

# The Protected Areas Working Group of the Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation – Terms of Reference

## Introduction

The Protected Working Group (PAWG) is a working group of the Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation. The mandate of the group aligns to Objective 3 of the Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Islands Region - Identify, conserve and sustainably manage and restore priority sites, habitats and ecosystems including cultural sites. This, in turn, aligns with Aichi Target 11:

*By 2020 By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes.*

The Pacific Islands Round Table Protected Areas Working Group (PIRT-PAWG) was reconvened on 4th March 2015, as a response to the need to provide a forum to help better connect a wide range of people whose work relates to protected and conserved areas, nationally as well as regionally.

## Who is encouraged to be involved?

Interested and committed representatives of CROP / regional agencies, donors, IUCN and Commissions, NGOs, BINGOs, countries/territories, individuals, representative of other working groups (eg. Marine Sector Working Group, Pacific Invasives Partnership) and other networks.

## Principles of Operation

Members agree to respect and adhere to the following:

- *Member contributions to PAWG as part of existing jobs*

Acknowledging that work in the region is demanding on people's time, the PAWG is realistic about its role and what its members can contribute to see improved outcomes for protected and conserved areas.

It will keep its focus tight and prioritised with communication by ICT (information communication technology) means, linking with related regional forum timing and minimal face to face meetings. It will encourage sub-groups to progress specific issues independently with input invited from the wider group.

- *Respecting the proprietary nature of data*

PAWG Members will seek appropriate permissions to use and reproduce information/data sourced from data owners/guardians within the group, and appropriately acknowledge data owners/guardians when permission to reproduce share information is granted.

The Information owner/guardian must identify the sensitivity of information for which they are responsible when the unauthorized disclosure of the information could have adverse impacts on their own interests.

- *Contributes to preparatory processes and requests from the secretariat*

PAWG Members will contribute to meeting preparatory requests when approached by the Chair and/or Secretariat.

### **Objectives of the PAWG:**

- encourage and support collaboration and coordination on protected areas issues across the Pacific Island region specifically the implementation of protected area related actions from the Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas
- provide a regional hub for discussion, networking and exchange of knowledge and experience

### **Functions of the WG**

- offer a peer review function for significant regional reports, plans and policies
- identify information gaps, emerging issues and opportunities and priorities for action
- facilitate collaborative funded activities
- provide a collective advocacy and endorsement forum for protected area issues
- provide recommendations to the PIRT

### **Action Plan**

A five year action plan will be developed identifying priority activities, timing and nominated lead persons. Actions will be focussed, targeted and achievable, and will be presented at the annual PIRT meetings and revised accordingly

### **Meetings**

1. Annual Meeting: Members will hold one annual meeting, and
2. PIRT Preparatory Meeting: A second meeting will be held in the lead up to PIRT.
3. Subsidiary Meetings: Other opportunities will be sought for thematic discussions.
4. Hosting of Meetings: Members are encouraged to consider hosting and chairing meetings of the PAWG, with the understanding that such meetings are self-funded

The PAWG Chair can call ad-hoc meetings pertinent to the PAWG Functions and agreed Action Plan, as necessary.

### **Reporting process**

*Report to the PIRT meetings:* PAWG shall report on the progress of the Action Plan as a contribution to the Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Islands Region at the Annual PIRT Meeting.

\*Monitor and report on progress of Framework Objective 3 (Identify, conserve and sustainably manage and restore priority sites, habitats and ecosystems including cultural sites).

### **Coordination**

The Working Group will be coordinated by an appointed Chair and Secretariat. The tenure of both will be discussed and decided on as an agenda item at the PAWG Annual Meeting.

The Chair will provide overall oversight of all PAWG-related activities including:

- acting as focal point within the group;
- chairing and managing the Annual Meeting;
- interacting with other PIRT Working Groups, and regional bodies with mutual interests;
- maintaining contact with the PIRT Chair and Secretariat

The Secretariat shall manage and appropriately delegate the following tasks:

- Management of logistics for meetings;
- Compiling and circulating the Annual meeting minutes;
- Preparing and circulating the Annual meeting agenda;
- Follow up on tasks as outlined in the Action Plan;

- Coordinating presenters;
- Maintain the membership/contact list.

**Information sharing**

Members are encouraged to support regional information-sharing initiatives, e.g., Pacific Islands Protected Areas Portal, MACBIO etc

**Media and Communication Protocols**

Members are encouraged to promote the achievements of the working group through their normal communication channels and protocols. Any joint media communications will ensure input and from the wider group prior to release by the Chair.

**Working Group Costs**

All PAWG activities are carried out with the understanding that participation is self-funded and contribution is through Members' normal programme of work. However, joint activities contributing the Action Plan and Framework Objective 3, are can be funded through mutual partnerships and contributions between relevant Members of the PAWG.