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Minutes of the Local Project Appraisal Committee (LPAC) meeting

Date: 20 September 2023
Venue: Level 2, Kadavu House, Suva, UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji & UNDP Pacific Office in the Federated States of Micronesia Kamorale room
Project(s) Appraised: Securing Climate Resilient Sustainable Land Management and Progress Towards Land Degradation Neutrality in the Federated States of Micronesia Project Local
Participants: Yap, Pohnpei, Chuck, and Kosrae states, DECEM, UNDP MCO in Fiji and Federated States of Micronesia.

The LPAC was conducted virtually with the UNDP Fiji Office, UNDP office in Pohnpei and partners and stakeholders from the States of Pohnpei, Yap, Kosrae and Chuuk.

Name	Title	Organisation	STATE
FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA			
1. Leelkan P. Southwick	Director	Department of Resources and Development, Yap State	YAP
2. Jordan Mautaman	Acting Director	Environmental Protection Agency, Yap State	YAP
3. Bertha Reyuw	Capacity Building Program Manager	Micronesia Conservation Trust	YAP
4. Rachael Nash	Project Development Adviser	Department of Environment, Climate Change & Emergency Management	YAP
5. Hubert Yamada	Director	Department of Resources and Development, Pohnpei State	POHNPEI
6. Donna Scheuring	Consultant	Environmental Protection Agency, Pohnpei State	POHNPEI
7. Francisco Celestine	Director	Environmental Protection Agency, Pohnpei	POHNPEI
8. Cynthia H. Ehmes	Acting Secretary	Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management (DECEM)	NATIONAL
9. Rosalinda Yatilman	Project Develoment Manager	Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management	NATIONAL
10. Roseo Marquez	Terrestrial Program Manager	Micronesia Conservation Trust	POHNPEI
11. Tamara Greenstone-Alefaio	Deputy Director for Conservation and Climate Change	Micronesia Conservation Trust	NA
12. Kevin Petrini	Deputy Resident Representative	UNDP Pacific Office in the FSM	NA
13. Wanyi Wang	Programme Analyst	UNDP Pacific Office in the FSM	NA
14. Darla Yatilman	Program Manager	Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management	NATIONAL
15. Steven Palik	Director	Kosrae Island Resource Management Authority	KOSRAE

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16. Bradford Mori	Director	Environmental Protection Agency, Chuuk State	CHUUK

SUVA, FIJI			
1. Tuya Altangerel	Resident Representative	UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji	-
2. Kiye Mwakawago	Programme Advisor	Resilience and Climate Change	-
3. AnnaLucia Londono	UNV - Intern	Resilience and Climate Change	-
4. Merewalesi Laveti	Programme Oversight Specialist	MPO Unit	-
5. Adelle Khan	Programme Associate	MPO Unit	-
6. Talei Elaisa	Programme Assistant	Resilience and Climate Change Unit	-
7. Kiye Mwakawago	Programme Advisor	Resilience and Climate Change	-
8. AnnaLucia Londono	UNV - Intern	Resilience and Climate Change	-
9. Talei Elaisa	Programme Assistant	Resilience and Climate Change Unit	-

Apologies : Rusiate Ratuniata – RCC Analyst – Sick Leave

Brief on the LPAC processes

- The FSM LDN (Land Degradation Neutrality) project LPAC meeting was held on 20 September 2023 virtually in 2 countries and 5 locations (Fiji – UNDP MCO in Suva) (Pohnpei-UNDP North Pacific with Pohnpei based partners) (Chuuk) (Kosrae) (Yap).
- The meeting was chaired by the UNDP Pacific Office Resident Representative, Mrs Tuya Altangerel and co-chaired by Acting Secretary Cynthia Ehmes from the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management (DECEM) of the FSM
- The LPAC was convened to review, discuss and comment on the FSM LDN project document which was circulated to LPAC members in advance of the meeting.
- The FSM LDN project is a 6-year project with a funding from GEF of USD 5,155,255 and country co-financing of up to USD33,492,144 – in cash and in-kind.
- All 4 states – Pohnpei, Kosrae, Chuuk and Yap **APPROVED** the FSM LDN Project Document

Welcome

UNDP DRR North – Kevin Petrini welcomed everyone to the LPAC and thanked all present for their time and their input into the project document soon to be discussed.

Opening Remarks

The Chair of the LPAC, UNDP Resident Representative, Mrs Tuya Altangerel again welcomed those present especially the implementing partners in Pohnpei, Chuuk, Yap, and Kosrae and acknowledged the hard work by the team in the climate change and environment units, MPO and colleagues in FSM to ensure that this project becomes a reality.

- She was hopeful that those present would collectively agree to approve the project.
- She reiterated UNDPs stance in providing support to island nations who are experience the onslaught of climate change and land degradation that is affecting its population and agriculture.
- Acknowledged and commended the hard work and data put into the project document, especially in the projected reach and its beneficiaries.

Assistant Secretary Cynthia Ehmes commended UNDP and those present for their hard work.

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- She highlighted that presence of the directors and was thankful that the state key stakeholders from national government, state government and key environment non-government organization staff who have played a big role in the development of this so project document were able to be present.
- She too was looking forward to the project kicking off as soon as possible.

Project Document Overview

UNDP DRR North – Kevin Petrini gave a brief outline on the PowerPoint which included the project background and design; the outcomes, outputs activities as well as the governance arrangements, budget, social environment, safeguards, gender analysis project also and monitoring evaluation and quality assurance.

- The latter of which was discussed with DECEM to ensure that all aspects of the project were of good quality.
- Special thanks was directed to Malcolm Yinson who revised the documents and brought it back to current, based on the the validation workshop; and the team was able to have it submitted to GEF in the first week of June (ref to PowerPoint – Project Timeline and Key Milestones
- Introduction of Ms. Wanyi Wang – lead of CCR team in FSM UNDP North Pacific country office and will now have the responsibilityy of overseeing the GEF programming in FSM for UNDP.
- It was noted that with the likelihood of the document being signed in October 2023, the planned on-boarding of personnel could take effect as early as February/March of 2024.
- He clarified that a running issue with most GEF projects globally was the stopgap that existed between the date of signing and the late date of actual implementation on the ground– to mitigate this, he has been in discussions with DECEM to address this.
- It is expected that the team will be onboard before the inception workshop.
- He clarified that with GEF and UNDP, the date of signing the project document is the start date of implementation.

UNDP Fiji – Kiye Mwakawago –RCC MCO presented an in-depth review of the PowerPoint that outlined the project timeline and key milestones, strategic alignment; introduction of the FSM LDN project; project activities and budget contributions. *(See PowerPoint attached).*

From the PowerPoint presentation, here follows a few areas covered:

a) Governance and management arrangements (*refer to diagram in the PowerPoint)*
b) Areas of Budget and Co-financing
c) Social and Environmental Safeguards
d) Project risks
e) Gender Analysis
f) Monitoring and Evaluation/Quality assurance
    - Inception Workshop
    - Project Implementation Review

Discussion

After the presentation a few queries were brought up by stakeholders and representatives of the Government. Queries included:

Co-financing modality and the Cash and In-Kind: To the query posed on the amounts in the cash and in-kind table (see PowerPoint), Acting Secretary confirmed that these funds were already those committed already by Government to address the related issues.

Tracking of funds: to the query on tracking of co-financing funds, UNDP DRR Kevin Petrini mentioned the drawing up of a guidance note established on co-financing at inception.

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Late submission of documents: It was shared to those present by UNDP DRR Kevin Petrini that one of the reasons noticeably experienced with GEF funds is the late startup, which in turn results in late processing of the implementation on the ground. This is an area for improvement.

Project Document Endorsement

With the end of the presentation, and discussions, all present were required to recommend one of three possible outcomes of the LPAC today, comprising of the following:

a) *Approve:*	*The project design is of sufficient quality to move to the implementation stage. The SES criteria must be satisfactory or above for the project to be approved.*
b) Approve with qualifications:	*The project design requires some modifications, noted in the quality assurance summary and management actions, which must be addressed before the project moves to implementation.*
c) Disapprove:	*The project is not of sufficient quality to move to the implementation stage; it requires significant changes. If scores on the SES criteria are inadequate, the overall project rating is inadequate, and the project is not approved.*

Discussion and voting process was explained.

The Chair of the LPAC, UNDP Resident Representative, Mrs Tuya Altangerel opened the floor for voting by a show of hands.

Assistant Secretary Cynthia Ehmes DECEM made mention of the option of aiming for the GEF-8 programming as it would offer an opportunity to re-prioritize and work for a new project before she opened the floor to the States represented given that they were the ones that were going to do the implementation on the ground.

After a few moments in discussion and airing observations, all present unanimously gave their approval.

YAP State : Approved
- CHUUK State : Approved
- POHNPEI State: Approved
- KOSRAE state : Approved

Concluding remarks:

UNDP Resident Representative, Mrs Tuya Altangerel thanked all present for their support and trust in the process and in UNDP.

UNDP is deeply committed to supporting Northern Pacific SIDS on their struggle with climate change and building resilience. She reassured all that North Pacific countries will be a high priority for mutual support especially as our states and countries struggle with the climate crisis and climate adaptation. She also acknowledged the continued trust that GEF has had with UNDP over the years and recognized that through this modality of NIM, there has been an increase in capacity development in those involved in such GEF projects. She also added that through GEF, UNDP has over the years, worked to improve the internal systems of oversight with great effort, deliberation and given the increasing sense of urgency to address issues that are affecting people and communities that we strive to serve in the North as well as the Pacific Islands UNDP serves, shortening time frames in development project concepts is a natural progression.

She acknowledged the empowered and hardworking North Pacific Office team under DDR Kevin Petrini, and that the face-to-face connection had made a notable difference in the quality of our partnerships and engagements on the ground.

She thanked everyone for their trust and looked forward to the project's implementation.

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She hopes to meet each of them face to face in the following week when she comes up North Mission and gave the floor to Acting Secretary Cynthia Ehmes to end the meeting.

Acting Secretary Cynthia Ehmes DECEM thanked UNDP Resident Representative, Mrs Tuya Altangerel for her comments and hoped to meet with her in person, if her schedule permits.

She especially thanked state partners and key stakeholders for approving the LPAC.

She reminded the those present that although everyone is excited to move forward, this is not yet set in stone and that should there be any other comments, or matters in terms of institutional arrangement, this can be done at the inception workshop that will take place soon.

She once again thanks everyone present and echoed UNDP RRs sentiments on looking forward to the project's implementation.

Decision

The Board endorsed the approval of the project document stating the design is of sufficient quality to move to the implementation state with SES moderate rating.

PAC Summary meeting minutes prepared by:

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Merewalesi Laveti
Programme Oversight Specialist
Management Performance Oversight Unit

PAC Summary meeting minutes Approved:

DocuSigned by:

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Mrs Tuya Altangerel
UNDP Resident Representative
Chair of LPAC

Cynthia Ehmes
Acting Secretary DECEM
Co-Chair of LPAC

Meeting duration: 2hr33min
Annexes
Annex 1: Power Point presented by UNDP

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Annex 2 :Virtual group photo collage

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FSM Pohnpei Office – UNDP and partners



Virtual "Group" Photo

