



GEF Project ID: 4746

A Global Environment Facility Project implemented by FAO and UNDP, with FFA as Executing Partner for the benefit of the Governments of Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

Steering committee meeting record

1. Welcome to participants and explanation of the purpose of the meeting

The Chair, Kalo Pakoa (Vanuatu), welcomed participants and noted the importance of this program to all members. Wez Norris, Deputy Director General FFA, made some opening remarks and acknowledged the contributions of the funding partners for the project at UNDP and FAO. It was noted that there had been some delays in getting the program started given but that work is now well underway with FFA formally commencing work on the project in July 2015.

A full list of participants and observers is included at **Attachment A**.

2. Background to the project

Hugh Walton, OFMPIO Project Coordinator, gave an overview of the background noting that this project is the second stage of the oceanic fisheries management program to support small island developing states (SIDS) meet their regional obligations to manage fisheries sustainably and increase benefits derived from these fisheries.

Hugh summarised the main components of the project and listed each of the outputs included in the project plan. These outputs were first compiled in 2010 and it was noted that, as implementation work commenced in 2015, some of the requirements may have changed. As a result, the steering committee may need to review the priorities and focus of some of the activities included in the project plan.

A full list of outputs and activities is included in **Attachment B**.

Palau thanked GEF for the valuable support received through this project and questioned if they would receive MCS support as included in output 3.2. It was noted that an MCS support officer position is currently being advertised in Palau.

3. Brief Summary outline of the roles and responsibilities of each project partner

UNDP and FAO are the Implementing Agencies for the project, FFA is the Executing Partner for the project, SPC and other service providers are Contracting Partners, and FFA Pacific Island member countries are Participating Countries.

Jose Padilla, UNDP regional coordinator based in Bangkok, explained their position as providing an oversight role. UNDP staff in the Bangkok office are available to provide technical oversight and staff in the Suva office provide administrative and operational oversight.

Francis Chopin, FAO, explained that as the budget holder and implementing agency they have to ensure that information is coming in a format that meets GEF and FAO conditions.

As the executing partner, the FFA project team is responsible delivering on the project outputs and coordinating activities conducted by members and other partner agencies. In doing this, FFA works closely with partners including Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA), Te Vaka Moana (TVM), Pacific Islands Tuna Industry Association (PITIA) and WWF South Pacific.

4. Project management unit staffing, recruitment and costs

Within FFA, Hugh Walton is the chief technical officer and project coordinator. David Power joined FFA in January 2016 as the OFMP II fisheries management advisor supporting members and the delivery of project outputs. It was noted that FFA has a team of management advisors and David's role will also operate within the broader team. The third member of the project team is a finance officer who is now in the final stages of being recruited. A finance officer was initially recruited in 2015 but the candidate experienced a serious illness and was not able to take up the position.

Fiji asked if they could get in country support through this project. It was noted that in country support is an important element of this project.

5. Project progress to date by component

5.1 FFA report for six months to December 2015

The key activity during 2015 was the support and operation of the management options consultation (MOC) meeting held in October 2015. It was noted that the OFMP project contributes to the established MOC process bringing together all members to plan and prepare for negotiations at the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission. This includes preparing briefs, meeting and workshopping positions and developing talking points for members to best represent the regional interests of SIDS. This ensures that all members can participate actively and collaboratively in the WCPFC Scientific Committee, technical and compliance committee and commission meetings. This process has proved highly successful at ensuring positions are clear and that members can participate vocally and effectively in discussions.

Hugh noted the six monthly report to FAO covers all activities conducted between July and December 2015 and suggested that they be taken as read unless there are any comments or questions. The steering committee noted that progress towards achieving the project outputs is considered satisfactory with incremental actions and activities contributing to effective outputs over time.

Wez Norris emphasised the importance of the management options committee process noting that it has proven to be highly effective at delivering outcomes in WCPFC. The process of coastal states

coming together is crucial for ensuring that the interests of coastal states are recognised. Wez noted his recent experience in the IOTC area where coastal states do not have the resources to support regional planning meetings (such as the MOC). Without prior planning and collaboration, the distant water fishing nations pursue their own interests to the detriment of SIDS.

SPC activities

Graham Pilling gave an update activities lead by SPC. Research on tuna diets has progressed and is being used to support the Spatial Ecosystems and Population Dynamics Model (SEAPODYM) for Pacific tuna. The SEAPODYM model is also being updated to account for changing climate conditions. This material is available to all members through their country reports prepared by SPC

In relation to output 3.2.1 (Upgraded data and information management systems), the TUFMAN 2 database has been launched and installed by SPC in most regional fisheries management agencies. The updated database offers substantial increase in speed and capabilities to support national and regional management schemes including both catch and effort based approaches.

Under output 3.2.2 (National scientific analysis and support for ecosystem based management), Stephen Hare is funded through this project and has been out in the region supporting the members develop a National Plan of Action (NPOA) for sharks as well as management plans in the Solomon Islands. A stock assessment workshop will be held in July in Noumea with a basic course held first followed by a more advanced course for those with more experience.

5.2. FFA quarterly reports to the UNDP for the period July 2015 to March 2016

It was noted that the UNDP reports are compiled quarterly and have different format to the FAO reports. The key activity over the first quarter in 2016 was the MCS working group meeting where the project coordinator presented several papers. A TVM workshop was also held in Auckland and both the project coordinator and fisheries management advisor participated and presented material to support common management activities.

The quarterly reports have been provided to all members of the steering committee and were taken as read subject to any comments. Hugh noted that under output three there needs to be a stronger focus on national engagement and that this will be a priority for the year ahead.

PNG noted that the recent 2 day CMM workshop which included a fisheries management component was extremely useful for new staff to understand the context that they worked in and how it contributed to fisheries management.

6. Project work plan and budgets

6.1 Workplan for FAO components

The proposed work plan and budget for the FAO component was presented for consideration by members of the steering committee. Hugh explained the format of the proposed 2016 work plan and noted the budget allocated against each output. The budget and work plan does not cost each activity separately but list all activities against an output and presents the budgeted total cost for the output. It was noted that activities listed for 2016 were manageable and are expected to be achieved across the course of the year.

It was noted that all participating parties contributed to the development of the budget and comments were sought from members of the steering committee.

Wez noted that FFA planning and budgeting are conducted on a financial year cycle (July to June) whereas this project runs across the calendar year. This has caused some issues and additional work to align planning and budget cycles.

Tuvalu asked if the workplan could ensure that there is a balance of work activities across all members.

Clarification was sought by FAO on the total estimated expenditure for 2016. It was noted that the running table in section three of the report gives a full breakdown of the FAO budget component including component costs and total budget. The total budget for the full project is included in the global budget table with 10 million USD allocated for GEF funding. This is broken down based on the budget allocated against each output and also what proportion of funding is from FAO and UNDP.

Palau raised questions regarding the plans for activity 1.1.1.4, hold Train-Sea-Coast course. It was noted that this course was developed in 2002 and there may be an opportunity to update the training. It was proposed that this be addressed at agenda item 7.

Tokelau asked a question about how work under output 2.1.2 (national harvest rights established for the 5 SIDS) would support the TVM process. It was noted that the focus would be on activities to under 2.1.2.4. This includes establishing systems, processes and operational activities to support TVM rights based management.

Recommendations:

The workplan for FAO components was endorsed by the steering committee.

Action:

The TVM secretariat and FFA will review the priorities under 2.1.2 and some activities may be revised.

6.2 Workplan for UNDP components

The proposed work plan and budget for the UNDP component was presented for consideration by members of the steering committee. It was noted that the current workplan will apply until the end of 2016 and new interim workplan will be circulated in January 2017.

PNG raised a question about how changes could be made to workplan activities and outputs under the project. Jose (UNDP) noted changes to activities could be made in the context of adaptive management. However, he noted that outcomes could not be change easily as this would require a review by GEF. Jose also encouraged members to step up efforts to pursue the activities and objectives of the project given we are a bit behind and the project only runs for 4 years.

Tuvalu thanked UNDP for the clarification that there is flexibility to refine activities if required.

There is a time lag between the end of the 2016 workplan. An interim 6 month workplan in January for the first 6 months of 2017. In May 2017, the steering committee will be presented with a full 12 month workplan.

Recommendations:

The workplan for UNDP components was endorsed by the steering committee.

7. Potential modifications to project activities

Activity 1.1.1.4 – Train-Sea-Coast-Course

The Train-Sea-Coast-Course was first developed in 2002 and some elements are dated. It was proposed that the training component under Activity 1.1.1.4 be revised to provide officers with comprehensive understanding of the current legal and policy framework for responsible fisheries. The steering committee was asked to provide advice on how this component could be updated and what the priority areas are for training.

PNG noted that the course on conservation and management measures provided by FFA in April 2016 was very valuable and has led to an improved understanding of obligations by officers. PNG supported ongoing training support that was targeted to the needs of members to help build capacity and capability, especially for new staff.

It was noted that the full training budget for 1.1.1.4 is 60,000 USD [check as it includes 25k per year] which is not enough to cover delivery of a 2 week course with participants all attending at a central venue. It was noted the goal of this activity could be to target mid-level officers and new entrants to help inspire and boost understanding of fisheries obligations. It was suggested that it could be more strategic to run a series of in country workshops with staff in the relevant fisheries management agencies. PNG and Samoa supported this in country approach as an efficient way of providing training. Cook Islands and Tuvalu recognised the value of the fisheries MCS officers' course and would like to see the course continue broadly.

Action:

The steering committee tasked the project team to develop an options paper on how to most efficiently utilise the 60,000 training budget could be used. This paper will be circulated for comment out of session.

FAO noted that the initial rationale was to provide training for senior managers but if this need has now changed, they would like to see an advice note from FFA on this.

Action

FFA to advise FAO of the changing need for training.

Members noted that it would be good to have a long term formal course but it was recognised that for the context of this project members would like to see the best value for money.

Activity 2.1.3.1 Support for additional emerging sub regional arrangements

The Tokelau arrangement (TKA) has emerged as the most significant new sub-regional body in recent years and clarification was sought from the steering committee on how this project would support the TKA. Members strongly supported the activities being refined to support management arrangements being developed under the Tokelau arrangement.

The budget includes 25,000 USD per year to support emerging sub-regional arrangements. A question was raised about whether members feel the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) would be able to utilise this funding. It was resolved that the funding would be used to support TKA activities but the MSG would also have the opportunity to present a case for how they could productively utilise some of this funding to progress management objectives.

Recommendations:

The steering committee supported funding under activity 2.1.3.1 being used to support the implementation of management measures under the Tokelau Arrangement but noted that the Melanesian Spearhead Group would also have the opportunity to present a case for utilising some of this funding.

7.2 Timing of Steering Committee and annual workplan approval; and 7.3 Year 1 – year 2 – rollover – remaining year one budget allocation

These items have been resolved through agreement on a revised planning and budgeting timetable. This project was effectively started on 1 July 2015. Due to differences in reporting years, this meant that the year two plan was due after 6 months.

8. Knowledge management

Lisa (FFA) gave a presentation on how knowledge and experience in fisheries management under the OFMP project can be recorded and shared. This is an important component of the project to help spread the benefits, improve understanding by all members and improve the impact of the project.

It was clear from the OFMP phase one outcomes that their needs to be greater visibility and access to management messages and material. It needs to be presented in a format that is suitable for all to comprehend.

Under OFMP 2 around 30,000 USD has been budgeted to support this work. Initial work under this item has included a face to face survey to assess the needs of members. Next steps include disseminating information through the GEF website and project website, distributing project materials, newsletters, press releases and ongoing face to meetings.

9. Challenges

Hugh noted that the number of parties involved in this project results in some substantial challenges to maintaining communication. The many and varied formats for reporting has impacted on the implementation side of the project and Hugh identified a concern that it has slowed progress on some activities. Many of these challenges have been accommodated and addressed, and activities are now well underway.

10. Other business

UNDP noted that they find the steering committee a valuable opportunity to learn what countries are doing and get feedback on what is working well and any challenges. Joe suggested that 15 minute presentation from each member would be useful. FAO supported this approach as feedback from members is crucial to gauge the effectiveness of the project.

The republic of the Marshall Islands expressed their appreciation to the implementing agencies and the project team for progressing this project. They noted it is a very important project and the Marshall Islands stated their commitment to assisting with activities under the project and working collaboratively to achieve the desired outcomes over the coming years.

Action:

Members are asked to prepare a 15 minute presentation for the next steering meeting that covers key activities, progress and challenges. FFA and the project team will prepare a template for members.

Meeting record

The draft record will be finalised and circulated for consideration during the FFC meeting next week (9 – 13 May 2016).

List of Participants

Attachment A

Country	Name	Designation
Australia		
Cook Is	Tim Costello	Director, Offshore Division
Fiji	George Madden	Acting Director
	Meli Raicebe	Fisheries Officer
	William Sokimi	Fisheries Technical Officer
FSM	Justino Helgen	VMS Compliance Manager
Kiribati	Peniita Kabubuke	DPS
	Karibanang Tamuera	Acting Director-Fisheries, MFMRD
New Zealand	Don Syme	Manager International Fisheries Management, MPI
	Lars Olsen	Senior Fisheries Analyst-Pacific Fisheries
	Megan Linwood	Senior Policy analyst, MPI
	Dan White	Foreign Policy Officer, MFAT
PNG	Brian Kumasi	Manager-Fisheries Policy, NFA
	Alois Kinol	Senior Foreign Service Officer, Regional Economic Affairs Branch
	Noelene Geno	Senior Legal Officer, Office of the Solicitor General
	Mathlina Somo	Foreign Service Officer, Regional Economic Affairs Branch
	Josephine Bade	Foreign Service Officer, Regional Economic Affairs Branch
Samoa*	Joyce Ah Leong	Assistant CEO, Fisheries Division, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
	Matilda Bartley	Principle Foreign Service Officer, MFAT
Solomon Is	Francis Tofuakalo	Deputy Director-Offshore
	Douglas Aitorea	Principal Fisheries Officer
	Mary Walenenea	
Tokelau	Feleti Tulafono	Offshore Fisheries Officer, Fisheries Division, EDNRE
	Leslie Gould	Fisheries Consultant, EDNRE
Tonga	Vilimo Fakalolo	Acting CEO for Fisheries
Tuvalu	Vakalasi Apinelu	PS for Natural Resources
	Samasoni Finikaso	Director for Fisheries
Vanuatu	Kalo Pakoa	
	Yvon Basil	
	William Naviti	
	Jason Raubani	
	Tony Taleo	
Observers		
UNDP	Jose Padilla	
FAO	Francis Chopin	FAO - Samoa
	Liao Chonguang	Field Programme Officer
	Barbara Cooney	FAO – Rome

PITIA	John Maefiti	Executive Officer
EDF	Sarah O'Brien	
SPC	Graham Pilling	Principal Fisheries Scientist
	Stephen Brouwer	National Scientist
FFA	Wez Norris	Deputy Director General
	Tim Adams	Director Fisheries Management
	Ian Freeman	Fisheries Management Advisor
	David Power	OFMP II Fisheries Management Advisor
	Hugh Walton	Chief Technical Officer and Project Coordinator
	Samasoni Sauni	Fisheries Management Advisor