

## Twenty Fourth SPREP Meeting

17-19 September 2013  
Apia, Samoa

### **AGENDA ITEM 6.3: GEF Programmatic issues - (GEF 6, Ridge to Reef programme, internal coordination issues)**

#### **Purpose of Paper**

1. Provide update on the use of GEF 5 and STAR allocations for the Ridge to Reef Programme for the Pacific Islands.
2. Seek endorsement for SPREP's support to member countries in the preparation of their project proposals for the new GEF 6 programme cycle.

#### **Background**

##### **GEF 5:**

3. At the mid-point of GEF 5 programming cycle (June 2012), countries had experienced significant delays in accessing their GEF 5 resources. As a direct response, the GEF together with UNDP, UNEP and FAO proposed the Ridge to Reef Umbrella Programme as viable platform for SPREP member countries to lock in their STAR and other GEF funding windows before the end of GEF 5 cycle in June 2014.
4. The Ridge to Reef Umbrella Programme has effectively replaced the GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability (GPAS under GEF 4). All 14 SPREP Member countries eligible for GEF funds are now participating in the Ridge to Reef Programme either through its regional IWRM component, national Ridge to Reef projects or both.
5. The GEF Constituency Meeting for the Pacific Islands in Sydney, Australia noted multiple requests from SPREP Member countries to engage the Secretariat for supporting the development of their Project Identification Forms (PIF) and Project Preparation Grant (PPG) in collaboration with their preferred GEF Implementing Agency (IA).
6. The Secretariat has prepared its 'support package' that identifies co-financing leverage as well as making technical staff available to support the development of country's ridge to reef project document, in addition to technical backstopping during the implementation of activities.

7. The following list shows countries and their preferred GEF IAs;
- a) UNDP: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Nauru, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, International Waters Regional Programme Coordinating Agency.
  - b) UNEP: Marshall Islands, Palau.
  - c) FAO: Kiribati, Tonga, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands. (Tonga is mentioned twice under UNDP and FAO)

8. **GEF Council:** GEF Council has approved the Ridge to Reef Programme at its 44th Council Meeting in Washington DC from the 17-20 June 2013.

**GEF 6:**

9. The GEF is currently evaluating its GEF5 performance (called the Overall Performance Study or OPS 5). The evaluation report and recommendations is important to secure donor confidence in the GEF and will ultimately shape the new GEF 6 programming direction.

10. **Replenishment Discussions:** The GEF 6 replenishment discussions started in Paris on the 3-5 April 2013. There are 3 series of replenishment discussions (2 in 2013 and 1 in the 1st quarter of 2014). The replenishment discussions will conclude in February 2014. Country allocations will only be known after the completion of replenishment discussions.

11. **GEF Assembly Meeting:** The GEF Assembly is earmarked to meet tentatively in March 2014 to discuss and approve the new GEF 6 Programming Cycle. Mexico will host the next meeting of the GEF Assembly in 2014 in which all 183 member nations, including South Sudan – the GEF's newest member – will gather. Whereas the representative GEF Council meets twice a year, the Assembly of GEF member nations meets every four years to take major decisions, including endorsement of the next four-year GEF replenishment package. The Council also received an update on the GEF-6 replenishment process, which will be ready for final review and approval next year.

12. **GEF 6 Programming:** Following discussions at the GEF Constituency Meeting in Sydney, SPREP Member countries have approached the Secretariat to provide assistance in their prioritization exercises in addition to developing project proposals. The Secretariat through its GEF Support Adviser and the members of the SPREP GEF Advisory Group will coordinate support in both the PIF and PPG phases.

13. **Direct Access:** SPREP Member countries eligible for GEF funds can directly access two funding windows from the GEF Secretariat. These are;

- a) **MEA Reporting:** funds to assist countries in their preparation of national reports as part of their international obligation under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD), United Nations Framework on Climate Change Convention (UNFCCC), and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) among others.
- b) **Direct Support to GEF Operational Focal Points:** the GEF Secretariat provides an annual support fund of USD 9,000 to assist national focal points to implement its work effectively in - country.

- c) National Prioritization Formulation Exercise (NPFE): Under GEF 5, countries eligible to access GEF funds may request NPFE funds of USD 30,000 to undertake consultations in developing its national priorities for GEF programming. SPREP member countries who wish to have these funds continue into GEF 6 will have the opportunity to do so during the GEF Constituency Meeting in Apia in addition to communicating directly with the GEF Secretariat via countries' GEF Operational Focal Points.

#### Recommendation

14. The Meeting is invited to:

- **note** that the Ridge to Reef Umbrella Programme has locked in SPREP Member countries GEF 5 resources;
  - **note** that the Secretariat will closely follow the replenishment discussions and communicate with SPREP Member countries who are eligible to access GEF funds on the new GEF 6 programme cycle and allocation of resources; and
  - **note** that the Secretariat will continue to provide key support to its Member countries in the preparation of new projects for GEF 6 programming.
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28 August, 2013