



OFMP II Project Design Workshop, 7 May 2010

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PROJECT DESIGN WORKSHOP – OFMP II

Honiara, Solomon Islands
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MID TERM EVALUATION

Governments of Cook islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

United Nations Development Programme
Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency

Pacific Islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Project

Executive summary

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The Pacific Islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Project (OFM Project) has been developed to assist Pacific SIDs sustainably manage their oceanic resources, which include the world's largest stocks of highly migratory tunas, and conserve ocean biodiversity. The Project is large in scope and complex in design. It spans a vast area, around 40 million sq km of the Central Western Pacific, and the jurisdictions of 15 Pacific Island nations and territories. It is a multi-governmental, five year project (2005-2010), funded by US\$ 11,644,285 from Global Environment Facility (GEF) and US\$ 79,091,993 of co-financing from participating countries, regional organisations and other sources. At the mid-term of the OFM, the GEF Implementing Agency, UNDP, has commissioned this MTE to assess progress, provide feedback on lessons learnt and future directions.

The MTE found that the Project was well designed and implemented, and has already had a significant impact on the immediate regional objectives (i.e. improved OFM in Pacific SIDs, and sustainable development of resources), and contributed to its wider global objectives (i.e. management of oceanic fishery and oceanic biodiversity). The capacities of most Pacific SIDs to meet their obligations under the WCTF Convention have been substantially enhanced, and the performance and outcomes of the Project were highly rated by the WCPF Commission. However, it is evident that smaller, less developed Pacific SIDs require greater levels of support. This is occurring in some countries through bilateral funding. As capacity-building in the Project has largely focused on immediate objectives (needs under the WCPF Convention), long-term, more strategic capacity-building will be required in the future. The commencement of one component, the IUCN Seamounts study, as been delayed for matters beyond the organisation's control but has now been redesigned and will commence in the near future.

Project management and administration is rated as very efficient and effective. UNDP, the GEF Implementing Agency has been efficient and responsive. Its bureaucratic procedures were initially considered onerous by the Executing Agency (FFA) resulting in some delays in disbursements, but these issues since have been resolved. FFA, a regional body with 30 years experience in OFM, has been very effective in its key role. Project management and coordination, undertaken by the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) within FFA has been effective. However, the PCU is under-resourced for such a large project, and does not have resources for regular country visits and information dissemination. SPC, the main scientific organisation, has also been effective in increasing knowledge of the status of oceanic fisheries. However, a number of countries indicated their desire for greater capacity in this area.

Financial management by FFA was ranked highly and financial procedures, disbursements and spending have been effective. However, the decline in the US\$ has created significant problems, requiring some reallocations of budgets in the second term. The weakening in the US\$ will contribute to the loss in the value of the Project budget and staff costs, particularly in SPC's scientific assessment and monitoring component. The loss in the value of the budget has been effectively managed by increasing co-financing. While it is not possible to comment on the co-financing and contributions in kind of the regional partners, the high level of the commitment does indicate their overall effectiveness. Leverage funding to date has been substantial and further external funds are foreshadowed. This will greatly assist in sustainability of the Project. The overall cost/effectiveness, risk assessment and adaptive management were rated highly, but quantitative indicators should be developed for monitoring and assessment of progress. Cross-cutting issues of institutional strengthening, national development and innovation (cornerstones of the Project) have been very well addressed, but gender, equity and human rights were not explicitly addressed in the Project design.

The positive negative lessons learnt from the Project include: its strong emphasis on planning and design and engagement of stakeholders; reducing risks in implementation through the utilisation of existing resources, organizations and arrangements; and maximising stakeholder participation and collaboration through partnership arrangements. The OFM Project is an

appropriate model for other regional, multi-stakeholder and inter-governmental projects. However, long-term sustainability of the Project objectives will require longer-term, strategic approaches to capacity-building.

Recommendations relating to the second term of the OFM Project include: the need for greater coordinated and integrated approaches in the Seamount research component; greater involvement of interested Pacific SIDS in oceanic fisheries science; identification of appropriate indicators for monitoring progress and final evaluation of the Project; a focused information dissemination and media programme; need for greater collaboration with other CROP agencies (e.g. USP, SPREP); need for closer linkages with the Pacific Plan and Pacific Forum Secretariat; and need for additional support to the FFA PCU to enable greater focus on information dissemination, monitoring and reporting, and future project development.

New initiatives recommended are that planning is commenced as soon as possible on a new project to focus on longer-term capacity building in OFM, especially on the smaller and less developed Pacific SIDS. As the small populations and technical capacities of the smallest Pacific SIDS are insufficient for a comprehensive technical OFM capacity, new approaches are also recommended to assist them in OFM (e.g. collaborative, sub-regional approaches; staff attachments for national OFM officers at FFA; specialist staff or consultants at FFA to look after their interests).