

GEF International Waters: Learning Exchange and Resource Network (IW:LEARN)

Twining Report

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Inter-regional SIDS knowledge sharing on experiences and emerging lessons from Source to Sea programmatic implementation



1. PROJECT TITLE(S) –

GEF/UNDP/SPC Pacific Regional International Waters Ridge to Reef Project and GEF IWeco Project

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION(S) –

Pacific R2R

The 5-year programme aims to guide coordinated investment of the US\$91 million package of GEF grants, and USD 333 million of co-financing from the participating countries and other development partners. The multi-focal area strategy, multi-agency, multi-country 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 in 14 Pacific Island countries. The programme is implemented by the United Nations Develop Programme, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, and the United Nations Environment Programme and regionally executed by the Pacific Community (SPC).

The purpose of the 5-year regionally executed project (ending September 2021) is to test the mainstreaming of 'ridge-to-reef' (R2R), climate resilient approaches to integrated land, water, forest and coastal management in the PICs through strategic planning, capacity building and piloted local actions to sustain livelihoods and preserve ecosystem services. This regional project provides the primary coordination vehicle for the national R2R STAR Projects that are part of the Pacific R2R Programme, by building on nascent national processes from the previous GEF IWRM project to foster sustainability and resilience for each island through:

- Reforms in policy, institutions, and coordination;
- Building capacity of local institutions to integrate land, water and coastal management through on-site demonstrations;
- Establishing evidence-based approaches to ICM planning;
- Improved consolidation of results monitoring and information and data required to inform cross sector R2R planning approaches.

This project will also focus attention on harnessing support of traditional community leadership and governance structures to improve the relevance of investment in ICM, including MPAs, from 'community to cabinet'.

The Pacific R2R-IWEco Twinning exercise in April and July, 2019 contributed to Component 4. Regional and National 'Ridge to Reef' Indicators for Reporting, Monitoring, Adaptive Management and Knowledge Management

Outputs:

Output 4.2.1 – Regional 'ridge to reef' communications strategy developed and implemented and assistance provided to national R2R project including partnerships with national and regional media and educational organizations

Output 4.2.2 - Participation in IW:LEARN activities: conferences; preparation of at least 10 experience notes and inter-linked websites with combined allocation of 1% of GEF grant

Output 4.2.3 - Established Pacific R2R Network, online regional and national portals containing among others, databases, rosters of national and regional experts and practitioners on R2R, register of national and regional projects, repository for best practice R2R technologies, lessons learned etc.

The Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (GEF-IWEco) Project is a multi-focal, regional project that builds upon the work of previous initiatives, to address water, land and biodiversity resource management as well as climate change in ten participating countries.

IWEco is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and UN Environment (UNEP) is the lead Implementing Agency for national and regional sub-projects. The UN Development Programme also implements some activities aimed at supporting community-based livelihood opportunities through the GEF-Small Grants Programme.

IWEco

IWEco's objective is to contribute to the preservation of Caribbean ecosystems that are of global significance and the sustainability of livelihoods through the application of existing proven technologies and approaches that are appropriate for small island developing states through improved fresh and coastal water resources management, sustainable land management and sustainable forest management that also seek to enhance resilience of socio-ecological systems to the impacts of climate change.

Expected project outcomes include:

- Reduction in environmental stress at project sites in eight countries through appropriate sustainable water, land and ecosystems management interventions that account for climate change.
- Enhanced livelihood opportunities and socio-economic co-benefits for targeted communities
- Strengthened national and regional systems for monitoring of environmental status with respect to key international agreements.
- Strengthened national policy and legislation for the effective management of water, land and ecosystems resources that account for climate change.
- Strengthened capacity of national and regional institutions and other stakeholders for water, land, and ecosystems management that accounts for climate change.
- Improved engagement and information access for practitioners and other stakeholders through targeted knowledge-sharing networks.

This Twinning exercise in April and July 2019 contributed towards Component 4 of the IWEco project, specifically enhancing knowledge exchange, stakeholder involvement, replication and documenting best practices.

Output 4.1.3 Best practice guidelines, Lessons Learnt outputs and Communities of Practice

Activity 4.1.3.2 Compile and develop of codes of practices (best practice guidelines) from National Sub-projects

Output 4.1.6 Professional exchanges; participation at regional and international fora

Activity 4.1.6.2 Conduct exchanges/host Caribbean and other SIDS professionals in-country

3. DESCRIPTION OF ISSUE(S), CHALLENGE(S) AND EXPERIENCE –

Given the close inter-connections between land, water and coastal systems in Small Island Developing States (PICS), the integration of freshwater watershed management with coastal area management is considered essential to foster effective cross-sectoral coordination in the planning and management of land, water and coastal uses. In Pacific PICS, such integrated approaches to freshwater and coastal area management have been termed ‘Ridge to Reef’ to emphasise the inter-connections between the natural and social systems from the mountain ‘ridges’ of volcanic islands, through coastal watersheds and habitats, and across coastal lagoons to the fringing ‘reef’ environments associated with most Pacific PICS.

At the 3rd Steering Committee of the IWeco Project in April in the Dominican Republic, the Pacific R2R Communications and Knowledge Management Adviser was invited to present on experience and emerging lessons from programmatic implementation. The presentation included:

1. Overview of the regional programme and project;
2. National Demonstrations to Support R2R ICM/IWRM Approaches for Island Resilience and Sustainability and the environmental stress reduction measures/technologies;
3. Island-based investments in human capital and knowledge and partnership;
4. Mainstreaming of ridge to reef ICM/IWRM approaches into national development planning - State of the Coast reports and Strategic action Frameworks;
5. Regional and national ‘ridge to reef’ indicators for reporting, monitoring, adaptive management and knowledge management;
6. Ridge to Reef Regional and National coordination;
7. Experiences and emerging lessons from Pacific R2R programmatic implementation.

The importance of **cross-sectoral coordination** in the planning and management of freshwater use, sanitation, wastewater treatment and pollution control, sustainable land use and forestry practices, balancing coastal livelihoods and biodiversity conservation, and climate variability and change.

Importantly, the participation of communities, stakeholders, and national governments within such a cross-sectoral planning framework is described by Pacific PICS as a **‘Community to Cabinet’** approach is crucial to ensure that all voices are heard and considered as part of the planning and management process.

Equally important was that the project builds on nascent national processes built in the previous GEF IWRM project to foster sustainability and resilience for each participating island nation through: reforms in policy, institutions, and coordination; building capacity of local institutions to integrate land, water and coastal management; establishing evidence-based approaches to ICM planning; and improved consolidation of information and data required to inform cross-sector R2R planning approaches. The

project also supports **traditional community leadership and governance structures** to improve the relevance of investment in integrated land, water, forest and coastal management.

Also significant, is the **results-based approaches** to the management of development assistance programmes and projects, and supporting in areas of coordination, capacity building, technical assistance, and monitoring and evaluation for the operation of the broader Pacific R2R programme is significant.

Based on experiences from Pacific R2R regional project and PCU implementation, ways forward were shared with committee members.

Success Factors	Concrete Actions
1. Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct of annual joint reflection and planning
2. Steering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish joint Project Board for STAR and IW • Holding joint board meetings to update on the status of project implementation and respond to programmatic issues and concerns
3. Inter-project collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint implementation & complementation (e.g. Palau on SLM, FSM on dry litter piggeries), conduct of baseline monitoring, water quality monitoring, campaigns etc
4. Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish coherent systems and procedures (planning, monitoring & reporting) • Participation and involvement in technical discussions & reviews, pilot testing • Joint reporting of results
5. Capturing lessons and sharing of experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish unified approach for knowledge profiling, packaging and sharing • Conduct joint knowledge sharing and learning exchange

Dr. Mangisi-Mafileo was also able to co-facilitate a session on the development of action plans for citizen science based on the Palau experience.

In July at the Pacific R2R 4th Regional Steering Committee in Nadi, Fiji the IWECO Project's Dr. Nicole Caesar was invited to share experiences and emerging lessons from R2R implementation in the Caribbean to over 50 participants from 14 Pacific Island countries. This was very well received by participants. In particular, there was keen interest expressed by countries on the development of key indicators as well as knowledge products developed by the predecessor project IWCAM. Dr. Caesar also had the opportunity to join the regional country exhibition, showcasing the project and some of the great work from the Caribbean SIDS.

4th REGIONAL PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING GEF INTERNATIONAL WATERS RIDGE TO REEF PROJECT



Tanoa International Hotel - Nadi, Fiji 30th – 31st July, 2019



4. RESULTS AND LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE - Summarize the impacts of this experience on the issues, the project and its partners. What was learned from this experience?

Key learning highlights include:

- 4.1 Good practice guide for mainstreaming integrated approaches is needed;
- 4.2 Inter-sectoral coordination remains a challenge and good practice documents and lessons learned documentation would be valuable in this specific area;
- 4.3 Growing interest in the IW community for research on socio-cultural dimensions of behaviour change linked to targeted communications strategy;
- 4.4 Effective coordination by PCU or national projects working in silo without support from PCU;
- 4.5 Institutionalizing TDA-SAP through the Permanent Coordination Mechanism;
- 4.6 Understanding the inter-regional SIDS common interests and pursuits in:
 - Supporting national obligations under multilateral environmental agreements and SDGs;
 - Capturing of learning and how it is critical to continued improvement, and knowledge sharing to ensure that we are leveraging from experiences and lessons learned;
 - Coherence and cooperation for knowledge sharing and replication and upscaling;
 - Demonstrating regionalization of environmental benefits.
 - Obtaining knowledge of the Institutionalization of the TDA-SAP processes and lessons learned, and encouraging intergovernmental organizations supporting national obligations and ratification of the Cartagena Protocol through the endorsement of a periodic reporting mechanism – State of the Coast, which is a key deliverable of Pacific R2R Regional project.

In terms of the 3rd IWeco Steering Committee Meeting Members, some areas of interest expressed, included:

- The usefulness of the co-facilitated Citizen Science Action Planning session;
- Revitalizing community engagement;
- The importance of cross-sectoral coordination in the planning and management of freshwater use, sanitation, wastewater treatment and pollution control, sustainable land use and forestry practices, balancing coastal livelihoods and biodiversity conservation, and climate variability and change;
- Harmonization of governance and indicator frameworks;
- CARPHA and the IWEco Project indicated interest in the application of the Most Significant Change technique in the Pacific R2R Programme and harnessing case studies and lessons learned;
- Jamaica's interest in an online community of practice to facilitate stakeholder engagement and knowledge sharing.
- From a Pacific R2R programmatic implementation perspective, concrete actions for success were shared at the IWEco Steering Committee Meeting:

Common issues of interest for Pacific R2R/IWEco projects to explore because of learnings from this exchange:

- Consider with CLME+ and IWLEARN having a "SIDS/R2R" twinning session either at the CLME+ Partnership Forum (first half of that week), or at the LME COP (second half) – or at mid-week when we have the joint Partnership-LME COP day. CLME+ Regional Coordinator extended an informal verbal invitation during the IWEco Regional Steering Committee meeting.
- Consider the application of an assessment of the effectiveness of national inter-sectoral coordinating mechanisms (IMCs) using the good practice guidelines.
- Continue to engage in inter-regional SIDS experience and learning exchanges, including the proposal for the IWEco technical and monitoring officer Palau site visit on participatory monitoring and evaluation.



6. REPLICATION - *What implementation challenges should others expect to encounter when replicating this experience? Highlight specific conditions needed for others to replicate or benefit from this experience.*

With the depth of breadth of our respective programmatic experiences, time always poses a challenge. The sheer quantity of information presented during meetings can also lead to information overload for participants. To optimize benefit, facilitators should agree on a few (no more than 4) priority areas for discussion, exploration and development. Participants should be given a clear framework to manage their expectations and a template to guide and encourage discussions. Participants should also be made to feel comfortable in sharing their experiences in a judgement-free zone.

Challenges and opportunities:

1. Information and knowledge sharing are very powerful ways to connect, relate, share, replicate, and scale up what works in development. Experts and practitioners want to learn from the experiences of others who have gone through, or are going through, similar challenges and articulating solutions that have been tried and tested. They want to be connected with ready access to practical knowledge and solutions. "When done right, knowledge exchange can build the capacity, confidence, and conviction of individuals and groups to act."¹

¹ "World Bank. 2015. The Art of Knowledge Exchange : A Results-Focused Planning Guide for Development Practitioners, Second Edition Updated. Washington, DC. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/17540> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO."

2. Fit-for-purpose design of any knowledge exchange is crucial for effective learning. What are the most useful techniques/tools that may be used to facilitate different kinds of knowledge exchanges for different kinds of results? A useful resource developed by The GEF and The World Bank – *The Art of Knowledge Exchange: A Results-Focused Planning Guide for Development Practitioners, Second Edition Updated* was shared at the GEF Pacific Expanded Constituency Workshop (Tonga, 2017).
3. Presenting experiences at steering committee meeting has its advantages – representation of key stakeholders being a huge benefit for networking and learning. However, the agendas at these meetings are often structured and scheduled for efficiency of decisions making processes, rather than for effective learning as a primary objective.
4. In future, in joint results-focused planning and execution of knowledge exchanges, the following steps from the guide will be critical for success:
 - i. Anchor
 - ii. Define
 - iii. Design and Develop
 - iv. Implement
 - v. Measure and report results

7. SIGNIFICANCE - *Why is this experience significant to GEF and to transboundary water resources management?*

Given the close inter-connections between land, water and coastal systems in Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the integration of freshwater watershed management with coastal area management is considered essential to foster effective cross-sectoral coordination in the planning and management of land, water and coastal uses. In SIDS, such integrated approaches to freshwater and coastal area management have been termed ‘Ridge to Reef’ to emphasise the inter-connections between the natural and social systems from the mountain ‘ridges’ of volcanic islands, through coastal watersheds and habitats, and across coastal lagoons to the fringing ‘reef’ environments associated with most Pacific PICS.

To ensure sustainable development to resource management, a paradigm shift from sectoral to ecosystem-oriented management approaches and strategies must be adopted. And that Ridge to Reef (R2R) or Source to Sea (S2S) approaches establish governance, operations, practices and finance that strengthen collaboration and coherence across S2S systems resulting in sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits.

To optimize investments in resource management, the enablement of knowledge networks and exchange opportunities nationally, regionally and inter-regionally cannot be overemphasized. This knowledge exchange between Pacific R2R and Caribbean IWEco, has supported this.

There are also broader opportunities that these learnings can be applied in the development of a regional integrated ocean governance/investment framework for consideration in the development of the 2050 Pacific Leaders Strategy (2020).

8. REFERENCES - *How can someone interested in using or adapting this experience get more information? Please provide relevant Web site(s), documentation and contact information.*

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9. KEYWORDS - *What 2-5 keywords could be used to help others search and find this experience note? Ridge –to-Reef, Pacific R2R Project, Caribbean IWECO Project, GEF Programmatic Implementation*