

REGIONAL IW R2R PROJECT Q4-2019 PROGRESS REPORT

PACIFIC IW R2R QTR 4 (October to December 2019) PROGRESS

1 – KEY FACTS UPDATED

Regional IW R2R project implementation status at 31 December 2019													
Country Name	Country Visits	Pro Doc Sign	IW R2R					STAR R2R					
			MOA			Project Manager	Inception Meeting	STAR ProDoc		IA	PCA Status	Project Manager	Inception Meeting
			Original Ending Date	Letter of Variation 1	New Ending Date								
Palau	Completed	Signed	Dec. 31, 2019	Signed	Jun. 30, 2020	Leena M. Mesebeluu	Oct. 25, 2016	Copy	OK	UNEP	Signed	Gwen Sisior	March 3, 2018
FSM	Completed	Signed	Dec. 31, 2019	Signed	Dec. 31, 2020	Faith Siba	Feb. 21-22, 2018	Copy	OK	UNDP	Signed	Rosalinda Yatilman	Mar-17
RMI	Completed	Signed	Dec. 31, 2019	Signed	Dec. 31, 2020	Kristina Reimers	March 9, 2018		OK	UNDP		Jennifer Debrum	March 9, 2018
Kiribati	Completed	Signed	Dec. 31, 2020	Signed	Jun. 30, 2021	Teema Biko	March 2018	Copy	OK	FAO		David Yeeting Jr	
Tuvalu	Completed	Signed	Dec. 31, 2019	Signed	Sept. 30, 2020	Pesega Lifuka	July 12, 2016	Copy	OK	UNDP	Signed	Ivy Tumua	Apr-2019
Nauru	Completed	Signed	Dec. 31, 2019	Signed	Dec. 31, 2020	Evayne Gaubidi	Feb. 22-23, 2016	Copy	OK	UNDP	Signed	Phaedora Harris	Feb-16
Samoa	Completed	Signed	Dec. 31, 2019	Signed	Jun. 30, 2021	Fata Eti Malolo	Nov. 1, 2017	Copy	OK	UNDP	Signed		done
Tonga	Completed	Signed	Dec. 31, 2019	Signed	Mar. 31, 2021	Silia Leger	Feb. 1, 2018	UNDP Copy	OK	UNDP	Signed	Tahirih Hokafonu	2015
								FAO Copy	OK	FAO	Signed	Isileli Aholelei	Sep-17
Niue	Completed	Signed	Dec. 31, 2019	Signed	Dec. 31, 2020	Crispina Konelio	Sept. 13, 2017	Copy	OK	UNDP	Signed	Shane Tohovaka	Jul-16
Cook Islands	Completed	Signed	Dec. 31, 2019	Signed	Feb 29, 2020	Jaime Short	Sept. 25, 2017	Copy	OK	UNDP	Signed	Maria Tuoro	Oct-15
Fiji	Completed	Signed	Dec. 31, 2019	Signed	Jun. 30, 2021	Tavenisa Luisa	Oct. 5, 2017	Copy	OK	UNDP	Signed	Beverly Sadole	April 2017
Vanuatu	Completed	Signed	Dec. 31, 2019	Signed	Jun. 30, 2021	Ericksen Packett	Dec. 8, 2016	Copy	OK	FAO			done
Solomons	Completed	Signed	Dec. 31, 2019	Signed	Dec. 31, 2020	Sammy Airahui	Jan. 25-26, 2017	NIL R2R Project				Douglas Yee	
PNG	Completed	Signed	Dec. 31, 2019	Signed	Dec. 31, 2020	Senson Mark	May 9, 2017	Copy	OK	UNDP	Signed	Patricia Kila	2016

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2 – PROGRESS AGAINST OUTPUTS

Component 1. National Demonstrations to Support R2R ICM/IWRM Approaches for Island Resilience and Sustainability		
1.1.1	14 national pilot project area diagnostics based on R2R approach including: baseline environmental state and social data incorporating CC vulnerabilities; and local governance of water, land, forests and coasts reviewed	<p>As precursors to the Island Diagnostic Analysis (IDA) reports, Rapid Assessment of Priority Coastal Areas (RapCA) reports shall be prepared. To date, four of the targeted six RapCA reports are available (Samoa, Solomons, PNG & Vanuatu). Three IDA reports are also available (Palau, Cook Islands & PNG).</p> <p>Within the remaining project period, two additional RapCA reports (Cook Islands and Tonga) will be prepared following the agreed theory of change process and with due consideration to the capacity of national projects and available expertise.</p> <p>Two project and database support interns have been selected with expected start date of late January 2020.</p> <p>Ongoing work to design schema and launch beta version of relational database. Version 1.0 showcased at end of Dec. 2019.</p>
1.1.2	14 national pilot projects test methods for catalysing local community action, utilizing and providing best practice examples, and building institutional linkages for integrated land, forest, water and coastal management	<p>Methodological and technical papers to be used as the basis for testing following the agreed Theory of Change were approved during the 5th Regional Scientific and Technical Committee (RSTC) meeting in July 2019. All 14 national pilot projects are currently implementing activities aimed at achieving their agreed process and stress reduction measures.</p> <p>Procurement and receipt of Water Quality Monitoring equipment for Kiribati and Kosrae, FSM. This includes equipment to monitor nutrient concentrations, background parameters and <i>E.coli</i> in freshwaters.</p> <p>The R2R Water Quality Guidelines, associated templates, and training materials have been finalised and sent through the RSTC for endorsement, and then for packaging/publishing by RPCU in early 2020.</p> <p>The R2R Environmental Monitoring Guidelines and associated facilitation guides and templates have been finalised and sent through to the RSTC for endorsement, and then for packaging/publishing in early 2020.</p>
1.2.1	Priority areas for replication in each of 14 participating PICs characterized in diagnostics for ICM/IWRM reforms, investments and CC adaptation in 14 PICs	<p>Three participating countries have prepared diagnostic reports (Palau, Cook Islands and PNG), see indicator 1.1.1.</p> <p>As previously reported, activities related to site diagnostic analyses workshops and reports will be progressed in the next quarters for Vanuatu, Samoa and Solomon Islands. The same will follow for Tonga, Niue, RMI, Kiribati and Fiji.</p>

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1.2.2	Methodology and procedures for characterizing island coastal areas for ICM investment developed	<p>As an iterative process, the project is continuously enhancing the procedures for characterizing island coastal areas for Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) investment, in close collaboration with national stakeholders is. As mentioned in the previous report, the methodology for the procedure and required indicator sets driving the linked land-sea model, as well as sampling design for additional marine surveys, were prepared for and approved by RSTC 5 in July 2019.</p> <p>Fieldwork to collect information on benthos and fish, which will be used to prepare evidence-based procedures for identifying priority R2R sites, was completed in Vanuatu in November. This work provided the data sets for the final report that highlights hotspot areas where sediment loads can negatively affect coastal areas, thus providing hotspot catchments for future R2R investment.</p> <p>It is intended that further trialling of this work will be undertaken in Solomon Islands in the first quarter of 2020.</p>
1.3.1	Institutional relationships between national and community-based governance structures strengthened and formalized through national “Ridge to Reef” Inter-Ministry Committees in 14 Pacific SIDS	<p>All participating countries have established committees and governance structures that direct project implementation. As previously reported, these governance bodies comprise representatives from communities and local governments. The project continues to advocate for the establishment of a functional joint project steering committees (PSC) or project boards (Boards) for both STAR-R2R and IW-R2R projects, with the intention of fostering a programmatic approach to R2R implementation. PSCs and Boards are expected to promote and upscale R2R tested measures to enhancing planning process or enact new policies. As previously reported, some advances have been, with joint national meetings established, in Palau and Marshall Islands and two more likely, in Kiribati, Nauru and Fiji, but this remains work in progress.</p>
1.3.2	14 national private-sector and donor partnership forums for investment planning in priority community-based ICM/IWRM actions	<p>The project has actively participated in various fora organized by various stakeholders and development partners to explore opportunities for future financing of priority community-based ICM/ IWRM actions and to promote mainstreaming of R2R e.g. the World Bank-sponsored, Pacific Ocean Finance Conference convened by the Forum Fisheries Agency, and the Pacific Ocean Alliance Conference convened by the Office of Pacific Ocean Commissioner,</p> <p>Preparations are underway for a planned regional investment forum that will be convened by the project in the remaining project period.</p>

COMPONENT 2. ISLAND-BASED INVESTMENTS IN HUMAN CAPITAL AND KNOWLEDGE TO STRENGTHEN NATIONAL AND LOCAL CAPACITIES FOR RIDGE TO REEF ICM/IWRM APPROACHES, INCORPORATING CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

2.1.1	Innovative post-graduate training program in ICM/IWRM and related CC adaptation delivered for project managers and participating stakeholders through partnership of internationally recognized educational institutes and technical support and mentoring program with results documented	<p>Previously, the project reported the successful completion of 31 participants (20 women) in the Post Graduate Certificate (PGC) delivered by James Cook University. The majority of participants are expected to continue with the R2R Diploma course.</p>
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2.1.2	Capacity for civil society and community organization participation in ICM/IWRM and CC adaptation strengthened through direct involvement in implementation of demo activities with results documented	As previously reported, capacity building through a participatory approach to the implementation of project interventions remains to be the project priority activity. National projects engaged with communities, local governments and mandated institutions in the conduct of baseline assessments, planning and implementation. Acknowledging the limited capacities in-countries, the project employs mentoring the project managers as the most appropriate approach for enhancing managerial skills and technical expertise. The number of individuals and institutions developing improved capacity will be reported as one of the dashboards of the Regional IW R2R project website.
2.2.1	National human capacity needs for ICM/IWRM implementation identified and competencies of national and local government units for ICM/IWRM implementation benchmarked, tracked, and capacity building support secured with results documented	No update on this indicator. New results achieved under this indicator will be reported accordingly in the succeeding progress report.
2.2.2	Existing Public Service Commission salary scales and required functional competencies of key ICM/IWRM personnel analysed; appropriate guidelines and incentive structures explored to encourage retention skilled and experienced staff	As previously reported, this indicator will no longer be implemented. The study that will be conducted under 2.2.1 is considered sufficient. The RPCU decision conforms to recommendation of the IW R2R Mid-term Review.

COMPONENT 3. MAINSTREAMING OF RIDGE TO REEF ICM/IWRM APPROACHES INTO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

3.1.1	National recommendations for 14 PICs for coastal policy, legal and budgetary reforms for ICM/IWRM for integration of land, water, forest, coastal management and CC adaptation compiled and documented with options for harmonization of governance frameworks	No new update on this indicator. New results achieved under this indicator will be reported accordingly in the succeeding progress report.
3.1.2	Inter-ministerial agreements and strategic action frameworks for 14 PICs on integration of land, water, forest and coastal management and capacity building in development of national ICM/IWRM reforms and investment plans endorsed by leaders	No new update on this indicator. New results achieved under this indicator will be reported accordingly in the succeeding progress report.
3.1.3	National 'State of the Coasts' reports for 14 PICs completed and launched to Pacific Leaders during National Coastal Summits (Year 3) in coordination with national R2R projects and demonstrated as national development planning tool, including guidelines for diagnostic analyses of coastal areas	No update on this indicator. As mentioned before this indicator builds on the results achieved in indicator 1.1.1 and 1.2.1. New results achieved under this indicator will be reported accordingly in the succeeding progress report.
3.2.1	14 national networks of national ICM/IWRM pilot project inter-ministry committees formed by building on existing IWRM committees and contributing to a common results framework at the project and program levels	No update on this indicator. New results achieved under this indicator will be reported accordingly in the succeeding progress report.

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3.2.2	Periodic inter-ministry committee meetings in 14 PICS conducted and results documented, participation data assembled and reported to national decision-makers and regional forums	As previously reported, RPCU continues to advocate for establishment for joint Project Steering Committees/ Boards for both STAR and IW projects. The PSCs/ Boards are considered to be performing the role of inter-ministry committees for promoting R2R. New results achieved under this indicator will be reported accordingly in the succeeding progress report.
3.2.3	Community leaders and local government from pilot projects networked via periodic national and regional round-table meetings complemented by community tech exchange visits	A knowledge exchange visit to American Samoa was successfully carried out with some co-financing from IW: LEARN. The exchange focused on increasing the knowledge of technology and governance arrangements for pig waste management. A full report and a short video of this exchange visit is available.
3.2.4	Participatory techniques used to gauge learning and change in perception among inter-ministry committee members in 4 pilot PICS (sub-regional, mix of high island, atoll settings)	No new update on this indicator. New results achieved under this indicator will be reported accordingly in the succeeding progress report.

COMPONENT 4. REGIONAL AND NATIONAL 'RIDGE TO REEF' INDICATORS FOR REPORTING, MONITORING, ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

4.1.1	National and regional reporting templates developed based on national indicator sets and regional framework to facilitate annual results reporting and monitoring from 14 PICS	The project continue its advocacy for results-oriented planning, implementation and reporting. Hands-on learning by doing approach or mentoring is provided to project managers who routinely fall short in submitting good quality workplans and progress reports. A combination of face to face and teleconferencing has been employed in mentoring and supporting project managers.
4.1.2	Unified/harmonized multi-focal area results tracking approach and analytical tool developed and proposed to the GEF, its agencies and participating countries	No new update on this indicator. New results achieved under this indicator will be reported accordingly in the succeeding progress report.
4.1.3	National planning exercises in 14 Pac SIDS conducted with relevant ministries on embedding R2R results frameworks into national systems for reporting, monitoring and budgeting	Six country visits, to Nauru, Palau, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Tonga, and Kiribati were carried out during this reporting period. These visits were aimed at providing technical guidance to national projects for incorporating, embedding or mainstreaming R2R into planning processes/ appropriate policies.
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	<p>The recommendation by the MTR regarding the communications strategy was approved by both the RSTC and RSC in July, and the multi-year costed work plan and the related communications activities approved by RSC.</p> <p>Global and regional SIDS knowledge sharing and advocacy were undertaken at the GEF-convened Large Marine Ecosystem 21 Forum at Cartagena, Colombia in September and at the Pacific Ocean Alliance inaugural consultations in Suva, Fiji, respectively.</p>

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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	<p>The RSC meeting in Nadi in August approved the regional framework for the compilation of R2R lessons learned prepared by the RPCU. It is expected that this will significantly increase the total number of experience notes (expanded to lessons) beyond the end of project target of 10. A programme inventory of lessons learned contributions will be compiled and presented at RSC5.</p> <p>Currently, two joint experience notes have been drafted as a result of two twinning exercises, with the IWEco Project and CLME+ (Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem). Three notes have been drafted from national project implementation experience (Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Palau) for a total of five. Experience notes emanating from the twinning with the American Samoa Environmental Protection Agency on pig waste management are forthcoming.</p> <p>Interlinking of websites has been included in the ToR for R2R web redevelopment.</p>
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	<p>RPCU is in an advanced stage of negotiations with an SPC preferred supplier to initiate this work. While it is hoped that the work will commence in Q4 2019, lengthy negotiations with the supplier may mean that the work will not commence until Q1 2020.</p>

COMPONENT 5. RIDGE-TO-REEF REGIONAL AND NATIONAL COORDINATION

5.1.1	Functioning overall R2R program coordination unit with alignment of development worker positions contributing to coordinated effort among national R2R projects (Year 1)	<p>As previously reported the Project Accountant resigned in September 2019. A temporary Finance Officer has been recruited. Formal recruitment is underway to engage a full-time Finance Officer.</p> <p>In addition, in December 2019, the Project Science Officer resigned, effective February 5, 2020. Several options are currently being discussed to provide RPCU with this skill set over the remaining life of the project.</p>
5.1.2	Technical, operational, reporting and monitoring support provided to national R2R projects, as may be requested by PICs, to facilitate timely delivery of overall program goals	<p>These are ongoing activities or services being provided by RPCU to participating countries. The focus in this reporting period was technical review of national project status and progress with a view to determining any extension of time required for national projects to achieve their targets. As indicated in section 1 of this report, Letters of Variations indicating the new ending dates were developed by the RPCU, and SPC's Procurement section, in close collaboration with the national projects. Review of, and agreement on, updated national logframes and multi-year costed workplans served as the bases for determining the appropriate period of extension of the national projects.</p> <p>During this reporting period, country visits to Nauru, Palau, Fiji, RMI, Tonga, and Kiribati were conducted to assist in project implementation. Several other countries were supported through telecoms.</p>

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5.1.3	Assistance provided to participating countries in the Pacific R2R network, harmonized reporting and monitoring and other regional and national and capacity building modules, among others	No update on this indicator. New results achieved under this indicator will be reported accordingly in the succeeding progress report.
5.1.4	Periodic planning and coordination workshops conducted for national project teams in the Pacific R2R network	The project is currently preparing for the conduct of an assessment/reflection and planning workshop. Documentation of this activity will be available in Q1 2020.

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4 – PROJECT EXPENDITURE SUMMARY

Country	MOA Signed	1 st Fund Tranche	Expenditure as @ end Q4Y2019	% Expenditure as @ end Q4Y2019
Palau	13/06/2016	20/06/2016	170,649.17	85.3%
FSM	28/12/2016	6/10/2017	102,665.44	51.3%
Marshalls	13/06/2016	20/06/2016	126,491.36	63.2%
Kiribati	10/03/2017	5/09/2017	47,703.30	23.9%
Tuvalu	1/06/2016	2/11/2016	148,770.72	74.4%
Nauru	26/05/2016	5/08/2016	44,370.39	22.2%
Samoa	10/03/2017	27/09/2017	73,182.98	36.6%
Tonga	1/09/2016	13/09/2017	54,462.43	27.2%
Niue	7/02/2017	16/03/2017	117,898.33	58.9%
Cooks	15/09/2016	28/09/2016	103,248.39	51.6%
Fiji	10/03/2017	6/10/2017	22,890.74	11.4%
Vanuatu	1/06/2016	12/07/2016	70,543.86	35.3%
Solomons	1/09/2016	10/01/2017	96,447.50	48.2%
PNG	9/01/2017	2/03/2017	193,063.57	96.5%
Regional Project	30/07/2015	6/11/2015	5,596,656.44	54%
Component 1			2,963,800.07	67%
Component 2			650,168.64	39%
Component 3			246,351.47	22%
Component 4			606,089.11	61%
Component 5			901,005.94	57%
Component 6/PM			229,241.21	44%

5. CHALLENGES / LESSONS LEARNT

Key challenges and remedial measures taken:

1. Despite numerous reminders to national R2R teams, achieving timely delivery of good quality submission of national project workplans and progress and financial reports remains a challenge. The often poor quality of reports and, most importantly incomplete submissions of financial reports and supporting documents that serve as basis for cash advance acquittals, are causing delays in the processing of requested fund transfers. In attempting to remedy this, on top of the efforts of the Country Focal Points, all RPCU staff were involved in continuously providing mentoring session through face-to-face meetings and teleconferencing (Skype or FB messenger) in order to iron out planning and reporting gaps.
2. Some project managers and country host agencies remain confused in respect of the opportunity to seek no-cost extensions to national projects. The RPCU prepared simple guidance notes in this regard explaining the process and steps related to the request for a no-cost extension. The circular emphasised that justification for no-cost extensions rests on submission and approval of detailed work plans aimed at achieving national end of the project targets. Towards the end of the reporting period, there were indications that national project managers are beginning to grasp this concept and some have begun submitting revised logframes and related multi-year costed work plans. As of end December 2019, all participating countries requested no-cost extension to ensure delivery of the end of the project targets as indicated in the updated logframes. Letters of Variation were sent to the countries for counter-signing by the authorized representative of the implementing agency, with a deadline of 31 January 2020.
3. As previously reported, achieving an overall programmatic approach to implementation of R2R continues to challenge SPC, and remains a significant constraint to successfully achieving overall program outcomes. Although RPCU has provided the Harmonized Results Reporting tool for reporting results of the GEF Pacific R2R outcomes, GEF R2R child projects are yet to submit the data required for SPC to report on the results of GEF investments towards achievement of GEF-5 indicators. Considerable attention was given to this issue at RSC 4 and, while there was general agreement that such reporting should and will be actioned, compliance still requires direction and encouragement by all the GEF Pacific Regional R2R implementing agencies to their respective R2R STAR projects.
4. The loss of the IW R2R Project Accountant has provided a further challenge to project implementation, though at the end of the reporting period arrangements were made for temporary project accounting support and for recruitment of a permanent replacement. SPC recruitment process is underway.
5. SPC does not have a clear understanding of UNDP's intention, or otherwise, to work with the R2R project to develop a future Strategic Action Plan for the Pacific islands under GEF's International Waters portfolio.