Enhancing the resilience of tourism reliant communities to Climate Change risks project brief

**CONTEXT/BACKGROUND**

Tourism is the dominant sector of the Samoan economy contributing more than 20% of its GDP. Small to medium scaled tourism operations are mostly controlled by small beach *fale* (open hut) developments that are uniquely connected to the many small villages around the coastline of the two main islands of Upolu and Savaii.

The principle resource bases of tourism are the pristine beaches, coastal, lagoon and reef areas. Small scaled operators are reliant on goods and services related to agriculture, fisheries, food processing, construction, handicraft, transport, energy, water and waste management and cultural performance and village communities are reliant on the tourism operations for employment, income and capital.

There are indirect benefits as well through the extension of transport networks, upgrading of infrastructure and the provision of essential services. The value chains are therefore very strong and diverse.

Seventy percent of Samoa’s population live within the coastal strips with tourism operations mostly within 100 meters of the coastline. Being adjacent to the coast, many operators and reliant communities are exposed to the impacts of climate change induced extreme events and other long term incremental changes (sea-level rise, etc).

Increased vulnerability and reduced resilience to natural and human induced forces will increase due to climate change factors. Threats upon these small-scaled operations will detrimentally affect the viability and profitability of community value chains both directly and indirectly.

**PROJECT SUMMARY**

The objective of the project is to enhance the resilience of tourism-reliant communities to climate change risks. This will be achieved by integrating climate change into development policy and instruments, and investing in adaptation actions supporting tourism-reliant communities. These are priorities identified under Samoa’s National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA).

Resources will be used to establish financial support schemes and risk transfer mechanisms develop a sector-tailored early warning system and implement concrete adaptation measures in high priority tourism-reliant communities and tourism sites targeting the management of coastal infrastructure, water resources, shore line and tourism resources including recreational activities.

The expected project outcomes are;

1. **Climate change adaptation mainstreamed into tourism-related policy instruments and public-private partnerships** (Initial allocated budget USD 330,758): this project will revise planning processes, regulations and financial instruments relating to tourism operators in Samoa.
2. **Increased adaptive capacity to climate change and disaster risks of tourism-reliant communities** (Initial allocated budget USD 1,437,605): Implementation of Climate Change Adaptation measures in nationally demarcated Tourism Development Areas (TDAs)

**Linkages with Related Initiatives, Policies, and Frameworks**
The project will implement priority interventions in Samoa’s NAPA and therefore satisfying the criteria outlined in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Decision 7/CP.7 and GEF/C.28/18.

It also fits into the overall programmatic approach of the Government of Samoa to address climate change risks and adaptation as outlined in its Strategy for Development of Samoa (SDS), NAPA (2005), Second National Communications, National Climate Change Policy as well as the Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change 2006-2015.

**Internal and External Collaboration**
The Samoa Tourism Authority (STA) will serve as the executing agency for this project and will be working closely with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) as the lead technical agency for climate change-related policies. Government ministries who will also play a part in the project include the Ministry of Agriculture and Fishers (MAF), Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure (MWTI), Land Transport Authority (LTA), Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCS), Ministry of Finance (MOF), Samoa Hotel Association (SHA), Samoa Umbrella of NGOs (SUNGO).

To support the knowledge management activities of the project, academia also will be involved. CROP agencies (SPTO, SPREP, SPC, SOPAC, USP) will also be supporting the adaptation implementation and policy processes through their technical and sectoral mandates, expertise and country support programmes. Technical project documents will be communicated to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), serving as global platform for tourism policy and development matters.

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| EXPECTED RESULTS | • Management plans integrating climate risks are developed in 6 Tourism Development Areas involving 20 villages.  
• Technical guidelines developed on climate resilient beach tourism management practices  
• Recommendations developed to internalize climate change considerations into existing micro-finance, grant and loan schemes to the tourism sector and feasibility of a climate risk transfer (insurance) mechanism | • Concrete adaptation actions in the management of coastal infrastructure, water resources, shoreline and tourism recreational activities are implemented in 6 TDAs, involving at least 15 community-owned beach tourism operations, ensuring that both women and men participate in and benefit from these investments.  
• Coastal tourism operators are connected to Climate Early Warning and Information system  
• South-South transfer of tourism adaptation case studies between operators in Samoan TDAs, and counterparts in other SIDS |