



RSTC5 WP.6
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**Fifth Meeting of the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee
for the GEF Pacific Ridge to Reef Programme**

Nadi, Fiji 28th July 2019

RSTC Composition & *Modus Operandi*

Recommendations:

The Committee is invited to:-

- i. **Review and discuss** the suggested changes to the current TOR in response to the MTR recommendation; and
- ii. **Approve** the revised TOR with suggested changes.

Introduction

1. Recommendation 16 of the MTR review report states that the RPCU and RSTC should:
 - (i) “re-assess the composition and *modus operandi* of the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee (RSTC) in the light of the scientific and technical scope and needs of the project, specifically strengthening its social and economic expertise;
 - (ii) as far as feasible, put more emphasis on opportunities to build scientific and technical capacity among the PICs by providing for improved engagement of national PIC science stakeholders in project/programme science and technology decision making;
 - (iii) explore how the R2R network and platform (component 4.2) might contribute to the sustainability of science and technology support to PICs after the project finishes; and
 - (iv) explore opportunities for expanding interactive workshops and training on the project's science and technology agenda under RSTC oversight.”
2. The MTR review suggested revisions to the TOR to consider the following elements:-
 - (i) Composition (expertise, numbers, affiliations)
 - (ii) *Modus operandi*
 - (i) PICs science stakeholders
 - (ii) R2R network
 - (iii) Interactive workshops and training if it is an issue to expand membership of the group
3. This paper presents the revised TOR with proposed changes that correspond to elements suggested by the MTR review, for the consideration and approval of the Committee

Key Issues

4. Generally, the IW R2R project document establishes that the RSTC be responsible for ensuring that scientific and technical aspects of the R2R **programme** meet international standards. This is not currently followed because reports, data and information from national level activities of STAR projects are not received by SPC and thus do not reach the Committee. Therefore, the Committee is unable to meet its requirement to oversee the regional syntheses of STAR information to identify overall needs and priorities for strengthening scientific and technical support to the operation of a Regional Ridge to Reef Initiative.
5. Moreover, the TOR are not clear with respect to the mandate and jurisdiction of the RSTC. For instance, the following clauses of the TOR clearly suggest that the RSTC mandates covers the R2R Programme and the child projects of STAR and International Waters.
 - (i) Clause 1 (rationale and purpose) specifically reference the UNDP/SPC “project” or the IW project; noting Clause 1.2(5) refers to national/ regional cooperation and coordination in the operation of the Pacific Ridge to Reef **Programme**.
 - (ii) Clause 2 (role and function) reference the Pacific Ridge to Reef Initiative which is the R2R **Programme**, and
 - (iii) Clause 3.2.2 is the requirement for the RSTC to receive, and review reports, data & information from national level activities of the STAR projects
6. Another issue is the MTR concerns over the “independent” RSTC being at odds with the concept and objectives of capacity building among PICs and the principle of the full and effective participation of national stakeholders in project decision making. The Committee may consider this concern in light of whether or not the current maximum 5-members being of manageable size and balance of expertise spread across organisations in this region working with countries on similar and related projects.

7. The MTR review raised concerns over the composition of the Committee being biased towards natural sciences and therefore not balanced. It also raises concern on the lack of PIC stakeholders participating in the Committee, which is at odds with the capacity building (in science and technology decision-making) objectives of the project.

Possible Strategies

8. SPC supports the need for more balanced membership with an opportunity for more socio-economic expertise in the group, and build scientific and technical capacity among PICs through engagement activities. SPC has thus invited two new members to the Committee, an economist from the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, and a specialist from the Institute of Applied Science of USP, to help address this concern. As agreed previous meetings of this group, others may be invited as required to provide inputs in certain agenda items.

9. There are merits in the MTR suggestion that encourages development of the R2R network and platform to continue technical contributions to the sustainability of science and technology support to PICs. However, there are always cost associated with such platform, which could be operating voluntarily or such roles could be mainstreamed into national government budgets.

10. The mandated composition of the RSTC is currently for up to five members spread across CROP agencies, NGOs and academia, with observers from UN agencies and SPC. The RPCU agrees with the MTR that the RSTC needs to be maintained at a manageable size, and supports the suggestion of “larger and more inclusive scientific and technical meeting or workshops to be organised under the oversight of the RSTC.”

Name	Expertise/ Roles	Affiliations	Male/Female
Invited Members			
Prof. Marcus Sheaves	Marine ecology	James Cook University (Chair)	Male
Mr. Isaac Rounds	Forestry & land-use ecology & management	Conservation International (Co-Chair)	Male
Mr. Conway Pene	Information Management Systems, Dbase designs & developments	Consultant	Male
Dr Isoa Korovulavula	Natural Resource Science & Management	IAS, University of the South Pacific	Male
Dr Salome Taufua	Natural Resource Economics	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat	Female
GEF R2R Implementing Agencies			
Dr Jose Padilla		UNDP Bangkok Office	Male
Dr Winifreti Nainoca		UNDP Pacific Office	Female
Dr Manoela Pessoa De Miranda		UNE, Samoa	Female
Ms Jessica Sanders		UNFAO, Samoa	Female
GEF R2R Executing Agency & Secrétariat - SPC			
Rhonda Robinson	Program Coordination	SPC, GEM	Female
Peter Cusack	Program Coordination	SPC, GEM	Male
Samasoni Sauni	R2R Science & Policy	SPC, GEM	Male
Emma Newland	R2R Science & Policy	SPC, GEM	Female
Dr Fononga Mangisi-Mafileo	Communications, Knowledge Management	SPC, GEM	Female
Jose Antonio	Monitoring & Evaluation	Male	Male

Ex-Members

Dr. Johan Poinapen – IAS, University of the South Pacific (resigned)

Ms. Aliti Vunisea – Consultant

Dr. Stamatios Christopoulos – UNE, Samoa

Dr. Milika Sobey - Consultant

11. In the proposed science-policy approach (theory of change), many of the national and regional activities centre on using local capacity, thereby increasing opportunities to build scientific and technical capacity, and improved engagement of national PIC science stakeholders in project/ programme science and technology, both in the field and also at policy decision-making levels. While there may be opportunity for PIC delegates to participate in future RSTC meetings, SPC also plans opportunities for learning exchanges and twinning exercise that will allow national scientists and stakeholders to participate regional and international conferences to present their papers and engage in global discussions.

12. The Committee can consider supporting a clear statement that its TOR mandates its consideration of Pacific Ridge to Reef programme, covering the child projects of STAR and IW. There are several options:

- (i) Amendments to clause 1.1. and 1.2 to provide clarity that the mandate of the Committee is not just for the UNDP/ SPC project but also the STAR project at both national and regional cooperation and coordination levels;
- (ii) Amendments to replacing “project” with “programme” unless/otherwise the clause specifically addressing either the STAR or IW project; and
- (iii) Delete and replace “Pacific Ridge to Reef Initiative” across the TOR, with “Pacific Ridge to Reef Programme” for consistency, avoid confusion and misinterpretation.

Conclusion & Recommendations:

12. The Committee is requested to review and endorse the suggested amendments of the TOR outline in the paper, and set out in **Attachment 1**.

Attachment 1: Revised TOR with suggested changes

1. Rationale and Purpose of a Regional Scientific and Technical Committee

1.1 ~~To facilitate the achievement of the goals and objectives of the UNDP/SPC project entitled “Ridge to Reef – Testing the Integration of Water, Land, Forest and Coastal Management to Preserve Ecosystem Services, Store Carbon, Improve Climate Resilience and Sustain Livelihoods in Pacific Island Countries”,~~ a Regional Scientific and Technical Committee (RSTC) will be established with responsibility for: overseeing the scientific and technical elements of the **Pacific Islands Ridge to Reef (R2R) programme project**; ensuring effective implementation of activities undertaken during the **programme project**; and providing sound scientific and technical advice to the Project Steering Committee.

1.2 The RSTC will also be responsible for ensuring that scientific and technical aspects of the **R2R programme project** meet International standards. Specifically, it will review the substantive activities of the **programme project** to: (1) conduct diagnostic analysis of threats to priority coastal areas to guide investment in integrated environmental and natural resource management; (2) improve State of Coast reporting and its mainstreaming in national Strategic Action Planning for Ridge to Reef approaches to Sustainable Development Planning; (3) enhance information management and knowledge management and sharing in support of the national uptake of best practice management approaches and technologies; (4) guide the establishment and operation of regionally appropriate results-based management and reporting systems, including monitoring of the effectiveness of management actions; and (5) strengthen national and regional cooperation and coordination in the operation of the **Pacific Islands Ridge to Reef R2R programme**.

2. Role and Function

2.1 As the over-riding scientific and technical body for the **Pacific Islands Ridge to Reef programme project**, the RSTC shall provide sound scientific and technical advice to the Project Steering Committee regarding matters requiring decision and shall provide direction and strategic guidance to the national level activities of the **R2R programme Pacific Ridge to Reef initiative** as required.

3. The Regional Scientific and Technical Committee Shall:

3.1 Regional Activities

3.1.1 Review and co-ordinate regional scientific and technical activities of the **Pacific Ridge to Reef programme initiative**;

3.1.2 Review and evaluate, from a scientific and technical perspective, progress in implementation of the **Pacific Ridge to Reef programme initiative**, and provide guidance for improvement when necessary;

3.1.3 Provide the Project Steering Committee with recommendations on proposed regional activities, work plans, and budgets;

3.1.4 Provide the Project Steering Committee with technical guidance and suggestions to improve project activities where necessary, including reforms of national and regional policy and planning frameworks for integrated approaches to environmental and natural resource management;

3.1.5 Facilitate co-operation with relevant international, regional, and national organisations and projects to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the **Pacific Ridge to Reef initiative**;

3.1.6 Monitor the progress of the **project's STAR and International Water projects'** regional activities and ensure the quality of outputs.

3.2 National Activities

3.2.1 Review and evaluate, from a scientific and technical perspective, progress in implementation of the national activities of the **STAR project and** International Waters pilot projects, and provide guidance for improvement when necessary;

3.2.2 Receive, and review reports, data and information from national level activities of the System for the Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) projects and oversee the regional syntheses of this information to identify overall needs and priorities for strengthening scientific and technical support to the operation of a regional Ridge to Reef **programme initiative**;

3.2.3 Receive, review, and comment on drafts of national policies and/or action frameworks; and

3.2.4 Advise the regional Project Coordinating Unit and National Focal Points of the need for public awareness, information materials and knowledge sharing concerning integrated approaches to environmental and natural resource management.

4. Proposed Membership for the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee

4.1 SPC's PCU, in consultation with National Focal Points, shall nominate no more than five regional experts to ensure a balance of expertise and specialisation consistent with the mandate of the Committee. The membership of the RSTC shall be formally established at the first meeting, of the committee.

4.2 At the commencement of each meeting the committee shall elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chair from amongst the members. The Vice-Chair shall act as Chairperson of meetings in the absence of the Chairperson. The Chairperson and Vice-Chair shall participate in the annual meetings of the Regional Project Steering Committee at which they shall present the reports and recommendations of the RSTC.

5. Secretariat

5.1 The Regional Coordination Unit shall act as Secretariat to the RSTC and shall ensure that reports of the meetings are circulated to all members **and observers** of the regional Regional Steering Committee.

6. Meetings of the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee

6.1 The Regional Coordination Unit in consultation with the Chairperson shall convene meetings of the RSTC according to an agreed schedule, which will form part of the agreed work plan and timetable for the work of the Committee.

6.2 The first meeting of the RSTC will be convened during project inception to: agree on the detailed activities, work plan and timetable for the twenty-four months leading to the project's mid-term evaluation: and to provide guidance to the projects emerging scientific and technical needs.

7. Conduct of Regional Scientific and Technical Committee Business

7.1 The Committee shall operate and take decisions based on consensus, regarding any matter relating to project execution that has regional significance. Where full consensus cannot be achieved in reaching agreement during a meeting of the Committee, the Chair, Vice Chair and Regional Programme Coordinator shall decide on the least contentious course of action to be adopted.

8. Participation of Observers in Regional Scientific and Technical Committee Meetings

8.1 The RSTC may invite observers to participate in its meetings;

8.2 Upon the invitation of the Chairperson, observers may participate in the discussion of issues within their competence or scope of activities, without the right to participate in decision-making; and

8.3 Observers may, upon invitation of the Chairperson, submit written statements that shall be circulated by the Regional Coordination Unit to the members of the RSTC.