. There are two versions of HRR to be used in reporting contributions of each child project to GEF-5 focal areas.
- (i) The first HRR version is for the Project Manager/Coordinator, and there was an information session held in the past to orientate people on how to use the template.
 - (ii) The second HRR version was developed in July 2019 intended for GEF implementing agencies (IAs) as oversight of the child projects. This HRR template for GEF implementing agency was developed as requested by the IAs (since the RPCU has no authority over STAR projects).
47. Mr. Antonio suggested that the child project or the GEF IA should simply use the existing reporting template available.
48. Dr Mangisi-Mafileo of the Secretariat explained that the framework for the compilation and development of lessons learned was endorsed by RSC4 and that it provided countries with a template for the submission of their lessons. A Terms of

Reference was provided to report writers should the project choose to procure external individuals to write and package their lessons. This was provided in December 2019. Guidance documents were also developed and circulated to countries and briefings followed thereafter jointly between STAR and IW projects. This culminated in a full programme briefing to which all STAR and IW projects were invited. Updates will be provided under Agenda Item 7 and at the RSC5. It was also noted that the partnership with JCU will also incorporate lessons learned into the public policy and technical streams in the final unit. These will be consolidated as appropriate. Dr Mangisi-Mafileo also mentioned that lessons will be harvested from programmatic implementation. This was led by Mr Antonio in the previous week.

49. The Chair stressed the need to take heed of time available to the project and to treat this as a matter of urgency.

Agenda Item 5.2: Status of the Regional IW R2R Project

50. Mr Sauni of the Secretariat introduced the working paper [GEF R2R/RSTC.6/WP.05](#), which provides details on the status of Implementation of the Regional International Waters Ridge to Reef (IW R2R) Project. Generally, the overall rating by SPC and UNDP of the project implementation progress has improved to moderately satisfactory since last reported at the RSC meeting year. However, there was no change in the overall rating relative to achieving development objectives, currently levelled at moderately unsatisfactory. The contributing factors to the ratings are detailed in the paper and details are expected to provide strategic guidance in the successful implementation of the project and delivering on its objectives and outcomes.
51. The Committee noted that the financial liquidation continues to be an issue as clearly raised by UNDP Pacific Office by way of reporting back to UNDP. Cognisant of the implications, the RPCU has engaged with countries encouraging and supporting them in terms of completing outstanding acquittals. The issue remains a bottleneck that clearly slowed down complete and accurate submissions and reporting back to UNDP – an issue also clearly reflected in the UNDP audit report. The RPCU continues its regular monthly meetings with UNDP Pacific Office to discuss challenges and working towards overcoming issues – e.g. staff turnover but SPC was quick to respond to that challenge by reinstating positions.
52. Mr Sauni discussed some key points brought up through the assessments and steps being taken to address these as follows:
 - (i) Timely financial liquidation. The RPCU has engaged with countries to encourage completion of outstanding acquittals and to submit the complete report back to UNDP. Monthly meetings are being held with UNDP Suva office to discuss challenges and working towards overcoming issues.

- (ii) Staff turnover in the RPCU. SPC has been quick to respond to that challenge by reinstating positions. This would be further discussed in the presentation on the MYCWP during the RSC meeting.
- (iii) Programme outputs and activities. Acknowledged that several outputs and activities are yet to be completed or to be commenced. This has been factored into the MYCWP paper.

53. The Committee considered a summary of the project status from June 2019 to June 2020 (Figure 2) noting highlights, which include the spatial prioritisation modelling work. Some activities have been deferred to the next financial year and workplan.

Component	Outcome	As of Jun 2019	As of June 2020
1	1 – Pilot testing of innovative solutions	Off track	On track
	2 – National diagnostic analysis	Off track	Off track
	3 – Multi-stakeholder leader roundtable networks	Off track	On track
2	4 – National and local capacity on ICM and IWRM	On track	On track
	5 – Incentive structures for retention of local expertise/ human resource needs for ICM/IWRM	Off track	Off track
3	6 – National and regional strategic action framework for ICM/IWRM	Off track	Off track
	7 – Coordinated approaches for R2R	On track	On track
4	8 – National and regional integrated and simplified frameworks for integrated multi-focal projects	On track	On track
	9 – National and regional platforms for managing information and sharing of best practice & LL	On track	On track
5	10 – Effective program coordination of national and regional R2R projects	On track	On track

Figure 2: Status of IW R2R

Agenda Item 5.3: James Cook University (JCU) Update Report

54. Prof. Marcus Sheaves of James Cook University and also RSTC Chair introduced the meeting paper [GEF R2R/RSTC.6/Inf.07](#), which provides an update of the teaching course at James Cook University. The report outlines two subjects at this first semester followed by two new subjects at the first semester of 2020. He stated that the subject is very difficult and that students also faced problems dealing with restrictions of COVID-19, however there was a lack of commitment by some of the students, some of whom fail to communicate over many weeks. Additionally, students had not been engaging very strongly even when they could. He stated that under normal circumstances, leeway would not have been provided as was being done in the current situation. Professor Sheaves emphasised his belief that if given the opportunity to advance one's education, one must be committed to get things done.

55. Mr Sauni of the Secretariat explained that the RPCU is also monitoring progress of students in the JCU course, and several students were falling behind in schoolwork due to COVID-19 and connectivity issues within the countries even during last year's

subjects. The RPCU and JCU have jointly supported the students by giving them numerous chances to catch up and, prepare tailor-made workplans that would allow catch up, students were still falling behind. Mr Sauni recognised the difficulty handling sensitive issues as such this and there needs to be alternative strategy where university regulations can no longer be undermined to suit out students. The GEF Pacific R2R Programme Administrator, Ms Vere Bakani and RPCU staff have reached out to students and offered encouragements knowing too well how difficult it is to managed studies and work during the pandemic. While acknowledging the issues, he advised that a line needs to be drawn and students be encouraged to either complete their education or to formally communicate to RPCU to withdraw from the course.

56. Chair thanked Ms Vere Bakani and Mr Sauni for helping and emphasised that students cannot go a long period of time without engaging in communications with the course.
57. Chair explained the two streams for current semester are Management stream EV5966 and Technical stream EV5968. The final semester for the course is in the first semester of 2021 so need to get things done through in the coming months.

Agenda Item 5.4: Discussion and Decisions

58. The Committee endorsed the decisions of the Pre-RSC sessions on the papers under the Stock-take theme, and recommended transmitting these to the RSC for further consideration and actions. These decisions include the following: -

- (i) Progress on implementation of the MTR recommendations; and**
- (ii) Current status of the Regional IW R2R Project.**

59. The Committee also noted the JCU course report and recommended that the RSC: -

- (i) Supports current efforts of both JCU and RPCU-SPC to assist students who are falling behind their studies;**
- (ii) Further supports preparation of dedicated workplans by JCU that would allow students to catch up and submit late assignments;**
- (iii) Considers the seriousness of the matter where university regulations are continually challenged and possibly undermined to accommodate commitments to enable students to complete late assignments and therefore continue their studies; and**
- (iv) Endorse that if all efforts fail and students do not satisfy the course requirements, the JCU and RPCU will request the students' withdrawal from the course.**

Agenda Item 6: Mainstreaming R2R – Research and Information Management

Agenda Item 6.1: R2R website re-development and related online tools

60. Dr Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo of the Secretariat presented an update on the R2R website re-development and related online tools. She explained that Phase 1 was launched during World Water Day March 22nd, 2020. The meeting also noted the following updates and key statistics as at August 30th 2020:
- Over 3,304 users (target 100). Exceeded 100-user target,
 - 25,584-page views, 05:22 minutes per session and 4 pages per session
 - Bounce rate: 25% (26% - 40% rates excellent)
 - 2279 downloads, 167 countries visited
 - Most visited page (in order of frequency of visits) - Resource library, News, Project pages, Capacity development, and the Science portal.
61. Dr Mangisi-Mafileo also provide updates on other activities under the website redevelopment work includes:
- Science Portal and the Pacific State of the Coast (SOC) system and database launch this week
 - Pacific R2R Science Database Training for project managers on 2 October
 - Follow-up country specific training for in-country GIS specialists
 - Online regional and national portals developed
 - Roster of national and regional experts and practitioners developed and deployed
 - Repository for best practice, lessons learned, and other programme outputs developed
 - A virtual Content Management System training September 15-16 for STAR and IW projects to update, maintain and enhance the content of their respective online project pages.
 - Launch of the first Pacific R2R Programme newsletter in August.
62. Dr. Mangisi-Mafileo highlighted a key challenge, including the Project Management Information System (PMIS) development delay due to implementation issues. She explained that more information can be found in related Working Paper “*Status on implementing MTR Recommendations and Management Responses*” (GEF R2R/RSTC.6/WP.03).
63. Dr Nainoca of UNDP acknowledged the good work on the website and associated online tools. Dr. Nainoca also enquired whether there is a dedicated place in this portal for COVID-19. Dr Mangisi-Mafileo explained that there is currently no designated page for COVID-19 but assures if there are programme outputs that need that space then we can explore options. However, the RPCU needs to know a focal point of this initiative who will be responsible for feeding the information into the

website and the RPCU can liaise with this person. But this is certainly an opportunity that can be explored. In agreeing with what's been suggested, Ms Robinson of SPC also talks about COVID-19 related activities and starting points in putting up information on COVID-19 related sections on the website.

64. The Committee thanked the Secretariat for reporting on progress of the R2R website redevelopment and related online tools. It also underlined the importance of a dedicated portal on COVID-19 in the R2R website recognising similar efforts done on other programmes of the SPC including public health. It recommends exploring further the proposal including identifying focal points responsible for feeding information into the website and the RPCU as the administrator.

Agenda Item 6.2: R2R information management systems - environment, governance and socio-economic baseline assessments using EGS and DPSIR Approaches

65. Mr Sachindra Singh, Head of SPC Geoinformatics Unit and lead on developing infrastructure, gave updates on the R2R Information Management Systems, which will be launched at the RSC meetings later in the week. He reminded participants of the live demonstration in Nadi and advised that since then, the team has worked with several stakeholders to collect, collate, convert and upload baseline and country datasets. Data types include water quality, terrestrial maps, biological data and benthic maps. He stated that a data register for environmental datasets has been built and it is possible to use expertise within SPC and within country projects which then feed back into the State of Coast. He further stated that baseline data from global data sources were used and these data sets were accessible. He requested that the Committee visit the website (www.r2r.spc.int) and provide some feedback.
66. Prof. Marcus Sheaves and RSTC Chair observed the reliance on global data source and acknowledged the need to use those data sources to fill in data gaps in the region. He asked how difficult it was to control the quality of this data in terms of sampling designs and how the data was collected, noting that this is a growing challenge as more data becomes available worldwide.
67. Mr Singh advised that systems are in place through SPC's data register, which collates and standardises data, since countries collect in their own standards, formats and file structures. However, he explained that they do not have the ability to conduct quality control in terms of what methodology was used or to validate the data collection process.
68. Mr Sauni stated that there are processes in SPC for data to be cleaned and filtered before they can be used in the models and analytical tools such as for the spatial prioritisation modelling. Where data is not available from primary sources, free access data is sought. Mr Sauni agreed that the ability to assess and evaluate the quality of data collected should conform to standards of high quality. He further

noted that SPC has processes and protocols to clean raw data from member countries before it can be put into the regional database.

69. Dr Korovulavula mentioned that some governments are updating their State of Environment reports and relying on various sources for data. He asked how countries could best benefit from the R2R data beyond the project. He further stated that it would be a waste if it would “fizzle out” after the R2R project and perhaps it could be used for something concrete such as contributions towards a State of Environment report. Mr Sauni noted that a demonstration showing how the data can be used by policy makers would be conducted during the launch of the platform at the RSC.

70. Ms Robinson noted that what is seen on the R2R spatial database is replicated in other parts of SPC’s work, such as the Pacific Risk Information System. She agreed on the need to ensure longevity of the work commenced under the project and stated that the DCRP is working with partners to connect this data infrastructure with other infrastructures available through the Pacific Resilience Nexus.

Agenda Item 6.3: Discussion and Decisions

71. The Committee recommended that RSC supports exploring further the proposal for a separate standalone COVID-19 space within the R2R website, which includes identifying individuals or focal points responsible for feeding information into the website and the RPCU as the administrator.

72. The Committee recommended that the RSC: -

- (i) Endorse and launch the R2R Science Portal, which includes the R2R information management systems, science portal and data infrastructure;**
- (ii) Note the utility and application of the Pacific State of Coast Spatial Data Infrastructure for the Pacific Ridge to Reef Programme, and that it links to other data infrastructure/ systems of the SPC;**
- (iii) Support linking the R2R data infrastructure to other regional and global data sources for purposes of sharing and minimising chances of duplication; and**
- (iv) Note the need for caution and effective use of controls to ensure quality of data (including methods and designs employed to collect the datasets) feeding into the R2R data systems.**

Agenda Item 7: Mainstreaming R2R – Special Topics

Agenda Item 7.1: (Modified) R2R science-policy technological interface

73. Mr Sauni of the Secretariat, introduced working paper [GEF R2R/RSTC.6/WP.04](#), which clearly set out guidelines to assist stakeholders and managers implement the science-policy strategic framework in future upscaling R2R investments. The framework was approved by the RSC during its formal session last year 2019. However, there have been no commitments demonstrated by the countries in implementing the framework.
74. Consequently, the framework has been slightly modified to cater for circumstances and situations of countries and allow for flexibility implementing steps 1 to 6 of the science-policy framework. For instance, the framework had been modified to address limitations identified by countries in implementing the science to policy continuum (such as timing, availability of experts, low uptake by the participating projects, and parallel efforts from other projects). The modifications are still in conformity with the approved science to policy theory of change ensuring robustness of scientific and technical basis.
75. Mr Sauni further stated that the focus remains on delivering environmental stress reduction targets in each of the 14-national demonstration projects. Having revised and agreed on new targets, progress of implementing project activities and outputs to deliver the targets remain off track. The aim now is to continue supporting demonstration in country and deliver on those targets by the end of project life. Broadly, the science-policy framework is delivering on project outcomes in 1.1, 1.2 and 3.1. If not for COVID-19, there is possibility and opportunity to pursue positive trends that we have started and put back on track implementation in poorly performed countries.
76. Mr Sauni explained that this is the reason why the proposal in the working paper on MYCWP to the RSC, requests for more time to be able to deliver targets. Mr Sauni noted the difficulties working with consultants during this pandemic due to border restrictions. Notwithstanding, in view of programming outcomes 1.1, 1.2 and 3.1 into the MYCWP, not only covering technical related outputs/activities delivering steps 1 to 4 of the science-policy framework but also doing steps 5 and 6 relative to reforms on policies, strategic plans and legislations that would inform changes within institutions and governance structures. Mr Sauni stressed the need of data to develop technical reports (IDA etc), which need us to go back to collecting baselines to ensure datasets collected can feed into analytical tools to be able to narrate products required for policy and decision making. Spatial prioritization work in Vanuatu identifies the data gaps that need to be filled by calibrating and ground truthing data to complete it.
77. Mr Antonio of the Secretariat, urged participants to reflect on the temporal dimension of each of the stages of the modified science to policy framework, suggesting that they consider the amount of time required for each stage of the process. He noted that expertise will need to be procured to conduct the RaPCA, IDA processes through to the SOC and SAP. Understanding the timeframes will assist with providing advice on the proposed no-cost extension in terms of the amount of time needed to deliver on the stages and achieve the target.

Project Objective: To test the mainstreaming of 'ridge-to-reef' (R2R), climate resilient approaches to integrated land, water, forest and coastal management in the PICs through strategic planning, capacity building and piloted local actions to sustain livelihoods and preserve ecosystem services

Impacts Outcome Outputs Activities

Increased knowledge and understanding around R2R approach

1.1 Successful pilot projects test innovative solutions that link ICM, IWRM and climate change adaptation

Effective data and knowledge sharing

- IW Pilot Site Diagnostic Reports
- National Diagnostic Reports
- Characterisation and Prioritisation and Procedure Guidelines

Greater use of science based information in decision making process

1.2 Diagnostic analysis for prioritizing/ scaling up key ICM/ IWRM reforms & investments

Effective networks

Assessment and advice to organisations

National State of the Coast Reports

Improved institutional setting for informed decision making and action

3.1 National and regional strategic action frameworks for ICM/IWRM endorsed nationally & regionally

Plans and Policies

National Strategic Action Frameworks for ICM/IWRM

Data collation and field surveys

Technical support

R2R Networks

R2R Training

Stakeholder engagement

Participatory analysis and decision making

IW GEF R2R Science to Policy – Theory of Change

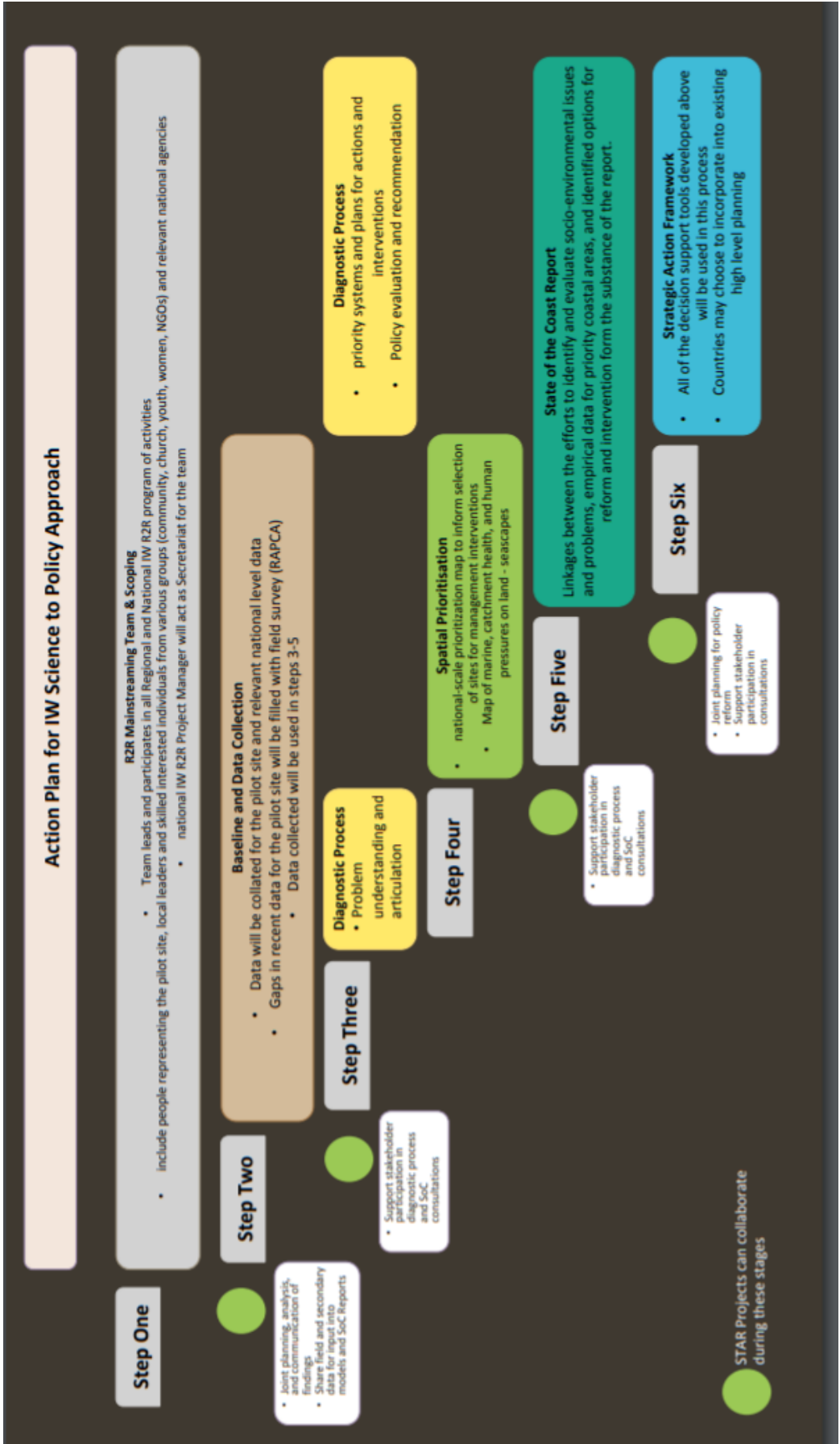


Figure 4:
Action Plan
for IW
Science to
Policy
Approach

78. Dr Korovulavula pointed out that the context and narrative of the framework is clear, but the question is how to make it relevant/roll it out in practicality. He suggested the need to consider development policies and the drivers causing the issues as well as how science can advise policy by addressing how governments work. He added that it is not that easy and that perhaps this is something that can come out beyond the R2R project, whereby more detail can be teased out - such as the need for an engagement strategy, building on science communication to target government, opposition, community, etc.
79. Mr Sauni followed up and stated that the outcome of RSTC-TC Feb 2020 is to convince policy makers in decision making processes. He noted however, that the role of the RPCU is just to communicate and convince through development of products from scientific and technical work. Eventually, it is the decision makers that make the final decision and that is beyond the project scope. RPCU can only advocate evidence-based best practice and encourage and support using work of scientists to inform decision making. He hoped that products developed from the project will add value to that process of decision making. Mr Sauni stated that the paper is just guidelines that have no “legal teeth”.
80. Chair agreed and stated that it would be good to have a committee to consider one of goals on how science interacts in almost a philosophical way regarding the way science is used to influence end users and decision makers.

Agenda Item 7.2 Conceptual framework on spatial prioritisation procedures (guidelines, publications, factsheets)

81. Mr Sauni of the Secretariat, presented the paper [GEF R2R/ RSTC.6/ WP.05](#) “Regional Guidelines for the Application of Ridge to Reef (R2R) Spatial Prioritization and Planning Procedures to Identify and Select Priority Coastal Areas and Sites for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Ecosystem Goods and Services”. The purpose of the presentation was to reflect on the R2R approach in natural resource management and governance and to consider and endorse the framework for future R2R investments and planning.
82. Mr Sauni explained that spatial prioritisation is a science-based spatial planning procedure that supports selection of priority areas and sites for R2R interventions and reforms. He referenced a brochure that provides further information on spatial prioritization procedures and is available as [GEF R2R/ RSTC.6/ Inf.06](#).
83. Mr Sauni discussed how modelling can help policy makers in the selection process of priority areas set aside for conservation actions. He presented the stepwise procedures outlined in the paper and used scenarios from the Vanuatu model, developed through the work of Dr Jade Delevaux to showcase the methodologies and outputs or results of the model.
84. Effectively, the model considers impacts of certain land-use activities that would lead to sediment export from upstream to lower areas downstream of the watershed catchment and further impacts on adjacent coastal/marine areas. The model will determine the impacts of total suspended solids, as influenced by one or a mix of land-use scenario(s) of say deforestation, urbanisation and protected

areas on land/forest, in the water column on marine ecosystem health, using indicators of percentage of coral cover, fish biomass and macroalgae growth.

85. Mr Sauni noted the value of engaging local counterparts on the ground, which provided opportunity to train and upskill and to assist international consultants' technical assessments and collection of additional data. Mr Sauni stressed the importance of having access to data, noting that any model is only as good as the quality/adequacy of data that is put into the model, recognising a suite of model assumptions.
86. Chair Prof. Sheaves T complimented the work of Dr Delevaux and acknowledged that limitations are expected. He echoed the comment on need for data, noting that good data from the biological field is needed and science must do the work to work out streamlining to fill those gaps. He stated he is convinced, proposed endorsing the spatial prioritization model, and opened the floor for discussion.
87. Dr Korovulavula noted the value of the model in addressing the ridge to reef continuum in the programme and expressed that this would also be valuable for the Fiji STAR project because a lot of good data has been collected in Fiji. He also noted the need to look at different variables in the model such as considering different islands in Vanuatu.
88. Dr Nainoca reflected on the amount of data being generated from this project and suggested the possibility of developing lessons learned in the application of the guidelines on spatial prioritisation. She recognised that investments have already been done by the partners and other organisations and through RPCU, which has published IW:LEARN experience notes. She suggested this could be moved up another notch and develop into an e-publication to be led by RSTC, depending on availability of resources. She recommended an editorial team be established to formulate an outline, which would collate the large amount of good scientific work, lessons learned stories both from STAR and IW work and have this published electronically.
89. Chair stated that one of the immediate needs is to get the work of R2R out so people will see it. International publications and e-publications provide the type of coverage and profile required and would be worthwhile investments. He suggested there are several options, including possibility of a collaborative approach with specific journals. However, it was important to do this in a logical way, noting that costs are involved.
90. Mr Sauni acknowledged the merits in publishing products and noted that R2R products had been made available in the public domain. He advised that two papers are being prepared for submission to peer reviewed journals and suggested that the same could be done for other work (potentially for something stronger than an e-publication), however, the current priority is the two peer reviewed papers, which continued to be led by Dr Jade Delevaux.
91. Dr Mangisi-Mafileo of the Secretariat, advised the Committee on a legacy publication on Mainstreaming R2R into Sustainable Development in the Pacific and lessons learned, noting that this is work in progress and updates will be provided in the next agenda item. Mr Sauni reminded the meeting that the

current project is focusing on “testing” and while it is also good to publish the results and strategic innovations tested and methods employed, it is equally important that further publications on the impacts of R2R interventions be considered in future upscaling of R2R.

Agenda Item 7.3 Lessons learned – Mainstreaming

[This agenda item was included at the request of UNDP Bangkok]

92. Dr Mangisi-Mafileo of the Secretariat presented on the compilation and development of lessons learned and associated knowledge products. This work responds to MTR Recommendation 11 (and related recommendations) where it highlights: *“In most cases, it is likely that the most valuable programme outcome (in addition to capacity building) will be lessons learned. There is a clear need and opportunity for the RPCU to become actively involved in promoting lessons learned across the programme and deriving (or compiling) lessons learned from previous IWRM/ ICM/ R2R investments. This would include providing guidance to current projects (STAR and IW) regarding which lessons should be derived, and how to do it.*
93. Dr Mangisi-Mafileo updated the committee on the progress to date:
- (i) Regional framework for the compilation and development of lessons learned for Pacific R2R Programme drafted and endorsed by the RSC4 (August 2019).
 - (ii) TOR for report writers provided to IW/STAR project coordinators and managers (December 2020).
 - (iii) Country briefings on lessons learned have been conducted for the regional programme (September 2020), with separate country briefings for Tuvalu, Palau, Samoa, Cook Islands and PNG (Q2 – Q3 2020).
 - (iv) Countries had requested extensions for submissions on titles and summaries from 30 June 2020 to 29 July 2020.
94. Dr Mangisi-Mafileo presented to the Committee the update on submissions of lessons learned summaries and/or full drafts by STAR and IW. Through further preliminary analysis, the lessons were corresponded to different sections/themes under the Pacific Ridge to Reef Programme framework for coordination, compilation and development of R2R lessons learned. The numbers in the table indicate the sections in the framework they correspond to. It was highlighted that sections that were not filled in the table provided, the RPCU did not receive any submissions.
95. Dr Mangisi-Mafileo also provided context of the lessons learned to be packaged as part of a legacy publication on Mainstreaming R2R into Sustainable Development in the Pacific. The Framework is in 3 parts, the first 2 parts on a guide is being written by a consulting team. The lessons will be incorporated to demonstrate project/national implementation success. This will be done as an e-book, and/or hard copy if there are resources.

Country	Project		Thematic areas
Cook Islands	STAR	IW	Capacity Building and sustainability, Conflict Resolution (land ownership) (STAR) and Project design (IW)
Fiji	STAR		Participatory planning and policy process (community to cabinet) 1.2.2 Functional catchment management committees in Tuva, Votua in Ba and Labasa; 3.2.4.2 Knowledge management - Biophysical/demographic/Socioeconomic data collected and analysed; 1.3, 1.5 ICM Plans developed for 4 catchments.
FSM	* STAR		
Kiribati			
Nauru	STAR		1.3, 1.5 Participatory Planning and policy - Development and approval of the Coastal Fisheries & Aquaculture Act 2020. Draft LMMA plans to be later included in regulations
Niue			
Palau	STAR	IW	1.2.6 Capacity building (water quality monitoring program), 1.2.3, 1.5, 1.2.6 mainstreaming to sectoral policy (Greenboots), 1.2.2, 1.4 MNRET creating new Institutional structures establishing a Bureau of Environment and Planning
PNG			
RMI	STAR		1.2.2, 3.2.4.2, 3.2.3 Participatory planning and policy - REIMAANLAK 8 Step Process as the operational guideline – knowledge management (incl. traditional knowledge) MIS, participatory planning and Institutional structures – PAN Office and Action Plan (Output 1.1-1.3 and 3.1-3.3) , 1.2.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.2.6 Outputs 2.1 – 2.4,
Samoa			
Solomon Islands			
Tonga		IW	1.1.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.6, 1.2.7, 1.5 Community to Cabinet stakeholder engagement, media and policy advocacy
Tuvalu	STAR	IW	1.1.2, 1.2.1, 1.2.3, , 1.2.7, 1.3, 1.5 8 ISPs have R2R principles integrated that incorporates ICM, MSP and IWRM
Vanuatu		IW	1.1.3, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.7 Improved inter-agency partnership in sustainable catchment management and 2) Community to local government partnerships for sustainable land and surface water use preserving livelihood

Figure 5: List of country contributions to Pacific R2R Programme Lessons Learned as at 20 September 2020

Agenda Item 7.4: Discussion and Decisions

96. The Committee endorsed the decisions of the Pre-RSC sessions on the papers under the Special Topics theme and recommend transmitting these to the RSC for further consideration and actions. These include the following: -

- (i) Regional guidelines – ‘Modified’ Science to Policy theory of change;**
- and**
- (ii) Regional guidelines – Spatial Prioritisation Modelling Procedures.**

Agenda Item 8: Any other business

Agenda Item 8.1: Next RSTC meeting and 2nd technical consultation

- 97. There were no other matters raised by participants.
- 98. The Secretariat proposed to postpone decision on details of dates and venue of the next RSTC meeting and 2nd technical consultation until decisions are taken by the RSC regarding the proposal for a no-cost extension.

Agenda Item 9: Closing remarks by Chair

- 99. Chair reflected on how well so much has been done despite the difficulties. He stated the challenges of working across multiple countries in the region and thanked everyone for their involvement and commitment. He added that he was impressed by the commitment, input and integrity shown by the team and said that this has stood out through the whole process.
- 100. SPC representative Ms Robinson, thanked Professor Sheaves as Chair of the RSTC and acknowledged Dr Korovulavula for chairing the meeting the previous day. She stated that these meetings provide the opportunity to talk about the scientific work being done which in turn enables the tools and support to be provide to member representatives. She acknowledged Mr Sauni and his team and thanked Dr Nainoca and the UNDP team, FAO representative and country representatives.

Annex 1: Provisional Agenda

Start Time	End Time	Agenda Item	Description	Session Facilitator
DAY 1			Monday, 19 th October 2020	
10.30am			Delegates log in and undertake audio/ video check	Secretariat
11.00	11.20	1	Welcome and Opening	
		1.1	Prayer	tbc
		1.2	Welcome and remarks by Chair	Chair (Prof. M. Sheaves)
		1.3	Opening remarks on behalf of the Secretariat	SPC (Andrew/ Rhonda)
11.20	11.35	2	Organization of the meeting	
		2.1	Appointment of Officers	Chair
		2.2	Meeting documents	SPC
		2.3	Meeting arrangements and conduct	SPC
11.35	11.45	3	Adoption of agenda	Chair
		3.1	Last RSC meeting record and action items	SPC
11.50	12.20	4	Looking ahead post R2R and COVID-19	Chair
		4.1	Project closure and terminal evaluation	UNDP
		4.2	What's next, post R2R and COVID-19?	SPC
		4.3	Chair's report 2020 – Highlights, Challenges and Opportunities	Chair, SPC
		4.4	<i>Discussion and Decisions</i>	Chair
12.20	1pm	5	A stocktake of the work so far	Chair
		5.1	Update progress on implementing MTR recommendations	SPC
		5.2	Status of the regional IW R2R project – specific to the science workplan	SPC
		5.3	JCU Course Report, 2020	Prof. M. Sheaves
		5.4	<i>Discussion and Decisions</i>	Chair
DAY 2			Tuesday, 20 th October 2020	
10.30am			Delegates sign in and undertake audio/ video check	Secretariat
11.00	11.30	6	Mainstreaming R2R – Research and Information Management	Chair
		6.1	R2R website re-development and related online tools	SPC
		6.2	R2R information management systems - environment, governance and socio-economic baseline assessments using EGS and DPSIR Approaches	SPC
		6.3	<i>Discussion and Decisions</i>	Chair
11.30	11.55	7	Mainstreaming R2R - Special Topics	Chair, Secretariat
		7.1	(Modified) R2R science-policy technological interface	SPC
		7.2	Conceptual framework on spatial prioritization procedures (guidelines, publications, factsheets)	SPC
		7.3	<i>Discussion and Decisions</i>	Chair
11.55	12pm	8	Any other business	Chair
		8.1	Next RSTC meeting and 2 nd technical consultation	SPC
12.00	12.05	9	Closing remarks by Chair	Chair

Annex 2: List of Participants

Federated States of Micronesia

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Annex 3: RSTC Chair's Report to RSC (Meeting Outcomes & Recommendations)

1. The Committee reappointed Prof. Marcus Sheaves and Dr Isoa Korovulavula into their current positions as chair and co-chair, respectively.
2. The Committee noted the responses corresponding to the decisions and recommendations of the 4th meeting of the RSTC. The Committee further noted that details of specific action items would be considered and discussed as separate agenda items during the meeting.
3. The Committee supported revisiting discussion of timelines for the terminal evaluation, following the RSC decision on the proposal for a no-cost extension. The Committee endorsed the outcomes and recommendations of the Pre-RSC panel discussion on this presentation and recommend transmitting to the RSC for consideration and approval.
4. The Committee endorsed the outcomes and recommendations of the Pre-RSC panel discussion on the paper. Therefore, the Committee recommends further consideration and approval of the RSC on a next phase project post R2R, and a no-cost extension beyond September 30th, 2021 of the current project.
5. The Committee noted the JCU¹ course report and recommended that the RSC: -
 - (i) Supports current efforts of both JCU and RPCU-SPC² to assist students who are falling behind their studies;
 - (ii) Further supports preparation of dedicated workplans by JCU that would allow students to catch up and submit late assignments;
 - (iii) Considers the seriousness of the matter where university regulations are continually challenged and possibly undermined to accommodate commitments to enable students to complete late assignments and therefore continue their studies; and
 - (iv) Endorse that if all efforts fail and students do not satisfy the course requirements, the JCU and RPCU will request the students' withdrawal from the course.
6. The Committee endorsed the decisions of the Pre-RSC sessions on the papers under the stock-take, Special Topics and Looking Ahead Post R2R themes, and recommend transmitting these to the RSC for further consideration and actions. These includes the following: -
 - (i) Progress implementation of the MTR recommendations;
 - (ii) Current status of the Regional IW R2R Project;
 - (iii) Regional guidelines – 'Modified' Science to Policy theory of change;
 - (iv) Regional guidelines – Spatial Prioritization Modelling Procedures;
 - (v) No-cost extension; and

¹ James Cook University, Australia

² Ridge to Reef Regional Programme Coordination Unit, GEM, SPC

(vi) Next phase post-R2R.

7. The Committee recommended that RSC supports exploring further the proposal for a separate standalone COVID-19 space within the R2R website, which includes identifying individuals or focal points responsible for feeding information into the website and the RPCU as the administrator.

8. The Committee recommended that the RSC: -

- (i) Endorse and launch the R2R Science Portal, which includes the R2R information management systems, science portal and data infrastructure;
- (ii) Note the useful utility and application of the Pacific State of Coast Spatial Data Infrastructure for the Pacific Ridge to Reef Programme, and that it links to other data infrastructure/ systems of the SPC;
- (iii) Support linking the R2R data infrastructure to other regional and global data sources for purposes of sharing and minimising chances of duplication; and
- (iv) Note the need for caution and effective use of controls to ensure quality of data (including methods & designs employed to collect the datasets) feeding into the R2R data systems.