



**GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME**

**THE INTERNATIONAL WATERS PROJECT
IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGIC ACTION PROGRAMME (SAP) FOR THE
INTERNATIONAL WATERS OF THE PACIFIC SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES**

**FOURTH NATIONAL COORDINATOR'S MEETING
5-7 July, 2004
[Apia, Samoa]**

SUMMARY RECORD OF DISCUSSION

1. Project National Coordinators and Country Officials participated in the Fourth National Coordinator's Meeting (NCM-4) for the International Waters Project that is implementing the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the International Waters of the Pacific Small Island Developing States. The following governments were represented: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. In addition to Coordinators and Officials, representatives from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) also participated in the Meeting. A list of participants is annexed at Attachment A.

OPENING

2. The representative from the UNDP (Apia Office), Mr. Tom Twining-Ward, noted that the project has come a long way since its inception. The Project has made a critical step in last 12 months, from project planning to a focus on results and impacts. He stated that he was pleased to see that the focus on this NCM was monitoring and evaluation and that this was of particular interest to the UNDP since the GEF is moving towards a performance-based monitoring system, which has an increasing focus on impacts and results. Accordingly, it will be critical to have effective monitoring and evaluation systems in place in the future in order to secure future funds. The Project Manager, Andrew Wright, noted that a recent paper on GEF performance based monitoring in the biodiversity focal area will be made available to meeting participants.

3. The Project Manager also welcomed Coordinators and Officials to the Meeting. The Project Manager referred to the objectives of the NCM-4 meeting: to reassess project implementation status and focus on impacts and achievements; to share project experiences and lessons to date; to review the

Project log frame; to develop first draft National Monitoring Plans; to refine a first draft Project monitoring Plan. He invited the participants to select a chairperson for the Meeting.

SELECTION OF CHAIR

4. The representative from Samoa, Faumuina Pati Liu was selected Chairperson for the Meeting. He welcomed all participants on behalf of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. He urged the Meeting to focus on progress to date. He commented that National Coordinators should contribute actively to the Meeting as this was their opportunity to direct the development of the Project.

APOLOGIES

5. Apologies were received from the Kiribati National Coordinator and from Nauru.

PROCEDURAL ISSUES

6. The Project Manager encouraged Officials to fully participate in NCM-4 and for National Coordinators to actively support their Officials during the subsequent MPR.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

7. The Meeting adopted the revised agenda annexed at Attachment B.

PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES STATUS REPORTS

8. Project National Coordinators representing the Governments of Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu presented country status reports 2003-2004 appended at Attachment C. The country status report for Kiribati was presented by the Kiribati government official, Rikiaua Takeke, in the absence of the Kiribati National Coordinator.

9. Common issues raised during the session of relevance to many participating countries included: National Task Force (NTF) membership and effectiveness (particularly in relation to changing membership, its impact on project decision-making and how active NTFs are); integration and coordination of IWP with other Lead Agency activities and national and regional projects; the extent to which IWP can support infrastructure; requests for additional economic support for some projects; partnerships between government and other agencies such as NGOs, including the need for formal arrangements e.g. MOUs (Palau and Fiji); the possible need for legislation that mandates local community management of community-owned resources (e.g. by laws); community understanding of IWP - managing community expectations; flexibility in use of funds set aside for a scholarship for other capacity building initiatives .

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Coastal Component

11. Referring to Working Paper 1, the Project Manager highlighted Project achievements for the last 12 months at the regional and national level and current priorities for the next 12 months. Following the presentation, the delegate from Solomon Islands, Moses Biliki, observed that there was only two years left in the Project. He acknowledged the importance of the two pronged approach but suggested that the priority in the time remaining should be given to getting community-based activities established before addressing national or higher level issues.

12. The National Coordinator from Niue, Sione Leolahi, asked whether it was final that the Project would end in December 2006. He was particularly concerned that the Cyclone Heta had severely

affected Project implementation on Niue reducing the potential for achieving Project objectives there. The Coordinator asked if there was room to extend the project termination date. The Project Manager responded highlighting the pilot nature of the IWP and the need to put in place arrangements to assist in making the transition at the end of IWP funding in 2006.

SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT

13. The Project Accountant, Mr Rama Va'a, presented a summary of the GEF-IWP project budget. The presentation included details on expenditure and disbursement to date. The National Coordinator from PNG, Narua Lovai, asked about the status of Nauru and possible allocation of funds to other countries. The IWP Project Manager noted provision for the reassignment of unexpended funds on the basis of demonstrated need. He explained that the Nauru project was on-hold pending the submission of satisfactory audits for 2002 and 2003. The Project Accountant explained the procedure in relation to audit issues with countries involves consultation with lead agencies, finance departments or treasury and the auditor general.

MONITORING

14. The Project Manager started the session by noting that the focus of the NCM4 meeting would be on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). He introduced the workshop facilitator Dr Sango Mahanty. Dr Mahanty provided a preview of the two-day monitoring session.

15. The Project Manager drew the attention of the workshop to the Project Logframe around which the Project is developed. The Project Manager noted that the Logframe should provide the basis for the monitoring and evaluation plan. He provided an overview of generic considerations of GEF Monitoring and Evaluation. He noted that the different levels at which monitoring is conducted. He noted the key elements of a GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, and provided an overview of the IWP Project Log frame.

16. The Workshop Facilitator provided an introduction to key concepts and issues associated with Monitoring and Evaluation and an introduction to GEF/IW Indicators: Process Indicators, Stress Reduction Indicators and Environmental Status Indicators.

17. The Community Assessment and Participation Specialist (CAPS), Dr Natasha Stacey, noted some key issues in monitoring plans in relation to participation (consultation with stakeholders, agreement of indicators and methods of collection, collaboration on gathering and interpreting data). She noted that monitoring was inextricably linked to baseline assessments of situations. The CAPS gave a brief overview of baseline studies and why they are important to projects. She also noted that National Coordinators had already had some capacity building in baseline work during training in 2003.

18. The National Coordinator for Papua New Guinea noted the relationship between baselines and monitoring. It was acknowledged that the two issues are related although monitoring would involve collection of information on fewer variables than a baseline study. The National Coordinator for Tuvalu, Kelesoma Soloa, noted that some baselines may contain so much information as to be daunting. The workshop facilitator observed that some previous monitoring programmes had been too onerous and there was therefore a need to ensure that monitoring activities were realistic.

19. The workshop facilitator distributed three focal area case studies among the workshop participants. She divided the group into four working groups – two for waste, one for freshwater and one for fisheries. The working groups identified the goals and objectives of the case studies that relate to their own projects. The workshop facilitator then described process indicators, noting their relationship to project activities. Workgroups met to identify and document examples of the different indicators for their case studies and feed back information to the workshop for discussion.

20. There was some discussion about the difference between stress reduction indicators and environmental status indicators. The group agreed that process indicators were easier to identify than stress reduction and or environmental status indicators (which were sometimes difficult to differentiate). The workshop facilitator noted that process and stress reduction indicators were most likely to be relevant to IWP projects compared to environmental status indicators in the short to medium term. This is because it may take time for projects to affect environmental quality in practice. It was noted that some indicators are not clear and would need to be interpreted with care. Some indicators appeared to be useful for more than one objective. It was noted that timeframe, costs and the availability of necessary expertise would be likely to affect the desirability of an indicator. Another important issue raised was that it was necessary to be aware of other projects or activities that may also be contributing to changes related to Project objectives.

21. Workshop participants subsequently applied the lessons they had learned in the previous session to draft monitoring plans for their own projects. Three National Coordinators (Niue, Tuvalu and Fiji) presented their draft plans to the meeting.

22. It was noted by the PCU that the national project objectives should reflect that objectives of the project logframe, which is: “To address the root causes of degradation of international waters in the Pacific Islands region”. It was agreed that National Coordinators would use their draft monitoring plans for subsequent discussion with their project stakeholders prior to finalising their plans. In some cases, finalization of the plan was awaiting final agreement on the outputs and outcomes to be supported by the pilot activities at the national level.

23. The Project Manager presented a revised logical framework for discussion prior to submission to MPR for approval. He noted revisions which were based on recommendations from GEF. The Meeting agreed to present the Logframe, as revised to the MPR.

24. The final session on monitoring focused on reviewing the objectives of the monitoring sessions and considering the next steps for developing national monitoring plans. The Workshop Facilitator provided a short presentation followed by general discussion on: key elements of monitoring; how to draft a monitoring plan (with the facilitator noting that the monitoring plan template will be revised to incorporate separate process, stress, environmental status indicators); what is a good indicator; and how to prioritise indicators.

25. The workshop facilitator noted that the aim of the monitoring sessions had been to commence steps to develop a plan but that she acknowledged that it would still probably take extra time to absorb the information, think about it and work out how to plan for monitoring in practice. The Project Manager noted that the development of monitoring plans was also a demonstration of best practice in the Project.

26. The workshop facilitator noted a number of key areas on which national coordinators could focus when developing their monitoring plans: stakeholder participation (what sorts of activities are going on to support stakeholder participation); capacity building; changes in legislation, policy, and rules; cooperation between institutions (e.g. NTF, local committees, empowerment of local structures); changes in behaviour (enforcement or compliance with rules); and changes in the condition of the environment. The components of a ‘good’ monitoring plan were noted. The Facilitator noted some of the good examples of indicators that had come out of work the previous day. She noted steps ahead for national coordinators to follow – consideration of national project log frames; discussion with project stakeholders; and finalisation of monitoring plans. The Project Manager added that best efforts should be made to have project monitoring plans effectively finalized by the end of August. The PCU was available to assist in this endeavor.

27. The workshop facilitator briefly re-visited the issue of baselines in the context of existing baseline work completed or in the process of being completed and in relationship to indicators identified by national coordinators to measure change. She invited the National Coordinator from Tonga, Sione Fakaosi, to consider future baseline needs in the light of the monitoring session. The National Coordinator noted that some baseline information would be good for monitoring purposes (such household waste generated on a daily basis) but that there may be certain issues that they would have to revisit to ensure good monitoring (amount of human and animal waste).

28. The CAPS noted that it was important that all baseline information was compatible and there was a consistency of methods used for baselines and monitoring. The National Coordinator for Palau, Joseph Aitaro, asked whether there were any dangers from developing and implementing monitoring plans at the same time. The workshop facilitator noted that in an ideal world, baseline information collection should occur before monitoring, but if not – as is often the case in the real world – it is essential to collect monitoring information early on in order to monitor change brought about by the Project.

29. The National Coordinator from Tuvalu provided an example of where this was an issue noting that some of the methods currently used for measuring water quality are not able to detect specific changes.

30. The Workshop Facilitator presented a revised Monitoring Plan template to the Meeting. The amendments were highlighted. She noted that the PCU would circulate this revised version to all National Coordinators.

KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

31. The Natural Resource Economist (NRE), Paula Holland, presented an overview of Project considerations in information and knowledge management. She noted that monitoring work raised the importance of effective information management systems. She noted that the objective of the Project was to address the root causes for environmental problems in the Pacific Islands region. She noted that the SAP had identified a contributing factor to the root causes was deficiencies in information to support decision-making. She encouraged National Coordinators to ensure effective information management is applied to their projects. The NRE noted the importance of considering the information requirements of different stakeholders, and considerations in information acquisition, analysis, documentation, security, and dissemination. The National Coordinator for PNG asked if the PCU could act as a centre for storing IWP-related information for countries. The NRE responded that the PCU had been encouraging this and that it provides a useful back up for information storage. The government representative for Niue, Brendon Pasisi, endorsed this suggestion, saying that it was good practice for SPREP to act as a repository of national information relating to the Project.

EVALUATION

32. The Project Manager noted the importance of project evaluation, noting that the MPR and Mid Term Evaluation have provided some input on evaluating the Project to date. He also noted that the terminal evaluation for the oceanic component has been completed and would be discussed in the MPR. This would provide an opportunity for country representatives to familiarize themselves with terminal evaluation procedures and issues. The Project Manager noted that the terminal evaluation for the ICWM component was currently scheduled to start in July 2006.

OTHER BUSINESS

Communications

33. The Community Communications Specialist (CCS), Steve Menzies, presented an overview of communication considerations for the remainder of the Project. He suggested that the public relations of the Project had focused on short term issues for the moment. He suggested that National Coordinators should now be focusing on sending messages on the objectives, processes and benefits of the Project to raise interest and promote participation.. The CCS noted the role of communications in encouraging changes in behaviour and the importance of providing alternatives/support for people. He emphasized that it is not enough to just communicate – that messages would have also to be backed up by supporting policies.

34. The National Coordinator from Samoa, Su'a Faraimo Ti'itii, asked about an information video that had been being developed about the IWP early in on the Project. The Project Manager noted that the video had never eventuated because of administrative and logistical difficulties. Consequently, no payments had been made to date for the filming and editing. However, he also noted that the material collected for the video was now to be put into a documentary-type video on the Project, to be released in 2006.

35. The National Coordinator for Tuvalu asked if it was possible to do an assessment of how people learn methods of communication. The CCS agreed that he could help National Coordinators manage surveys and focus groups to identify information needs. The National Coordinator for Tonga noted the confusion about the volume of information relating to the IWP. He noted that in Environment Week, IWP Tonga tries to work within the Environment Department so that people do not get confused about who the IWP is, what they are doing and how they relate to the Government. The CCS agreed that there was a need to consider how IWP brands or communicated its message.

36. The National Coordinator for the Cook Islands, Tauraki Raea, commented that in his government, all the sections in the Department of Environment share communications work because they are all targeting the environment. He suggested that there is a need to focus on objectives for departmental campaigns.

37. The National Coordinator for Niue asked if the PCU could provide a standard advertisement for IWP national projects. The CCS said that this was possible if it would stop people duplicating efforts.

Regional ICWM

38. The Project Manager noted that last year's MPR had adopted the MTE recommendation that the Project pay increased attention to regional institutional and consultative arrangements for ICWM. He advised the Meeting that the PCU had supported a consultation., in association with the South Pacific Applied Geosciences Commission (SOPAC) in December 2003. The objective of the consultation was to develop strategies for ensuring that ICWM received adequate attention during the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Forum, which was convened at the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Suva in February 2004. He noted that the PCU had had considerable input to the major outcome of the Forum, a Framework for Integrated Strategic Action and that ICWM was well represented in the Framework. He advised that the Framework would be presented to the August 2004 Pacific Island Leaders Meeting at Apia in August 2004. He suggested that, on adoption of the Framework, the Project would have a basis for moving forward on regional ICWM. The PCU would be liaise with National Coordinators on appropriate action following the August Forum Leader's Meeting.

Empowering the NTF

39. The Project Manager appealed to National Coordinators to discuss means to secure meaningful participation of the National Task Forces (NTF) in Project implementation and empowering the NTF to consider broad strategic issues associated with the focal area or areas of interest to the Project. He noted that this issues was raised during the MTE and that it was highly likely it would be re-visited

during the Terminal Evaluation. National Coordinators discussed difficulties associated with securing meaningful engagement in the NTF. They noted that considerable effort was required to encourage participation in NTF meetings. Challenges for securing good NTF participation included the heavy work loads of Task Force members and the large number of national consultative processes that are supported at the national level for natural resource management and environmental affairs. It was agreed that meaningful participation in the NTFs could be improved if NTFs could demonstrate a capacity to add value to the existing work areas of interest to the institutions, be they government or non-government, who are represented in the NTF. It was suggested that a SWOT analysis for NTFs could be useful in identifying issues that could be addressed to improve NTF operations.

National Coordinator issues

40. The National Coordinators presented a list of issues to the Meeting for general discussion. The issues discussed included: Project publications, further support for the development and implementation of national monitoring plans, the Project policy in relation to the purchase of capital assets that will assist the Project achieve the objective of addressing the root cause for the environmental problems being addressed by the Project, the need to exert best efforts to continue Nauru's involvement in the Project, the possibility of an additional NCM before the end of the year, and the need to for future budget revisions to make increased provision for the engagement of short term national assistance to the Project.

41. In relation to the acquisition of assets and infrastructure, the project manager referred NCs to the community waste management paper that was provided to the National Coordinators a year ago in Tonga (This paper outlines the type of things the project can financially support in practice.) He observed that no comments were received on this paper and suggested that National Coordinators could review it and any additional queries could be raised. He noted that each asset has to be looked at specifically for each project. Co-funding will make consideration for support for acquisitions easier.

42. At the same time, the Project Manager noted that the UNDP has established a clear rule requiring countries to have PCU input on assets costing over US\$1000. He noted that countries signed on to this rule when signing the MoU.

43. Regarding Nauru, the Project Manager commented that the PCU has made considerable efforts to keep Nauru engaged in the project. He noted for example that the PCU phones at least twice a week (to the National Coordinator, auditor etc.). the Project Manager commented that the PCU is committed to keeping all countries engaged and it is making best efforts. However there are certain rules under UNDP and the PCU's hands are tied if a country does not follow them.

44. Regarding additional NCM meetings, the project manager stated that he takes on that suggestion for more meetings which is good for National Coordinators. He suggested that National Coordinators need to be aware that as there is no funding in the PCU for additional meetings, the cost would have to come from the in-country budgets and be supported by the NTFs and the lead agency.

45. Regarding PCU visits to Samoa communities, the project manager noted that the CAPS, project accountant and CCS have all been to Samoa project sites. The NC for Samoa acknowledged this. The project manager said the PCU would be happy to attend more meetings at sites if they received more invitations. The PCU would also be keen to attend Samoa IWP NTF meetings at their invitation.

46. Regarding Post 2006 issues, the Project Manager stated that the PCU is keen to discuss replication work and how we prepare for post 2006. He noted that the IWP would need to consider a variety of issues including:

- Documentation of lessons learnt
- National monitoring plans and Project monitoring plan

- Production of a replication strategy.

47. Regarding publications, the project manager stated he had already apologised to PNG and Niue regarding the covers for their reports but reiterated his apology. He stated that the situation will be corrected from now on. The Project Manager noted that the PCU/SPREP is happy to be involved in publications because it enables it to consolidate work and act as an information clearing house, while standardizing the quality of reports. On the other hand, although publication requires a significant amount of effort (professional editing, formatting, and registering an ISBN and international library association), national publication of documents can always be considered.

48. Regarding national staffing requirements, the Project Manager stated that the PCU would have to talk to UNDP about the opportunity to increase the salary allocation. In the meanwhile, he drew National Coordinators attention to the money available for the use of national short term consultants.

49. The National Coordinator for Fiji, Sandeep Singh, asked why the country logo was not put on every cover of each relevant publication. The project manager said that this is because it would mean that each report cover would have to be individually designed and printed and this would make publishing costs too high. In future publications in this series the Lead Agency logo will be included on the title page.

50. Regarding the donor conference, the Project Manager noted that in Budget Revision G, \$123 178 has been allocated for 2006 so that the final MPR and NCM will be merged with the donor conference.

NEXT MEETING

51. The Meeting agreed to propose to MPR3 that the next Meeting of National Coordinators be held over 5 days in November 2004 at a venue to be determined.

SUMMARY RECORD

52. The Fourth National Coordinator's Meeting adopted this Summary Record of Discussion.

CLOSE OF MEETING

53. The Project Manager extended his appreciation to all PCU team members for their support and efforts throughout the year. He noted their dedication to the preparations for this Meeting – extending particular thanks to Rosanna Galuvao for the logistical and administrative support provided to the Meeting. He also thanked SPREP finance and administrative personnel and other SPREP staff who provided logistical support to the meeting. He thanked Dr Sango Mahanty for her support during the preparation and delivery of the monitoring component of the Meeting and to National Coordinators for their constructive participation during the 3-day Meeting.. He reminded National Coordinators of the support available from the PCU to assist with the completion of the tasks identified for Project implementation during the forthcoming 12 months.

54. The representative from UNDP noted, with satisfaction, the significant progress achieved by the Project during the last 12 months. However, he also noted that there is still much left to be done. He appealed to all National Coordinators to exert best efforts to securing the best possible outcomes for the Project. The advised UNDP is looking forward to the results that will be generated by the Project in the 2.5 years remaining.

55. On behalf of participants, Sione Fakoasi, the National Coordinator from Tonga, extended appreciation to the government of Samoa for their assistance with hosting the Meeting. He also thanked UNDP for the support provided during the last 12 months. He extended appreciation to the PCU for the Meeting arrangements and Dr Sango Mahanty for her facilitation support. He endorsed

the view that the opportunity for National Coordinators to meet and discuss Project implementation issues was invaluable.

56. The Meeting was declared closed.