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Resilient nations

**Local Project Appraisal Committee (LPAC)  
GEF 6 Safeguarding biodiversity from invasive alien species in the Federated  
States of Micronesia**

**Date: Wednesday 18 September 2019**

**Venue: Island Palms Hotel, Pohnpei Room**

**Time: 3pm – 4pm**

**PROJECT APPRAISAL COMMITTEE (PAO) MEETING MINUTES**

**Project Title:** Safeguarding biodiversity from invasive alien species in the Federated States of Micronesia

**Project Objective:** To safeguard biodiversity in terrestrial and marine ecosystems and in agricultural and fisheries production systems from the impacts of invasive alien species in the Federated States of Micronesia.

**UNDP-GEF PIMS ID number: 5645**

**Project Budget:** USD\$4,141,509 sourced from the Global Environment Facility (GEF)

**Project Timeline:** 2019 – 2024 (5 years)

**National Executing Agency:** Department of Resources and Development (DRD).

**GEF Implementing Agency:** UNDP

**Proceedings**

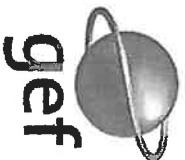
The meeting was co-chaired FSM R&D, represented by John Wichep, Plant and Animal Quarantine Specialist, FSM DR&D – Division of Agriculture and Quarantine by UNDP, represented by Floyd Robinson, Program Analyst, UNDP Pacific Office and

The meeting agenda is in Annex A.

The list of participants included: Cindy Ehmes, Assistant Secretary Department of Environment, Climate Change, and Emergency Management (DECEM); Martyler Silbanuz, DR&D; John Wichep, DR&D; Floyd Robinson, UNDP Pacific Office and Vanessa Fread, DR&D/DECEM – Ridge to Reef Project Technical Coordinator and UNDP Regional Technical Adviser, Lisa Farroway

Opening remarks and welcome by John Wichep, Plant and Animal Quarantine Specialist, FSM DR&D – Division of Agriculture and Quarantine.

The purpose of LPAC being to review key components of the project document, identify amendments, provide justification and approve the project.



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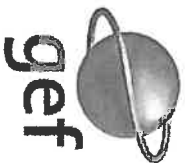
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Floyd Robinson (UNDP Pacific Office) – PAC as a mandatory UNDP-GEF requirement with review of key sections of the project including background, log frame, budget, monitoring and evaluation, project management structure and the UNDP Quality Assurance Form also seeking the LPAC's endorsement.

### **Key discussion Points**

#### **Reference was made to the status of the formulation of project document:**

Lisa Farroway confirmed that Project documented was resubmitted to the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The two queries raised by GEF are addressed and technically cleared. This included GEF request for clarification on communication & awareness raising (use of low-tech methods), collaboration with a GEF funded regional invasive alien species project (regional knowledge exchange and transfer) which is executed by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Program (SPREP) in 4 countries and use of consultants who have expertise/experience in the South Pacific.

GEF recently enforced an existing requirement of Governments - justifying the need for GEF Implementing Agencies to provide support Services i.e., the signed Letter of Agreement (LoA) submitted as a supporting document is insufficient and GEF expects a formal justification submitted by Government National Operational Focal Point. This appears to delay final endorsement of the project by GEF Secretariat. Lisa Farroway informed participants that UNDP has similar experiences with project formulation in Kiribati, Samoa and Tuvalu.

**Government Concerns:** Government expressed its disappointment and reservations about this new development of GEF. The Assistant Secretary of DECEM felt that GEF is not understanding to the special needs of Pacific Island. Based on geographical location of the Federated States of Micronesia, limitations of service providers in country and previous experience, Government is in favour of UNDP support services. Cindy Ehmes made reference to procurements being more effective through UNDP as compared to service providers based in Guam and Hawaii.

Cindy Ehmes reiterated that:

- the decision to engage services by UNDP (as stipulated in the Letter of Agreement) was at the discretion of Government, which is fully aware of the implications such as cost recovery. More importantly under this modality, ownership of the project is still with the national executing agency and experience to date is such that UNDP will continue to build capacity of the respective Project Implementation Unit and national executing agency
- UNDP support services is necessary for the timely execution of the project i.e. minimise delays. Reference was made to existing support services provided under the National Ridge to Reef Project. For example, Vanessa Frad's travel arrangements was facilitated through UNDP ensuring that she participated in Strategic Environment workshop in Brisbane (earlier this year) even though project quarterly advances were still being processed, not yet received by DECEM.

FSM Government's response to GEF was urgent. In this regard, it decided to prioritise:



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- finalization and endorsement a letter of justification (for UNDP support Services) through the National GEF Operational Focal Point
- Forwarding a copy of the endorsed letter to UNDP
- Contacting GEF directly to express its support for UNDP support services under the Safeguarding biodiversity from invasive alien species in the Federated States of Micronesia Project and express its serious concerns about the new requirement of GEF. It was noted that this new requirement was noted and discussed by the GEF at the recent GEF Extended Constituency workshop in Fiji. Government noted inconsistency in application of the requirement by GEF i.e. not applied to a recently approved GEF funded energy project executed through the DRD also.

**Recruitment of Project Implementation Unit:** Government noted importance of recruiting project implementation unit immediately after endorsement. Cindy Ehmes informed the PAC that a two-week period is required for advertisement of project positions, unlike the 30-day period required of public servants.

### PAC Committee Decision:

**Endorsement:** the Project Appraisal Committee noted progress of the formulation of project document and stage of endorsement by GEF. It reaffirmed its endorsement of the final project document which was resubmitted to GEF indicating its endorsement of key sections including the background, log frame, budget, monitoring and evaluation, project management structure and the UNDP Quality Assurance Form. Government extend its appreciation to UNDP for supporting building of DRD through the recent micro fact assessment undertaken.

**Response to GEF:** Government decision to expedite the endorsement process by GEF by prioritising the submission of formal notification (justifying decision to engage UNDP support services under this project)

### Way Forward and Next Steps

The following was discussed and decided by the LPAC

- Submission of formal justification to UNDP submitted urgently i.e. before end of September
- Advance preparations through DRD i.e. finalization and advertisement of Project Implementation Unit position, compiling and submitting resolution of project by Congress which will lead to Finance/Treasury Department establishing an account number for the project
- Late September to Mid-October – UNDP to support DRD in compiling initial Annual Work Plan as endorsement will ensure release of funds to support initial set up including recruitment of Project Implementation Unit
- October -recruitment of Project Coordinator and Project Admin-Finance Officer



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- December – contacts for Project Coordinator and Project Admin-Finance Officer offered/signed
- Endorsement of Project Document

Close of meeting: John Wichep expressed DRDs appreciation to the PAC for its support through the formulation process and endorsing this important project document. Lisa Farroway extended UNDPs acknowledgment to DRD and DECEM for responding to queries from GEF at such short notice. The technical knowledge and experience of DRD and DECEM was obvious in the quality of final project document and fact that the GEF Secretariat responded with only two comments/request for clarification upon first submission.

**Meeting Minutes Endorsed:**

LPAC Endorsement by Government:

  
Signature

Name: John P. Wichep

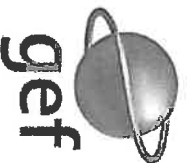
Ministry/Department: FSM Resources & Development

LPAC minutes is approved by UNDP:

  
Office)

(Chairperson of the meeting - on behalf of UNDP Pacific

  
(Mary Robinson)



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**Annex A**

**Project Appraisal Committee (PAC) Meeting**

**Safeguarding biodiversity from invasive alien species in the Federated States of Micronesia Project**

**Date: 18 September, 2019**

**Purpose of PAC Meeting:**

- To allow PAC members with an opportunity to review and discuss key issues/ sections of project document
- To invite recommendations and suggestions which will strengthen the project document
- To facilitate endorsement of project document

**Tentative Agenda**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Comments</b>
9:00am – 9:20am	Welcome and Introductions Opening Remarks from Government and UNDP	Government and UNDP
9:30am – 9:45am	LPAC: Background; Objective; Expected Outcomes	UNDP
9:25am – 10:00am	Presentation of the Project Document and GEF Approval Process  Questions on Answer Session (Q& A) on key components of Project (budget, log frame, monitoring and evaluation)	UNDP
10:00am – 10:15am	Morning Tea	
10:15am – 10:30am	Continuation of Q & A	
10:30 – 11:00am	Quality & Assurance (discussion based on Q & A)	UNDP
12:00pm – 12:30pm	Summary of Discussions Agreed Steps on Way Forward Way Closing Statements by Government and UNDP	Government and UNDP