

GEF International Waters Pacific Regional Ridge to Reef Project

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

FINAL REPORT

Sixth Regional Steering Committee Meeting (Virtual) for the GEF Pacific International Waters Ridge to Reef Project



20th to 21st January 2022



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ABBREVIATIONS

DCRP	Disaster and Community Resilience Programme
DPSIR	Driver-Pressure-State-Impact-Response
EGS	Ecosystem Goods and Services
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEM	Geoscience, Energy and Maritime Division (Pacific Community)
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
H2H	Highlands to High Seas
HRR	Harmonised Results Reporting
IA	Implementing Agency/Agencies
ICM	Integrated Coastal Management
IDA	Island Diagnostic Analysis
IMC	Inter-Ministerial Committee
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
OGC	Open Geospatial Consortium
PCG	Programme Coordination Group
PFD	Programme Framework Document
PGC	Post Graduate Certificate
PIC	Pacific Island country
PIF	Project Identification Form
PIFS	Pacific Island Forum Secretariat
PMIS	Project Management Information System
PMU	Project Management Unit
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PSC	Project Steering Committee
R2R	Ridge to Reef
RaPCA	Rapid Priority Coastal Area Assessment
RMI	Republic of the Marshall Islands
RPC	Regional Programme Coordinator
RPCG	Regional Programme Coordination Group
RPCU	Regional Programme Coordination Unit
RPSC	Regional Programme Steering Committee
RSC	Regional Programme Steering Committee
RSTC	Regional Science and Technical Committee
SAF	Strategic Action Framework
SDI	Spatial Data Infrastructure
SOC	State of the Coast
SOE	State of Environment
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

INTRODUCTION

The implementation of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Pacific Regional International Waters Ridge to Reef (IW R2R) Project and coordination of the broader Pacific R2R Programme is carried out under the general guidance of the Regional Steering Committee (RSC).

The RSC includes the designated national R2R Focal Points, Project Managers, and Heads of Lead Agencies, as well as GEF Operational Focal Points. The role of the RSC is to govern the project, guiding its overall implementation and monitoring, as well as supporting programmatic coordination through the SPC Regional Programme Coordination Unit (RPCU). Representatives from the GEF Implementing Agencies (IA) – UNDP, FAO and UNEP participated in the meetings to foster cooperation and coordination of the National STAR (System for Transparent Allocation of Resources) projects in line with the R2R programmatic approach.

Due to the constraints posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and completing deliverables for presentation to the RSC, the Sixth RSC Meeting for the GEF Pacific International Waters Ridge to Reef Project (RSC6) was postponed from the last quarter of 2021 to first quarter 2022 and to be conducted through a 2-day ZOOM meeting. Leading up to the RSC6, there was the Regional Investment Forum held in January, including a High-Level Panel on *Across boundaries and sectors: Lessons from implementing Integrated Ridge-to-Reef Approaches in the Pacific for sustainable development*. This was followed by a series of pre-RSC meetings to socialise and facilitate discussion and deeper understanding on key thematic areas for effective and efficient engagement and governance.

The paper and presentations for these meetings are available at <https://www.pacific-r2r.org/meeting-documents>

AGENDA ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. The Sixth Regional Steering Committee Meeting for the GEF Pacific International Waters Ridge to Reef Project (IW R2R) was held on 20 and 21 January 2022. The meeting was conducted virtually. The provisional agenda is attached as **Attachment 1**
2. The meeting was attended by over thirty (30) representatives and delegates from participating R2R project countries of Kiribati, Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI), Kingdom of Tonga, Niue, Papua New Guinea (PNG), Samoa, Vanuatu, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP Pacific Office, Suva), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), Pacific Community (SPC), University of the South Pacific (USP), Conservation International, and other observers. The list of delegates and observers is attached as **Attachment 2**.

1.1 Meeting Preliminaries and Opening Prayer

3. Ms Rhonda Robinson, Acting Director of Geoscience, Energy and Maritime Division (GEM), and Deputy Director of SPC's Disaster and Community Resilience Programme (DCRP) in the GEM Division, welcomed participants and noted the series of meetings held over the past few weeks culminating in this Regional Steering Committee (RSC) meeting. She urged participants to stay engaged in the discussions.
4. Mr Malaki Lakopo (Samoa) delivered an opening prayer. The meeting also observed a minute of silence remembering citizens, families, and communities in the Kingdom of Tonga due to the recent volcanic eruption there.



Ms Rhonda Robinson
Pacific Community



Mr Malaki Lakopo
Samoa

1.2 Welcome remarks by the Chair

5. The current Chair, Ms Gwendalyn Kingtaro Sisor of Palau, was not available for the meeting. She sent her apologies.
6. The incoming Chair, Mrs. Lealaisalanoa Frances Brown Reupena, Chief Executive Officer – Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (Samoa) welcomed delegates to the sixth virtual meeting of the RSC. She acknowledged the leadership of Ms Sisor for steering the project implementation since the last RSC meeting in October 2020 despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Chair asked the meeting to keep the Kingdom of Tonga in their prayers as the families and communities rebuild their lives and recover from the recent volcanic eruption.
7. Noting that the meeting was being conducted virtually, Chair reminded delegates of the need to be strictly guided by time allocations set out in the provisional agenda (**Attachment 1**).

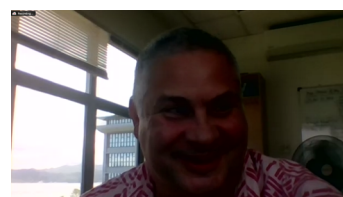


1.3 Welcome address on behalf of the Pacific Community (SPC)

8. The Acting Director of SPC's Geoscience, Energy and Maritime Division (GEM), Ms Rhonda Robinson, on behalf of SPC's senior executive management, the GEM Division, and the R2R Project team, welcomed participants to the Sixth and final Regional Steering Committee Meeting for the GEF Pacific IW R2R Project. Ms Robinson recognised the efforts of those that have contributed to implementing the R2R project from the beginning. She added that although the project will end in March 2022, there were many lessons learned from the programmatic and integrated approaches in the GEF R2R Programme. The Pacific Community (SPC) encourages strategic considerations and dialogue on this good work into the future.
9. Ms Rhonda Robinson declared the meeting open, and her welcome address is appended as **Attachment 5**.

1.4 Opening address on behalf of UNDP and other IAs

10. The United Nations Development Programme Pacific House, Team Leader for Resilience and Sustainable Development, Dr Justin Shone, welcomed participants to the meeting on behalf of UNDP, UNE, and FAO. He thanked GEF for their commitment towards the development of PICs.



Dr Justin Shone
UNDP

11. Dr Shone highlighted the challenges implementing projects and priorities due to COVID-19 pandemic and implications. Dr Shone emphasised on the following three points:
 - i. The successful achievement of the project further outlines that much has been achieved. Of the USD10 million, USD9 million has been dispersed through multiple formal and informal trainings such as Post Graduate certificates and diplomas. Also, there are other technical reports and policy guidelines or frameworks such as the mainstreaming R2R work, practitioners' guides, numerous reports, and technical assessments, all of which support and build capacity within the PICs.
 - ii. The UNDP Terminal Evaluation on the Regional IW R2R project is currently underway noting the results will assist in the success of the formulation and submission of the next R2R replacement project.
 - iii. On the operational closure of the project, UNDP sought countries collaboration on utilising remaining funds (USD 1 million) noting that an additional extension is no longer possible.
12. UNDP opening address is appended as **Attachment 6**.

13. The Committee appreciated the opening remarks offered by the SPC as Executing Agency and by UNDP on behalf of all R2R Implementing Agencies (UNDP, UNEP, and FAO). Key messages include but not limited to:
 - i. Despite the challenges of COVID-19 impacting on project implementation, recognised the successful achievements of the GEF Pacific R2R Programme in delivering on project development objectives, outcomes and outputs or targets, as demonstrated in the publishing range of R2R products and corresponding capacity building within PICs.
 - ii. That although the project will end in March 2022, there were many lessons learned from the programmatic and integrated approaches in the GEF R2R Programme, thereby continue this good work into the future.
 - iii. That the results of the UNDP terminal evaluation are important in the consideration and approval of the next R2R replacement project concepts and proposals.

AGENDA ITEM 2. ORGANISATION OF THE MEETING

Agenda Item 2.1: Call meeting to Order by the new Chair

14. The incoming Chair from Samoa, Mrs. Lealaisalanoa Frances Brown Reupena, Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment called the meeting to order. Given this is the last meeting of the project, the Chair draws the attention of the Committee to its Rules of Procedures which remain in force in the conduct of the meeting.

Agenda Item 2.4: Meeting documents

15. The GEF Pacific R2R Regional Programme Coordinator, Mr Samasoni Sauni, directed participants to the meeting papers, listed in *GEF-R2R-RPSC6-IP.03*. The meeting noted several late papers which will be posted online soon the papers are available.

Agenda Item 2.5: Meeting arrangements & conduct

16. Mr Samasoni Sauni of the Secretariat briefed the Committee on arrangements for the conduct of the meeting. The meeting noted the information presented in the Provisional Annotated Agenda is sufficient to guide the meeting. The relevant information paper for this agenda item is *GEF-R2R-RSC6-IP.06*.



Mr Samasoni Sauni
Pacific Community

AGENDA ITEM 3.

MEETING RECORD & ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Agenda Item 3.1: Last RSC meeting record, action items

17. The Chair invited the Secretariat, Mr Sauni, to comment on any outstanding matters or action items in the record of the last meeting. The relevant paper for this agenda item is *GEF-R2R-RSC6-IP.04*. The Chair stated that the meeting report has been finalised, circulated, and posted online following an iterative process of clearing it out of session.
18. Mr Sauni briefly presented the relevant action items in the last meeting record, which are also relevant for this meeting:
 - (i) Challenges, opportunities, and lessons implementing the programmatic approach are useful in the consideration of future R2R projects on replicating, scaling up and if needed, ongoing testing of innovative technologies and management measures. Update on this can be revisited in Agenda 5.1.
 - (ii) Updates on RSTC and RPCG reports will be provided in Agenda 5.3 with respect to roles of these committees in discharging their functions supporting the project.
 - (iii) Highlight of the launching of the R2R website in 2020 with the aim of completing all R2R products for publication and launching, which will occur at this RSC6 meeting. The RSC5 meeting in 2020 approved several R2R products, particularly the guidelines to spatial prioritization and the regional guidelines to implement Science to Policy framework of the project.

- (iv) Subject to UNDP policies, a 12-months no-cost extension approved by the RSC5 in 2020 to allow completion of backlog of outstanding priority works, did not eventuate. Instead, the UNDP approved 6 months no-cost extension and with a new closure date of 1 March 2022. The impact and implications of UNDP decision to grant only 6-months amid the pandemic is shown in the progress of delivery. The meeting will further discuss this subject linking the large sum of funds un-utilized because of circumstances directly impacting on project implementation.
- (v) The RSC5 meeting record was endorsed, and approved intersession ally and it reflects the true discussion of meeting of back in October 2020.

19. The Committee noted the paper and endorsed the RSC5 Meeting Report.

Agenda Item 3.2: Adoption of agenda

- 20. On the invitation of the Chair, the Secretariat provided brief changes to the provisional agenda suggesting removal of agenda item 5.5 as recommended by the RPCG in their meeting report. A brief announcement on the timelines and related aspects of the UNDP Terminal Evaluation will be done in Agenda Item 8 – other business.

21. The Committee approved the amendments to the Provisional Agenda and subsequently adopted the provisional Meeting Agenda.

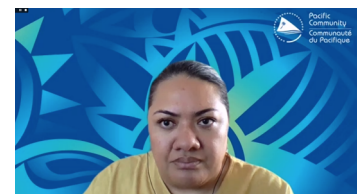
AGENDA ITEM 4. R2R INVESTMENT FORUM & ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION - OUTCOMES

- 22. Chair informed the meeting that there were three key sessions that took place at the Investment Forum (11-12 January 2022) – introduction & reflection on R2R products, declaration & framework for mainstreaming R2R approach, and roundtable/case studies. The Chair then invited the Secretariat to present the outcomes of the R2R Investment Forum and Roundtable Discussion.

Agenda Item 4.1: Outcomes of case studies roundtable session

- 23. Chair invited Mr Samasoni Sauni and Dr Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo of SPC, to jointly introduce the working paper, *GEF-R2R-RSC6-WP.1. Outcomes of the Investment Forum Roundtable*. There was general support and appreciation of the range of R2R products generated by the GEF Pacific R2R Programme covering both the STAR and IW R2R child projects. The Forum also welcomed and supported the proposed declaration and framework for mainstreaming R2R for sustainable development in PICs.

- 24. Dr Mangisi-Mafileo of SPC provided an overview of the outcomes of the High-Level Panel Discussion on the GEF Pacific R2R Programme Lessons from Implementation of Integrated Ridge to Reef Approaches for sustainable development in the Pacific. A keynote address was offered by the Samoa Minister for Natural Resources and Environment, Hon. Toeolesulusulu Cedric Posē Salesa Schuster, with welcome remarks by SPC Deputy Director General and Head of Science and Capability Dr. Paula Vivili to the 116 registered attendees. It was noted that the panel concept was based on the Most Significant Change technique that was trialled



Dr Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo
Pacific Community

with the regional programme in 2019. There was overwhelming support and gratitude for the work highlighted and the lessons harvested by the 6 panellists, summarised in the paper.

25. Moreover, Dr Mangisi-Mafileo highlighted the advocacy statements from the distinguished panellists, on ways forward:

- **Niue – Director General, Ministry of Natural Resources Niue, Dr. Josie Tamate** – Integrated approaches are not easy but necessary and we must raise our ambition to consider trans-boundary challenges from highlands to high seas.
- **Tonga – Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources Ms. Rosamond Bing, Tonga** – The R2R Projects at the national and regional level implementation is demonstrated as a proof of concept and that there can be enduring benefits to our communities. The scaling up to the highlands to high seas concept should be considered for a sustainable way forward.
- **Samoa – Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Mr. Malaki Iakopo** – R2R approaches to resource management promotes collaboration, coordination and sustainability and should be implemented from the highlands to the high seas.
- **Solomon Islands – Undersecretary – Technical, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology, Mr Chanel Iroi** – On the R2R approach, to continue this initiative in the future as it is a good approach in terms of sustainable management of protected areas. It is very important that we involve the resource owners in understanding the issues surrounding the R2R sustainable management, ensuring that their needs are met, ensuring a win-win situation.
- **Fiji – Director, Environment, Ms. Sandeep Singh** – All future projects to adopt an all-inclusive approach that is science evidence based with traditional knowledge incorporated with the understanding that all ecosystems are inter-connected from mountain ridges to ocean. High land to high seas is the way forward.

26. The Committee endorsed the outcomes of the Investment Forum and recommended its use to inform further discussion and decisions specific to the utility of R2R products, the proposed declaration & framework for mainstreaming R2R, and the next R2R project concepts and proposals.

Agenda Item 4.2: R2R Investment Forum Declaration

27. Chair invited the Secretariat, Mr Samasoni Sauni, to introduce the paper for this agenda item, *GEF-R2R-RSC6-WP.2*, which briefly provides a declaration for mainstreaming R2R approach in PICs. The paper is seeking support, affirmation and signatures from participating agencies, countries, and other interested parties at all levels of society at this RSC6 meeting, on a declaration to mainstream R2R approach.

28. The meeting noted that the application of the ridge to reef (R2R) concept is widely documented and known in the Pacific region as well as in other parts of the globe. R2R is also universally acceptable as a best practice management tool supporting integrated ecosystem-based approaches to conserve and manage ecosystem goods and services cross-sectorally from land to sea.

29. To better strengthen and coordinate future R2R planning and investments, a zero draft declaration has been prepared to support and add value on resource mobilization demonstrating resilience, commitments and affirmations across stakeholders, institutions, and communities to integrate and mainstream R2R in domestic policy and legislative frameworks. It is expected that the signed declaration and framework for mainstreaming R2R approach for sustainable development for the Pacific region is transmitted to Pacific Leaders for their blessing in the next Forum meeting.

30. The Committee endorsed the declaration and recommended that it be finalised for uploading online the R2R website and opens for signatures. The Committee also supported transmitting to Pacific Leaders the signed declaration and framework for mainstreaming R2R approach for sustainable development in the Pacific region.

Agenda Item 4.4: Mainstreaming the Ridge to Reef Approach for Sustainable Development in the Pacific Region – Conceptual Framework

31. Chair invited Mr Samasoni Sauni of SPC to introduce the working paper *GEF-R2R-RSC6-WP.3*. The paper contains a framework to mainstream the R2R approach analytically and showcasing clear guidance on the intent, conceptual distinctions in several variations and contexts particularly between strategic building blocks, before implementing an approved R2R related plan.
32. The meeting noted that the conceptual framework outlines the entry points for mainstreaming R2R from strategy to reality in the Pacific context, such as:
- (i) Steps to reach agreement (or not) to mainstream R2R approach
 - (ii) Steps to reach agreement on scale and coverage
 - (iii) Steps to reach agreement on theory of change, R2R Plans, On-site Management
 - (iv) Approval and implementation
33. Moreover, the meeting noted that the conceptual framework is linked to a technical report documenting options for mainstreaming R2R, and accessible on this [link](#), The technical report and the Practitioner's Guide provide the bases on the various entry points pivotal to securing ecosystems goods and services, ensuring food security, and enhancing climate resilience of communities.

34. The Committee approved the conceptual framework for mainstreaming R2R approach in sustainable development for PICs. It also agreed merging the framework to the declaration presented earlier in its final version and upload on the R2R website for signatures (see **Attachment 3**).

AGENDA ITEM 5. REGIONAL IW R2R PROJECT FINAL REPORT

35. Chair informed the Committee that the Regional IW R2R final project report is a requirement on closing the project and it will benefit from outcome of discussion at this meeting for its finalization and submission to UNDP/GEF. The regional project report will be updated and finalised benefiting from data and information in national IW R2R project final reports. At this stage, most country final reports are not yet completed and submitted to SPC and expect this is completed before closure date 1 March 2022.

Agenda Item 5.1: Project Final Report (narrative & financial)

36. Chair invited Mr Sauni of the Secretariat to introduce the working paper *GEF-R2R-RSC6-WP.04*, which is the Project Final Report. Mr Sauni advised the Committee that the Project Final Report is a working draft at this stage given that there are still gaps and missing information. The draft report will be further enhanced and finalised following the submission of all outstanding final reports from national demonstration projects and that of consultancies which still progressing at this time.

37. The meeting noted that the outcomes of discussion and guidance from the RSC, RSC meetings this week and past years, coupled with guidance from GEF Implementing Agencies, will further inform the enhancement and finalisation of the Project Final Report. As part of its reporting requirement to UNDP-GEF, this final report is part of SPC periodic reporting which is quarterly from the start of the project and includes the mid-term review (MTR) report.
38. Mr Sauni's presentation focussed on the program objectives and program outline (number of projects, components, and GEF focal areas), and elaborated on facts & figures in terms of the total budget, fund source, and agencies involved. More importantly, the meeting noted progress of delivering against project objective, outcomes, outputs, and targets. The meeting noted the RPCU-SPC self-assessment of 'satisfactory' against development objective and implementation progress.
39. The RSC endorsed the report in principle recognising further enhancements is needed once SPC receives all final reports from national IW R2R projects and consultants. The Committee recommends that the final version of the report is circulated to project countries and partners.

Agenda Item 5.2: Regional Scientific and Technical Committee (RSTC) Final Report

40. The Chair invited the RSTC Co-Chair, Dr Isoa Korovulavula to present to the Committee's final report, and the outcomes of the Seventh RSTC Meeting. The relevant meeting paper of this agenda item is *GEF-R2R-RSC6-WP.05*.



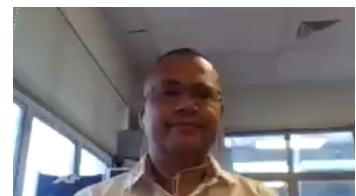
Dr Isoa Korovulavula
USP

41. In his presentation, Dr Korovulavula recognised the hard-working members of the RSTC and their contributions supporting the project over the 5-6 years. The presentation also provided an opportunity for reflection on the successes, challenges and lessons learned in delivering on the RSTC ToRs and offer suggestions on opportunities ahead.

42. The Committee noted and endorsed the RSTC Chair's final report, which also includes the RSTC7 meeting record (see **Attachment 8**).

Agenda Item 5.3: Regional Programme Coordination Group (RPCG) Final Report

43. Chair invited the Chair of the Regional Programme Coordination Group (RPCG), UNDP, to present the final report and the outcomes of the 5th RPCG Meeting. Mr Floyd Robinson of UNDP presented on behalf of the Chair of the RPCG. The relevant meeting paper of this agenda item is *GEF-R2R-RSC6-WP.06*.



Mr Floyd Robinson
UNDP

44. The meeting noted that over the project life the group meets in the margin of the RSC annually, with strong participation and engagement from GEF IAs in early years only. Mr Robinson added that the programmatic approach particularly in the oversight of linking and sharing of data of all child projects with RPCU-SPC for holistic, responsive, and ensuring technical and scientific robustness was an ongoing challenge. Further, the planned harmonised results reporting of the GEF Pacific Ridge to Reef Programme contributions to the GEF focal areas and SDG was not achieved.

45. The meeting also noted the imported current work of the UNDP audit and terminal evaluation currently underway. It is not possible to present the preliminary results of the terminal evaluation at this time. However, a report will be shared to all participating countries and partners when it is available in early February 2022.

46. The Committee noted and endorsed the RPCG final report.

Agenda Item 5.4: JCU Final Report

47. Chair invited the Secretariat to introduce the final report of the JCU-SPC teaching program on R2R Sustainable Development. In the absence of Prof. Marcus Sheaves of James Cook University (JCU), Mr Samasoni Sauni of SPC presented the report. The relevant paper for this agenda item is *GEF-R2R-RSC6-WP.07*.

48. The meeting noted the highlights of the JCU programme particularly the successful completion and graduation of students in the Graduate Certificate and Diploma in R2R Sustainable Development. The COVID-19 pandemic impacts the students greatly with several forced to drop off the courses due to internet connectivity issues. Mr Sauni added that looking forward, it is important for JCU to absorb and add on the Graduate courses on R2R Sustainable Development to their own list of courses on offer. It is also important that that future R2R investments continue to support capacity building and support extending coverage to master's and PhD levels on R2R Sustainable Development.

49. The meeting was invited to note and endorse the JCU final report with a view of supporting future R2R investments in formal and informal training, and with specific focus on continuing current academic courses on R2R Sustainable Development in the next and future R2R projects and programmes.

50. The Committee endorsed the JCU final report and recommended that capacity building and strengthening through R2R formal and informal training is continued in future R2R and related investments.

Agenda Item 6: Looking ahead post R2R & COVID-19

51. In introducing agenda item 6, the Chair, Mr Malaki Iakopo of Samoa informed the meeting that the RSC has already approved and agreed to work towards a next replacement project for the current R2R IW R2R project. At this stage a generic project concept was formulated and circulated to everyone last year seeking inputs. It was intended that the generic project concept is streamlined and covering priority areas discussed and agreed in the past. The generic concept will then revise to meet at least the minimum requirements of potential donors such as GEF-8, GCF and EU.
52. The Chair invited the Secretariat & the consultants to present to the Committee for its information and consideration and update on what could possibly be next after R2R.

Agenda Item 6.1: GEF-8 project concept & PIF (highlights)

53. Chair invited SPC Consultant, Mr Herman Timmermans to introduce the working paper, *GEF IW R2R/RSC.6/WP.09*. The paper covers the GEF-8 project concept and the project identification form (PIF). The 'next phase' project for GEF-8 financing is titled "Strengthening community resilience in a post-covid world: Mainstreaming integrated ridge to reef ecosystem-based management along the land-sea continuum in Pacific Island countries."
54. Based on past RSC decisions and brief consultations with stakeholders during the consultancy, the next new project is expected to focus on five components to deliver on the overall goal and objectives, as follows:
 - Component 1 – Strengthening governance arrangements
 - Component 2 – Strengthening the science
 - Component 3 – Conservation, ecosystem restoration and sustainable livelihood projects and innovations
 - Component 4 – Communications
 - Component 5 – Regional coordination and enabling activities
55. The meeting noted that the next four-year funding cycle of GEF-8 will formally launch and start in July 2022 and project concepts and PIFs considered in the 63rd meeting of the GEF Council schedule to occur 5-9 December 2022.

56. The Committee welcomed the GEF-8 project concept and PIF and agreed that it is further enhanced and finalised for submission. There are several areas in the document that need tightening and gaps filled. This includes confirmation of PICs that will be participating and use of STAR allocations. This information is linked to the proposed budget and key priority focus areas selected for implementation.

Agenda Item 6.2: GCF project concept & PFF (highlights)

57. Chair invited SPC Consultant, Mr Luke Moore to introduce the working paper, *GEF-R2R-RSC6-WP.10*, which is a project concept targeting the Green Climate Fund (GCF) for the R2R that replaces the current IW R2R project.
58. The meeting noted that the concept addresses key areas identified by the IW R2R project where additional technical assistance is required, and aligns with PICs needs, SPC's strategic goals maintaining ecosystem goods and services, and alignment to GCF's mandate and current priorities. The project concept and PFF is expected to be ready for submission in February 2022.

59. The meeting noted the synergies between this concept and that of GEF-8 recognising the climate rationale of GCF only fund activities linked to climate change additionality. Unlike GEF, the GCF is unlikely to fund all the 14 PICs selected in the current IW R2R project. The maximum envelope allowed is US\$50 million and the identification of PICs to participate will follow the criteria of country and GCF readiness criteria and capacity to implement the project.
60. Consequently, the consultancy adopts a two-tiered approach to consult and engage countries and stakeholders seeking guidance and interest in the co-design and formulation of the GCF project concept. In this vein, the meeting underlined the importance for countries to provide responses to the online surveys. Stakeholder engagement is crucial to allow the concept to be refined and enhanced and responding to country priorities and GCF requirements.
61. The Committee endorsed the GCF R2R project concept and recommended it be enhanced and finalised for submission. The meeting recognised more time is needed to consider preliminary results of the consultancy and therefore recommends that countries communicate their positions back to the consultants and RPCU at an earliest opportunity.

Agenda Item 6.3: EU project concept (highlights)

62. Chair invited Dr Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo of the Secretariat to introduce the working paper, *GEF IW R2R/RSC.6/WP.11*. The paper provided a brief concept that responded to a call by the European Union for regional projects and programmes. It is being considered by SPC as a proposal for EU Funding, or for the consideration of other potential donors. The proposed integrated programme is entitled, *Highlands to High Seas (H2H): Integrated (nexus) resource management and governance for climate resilience and sustainable development of Small Island and Large Ocean States (SILOS)*.
63. The meeting noted that the paper builds on challenges and lessons from R2R implementation in the Pacific (2015-2022), and opportunities that constitute the H2H Framework for implementation for the consideration of the Regional Steering Committee. The concept is designed to focus on the nexus and expand the scope beyond the reef. Based on the national and regional priorities articulated through country consultations and validation, H2H aims to realise holistic, local to global sustainable development benefits.
64. **Moreover, the concept outlines the H2H Innovation Science-Knowledge-Action Pathways, which are:** (i) Research (Science); (ii) Change Knowledge; and (iii) Generate Action/Behaviour Change.

65. The Regional Steering Committee reviewed and endorsed the Brief Concept for *Highlands to High Seas (H2H): Integrated (nexus) resource management and governance for climate resilience and sustainable development of Small Island and Large Ocean States (SILOS)* integrated programmatic initiative for co-development with national and development partners for co-implementation.

Agenda Item 6.4: Discussion & Decisions

66. Chair opened the floor for discussion at the end of all the presentations. He emphasised the importance that countries re-confirm their interest in participating in the successor R2R project.
67. Papua New Guinea thanked Dr Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo for the presentation saying PNG supported the concept and looked forward to the next phase of project documentations.

68. Vanuatu expressed full support and agreed to the concept notes presented for the next phase of IW R2R. Vanuatu looks forward to reading and providing comments where necessary to help finalise the concept notes.
69. Chair stated that the record reflected the Committee's overwhelming support in endorsement of the proposed projects concepts. In moving forward, these project concepts are for further enhancement from inputs from countries.
70. The Committee noted that several countries have already progressed bilaterally with potential donors on similar projects. The Committee further noted countries who have expressed interest in the concept since it was discussed at the Investment Forum, RSTC, and RSC meetings are Niue, Tonga, Fiji, Samoa, PNG, Vanuatu, and Solomon Islands.

AGENDA ITEM 7. E-LAUNCHING R2R PRODUCTS & PUBLICATIONS

71. The Chair introduced the agenda item on the end of project results and the publications produced by the Regional IW R2R project in partnership with national demonstration projects. He invited the Secretariat to present the paper for this agenda item, *GEF-R2R-RSC6-WP.12*.
72. Dr Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo of SPC presented on the end of project results from the implementation of the Knowledge Management Strategy. She outlined progress performance of the online platform, and the publications produced by the Regional R2R Project in partnership with the R2R national and demonstration projects. The products will at this meeting following the end of discussion on this agenda item.
73. The paper invited the RSC to note the project results, the partnership efforts, and knowledge sharing critical to facilitate future investments and R2R planning and policy processes. In turn, these resources and products will facilitate the adoption of ICM/IWRM practices supporting sustainable livelihoods and climate resilience among Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS).
74. Vanuatu and PNG expressed their sincere gratitude to SPC for the information products that have been developed through the IW R2R Project. Others offered congratulations to Dr Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo of SPC and all those that collaborated in the co-creation of the knowledge products, which represented a significant contribution to the region.

75. The Regional Steering Committee noted the results, the partnership effort, and knowledge sharing critical to facilitate future investments and R2R planning and policy processes to facilitate the adoption of ICM/IWRM practices supporting sustainable livelihoods and climate resilience among Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS). The Committee endorsed the launching of R2R products and publications produced by the partnerships with national demonstration projects.

Agenda Item 7.1: Formal virtual handing over of IW/STAR R2R products to PICs

76. The Chair and the Secretariat introduced the R2R products and publications. The formal official launch followed.
77. The Chair invited the Committee to witness and endorse the launching and the handing over of IW/STAR R2R products and publications to PICs. The launching was facilitated by the Chair, UNDP and SPC.

78. In launching the products, the Chair expressed his pleasure in celebrating the launch of the R2R products and publications as it has been a legacy and a labour of love, co-produced by the thriving R2R networks and community of practice aiming to help us better manage and guard our resources for a sustainable future for our island nations.

79. The Committee thanked everyone and observed the formal virtual handing over of R2R products to PICs, which are useful products and tools for mainstreaming R2R approach in future investments to improve livelihoods, ensure food and water security and ensure climate resilience.

AGENDA ITEM 8. TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT (draft highlights)

80. The committee agreed to remove this agenda item following recommendation of the RPCG as set out in its meeting record.

AGENDA ITEM 9. OTHER BUSINESS

81. Mr Floyd Robinson of UNDP advised the meeting that the Terminal Evaluation (TE) report promotes accountability and transparency and assesses the extent of project accomplishments. A TE draft report is due on 24 January 2022 and the TE Final Report submitted by the consultants on 10 February 2022.

82. Mr Sauni of SPC mentioned that the final version of the declaration recently approved by RSC6 would be uploaded online the R2R website and opens for signatures. Having endorsed the declaration and framework for mainstreaming R2R approach, the RSC6 meeting delegates, observers and other stakeholders are requested to send us a copy of the signature page with their signatures.

83. Mr Floyd Robinson of UNDP requested that an outcome in the RPCG record, is reflected in the RSC6 meeting record, relative to the use of R2R resources to support recovery efforts in Tonga.

“Para. 15: The meeting noted efforts to explore options re-directing project un-utilized funds to support relief efforts in Tonga. SPC advised that the best way to plan better is to extend the project to allow adequate time for proper processes to follow that satisfy SPC policies and regulations, as well that of the UNDP and consistent with SPC/UNDP Project Cooperation Agreement. It is difficult to re-programme project funds from programming response perspectives, and there are more we don’t know yet of the situation to inform better planning and actions. The meeting noted that SPC as executing agency takes instructions responding to RSC decisions and UNDP directives.”

AGENDA ITEM 10. MEETING EVALUATION

84. Chair invited the Secretariat to present a summary of the decisions taken at this RSC-6 meeting. Mr Sauni from the Secretariat presented the key decisions and outcomes and advised the meeting that a draft record will be circulated for comments and approval is done inter-sessionally. The Secretariat also outlined the meeting evaluation and an online link for delegates and observers to access and provide responses.

AGENDA ITEM 11. CLOSING REMARKS

85. Having observed no further interventions, the Chair thanked the Committee for its deliberation and respective contributions.
86. Ms Rhonda Robinson, Acting Director and Deputy Director of SPC's Disaster and Community Resilience Programme in the GEM Division gave a vote of thanks to the Chair, Mr Malaki lakopo, the MNRE staff, and the RPCU. More importantly, Ms Robinson thanked member countries for supporting the project over the years, despite the challenges encountered. She underlined the wealth of experiences and lessons gained including the range of R2R products observed at the launching demonstrates the commitments and determinations of country teams and everyone directly or indirectly involved in the Regional IW R2R project.
87. The Chair closed the meeting at 12.00 pm.

AGENDA ITEM 12. JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY (JCU) GRADUATION CEREMONY

88. JCU hosted the virtual graduation ceremony online, and with assistance from the RPCU-SPC. The JCU graduation was facilitated by Prof. Marcus Sheaves and Dr Janine Sheaves. The Dean, Science and Engineering of JCU delivered the keynote address.
89. Thirteen (13) graduates successfully completed and were awarded the Graduate Diploma of R2R Sustainable Development. The graduating students are:
- (i) Anderson Anjo (PNG)
 - (ii) Umai Basilius (Palau)
 - (iii) Sereseini Dikalouniwai (Fiji)
 - (iv) Muraai Herman (Cook Islands)
 - (v) Heimata Karika (Cook Islands)
 - (vi) Heather Ketebengang (Palau)
 - (vii) Crispina Konelio (Niue)
 - (viii) Leena S.M Mesebeluu (Palau)
 - (ix) Pesega Lifuka Samuelu (Tuvalu)
 - (x) Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo (Tonga)
 - (xi) Feagaiga Penivao (Tuvalu)
 - (xii) Lamese Saamu (Tuvalu)
 - (xiii) Rolenas Tavue Baereleo (Vanuatu)
90. Dr Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo delivered the graduating students' address. The programme is appended as **Attachment 7**.

Attachment 1: Provisional Agenda

Start Time	End Time	Agenda Item	Description	Session Facilitator
DAY 1				
10.00am			Delegates sign in & undertake audio/video check	Secretariat
10.30	10.50	1	Opening Ceremony	
		1.1	Meeting Preliminaries & Prayer	SPC (GEM Deputy Director)
		1.2	Welcome remarks by Chair	Chair (Palau)
		1.3	Opening remarks on behalf of the Secretariat	SPC GEM Director
		1.4	Remarks on behalf of UNDP and other IAs	UNDP Rep.
10.50	11.15	2	Organisation of the meeting	
		2.1	Call meeting to Order by the new Chair	Chair (Samoa)
		2.2	Message from current Chair	Chair (Samoa)
		2.4	Meeting documents	SPC
		2.5	Meeting arrangements and conduct	SPC
11.15	11.30	3	Meeting record & adoption of agenda	Chair
		3.1	Last RSC meeting record, action items	SPC
		3.2	Adoption of agenda	SPC
11.30	11.57	4	R2R Investment Forum & Roundtable Discussion - Outcomes	Chair, SPC
		4.1	Outcomes of case studies roundtable session	SPC
		4.2	R2R Investment Forum Declaration	SPC
		4.3	Regional R2R Framework for Natural Resource Management Governance in Tropical Islands Setting	SPC
12pm	1pm	5	Regional IW R2R Project Final Reports	
12.00pm	12.15	5.1	Project Final Report (narrative & financial)	SPC RPC
12.15	12.25	5.2	RSTC Final Report	RSTC Chair
12.25	12.35	5.3	RPCG Final Report	RPCG Chair
12.35	12.45	5.4	JCU Final Report	JCU rep.
12.45	1.00pm	5.5	Terminal Evaluation Report (draft highlights)	UNDP

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

Start Time	End Time	Agenda Item	Description	Session Facilitator
DAY 2				
10.00	11.30	6	Looking ahead post R2R & COVID-19	Secretariat
10.00	10.45	6.1	GEF-8 project concept & PIF (highlights)	Consultant/Secretariat
		6.2	GCF project concept & PFF (highlights)	Consultant/Secretariat
		6.3	EU project concept (highlights)	Secretariat
10.45	11.00	6.4	Discussion & Decisions	Chair
11.00	12.15pm	7	E-launching of R2R Products & Publications	Chair, Secretariat
11.00	11.20	7.1	Formal virtual handing over of IW/STAR R2R products to PICs	Secretariat
11.20	11.30	8	Any other business	Chair
11.30	11.45	9	Meeting evaluation	SPC
11.45	12.00pm	10	Closing remarks by Chair	Chair
12pm	1pm	11	JCU Graduation Ceremony	JCU

Attachment 2: List of Participant

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<p>OBSERVERS</p> <p>Mr Keneti Faulalo</p> <p>Pastor Jarrett Suniula Every Nation Church, Fiji</p> <p>Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation – Vanuatu</p> <p>Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment – Samoa</p> <p>Department of Environment - Fiji</p>	<p>RSTC MEMBER</p> <p>Mr Conway Pene Consultant Tel: +61-4-1691 4961 E-mail: conwaypene@gmail.com</p>

Attachment 3: Declaration & framework for mainstreaming R2R- for signatures

DECLARATION FOR MAINSTREAMING THE RIDGE TO REEF APPROACH FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE PACIFIC REGION

PREAMBLE

Recalling the cultural significance Pacific Islands Countries (PICs) place on their land and sea, as well, the spiritual connection of Pacific peoples to the biological diversity offers by the various ecological systems along the highland ridges to the reef and the ocean connectivity.

Further recalling considerable variation in size and geomorphology of PICs with over 6,000 islands and islets ranging from high volcanic islands to tiny low coral atolls and have correspondingly varied economies and systems of governance. In this regard, PICs represent the microcosms of some of the most significant development and environment challenges the world faces.

Recognising that the cultural and spiritual links of Pacific peoples with their land-sea adequately demonstrated through a range of traditional, conventional, and modern systems of maintaining and enhancing PICs ecosystem goods and services (provisioning, regulating, supporting and cultural) through integrated approaches which hinge on the carrying capacity of natural resources.

Underlining the direct links between investments supporting integration efforts by all stakeholders, donors, partners, and communities to manage natural resources and conserve wetlands, while leveraging the community-to-cabinet approach ensuring cross-sectoral multi-stakeholder coordination, learning, and knowledge management.

Further underlining that the integration of water, land, forest, biodiversity, and coastal/ ocean natural resources and environmental management to preserve biodiversity, ecosystem services, store carbon, improve climate resilience, reduce poverty, and sustain livelihoods, are important priority goals for all Pacific peoples, while also delivering significant global environmental benefits.

Recognising their limited land area, PICs continue to experience intense competing pressures on land-sea resources for agriculture, tourism, transport, water, mining, fisheries, energy, and other needs. The impacts of climate change and the recent COVID-19 pandemic remain top priority in the Pacific region. This calls for direct investments to support blue-green initiatives to strengthen and increase productivity in key sectors of Pacific islands' economies.

Acknowledging PICs continue to confront the reality of ensuring sustainable management of terrestrial and marine natural resources and heritage, from the local to global levels, and the adaptation of individuals, communities and states to climate and environmental change and natural hazards. Notably, PICs ongoing need and urgency to prepare and respond to disasters and population related consequences remains.

Also acknowledging the various drivers that led to excessive unsustainable exploitation and exploration of resources in waters beyond the reefs and national jurisdictions, if not managed, can have devastating impacts on humanity.

Recognising the experiences and lessons learned and achieved from past integrated natural resource programmes demonstrably supported and addressed national priorities and development needs while delivering global environmental benefits or ecosystem goods and services that improve biodiversity, land degradation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and international waters.

Further recognising experience has shown that an integrated approach from ridge to reef and beyond is necessary for poverty reduction, sustainability, and capacity enhancement for small countries with few human resources to undertake projects. Therefore, each country planned and adopted, considering the importance of cross-sectoral integration, specific aspects of R2R and selected its own innovative and management approaches for testing covering: -

watershed catchment and coastal management, water/ sanitation management practices & agriculture systems, terrestrial/coastal/marine protected areas, rehabilitation of degraded habitats (forest, coral reefs, mangroves, wetlands), climate change adaptation/mitigation and DRR/DRM, and enhancing land-sea ecosystems connectivity.

Noting that the national and regional projects make up the Ridge to Reef program, not only responded to national priorities with global environmental benefits, but also responded to the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation and multiple sections of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, Framework Convention on Climate Change, Convention on Law of the Sea, Sustainable Development Goals, Rio+20 Outcomes Document, Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Samoa Pathway, and as a necessary step toward reducing poverty and sustaining island livelihoods.

Acknowledging that innovative capacity building programs and partnership with the academic community remained key to sustaining program impact by developing local human capital and a network of local leaders/chiefs and enabling the transition to integrated ridge to reef approaches.

Recognising that the R2R program was the testing ground for longer term replication, mainstreaming and scaling up of innovative integrated natural resources management approaches that may be applicable for the Pacific SIDS and other regions. Notably, the R2R program was also designed to prepare the countries for up-scaling by providing the requisite supportive governance in terms of mainstreamed enabling policies, responsive institutions, and trained personnel.

Underlining that the R2R approach provides the appropriate framework for multi-focal projects addressing environmental and natural resource management issues in priority catchments and their linked coastal areas, as initially envisaged in the Strategic Action Programme for International Waters of the Pacific Islands Region approved by Pacific Forum Leaders.

Also underlining policy actions in each R2R focal area intended to complement each other to promote a truly integrated approach in managing biological diversity and other natural resources. The R2R program seeks to focus on innovation, testing, and catalysing implementation of cutting-edge methodologies, technology, and policy reforms with the objective of enabling replication and future scaling-up of integrated R2R approaches.

**WE, THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES, PARTNER AGENCIES,
CIVIL SOCIETIES, ACADEMIA AND COMMUNITIES THEREFORE:**

Adopts and declares support for the application of the ridge to reef concept as an integrated approach to natural resource governance, sustainable use and management, and climate resilience cross-sectorally along the land to sea continuum.

Further declares and affirms support for a three-stage R2R mainstreaming with a unifying gender and socially inclusive message be communicated, disseminated, and discussed in the PICs, such that:

“Optimising benefits of R2R mainstreaming by ensuring that natural capital (ecosystems and the EGS they provide) are sustainably transformed into environmental, economic and financial assets based on governance-oriented, holistic, gender and socially inclusive, sustainable and resiliency-focused processes”.

- i. Scaling up communication, advocacy, and social marketing campaigns based on spatial, bio-geological, climatic, policy, governance and stakeholders’ integrated analysis and unifying message of optimising R2R benefit flows in PICs’ land-sea areas;
- ii. Replicating participatory integrated R2R site planning with envisioned R2R benefit flows at the local, sub-national, and national levels; and
- iii. Replicating R2R implementation of approved integrated R2R site plans to realise R2R benefit flows at the local, sub-national and national levels.

**MADE ON 21st JANUARY 2022 AT THE FINAL REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE
PACIFIC REGIONAL INTERNATIONAL WATERS RIDGE TO REEF PROJECT**



Mainstreaming a Ridge to Reef Approach for sustainable development in the Pacific

Conceptual Framework

1

What is the Pacific R2R Programme?

The Pacific Ridge to Reef (R2R) Programme is a multi-country, multi-GEF agency programmatic initiative guiding the coordinated investment of US\$90 million in GEF grant funding across multiple focal areas of biodiversity conservation, land degradation, climate change adaptation and mitigation, sustainable land management, sustainable forest management, and international waters in Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Operating across 14 Pacific Island countries, the programme aims to deliver tangible and quantifiable local and global environmental benefits by focusing on cross-cutting approaches to water, land, and coastal management with linkages across GEF focal areas including: biodiversity, land degradation, international waters, sustainable forest management, climate mitigation and adaptation and capacity development.

The programme is implemented by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Executed regionally by the Pacific Community through the Pacific Regional Ridge to Reef International Waters project (Pacific Regional R2R IW), the R2R Programme is supported by the Regional Programme Coordination Unit (RPCU) in areas of science-based planning, human capital development, policy and strategic planning, results-based management, and knowledge sharing.

Pacific R2R participating countries include: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshal Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.



Benefits of the R2R Approach

- The Pacific R2R Programme aims to maintain and enhance Pacific Island Countries (PICs) ecosystem goods and services through integrated approaches to land, water, forest, biodiversity, and coastal resource management that contribute to poverty reduction, sustainable livelihoods, and climate resilience.
- The R2R approach explores and targets ways to reduce the transfers of chemicals, nutrients and sediments from agriculture, forestry in catchments, and untreated wastewater to maintain and enhance ecosystem services by minimizing the damage from land to coastal ecosystems, including forests, agricultural lands, watersheds, coral reefs, and coastal waters.
- Improves climate resilience by supporting the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture, deforestation, forest and coastal degradation and increased carbon sequestration.
- The distinct inter-connection between land, water, and coastal systems in Pacific Small Islands Developing States (PSIDS), coupled with their high vulnerability to climatic changes and limited human resource capacity make a strong case for the R2R approach in the Pacific.
- Operating across 14 PSIDS, participating countries have the opportunity to strengthen capacity to successfully demonstrate and transfer technology to support targeted vulnerable areas, improve livelihoods and public health, and upscale their effective R2R mainstreaming efforts to support countries in achieving their sustainable development goals.
- A “whole of ecosystem” and “whole of island” approach ensures that policies, multiple sectors, agencies, and community interests are properly considered and integrated in the planning and management of resources.



R2R Mainstreaming: From Strategy into Reality

What is Mainstreaming R2R?

Mainstreaming is the “process of embedding R2R approach and processes into national, sub-national, and community policies, strategies, programs, and practices to ensure that the ecosystems and EGS in various land-sea formations in PICs are maintained and enhanced to help reduce poverty, sustain livelihoods and build up climate resilience”.

Effectively, mainstreaming R2R is better guided by analysis of various national (and regional) sustainable development planning processes, strategic frameworks, and related activities, including results of assessments for effectively mainstreaming R2R. The assessment should highlight the appropriate mainstreaming strategy, the appropriate steering platform upon which the mainstreaming shall take place, specify cooperation landscape and corresponding processes necessary and appropriate for mainstreaming R2R at the case study sites, and ultimately in the Pacific Region.

A [technical report](#) documenting options for mainstreaming R2R in the Pacific context provides the bases on the various entry points pivotal to securing ecosystems goods and services, ensuring food security and enhancing climate resilience of communities.

What are the Strategies for Mainstreaming R2R?

IF national, sub-national and local stakeholders understand and value mainstreaming R2R (IWRM/ICM) approaches in their major land-sea forms to ensure the sustainable supply of ecosystems goods and services to meet their community needs and improve resiliency as a result of:

- Scaling up R2R mainstreaming of advocacy and social marketing communication campaigns based on results of comprehensive analysis and unifying messages of optimizing R2R benefit flows in PICs’ land-sea areas,
- Replicating participatory integrated R2R planning with envisioned R2R benefit flows at the local, sub-national and national levels, and
- Replicating R2R implementation of approved integrated R2R plans to realise R2R benefit flows at the local, sub-national and national levels,

THEN, the GEF Pacific R2R programme through its Regional IW Ridge to Reef (IW R2R) project has substantially supported the PICs efforts to mainstream R2R approaches for integrating protection, restoration, and development of land, water, forests, coastal resources, and biodiversity;

THEREBY, significantly contributing towards the PICs R2R vision of “maintained and enhanced PIC’s ecosystem goods and services” to help reduce poverty, sustain livelihoods, and build climate resilience.

Programme-based Approach for Mainstreaming R2R

A 'framework document' or a 'Practitioners guide for mainstreaming R2R in the Pacific Region' will support efforts rolling out a programme-based R2R mainstreaming at the national, sub-national and site levels. The guide broadens the knowledge of, and equips key officials and staff of development organisations, actors of relevant sectors, project teams, advisors and consultants, researchers, academicians, NGOs, and media groups, in mainstreaming R2R.

Seven key steps of a programme-based approach to R2R mainstreaming (see Figure 1 below):

1. Mapping and spatial analysis – Governance and Advocacy
2. Securing buy-in and commitments
3. Communications and Advocacy
4. Prepare plan – Participatory process
5. Approval of Plan
6. Implementation
7. Monitoring and Evaluation

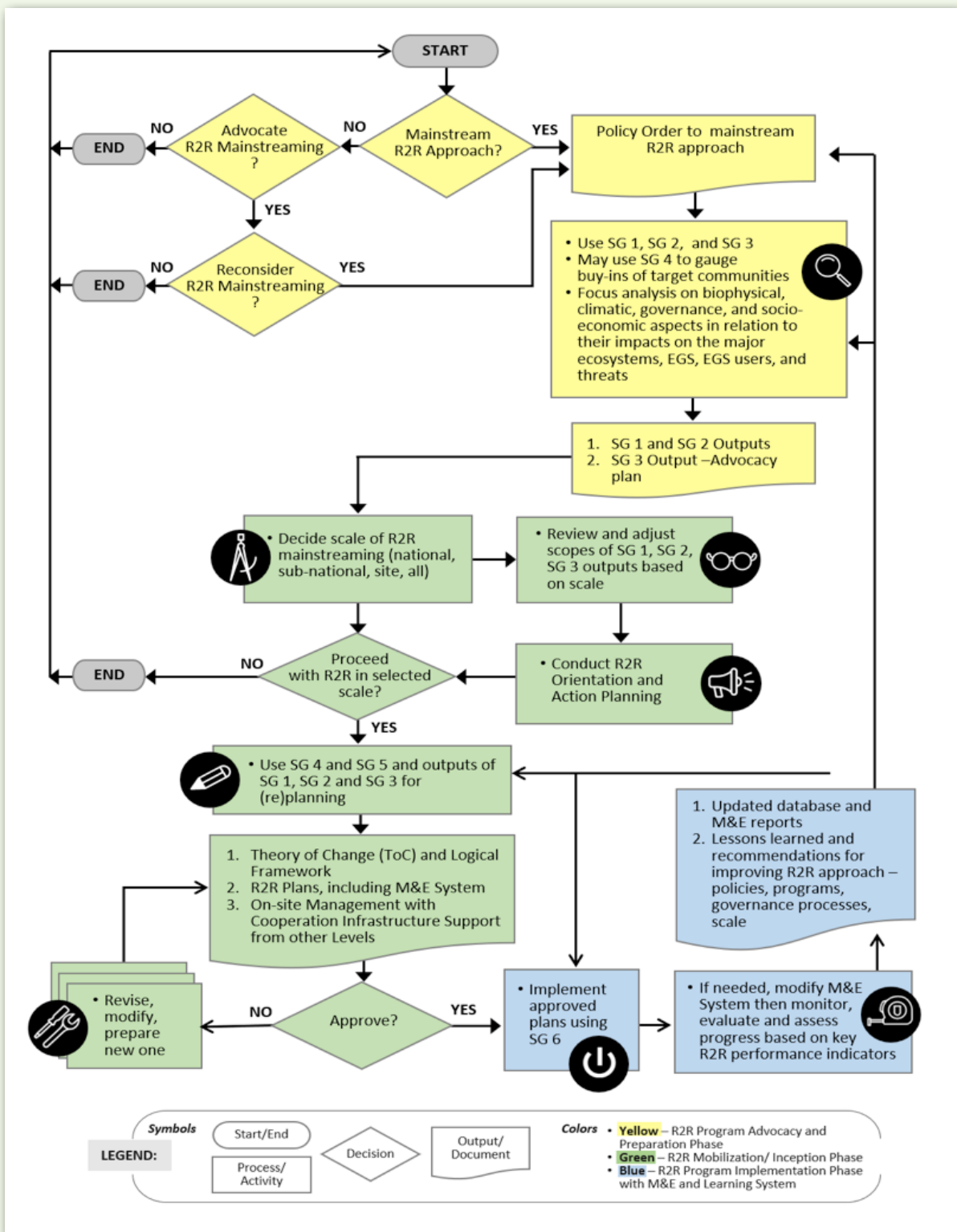
What are the Sub-Guides for Rolling Out the R2R Approach?

The 'Practitioner's Guide' emerged from the review of emerging best practices and lessons from various R2R-related frameworks, PICs' unique bio-geophysical and climatic features, policies, and governance processes, and lessons learned from the planning and implementation of IWRM, GEF IW R2R and STAR projects.

At a minimum the Guide precisely indicates the strategic approach, steering requirement, cooperation and institutional landscape, and appropriate processes, including necessary framework conditions, assumptions, and risks.

Six inter-related sub-guides (SGs) in the Guide designed for the programmatic approach to R2R mainstreaming – from preparation, mobilisation, and implementation with or without external donor and development partners - regardless of the scale of mainstreaming, as follows:

1. Sub-Guide 1 – Data Gathering, Mapping, and Analysing the Benefit Flows of Land-Sea Forms in Support of R2R Mainstreaming Strategies
2. Sub-Guide 2 – Identifying Relevant R2R Institutions and Establishing Governance Bodies for Steering, Directing, and Supporting Policy Development, Planning and Implementing R2R Mainstreaming Strategies at the Site, Sub-National, and National Levels
3. Sub-Guide 3 - Developing Strategies for Advocating R2R Policies and Programs at the Site, Sub-National, and National Levels
4. Sub-Guide 4 – Developing and Implementing Social Marketing Strategies for Target R2R Communities
5. Sub-Guide 5 – Preparing, Legitimizing, and Seeking Approval of R2R Plans at the Site, Sub-National, and National Levels
6. Sub-Guide 6 – Mobilizing, Organizing, and Strengthening R2R Site Project Management Units for Implementation



For more detail, the *Mainstreaming a Ridge to Reef Approach for Sustainable Development in the Pacific A Practitioners' Guide* can be accessed [here](#).

For more information contact

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 GEF Pacific Regional International Waters Ridge to Reef Project
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 Geoscience, Energy and Maritime Division,
 Pacific Community SPC - Private Mail Bag - Suva, Fiji
 Tel: (679) 3249 257 | Ext: 36257 Email: samasonis@spc.int

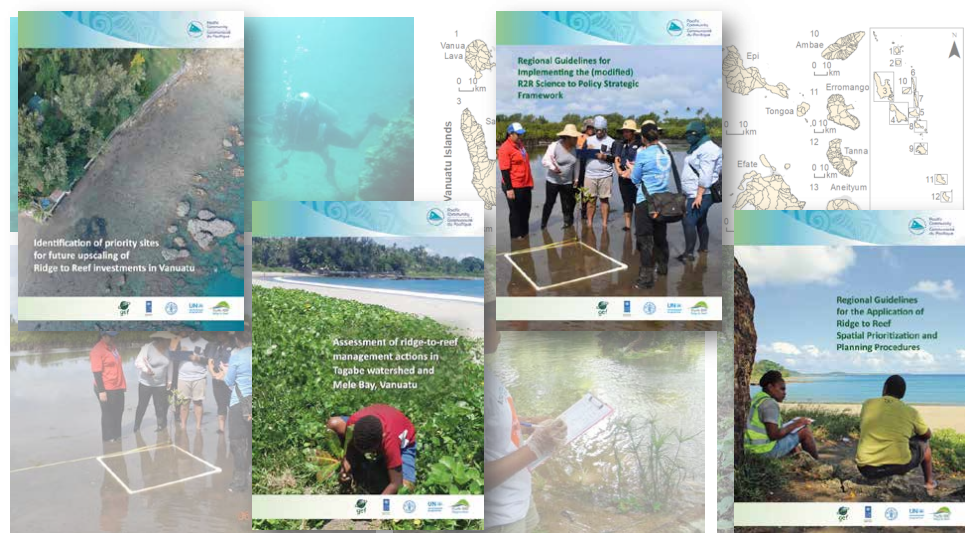
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www.facebook.com/PacificR2R

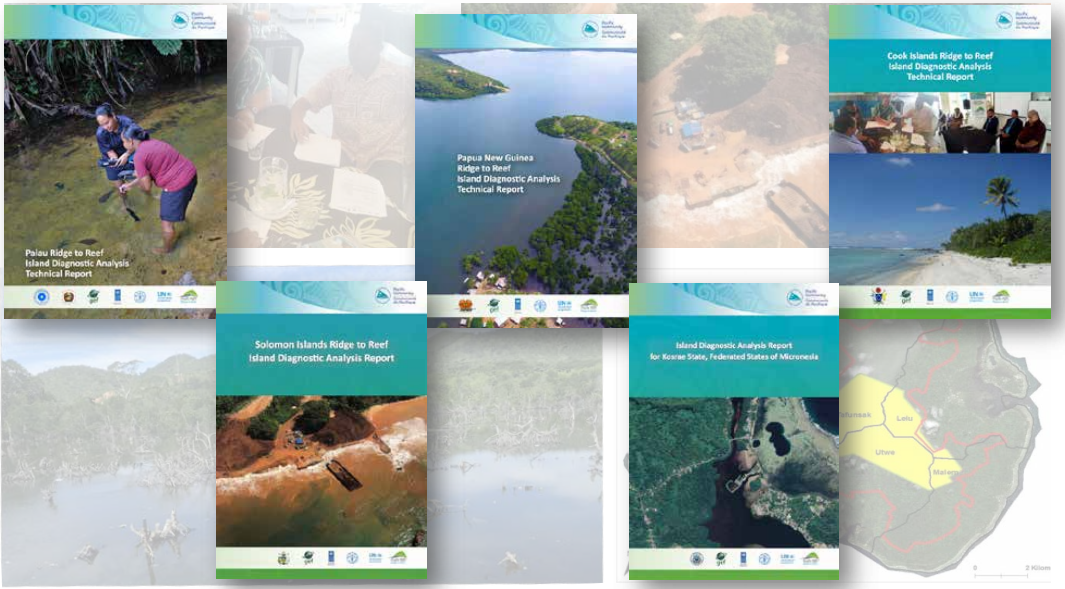
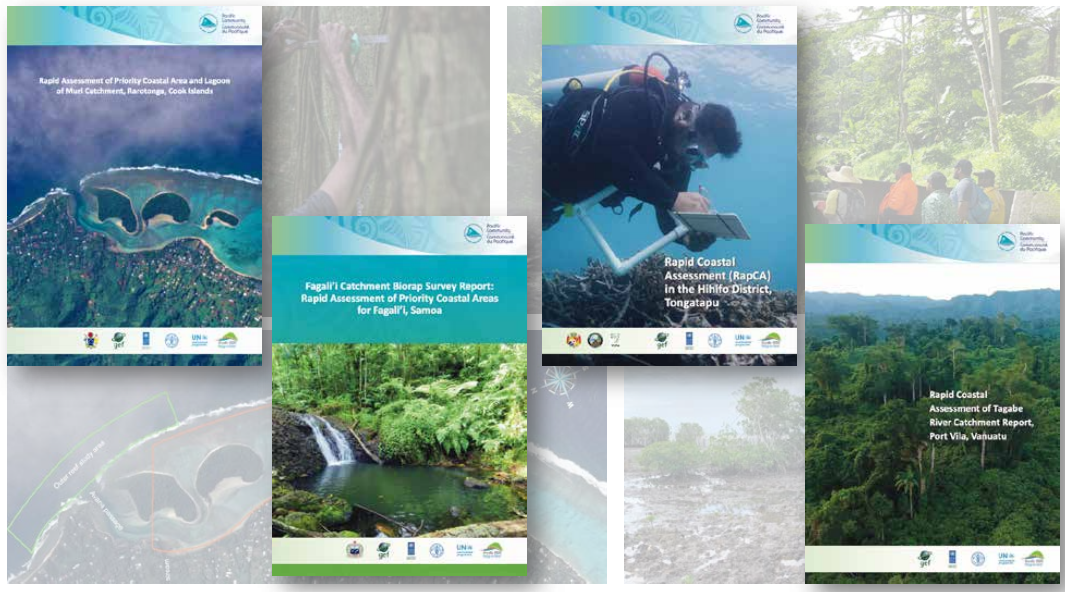
Photo credit

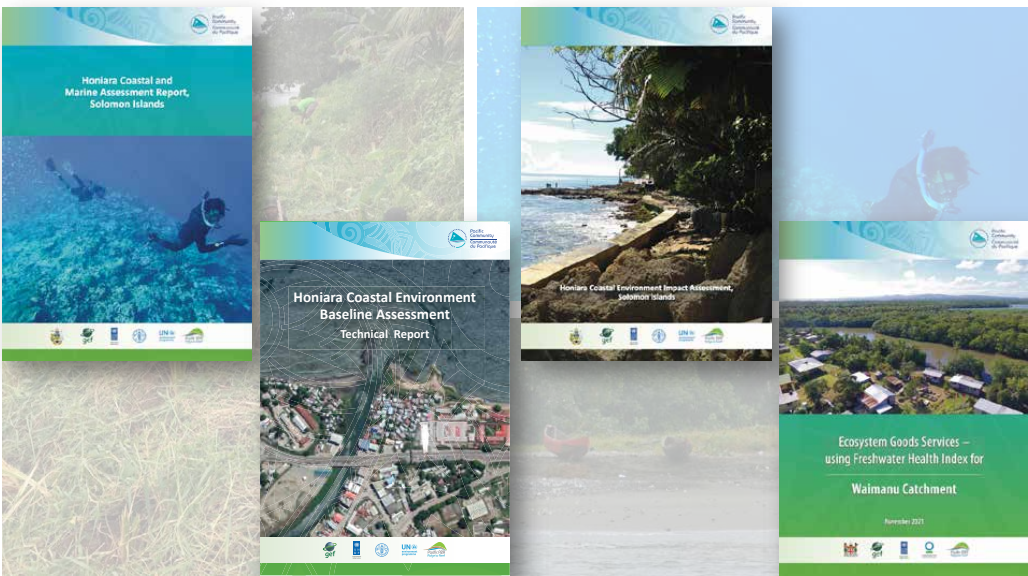
1,2 - Havilah Enterprise, 3 - Areta Areta,
 4 - RPCU/SPC, 5 - Tonga IW R2R Project

Attachment 4: Launching Documentary

R2R products









What is the Pacific R2R Programme?

The Pacific Ridge to Reef (R2R) Programme is a multi-country, multi-GEF agency programmatic initiative guiding the coordinated investment of US\$90 million in GEF grant funding across multiple focal areas of biodiversity conservation, land degradation, climate change adaptation and mitigation, sustainable land management, sustainable forest management, and international waters in Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Operating across 14 Pacific Island countries, the programme aims to deliver tangible and quantifiable local and global environmental benefits by focusing on cross-cutting approaches to water, land, and coastal management with linkages across GEF focal areas including biodiversity, land degradation, international waters, sustainable forest management, climate mitigation and adaptation and capacity development.

The programme is implemented by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Executed regionally by the Pacific Community through the Pacific Regional Ridge to Reef International Waters project (Pacific Regional R2R IW), the R2R Programme is supported by the Regional Programme Coordination Unit (RPCU) in areas of science-based planning, human capital development, policy and strategic planning, results-based management, and knowledge sharing.

Pacific R2R participating countries include: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tokelau, and Vanuatu.



OFAGA HE PULOTU – Tumaukifonua ke he Uluulu Tuapa-Uhomotu Marine Learning Centre



To strengthen conservation and sustainable use of land, water and marine areas and their biodiversity by building on their cultural heritage values through integrated national and community actions



What is the Pacific R2R Programme?

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GEF Pacific International Waters Ridge to Reef Project

Tongatapu

"Tokangaikina 'o e Toka'anga Vai' mo e Matātahi, ke Fakalivia 'a hono Malu' i mo e Fakasi'isi'i 'o e Fakatamaki', 'i Tonga"

NIGAAHI LELEI:

1. Fakasi'isi'i 'o e he haka'a e haka'alo.
2. Fetu'u Aino Fakatolonga/ Malu'i.

"Integrating Watershed and Coastal Area Management for Strengthened Water Protection and Coastal Hazard Reduction in Tonga"

BENEFITS:

1. Municipal Waste Pollution Reduction.
2. Conserved/protected Wetlands.

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Dumping of any form of litter is strictly prohibited. Offenders will be prosecuted.



Kiribati Portable Dry Litter Pigpen



Benefits of DL piggery

- Produce organic compost for home gardening
- Pig will naturally turn organic dry litter mixed with pig's manure, doing the work for you
- No cleaning of pig manure
- No odor from pigpen
- Reduce and help avoid water pollution, hence prevent health impact
- Pigs remain clean and healthy

Step by Step Guide

1. Use wire cutter to cut the side panel to 3.6 meter length (use heavy duty panel wire or something similar that allows proper ventilation).
2. Cut two 1.5 meters posts using 2x2" timber for front post and two 3.3 meters posts using 2x4" timber for the back (local timber is a good alternative).
3. Tie the side panel with post using the wire.
4. For roofing, drill 2 holes in the corner of 2x4 (1.6 meters length) and insert each to the four posts (front and back). Cut to 2.4 meters each of the five lengths from 2x2" timber as roofing rafters as shown in the photo.
5. Fill the pigpen with bedding using dry leaves and related materials.
6. Compostable dry litter shall be added daily to the pen, and especially placing dry litter materials on top of any pig manure.
7. Remove excessive compost material once the height of the compost measures 30cm above the pigpen ground level.
8. Regularly remove used materials and manure and add to compost pile outside.

Materials & Tools

Four 2.6 meters square heavy duty wire
Two 1.5 meters 2" timber
Two 3.3 meters 2" timber
Two 3.6 meters 2" timber
The wire and pliers




Alternative design using local materials



For more information Contact
Environment Conservation Division, MELAD
Phone: 7452105
Silembui Tarawa

Ridge to Reef Approach: Testing Spatial Prioritization in Tropical Island settings

Drivers of Ecosystem Degradation

- Climate
- Population dynamics
- Industry
- Institutional and Socio-economic conditions


Land to Sea Link

Land Systems → Freshwater → Coastal → Open Sea

Ridge to Reef Management
Collaborative knowledge generation and decision making for sustainable development


Support Collaborative Decision Making and Management

- Prioritize conservation areas at the national scale that can benefit both terrestrial & marine environments
- Support local decision making by testing policy actions & evaluating potential outcomes prior to implementation
- Provide information to foster dialogue between decision makers
- Supports on themselves decision making process



Benefits of R2R approach Vanuatu Spatial Prioritization Trial

- Forest restoration area
- Marine reserve
- Marine reserve



WORLD LEADER
First to test R2R approach in a tropical island setting

Restoring 10,000 ha of forest
+ Restoring 10,000 ha of marine
+ Restoring 10,000 ha of marine
+ Restoring 10,000 ha of marine

www.pacific-r2r.org @PacificR2R www.facebook.com/PacificR2R



Attachment 5: Opening Remarks (SPC)

Bula Vinaka All, on behalf of the SPC Director General, I welcome you all to the 6th and FINAL meeting of the Ridge to Reef Regional Steering Committee.

As we prepare to close the project in March it's perhaps important that we recognize the hard-working people who have contributed to implementing this project from the start. Several people have moved on in their careers but the majority of whom are still in this committee. And I'm referring to the host agencies and GEF Operational Points and Project Managers and your country project committees – Vinaka. We know it has not been an easy task to implement such an ambitious program and project.

As the project's executing agency, SPC has been associated with the project as your region's principal scientific and technical organization working alongside you for many years to build our broader Pacific resilience. This includes work in over 20 sectors including cross-cutting areas such as human rights and culture and continues to be strategically guided by our (members and Secretariat's) recently endorsed SPC Strategic Plan 2021+, the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, the evolving and soon to be endorsed Blue Pacific Strategy, the Samoa Pathway, and commitments on Sustainable Development goals.

Additionally, I'd ask we remember that the Pacific R2R IW regional project strongly supports a national approach to delivering the work, by working alongside countries to strengthen national frameworks and operational systems at the country level. And for this SPC also acknowledges UNDP, UNE, FAO, GEF and other partners supporting project implementation where they have been.

Through our demonstrated experience over the last many years, SPC has continued to support the delivery GEF investments over the last many years and this of course more recently includes the Pacific Ridge to Reef Programme and all its fifteen (15) child projects to deliver on their GEF focal areas, and national development priorities and aspirations.

As you all know, it hasn't been smooth sailing for SPC as the executing agency of the Regional International Waters Ridge to Reef project, as well as the coordinating unit responsible for the GEF Pacific Ridge to Reef Programme. Despite the challenges, there was an expectation that the child R2R projects can in fact work together in achieving an integrated programmatic approach. This was considered important to be able to tick the GEF boxes in delivering on GEF indicators which are set high based on SDGs, linked to global and national framework.

Moreover, not only does the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic cut across all SPC programmes, the extent of its influence and disruption has cost the project dearly in our efforts to deliver against targets and produce quality results. There was progress and efforts continue through implementation and generating results, as demonstrated through the adaptive management measures used, during these challenges.

As we observed, things were progressing in the right direction following the midterm review ending June 2019 as the project gained momentum in implementing activities that would have produced the planned outputs, if not for the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, it is evident from the results that even with the full knowledge of the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic and the operational challenges hindering progress, the countries continue to demonstrate their commitments to adapt and progress implementation.

As the project ends, there are many lessons learned to draw from the programmatic and integrated approaches in the GEF Pacific Ridge to Reef Programme. The Pacific Community encourages strategic considerations and dialogue on this good work so that we might be able to support you in progressing to a next project should this come into fruition.

With that said, the Pacific Community is happy to officially open this meeting and I look forward to the outcomes in the coming days. Vinaka.

Attachment 6: Welcoming Remarks (UNDP)

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge all the national government representatives – including Directors Permanent Secretaries, also Ms Rhonda Robinson from the Pacific Community, the RPCU as well as all the implementation units and development partners. With all protocols observed, Bula Vinaka to everybody, on behalf of UNDP I am very pleased to warmly welcome all of you to the Sixth and Final Steering Committee of the Regional Ridge-to-Reef Project.

My name is Justine Shone, and I am relatively new to Fiji and into this position as team leader for the RST Team based here with UNDP. I understand from colleagues in the office that apparently that it only seems like yesterday since implementation commenced on the project, but it was in September 2015, so it was quite some time ago, so there is a wealth of experience and application.

But obviously as have just mentioned by Rhonda, we move forward to the 1st of March where the project will be closing. Having had extensions it is now time to close, and there are certain implications with that, and we will discuss this over the next day or two regarding understanding and potential ways we can use the funding that is available, otherwise funds would have to be returned.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the donor agency, the Global Environment Facility and the commitments towards the development and Pacific Island countries and with this project, with the support of GEF, much has been achieved.

Several challenges have occurred regarding the Covid pandemic and the implications on that with regards to implementation of projects and priorities to the Pacific, as we are all aware are no exception to having at least three waves, and more recently with Kiribati and the Solomon Islands where there has been a new uptake in cases. Our thoughts with them as well as, like us, they continue to go through this Covid crisis that we have.

I would like to address the achievements of the projects. Much has been achieved against the financial disbursement of \$10 million, \$9 million has been dispersed. There have been multiple trainings that have been accomplished, completing postgraduate certificates and diplomas and frameworks for mainstreaming for the R2R approach in the Pacific region as well and this includes practitioners' guides for implementation, numerous reports and technical assessments really supporting and building capacity with the respective countries.

The terminal evaluation, many of you will be aware of that – I would like to raise that this is an ongoing assessment, which is almost at the final stages, so we look forward to receiving this. I understand there will be preliminary evaluations provided early next week. I think there will be a lot of positive lessons that we can take from that to hopefully position ourselves to move forward with the second phase or some type of reincarnation of what we have been able to successfully achieve.

On the operational closure of the project, as mentioned the project will be closed as of March 1st and we would continue to seek your collaboration and participation and we are there to really support it from when needed to ensure that the closing is done in a timely manner.

The total funds currently unspent totalling over USD \$1 million, if there are ways that we can work together to consider utilizing or acquitting as much funds as possible because an additional extension is no longer possible. If we can do that, I think it would be a great benefit to all the different countries but also to the beneficiaries on the ground as well - noting that Covid has restricted us greatly. In the work that we have been able to do, this is something we will be discussing in the next few days and potentially there may be some ideas that we can come up with in the next six weeks in how we can utilize those funds which would be beneficial to all of us.

Finally, UNDP remains and is very honoured to partner with everybody, with SPC, the national governments and development partners to implement this project. Our enduring commitment is to improve resilience of the Pacific Island nations to help all of them, particularly the rich biodiversity and security of ecosystems.

I really wish everyone the very best of deliberations over the next day or two and all your ambitions beyond this project as well.

Thank you very much and I look forward to the meetings.

Attachment 7: Graduation Ceremony programme



You are cordially invited to the Ridge to Reef
Online Graduation Ceremony

Friday 21st January 2022
12.15pm (Fiji Time)

<https://jcu.zoom.us/j/83804631724?pwd=L1c0RHYxRnFDeTg4MVB1bFphRE92QT09>

Password: 072216

Please join us in celebrating the
Completion of the Graduate Diploma
of R2R Sustainable Development



Graduation Program

Online Completion Ceremony

Graduate Diploma of R2R Sustainable Development

Order of Proceedings

Opening Prayer

Pastor Jarrett Suniula - Of Every Nation Church in Fiji

Master of Ceremonies

Dr Janine Sheaves - College of Science and Engineering, JCU

Welcome Address

Professor Marcus Sheaves - Distinguished professor, College of Science and Engineering, JCU.

Keynote Address

Professor Ron White, Dean, Science and Engineering, JCU.

Presentation of Certificates

by Samasoni Sauni - Regional Coordinator, GEF Pacific Ridge to Reef Programme

Graduating Students Address

Dr. Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo

End of Programme.

Congratulations to all.





Graduating students

Anderson Anjo
 Umai Basilus
 Sereseini Dikalouniwai
 Muraai Herman
 Heimata Karika
 Heather Ketebengang
 Crispina Konelio
 Leena S.M Mesebeluu
 Pesega Lifuka Samuelu
 Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo
 Feagaiga Penivao
 Lamese Saamu
 Rolenas Tavue Baereleo



James Cook University Postgraduate Diploma in Ridge to Reef Sustainable Development 2022 Graduands



Anderson Anjo
Papua New Guinea



Umai Basilus
Palau



Sereseini Dikalouniwai
Fiji



Muraai Herman
Cook Islands



Heimata Karika
Cook Islands



Heather Ketebengang
Palau



Crispina Konelio
Niue



Leena S.M Mesebeluu
Palau



Pesega Lifuka Samuelu
Tuvalu



Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo
Tonga



Feagaiga Penivao
Tuvalu



Lamese Saamu
Tuvalu



Rolenas Tavue Baereleo
Vanuatu





GEF IW R2R/ RSC.6/WP.1
Date: 17 January, 2022
Original: English

**Sixth 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 & highlands
Coastal Management to Preserve Ecosystem Services, Store Carbon,
Improve Climate Resilience and Sustain Livelihoods in Pacific Island Countries*

Suva, Fiji 20th to 21st January 2022

Outcomes of the Investment Forum and Roundtable Panel Discussion

Summary:

This document presents the outcomes of the Investment Forum and Roundtable Panel Discussion. There was general support and appreciation of the range of R2R products generated by the GEF Pacific R2R Programme and covering both STAR and IW R2R child projects. The participants also welcome the proposed declaration and framework for mainstreaming R2R for sustainable development in PICs. The highlight of the Investment Forum was the high-level Panel Discussion with a keynote address from Samoa Minister for Natural Resources and Environment.

The record of the Investment Forum is appended as **Attachment 1**

Recommendation:

The meeting is invited to use the outcomes to inform further discussion and decisions specific to the utility of R2R products, the proposed declaration & framework for mainstreaming R2R, and the next R2R project concepts and proposals.



Outcomes of the Investment Forum and Roundtable Panel Discussion

1. Introduction

1. Twenty-two (22) participants attended the Investment Forum from GEF R2R implementing agencies in Fiji, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga, UNDP Pacific Office, USP and others. The 2-day Investment Forum was done virtually broadcasting from the Pacific Community regional office in Suva, Fiji from 11th to 12th January 2022.

Session 1 – Introduction and Reflection on R2R Products

2. The Participants noted the range of R2R products during the virtual tour of the R2R website and recognising the most visited page in the order of frequent visits being the resource library and meeting notes. The R2R products and documentations have been downloaded, to date, more than ten thousand (10,000) times.
3. The Participants expressed appreciation for R2R products been showcased and underline the important work of every stakeholder who were engaged directly and indirectly in project implementation leading up to reporting and publications. The forum considered issues of ownership and strengthening and building local capacity building tying into fieldwork, research and publications. For instance, several countries are already using the regional guidelines to implement spatial prioritization procedures to model and select priority sites in watershed catchments.
4. There was interest to upscale and replicate several project elements such as spatial prioritization modelling work to identify and select priority sites to protect, at both the national and subnational levels. Participants supported having this focus are taken up in future new R2R projects. Similar interests were also expressed in support of the R2R products however countries will need to select the products best suited to domestic context and circumstances.
5. The Participants underlined the importance of capacity building and traditional knowledge as priority considerations in the next new R2R project.

Session 2 – R2R Investment Forum Declaration & the Framework for Mainstreaming R2R Approach

6. The Participants welcomed the ‘zero draft’ declaration and framework for mainstreaming R2R approach in sustainable development in PICs. The rationale and intent towards adding value and support to mainstreaming R2R through future R2R investments or opportunities through other potential donors. Participants generally supported ongoing work on another new regional R2R project.
7. Country Representatives and Participants requested adequate reference given to traditional knowledge, community engagement, capacity building, knowledge building, gender, and technological innovations. These are important drivers observed to be successful making progress and impacts in national R2R demonstration projects. The forum noted these important areas and are already reflected in the documentations on mainstreaming R2R approach including the Practitioner’s Guide, the declaration, and the framework under discussion.

Session 3 – Summary from Regional Investment Forum High-level Webinar: Across boundaries and sectors: Lessons from implementing Integrated Ridge-to-Reef Approaches in the Pacific for sustainable development

The design of the webinar used the Most Significant Change technique to harness in the short time allocated significant results and lessons from implementation, and ways forward driven and articulated by national stakeholders. The MSC technique was used by the Pacific R2R Programme in 2019 in Building consensus in environmental governance through rapid application of Most Significant Change technique <https://www.pacificr2r.org/news/building-consensus-environmental-governance-through-rapid-application-most-significant-change>

There were 116 registered attendees for the event from 5 continents, including speakers, panellists, and moderator. Full list of speakers and panellists in Annex 1 Session 3. Access [here](#) for full webinar video.

8. Key themes that emerged from the panel discussion:

- Effective partnerships and networks are fundamental in effective implementation and sustainability
- Taking a whole of government/island approach to ensure complementation and value-added
- Support integrated framework and approaches that include beyond the reef - from Highlands to High Seas
- Mainstreaming R2R reporting to high-level national reporting mechanisms can secure buy-in and broad stakeholder support
- Communication and stakeholder engagement throughout implementation is fundamental to securing and maintaining commitment and collaboration of partners, and adaptive management
- P3D modelling effective for stakeholder engagement, consensus building, planning and implementation
- Opportunities for green/blue technology e.g., Vetiver grass for coastal and riverbank protection
- Understanding resource use to inform planning is critical
- Evidence-base and data, including traditional knowledge is the basis to determine relevance and priority (data to decision making, science-social-policy-legal interface, and knowledge management process)
- Role of a multi-disciplinary scientific and technical body is critical to support natural resources management projects.
- Behaviour change requires adequate resourcing to consider awareness and education, infrastructure, development of communities of practice, development of policy and legislation
- People-centred approaches are considered in design and implementation
- Recognise the important links with private sector – tourism and livelihoods
- Capacity building (resource owners, youth, women, schools, NGOs and local

government) and leveraging off existing national capacities to develop and implement management plans and actively participate in its governance for sustained outcomes

- Accredited education programs incentivise networks, and contribute to capacity and sustainability of outcomes
- Timing program to support and complement project implementation
- Having a sustainable funding strategy is key to sustainability (e.g., home grown trust funds, funding mechanisms)
- Targeted interventions and appropriate resourcing to the needs of communities and national governments
- Thematic areas of governance, research and technology and spatial planning and management to be strengthened

Advocacy statement from Panellist



9. Dr. Josie Tamate, Niue – Integrated approaches are not easy but necessary and we must raise our ambition to consider transboundary challenges from high lands to high seas.



10. Ms. Rosamond Bing, Tonga – The R2R Projects at the national and regional level implementation is demonstrated as a proof of concept and that there can be enduring benefits to our communities. The scaling up to the high lands to high seas concept should be considered for a sustainable way forward.



11. Mr. Malaki Iakopo, Samoa – R2R approaches to resource management promotes collaboration, coordination and sustainability and should be implemented from the high lands to the high seas.



12. Mr. Chanel Iroi, Solomon Islands – On the R2R approach, to continue this initiative in the future as it is a good approach in terms of sustainable management of protected areas. It is very important that we involve the resource owners in understanding the issues surrounding the R2R sustainable management, ensuring that their needs are met, ensuring a win-win situation.



13. Ms. Sandeep Singh, Fiji – All future projects to adopt an all-inclusive approach that is science evidence based with traditional knowledge incorporated with the understanding that all ecosystems are inter-connected from mountain ridges to ocean. High land to high seas is the way forward.

Conclusion

14. The meeting is invited to use the outcomes to inform further discussion and decisions specific to the utility of R2R products, the proposed declaration & framework for mainstreaming R2R, and the next R2R project concepts and proposals.

Annex 1 Records of Investment Forum

Introduction

1. The Investment Forum for the GEF Pacific International Waters Ridge to Reef Programme (IW R2R) was held on 11 and 12 January 2022. The meeting was conducted virtually. The provisional agenda is attached as **Annex 1**.
2. In sessions 1 and 2, there were twenty-two (22) participants from GEF R2R implementing agencies in Fiji, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga, UNDP Pacific Office, Suva, and the Pacific Community (SPC) attended. The list of participants is attached as **Annex 2**.

Agenda Item 1: Opening

Agenda Item 1.1: Meeting Preliminaries and Prayer

3. George Naboutuiloma of SPC GEM, delivered an opening prayer.
4. Participants from around the region gave a brief introduction before the start of the meeting proper.

Agenda Item 1.2: Opening remarks on behalf of the Secretariat

5. Ms Rhonda Robinson, GEM Division Acting Director and Deputy Director of SPC's Disaster and Community Resilience Programme welcomed participants to the Investment Forum, a first for the project. She paid tribute and recognised commitments of the Heads of States of 13 Pacific SIDS who developed, and in 1997 endorsed a GEF International Waters Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for Pacific Island Countries. She highlighted that the R2R Investment Forum provided a unique opportunity to collectively reflect on future R2R investments and how it may better support the sustainable development and aspirations of our nations, our region, and more broadly – people and planet. Ms Robinson added that delegates would have the opportunity to consider the zero draft of a declaration and framework for mainstreaming R2R approach in sustainable development in the Pacific region as a reaffirmation of our commitment to maintaining and enhancing ecosystem functions and services that underpin our futures. In conclusion, she said that the results of the R2R investments in the region demonstrates successes and lessons in testing innovative measures that may be upscaled and replicated in the future.



Ms Rhonda Robinson
Pacific Community

Agenda Item 2: Organisation of the Forum

Agenda Item 2.1: Call the meeting to Order

6. Ms Rhonda Robinson, Acting Director and Deputy Director of SPC's Disaster and Community Resilience Programme in the GEM Division called the meeting to order.

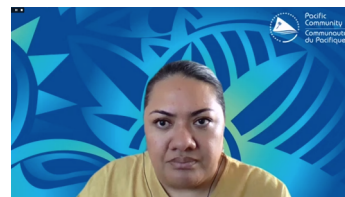
Agenda Item 2.4: Meeting documents & arrangements

7. Mr Samasoni Sauni, Regional Programme Coordinator (RPC) of SPC advised participants on the meeting documentation available online on the R2R portal (www.pacific-r2r.org) under the "Investment Forum" tab.
8. He also highlighted the purpose of the Investment Forum, which provided an opportunity to showcase the range of R2R products, applications, and toolkits. He said that the products, applications, and toolkits formed the basis to support the priority community based IWRM, IW R2R, and CCAM actions; working towards mainstreaming of R2R approaches for sustainable development in the Pacific Island countries.

Agenda Item 4: Session 1 – Introduction and Reflection on R2R Products

9. Dr Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo and Navneet Lal of the Secretariat took participants on a virtual tour of the R2R website. The meeting noted following updates and key statistics:

- Over 12,000 users
- Most visited page (in order of frequency of visits) – Resource library, meeting notes
- Documentation downloads – more than 11,000 times



*Dr Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo
Pacific Community*

Agenda Item 4.1 – SPC staff and consultants introduce R2R SPC products for deliberation

Overview

10. Mr Sauni of the Secretariat provided an overview of the Regional International Waters Ridge to Reef (IW R2R) Project, including its goals and objectives. The Forum noted the 14 participating Pacific Island countries of the Regional IW R2R Project. Mr Sauni acknowledged the traditional leaders, government officials, stakeholders, researchers and consultants, partner agencies and communities, and thanked them for their cooperation and collaboration in implementing the project activities. He added that the Secretariat over the 4-5 years in its efforts to try to merge integrated catchment and coastal management had its share of challenges.



*Mr Samasoni Sauni
Pacific Community*

Spatial Prioritization Procedures & Trialling

11. Mr Sauni of the Secretariat introduced the presentation on Spatial Prioritization Procedures & Trialling. A joint presentation by Samasoni Sauni, Bradley Eichelberger, Sachindra Singh, and Nicholas Metherall. Mr Sauni focussed on Vanuatu, where the procedures originate in terms of early development noting the trial work that happened in Vanuatu and continuing to Solomon Islands. Bradley, the SPC consultant presented on the preliminary results of the trial in the Solomon Islands.



Bradley Eichelberger
Consultant

12. Mr Isoa Korovulavula of USP thanked Mr Sauni and Bradley for the comprehensive presentation. He asked the presenters, how were the locals involved in the work? He added that although the work was to with spatial analysis, it was critical in his view to get the locals involved and feel the ownership of that initiative. He added that likewise, in any other Pacific Island countries, the process of engagement of key stakeholders and government was important as they would be able to take ownership of the work moving forward.



Dr Isoa Korovulavula
USP

13. Ms Robinson thanked Mr Korovulavula for the valuable feedback, which was a common theme that he has raised with the team on several occasions and the Secretariat's engagement with the countries as well. Ms Robinson explained that the work initially was grounded on the Vanuatu experience and it has since been developed on that platform. She then asked Mr Sauni to share reflections about localising the technical and involved approaches with the local counterparts in government and civil society actors who are working in that space.

14. Mr Sauni mentioned that they were approached by Fiji's Department of Environment (in view of the data and information), to build a model catchment for Fiji. He stated that the guidelines to implement Spatial Prioritization is currently being used by Pacific Island countries to do their own land-sea modelling work with the support of SPC. Mr Sauni agreed with Mr Korovulavula's comments in terms of replication and upscaling this work in other countries and added that the project concepts that was going to the RSC next week, had a lot of room for this type of work to trial in Fiji and other Pacific Island countries. Mr Sauni added that the methodology needed to continually be enhanced and worked upon to suit the context of our countries and to be able to engage the local counterparts in the actual mechanics of collecting data and analysing the data in the model.

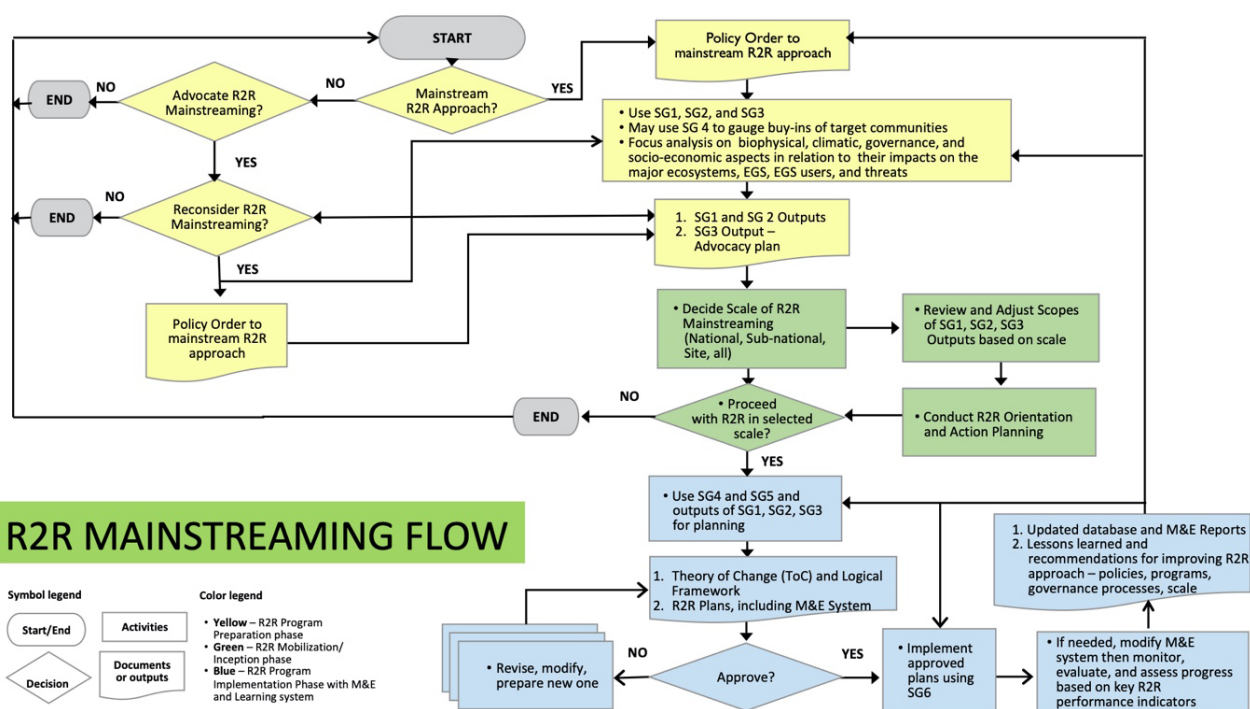
Mainstreaming R2R

15. RPCU-SPC Consultants, Dr Ernie S. Guiang and Team introduced the reports pertaining to mainstreaming R2R in PICs. The presentation looked at:

- i. R2R-related frameworks and key features as "Lens" in the Review process.
- ii. Analysis of documents related to "Testing of R2R Mainstreaming" and Focus Group Discussion conducted with focus on: The 'Givens' in PICs – geo-physical assets and climatic features, and Emerging key lessons learnt from testing R2R Mainstreaming.
- iii. A possible pathway for mainstreaming R2R approach in PICs.



Dr Ernie S
SPC Consultants

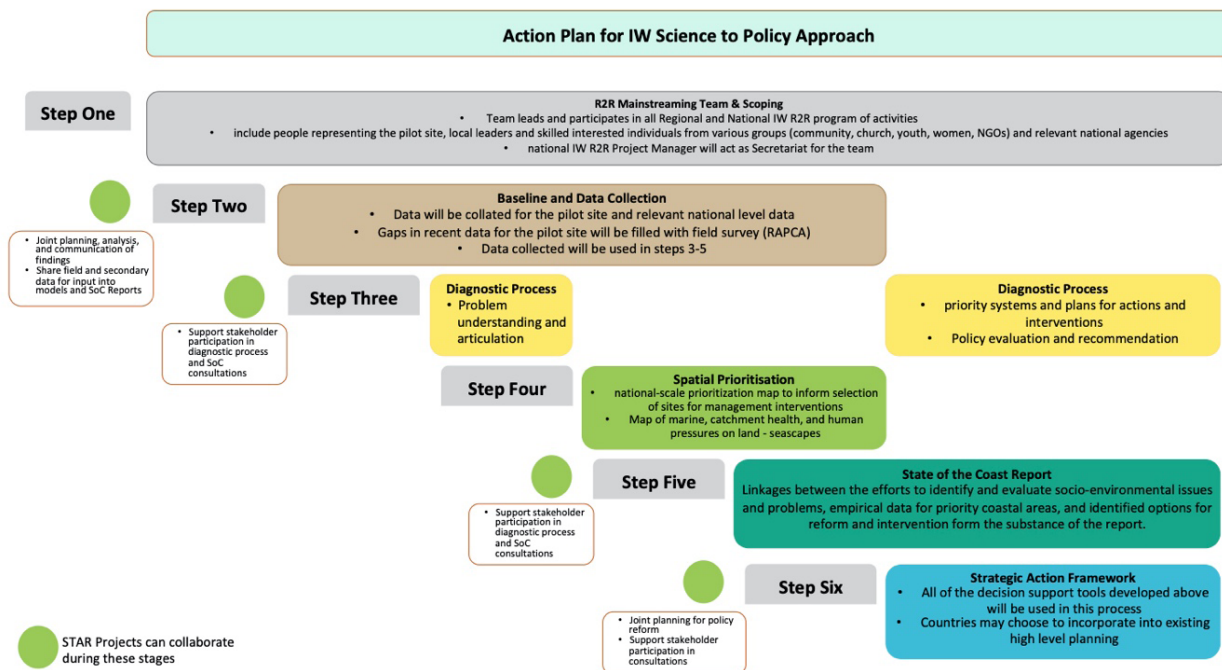


16. Ms Robinson of the Secretariat thanked Mr Guiang for the presentation and informed the meeting that a more detailed presentation was available on the R2R website. Ms Robinson than asked Mr Sauni for his reflections on the Mainstreaming work, the important part of capturing how we are doing it and how we can do it better moving forward.
17. Mr Sauni of the Secretariat thanked Mr Guiang and the team for the excellent work done on Mainstreaming. He stated that there was documentation online on the technical reports for mainstreaming R2R as well as a practitioner’s guide, and the links provided in the Framework presented. Mr Sauni highlighted that it was an experience to learn from the Mr Guiang and the team particularly the in-depth analysis performed in the six case study countries (Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Palau, Samoa, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu).
18. He added the experiences that were coming out of the report of the various means of mainstreaming R2R is quite rich and the experience that are documented in their research provide food for thought for mainstreaming. He further added that they have started R2R but haven't gone to the extent of mainstreaming in proper, so there is more work to be done in future investments that are coming our way as we roll out this framework.

Science to Policy

19. Ms Robinson of the Secretariat introduced the presentation on Science to Policy – Theory of Change Report by John Carreon and George Naboutuiloma of SPC. The presentation focussed on the Science to Policy Guidance Documents:
- Guidelines for conducting RapCA
 - Developing an Island Diagnostic Analysis
 - Terms of Reference for Developing State of the Coast Diagnostic Analysis and Reporting
 - State of the Coast (SoC) and Strategic Action Plan (SAP) – Standard Consultancy Template

The presentation also looked at the Country Choices i.e., a modified science-to-policy approach due to some countries preferring fulfilling some steps rather than completing going through the entire science-to-policy process. Mr Carreon emphasised that science perceived trends may be misleading so following the steps ensured that the decisions are evidence and science-based to be able to accurately inform, to the best of our ability, decisions made for policymaking.



20. Ms Robinson highlighted that the science to policy work has been progressing over the last few years and presented in different forms at previous RSCs and RSTCs, and she thanked John and George and the rest of the Science team for having the final work presented today, which will be carried through to next week as well with the learnings over the last 12 to 18 months towards project closure in the background.

21. Due to power outages in Suva, Fiji, Ms Robinson asked the Forum to take the two presentations (Capacity building & strengthening and Gender toolkits) not presented as presented. She added that the presentation PDFs were uploaded and available on the website.

Agenda Item 4.2 – Open Dialogue & Discussion

22. The Secretariat invited the participants to:

- (i) Evaluate contributions of R2R products and publications in ensuring medium to long term impacts of the current and future R2R investments make an impact and deliver on the overall conservation objectives of the GEF Pacific R2R Program taking into consideration development priorities of PICs.
- (ii) Identify opportunities for upscaling and replicating proven and tested innovative measures based on lessons learned and through implementing measures to manage catchment and coastal/marine ecosystems. Equally, encourage discussion on the utility and application of the products to support blue-green (nature-ecosystem based) initiatives to increase production of key sectors supporting vulnerable economies, livelihoods and ensuring ecosystem services in the current and post COVID-19 recovery period.

- (iii) Review priority focus areas set out in next phase project concepts and proposal and provide advice on priority and practical actions taken at the national level.

23. Mr Malaki lakopo of Samoa thanked the presenters for their well-prepared presentations and noted the sedimentation work carried out and welcomed similar work to be done in Samoa. He added that he appreciated the schematics and the frameworks presented for mainstreaming by the consultants, however it would take some time to go in-depth with each one. Mr lakopo than asked Mr Sauni of the Secretariat if he could take the participants through each of the three outcomes of Session 1.



*Mr Malaki Lakopo
Samoa*

- 24. Mr Sauni of the Secretariat explained in detail point (i) of the outcomes.
- 25. Regarding point i of the Outcomes, Mr Malaki lakopo of Samoa said that the presentations have been very educational and have given a lot of ideas on pushing through with the R2R work in Samoa. He agreed with point 1 stating that each of the 14 island countries have different issues and challenges and that the products may not fit everyone, however countries would be able to pick and choose which products fit them the best. Mr lakopo added that it was good to note that the products and upcoming projects were on the website.
- 26. DEPC-Vanuatu said that the products would be useful in the future and fully agreed with the comments from Samoa.
- 27. Mr Sauni of the Secretariat explained in detail point (ii) of the outcomes.
- 28. Regarding point (ii) of the Outcomes, Mr Malaki lakopo of Samoa explained the challenge they faced in Samoa in terms of bilateral projects being climate change and DRR focussed. He added that there was an opportunity to have another project dedicated to watershed catchment management and R2R approaches. Mr lakopo stated that Samoa supports another new regional R2R replacement project specifically looking into land-use management and provided support for point (ii).
- 29. DEPC-Vanuatu said the R2R approach should be upscaled to other islands and provinces in Vanuatu as this approach helps communities to see the connectivity from R2R and help them understand the importance of sustainable development.
- 30. Mr Sauni of the Secretariat explained in detail point (iii) of the outcomes.
- 31. Regarding point (iii) of the Outcomes, Mr Malaki lakopo of Samoa stated that although the presentation on Capacity Building wasn't presented, he said that this was a very important area to include in the next new R2R project. He added although there has been a lot of changes happening in the other projects areas, however, this was the only project offering priority trainings in terms of watershed management and coastal management.
- 32. Ms Robinson of the Secretariat thanked Mr lakopo for his comments. She mentioned that there would be more detailed discussions next week on the new concepts that were being developed.
- 33. DEPC-Vanuatu supported the additional area of capacity building developments in the next new R2R project.

Agenda Item 5: Session 2 – R2R Investment Forum Declaration & the Framework for Mainstreaming R2R Approach

Agenda Item 5.1: Introduction of ‘zero draft’ declaration for further discussion and finalization

34. Mr Sauni of the Secretariat outlined to the Forum the intentions of the Declaration.
35. Ms Robinson of the Secretariat thanked Mr Sauni and the team for these initiative and asked participants for their reflections on the Declaration. She added that the idea was when they bring this back to the RSTC/RSC next week that they would have a final version at that point.
36. Mr Malaki Iakopo of Samoa thanked the Secretariat for putting together the Declaration and providing an opportunity for participants to provide initial comments ahead of next week’s meeting. He added that it was important to note whether there is sufficient mention of traditional knowledge and community engagement, as well as capacity building and the importance of technology, capacity, and knowledge building in driving some initiatives from R2R in the islands, and the importance of gender inclusiveness in decision making.
37. Vanuatu fully supported a Stage 3 upscaling from the current project and thanked the Secretariat for putting together the Declaration. Vanuatu added that they will inform other relevant stakeholders and provide their views at the meetings next week.
38. Senson Mark of Papua New Guinea also agreed with comments made by Mr Iakopo of Samoa.
39. Mr Sauni of the Secretariat thanked Mr Iakopo for his points raised. He said this was just signalling the level of support and non-legally binding commitments to mainstreaming. Mr Sauni added that the Declaration was to add value to the process as we move forward to implement this in the region cross-sectorally and complementing related integrated initiatives in the natural resources management and governance space. He stated that they had removed the signatures page in the initial draft because of the inclusivity principle that includes everyone and stakeholders and communities supporting and believing in the ‘gospel’ of Mainstreaming R2R.

Agenda Item 5.2: Framework for Mainstreaming R2R Approach

40. Mr Sauni of the Secretariat introduced the presentation on Mainstreaming R2R Approach for Sustainable Development in the Pacific region – *Conceptual Framework*, a joint presentation by Samasoni Sauni and Shaleh Antonio of SPC and Ernie S. Guiang; presented by Mr Sauni. The presentation focussed on options for mainstreaming R2R in the Pacific context and the strategies for mainstreaming R2R Approach. Mr Sauni stated that the key message and statement underpinning R2R mainstreaming is such that:

IF national, sub-national and local stakeholders understand and value mainstreaming R2R (IWRM/ICM) approaches in their major land-sea forms to ensure the sustainable supply of ecosystems goods and services to meet their community needs and improve resiliency as a result of:

- Scaling up R2R mainstreaming of advocacy and social marketing communication campaigns based on results of comprehensive analysis and unifying messages of optimizing R2R benefit flows in PICs' land-sea areas,
- Replicating participatory integrated R2R planning with envisioned R2R benefit flows at the local, sub-national and national levels, and
- Replicating R2R implementation of approved integrated R2R plans to realise R2R benefit flows at the local, sub-national and national levels,

THEN, the GEF Pacific R2R programme through its Regional IW Ridge to Reef (IW R2R) project has substantially supported the PICs efforts to mainstream R2R approaches for integrating protection, restoration, and development of land, water, forests, coastal resources, and biodiversity;

THEREBY, significantly contributing towards the PICs R2R vision of "maintained and enhanced PIC's ecosystem goods and services" to help reduce poverty, sustain livelihoods, and build climate resilience.

Agenda Item 5.3: Group Discussion – for enhancement of 'zero draft' declaration

41. The Secretariat invited the Forum to:

- Reflect and discuss the zero-draft declaration with a view to enhance the document and reflect priority and relevant high-level messages and resolutions which seek to support the integration and mainstreaming of R2R in domestic policies and legislations relative to natural resources management and governance.
- Recognise that the regional resolution signals an opportunity for countries to renew their commitments towards integration and mainstreaming R2R in either planning process and/or adoption and issuance of new policies. The regional guidelines and toolkits provide useful reference for that purpose.
- Reflect on the importance of integrated natural resource management approach from land to sea, and from ridge to reef and beyond. The forum is requested to approve the proposed Regional Framework for R2R Natural Resource Governance is based on such approach, and the utility of land-sea modelling as a decision support tool.
- Submit the final declaration and the regional framework for the RSC consideration and approval. It is expected that the documents will be signed representatives of participating countries, civil societies, academia, and communities, and transmit to the next meeting of the Forum Leaders in 2022.

42. Mr Malaki Iakopo of Samoa showed his support and noted the advancement of those documentation for the upcoming meeting.
43. Mr Shaleh Antonio of the Secretariat thanked Mr Iakopo for his inputs. Mr Antonio stated that no one can talk about the Declaration without understanding the Mainstreaming R2R. He added that if participants looked at the Practitioner's Guide, all the comments mentioned earlier) by Mr Iakopo have already been embedded in the Mainstreaming Framework.
44. Ms Robinson of the Secretariat mentioned Vanuatu's agreement of the Outcomes. She said that they had an agreement on the intentions of the Declaration and the Framework for Mainstreaming R2R approach; and the agreement that we will take those two documents to the RSTC and RSC meetings next week. Ms Robinson added and thanked for support to annex the Mainstreaming Framework to the Declaration to give it a more in-depth, credibility and currency as a Declaration. She thanked Mr Malaki Iakopo who will brief the Chair from Samoa for next week's meeting.
45. Mr Sauni asked the participants to brief their head of delegations on the outcome of the Investment Forum (Progress made from the Forum and the revisions to the 'zero-draft' Declaration) and not re-open old discussions at the RSC meeting.
46. Dr Fononga Mangisi- Mafileo of the Secretariat talked about the Panel discussion to be held the next day from 2-3.15pm Fiji Time and that participants had to register for the event to get the unique link to be an attendee.
47. Ms Robinson of the Secretariat called the meeting to a close.

DAY 2

Agenda Item 6: Session 3 – Regional Investment Forum High-Level Webinar¹

Agenda Item 6.1: Overview: Across boundaries and sectors: Lessons from implementing Integrated Ridge-to-Reef Approaches in the Pacific for sustainable development

Access [here](#) for full webinar.

There were 116 registered attendees for the event from 5 continents, including speakers, panellists, and moderator.

Opening:

1. Dr Fononga Vainga Mangisi- Mafileo of SPC, the coordinator and moderator for the panel discussion provided housekeeping rules.
2. Pastor Jarrett Suniula of the Every Nation Church in Fiji delivered the opening prayer.

Agenda Item 6.2: Welcome remarks

3. Dr Paula Vivili, Deputy Director General and Head of Science and Capability of SPC delivered the welcome remarks. Dr Vivili said that while they would have preferred to have this panel face-to-face to discuss this important theme, the fact that the session was held virtually demonstrated its relevance and significance. He added that they were pleased that participating countries have had the opportunity to strengthen their capacity, to successfully demonstrate and transfer technology, to support targeted vulnerable areas, improve livelihoods and public health and upscale that effective mainstream efforts to support countries in achieving their development aspirations and SDGs. The GEF R2R programme has provided an opportunity for countries to develop and implement innovative, integrated approaches for the sustainable development of island economies and communities. And welcomed speakers and attendees to the High-Level Webinar.



*Dr Paula Vivili
Pacific Community*

For full speech, access [here](#).

¹ The design of the webinar used the Most Significant Change technique to harness in the short time allocated significant results and lessons from implementation, and ways forward. The MSC technique was used by the Pacific R2R Programme in 2019 in Building consensus in environmental governance through rapid application of Most Significant Change technique

<https://www.pacificr2r.org/news/building-consensus-environmental-governance-through-rapid-application-most-significant-change>

Agenda Item 6.3: Keynote

- Hon. Toeolesulusulu Cedric Posē Salesa Schuster, Minister for Natural Resource & Environment, Samoa delivered the keynote address. Hon. Schuster explained that the Pacific Ocean is the largest and deepest ocean basin on earth and as large ocean states it is important, to understand that interconnectivity between land, forest, water, and coast to ocean for sustainable development. He stated that our blue Pacific region is highly vulnerable to extreme weather events and pandemics, both present and future, therefore, there is an urgent need for nature-based solutions that will protect and restore nature whilst balancing it with an economic and social development needs for our people and national economies. Hon. Schuster added the need for us, as present custodians of our region to continue action with greater momentum from Highlands to High Seas, for future generations to survive and thrive.



Hon. Toeolesulusulu Cedric Posē Salesa Schuster
Samoa

For full speech, access [here](#).

- Dr Fononga Vainga Mangisi- Mafileo of SPC invited the speakers and panellists to switch on their videos and handed it over to the SPC technical support team to guide the team for a group photo.

Agenda Item 6.4: Panellists

- Dr Fononga Mangisi-Mafileo of SPC gave an introduction for the panel discussion.

This programmatic initiative is to maintain and enhance Pacific Island countries ecosystem goods and services, including provisioning, regulating, supporting and cultural through integrated approaches, land water, forest, biodiversity, and coastal resource management that contribute to poverty reduction, sustainable livelihoods, and climate resilience by fostering sustainability and resilience for each island. Through reforms and policy institutions and coordination through the building of capacity of local institutions to integrate these approaches, to establish evidence-based approaches, to planning, and to improve consolidation of results, monitoring and data, information, and knowledge required to inform cross sectoral R2R planning. This esteemed panel discussion, and the panellists today will provide the opportunity to share experiences and lessons in implementing integrated approaches to accelerate action, harnessing integrated natural resources or ecosystem management and governance for improved resilience and sustainable development.

Panellists

Director General, Ministry of Natural Resources – Niue, Dr. Josie Tamate.

In summary, Dr. Tamate's presentation emphasised on a whole of government approach to ensure that there is no duplication and that there is complementarity and continuity from investments building on lessons.



*Dr. Josie Tamate
Niue*

Challenges and key lessons

- Continuous stakeholder engagement
- Staff turnover
- Change in leadership at village level to government
- Land ownership and access issues
- A constant was the key people who contributed to project design to implementation
- Stakeholder engagement with various committees and partners were fundamental to securing commitment to establishing protected and managed areas.
- Observation of village and cultural protocols
- Empowering village councils and communities to develop land and marine management plans

Success:

- Development of marine spatial and management plan for the whole of Niue EEZ
- 40% EEZ MPA Moana Mahu and Beveridge Reef as a Special Managed Areas formally established under regulation in 2020
- Collaboration with Niue Ocean Wide project implemented under a PPP with the National Government and Non-For-Profit Organization Tofia Niue
- Funding provided by Ocean 5 and the R2R project and the National Geographic Pristine Seas program

Lessons:

- Communications was fundamental in adaptive management and maintaining engagement
- Perceptions of stakeholders from previous projects
- Taking a whole-of-government approach
- Ensuring that we add value to efforts already made by previous projects and that there is sustainability
- Sustainable financing strategy to maintain the Moana Mahu lead by NOW project
- Resource management advisory committee comprised of representatives from villages and government agencies overseeing the management plans being developed
- Funding: Home grown trust fund to continue implementation beyond project life

Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources – Tonga, Ms. Rosamond Bing.

Ms. Bing's presentation included the Ministry's sister projects with the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, including Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources.



*Ms. Rosamond Bing
Tonga*

- IEMP Fangauta Lagoon (UNDP) –
- Integrated Land and Agro-Systems Management (FAO)–
- International Waters (UNDP/SPC)

Lessons:

- To ensure support by communities and maximise benefits, evidence-base and data, including traditional knowledge, is the basis to determine the relevance of activities, consultations, and engagement, as a result of IEMP we have a Stewardship Management Plan for Fanga'uta Lagoon which has been gazetted, Rapid Coastal Assessments, State of the Coast Report, Strategic Action Plans, Forest management Plans, and Watershed Plans.
- Overcoming challenges, requires strong engagement and partnerships and multi-stakeholder engagement and collaboration.
- Empowerment of women in development group, female member of parliament, provided the momentum to move the project forward significantly from community to cabinet, instilling ownership and ensuring sustainability
- Empowering the Hihifo Youth Council and building their capacity engaging them to be enumerators and surveyors in the RapCA work also ensures ownership and sustainability. There are also other donors that would like to build on this initiative.
- Engagement with schools, youth, NGOs, and local governments ensures education, ownership of resources and their sustainable use, which is paramount.

Challenges:

- Innovative ways to access resources
- Interventions to being more targeted

Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment – Samoa (Chair, RSC), Mr. Malaki Iakopo.

Mr Iakopo explained that IWRM and R2R are mainstreamed at national level but also in implementation at the grassroots level, with a goal to improve water resources quality within the Fagalii Watershed area, water supply and receiving coastal environment



*Mr Malakai Iakopo
Samoa*

Most significant results:

- Waste management practices of communities through river and clean up campaigns, provision of rubbish stands and community by-laws on water resources management. Now the Fagalii community has a good network of waste management bins and awareness and warning signs around the villages
- Riparian and marine area rehabilitation – replanting and ecosystem restoration programs including the introduction of vetiver grass as green technology, to support and protect riverbanks and coastal areas. This led to the revitalization of the vetiver as a key species for erosion and sedimentation control.
- Wetlands, cleaned, demarcated, and rehabilitated by the project
- Land use practices and planning
- Wealth of information and knowledge collected and documented through community consultation and scientific research and monitoring undertaken
- Water quality research conducted by the National University of Samoa
- Monitoring by the Fisheries Division in the coastal areas
- Flood warning within the greater Apia catchment

Innovative tools:

Stakeholder engagement using the P3D model with participation of diverse members of the community using the latest spatial information from the lidar imageries of Samoa and incorporates traditional and local knowledge it was used to identify current land use patterns and areas of concern that would require interventions. It was also used to develop the Fagalii Watershed Management Plan guiding current efforts in land-use planning and identifying future investment needs.

Obstacles:

- Budget compared to the activities for delivery
- To overcome this, the project leveraged partnerships and securing cofinancing from government and other GEF projects

Lessons:

- Ensuring effective partnerships and networks with government agencies, projects and community is fundamental
- Mainstreaming R2R reporting to National Environment Coordination Committee and the Joint water sector steering committee where support from other partners can be secured
- Human capital development is key. Samoa will continue to push for capacity building and training utilising the wealth of knowledge already accumulated from R2R and IWP and IWRM projects to not only equip young R2R leaders but ensure our national and regional community of practice continue to develop and be resilient into the future.

Legacy:

Empowerment of the Fagalii Community with the necessary tools, capacity and resources including scientific information and technologies to continue to steward their natural environment and improve water quality moving forward. The established water and environment committee made up of village chiefs and leaders will no doubt support the sustainability of the project moving forward.

At the national level, the concept of R2R being mainstreamed into national planning, policies, financial and operational mechanisms in Samoa. And we will continue to advocate for integrated approaches from the Highlands to the High Seas.

Undersecretary – Technical, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology – Solomon Islands, Mr Chanel Iroi

Mr Iroi included both STAR and IW projects in his presentation.

Integrated Forest Management (FAO) focuses on BD, CC, SLM in forest sector:



*Mr Chanel Iroi
Solomon Island*

MSC:

- Support we provide for BD to the expansion and enhanced management and the financial sustainability of the protected areas network through the sustainable and integrated landscape management targeting productive mixed-use corridor
- Gender inclusive approach in the terrestrial protected areas establishment and sustainable land management training to enable to the forest dwelling community's role in conservation (supporting resources owners in terms of environmental conservation management)
- Establishment of the protected areas trust fund mandated under the protected areas act
- Improved national forest monitoring system of emissions from the forest sector
- Establishment of 2-level courses Bachelor of Science courses in forestry and environmental science with SINU

Obstacles:

- Establishment of PAs – customary land tenure system
- Involves community consultations and working with resources owners to ensure they understand the value of conserving nature, involvement, and ownership

Legacies:

- Establishment of protected areas and continue to even after the project ends. We can see the tribes coming in to see the Pas and interest to participate in the network
- Est of the trust fund for sustainability of Pas and conservation work
- Est. of courses for capacity building

Sustainable and equitable resource governance and integrated landscape management under the customary land tenure we will continue to advocate in all our pursuits

International Waters demonstration project:

MSC:

- Engagement and education of upland communities and those around the river system
- Involving communities in reforestation and replanting in upland areas
- Island Diagnostic Study and the management plan developed by local teams with implementation to start this year
- Behaviour changes to waste management – awareness and education, compost bins – reduce, reuse, and recycle approach
- Include men, women, children in planning and design

Key obstacle:

Lack of support from major stakeholders' Chinese association the Honiara City Council, Ministry of Tourism, Solomon Is Water and NGOs,

But by continuing to engage them in project implementation they began to see the value over time of the benefits to the Mataniko River

Legacies:

Mataniko free of pollution and a model community

Tourism activities upland and around river system will increase and provide revenue for local communities and national economy

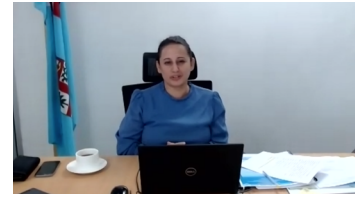
Network governance with the stakeholders creates a common ground for working together for restoration and catchment protection from degradation

Looking forward, areas to focus on:

1. Governance
2. Research and technology
3. Catchment-based restoration and planning
4. R2R informing land-use management

Director, Environment and Waterways – Fiji, Ms. Sandeep Singh

Ms Singh shared the rich results that Fiji has experienced under R2R both the national project as well as the demonstration project with SPC. Recognizing that COVID19 pandemic had impeded efficiencies in implementation. Acknowledging the 13 partners with a wide range of expertise and conflicting interests can be a challenge. Government agencies, NGOs, implementing in 7 catchments – Ba, Waidina, Waimanu, Tuva, Tunaloa, Labasa, Vunivia and working with communities. Effective communication sustains these partnerships.



Ms Sandeep Singh
Fiji

Key achievements:

- Completion of baseline scientific assessments
- Marine inventory surveys
- Rapid Resource Assessments and Diagnostic Assessment
- Ecosystem Goods and Services and mapping of Waimanu Catchment
- NbS for protection of riverbanks and coastlines and protecting vulnerable communities in these catchments
- Forest restoration over 750ha of degraded forest have been restored nationally with approx. 208k seedlings were planted as part of Fijis 30m over 15-year target
- Revival of traditional ecological knowledge working with a community in Tuva traditional salt making
- Eradication of invasive species African Tulip (150 ha)
- Sustainable livelihoods including women, youth
- Review codes for forest harvest practices with Ministry of Forestry
- Environmental and social safeguards in to R2R program and reviewing the EIA guidelines
- Capacity building for SLM and SFM with communities
- Catchment-wide management plans
- Jobs for Nature – 71 small grants to women and youth groups to conserve environment in different focal areas: waste management, forest, and mangrove restoration, CCA+M
- Joint Steering Committee for coordination and collaboration
- Contributions to 5- and 20-year plans, CBD targets, NBSAP and SDGs
- Contributed to 85% of SDG

Legacy and ways forward:

- Ms. Singh explained that the Government of Fiji is pursuing the Mountains to Ocean Programme that extends beyond the reef, a continuation of the R2R concept
- Support integrated framework and approaches that reaches beyond the reef - from Highlands to High Seas for regional collective implementation and advocacy to strengthen cohesion, cooperation, and coordination.

Samasoni Sauni, presented on behalf of the Director Special Projects, College of Science and Engineering James Cook University, Distinguished Professor Marcus Sheaves

Mr Sauni shared the regional science and technical community as well as the work done in partnership with James Cook University.



Mr Samasoni Sauni
Pacific Community

Regional Science and Technical Committee

Impact

- Although the RSTC needed to be active and action-oriented, providing guidance through robust technical discussion and advice this impact was mixed.
 - Meeting only once annually, staff turnover and COVID, all limited the effectiveness of the RSTC.
- Revamping of the committee in 2019 lead to improved outcomes.
 - However, difficulties encountered meant that, although were developed, trials and implementation could only be conducted at limited locations.

Strategic Lessons

- The effectiveness of the R2R program would have been enhanced by ensuring from the outset that the RSTC:
 - Was able to meet more regularly.
 - Had a more direct and detailed oversight of scientific and technical elements of the projects at each key step development and implementation.
- Outcomes could be enhanced by integrating successful R2R Postgraduate Learning more extensively and specifically into projects.

Path Forward

- Ensure the RSTC is:
 - Explicitly and actively involved in scientific and technical elements at all levels.
 - Meets at least 3 times a year, including meetings at active project locations.
 - Is resourced to ensure sufficient involvement occurs.

JCU Graduate Program on R2R Sustainable Development

Impact

- Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma both very successful.
 - Involvement was strong (28-51 participants per subject).
 - Grades featured a substantial number of high achievers, underlining strong student personal commitment.



Strategic Lessons

- The focus on project specific understanding was successful and an area that should be enhanced in future iterations.
- Any future iteration of the program should involve more extensive learning focused on specific R2R projects – enabling the learning to directly influence project outcomes.
- Future learning programs should feature more extensive in country deliver.
 - This would help overcome the major challenges of communication and direct access to teaching staff.

Path Forward

- Resource the teaching program to allow much more in-country delivery.
- Ensure teaching is even more closely linked to specific project needs.
- Include a major teaching component aimed at developing in-country expertise in utilisation of developing technologies the volumes of data the deliver.

Wrap Up session:

Dr Fononga Mangisi-Mafileo of SPC welcomed back the panellists for a wrap-up session and welcomed any questions from the attendees. Dr Mafileo then asked each of the panellist in the order that they had presented to present their **one sentence advocacy on ways forward**.

1. Dr. Josie Tamate, Niue – Integrated approaches are not easy but necessary and we must raise our ambition to consider transboundary challenges from high lands to high seas.
2. Ms. Rosamond Bing, Tonga – The R2R Projects at the national and regional level implementation is demonstrated as a proof of concept and that there can be enduring benefits to our communities. The scaling up to the high lands to high seas concept should be considered for a sustainable way forward.
3. Mr. Malaki Iakopo, Samoa – R2R approaches to resource management promotes collaboration, coordination and sustainability and should be implemented from the high lands to the high seas.
4. Mr Chanel Iroj, Solomon Islands – On the R2R approach, to continue this initiative in the future as it is a good approach in terms of sustainable management of protected areas. It is very important that we involve the resource owners in understanding the issues surrounding the R2R sustainable management, ensuring that their needs are met, ensuring a win-win situation.
5. Ms. Sandeep Singh, Fiji – All future projects to adopt an all-inclusive approach that is science evidence based with traditional knowledge incorporated with the understanding that all ecosystems are inter-connected from mountain ridges to ocean. High land to high seas is the way forward.
6. Jens Kruger of SPC Geoscience Energy and Maritime Division Oceans and Maritime Programme put forward the following question to the Panel – Resourcing has been mentioned as an ongoing challenge. What has been your experience in teaming up with organisations such as the Oceans5 (e.g., Tonga and Niue) and associated philanthropists to secure resources and as partners to reach tangible improvements for ocean management - and how do you see this continuing into the future?
7. Dr. Josie Tamate, Niue answered – accessing funding from multi-lateral organisation like GEF has been easy. Easier in terms of establishing what we want and what we want to do. However, [with philanthropic organizations] there are restrictions because of the organisation cannot provide funding directly to government. We must work with a local NGO, so that we have a public-private partnership to implement this project. It still must go through a whole lot of due diligence, but we drive the conversation and the process.
8. Ms. Rosamond Bing, Tonga – as Dr Tamate outlined one of the challenges that she had raised earlier was looking at resourcing. Having had the opportunity to work with philanthropic organisations prior to COVID and during COVID, we have had the opportunity to work with the non-traditional funding partners. It complements the resourcing of national government; traditional funding agencies and I think it is a healthy combination and it enhances the public-private partnership. It is a value-added relationship to our existing funding partners.
9. Dr Fononga Mangisi-Mafileo of SPC wrapped up the panel discussion and thanked the Hon. Toeolesulusulu Cedric Posē Salesa Schuster, Minister for Natural Resource & Environment, Samoa, and Dr Paula Vivili, Deputy Director General of SPC as well as the distinguished panellists. She then invited the Acting Director of SPC's GEM Division and Deputy-Director of the Disaster and Community Resilience Programme, Ms Rhonda Robinson to give the closing remarks.

10. Ms Rhonda Robinson offered closing remarks on behalf of SPC and the GEM Division. Given the depth and richness of comments made by the country panellists and acknowledge their contributions. What we find exciting about the R2R Project is that it supports locally driven solutions and mobilises communities to take action that will then add to regional and global benefits. It fosters active and diverse stakeholder participation in local decisions as part of a community to cabinet approach to manage and govern natural resources. She thanked the panellist and attendees.

END.

Annex 1 Investment Forum Provisional Agenda

Start Time	End Time	Agenda Item	Description	Session Facilitator
DAY 1				
9.30am			Delegates sign in & undertake audio/video check	Secretariat
10.00	10.15	1	Opening	
		1.1	Meeting Preliminaries & Prayer	SPC (RPC) Samasoni Sauni
		1.2	Opening remarks on behalf of the Secretariat	SPC GEM Director (Ag.) Rhonda Robinson
10.15	10.25	2	Organization of the Forum	
		2.1	Call the meeting to Order	SPC GEM Director (Ag) Rhonda Robinson
		2.4	Meeting documents & arrangements	SPC
10.25	12.00	4	SESSION 1 - Introduction and Reflection on R2R Products	SPC
		4.1	SPC staff and consultants introduce R2R products for deliberation	SPC
			- Overview	<i>Sam</i>
			- Spatial Prioritization Procedures & Trialing	<i>Sam/Bradley/Sachin/Nick</i>
			- Mainstreaming R2R	<i>Ernie Guiang</i>
			- Capacity building & strengthening	<i>Shaleh</i>
			- Science to Policy	<i>John/George</i>
			- Gender toolkits	<i>Aliti</i>
		4.2	Open dialogue and discussion of R2R products	GEM Director (Ag.)/ SPC RPC
12.00	1.00pm	5	SESSION 2 - R2R Investment Forum Declaration & the Framework for Mainstreaming R2R Approach	
		5.1	Introduction of 'zero draft' declaration for further discussion and finalization	SPC RPC
		5.2	Framework for Mainstreaming R2R Approach	SPC RPC/ CCMEA/Ernie
		5.3	Group Discussion – for enhancement of 'zero draft' declaration	GEM Director (Ag.)/ SPC RPC

Start Time	End Time	Agenda Item	Description	Session Facilitator
DAY 2				
2.00	3.30pm	6	SESSION 3 – Lessons Learned – Invited Panelists	Secretariat
		6.1	Overview: Across boundaries and sectors: Lessons from implementing Integrated Ridge-to-Reef Approaches in the Pacific for sustainable development Webinar Registration link	Moderator - SPC CKMA Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo
		6.2	Welcome remarks	SPC Deputy Director General and Head of Science and Capability Dr. Paula Vivili
		6.3	Keynote	Minister for Natural Resource & Environment, Samoa Hon. Toeolesulusulu Cedric Posē Salesa Schuster
		6.4	Panelists: Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment – Samoa (Chair, RSC), Mr. Malaki Iakopo Director General, Ministry of Natural Resources – Niue, Dr. Josie Tamate Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources – Tonga, Ms. Rosamond Bing Undersecretary – Technical, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology – Solomon Islands, Mr Chanel Iroi Director, Environment and Waterways – Fiji, Ms. Sandeep Singh Executive Director at Kosrae Conservation and Safety Organization – Federated States of Micronesia, Mr. Andy George Director Special Projects, College of Science and Engineering James Cook University, Distinguished Professor Marcus Sheaves	Country & Academia representatives
		6.5	Open discussion/ Q&As	Moderator - SPC CKMA
		6.6	Closing remarks	GEM Director (Ag.) Rhonda Robinson

Annex 2

Across boundaries and sectors: Lessons from implementing Integrated Ridge-to-Reef Approaches in the Pacific for sustainable development

List of Participants

Attendee Details			
First Name	Last Name	Organization	Country/Region Name
Awantha	Dissanayake	University of Gibraltar	Gibraltar
Filimoni	Yaya	IUCN	Fiji
Jemima	Garrett	Freelance	Australia
JIONE	J	SPC	Fiji
Jose	Antonio	SPC	Fiji
Arnold	Lal	SPC	Fiji
Nina	Tu'i	National Emergency Management Agency	New Zealand
Pauline	Komolong	Live and Learn Environmental Education	Australia
Ben	Percival	County Pipeline	United States
Siosina	Katoa	University of Newcastle	Tonga
Tavenisa	Luisa	IUCN	Fiji
Aliti	Vunisea	SPC	Fiji
Alifereti	Tawake	LMMA Network International	United States
Alvin	Chandra	UNEP	Australia
Amit	Singh	SPC	Fiji
Anais	Rouveyrol	Pacific Community	Fiji
Atishma	Lal	Water Authority of Fiji	Fiji
Whippy	Albert	University of the South Pacific	Fiji
Vutaieli	Vitukawalu	University of the South Pacific	Fiji
Chinnamma	Reddy	IUCN	United States
Cindy	Ehmes	Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management	United States
Ken	Cokanasiga	Self employed	Fiji
Dave	Hebblethwaite	SPC	Fiji
Delilah	Griswold	Cornell	Fiji
Donna	Hoerder	Internews -Earth Journalism Network	Fiji
Eferemo	Kubunavanua	Wildlife Conservation Society	Fiji

Ema	Nailatikau	CATD	Fiji
Emily	Sunderland	Palladium	United States
Epeli	Waqavonovono	Pacific Community (SPC)	Fiji
Fine	Lao	Pacific Environmental Activist	Tonga
Fipe	Tuitubou	International Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Oceania Regional Office	Fiji
George	Naboutuiloma	SPC	Fiji
George	Beck	Pacific Community	Fiji
Haden	Talagi	Department of Environment	United States
Herman	Timmermans	Herman Timmermans	Fiji
Isimeli	Loganimoce	CI Fiji	Fiji
Karen	Stone	VEPA	Tonga
Jack	Rossiter	SPC	United Kingdom
Jake	Ward	SPC	Australia
Jens	Kruger	SPC	Australia
Jeong	Park	APCP	Fiji
Jessica	Lees	Humanitarian Advisory Group	Australia
John Adams	Carreon	Pacific Community	Fiji
Jyanti	Singh	Conservation International (Fiji)	Fiji
Judith	Giblin	Pacific Community	Fiji
Karen	Fukofuka	Tonga Health Promotion Foundation	Tonga
Kat	Paton	katpatNZ Ltd	New Zealand
Katherine	Frisch	APCP	United States
Katy	Soapi	SPC	Fiji
Kim	Robertson	SPC	Vanuatu
Kalesi	Nadalo	Conservation International Fiji	Fiji
Leituala Kuiselani	Toelupe Tago - Elisara	Pacific Community	Samoa
leanne	Schuster	Family Planning NSW - ASHFIELD, NSW	Australia
Luka	Selu	Disaster Management Office (GoT)	Tuvalu
Atelaite	Matoto	Department of Environment	Tonga
Marita	Manley	Talanoa Consulting	Fiji
Senimili	Dainaki	Projects Abroad	Fiji
Melania	Rokoloqa	Water Authority of Fiji	Fiji
Bulou	Buakula	Water Authority of Fiji	Fiji
Madeleine	Lavemai	Attorney General's Office, Tonga	Tonga
Masako	Ogawa	PCCC	Samoa
Margaret	Tabunakawai-Vakalalabure	WWF	Fiji
Natalie	Degger	IW:LEARN	France

Nikheel	Sharma	Ministry of Environment	Fiji
Nina	Nakaora	ISS	Fiji
ELSIE	FUKOFUKA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Tonga
Paula	Katirewa	IUCN	United Kingdom
Peter	Sinclair	Pacific Community	Fiji
Manoa	Tupou	Pacific Centre for Peacebuilding	Fiji
Robert	Vivili	PHAMA Plus Project	Tonga
Rolenas	Tavue Baereleo	Vanuatu Department of Environment	Vanuatu
Reama	Naco	REDD+ Fiji	Fiji
Riibeta	Abeta	Pacific Island Forum Secretariat	Kiribati
Reene	Ram	Fiji Government	Fiji
Rosi	D	Fiji Sun	Fiji
Rose	Alphonse	CEPA	Papua New Guinea
Sachindra	Singh	SPC	Australia
Sainimere	Vosare	Fiji Pine Limited	Fiji
Sanita	Tabudravu	Water Authority of Fiji	Fiji
Sera	Lewanuya	USP	Fiji
Selaina	Tuimavave	AS Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources	American Samoa
Senson	Mark	CEPA	United States
Sereana	Narayan	N/A	Fiji
Setaita	Tavanabola	UNDP	Fiji
Silia	Leger	Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources	Tonga
Sumeo	SILU	Ministry of PWIELMD	United States
Simon	Wilson	Australia Pacific Climate Partnership	Australia
Semisi	Meo	Conservation International	Fiji
Solomone	Fifita	Pacific Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency	Tonga
Sam	Quinn	Humanitarian Advisory Group	Australia
Shoko	Takemoto	World Bank	Japan
Susana	Tuisese	Conservation International	Fiji
T. Suka	Mangisi	Embassy	Japan
Pesega	Lifuka	Department of Waste Management	Tuvalu
Tautala	Mauala	SAMOA RED CROSS SOCIETY	United Kingdom
Yuko	Aoki	Embassy of the Kingdom of Tonga in Tokyo	Japan
Tui	Ledua	SPC	New Caledonia
Uraia	Makulau	IUCN	Fiji
Sione	Matoto	NGO	Tonga
Peti	Veikoso	Ministry of MEI DECC	Tonga

Viliame	Kasanawaqa	Pacific Islands Development forum	Fiji
Vuki	Buadromo	SPC	Fiji



GEF R2R/ RSC.6/ WP.05

Date: 12th January 2022

Original: English

**Sixth 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 20th to 21st January 2022

RSTC Chair’s Report – Highlights, Challenges and Opportunities

Summary:

The paper provides the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee (RSTC) Chair’s Final Report to the RSC at its final meeting. This is the last meeting of the RSTC as the project closes on 1 March 2022. The paper recognizes the hard-working members of the RSTC and members’ contributions supporting the project over the year. The report also provides an opportunity for reflection on the successes, challenges and lessons learned in delivering on the RSTC ToRs and offer suggestions on opportunities ahead.

Generally, the work of the RSTC could have been improved having suffered from limited time to meet and providing action-oriented expert support in scientific and technical aspects. This is important to facilitate the achievement of the goals and objectives of the UNDP/SPC IWR2R project, and with responsibility for:

- i. overseeing the scientific and technical elements of the project;
- ii. ensuring effective implementation of activities undertaken during project execution; and
- iii. providing sound scientific and technical advice to the Project Steering Committee.

The meeting is invited to note and endorse the RSTC Chair’s final report.

The Record and outcomes of the Seventh Regional Scientific and Technical Committee (RSTC) Meeting is attached as **Attachment 1**

RSTC Chair's Report – Highlights, Challenges and Opportunities

Overview

1. This is the last meeting of the RSTC as the project closes on 1 March 2022. Therefore, the Chair's report at this meeting is dedicated to all hard-working members of the RSTC. The report also provides an opportunity for reflection on the successes, challenges and lessons learned in delivering on the RSTC ToRs, and opportunities ahead. The science and evidence-based approach is already an international best practice, and it underpins the work of this group over the last 5-years of the IWR2R project.
2. As previously stated in the 2019 RSTC meeting, there is a fundamental principle of maintaining high quality science to frame scientific and technical advice thereby informing policy discussion and decisions at the RSC. Therefore, the role of the RSTC ought to be active and action-oriented by providing guidance through robust technical discussion on aspects of project implementation such as testing of innovative technologies, review research methods and sampling designs used, and critically assess and advise on recommended best practices and upscaling R2R investments.
3. Recall that to facilitate the achievement of the goals and objectives of the UNDP/SPC IWR2R project, the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee (RSTC) was established with responsibility for:
 - i. overseeing the scientific and technical elements of the project;
 - ii. ensuring effective implementation of activities undertaken during project execution; and
 - iii. providing sound scientific and technical advice to the Project Steering Committee.
4. Further recall that the RSTC is responsible for ensuring that scientific and technical aspects of this project meet international standards. Specifically, the RSTC reviews the substantive activities of the project to:
 - (i) conduct diagnostic analysis of threats to priority coastal areas to guide investment in integrated environmental and natural resource management;
 - (ii) improve State of Coast reporting and its mainstreaming in national Strategic Action Planning for Ridge to Reef approaches to Sustainable Development Planning;
 - (iii) enhance information management and knowledge management and sharing in support of the national uptake of best practice management approaches and technologies;
 - (iv) guide the establishment and operation of regionally appropriate results-based management and reporting systems, including monitoring of the effectiveness of management actions; and
 - (v) strengthen national and regional cooperation and coordination in the operation of the Pacific Ridge to Reef programme

Achievements, Challenges & Opportunities

5. Generally, evaluating RSTC role in ensuring scientific and technical aspects of the R2R programme meet international standards is mixed and cause of concern. The group meets once annually and efforts to meet more often virtually or face to face did not work out as anticipated. There were challenges in the retention of group members and the occurrence of COVID-19 impacted efforts of the group further. However, there was improvement in scientific and technical aspects of the R2R Programme following the recruitment of new staff in 2019, and the convening of technical consultations for the RSTC and the R2R Technical Working Group. More details on the outcomes and products emanating from these efforts are accessible online.
6. A substantive activity of project component 1 is to develop a regionally appropriate method and procedure for the characterization and prioritization of PIC coastal areas for R2R investment and the conduct of diagnostic analysis to identify needs for key reforms and investments in priority areas. There were good results and products coming out of these project works, and the corresponding reports and publications are accessible online. However, due to time limitation and challenges related to COVID-19, the development and trials of the spatial prioritization procedures and modelling were only performed in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands. The trials will need to be extended to other PICs for better improvements in the methods and align the model to the context of each country.
7. The RSTC reviewed and provided expert advice on the preparation of the R2R science to policy strategic framework that was approved in 2019, and a modified version approved in 2020. The Rapid Assessment of Coastal Areas (RapCA), spatial prioritization procedures, diagnostic analysis, 'State of Coasts' (SoCs) and Strategic action Frameworks (SAFs) reporting were essential steps of the science-policy framework. The production of reporting against these regionally led activities in-country vary considerably. The regional guidelines for implementing the above steps were published in 2021. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 it was not possible to hire and send international consultants project staff from Suva in-country to carry out the above technical work. Local consultants were hired, instead.
8. Investments in human capital for integrated environmental and natural resource management is one essential area of the project. The design of curricula and training materials for the regional post-graduate training programme offered through James Cook University was a 'big' success. The original intent of the programme, amongst others, was to provide regional guidance to the national 'State of Coasts' (SoCs) reporting and harmonized results reporting to be undertaken as part of component 3 and 4, respectively. Unfortunately, the plan to link JCU graduate training with development of SoCs reporting and harmonized results could have been executed better and efficiently. Accordingly, the graduate training is largely executed remotely, and the students were experiencing internet connectivity issues. Due to country lock downs and restriction of movements, the students were unable to carry out to their field research which is an important component of the course.
9. Moreover, the RSTC was earmarked to lead in the development of regionally appropriate knowledge tools to support evidence-based coastal and marine spatial planning in PICs. Unfortunately, there was little done on this by the RSTC other than providing expert advice on aspects of knowledge tools during the group's annual meeting. The two technical consultations of the RSTC were useful exercises to engage this group and other stakeholders in technical dialogue, peer review research papers and contributed to enhancing research methods and working towards improving results from range of R2R funded research.

10. The RSTC has the opportunity to deliberate and provide expert advice on a more comprehensive approach for capturing and exchanging lessons learned, good practices and impact experiences from community and stakeholder level using the Most Significant Change technique and the Participatory Video technique. These techniques and their benefits were introduced to the committee and example videos shown, recognizing several high impact events showcasing the products generated through the various modes of collecting lessons learned in 2019 and several other periods in 2020 and 2021. These events showcased, amongst others, personal verbal story-telling advocacy of R2R work amongst community and stakeholders, premiere videos and stories, hold interactive workshops with managers and stakeholders, and present community level art and crafts associated with the programme.
11. The role of RSTC was relatively limited in guiding the establishment and operation of regionally appropriate results-based management and reporting systems, including monitoring of the effectiveness of management actions. The group contributions relate more to reviewing relevant documentations presented by RPCU staff. The reporting systems and templates were prepared to enable efficiency in harmonized data collection and monitoring of management actions. A harmonized and simple results reporting system (HRR) was developed and has served the project reporting well. This was an important undertaking realigning national activity of both R2R STAR and IW projects to the GEF Focal Area Objectives, the targets specified in the logframes for GEF Focal Areas, and identify what SDGs and SDG targets the projects would deliver against, and which conventions related to these targets. The HRR provides clear relationship and overlap between several global results reporting frameworks. Apparently the RPCU experienced the need for ongoing guidance and reminders in the course of implementing the project and its reporting requirements.
12. There was minimal experience observed and documented where RSTC plays a role to strengthen national and regional cooperation and coordination in the operation of the Pacific Ridge to Reef programme. That said, the RSTC members' level of engagement, sharing of experiences, contacts, key people and agencies previously worked often speed up efforts to cooperate and coordinate project work nationally and regionally. Most of the members have their own extensive list of collaborators already in natural resource and ecosystem research and management projects and programmes.
13. The implementation of project science workplan is often faced with operational challenges beyond the control of the RPCU. There is very little the RSTC can do to assist addressing these challenges. The commitment and engagement of lead persons and consultants undertaking technical project work vary considerably. In most cases, COVID restrictions do not allow project staff and consultants to visit specific project sites and carry out field work. The alternative platforms to engage remotely and virtually are relatively useful and speed up work, but only if internet connectivity is strong.
14. Consequently, the RSTC had observed difficulties maintaining the international standards expected in the operation of the R2R project which includes the quality of science and rigor. In this vein, several technical reports are the result of reviews, consultations, interviews and other related desktop modalities. The majority of other technical reports follow the usual necessary requirements of field work employing standard methods and sampling designs. Another similar issue relates to the availability of adequate expertise and capacity in-country and therefore arrangements were done to secure expertise outside the countries in question. A concept of establishing a centralized hub of experts to support implement scientific and technical works of the project everywhere was floated but not implemented.

Conclusion

15. Overall, and given the circumstances, the RSTC had the opportunity to discharge its functions in the best way it can. Obviously, there is much more needed to be done and would have done differently if not more efficiently without the challenges outlined earlier. Nonetheless the RSTC did well adopting the alternative means of executing its ToR and support the project.
16. With the closure of the project and efforts to prepare a replacement R2R project, it is important for the RSTC supporting future project work that strengthen a science-based approach for the prioritization of catchment and coastal areas for integrated catchment and coastal management. The guidelines and technical reports supporting science-based approach have been developed, available and accessible online.
17. Moreover, the trialing work characterizing coastal areas and sites using the guidelines and strategic frameworks outline earlier would need to be continued. Technical people in country needs upskilling in the implementation of spatial prioritization procedures and modelling, including but not limited to:
 - (vi) compiling comparable information in agreed format, including sex-disaggregated data for socio-cultural characterizations,
 - (vii) prepare final site characterizations for identified coastal areas for compilation into datasets, and using agreed procedures and modelling to identify priority locations, including implications for coastal and marine spatial planning, for R2R investments in PICs.
 - (viii) use of remote-controlled drone were useful for taking aerial video and stills imagery. The diagnostic approach and analyses are useful means to the identification of required R2R reforms and interventions at priority locations.
 - (ix) prepare diagnostic reports for priority catchment and coastal areas presented for approval by national Inter-Ministerial Committees and related authorities in-country.

Attachment 1

Record and outcomes of the Seventh Regional Scientific and Technical Committee (RSTC) Meeting

Introduction

1. The Seventh Meeting of the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee for the GEF Pacific Ridge to Reef Programme (IW R2R) was held on 18 and 19 January 2022. The meeting was conducted virtually. The provisional agenda is attached as *Annex 1*.
2. Thirty-two (32) participants from GEF R2R implementing agencies in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga, UNDP Pacific Office, Suva, and the Pacific Community (SPC) attended. The list of participants is attached as *Annex 2*.

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Opening

3. Mr Samasoni Sauni, Regional Programme Coordinator (RPC) of SPC welcomed delegates from the participating member countries, partners, representative from UN agencies. He provided the meeting with apologies from the RSTC Chair, Prof Marcus Sheeves and Co-Chair, Dr Isoa Korovulavula.
4. Mr Sauni sought endorsement from the RSTC to resume the Chair and Ms Rhonda Robinson as Co-Chair until such time the RSTC Chair Prof. Marcus Sheeves and/or Co-Chair, Dr Isoa Korovulavula joins the meeting online. The Committee accepted the arrangement proposed by Mr Sauni.
5. Mr Sauni then called the meeting to order.



Mr Samasoni Sauni
Pacific Community

Agenda Item 1.1: Prayer

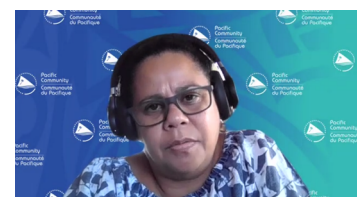
6. Mr George Naboutuiloma of SPC Regional Programme Coordination Unit, delivered an opening prayer.

Agenda Item 1.2: Welcome and remarks by Chair

7. Mr Samasoni Sauni put across to the floor the last RSC meeting record and action items from 2020.

Agenda Item 1.3: Opening remarks on behalf of the Secretariat

8. Ms Rhonda Robinson, Acting Director and Deputy Director of SPC's Disaster and Community Resilience Programme in the Geoscience, Energy and Maritime (GEM) Division welcomed participants to the Seventh (and final) Ridge-to-Reef Regional Science and Technical Committee Meeting. She mentioned the undersea volcano eruption in Tonga on Saturday (15 January) that affected Tonga and parts of Fiji and other Pacific Island countries and said that their thoughts and prayers were with the Tongan people.

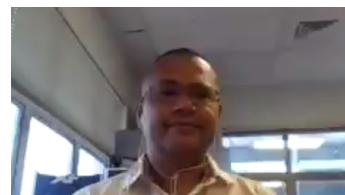


Ms Rhonda Robinson
Pacific Community

- Ms Robinson recognised that it was not all is 'smooth sailing' through years of implementing the IWR2R project and thanked the RPCU at SPC, as well as the participating countries and governments, civil society and NGO/IGO partners for putting in place strategic adaptive measures that were executed in a coordinated manner. She acknowledged the RST Committee for discharging its functions, recognising difficult circumstances encountered in the early life of the project.

Remarks

- Mr Floyd Robinson of UNDP offered thoughts and prayers to the Kingdom of Tonga. Mr Robinson thanked the RSTC for its continued and valued support and technical advice over the years to the Regional Ridge to Reef (R2R) Project as well as to all the stakeholders involved in the R2R Project.



Mr Floyd Robinson
UNDP

- Mr Samasoni Sauni as Regional Programme Coordinator acknowledged the RST Committee, as the two-day meeting was their last meeting as a committee. Mr Sauni reflected on the work and the R2R Products that have come out of the R2R Project and the expert advice by the Committee provided to the RSC for their policy decision process. Mr Sauni also thanked RSTC Chair, Prof. Marcus Sheeves and Co-Chair, Dr Isoa Korovulavula and full members of the Committee for discharging their responsibilities of the Terms of Reference well.
- Dr Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo of the Secretariat invited the speakers and panellists to switch on their videos and handed it over to the SPC technical support team to guide the team for a group photo.



Agenda Item 2: Organisation of the meeting

Agenda Item 2.1: Meeting documents

13. Mr Samasoni Sauni put forward to the meeting the two late papers:
 - i. Paper 1 – Investment Forum Outcomes on Deliberating the R2R Regional Guidelines and Policy Frameworks
 - ii. Paper 2 – Outcomes of case studies roundtable session

Agenda Item 2.2: Meeting arrangements and conduct

14. Dr Mangisi-Mafileo of the Secretariat advised the participants on basic housekeeping rules.

Agenda Item 3: Adoption of agenda

15. Mr Samasoni Sauni of the Secretariat advised participants on the working papers and information papers available online ([RSTC7](#)) on the R2R portal (www.pacific-r2r.org).
16. The meeting adopted the provisional agenda.

Agenda Item 3.1: Last RSC meeting record and action items

17. Mr Sauni of the Secretariat said the paper was inviting the meeting to note the records of the last RSC meeting is a true reflection of what was discussed and the action items that emerge from those discussions are approved in this meeting.

Agenda Item 4: Regional IW R2R Project Final Reports

Agenda Item 4.1: Chair's report 2020 – Highlights, Challenges and Opportunities

18. In the absence of RSTC Chair Prof. Marcus Sheaves, interim Chair, Mr Samasoni Sauni gave an update on the **Chair's Report 2020**. The paper recognises the hard-working members of the RSTC and members' contributions supporting the project over the year. The report also provides an opportunity for reflections on successes, challenges and lessons learned in delivering on the RSTC ToRs and offer suggestions on opportunities ahead.

Agenda Item 4.2: Project Final Report

19. Mr Samasoni Sauni of the Secretariat presented to the Committee, for its information and consideration, an update of the project final report. Mr Sauni said that the detailed updates were provided in the meeting paper (available online). The paper discusses key highlights relative to the outputs and achievements. He added that the full report will be presented to the RSC on Thursday, 20 January.
20. Ms Rhonda Robinson of the Secretariat commended the team for putting together the final draft report. She said that a lot of work went into finalising the report – consolidating a lot of

the learnings, findings, and reflections of the project over the years. Ms Robinson sought the input from the committee around the scientific and technical aspects that lay within the report.

Agenda Item 4.3: Project closure and terminal evaluation

21. Mr Floyd Robinson of UNDP co-presented with Luisa Katonibau to the Committee the draft highlights of the Terminal Evaluation (TE). The TE report promotes accountability and transparency and assesses the extent of project accomplishments.
22. Ms Rhonda Robinson of the Secretariat opened the floor for discussions.
23. Mr Ricardo Javier Dominguez Llosa, GEF FAO Vanuatu stated that in future when UNDP were looking to recruit national consultants with specialisation in evaluation, to forward the terms of reference (ToR) to GEF FAO as they were able to help UNDP look for potential candidates.
24. Mr Sauni asked UNDP if they could share with the Committee 1-2 results in view of the work that has been done so that they could frame their advice from the Committee to the RSC with respect to those preliminary results.
25. Mr Floyd Robinson of UNDP acknowledge the comment by FAO Vanuatu for future recruitments or evaluation to share the ToRs with FAO. This was normally shared between UNDP, government and SPC but UNDP will reach out to other agencies such as FAO.
26. In response to Mr Sauni's question on the terminal evaluation preliminary findings, Mr Robinson of UNDP said that they had requested it from the consultants, however, one of the challenges was getting inputs or feedback from the two national consultants. UNDP has requested that the two consultants share this with UNDP before Thursday's RSC meeting so that the UNDP and SPC teams have a chance to review these preliminary findings.
27. In response to a question from Shaleh of SPC in the zoom chat box regarding the final inception report, Mr Robinson said he would touch base with the UNDP Monitoring team to request the report be shared with the committee.
28. Another question put forward by Shaleh of SPC was on the process for conducting terminal evaluation like the one done during the mid-term review and sharing the preliminary findings from the evaluation. Mr Robinson said that he would get in touch with the focal point in office and request her to share the report. Mr Robinson stated that they were disappointed that UNDP did not receive a copy of the preliminary findings from the terminal evaluation.
29. Ms Robinson of the Secretariat agreed with the comments made by Mr Shaleh on the need to have some visibility across the findings to be able to manage that conversation with the RSC. She requested if Mr Robinson if he could get the team to provide a high-level summary of the findings.

Agenda Item 4.4: JCU Course Report, 2021

30. In the absence of RSTC Chair Prof. Marcus Sheaves, interim Chair, Mr Samasoni Sauni provided an update on the JCU-SPC teaching program on R2R Sustainable Development. The highlights of the programme are the successful completion and graduation of students in the Graduate Certificate and Diploma in R2R Sustainable Development. The COVID-19 pandemic impacts the students greatly with several forced to drop off the course due to internet connectivity issues.
31. The meeting was invited to note and endorse the JCU final report with a view of supporting future R2R investments in formal and informal training, and with specific focus on continuing current academic courses on R2R Sustainable Development in the next and future R2R projects and programmes.

Agenda Item 4.5: Discussion & Decisions

32. Dr Isoa Korovulavula of USP suggested if a more concrete collaboration could be established between JCU and USP, for USP to offer this programme. He noted from the presentation, one of the challenges students dropped out was due to internet connectivity issues and further suggested if USP was to deliver the course, it would ensure that students/universities don't lose out on the modules that has been developed and therefor sustain the human resources that can be developed in this field.



Dr Isoa Korovulavula
USP

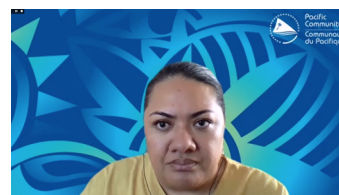
33. Mr Samasoni Sauni acknowledged the excellent point raise by Dr Korovulavula and stated that it was an important discussion to have not only between the two institutions for service delivery on training but also in terms of accessibility and the infrastructure that is more Intune to the Pacific Island students who are using USP's infrastructure remotely. Mr Sauni added that the meetings on Thursday and Friday would capture some of the project concept outputs.

34. Ms Rhonda Robinson of the Secretariat stated that they had talked around the point raised by Dr Korovulavula in previous RSTC and acknowledged the importance of connecting and collaborating. She added that from a technical perspective and alongside that in project design, they needed to consider how if they are building in partnerships with specific agencies, for example, between USP and SPC and other crop agencies or other entities that they factor that into the program design in terms of partnership delivery models that might work for the benefit of member countries; in this case the delivery of these capacity development programs in the region.

Agenda Item 5: Looking ahead post R2R and COVID-19

Agenda Item 5.3: EU project concept (highlights)

35. Dr Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo of the Secretariat presented a brief concept that may potentially be considered for EU Funding, entitled, **Highlands to High Seas (H2H): Integrated (nexus) resource management and governance for climate resilience and sustainable development of Small Island and Large Ocean States (SILOS)** an integrated programmatic initiative outlining challenges, lessons, stakeholders and proposed H2H Framework for implementation for the consideration of the Regional Steering Committee. Focusing on 'nexus' management and governance, the concept is designed to expand the scope beyond the reef, to the High Seas, and be driven by the national and regional priorities that will realise local to global sustainable development benefits.



Dr Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo
Pacific Community

36. Ms Rhonda Robinson of the Secretariat acknowledged and recognised that the high seas aspect of the proposal does need to be considered a lot more deeply as these were very preliminary thoughts. She added that those thoughts were also shared internally with the SPC executive team, awaiting feedback to give an indication as to whether this is something that as an organization, we'd be able to get behind, including broadening out the consultation process beyond the GEM division.

37. Ms Rhonda Robinson of the Secretariat acknowledged and recognised that the high seas aspect of the proposal does need to be considered a lot more deeply as these were very preliminary thoughts. She added that those thoughts were also shared internally with the SPC executive team, awaiting feedback to give an indication as to whether this is something that as an organization, we'd be able to get behind, including broadening out the consultation process beyond the GEM division.

Dr. Mangisi-Mafileo added that the concept briefing and preliminary consultations had been undertaken across SPC: Land Resources Division, Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems Division, Human Rights and Social Development Division, and the Pacific Islands

Forum Secretariat, the South Pacific Tourism Organization and several participating R2R countries.

37. Dr Mangisi-Mafileo acknowledged the R2R STAR Project Coordinator Jennifer De Brum comments in the chat box that H2H is a great project concept.
38. GEF-FAO Vanuatu, Ricardo Javier Dominguez Llosa – with the DSM, will the old deposits with nuclear waste that we have in the region be considered?
39. Dr Mangisi-Mafileo responded that this was preliminary conceptual thinking and there has been discussion around pollution and looking at land based and marine pollution from industrial and agricultural waste. She said that if they were looking at that type of pollution, it would be unearthed in further consultations with the broader range of stakeholders Emphasizing, the Regional Steering Committee will be invited to review and endorse the Brief Concept for co-development with national and development partners for co-implementation, and if endorsed scoping with stakeholders will be undertaken (including other participating countries and other CROP agencies, including SPREP).
40. The committee welcomed the Highlands to High Seas (H2H) concept noting the intent and purpose which are like that of the R2R but extend to waters beyond the reef. The Committee recommends that the paper is further considered for approval at the RSC meeting.

Agenda Item 5.2: GCF project concept & PFF (highlights)

41. Mr Luke Moore presented on preliminary results of a current consultancy commissioned by the RP-CU-SPC to formulate a project concept targeting the **Green Climate Fund (GCF)** for the R2R that replaces the current IW R2R project. It addresses key areas identified by the IW R2R project where additional technical assistance is required, and aligns with PICs needs, SPC's strategic goals maintaining ecosystem goods and services, and finally, alignment to GCF's mandate and current priorities. The project concept and PFF is expected to be ready for submission in February 2022.
42. The Committee noted the paper and recommended that it is further considered for approval at the RSC meeting.

Agenda Item 5.1: GEF-8 project concept & PIF (highlights)

43. Mr Herman Timmermans presented the highlights of a proposal for a 'next phase' project for GEF-8 financing titled **"Strengthening community resilience in a post-covid world: Mainstreaming integrated ridge to reef ecosystem-based management along the land-sea continuum in Pacific Island countries"**. Based on past RSC decisions and brief consultations with stakeholders during the consultancy, the next new project is expected to focus on five components to deliver on the overall goal and objectives, as follows:
 - Component 1 – Strengthening governance arrangements
 - Component 2 – Strengthening the science
 - Component 3 – Conservation, ecosystem restoration and sustainable livelihood projects and innovations
 - Component 4 – Communications
 - Component 5 – Regional coordination and enabling activities

The next four-year funding cycle of GEF-8 will formally launch and start in July 2022 and project concepts and PIFs considered in the 63rd meeting of the GEF Council schedule to occur 5-9 December 2022.

44. The meeting was invited to discuss and provide clear advice and recommendations to the RSC as:
- (i) Approve with no further work to enhance the concept and PIF
 - (ii) Approve with enhancements based on outcomes of discussions
 - (iii) Not approve the concept and PIF
45. Mr Senson Mark of Papua New Guinea (PNG) commended the consultant for the presentation, capturing all aspects after the first phase. He added that PNG is happy to participate as indicated as it was an opportunity not to be missed.
46. Mr Samasoni Sauni of the Secretariat said that they were mindful of the many projects and programs associated with natural resource management happening in country, not only at the national and international level, but also sub-regionally and so having that in mind that this project as RSC approved in the past to explore the continuation of the current projects but focus a lot more to scaling up and to replicating current testing initiatives and innovations.
47. Mr Erie Sami from Vanuatu and Ms Jennifer deBrum of the Republic of Marshall Islands thanked the consultant for the presentation and approved recommendation (i).

Agenda Item 5.4: Discussion & Decisions

48. Mr Conway Pene, Fiji, put forward questions: 1. Spatial prioritization as a modelling approach to inform decision making and drive change. Need to be able to scale this up from projects to standard practice; there is a stream of work here to move the emphasis from technical spatial modelling to embedding modelling outcomes in decision and change process. 2. Spatial modelling is a good driver for better data infrastructure, which remains a perennial problem in the region; projects/programmes need to harmonize and drive this in the same way they harmonize project delivery, project financial standards etc.
49. Mr Samasoni Sauni of the Secretariat in responding to Mr Pene said that they were already seeing countries using the procedures being developed and the guidelines that come with it. In the case of Fiji, they are already working on using the special prioritization procedures to selectively identify priority areas or sites within a particular catchment that can be protected. Hopefully that level of assistance will continue to other countries as well.
50. Ms Rhonda Robinson of the Secretariat thanked the attendees for taking their time to participate in the meeting and seeing there were no further comment, called the meeting to a close.
51. The meeting welcomed the project concept and PIF and recommended that it be further considered and approved by the RSC meeting.

Day 2

52. RSTC Chair, Dr Isoa Korovulavula of USP, welcomed delegates to the second and final day of the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee (RSTC).
53. Mr John Carreon of SPC GEM, delivered an opening prayer.
54. Mr Samasoni Sauni of SPC gave apologies for those who are unable to join the meeting due to connectivity issues. He invited the Committee to consider the inclusion of two papers:
 - (i) Stress Reduction Targets of the IWR2R project (revised update)
 - (ii) Digital Earth Pacific (DEP) - Operational Data Infrastructure
55. RSTC Chair, Dr Isoa Korovulavula highlighted the responsibilities of the RSTC, which are:
 - (i) overseeing the scientific and technical elements of the project;
 - (ii) ensuring effective implementation of activities undertaken during project execution;
and
 - (iii) providing sound scientific and technical advice to the Project Steering Committee.
56. The meeting noted and endorsed the RSTC Chair's final report.

Agenda Item 5: Investment Forum Outcomes

57. A joint presentation by Mr Samasoni Sauni and Dr Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo of SPC. The presents the outcomes of the Investment Forum and Roundtable Panel Discussion. There was general support and appreciation of the range of R2R products generated by the GEF Pacific R2R Programme and covering both STAR and IW R2R child projects. The participants also welcomed the proposed declaration and framework for mainstreaming R2R for sustainable development in Pacific Island Countries. The highlight of the Investment Forum was the high-level Panel Discussion with a keynote address from Samoa Minister for Natural Resources and Environment and Welcome Remarks by the Deputy Director General of the Pacific Community Dr. Paula Vivili. The record of the Investment Forum is appended as Annex 3.
58. The meeting was invited to use the outcomes to inform further discussion and decisions specific to the utility of R2R products, the proposed declaration & framework for mainstreaming R2R, and the next R2R project concepts and proposals.

Agenda Item 5.1: Outcomes of case studies roundtable session (late paper)

Agenda Item 5.2: Declaration for R2R Natural Resource Management Governance, Sustainable USE and Climate Resilience

59. Mr Samasoni Sauni of SPC presented the 'zero draft' declaration to the Committee.

To better strengthen and coordinate future R2R planning and investments, a zero draft declaration has been prepared to support and add value on resource mobilization demonstrating resilience, commitments and affirmations across stakeholders, institutions, and communities to integrate and mainstream R2R in domestic policy and legislative frameworks.

A final revised version will be presented to the RSC. The declaration is intended to seek support and signatures from participating agencies and countries at this meeting and other interested parties at all levels of society. The declaration will be accessible online the R2R website for others who may wish to submit their support and signatures.

60. There was no discussion and the Committee agreed to endorse the draft declaration in principle and recommended submitting it to the RSC6 meeting for further consideration and approval, and thereby opens for signatures.

Agenda Item 5.3: Mainstreaming the Ridge to Reef Approach for Sustainable Development in the Pacific Region – Conceptual Framework

61. Mr Samasoni Sauni of SPC introduced a framework to mainstream the R2R approach analytically and showcasing clear guidance on the intent, conceptual distinctions in several variations and contexts particularly between strategic building blocks, before implementing an approved R2R related plan.



Mr Samasoni Sauni
Pacific Community

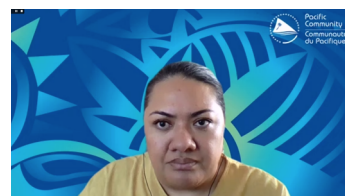
62. Shaleh Antonio of SPC elaborated on the two reports/documents.

(i). That the framework is linked to a technical report documenting options for mainstreaming R2R and can be accessed [here](#). The technical report provides the bases on the various entry points pivotal to securing ecosystems goods and services, ensuring food security, and enhancing climate resilience of communities. (ii). Mainstreaming a Ridge to Reef Approach for Sustainable Development in the Pacific *A Practitioners' Guide* and can be accessed [here](#).

63. The Committee endorsed the framework and recommended it be merge to the declaration and submitted to the RSC6 meeting for further consideration and approval.

Agenda Item 5.4: Launching & handing over of R2R products & SPC publications to PICs

64. Dr Mangisi-Mafileo of SPC presented on the end of project results from the implementation of the Knowledge Management Strategy. It outlined the performance of the online platform, and the publications produced by the Regional R2R Project in partnership with the R2R national and demonstration projects to be launched during the Sixth Regional Steering Committee.



Dr Fononga Vainga Mangisi-Mafileo
Pacific Community

65. The meeting was invited to note these results, the partnership effort, and knowledge sharing critical to facilitate future investments and R2R planning and policy processes to facilitate the adoption of ICM/IWRM practices supporting sustainable livelihoods and climate resilience among Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS).
66. The RSTC noted the commendation by PNG Mr. Senon congratulating the Communications and Knowledge Management Team for the excellent results, and the Chair's comments to support that intervention.
67. The committee noted the paper and looking forward the launching of R2R products in the margin of the RSC6 meeting.

New additional agenda items - Presentations

Paper 1

68. Mr John Carreon of SPC presented the **IW R2R National Demonstrations Stress Reduction Targets – An Update**. The paper provides verification and assessment of the achievements of the update end of project stress reduction targets. The paper also provides details on the National IW Project countries and the final implementation of specific activities towards achieving their stress reduction targets in five key areas namely:



Mr John Carreon
Pacific Community

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

69. RSTC Chair, Dr Isoa Korovulavula said that it was important to note the impact of those targets on the surrounding ecological systems. We can reduce the pollutants by making a change in the surrounding ecological systems and that needs to be understood as part of the stress reduction issues. He added that they used demonstration sites that do upscaling different scenarios to understand the baseline information of those systems.
70. Mr Samasoni Sauni of SPC reminded the Committee that establishing baselines is important to understand the condition prior to implementation of development activities and the attributable intervention of the project and is a key step in the monitoring and evaluation process.
71. The Committee reviewed the paper and approved the end of project stress reduction targets for national demonstrations and contributions to GEF tracking tools of its overall targets.

Paper 2


72. Nicholas (Nick) Metherall and Sachindra Singh of SPC presented on the Digital Earth Pacific (DEP). Digital Earth Pacific is a regional public good of the Pacific Community (SPC), offering and operational data infrastructure that makes current and historical, analysis-ready satellite data and derived products freely available and openly accessible for the Blue Pacific continent, to inform policy and drive action at community, national and regional levels.



*Mr Nicholas (Nick) Metherall
SPC Consultant*

73. Mr Samasoni Sauni of SPC highlighted that as the project nears closing, SPC is working towards making accessibility possible to member countries and partners in terms of the information and spatial data sets that we hold on to on your behalf. He added if people wanted to know more about the projects that Nick and the Sachindra are working on to contact them directly with respect to that information.
74. Ms Rhonda Robinson of SPC mentioned that the Digital Earth Pacific project is handled by SPC's Director General's office who has been a champion for digital earth work for SPC. She added that the GEM Division was consolidating a lot of the geospatial information across the various platforms and calling it the "Pacific Resilience Nexus", which will be launched in the first quarter of this year.
75. Conway Pene of Fiji asked on the reflections on the science portal site <https://www.pacific-r2r.org/r2r-science-portal>, its usefulness and sustainability?
76. Mr Samasoni Sauni of SPC said that the infrastructure and the platform have been established to store all project data and information been collected and that was not just from the international waters project but the star projects as well. As the project closes, the data and products will be migrated to a centralized platform and database of the SPC.
77. Mr Sachindra Singh of SPC said that the <http://r2r.spc.int> platform was developed for the IWRM and STAR partners for them to upload their data sets themselves without any organizational oversight from SPC. However, as mentioned by Dr Mangisi-Mafileo earlier, as the project finishes most of the data sets will be archived in the best to Pacific Data Hub platform for sustainability and the dynamic data sets will be made available in the Nexus platform. Mr Singh added that the <http://r2r.spc.int> will still be maintained because there's some pending data sets that needed to be uploaded and moving forward to the future, everything will be centralised in the Nexus platform.
78. Mr Pene commented in terms of the ever-changing nature of the underlying technologies and underlying focuses of these platforms, he suggested future iterations of such programs put in place a more robust monitoring and utilisation metrics and usefulness metrics on these types of platforms that are tied directly to project outcomes and project successes.
79. The Committee noted the additional papers and presentations, and the useful information therein.

Agenda Item 9: Closing remarks – Chair

80. RSTC Chair, Dr Isoa Korovulavula of USP thanked Mr Samasoni Sauni and his team for a very fruitful and well organised meeting. He highlighted that communication was critical in this type of initiative – How accurately the information can be sent in terms of its relevance to whoever was reading it, or taking it on, particularly with policymakers. He commended the work done by the Communications and Knowledge Management team for their exemplary efforts and the strategic importance of this work. He also highlighted the capacity building process from all the lessons in the scientific area, that the next generation can take it on, rather than re-inventing the wheel.
- 
- Dr Isoa Korovulavula*
USP
81. Mr Floyd Robinson of UNDP thanked all the presenters for their informative presentations and said that this reflected on the work behind the scenes. He showed appreciation to the science and technical committee for its continued leadership in providing technical advice – If there's been a building block in terms of making informed decision making it's been the science that's been of great help. He also showed appreciation to the SPC management for its continued leadership and particularly to the regional program coordination unit for working tirelessly throughout the life of this project, despite obstacles, such as COVID-19. Mr Robinson hoped that the closure of this project will open windows of opportunities for future projects.
82. Ms Rhonda Robinson thanked Dr Isoa Korovulavula for his chairmanship this year and last year and his role in supporting the process. She acknowledged the committee members who were there from the beginning particularly Prof. Marcus Sheaves, Dr Korovulavula and Conway Pene. She also acknowledged Floyd Robinson and UNDP and the consistency of representation by him on the committee meetings and the RSC governance structure as he was the one that carried the message internally within the UN family. Lastly, she acknowledged the leadership of Mr Samasoni Sauni and the team for their commitment and consistency in getting things done.
83. Chair closed the meeting at 1pm.

Annex 1 RSTC 7

Provisional Agenda

Start Time	End Time	Agenda Item	Description	Who?
DAY 1			Tuesday, 18 th January 2022	
9.30am			Delegates log in and undertake audio/ video check	-
10.00	10.20	1	Welcome and Opening	-
		1.1	Prayer	TBC
		1.2	Welcome and remarks by Chair	Chair
		1.3	Opening remarks on behalf of the Secretariat	SPC
10.20	10.35	2	Organisation of the meeting	
		2.1	Meeting documents	SPC
		2.2	Meeting arrangements and conduct	SPC
10.35	10.45	3	Adoption of agenda	
		3.1	Last RSC meeting record and action items	SPC
10.45	12.00	4	Regional IW R2R Project Final Reports	
		4.1	Chair's report 2020 – Highlights, Challenges and Opportunities	Chair
		4.2	Project Final Report	SPC
		4.3	JCU Course Report, 2021	JCU Rep.
		4.4	Project closure and terminal evaluation	UNDP (Floyd)
		4.5	Discussion & Decisions	
12.00	13.00	5	Looking ahead post R2R & COVID-19	
		5.1	GEF-8 project concept & PIF (highlights)	SPC Consultant
		5.2	GCF project concept & PFF (highlights)	SPC Consultant
		5.3	EU project concept (highlights)	SPC
13.00	13.30	5.4	Discussion & Decisions	

Start Time	End Time	Agenda Item	Description	Who?
DAY 2			Wednesday, 19 th January 2022	
9.30am			Delegates sign in and undertake audio/ video check	
10.00	12.00	5	Investment Forum Outcomes	
		5.1	Outcomes of case studies roundtable session (late paper)	SPC
		5.2	Declaration for R2R Natural Resource Management Governance, Sustainable Use and Climate Resilience	SPC
		5.3	Regional R2R Framework for Natural Resource Management Governance, Sustainable Use and Climate Resilience in Tropical Islands Setting	SPC
		5.4	Launching & handing over of R2R products & publications to PICs	SPC
		5.5	Discussion and Decisions	
12.00	12.10	8	Any other business	
12.10	12.30	9	Closing remarks by Chair	Sam

Annex 2

List of Participants

<p>FIJI</p> <p>Ms. Monika Lal Principal Environment Officer (PMU) Ministry of Environment Email: monika.lal@govnet.gov.fj</p>	<p>Mr Nikheel Sharma Senior Environment Officer Bali Tower, 318 Toorak Road Ministry of Environment Email: salvin.deo@govnet.gov.fj</p>
<p><u>Kiribati</u></p> <p>Mr Teema Biko Environment and Conservation Division Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agriculture Development P.O.Box 234, Bikenibeu Tarawa KIRIBATI] Tel: +686 28211 Mob: +686 730 54900 Email: teemab@environment.gov.ki</p>	<p>Ms Tiein Taebo Project Assistant Food and Agriculture Organization for Kiribati Offices. MELAD, Environment Conservation Division, Bikenibeu, South Tarawa, Kiribati. Tel: 75228211</p>
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<p>TUVALU</p> <p>Mr. Pesega Lifuka Former IW R2R Project Manager Department of Waste E-mail: tagatafoupe@gmail.com</p>	
<p>VANUATU</p> <p>Ms Rolenas Tavue Baereleo A/Principal Officer - Biodiversity & Conservation, Dept. of Environmental Protection and Conservation PMB 9063, Port Vila, Vanuatu Tel:+678 25302 Fax: +678 22227 Mob : +678 777 6000 Email: rbaereleo@vanuatu.gov.vu</p>	<p>Mr Dominiquez Loza FAO Office, Port Vila Vanuatu</p>
<p>Mr Erie Sami</p>	
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GEF IW R2R/ RSC.6/WP.06

Date: 20th January 2022

Original: English

Sixth 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 20th to 21st January 2022

Regional Program Coordination Group (RPCG) Final Report

The paper provides the final report of the Regional Programme Coordination Group. At this final meeting the RPCG Chair will reaffirm (or not) the Regional IW R2R Project in delivering on its development objectives and targets. Below is an excerpt from the Project Document on the role of this group.

*“197. **Programme Governance:** Coordination and Governance of the Regional Programme Framework of the National R2R STAR Projects and the IW R2R Regional Project will be undertaken by the **Programme Coordination Group (PCG)**. The PCG will be comprised of representatives of the three IA’s UNDP, FAO and UNEP who will meet annually during the **IW R2R Regional Project Steering Committee** meeting. A representative of the GEF Secretariat will be invited at these meetings. The PCG will review progress in PIC National STAR Projects and the IW Regional Projects. The IW R2R Regional PCU will act as the PCG secretariat. UNDP as R2R Program Leader will report to the GEF Constituency on the status of the Program as may be requested.”*

Over the project life the group meets in the margin of the RSC annually, with strong participation and engagement from GEF IAs in early years only. The impact and the useful guidance of this group regarding coordination and governance of the regional programme framework could be enhanced and improved. The programmatic approach particularly in the oversight of linking and sharing of all child projects data to RPCU for holistic, responsive, and ensuring technical and scientific robustness is an ongoing challenge. Further, the planned harmonized results reporting of the GEF Pacific Ridge to Reef Programme contributions to the GEF focal areas and SDG is not achieved.

The final RPCG meeting record is appended as ***Attachment 1***.

The meeting is invited to note the meeting record and endorse RPCG final report.

Annex 1: VIRTUAL MEETING RECORD OF THE GEF PACIFIC R2R PROGRAM COORDINATING GROUP (R2RPCG)

DRAFT 19th January 2022, 2:00pm – 4:40pm

Agenda Item 1: Appointment of Chair

1. Mr Floyd Robinson from UNDP as GEF Pacific Ridge to Reef Programme lead GEF implementing agency chaired the meeting.

Agenda Item 2: Introductions

2. There was no introduction of participants given only UNDP Pacific House and SPC staff were in attendance and need no introduction.
3. The meeting noted apologies from Dr Winifereti who had another urgent engagement. There were no representations from FAO and UNEP.
4. Brief welcoming remarks were delivered by UNDP (Floyd) and SPC (Rhonda), thanking the RPCG for its oversight over the GEF Pacific R2R Programme, and in particular the Regional IW R2R project and the STAR R2R projects.

Agenda Item 3 Adoption of Agenda

5. The draft agenda was revised to include new suggested agenda items on the UNDP Terminal Evaluation (TE) preliminary results, and the recent event in Tonga.
6. The meeting adopted the provisional agenda as amended.

Agenda Item 4: Endorsement of minutes of previous meeting

7. The minutes of previous meeting were reviewed and endorsed by the RPCG.
8. The meeting noted extensive discussion on programmatic approach covering sharing of data, information, and reports from STAR R2R projects to RPCU for harmonised reporting. There have been little or interactions demonstration commitment to the programmatic approach and facilitate sharing of data and information. The meeting noted the issue with STAR R2R projects and reporting, recognising efforts of GEF implementing agencies (GEF IAs) to link the child projects under their respective portfolio but it has been a challenge to share technical reports and field reports.

Agenda Item 5: Agency Status Reporting

9. Chair and UNDP representative presented updates on the status of GEF Pacific R2R Programme and the child STAR/IW R2R projects in their respective portfolios, as follows:
 - Nauru STAR R2R project is closed, and UNDP is still working on financial closure
 - Tuvalu STAR R2R project completed in August 2021, financial closure underway
 - FSM STAR R2R project closes in May 2022, internal discussions for 6-months extension ongoing and UNDP is yet to receive a formal request for extension
 - Regional IW R2R Project closes on 1 May 2022

Agenda Item 6: Regional Coordinator's Status Report

10. Mr Samasoni Sauni of the Secretariat reported that as the project is closing and so is the need to comply with its reporting requirements. Unfortunately, there remains outstanding reports particularly project closure reports (narratives and financial) from national demonstration projects. Despite this, the RPCU/SPC has prepared a draft final report of the Regional IW R2R project using the preliminary data and information contained in the national IWR2R project reports submitted by the eight (8) out of 14 national IWR2R projects. The draft final report of the Regional IWR2R project that will be presented to the RSC is a working draft that remains to be enhanced using relevant information from national final reports. This is also linked to the ongoing work to submit acquittals and financial reports and progress towards closing the project properly.
11. Mr Sauni also briefed the meeting that the UNDP audit work on the project commences next month. Therefore, having financial reports in order is important for the final auditing work. In turn, the results of the UNDP audit and TE will also assist in enhancing the project final report. It is important perhaps to have UNDP guidance with respect to the Regional IW R2R project progressing and complying with its reporting requirements to UNDP & GEF, particularly against GEF targets, beyond the project closing date on 1 March 2022.
12. Participants noted the outcomes of meetings this week will help filling the gaps in the draft final report of the project. UNDP advised that they have no initial feedback to the draft final report noting comments to the Quarter 4 report 2021 were shared with RPCU and actioned accordingly. UNDP is reviewing the draft final report and shall share comments.
13. Participants also noted the RPCU/SPC assessment in the draft final report being '**satisfactory**' each on development objectives and implementation progress. UNDP advised the feedback to the draft report needs to be clearly discussed and documented internally by senior staff. Noting last assessment of the PIR rated as moderately unsatisfactory for development objectives and satisfactory for implementation progress.
14. The ratings indicated in the final report was duly acknowledged by UNDP as appropriate. Participants noted assurance that UNDP would not be making substantial changes on the draft final report, particularly the performance assessment and specific ratings as set out in the report. The meeting agreed to support and facilitate the RSC discussion on the points raised earlier and not engage in a debate that may cause discomfort.

Agenda item 7: Decision items for RSC:

15. Mr Sauni brief the meeting that unlike past RSC meetings, the final meeting is streamlined and brief, providing the opportunity to reflect on the project and its implementation successes, challenges, and opportunities. There are at least two (2) key papers seeking guidance and endorsement of the RSC, namely:
 - New project concepts
 - Declaration & framework for mainstreaming R2R approach
16. The meeting noted that the GEF 8 concept is advanced and closed to being ready for submission of the PIF after further finetuning of the document. The other project concepts for GCF and EU or other donors may still require more work to complete satisfactorily. These two concepts will be shared to countries and partners when the documents are ready at least by early February 2022.
17. Participants noted the highlands to high seas concept and future progress will be guided by the executive of SPC with plans to submit a regional proposal to the EU. There may be alternative modality progressing this concept sub-regionally or bilaterally for countries supporting to progress the concept further. The meeting agreed to support and facilitate discussion appropriately on all the project concepts at the RSC meeting.
18. The meeting noted the importance of getting an indication of countries and their positions relative to participation in the next project. The country consultations and the online polling on this subject were not conclusive with some countries not interested and will go bilaterally and others expressed interest but with no STAR allocations. Having an indication on the number countries interested and demonstrably committed to participate will help formulate the project proposals better in terms of budgets and logframe.
19. The declaration and framework for mainstreaming R2R approach in sustainable development provides the opportunity for stakeholders, agencies, organisations, communities, and everyone to signal their support and commitment to continue efforts in this direction into the future. The declaration is a non-legal binding document that simply add value to mobilising resources and assist with advocacy in support of R2R mainstreaming efforts.
20. The meeting noted efforts to explore options re-directing project un-utilized funds to support relief efforts in Tonga. SPC advised that the best way to plan better is to extend the project to allow adequate time for proper processes to follow that satisfy SPC policies and regulations, as well that of the UNDP and consistent with SPC/UNDP Project Cooperation Agreement. It is difficult to re-programme project funds from programming response perspectives, and there are more we don't know yet of the situation to inform better planning and actions. The meeting noted that SPC as executing agency takes instructions responding to RSC decisions and UNDP directives.

Agenda Item 8: TE report:

21. Mr Floyd Robinson of UNDP quickly skimmed through the brief presentation highlighting some preliminary results of the Terminal Evaluation, prepared by TE mission team. The meeting considered the presentation general and with no detailed assessment and proper analysis and results. Participants noted factual errors in the presentation and agree not sending this presentation to the RSC meeting.
22. The meeting expressed disappointments on the quality of the preliminary presentation material prepared by the TE team to better inform discussion on the progress of the project delivering on its objectives and targets. It lacks substance and is not proper for the RSC meeting. As done in the past, and at their last committee meeting, the countries would have had an informed discussion over the project status in delivering its targets, with reference to preliminary results of the independent TE.
23. The RPCU reiterated the importance of the TE paper if it was done properly and having an aide memoir prepared (as requested by RPCU through UNDP) would have addressed the issue currently faced with substance of the presentation.
24. Given the lack of validation and substance in the presentation, the meeting agreed to remove the agenda item of the TE in the RSC agenda. The announcement of the dates the TE final report will be submitted, and a draft report circulated will be done in the agenda item, 'any other business.'

Agenda Item 8: Any Other Business

25. There were no other businesses discussed. Chair thanked everyone and adjourned the meeting

Annex 1: Provisional Agenda

1. **Appointment of Chair**
UNDP as programme lead will initially chair the meeting until a chair is designated.
2. **Introductions**
3. **Endorsement of minutes of previous meeting**
UNDP will lead the discussion. The minutes of previous meeting will be reviewed and endorsed.
4. **Agency Status Reporting**
UNDP, FAO, and UNEP will present updates on status of Pacific R2R child projects in their respective portfolios. SPC will provide an update on status of Regional IW R2R project.
5. **Regional Coordinator's Final Report**
Report on Regional Project Status includes implementation of MTR Recommendations and the RSC revised Results Logframe to be achieved by end of the project life. Post R2R project plans by RPCU/SPC
6. **Decision items**
Discussion on key discussion items which require program coordination group support/direction and way forward
 - i. *New project concepts*
 - ii. *Investment Forum Outcomes*
 - *Declaration and Framework for Mainstreaming R2R*
 - *Webinar/ Panel Discussion*
7. **Regional Steering Committee Meeting**
Summary of key updates to be presented at the Regional Steering Committee Meeting
8. **All Other Business**

Annex 2: List of Participants

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