

Inception Report

July 2005



National Capacity Self Assessment
for Global Environment Management Project

Cook Islands



NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT SERVICE
TU'ANGA TAPOROPORO
COOK ISLANDS

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Meitaki Maata.



This report was prepared by the Cook Islands NCSA Project
Cover photo courtesy of the Cook Islands NBSAP Project



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List of Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AMMAG	Avana Muri Marine Action Group
AusAID	Australia Agency for International Development
BPOA	Barbados Programme of Action
CAN	Climate Awareness Network
CBDAMPIC	Capacity-building for Development of Adaptation Measures in Pacific Islands Countries
CHARM	Comprehensive Hazards and Risks Management
CIANGO	Cook Islands Association of Non-Government Organisations
CIDA	Canada International Development Assistance
CLIMAP	Climate Change Adaptation Program for the Pacific
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ENSO	El Nino-Southern Oscillation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
INC	Initial National Communication
IPCC	Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change
IWP	International Waters Program
MFAI	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration
MMR	Ministry of Marine Resources
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOW	Ministry of Works
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCSA	National Capacity Self-Assessment
NCW	National Council of Women
NDMO	National Disaster Management Office
NES	National Environment Service
NESAF	National Environment Strategic Action Framework
NGOs	Non-Government Organisations
NIWA	National Institute of Water and Atmosphere (NZ)
NSDP	National Sustainable Development Plan
NZAID	New Zealand Agency for International Development
ODS	Ozone Depletion Substance
OMIA	Office of the Minister for Outer Islands Administration
PACER	Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations
PATA	Pacific Area Tourism Association
PERCA	Public Expenditure Review Committee and Audit
PICCAP	Pacific Island Climate Change Assistance Program
PICTA	Pacific Islands Country Trade Agreement
PI-GCOS	Pacific Islands Global Climate Observation Systems
PIREP	Pacific Island Renewable Energy Project
POPs	Persistent Organic Pollutants

REAP	Rarotonga Environmental Awareness Program
SPREP	South Pacific Regional Environment Programme
SOPAC	South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission
TAU	Te Aponga Uira o Tumu-te-Varovaro
TCA	Takitumu Conservation Area
TIS	Taporoporoanga Ipukarea Society
UNCBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
UNCCD	United Nations Convention for Combating Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Social and Cultural Organisation
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WSSD	World Summit for Sustainable Development
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

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Overview

Increasing recognition of anthropogenic changes in the natural environment as a result of human interference has led to the international community agreeing on a number of multi-lateral environmental agreements. At the 1992 Earth Summit, world leaders agreed on a comprehensive strategy for "sustainable development" – meeting our needs while ensuring that we leave a healthy and viable world for future generations. Three key agreements from the Summit are the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. These three are known as the Rio Conventions.

As a party to these Conventions the Cook Islands Government, is committed to promoting cooperation between government agencies and other institutions and organizations, working towards fulfilling our global and national obligations. Lack of capacity at different levels has been identified by the international community as well as various national initiatives to be one of the key challenges that constrain implementation of these Conventions. Small countries like the Cook Islands already have strained resources and need to strengthen and develop their capacity in order to meet their international obligations and national priorities.

United Nations Conventions

Each of these Conventions deals with the conservation and management of the natural environment with a view to ensuring resource protection within sustainable frameworks. As such they share common elements between the three that can overlap, requiring an integrated approach to the implementation of the three conventions. The Cook Islands does not have abundant resources therefore it is important to start exploring linkages between all MEAs we are a party to and develop synergies for implementation at the local and national level. The NCSA continues the self-assessment process and should help address some of our issues as well as support the development for new opportunities for funding.



The United Nations Convention on Biodiversity has the overall objective of conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

The **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change** and its related legal instruments ultimate objective is to achieve, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention, stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.

The **United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification's** objective is to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought in countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa, through effective action at all levels, supported by international cooperation and partnership arrangements, in the framework of an integrated approach which is consistent with Agenda 21, with a view to contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in affected areas.

Project Background

The National Environment Service, with support from the United Nations Development Programme and Global Environment Facility, is undertaking the National Capacity Self Assessment Project (NCSA) for Global Environment Management. This project was created under the Capacity Development Initiative (CDI) in order to address capacity needs issues countries may be facing. It provides the Cook Islands with an opportunity to review our global environmental responsibilities and determine how to reconcile these responsibilities with national sustainable development and environmental priorities. The overall aim of the NCSA process is to identify national priorities and needs for capacity building and development to address global environment issues, in particular, biodiversity, climate change and desertification/land degradation.

The Cook Islands National Capacity Self Assessment (NCSA) Project evolved from many international declarations and policy statements such as the Agenda 21 and the WSSD Johannesburg Plan of Action and in the case of Small Island developing states, the Barbados Programme of Action. According to UN decision 2/CP.7, “capacity building is a continuous, progressive and iterative process, the implementation of which should be based on the priorities of developing countries.”

Capacity Development¹

Capacity building and development can be defined as -

‘the actions needed to enhance the ability of individuals, institutions and systems to make and implement decisions and perform functions in an effective, efficient and sustainable manner’

It is a dynamic, endogenous process generally associated with training, human resources development, knowledge acquisition, the learning organization etc that builds upon existing systemic, organizational and individual capacity.

There are three levels of capacity – individual, institutional and systemic. Capacity building and development at the individual level refers to the process of changing attitudes and behaviours through imparting knowledge and developing skills, learning by doing, participation, and changes in management, motivation and morale. The institutional level focuses on overall organizational performance capabilities, adaptability to change, clarification of structures, responsibilities and accountability, changes in procedures, communications and the deployment of human resources. At the systemic level, the creation of ‘enabling environments’ is important, that is, the overall policy, economic, regulatory and accountability frameworks within which institutions and individuals operate. Relationships and processes between institutions, both formal and informal, as well as their mandates, are also important.

Objectives and Outcomes

The primary goal of the NCSA is to identify country level priorities and needs for capacity building to address global environmental issues, in particular biological diversity, climate change, and land degradation, with the aim of catalysing domestic and/or externally assisted action to meet those needs in a coordinated manner.²

¹ Brown, Rex. Swaziland NCSA Workshop Presentation, www.ecs.co.sz – National projects – The official launch of the NCSA Project – National approach to implement the NCSA

² GEF Operational Guidelines for Expedited Funding of National Self Assessments of Capacity Building Needs, 2001

This project also offers an opportunity for the Cook Islands to review its national environment programmes across sectors. It provides a good basis to maximise synergies, linkages and understanding of issues between national and local level programmes, together with regional and international environmental frameworks. It is expected to collate information on continuing programmes, institutional structures, resource availability and future prospects, training activities and relevant supporting policies and processes needed to sustain the implementation of MEAs obligations nationwide.

Project Objectives³:

- Identify, confirm, or review priority issues for action within the thematic areas of biodiversity, climate change, and land degradation, respectively;
- Explore related capacity needs within and across the three thematic areas;
- Catalyse targeted and coordinated action and requests for future external funding and assistance; and
- Link country action to the broader national environmental management and sustainable development frameworks.

Expected Outcomes

- Support long-term capacity building processes focused on individual, institutional and systemic development;
- Reinforce existing national programmes both within and across the thematic areas of biodiversity, climate change and desertification/land degradation;
- Identify linkages between global and national environmental management issues and capacity building efforts;
- Strengthen national procedures to negotiate and implement the global environmental conventions;
- Strengthen awareness amongst all levels of stakeholders (i.e. from general public to the high level decision makers) of the global environmental dimensions of national sustainable development activities and the obligations under the key environmental conventions;
- Clarify and improve the role of and relationship with donors and bilateral partners to ensure that their support is felt at all levels

NCSA Process⁴

An important part of preparing NCSA is the process itself. A well-designed and comprehensive process can help to ensure national action to build capacity to protect the global and national environments. The NCSA should bring together the various national agencies, institutions and organizations whose activities have important direct or indirect impacts on the environment and will encourage them to assess gaps, and identify synergies and devise a coordinated approach for strengthening overall capacity.

The NCSA process is an institutional support mechanism that will allow us to identify areas where capacity building is needed, prioritise and coordinate efforts to strengthen national

³ GEF: A guide for Self Assessment of Country Capacity Needs for Global Environmental Management, 2001

⁴ GEF: A guide to self assessment of country capacity needs for global environmental management, 2001

capacities. Addressing capacity needs at the systemic, institutional and individual levels and integrating them into wider sustainable development efforts will enhance our ability to manage our environment in a sustainable manner.

NCSA Expected Outputs

The expected NCSA outputs are in the form of technical reports on the following:

- A stocktaking of previous and on-going activities related to capacity building (such as enabling activities);
- An account of the process by which the NCSA was prepared, including stakeholder participation;
- A description/inventory of capacity building needs in the three sectors with prioritisation to the extent possible, and other related capacity needs;
- An identification of cross cutting issues and synergies, and
- A Plan of Action to meet prioritised needs and a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating progress made in meeting those needs

Institutional Framework

The project will strengthen the coordination of environmental policy formulation and implementation among authorities from a national level to local levels. It will ensure national ownership, leadership and policy commitment, promotes comprehensive participation, includes various dimensions of capacity and cross cutting concerns, ensure coordination within sectors and across sectors and adopt a long-term approach to capacity building within the broader sustainable development context. The NCSA will identify concrete opportunities for improvements, action plan development and projects that will strengthen the overall environmental management plan at the national level. The outputs and future projects based on NCSA to be funded by GEF and other donors will be integrated into a more comprehensive national strategy to ensure long-term commitment.

Project Management

Management Arrangements

The NCSA project in the Cook Islands will be managed by a number of agencies. The Government Coordinating Authority for UNDP funded programmes is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who will be the official contact point for communications with UNDP on project related matters. The GEF Operational Focal Point, Mr Vaitoti Tupa, will provide the overall management of the project implementation in line with the signed Project Document and UNDP NEX requirements. Management and disbursement of funds including financial reports will be the joint responsibility of the National Environment (NES) service as the Executing Agency and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM).

Project Execution

Within the National Environment Service, the Manager of the Environment International Division Ms Tania Temata has been appointed as the Project Manager. Ms Louisa Karika was contracted as the Project Co-ordinator and is responsible for the implementation of the project with support from the technical experts/consultants. Local national consultants will be contracted where possible to undertake the various consultancies within the project as a means of developing local capacity.

NES has executed other UNDP/GEF-funded projects in the past and is experienced in UNDP and GEF procedures. NES has also worked closely on a number of occasions with various other agencies both in the government and non-government sectors and has established several coordinating committees and task forces in which these agencies are actively participating. It is important to build on this experience to ensure that the NCSA project can benefit from the wealth of knowledge and experience that is already available through these committees. The ES will be responsible for the recruitment of experienced consultants to assist stakeholders in the carrying out of their self-assessments. The Environment Service will also be responsible for the management of funds from UNDP and for providing backstopping and logistical support to the Steering Committee.

Project Management Unit

The Project Management Unit (PMU) is made up of the Project Manager, Project Coordinator and Coordinators/Focal Points responsible for the CBD, FCCC and CCD. The Cook Islands NCSA PMU includes;

- Ms Pasha Carruthers (Climate Change Research and Technical Officer),
- Ms Elizabeth Munro (NBSAP Add-On Project Coordinator) and
- Mr Vaitoti Tupa (Director of NES and CCD Focal Point).

The PMU members will also be members of the NCSA Steering Committee. The PMU will give support and aid to the progress and implementation of the NCSA project activities and outputs. Day to day management of the project including finances and reporting requirements will be the responsibility of the Project Coordinator and Project Manager.

NCSA Steering Committee (SC)

Nominations for members of the NCSA Steering Committee was prepared by the PMU and forwarded to Cook Islands Cabinet for formalization. Final membership and endorsed was received from Cabinet on the 1st March, 2005 with the following approved members, not including members of the PMU:

- Mr Vaitoti Tupa – Director, National Environment Service
- Mr Nga Mataio – Secretary of Agriculture, Chairperson of Biosafety Steering Committee and member of International Waters Project (IWP) National Taskforce
- Mr Arona Ngari – Director of Meteorological Services and Chairperson of the Cook Islands Climate Change Country Team (CCCT)
- Mr Ian Bertrum – Secretary of Marine Resources
- Ms Nikki Rattle – President of the National Council of Women and Secretary General of Cook Islands Red Cross
- Mr Ken Matheson – Secretary of Education
- Mr Rairi Rairi – Secretary of Internal Affairs
- Mr Vaine Teokotai – Secretary of Health
- Ms Mii Rairi – Manager of the National Human Resources Department
- Mr Chris Wong – Chief Executive Officer, Tourism Cook Islands
- Ms Myra Moeka'a – Assistant Legal Advisor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration
- Ms Maria Tuoro – Policy Officer, Office of the Prime Minister
- Mr Sonny Williams – Secretary of Cultural Development

It is hoped that the high level status of the committee members will ensure the continued support and participation of various departments in the NCSA process. The Committee will meet at least every three months to review progress and to provide future guidance and support.

Technical Working Groups (TWG)

Technical experts in the fields of biodiversity, climate change and land degradation/management were nominated to be on the Technical Working Groups as well as some of the existing members of current Steering Committees for Biosafety, National Biodiversity and Strategy Action Plan (NBSAP), and the Climate Change Country Team. Their practical experience and technical input gives comprehensive insight into the capacity needs and constraints in the three focal areas and providing vital information to the NCSA process. It is anticipated that consultation with the technical working groups will be most valuable during the thematic assessment and strategic action plan phases of the NCSA project.

Stakeholder Participation

The participation and support of the stakeholders will be central to the success of the NCSA with the Steering Committee and Technical Working Groups playing an integral part. Broad consultation with other national stakeholders throughout the project is planned for the various outputs in particular, during the planned workshops for the Thematic Assessments and the Strategic Action Plan outputs.

The difficulty exists in ensuring adequate representation from all islands in the Cook Islands during the consultative process and at the workshops. It is anticipated that travel to some of the outer islands of the Cook Islands will be necessary to ensure that the priorities of

these islands is considered and incorporated into the thematic profiles and action plan but will be limited due to the expense involved in travel, particularly to the Northern Group. However, the project will strive to ensure that there are ample opportunities for all stakeholders to participate and contribute to the project.

Regional Coordination and Support

Pacific Regional Support Mechanism (PRSM) was jointly formed by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Australian Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH) and the United Nations University (UNU) to support Pacific Islands countries during their NCSA project. The overall rationale for the PRSM is to enable countries to implement their NCSA projects with the best possible support, resources and guidance available from a wide range of partners that have experience with capacity assessment and capacity development issues.⁵ Some of the support provided by the PRSM includes training, workshops, backstopping activities and the development of tools and methodologies for the NCSA process.

Regional cooperation, such as the PRSM, is beneficial to countries as it also provides an information network that allows sharing of experiences and exchange of lessons learnt amongst countries and organisations.

⁵ Global Environment Information Centre (GEIC). 53-70 Jingumae 5-Chome Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-0001 Japan

Project Activities

The NCSA process will be conducted over an 18-month period during which a number of activities will be undertaken. Within this timeframe it is not feasible to do in-depth analysis of all national priorities and obligations under each Convention therefore, the project will focus on select thematic areas deemed most important. Prioritisation is a critical element of this assessment and as such, will be carried out at several points throughout the NCSA process. Local consultants will also be used for all consultancies where possible as a capacity development measure.

A. Project Planning and Inception Activities

This phase commences with the appointment of a national coordinator and the setting up of the Project Management Unit. The PMU is responsible for nominating the Project Steering Committee members who will need approval and endorsement for the Cook Islands Parliament (Cabinet). This committee will consist of the Heads of Government Ministries or designates as well as NGOs. Technical working groups for the three thematic areas will be formed from the pool of local experts, NGOs and aronga mana (traditional leaders). Their knowledge and expertise will assist the PMU in progressing and implementing the activities of the NCSA.

A Stakeholders Analysis will be undertaken as part of the Stocktake activities by desk study and consultations in order to identify all the stakeholders for the NCSA project. A Stocktake of Convention documents and related activities will be carried out by a local consultant. This will include a review of past and ongoing activities, roles and responsibilities of government departments, boards, committees, NGOs and capacity constraints and gaps. The main tools will include desk study, and consultations to gather the information needed. An initial analysis of convention obligations from the Cook Islands point of view will also be undertaken with an in-depth analysis to be carried out during the thematic assessment.

B. Capacity Self-Assessment Within Thematic Areas

First step: Gap Analysis

- An analysis of gaps and opportunities to assess where the Cook Islands are in terms of meeting our obligations to the three conventions will be carried out, first through desk study and the creation of an obligations matrix. This will specifically link activities and reports to convention obligations as an overview of progress to meeting our obligations as well as access the major gaps and opportunities in planning, coordinating and implementing Convention obligations.

Second step: Selection of priority themes

- Using this baseline study, the gaps will be crosschecked with the national priorities identified in the National Environment Strategic Action Framework 2005-2009 (NESAF).
- Prioritisation of thematic issues in relation to the convention requirements and the Cook Islands national priorities identified in the NESAF will be used to determine the scope of this phase and focus the assessment around these issues.

Third step: SWOT Analysis

- For the three focal areas, SWOT analysis will be used to identify capacity needs, capacity constraints, existing capacity or opportunities available that can be utilised or developed further in each of the priority themes/areas at the systemic, institutional and individual capacity level.

Fourth step: Identification of priority problem areas

- SWOT results will be compiled to identify priority problem areas for capacity in each of the focal areas.

Fifth step: Root Cause Analysis

- Root Cause Analysis of the weaknesses will be carried out as an in-depth analysis of the capacity constraints at the three levels of each problem area.
- A Thematic Assessment Workshop will be held with as many stakeholders involved as possible including Technical Working Groups, the Steering Committee and representatives from the Outer Islands. Participants in this workshop will be facilitated through their own SWOT and Root Cause Analysis in breakout groups for the three focal areas. This ensures that the different views from the stakeholders can be incorporated into the final thematic profiles. It will also be important to have facilitators experienced in SWOT and Root Cause Analysis.
- Results from the analyses performed by the Consultant and Workshop participants will be compiled to produce an in depth account of the systemic, institutional and individual capacity needs of the three focal areas.
- Outputs from the assessment include profiles for the three thematic areas highlighting capacity constraints, gaps and opportunities for thematic and cross cutting capacity building projects.
- This also presents an ideal opportunity to explore the potential direction of the UNCCD in the Cook Islands. Of the three conventions, the CCD is the least developed owing to the lack of a national coordinator and funds however this should be rectified in late 2005. The prioritisation of issues and capacity needs will give focus to the project once it gets underway.

C. Cross Cutting Capacity Issues

- Conventions in the three focal areas all have reporting requirements in common however it is in activities such as education and awareness where cross cutting issues may be identified. It is important to distinguish between what is common between the three focal areas and what is truly cross cutting. Cross cutting issues are those issues that can be addressed by one set of activities, that can be resolved by one single joint effort therefore, it is important to look at existing arrangements and activities that link the three focal areas.

First step: Identification of synergetic profile capacity needs (cross-cutting issues)

- Analysis of the cross cutting root causes or constraints as well as cross cutting capacity needs identified in the Thematic Profiles will be conducted to identify capacity

development linkages and overlaps between the conventions as well as opportunities for integrated approaches in order to efficiently utilise available resources.

Second step: Prioritisation of the crosscutting issues (common problems)

- A Prioritisation Matrix will be used to identify priority cross cutting issues in conjunction with consultations with TWGs and key stakeholders

Third step: Analysing priority capacity constraints and presenting of appropriate capacity measures (activities need to be performed) for systemic, institutional and individual levels

- Further in-depth analysis of priority cross cutting needs and constraints will be performed using Root Cause Analysis in order to identify constraints and appropriate capacity measures/activities to overcome existing barriers.
 - These proposed activities are transferred to the NCSA Action Plan under the target thematic areas

D. Strategy and Action Plan

Results from the Thematic Profiles and Cross Cutting Exercise will be channelled into a matrix of real activities with feasible outcomes to create a draft Strategy and Action Plan. This will be constructed articulating specific short, medium and long-term objectives and priority actions including resources required, responsible parties and monitoring and evaluation indicators. This draft Strategy and Action Plan will be presented to stakeholders in a workshop to review and endorse capacity development opportunities emphasising synergies within and across the three conventions. The finalized Strategy and Action Plan will need to be submitted to Cabinet for high-level endorsement

It is important to note that this Strategy and Action Plan will not be the sole responsibility of the National Environment Service as the key Government environmental agency and NCSA implementing agency. As a party to these conventions, the Cook Islands Government in its entirety is committed to fulfilling its global and national obligations to various MEAs. Many stakeholders will have key roles to play in the implementation of this Action Plan and as such will be identified as either Primary Responsible parties or as co-implementers at the appropriate capacity level.

E. NCSA Report

A final NCSA report will summarize and synthesize all steps in the NCSA process and the information produced by previous activities (i.e. stock-taking, thematic assessments, cross-cutting analysis, etc.). To facilitate preparation of the final report, the previous NCSA outputs should be consolidated and prepared as short reports during the process.

F. Monitoring and Evaluation

After the completion of the NCSA Report and Strategy and Action Plan, monitoring of the action plan implementation will take place over a further 12 months. The exact mechanism and monitoring activities will be elaborated and agreed upon in the Strategy and Action Plan. Part of the Monitoring and Evaluation for this project includes the creation of a Capacity Building and Development Database. The aim is to provide a centralized database of all Cook Islands Capacity Building Projects, Opportunities, Country Needs and Priorities as well as Outcomes and Lessons Learnt.

**Government of the Cook Islands
United Nations Development Programme
Global Environment Facility**



Other partners:

Environment Service (National Implementing Agency), Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Marine Resources, Meteorological Service, Ministry for Finance and Economic Management, Non-governmental Organizations (CIANGO, TIS, REAP, Chamber of Commerce and WWF), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry for Education, Tourism Corporation, Human Resources Development Department, Public Service Commission, Health Department, Crown Law, others.

NATIONAL CAPACITY NEEDS SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

The NCSA is envisaged to provide the key national decision makers and external-funding agencies with critical information about the country's specific capacity needs to protect and manage the global environment. The main goal of the project is to identify, through a country-driven consultative process, priorities and needs for capacity building to protect the global environment in the Cook Islands, taking into account the three global conventions on biodiversity, climate change and desertification/land degradation, and also to explore synergies among and across these areas. The project will be process-driven and will produce a document highlighting prioritised national capacity needs, resource mobilization strategy and a capacity development action plan.

SIGNATURE PAGE

Country: **The Cook Islands**

UNDAF Outcome(s)/Indicator(s): **N/A**

Expected CPO Outcome(s)/Indicator (s):

Outcome: Enhanced Government capacity and commitment to meet its obligations under global conventions.

Indicator: Environmental considerations integrated into national development policies, strategies, programmes and projects.

Intended Output: Specific measures introduced to reverse environmental degradation and promote environmental protection.

MYFF Expected Output(s)/Indicator(s):

Outcome: National Capacity Self Assessments, National Adaptation Plans to Climate Change prepared; National Implementation Plans on POPs prepared; and reports on MEAs (UNFCCC, CDD, CBD, POPs) produced

Indicator: Active knowledge network on global environmental concerns including international conventions and other legal instruments in place.

Programme Period: **2004 - 2007**
Programme Component:
Project Title: **National Capacity Self-Assessment for Global Environment Management**
Project Code:
Project Duration: **18 months**

Agreed by Government: (Ministry of Foreign Affairs): _____

Agreed by Executing Partner (Environment Services): _____

Agreed by (UNDP): _____

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ACRONYMS

APR	Annual Project Report
BPOA + 10	10 years since the Barbados Programme of Action was implemented
CDSAPEM	Capacity Development Strategy and Action Plan for Environmental
Management	
CIG	Cook Islands Government
CROP	Council of Regional Organizations of the Pacific
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ES	Environment Services
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEF OFF	Global Environment Facility Operational Focal Point
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
MFEM	Ministry of Finance and Economic Management
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan
NCSA	National Capacity Needs Self Assessment
NEMS	National Environment and Management Strategy
NSC	National Steering Committee
PICCAP	Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Programme
PMU	Project Management Unit
PM	Project Manager
NPC/PC	National Project Co-ordinator
PSC	Project Steering Committee
QFR	Quarterly Financial Report
QPR	Quarterly Progress Report
QOR	Quarterly Operational Report
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP CO	United Nations Development Programme Country Office
UNDP/GEF	United Nations Development Programme Global Environment
	Facility Unit
UNDP NEX	United Nations Development Programme National Execution
	Modality
UNDP GEF RCU	United Nations Global Environment Facility Resource Coordination
	Unit
UNCBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
SOE	State of the Environment
SPREP	South Pacific Regional Environment Programme
TWG	Technical Working Groups
TOR	Terms of Reference
TPR	Tripartite Review
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

SECTION I

PART 1. Situation Analysis

Sustainable Development in Cook Islands

The economic reform, of 1995/96, has allowed the Cook Island Government an opportunity to develop a pragmatic approach to sustainable development. The economy is among the best performing countries in the Pacific region with the economy growing by 2.8% annually in real terms for the period 1982-2002. Such performance is complimentary given a declining population and the recent economic restructuring.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP), as measured by the value added approach, has grown significantly at 2.8% from 1982-2002. Expansion in the last five years has set record growth rates, with nominal GDP growth reaching 10.25% in 2000 and an average of 7.3% in the four years to 2002. The period immediately after the economic reform saw rapid expansion in economic activity, particularly tourist related. Visitor arrivals have increased from under fifty thousand in the mid nineties to almost seventy five thousand in calendar year 2002. As expected the largest industry in the Cook Islands is tourism. The offshore financial centre and the black pearl industry follow this. Tourism is largely based in Rarotonga with a growing market in Aitutaki, and small operations in the neighbouring southern group islands.

However, this economic growth has also brought about both medium and long term environmental pressures that may well place Cook Islands economic development at risk. The government is however aware of the risk and is taking appropriate and necessary steps to address it. For example, the new Environment Act will be extended beyond the current Rarotonga environment, and cover a number of other islands, particularly, Aitutaki, where economic growth related to tourism has been increasing. The new Act while outlining key regulatory requirements including Environment Impact Assessment (EIA), biodiversity, climate change and the protection of the atmosphere, the capability and capacity of the Cook Island people to implement the new Act will place increased burden and financial and technical pressure on the current Environment Service. The NCSA will help assess the capacity of relevant agencies and organizations such as the Environment Service to implement the new Act thereby making a significant and important contribution to the implementation and achievement of the goals of sustainable development.

Commitments to International Agreements

A considerable amount of effort has been undertaken to meet Cook Islands obligations to the global community while at the same time addressing its national environmental priorities. At the international front, the Cook Islands are a party to a number of environment conventions and treaties, including the UNFCCC, the UNCCD and the UNCBD. The Cook Islands is also a party to a number of regional conventions including the Convention on the Conservation of Nature in the South Pacific 1976, and the Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region 1986. These agreements provide a clear indication of the Cook Islands Governments commitment as a member of the global community to address environment and conservation issues that are threatening both the global and national environment.

Past Capacity Building Initiatives

Furthermore, the past ten years has seen the Cook Islands participating in various regional and international capacity building initiatives such as the UNDP-funded South Pacific Regional Environment Program's Capacity 21 project, and the development of the National Environment Management Strategy (NEMS). The NEMS provided a framework for environment management efforts and the mainstreaming of environment through the development of relevant legislations, plans and programmes to support environment management and conservation in the country.

In addition, the Cook Islands also participated in the UNDP-funded Capacity Building for Environment Management in the Pacific (CBEMP) project, and has benefited as well from other opportunities for capacity building support available through the Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Programme (PICCAP), the Waste Management project and the Invasive Species project coordinated through the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).

Problems to Address

In recent years, there has been a remarkable increase in the number of new environmental programmes and projects as a result of the Cook Islands becoming a contracting party to a large number of international and regional agreements and protocols. With the high demands placed on the Cook Islands to meet the various obligations and requirements by the respective international environmental agreements, the following problems or constraints have been observed and experienced (amongst other things):

- Limited capacity to meet national environmental priorities and international obligations.
- Limited understanding of the Conventions and the obligations required of the Government.
- Cross cutting issues amongst the MEAs are not clearly defined.
- Coordination and implementation of the MEAs are not very effective.
- Roles and responsibilities of the key stakeholders are not well defined.

The commitment from the Cook Islands is huge given its small size and human resource constraints and capabilities. With the other major conventions and agreements requiring similar commitment, there is a real concern that the Cook Islands current capacity may have already been stretched too thinly, and that the quantity and quality of its participation and contribution to the international conventions will suffer. Indications suggest that a lot more would need to be done in order to develop and further improve Cook Islands capacity to meet its national and international obligations.

PART 2: Strategy

The Country Programme Outline for the Cook Islands 2004 – 2007 identifies “Sustainable Management of Natural Resources” as its key environmental objective for the country's programme period. To achieve this objective, the Government has identified the need to enhance national capacity and commitment to meet its obligations under the global conventions in particular the multilateral environmental agreements that the Cook Islands is a party to. In this regard, the National Capacity Self Assessment for Global Environment Project aims at identifying key capacity needs priorities for the Cook Islands and to identify possible funding and technical assistance and support to assist the Cook Islands build its required capacity to meet the obligations of the global conventions.

Linkages to UNDP – supported programme

UNDP's role within the country is to provide guidance and support for sustainable development through poverty alleviation and good governance with focus on environmental management, empowerment of vulnerable groups and introduction of sustainable livelihood practices to all. While supporting the UNDP obligation to the Cook Islands, the NCSA outputs would assist the CIG to formulate an integrated environmental management plan in line with national priorities to enhance capacities to achieve a sustainable development strategy and improve its ability to address global environmental commitments and obligations mainly under the three conventions: UNCBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD.

UNDP has long recognized that capacity development and institutional strengthening is necessary for articulating national priorities through targeted support. UNDP assists the CIG through the Environment Service to strengthen its capacity to address the environmental challenges at national, as well as community level by providing support to implementation of international conventions and protocols, and incorporation of sustainable development practices in policy planning. UNDP through its cooperation with the CIG have supported a number of interventions to address global environmental obligations under the UNCBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD.

Linking the NCSA with other assessments, reporting requirements, initiatives and programmes

It is essential and critical that the NCSA process is linked to all the other reporting and assessment requirements of countries under various Multilateral Environmental Agreements, the WSSD, BPOA+10, MDG and National Development Planning processes. Identification and understanding of these linkages is important and will be covered during the training activities and supported with the use of tools. This will minimize duplication and maximize opportunities for complementarity. SPREP will be required to play a key role in this regard given its key role in assisting countries with reporting requirements under the WSSD and BPOA+10 processes, its facilitation in the development of the SPREP Action Plan and its role in promoting inter-linkages and synergies.

Linking the NCSA to on-going related environmental initiatives in CI

A number of on-going projects relevant to NCSA are currently implemented in CI funded from various sources. These include the following UNDP-GEF funded projects: Enabling Activities for Biodiversity and POPs, the Second National Communications for Climate Change, the regional International Waters Project, the Land Degradation National Action Plan process, the GEF Operational Support Programme and the Pacific Islands Renewable Energy Project. There are also other GEF funded projects through the UNEP such as the Biosafety Project. It is important that the NCSA capitalizes on existing relevant initiatives to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication of activities and information.

Beneficiaries

The NCSA process, which is a people-centred exercise, will be able to promote the outcome in the forms of collective action in the interest of a community as a whole, incorporating

interrelated sectoral concerns and adopting long-term perspective. The project will focus on advocacy, coordination, learning, partnership and the public interest, thus calling for a participatory approach to realize development objectives.

The government and its relevant institutions (ministries, departments and agencies), Civil Society Organizations (including NGOs, targeted women's groups, etc.), academic institutions and researchers, private sector and other stakeholders related to different levels of implementation of MEAs will benefit from this assessment where their current level of capacities and gaps in capacities to address environmental concerns will be identified and prioritised, and a strategy to address the prioritised capacity needs will be developed. They will also benefit from the opening that would be given in this project to voice their ideas and concerns through the proposed stakeholder consultation process, which is one of the key implementing strategies used for developing a transparent and accountable NCSA process.

The project will, apart from providing an opportunity for an extensive stakeholder dialogue to integrate global environmental management at a national context and it will facilitate synergies, practical initiatives and priorities to address environmental issues as a long-term intervention. The outputs of this project will also benefit the donor community, relevant CROP agencies, international/regional environmental organizations and others to clearly focus its country programmes and projects on environmental concern or where the environment is a crosscutting issue to ensure the overall programme/project outcomes are achieved. Success of the project will also pave the path to achieve long-term benefits at global level, while the increased capacities on environmental management will help to realize Cook Islands sustainable development vision and to comply with commitments to the global community.

Partnership Strategy

Through this capacity self-assessment, existing capacity development initiatives of various ongoing activities, further needs and unidentified gaps will be highlighted. Linkages will be also established through the stakeholder consultation processes and with partnerships in which lead personnel of the existing initiatives will be the key participants. The implementation of the NCSA process will be participatory, demand driven, cross-sectoral and cooperative, relying on stakeholder participation, information exchange, network strengthening, decentralization and learning by doing to guide the direction of activities. An appropriate participatory process will be developed during the implementation.

The overall NCSA process will also demonstrate a trend towards more strategic partnerships and a programmatic approach, which goes beyond simple stand-alone projects, and therefore, has a broader, more significant long-term impact. Some of the beneficiaries have already contributed to design the process taking the considerations of national needs. Stakeholder involvement will be looked for in project implementation and to monitor and evaluate project impacts.

The project will be implemented by the Environment Services through the partnership of other line ministries of the CIG and with the support of UNDP. The project will partner with these institutions to support policy development to realize the outcome of the NCSA process. Involvement of stakeholders has a practical relevance, since their actions and commitments will be essential to the implementation and success of the resulting strategy for capacity building. The Environment Service will also collaborate with other relevant UN agencies, multilateral, bilateral donors, CROP agencies and relevant international/regional environmental

organizations to address long-term capacity development needed identified through this process to address global environmental commitments.

Project Mechanism

The main advantage of the project would be the identification of capacity building needs in three levels: individual, institutional and systemic. The project will address capacity levels of following areas: (1) legal, policy and negotiations, (2) economic aspects and finance, (3) technology transfer and research, (4) education, training and human resources development, (5) institutional coordination and monitoring, (6) information and database management, and (7) stakeholder capacity building and participatory techniques.

The project will strengthen the coordination of environmental policy formulation and implementation among authorities from a national level to local levels. It will ensure national ownership, leadership and policy commitment, promotes comprehensive participation, includes various dimensions of capacity and cross cutting concerns, ensure coordination within sectors and across sectors and adopt a long-term approach to capacity building within the broader sustainable development context. The NCSA will identify concrete opportunities for improvements, action plan development and projects that will strengthen the overall environmental management plan at the national level. The outputs and future projects based on NCSA to be funded by GEF and other donors will be integrated into a more comprehensive national strategy to ensure long-term commitment.

The UNDP-GEF National Capacity Self-Assessment for Global Environment Project for the Cook Islands:

Goal:

The primary goal of the NCSA is to identify country level priorities and needs for capacity building to address global environmental issues, in particular biological diversity, climate change, and land degradation, with the aim of catalysing domestic and/or externally assisted action to meet those needs in a coordinated manner.⁶

Immediate Objectives⁷:

- To identify, confirm, or review priority issues for action within the thematic areas of biodiversity, climate change, and land degradation, respectively;
- To explore related capacity needs within and across the three thematic areas;
- To catalyse targeted and coordinated action and requests for future external funding and assistance; and
- To link country action to the broader national environmental management and sustainable development frameworks.

Expected Outcomes

- Support long-term capacity building processes focused on individual, institutional and systemic development;
- Reinforce existing national programmes both within and across the thematic areas of biodiversity, climate change and desertification/land degradation;
- Identify linkages between global and national environmental management issues and capacity building efforts;
- Strengthen national procedures to negotiate and implement the global environmental conventions;
- Strengthen awareness amongst all levels of stakeholders (i.e. from general public to the high level decision makers) of the global environmental dimensions of national sustainable development activities and the obligations under the key environmental conventions;
- Clarify and improve the role of and relationship with donors and bilateral partners to ensure that their support is felt at all levels

NCSA Expected Outputs

The expected NCSA outputs are in the form of technical reports on the following:

- A stocktaking of previous and on-going activities related to capacity building (such as enabling activities);
- An account of the process by which the NCSA was prepared, including stakeholder participation;
- A description/inventory of capacity building needs in the three sectors with prioritisation to the extent possible, and other related capacity needs;
- An identification of cross cutting issues and synergies, and
- A Plan of Action to meet prioritised needs and a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating progress made in meeting those needs

⁶ GEF Operational Guidelines for Expedited Funding of National Self Assessments of Capacity Building Needs, 2001

⁷ GEF: A guide for Self Assessment of Country Capacity Needs for Global Environmental Management, 2001

Key NCSA principles

The following are key principles to be adopted to ensure the NCSA is effectively implemented:

- Ensuring national ownership and leadership, and the use of national or regional experts;
- Using existing coordinating structures or mechanisms;
- Paying due attention to provisions and decisions of the three Conventions, as they relate to capacity building;
- Ensuring multi-stakeholder participation, consultation and decision-making, through appropriate institutional arrangements;
- Building on on-going/existing work relevant to NCSAs, for instance through the GEF supported enabling activities, and national reports to the Conventions;
- Adopting a holistic approach to capacity building that addresses capacity needs at the systemic, institutional and individual levels while integrating such capacity building into wider sustainable development efforts, to the extent possible and appropriate, and;
- Adopting a long-term approach to capacity building within the broader context of sustainable development.

NCSA Process⁸

An important part of preparing NCSA is the process itself. A well-designed and comprehensive process can help to ensure national action to build capacity to protect the global and national environments. The NCSA should bring together the various national agencies, institutions and organizations whose activities have important direct or indirect impacts on the environment and will encourage them to assess gaps, and identify synergies and devise a coordinated approach for strengthening overall capacity. The NCSA should contribute to strengthening existing national programmes and should lead to targeted action plan development and implementation both within and across the thematic areas of biodiversity, climate change and land degradation. It should also help to identify linkages between global and national environmental management issues and capacity building efforts.

⁸ GEF: A guide to self assessment of country capacity needs for global environmental management, 2001

PART 3. Management Arrangements

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs being the Government Coordinating Authority for UNDP funded programmes will be the official contact for communications with UNDP on project related matters, whilst the GEF Operational Focal Point provides the overall management of the project implementation in line with the signed Project Document and UNDP NEX requirements. The Environment Service / Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) will be responsible for the overall management and disbursement of funds, and including the submission of financial reports and other requirements to UNDP.

Project Execution

The Environment Service will execute the Cook Islands NCSA project. The Manager of the International Environment Division will be the Project Manager. She will recruit a Project Co-ordinator who will be responsible for the implementation of the project. The Project Co-ordinator will be supported by technical experts/consultants especially in the design and conduct of self-assessments by the stakeholders. National consultants will be recruited to undertake specific tasks required under the project. In the event where specific expertise is not available locally, then the project will outsource services from outside of the country.

The Environment Service has executed other UNDP/GEF-funded projects in the past and is experienced in UNDP and GEF procedures. The ES has worked closely on a number of occasions with various other agencies both in the government and non-government sectors and has established several coordinating committees and task forces in which these agencies are actively participating. It is important to build on this experience to ensure that the NCSA project can benefit from the wealth of knowledge and experience that is already available through these committees. The ES will be responsible for the recruitment of experienced consultants to assist stakeholders in the carrying out of their self-assessments. The Environment Service will also be responsible for the management of funds from UNDP and for providing backstopping and logistical support to the Steering Committee.

Project Management Unit

The NCSA will be managed directly by the Project Manager and Project Co-ordinator whose responsibility is to expedite the facilitation of approved activities and outputs as specified in the project document. The Project Manager and Project Co-ordinator together with consultants and CBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD focal points will formulate the Project Management Unit. During implementation phase, daily operations and management of work especially arranging and coordinating with consultant's work will be carried out by the Project Manager and Project Co-ordinator. Reporting on the progress of NCSA will be conducted by the PMU in the Steering Committee forum.

National Steering Committee (NSC)

During 15 and 17 September 2003, two NCSA introductory and consultative workshops were held with representation from a wide range of stakeholders. While meeting informally, and as

an interim measure, the representation will be finalized and formalized through Cabinet endorsement during the project inception phase so that it has the high level status that it needs in order to ensure the continued support and participation of its members. Final membership of the Committee will be confirmed at the commencement of the implementation phase of this project. The Committee will meet at least every three months to review progress and to provide future guidance and support. Members of the Committee will also be expected to report on progress in the implementation of their own self-assessments as these reports will contribute to the overall NCSA progress report by the Project Manager to the Steering Committee and to UNDP.

Technical Working Groups (TWG)

Existing coordinating bodies established under programmes relating to the CBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD will also be engaged by the NCSA in most cases as the technical arms of its Steering Committee. The National Biodiversity and Strategy Action Plan (NBSAP) Steering Committee, the Climate Change Country Team and the CCD Steering Committee will be invited to participate in the Steering Committee in an advisory capacity. This should allow for the cross fertilization of ideas and the sharing of information and resources for the mutual benefit of the programmes concerned. See the attached project brief for the NCSA organization chart.

Stakeholder Participation

The participation and support of the stakeholders will be central to the success of the NCSA. The project will therefore ensure that there are ample opportunities for all stakeholders to participate and contribute to the project. Stakeholders will nominate counterparts who will receive training from the consultants in the conduct of self-assessments. These counterparts will then have responsibility for carrying out self-assessment exercises within their own organizations and for the ongoing monitoring of in-house capacity to meet their organizations' objectives and functions. Stakeholders will meet regularly to discuss progress relating to their self-assessments and to share experiences and lessons learned.

Regional Coordination

The NCSA will provide opportunities for the Steering Committee to further explore the need for regional coordination and take the necessary steps to ensure that this important aspect of international cooperation is achieved.

A Regional Support Mechanism aimed at assisting countries in the speedy and effective conduct of their National Capacity Self Assessment's (NCSAs) is currently proposed by SPREP for endorsement by the SPREP Council who is schedule to meet in September 2004. The support mechanism will consist of a number of regional and international partners to be coordinated by SPREP. It will also enable countries to prepare for follow-up priority programmes and activities identified by countries through projects initiated within the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and through other funding sources.

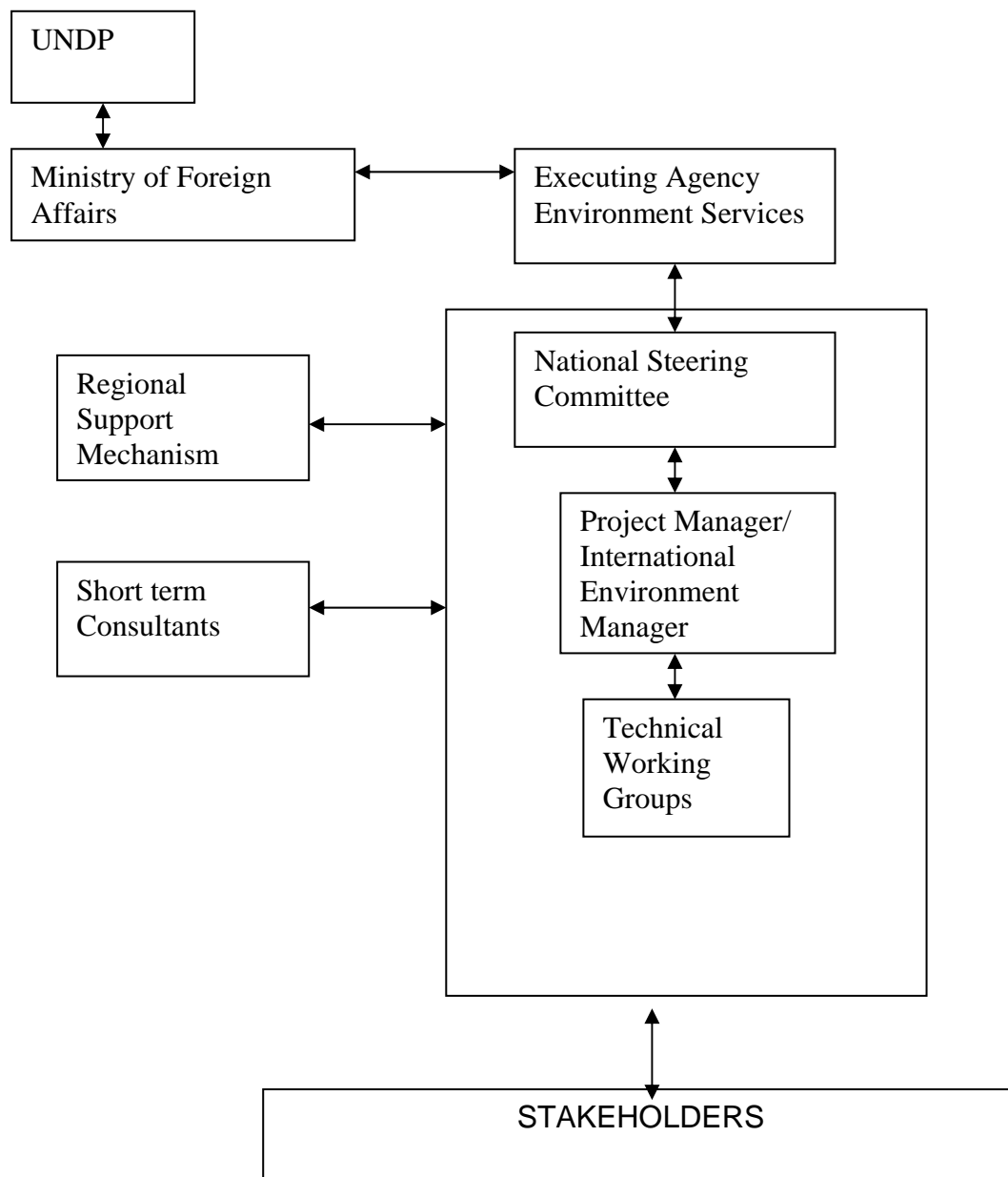
The support mechanism comprises of three main components including training, tool kit development and backstopping services. Countries will be expected to benefit from this initiative through developing local and national experts with training to acquire knowledge, skills and tools to support the implementation of individual countries NCSA projects. The pool of expertise developed within countries can also be used for further monitoring and evaluation

work, assist governments to develop GEF proposals for capacity building projects and programmes inclusive to partake in sharing experiences through country-to-country exchange initiatives.

International consultants may be recruited to meet individual country needs that the regional mechanism may not be able to effectively support. International experts may be required to train local and national consultants in conducting capacity needs assessments including developing skills and tools for effective monitoring of the NCSA process.

Experiences from other nationally implemented projects show that regional coordination does provide an opportunity for countries to meet and discuss common issues having implications on both national and regional programmes. To facilitate this process, it is important that a regional mechanism is set up either through a regional organization, UNDP office or other relevant body to coordinate this regional assistance to the Cook Islands and other Pacific Islands countries participating in the NCSA. Cook Islands NCSA welcomes the opportunity to participate in any regionally coordinated relevant to the NCSA.

Project Implementation Structure



PART 4: UNDP - Monitoring and Evaluation

Quarterly/Annual

UNDP's Country Office in Samoa will administer, monitor and review project progress as well as provide guidance in accordance with standard UNDP/GEF procedures and requirements. The DOE, through the Project Manager will liaise closely with UNDP Samoa office on all substantive matters relating to the project including financial reporting requirements and the timely disbursement of funds.

The project will be subject to an annual review, the timing of which will be determined by UNDP in consultation with the executing agency. During these reviews, project performances will be measured against established work plan targets and expenditures assessed against approved budgets. The Project Manager will prepare and submit to UNDP Annual Project Reports (APRs), which will be used as the basis for the annual reviews. Further, Quarterly Progress Reports, and a Project Implementation Report are also required. The final review of the NCSA will take place within three months after the completion of the project. The project is subjected to an annual audit, which is a mandatory requirement of UNDP/GEF.

Tripartite Project Review

A Tripartite Project Review (TPR) will be undertaken 12 months after the project has started implementation. The TPR will assess progress achieved and make recommendations to address key constraints. An Annual Project Report is required for the TPR. UNDP, the Government representative through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Aid Management Unit and the Environment Services will participate in the TPR. The Project Manager and the Project Coordinator will present the APR and report on the progress of the project.

Audit Arrangements

An annual audit is required for this project as its annual disbursement rate would be greater than US\$ 20,000. The Government of the Cook Islands is responsible for the audit and will ensure that the audit follows the UNDP Scope of Audit attached in Annex 7.

The audit should assure UNDP that its resources are being managed in accordance with the UNDP financial regulations, rules, policies and procedures that apply to projects; the project document and the work plans, including activities, management arrangements, expected results, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting provisions; and the key considerations for management, in the areas of management, administration and finance.

Final Evaluation

A Final Impact Evaluation will be conducted at the end of the project period to provide an overall assessment of the NCSA process, implementation of the RMS and Action Plan. This will be followed by a National Level Communication to present and review the results of the Final Evaluation. The evaluation will be undertaken in accordance with UNDP procedures and GEF requirements. An international independent evaluator with the support of a national evaluator will carry out this final evaluation.

UNDP's Country Office in Samoa with inputs from UNDP/GEF and CIG will prepare and finalize the Terms of Reference (ToR). UNDP/GEF will also contribute to the evaluation by

providing nominations for consultants and agreeing to the final selections, participating in the final evaluation if necessary, providing input to the evaluation as it necessitates, reviewing and providing comments on draft evaluation report and supporting the UNDP's Country Office in Samoa, CIG through the Environment Service in addressing recommendations and applying lessons.

Logo

GEF logo appears on all relevant GEF project publications, including among others, project hardware purchased with GEF funds. Any citation on publications regarding projects funded by GEF should also accord proper acknowledgment to GEF. The [UNDP logo](#) should be more prominent and separated a bit from the [GEF logo](#) if possible as, with non-UN logos, there can be security issues for staff.

PART 5: Legal Context

This project document shall be the legal instrument between the Cook Island Government and the United Nations Development Programme.

The following types of revisions may be made to this project document with the signature of the UNDP Resident Representative, provided he/she has verified the agreement thereto by GEF Unit and is assured that the other signatories to the project document have no objections to the proposed changes:

- (i) Revisions in, or additions of, any of the annexes of the project document;
- (ii) Revisions which do not involve significant changes in the immediate objectives, outputs or activities of the project, but are caused by the rearrangements of inputs already agreed to or by cost increases due to inflation;
- (iii) Mandatory annual revisions which re-phase the delivery of agreed project inputs, or reflect increased expert or other costs due to inflation, or take into account agency expenditure flexibility; and
- (iv) Inclusion of additional annexes and attachments only as set out here in this project document.

Since this project falls under the NEX modality, it shall be implemented in accordance with the NEX Guidelines, which includes audit requirements.

SECTION II

Resources and Results Framework

Intended Outcome as stated in the Country Programme: Enhanced Government capacity and commitment to meet its obligations under global conventions.			
Outcome Indicator as stated in the Country Programme: Environmental considerations integrated into national development policies, strategies, programmes and projects.			
MYFF Service Line: Energy and Environment for Sustainable Development			
Partnership Strategy: The NCSA project will strengthen partnerships with relevant government agencies, NGOs, CBOs, donor partners, CROP agencies, and UNDP			
Project title and ID: National Capacity Self Assessment for Global environment Management			
Intended Outputs	Outputs Targets (Year)	Indicative Activities	Inputs
1. Stocktaking report of previous and on-going activities related to capacity building	Year 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required stocktaking activities implemented; Draft stocktaking report prepared; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise TOR for consultant and advertise widely Recruit consultant to undertake the stocktaking inventory in accordance with the agreed TOR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNDP-GEF funds ES In-kind technical support NCSA PMU Steering Committee input Consultant UNDP-GEF technical backstopping
2. A final technical report on the NCSA process undertaken for CI prepared	Year 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft NCSA process prepared for discussion Year 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCSA process endorsed and adopted for implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Coordinator and PMU prepares draft NCSA process National Steering Committee reviews and endorses the NCSA Process Adopt NCSA process for implementation and copies sent to UNDP and relevant national and regional partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNDP-GEF funds ES in kind support NCSA PMU technical support National Steering Committee UNDP-GEF Backstopping Stakeholders
3. Report outlining the main capacity needs in the three conventions	Year 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity needs assessment completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultant undertakes capacity needs in the three conventions in accordance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNDP-GEF funds DOE in-kind support Technical support from PMU

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs assessment identified and prioritised Draft report on needs assessment prepared National Steering Committee endorses the Needs Assessment Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> with the agreed TOR Circulate draft report to stakeholders for comments and input National Steering Committee reviews the Needs Assessment Report Input and comments from UNDP-GEF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and respective Convention committees UNDP-GEF technical support Consultant Stakeholders
4. Cross cutting issues and synergies Report completed	<p>Year 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross cutting issues identified Synergies and linkages identified Analysis of the issues and linkages completed Draft report completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultant assesses, analyses and reviews cross cutting issues and synergies Consult with stakeholders and partners for comments on draft report Finalise draft report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNDP-GEF funds ES, PMU and National Steering Committee input UNDP-GEF technical input Stakeholders Input
5. Capacity Building Action Plan completed and endorsed by Cabinet	<p>Year 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Action Plan prepared Consultations undertaken <p>Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action Plan submitted to Cabinet for approval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultant to draft Capacity Building Action Plan Undertake consultations with stakeholders on draft Action Plan Prepare Resource Mobilization Strategy as a component of the Action Plan Raise awareness on key components of the Action Plan as part of Resource Mobilization Strategy Finalise and submit Capacity Building Action Plan to Cabinet for approval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNDP-GEF funds ES, PMU, Steering Committee Input UNDP-GEF technical backstopping Other partners regional and national
6. Effective Project Management Unit	<p>Year 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Coordinator and Assistant recruited Project Management Unit set up Implementation Arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise TORs for Project Coordinator and Assistant Recruit PC and PA Hold initial meeting of the PMU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNDP-GEF funds ES, PMU and GON in-kind technical, administrative and management support UNDP Samoa UNV Officer

	<p>clarified and agreed upon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Implementation Strategy prepared <p>Years 2 & 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documentations and reports produced, published and disseminated • Media activities undertaken • Participation in relevant regional capacity building activities • Report documenting lessons learnt on capacity building • Database created containing relevant information on capacity building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake Inception Phase activities • Prepare Implementation Strategy • Publish and disseminate technical reports and relevant documentations produced by the project • Conduct media activities • Arrange for participation at relevant regional capacity building activities • Procure required equipment for the project • Document lessons learnt • Create capacity building database 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP-GEF technical and management support • SPREP and other regional partners • Equipment • Project Coordinator and Assistant
<p>6. Effective Monitoring and Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Steering Committee meeting minutes • QPRs and FRs • Audit report completed and submitted to NY • Final Evaluation Report 	<p>Years 1 -3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Steering Committees meetings • Quarterly Financial and progress reports submitted to UNDP Samoa • TPR undertaken 12 months after project started implementation • Audit completed <p>Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Evaluation completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Steering Committee meetings • Prepare QPRs and FRs • Conduct Audit for the project • Undertake Final Evaluation of the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP-GEF • ES, GON, PMU in-kind support • Certified Auditor • Evaluation expert(s) • UNDP-GEF management and technical support • National Steering Committee

SECTION III

Annual Work Plan

Project Outcome/ATLAS Activity	Responsible Party	Source of Funds	Budget Description
<p>Outcome1: Stocktaking report of previous and on-going activities related to capacity building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise TOR for consultant and advertise widely • Recruit consultant to undertake the stocktaking inventory in accordance with the agreed TOR 	NEX	GEF	Service contract, local personnel
<p>Outcome 2: A final technical report on NCSA process undertaken for CI prepared.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake inception phase key activities • Adopt NCSA process for implementation and copies sent to UNDP and relevant national and regional partners 	NEX	GEF	
<p>Outcome 3: Report outlining main capacity needs in the three conventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultant undertakes capacity need in the three conventions in accordance with the agreed TOR • Circulate draft report to stakeholder for comments and input • National steering committee reviews the Needs Assessment Report • Input and comments from UNDP- GEF 	NEX	GEF UNDP	Service contract, local personnel, miscellaneous

<p>Outcome 4: Cross cutting issues and synergies report completed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultant assesses, analyses and reviews cross cutting issues and synergies in accordance with agreed TOR • Consult with stakeholder and partners for comments on draft report • Finalise draft report 	NEX	GEF	Service contract, local personnel, travel, miscellaneous
<p>Outcome 5: Capacity Building Action Plan Completed and endorsed by Cabinet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultant to draft Capacity Building Action Plan in accordance with agreed TOR • Undertake consultations with stakeholders on draft Action Plan • Prepare Resource Mobilization Strategy as a component of the Action Plan • Raise awareness on key components of the Action Plan including the Resource Mobilization Strategy • Finalise and submit capacity Building Action Plans to Cabinet for Approval 	NEX	GEF	Service contract, local personnel, miscellaneous, travel

<p>Outcome 6: Effective Project Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize TOR/Recruit for Project Coordinator and Assistant • Publish and disseminate technical reports and relevant documentations produced by the project • Conduct media activities • Arrange for participation at relevant regional capacity building activities • Purchase relevant reference materials and documents • Document lessons learnt • Create capacity building database • Procure required equipment for the project • Set up the NECSD 			<p>Travel, miscellaneous, service contract, equipment, local personnel, admin personnel</p>
<p>Outcome 7: Effective Monitoring and Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Steering Committee meetings • Prepare QPR's and FR's • Conduct UNDP Mission & TPR • Conduct Audit for project • Recruit Evaluators 	<p>NEX</p>	<p>GEF</p>	<p>Service contract, travel, miscellaneous</p>

Work Plan 2004

Expected Outputs (including Monitoring and Project Management)	Key Activities	Timeframe				Responsible Partner	Source of Funds	Budget Description	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4				
A final technical report on the NCSA process undertaken for CI prepared	Project Coordinator and PMU prepares draft NCSA process					ES	62000	Miscellaneous	
Effective Project Management Unit	Finalise TORs for Project Coordinator and Assistant					ES			
	National Project Coordinator and Project Assistant					ES	62000	Local Personnel Admin Personnel	
	Undertake Inception Phase Key Activities					ES	62000	Miscellaneous	
	• Hold initial meeting of the PMU					ES			
	• PMU prepares draft Implementation Strategy, NCSA process and detailed workplan					ES			
	• Stakeholder analysis					ES			
	• Confirm Steering Committee members					ES			
Effective Monitoring and Evaluation	National Steering Committee meetings					ES	62000	Miscellaneous	
	Prepare QPRs and FRs					ES			

Work Plan 2005								
Expected Outputs (including Monitoring and Project Management)	Key Activities	Timeframe				Responsible Partner	Source of Funds	Budget Description
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4			
A final technical report on the NCSA process undertaken for CI prepared	Adopt NCSA process and the Implementation Strategy for the NCSA and copies sent to UNDP and relevant national and regional partners					ES	62000	Miscellaneous
Stocktaking report of previous and on-going activities related to capacity building	Finalise TOR for consultant and advertise widely					ES	62000	Service Contract Travel
	Recruit consultant to undertake the stocktaking inventory in accordance with the agreed TOR					ES		
Report outlining the main capacity needs in the three conventions	Consultant undertakes capacity needs in the three conventions in accordance with the agreed TOR					ES	62000	Service Contract
	Circulate draft report to stakeholders for comments and input					ES		
	National Steering Committee reviews the Needs Assessment Report					ES		
	Input and comments from UNDP-GEF					ES		
Cross cutting issues and synergies Report completed	Consultant assesses, analyses and reviews cross cutting issues and synergies in accordance with agreed TOR					ES	62000	Service Contract
	Consult with stakeholders and partners for comments on draft report					ES		
	Finalise draft report					ES		
Capacity Building Action	Consultant to draft Capacity Building					ES	62000	Service Contract

Plan completed and endorsed by Cabinet	Action Plan in accordance with agreed TOR							
	Undertake consultations with stakeholders on draft Action Plan				ES	62000	Miscellaneous	
	Prepare Resource Mobilization Strategy as a component of the Action Plan				ES			
	Raise awareness on key components of the Action Plan as part of Resource Mobilization Strategy				ES			
Effective Project Management Unit	Publish and disseminate technical reports and relevant documentations produced by the project				ES	62000	Miscellaneous	
	Conduct media activities				ES	62000	Miscellaneous	
	Arrange for participation at relevant regional capacity building activities				ES	62000	Travel/DSA	
	Document lessons learnt				ES	62000	Miscellaneous	
	Create capacity building database				ES	62000	Miscellaneous	
	Procure required equipment for the project				ES	62000	Equipment	
	National Project Coordinator				ES	62000	Local Personnel	
	Project Assistant				ES		Admin Personnel	
Effective Monitoring and Evaluation	National Steering Committee meetings				ES/SC	62000	Miscellaneous	
	Prepare QPRs and FRs				ES/PC			
	Conduct UNDP Mission & TPR				UNDP			
	Conduct Audit for the project				ES	62000	Service Contract	
						62000		

Work Plan 2006								
Expected Outputs (including Monitoring and Project Management)	Key Activities	Timeframe				Responsible Partner	Source of Funds	Budget Description
Capacity Building Action Plan completed and endorsed by Cabinet	Finalise and submit Capacity Building Action Plan to Cabinet for approval					ES	62000	Service Contract
Effective Project Management Unit	Publish and disseminate technical reports and relevant documentations produced by the project					ES	62000	Miscellaneous
	Conduct media activities					ES	62000	Miscellaneous
	Arrange for participation at relevant regional capacity building activities					ES	62000	Travel/DSA
	National Project Coordinator					ES	62000	Local Personnel
	Project Assistant					ES	62000	Admin Assistant
Effective Monitoring and Evaluation	National Steering Committee meetings					ES	62000	Miscellaneous
	Prepare QPRs and FRs					ES		
	Conduct Audit for the project					ES	62000	Service Contract
	Conduct UNDP Mission & TPR					UNDP		
	Recruit Evaluators					UNDP	62000	Service Contract

Annex 2.

Terms of Reference

NCSA Steering Committee

Location: Environment Services

Duration: 18 months

Objective

The Cook Island Government has received funds through the UNDP/GEF to assist with the assessments of the Cook Islands capacity to meet its obligations under the UNCBD, UNFCCC and the UNCCD. An important part of this project is the establishment of a Project Steering Committee to carry out the following tasks:

Main Tasks

- Provide overall policy guidance for the project;
- Provide advice on stakeholder identification and participation and endorse the defined roles for each of the participating agency;
- Review and endorse the project work plan in line with the project document;
- Participate in the inception workshop as part of the capacity building activities for the project;
- Monitor the performance of the project through evaluation of three monthly reports produced by the project coordinator and project team;
- Consider and endorse all draft reports/policy papers etc produced as outputs of the Project;
- Liaise with government to ensure government commitment to the project and approval of all produced Reports by Cabinet;
- Facilitate discussions on possible funding sources for the Resource Mobilization Strategy component of the National Capacity Building Action Plan.
- Lay down policies defining the functions, responsibilities and delegation of powers for the local implementing agency and the Project Management Unit and the NCSA Team.
- Coordinate and manage the overall project activities and the budget.
- Coordination of project activities across institutions on NCSA.
- Review the project activities and progress, and their adherence to the work plan set forth in the project document.
- Review and comment on each year's proposed work plan and budget
- Take decisions on the issues brought to its notice by UNDP and other cooperating institutions, and advice regarding efficient and timely execution of the project.
- Initiate remedial action to remove impediments in the progress of project activities that were not envisaged earlier.

National Steering Committee (NSC) composition:

All key stakeholders should be represented in the NSC with representatives from NGOs and CBOs. The final selection of the NSC will be carried out during the inception phase. At their first meeting during project implementation the NSC shall agree upon a Chair for the NSC.

Meeting proceedings:

The NSC shall meet at least once a quarter and any other time when the need arises.

Annex 3.

Terms of Reference

National Project Manager

Location: Environmental Service

Duration: 18 months

Objective

The Cook Islands Government has received funds through the UNDP/GEF to assist with the assessments of the Cook Islands capacity to meet its obligations under the UNCBD, UNFCCC and the UNCCD. The National Project Manager shall be the Manager for the International Environment Division of the Environment Service and is responsible to the Director of the Environment Service.

Tasks:

The National Project Manager's tasks shall be to:

- Ensure appropriate and adequate office space is provided to the NCSA project team as part of the Government's in-kind contribution to the project;
- Manage and supervise the overall implementation of project activities;
- Contract and manage the consultants and project teams' work;
- Provide update reports to the Director of Environment Service on project progress;
- Provide update reports to the National Steering Committee on project activities and progress;
- Manage the disbursement and utilization of projects funds in accordance with Government and UNDP procedures;
- Liase closely with UNDP Samoa on matters relating to the project;
- Ensure the timely delivery of quarterly financial and progress reporting requirements of UNDP;
- Ensure close collaboration with relevant stakeholders including members of the Steering Committee;
- Provide overall supervision of the work of short-term consultants;
- Supervise the work of the Project Coordinator and technical experts.
- Assure the Government inputs to the project are forthcoming in a timely and effective manner
- Assure the project stays in line with national programs, strategies, and objectives and full achievements of the immediate objectives and outputs

With the support of the National Project Coordinator, the NPC shall:

- Oversee establishment of the Project Management Office with systems put in place for sound management of all project subcontracts and financial disbursements.
- Prepare detailed draft work plan and inception report for all project objectives and identify resource requirements, responsibilities, task outlines, performance evaluation criteria and work plans/schedules.
- Develop detailed and measurable quarterly performance indicators for each project output at the outset of the project.
- Prepare quarterly work plans, which are to include indication of extent to which previous quarter's activities have contributed to project's overall objectives.

- Create detailed TOR and qualifications for each subcontract and international expert.
- Coordinate international experts and advise on international training and workshops.
- Submit, as required, Annual Progress Review (APR) to tripartite (TPR) review meetings.
- Approve detailed terms of reference and qualifications for each subcontract.
- Direct and supervise the establishment of project administration procedures for all staff, subcontractors, and participating agencies.
- Approve quarterly status and financial reports for comment and approval of the Project Steering Committee.
- Approve six-month budget forecast requests for approval of the Project Steering Committee.
- Oversee implementation of Project Steering Committee directives.

(The National Project Manager role is the key responsibility of the lead executing agency as part of the Government's in-kind contribution to the project)

Annex 4.

Terms of Reference

National Project Coordinator

Location: Environment Services

Duration: 18 months

Objective

The Cook Islands Government has received funds through the UNDP/GEF to assist with the assessment of the Cook Islands capacity to meet its obligations under the UNCBD, UNFCCC and the UNCCD. An important part of this project is the recruitment of a Project Coordinator to the Executing Agency (i.e. the Environment Service) to provide oversight and supervision for the implementation of the project. In this regard, the Manager of the International Environment Division of the Environment Service whom is also the Project Manager will recruit a Project Coordinator to be responsible for carrying out the following tasks:

The NPC shall carry out the following tasks:

- Prepare the annual work plans of the project, in a manner consistent with the reporting, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation procedures of the Government, and UNDP's guidelines for National Execution (NEX), on the basis of the Project Document, and in close consultation and cooperation with the National Steering Committee, Task Team and the National Project Manager;
- Coordinate and monitor the activities described in the work plan;
- Prepare quarterly and annual financial and project progress reports as per UNDP monitoring requirements;
- Facilitate national consultations together with the national experts and focal points;
- Conduct inception workshop to introduce and review project plan, and implementation arrangements;
- Coordinate the development of Terms of References for the necessary contractors and consultants.
- Provide guidance and assistance to the contractors and consultants;
- Establish links/synergies with relevant NCSA initiatives and programmes (regionally and internationally);
- Prepare technical papers for information of the Steering Committee and other stakeholders;
- Review reports produced by consultants and ensure wide circulation to committee members and other technical experts;
- Foster and establish links/synergies with other related environment programmes in the Cook Islands;
- Provide technical assistance to the local counterparts/focal points in the implementation of project activities particularly the capacity self assessment;
- Coordinate and facilitate the implementation of a nation-wide awareness programme;
- Prepare full reports on outcomes of the awareness programme and synergies established with relevant organizations and environmental programmes.

Qualifications

- Preferably a degree in a field relevant to the objectives of the project;
- Familiar with donor requirements and working environments;
- Have a good understanding of the local institutions and stakeholders;
- Fluent in English and preferably Cook Island Maori;
- Good communications and report writing skills;
- Must be computer literate

Annex 5.

Terms of Reference Project Administrative Assistant

Location: Environment Services

Duration: To be determined

Objective

The NCSA is a project implemented by the ES with funding from UNDP/GEF. The project proposes to recruit a Project Administrative Assistant who will work directly under the Project Coordinator with overall supervision provided by the Project Manager.

Key responsibilities

- Assist with the preparation and dissemination of project documents;
- Assist in coordinating and monitor the activities described in the workplan;
- Assist the Project Coordinator in facilitating national consultations;
- Assist in coordinating the development of Terms of References for the necessary contractors and consultants;
- Establish and maintain a register of all project documents, correspondence, etc;
- Assist with the preparation of technical reports for the project;
- Coordinate and Assist with the preparation of logistical arrangements for the project;
- Provide secretarial and administrative support to the Project Coordinator and Project Steering Committee;
- Keep and maintain a register of all project assets;
- Disseminate and circulate all project specific and related correspondences to committee members and stakeholders;
- Assist with the preparation of financial reports and statements for the project;
- Provide secretarial and administrative support to the project;
- Assist in providing technical assistance to the Steering Committee and PMU in the implementation of project activities particularly the preparation of the NCSA document;
- Assist with the implementation of project activities;
- Undertake other duties related to the overall objectives of the NCSA as required from time to time.

Requirements

- At least 3 years of working experience in a relevant field;
- Should have relevant tertiary qualifications preferably in administration and financial management
- Have a good understanding of the local institutions and stakeholders
- Fluent in English and preferably Cook Island Maori;
- Good communications and report writing skills;
- Must be computer literate

Annex 6.

Terms of Reference

NCSA Consultants (International and Local)

Objectives:

The Government of the Cook Islands has received funds through the UNDP/GEF to assist with the assessment of the country's capacity to meet its commitments and obligations under the CBD, UNFCCC and the CCD. Short-term consultant(s) will be recruited where needed to assist the project with the following tasks:

Main Tasks

(i) Develop Capacity Needs Assessment Methodologies and Train Local Counterparts

1. Provide training and mentoring for local counterparts as identified by the stakeholders.
2. Develop self-assessment methodology and assist the planning, design and conduct of self-assessments by stakeholders as required.

(ii) Capacity Needs Assessment

3. Document and prepare report on the self-assessment process noting successes, constraints and especially the lessons learned.
4. Assist the conduct of self-assessment workshops by stakeholders as required.
5. Preparation and production of NCSA and self-assessment awareness raising materials.
6. Assist with the identification of capacity needs and priorities and prepare a report to document the findings of the assessment

(iii) Cross-cutting issues and synergies

7. Provide guidance and assist in identifying cross cutting issues and linkages and prepare report
8. Assist in the prioritisation of key cross cutting issues

(iv) Capacity Building Action Plan

9. Provide guidance and assist with the preparation of the Capacity Building Action Plan for the Cook Islands
10. Provide guidance and assist with the development of a Resource Mobilization Strategy for the Capacity Building Action Plan
11. Advise the Project Manager and Project Coordinator of any problems affecting the implementation of the project and suggest possible solutions for resolving such problems.
12. Assist the PM and PC review and identify lessons learned from previous capacity building projects and ensure such lessons are taken into account in the implementation of the NCSA.
13. Assist with the production of the Lessons Learned publication.
14. Assist the PC in developing a NCSA database based on available information of past and ongoing capacity building projects.

Qualifications

- An advanced degree in a field of relevance to the objectives of the project.

- At least five years of working experience in capacity building, institutional strengthening, self-assessments or other relevant fields.
- A good understanding of the environmental issues in the Cook Islands and the Pacific.
- A good understanding of the CBD, UNFCCC and the CCD.
- Good communications and reporting skills.
- Some understanding of local institutions and stakeholders.

Annex 7.

Terms of Reference Technical Focal Points for UNCBD, UNFCCC and UNCCCD in the PMU

Objective:

The Government of the Cook Islands has received funds through the UNDP/GEF to assist with the preparation of a National Capacity Self-Assessment programme to meet the country's obligations under the United Nations Convention on; Biological Diversity, Climate Change and Combating Desertification / Land Degradation. Part of this project includes the setting up of a Project Management Unit to carry out the following tasks:

Tasks

- Provide overall policy guidance for the project
- Provide support and advice to the project manager and coordinator on implementation of the project activities
- Provide advice on stakeholder identification and participation and endorse the defined roles for each of the participating agency
- Ensure participation of stakeholders through liaison with the three main technical working groups for each focal points (CBD, UNFCCC and UNCCCD)
- Actively participate in the development of the project work plan in line with the project document
- Participate in the inception workshop as part of the capacity building activities project
- Facilitate coordination of project activities across institutions
- Assist the project manager and coordinator in ensuring that all project reports / policy papers etc are produced and submitted to the National Steering Committee for their approval and endorsement as outputs of the project
- Provide supporting assistance to the project manager and coordinator on the day to day management of all project activities and the budget
- Coordinate support from the three Technical Working Groups in providing necessary information required for the implementation of activities under the project
- Ensure that project activities, comply with the work plan set forth in the project document
- Assist in the coordination and planning of each year's proposed work plan and budget
- Advice on sound decision making process to under take regarding issues brought to the Project Management Unit notice by UNDP and cooperating institutions, and assist in making sure that efficient and timely execution of the project is carried out.

Composition:

The Technical Focal Points shall comprise of the Project Managers and/or Coordinators from the following conventions; Climate Change, Biological Diversity and Combating Desertification / Land Degradation

Annex 8.

Terms of Reference Technical Working Groups (TWG)

Objective:

The Government of the Cook Islands has received funds through the UNDP/GEF to assist with the preparation of a National Capacity Self-Assessment programme to meet the country's obligations under the United Nations Convention on; Biological Diversity, Climate Change and Combating Desertification / Land Degradation. Part of this project includes the setting up of Technical Working Groups to carry out the following tasks;

- Provide technical advice and guidance to the Project Management Unit (PMU)
- Provide technical support to the PMU on implementation of project activities
- Ensure that necessary information required for capacity assessment of all relevant agencies, ministries, NGO's, CBO's and academic institutions etc are presented to the PMU
- Participate in the inception workshop as part of the capacity building activities project
- Facilitate inter-agency information sharing relevant to the project
- Provide comments on the quality control of technical reports prepared by the national consultants and the project coordinator to the PMU
- Assist the Technical Focal Points in coordinating activities under the project that are related to the work of each TWG under the three conventions
- Facilitate discussion on possible funding sources for technical capacity building support to relevant stakeholders involved in the project
- Provide assistance to technical activities implemented under the project
- Assist in the implementation of project activities that related to the three conventions

Composition:

The Technical Working Groups shall be the existing national task force teams or committees for each of the three main conventions (CBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD) or of technical experts in these fields. The TWG will serve as the technical arms for the NCSA project.

Annex 9.

Terms of Reference

Audit

Audit Scope

1. Scope of Work

The scope of the audit should be sufficiently clear to properly define what is expected of the auditor but not in any way restrict the audit procedures or techniques the auditor may wish to use to form an opinion. It should specify at least the following:

- A definition of the entity or the portion of an entity that is subject to audit. (This will normally be the project office whether located within a government department or in a separate location.)
- That the audit will be carried out in accordance with either ISA⁹ or INTOSAI¹⁰ auditing standards.
- That the audit period is 1 January to 31 December of the year 20XX.
- That the scope of the audit is limited to the executing agency expenditures, which are defined as including (1) all disbursements listed in the quarterly financial reports submitted by the executing agency and (2) the direct payments processed by UNDP at the request of the executing agency.
- That the auditor will verify the mathematical accuracy of the CDR by ensuring that the expenditures described in the supporting documentation (the quarterly financial reports, the list of direct payments processed by UNDP at the request of the government, the list of disbursements made by UNDP as part of support services, and the UN agency expenditure statement) are reconciled to the expenditures, by disbursing source, in the CDR.
- That the auditor will state in the audit report the CDR expenditures excluded from the scope of the audit because they were made by UNDP as part of support services and the total expenditures excluded because they were made by a UN agency.
- That the auditor will state in the audit report if the audit was not in conformity with any of the above and indicate the alternative standards or procedures followed.

2. The Audit Report

The TOR should clearly indicate the expected content of the auditor's opinion. (Refer to Annex 2 for a sample Audit Report.) This would include at least the following:

- That it is a special purpose report and its intended use.
- The audit standards that were applied (INTOSAI standards, ISAs, or national standards that comply with one of these in all material respects).
- The period covered by the opinion.
- The scope restriction for those expenditures that are the responsibility of UNDP (as part of support services) or a UN agency.
- Whether the CDR presents fairly the expenditures for the project and that the funds were utilized for the purposes described in the project document and work plans.

This section should also indicate the due date for submission of a draft audit report and the signed audit report to the executing agency, as well as the due date for the submission of the signed audit report to UNDP.

⁹ International Standards of Auditing (ISA) published by the International Auditing Practices Committee of the International Federation of Accountants

¹⁰ International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions

3. Management Letter

The TOR should specify that the auditor would submit a management letter at the completion of the audit. Guidance should be provided regarding the topics/issues to be covered in the management letter. At a minimum, the following topics/issues should be included:

- A general review of project progress and timeliness in relation to progress milestones and the planned completion date, both of which should be stated in the project document. This is not intended to address whether there has been compliance with specific covenants relating to specific performance criteria or outputs. However general compliance with broad covenants such as implementing the project with economy and efficiency might be commented upon but not with the legal force of an audit opinion.
- An assessment of the project's internal control system with equal emphasis on (i) the effectiveness of the system in providing the project management with useful and timely information for the proper management of the project and (ii) the general effectiveness of the internal control system in protecting the assets and resources of the project.
- A description of any specific internal control weaknesses noted in the financial management of the project and the audit procedures followed to address or compensate for the weaknesses. Recommendations to resolve/eliminate the internal control weaknesses noted should be included.
- Comments as to whether recommendations made in the management letter for the previous audit were implemented or, if not, the implementation status.

More detailed guidance for each of the above general categories is provided below.

Review of project progress

As part of the general review of project progress, specific steps could include the following:

- Review annual and quarterly work plans, quarterly financial reports, and requests for direct payments and assess in terms of their timeliness and their compliance with the project document and the UNDP Programming Manual (6.5.3 and 6.5.4).
- Review the Annual Project Reports prepared by the executing agency and assess in terms of compliance with UNDP guidelines and whether the executing agency met its responsibilities for monitoring described in the project document and work plans.
- Review whether the decisions and/or recommendations of the above activities have been followed through by the executing agency.
- Review the pace of project progress and comment on the causes for delays.
- Comment on whether implementation services of the UN Agency(s) were provided in line with project document and the work plan.

Assessment of internal control

The auditor is expected to conduct a general assessment of internal controls according to established internal control standards. An example of established internal control standards is available from the Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI). The INTOSAI standards are intended for use by government managers to use as a framework to establish effective internal control structures. For further information, the INTOSAI *Guidelines for Internal Control Standards* can be found on the INTOSAI Web site www.intosai.org. An overview of the standards can be found in the UNDP Contact tool (Chapter 6).

In addition to the above general assessment, additional specific steps could include the following:

- Review expenditures made by the executing agency and assess whether they are in accordance with project document, work plans and budgets; and are in compliance with the UNDP Programming Manual (6.4).

- Review the process for procurement/contracting activities and assess whether it was transparent and competitive.¹¹
- Review the use, control and disposal of non-expendable equipment and assess whether it is in compliance with the UNDP Programming Manual (6.4.5); and also whether the equipment procured met the identified needs and whether its use was in line with intended purposes.¹²
- Review the process for recruiting project personnel and consultants and assess whether it was transparent and competitive.
- Review the executing agency accounting records and assess their adequacy for maintaining accurate and complete records of receipts and disbursements of cash; and for supporting the preparation of the quarterly financial report.
- Review the records of requests for direct payments and ensure that they were signed by authorised government officials.

Recommendations for improvement

Recommendations should be directed to a specific entity so there is no confusion regarding who is responsible for implementation. The response of the entity should be included in the management letter, immediately following the recommendation.

Also, the auditor may wish to comment on “good practices” (if any) that were developed by the executing agency that should be shared with other project personnel.

Available Facilities and Right of Access

There should be a description of the nature and the location of all records belonging to the project. This list should specify those records kept at the executing agency's headquarters and those that are located at other offices.

The TOR should state that the auditor would have full and complete access at any time to all records and documents (including books of account, legal agreements, minutes of committee meetings, bank records, invoices and contracts etc.) and all employees of the entity. The auditor should be advised that he/she has a right of access to banks, consultants, contractors and other persons or firms engaged by the project management. If an auditor may not have unrestricted access to any records, person or location during the course of the audit, this restriction should be clearly defined, with reasons, in the TOR.

^{11,12} For a suggested detailed checklist, refer to the UNDP Contact tool (Chapter 12 Procurement and Assets management).