

GEF6 RIP PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING 2

**Global Environment Facility 6
Regional Invasives Project**

Meeting Location: Teleconference via Zoom

Meeting Date: 17 April 2020 12:00 PM – 3:00 PM (GMT +13)

GEF 6 Regional Invasives Project (GEF6 RIP) - Strengthening national and regional capacities to reduce the impact of Invasive Alien Species on globally significant biodiversity in the Pacific

Funding Body: Global Environment Facility (GEF)

Implementing Agency: United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Executing Agency: Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

Partner Countries: Marshall Islands, Niue, Tonga, Tuvalu

Project Start Date: 01-May-2019

Completion Date: 30-Apr-2024

Total Project Budget: US\$6,252,489.00

Total Co-financing: US\$22,177,157

Steering Committee Facilitators: David Moverley (SPREP Invasive Species Adviser), Bradley Myer (SPREP Project Manager)

Steering Committee Meeting Participants: Members of the GEF 6 Project Steering Committee and Secretariat

See Appendix 1 for full participants list.

A. Introduction

The Project Steering Committee (PSC) is responsible for ensuring that the project meets the goals outlined in the project results framework by helping to balance conflicting priorities and resources. The committee's main functions will be to assure compliance with the Project's objectives, monitoring and evaluating its activities, offer strategic guidance and supervise compliance with the annual work plans, collaborate in inter-institutional coordination, as well as contributing to the technical and financial reports, mid-term review and terminal evaluation, as needed.

Problem / Challenge Being Addressed

Pacific island ecosystems make up one of the world's biodiversity hotspots, with high levels of endemism. However, Pacific islands are particularly vulnerable to invasive species; because of their isolation and relatively recent human occupation, native species have not evolved to cope with the impacts of predators, herbivores, insect pests, highly competitive weeds, and diseases brought in from continental areas. As a result, Pacific islands face some of the highest extinction rates and threats to endemic species globally. The biggest threat to single-country endemic species in the Pacific region is the spread of IAS (SPREP, 2014). Most, if not all, countries continue to experience incursions of new introduced/invasive species. The State of Conservation in Oceania 2013: Regional Report noted that "the extent of impact of invasive

species across the 22 Pacific Island Countries and Territories was examined and the status was deemed to be poor, with only a small number of success stories overall: the majority of invasive species are not managed, are spreading, and continue to have devastating impacts on native species and ecosystems”.

Project Objectives

Reduce the threats from Invasive Alien Species (IAS) to terrestrial, freshwater and marine biodiversity in the Pacific by developing and implementing comprehensive national and regional IAS management frameworks

Project Outcomes

Project outcomes will be delivered in 4 key areas:

- a) All participating countries have a comprehensive and effective administrative framework established and countries are enabled to manage invasive alien species
- b) Enhanced IAS surveillance and control strategies reduce introduction rates and contain populations below thresholds that endanger threatened and endemic species and their habitats in 4 countries: IAS surveillance and control strategies can be relied on to reduce the risk posed by the introduction of new IAS and contain established IAS populations below thresholds that endanger threatened and endemic species and their habitats in 4 countries
- c) Biosecurity risks are reduced for the highest risk pathways and IAS
- d) Sustainable support service comprised of Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) agencies and partners established and enabling four countries to respond to existing and potential IAS threats, and is up scalable to at least the Pacific region

Under the component d), GEF6 RIP will establish a Pacific Regional Invasive Species Management Support Service (PRISMSS). The PRISMSS is a regional mechanism which aims to provide a comprehensive, seamless mechanism for scaling up invasive species support for on the ground action in the Pacific. This includes component programmes attractive to further investment. The PRISMSS modality will be tested and improved during the implementation of the project with the participating countries. At the same time, the PRISMSS will be available to all other Pacific Island Countries and Territories on a “pay as you go basis”.

B. Meeting Proceedings

Opening, Welcome and Introductions

1. The meeting was convened with the opening prayer which was followed by welcoming remarks from the Chairperson – David Moverley, Invasive Species Adviser acknowledging all participants joined via teleconference.

Meeting Objectives and Adoption of the Agenda

2. The objective of the meeting was clarified by the Secretariat by reiterating the purpose of the PSC, as detailed in the Terms of Reference (TOR). The Committee was reminded of the need to separate ideas of “Project Governance” from those of “Project Management” for the purposes of the meeting. The Committee was also reminded of their commitment to prioritise the interest of the project before the interest of the respective organisations represented in the committee.
3. The Agenda for the GEF6 RIP Steering Committee Meeting was introduced and formally adopted.

A copy of the Agenda is within document as Appendix 2.

Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting & Approval of Meeting Minutes

4. The record of the inaugural meeting of the PSC was reviewed. The focus of the first meeting was to negotiate and adopt the TOR for the Committee. This included defining its purpose and functions, membership, the organisation of work during meetings, reporting, and secretariat responsibilities. The proposed TOR was accepted by the committee during the first meeting. Project structure, project budget, monitoring and evaluation and a communication strategy were also presented. The record was circulated for comment and correction following the first meeting.
5. During this meeting, the record was formally accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting proceedings.

Project Implementation Update

6. Project Manager, Bradley Myer presented an update on the implementation of the GEF 6 RIP. He pointed out that the project has been in implementation for almost 1 year. The Project was designed to provide a year for the recruitment of key staff and the negotiation of the necessary agreements prior to the commencement of operational activities. This feature was based on the conclusions in the Terminal Evaluation of a previous GEFPAS IAS project. Mr Myer presented the following points to conclude that the project is currently on track and is benefitting from the skill and experience involved in the GEF6 RIP project design.
 - a. The recruitment of all Project Management Unit (PMU) and National Coordinators positions are now complete, with the most recent - Sam Panapa who is the National Coordinator for Tuvalu;
 - b. The signing of Memorandums of Understanding and Partnership Agreements with Participating Countries;
 - c. The signing of the Declaration of Intent and Partnership Agreements with PRISMSS partners;
 - d. The GEF 6 RIP Project Inception Meeting was held in Apia Samoa on 21st October 2019;
 - e. The 1st PSC Meeting was held in Apia 14 November 2019;
 - f. Successful completion of the PRISMSS Programme Management Course from 22 October to 22 November 2019 brought in 19 participants from 11 Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs);
 - g. Procurement of project vehicles in 3 countries is now in progress and expected to be completed prior to the next Committee meeting. Activity related procurement has been delayed due to travel restrictions although the project timeline is such that it is too early to determine if delays due to the pandemic will become an issue;
 - h. Natural Enemies Natural Solutions Workshops have been completed for Tonga and Niue with postponed visits to RMI and Tuvalu due to COVID 19.

Updates from Committee Members

7. Huggard Tongatule, National IS Coordinator from Niue reported on the completion of the Natural Enemies Natural Solution mission in February and progress on the procurement of project vehicle. During this time, Niue plans to continue collaborating with PMU and PRISMSS partners to identify tasks to prepare for when restrictions are lifted.
8. Kennedy Kaneko, National IS Coordinator for RMI updated on the completion of the first meeting of its Technical Advisory Group various stakeholders, the progression of

- procurement for the RMI Battler vehicle and will continue to work closely with PMU on procurement and activities to progress the project.
9. Viliami Hakaumotu, National IS Coordinator for Tonga reported the completion of the Tonga National Inception Workshop in February together with the Natural Enemies Natural Solution Mission, activities in-progress includes procurement for the construction of a pig proof fence for Mount Talau, renovation of the Vaini Lab under the NENS Programme and the procurement of Tonga Battler vehicle in close collaboration with SPREP
 10. Sam Panapa, Tuvalu National IS Coordinator joined on the 10 February 2020 and since then a Technical Advisory Group for invasive species in Tuvalu has been selected, comprising of representatives from the Departments of Environment, Agriculture, Customs and Immigration, Fisheries, Health, Kaupule of Funafuti, National Private Sector Organisation, Rural Development, Marine Port Services and Waste Management. A meeting is yet to be held due to cabinet directive to cease all gatherings in Tuvalu. The recruitment for an Administration Officer for Tuvalu has been completed and the successful applicant is scheduled to begin their role on the 20 May 2020.
 11. Lynley Hayes, Science Team Leader of Manaaki Whenua LandCare Research reported the completion of the in-country visits to Tonga and Niue. Revisions to planning have been made in response to travel restrictions. The organisation is preparing to work from home until June. While there is uncertainty with timelines, the current situations provide a good opportunity to progress the building of facilities in country.
 12. Richard Griffiths, Project Director at Island Conservation confirmed the signing of a Partnership Agreement with SPREP and is in contact with National IS Coordinators to identify which activities can be accomplished under the current situation. Planning and preparatory tasks are also being carried out to ensure all are ready for implementation once travel bans have been lifted.
 13. Monica Gruber, Ecology and Environment Manager at Pacific Biosecurity also confirmed signing of a Partnership Agreement with SPREP and is aiming to review legislations by June.
 14. Shannan Mortimer, Learning Designer at Department of Conservation, New Zealand reported that the organisation is currently determining its role within the PRISMSS given opportunities provided by an auxiliary project.

Overview of changes as a result of global pandemic

15. Travel restrictions have caused the postponement of in country training. Current efforts are being focused towards identifying actions and tasks that can be continued or brought forward which can be achieved during this period. Proactive work continues between countries and partners allowing for detailed preparation and planning.
16. The 10th Pacific Island Nature Conference (PINC) is tentatively re-scheduled for November 2020.
17. The Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN) Meeting originally planned for August 2020 has now also been postponed until 2021. These delays are not currently expected to cause medium to long term effects on the project.

Presentation of the Work Plan for 2020

18. Bradley Myer, Project Manager referred the committee to the Workplan 2020 with amendments reflecting the global pandemic. Split by country and PRISMSS partners, the plan adapts activities in reflection of COVID-19. This includes bringing forward a formal review of the document titled "Guideline for Invasive Species Management in the Pacific" alongside a

plan for Sustainable Financing; the PMU hopes to develop consultancy for both activities and procure the services in the current year.

19. There was a discussion on PRISMSS Meeting which has been scheduled for the fourth quarter of 2020 as confirmed by the Project Manager, Bradley Myer

Presentation of the Budget for 2020

20. Bradley Myer, Project Manager presented the 2020 Budget with amendments reflecting the global pandemic for PSC approval with changes that include bringing forward a formal review of the document titled “Guideline for Invasive Species Management in the Pacific” and postponement of the PILN meeting as reflected in the Workplan for 2020. Country allocation under the sub-contract component comprise of activities that have been contracted out in the PRISMSS Partnership Agreements, procurement of vehicles, office supplies and salaries.
21. There were questions and discussion around the opportunity for additional funds to be sought from GEF if needed and the PMU has confirmed that this issue has been discussed with the UNEP Task Manager. The response was that it is too early in the project timeline to anticipate extension or supplementary funding. The UNEP Task Manager, Manoela Miranda advised that supplementary funding from the GEF is not usually granted.

Monitoring and Evaluation Review

22. Bradley Myer, Project Manager led a review of the Monitoring Evaluation plan which highlighted UNEP process and procedures in Appendix 8 of the Project Document. The role of all partners and the PSC is crucial to the monitoring and evaluation component of the project.
23. The Project Implementation Review (PIR) was identified as the most immediate activity directly related to Monitoring and Evaluation. The PIR is due in July and is an activity that will be carried out by the Project Manager and UNEP Task Manager in consultation with partners where required to provide information for the completion of the task. The PIR will be available for review by the Committee prior to the next meeting.
24. This report will be circulated for feedback and comments from the Committee Members. Once finalised it will provide record of the formal acceptance of the 2020 Work Plan and Budget by the GEF6 RIP Project Steering Committee

Cross-Project Collaboration Opportunities

25. Opportunities for cross project collaboration were identified as an excellent way for Committee members to add value to the Project. The Project Manager proposed that Project Collaboration remain as a standing item on the agenda of Committee meetings. The Committee TOR allows for observers to join meetings as relevant. Dominic Sadler, Coordinator for the EDF11 PROTEGE project participated in this meeting and addressed the Committee:
26. The PROTEGE project has an invasive species thematic area with very similar project activities to GEF 6 RIP creating many opportunities for cross project collaboration. Some of these opportunities were highlighted by Committee members:
 - a. Landcare Research expressed interest on collaboration with French territories on NENS activities and suggested a platform for information sharing to help strengthen Pacific biosecurity.

- b. Island Conservation highlighted pig management work in Walls and Futuna and identified area of collaboration with pig management work in Niue under the GEF6 RIP Project.
 - c. Pacific Biosecurity offered support for the eradication activities in Wallis and Futuna through the Protect our Islands (POI) programme.
27. NZ MFAT is working on making funds available through an arrangement with the New Zealand Department of Conservation (NZDOC), SPREP and Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research (MWLR) to develop a new project designed to support invasive species management in the Pacific through the PRISMSS. The organisations aim to address Pacific resilience to climate change through invasive species management.
28. Steve Cranwell, Invasive Alien Species Programme Manager of BirdLife International, highlighted work on a concept being developed for the strengthening of Pacific island shipping sectors ability to implement the new Cargo Transport Unity biosecurity code and anticipates a first phase to include an assessment of compliance gaps. Discussions are being held between SPREP and SPC on how to progress these standards.
29. Ongoing work is being done to develop the Pacific Ecosystem Restoration through Invasive Species Management for Climate Change Adaptation project under the KIWA Initiative funded by the multiple countries. This project will hopefully provide more funds for the Late island eradication and include more opportunities for countries to access support from the PRISMSS.

Confirmation of Next Meeting Date

- 30. The Secretariat proposed Friday 16 October 2020 as next meeting date. This date was accepted by the Chairperson and the members of the committee.
- 31. Member of the committee are to join through teleconference using Zoom.

Appendix 1

PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE PARTICIPANTS		
NAME	COUNTRY /ORGANISATION	GENDER (M or F)
Huggard Tongatule	Niue	M
Kennedy Kaneko	Republic of Marshall Islands	M
Lupe Matoto	Tonga	F
Viliami Hakaumotu	Tonga	M
Sam Panapa	Tuvalu	M
Steve Cranwell	Birdlife International	M
Shannan Mortimer	Department of Conservation, NZ	M
Richard Griffiths	Island Conservation	M
Lynley Hayes	Manaaki Whenua LandCare Research	F
Bradley Myer	SPREP	M
David Moverley	SPREP	M
Dominic Sadler	SPREP	M
Isabell Rasch	SPREP	F
Josef Pisi	SPREP	M
Manoela Miranda	UN Environment Programme	F
Monica Gruber	Pacific Biosecurity	F

AGENDA GEF6 RIP Project Steering Committee Meeting

DATE: 17 April 2020

Location: Teleconference

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17 April 2020			
Time	Session	Agenda Item	Facilitator
12:00-12:15	1	Welcoming and Introductions Opening Prayer Meeting Objectives and Agenda	David Moverley Josef Pisi Bradley Myer
12:15-12:45	2	Adoption of the Meeting Agenda Matters Arising from 1 st Steering Committee Meeting and approval of meeting minutes	Bradley Myer
12:45-1:30	3	Project Implementation Update Updates from Committee Members	Bradley Myer
1:30-2:15	4	Overview of changes as a result of the global pandemic Presentation of the Work Plan for 2020 with amendments reflecting the global pandemic for PSC approval Presentation of the Budget for 2020 with amendments reflecting the global pandemic for PSC approval	Bradley Myer Isabella Rasch
2:15-2:30	5	Monitoring and Evaluation Review Other Matters	Bradley Myer
2:30-2:45	6	Set time and location of the next meeting Meeting closure	Isabella Rasch