

SUMMARY VERSION FOR PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

Annex 7. Stakeholder engagement plan

Prepared by: \

Project: Enhancing biodiversity considerations and effective protected area management to safeguard the Cook Islands integrated ecosystems and species	
UNDP PIMS: 6565	GEF Project ID: 10780

Content

1. DEFINITIONS	2
2. REGULATIONS & REQUIREMENTS OF THE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN	3
2.1 UNDP COMMITMENT TO STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	3
2.2. GEF GUIDELINES ON STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT:	4
2.3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT:	5
2.4. GUIDANCE FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:	5
3. SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT DURING PROJECT PREPARATION	5
3.1 STAKEHOLDER CONCERNS ANALYSIS	6
4. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT DURING PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION	11
4.1 PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN	11
4.2 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN	11
5. RESOURCES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	12
5.1 PROJECT ORGANIZATION	13
5.2 THE PROJECT COMMUNICATION PLAN	14
5.3 BIODIVERSITY AND HUMAN HEALTH	14
5.4 METHODS OF COMMUNICATING WITH STAKEHOLDERS	15
5.5 MAKING INFORMATION AVAILABLE	16
6. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE COOK ISLANDS AND THE FREE, PRIOR, INFORMED CONSENT PROCESS	17
6.1 Introduction	17
6.2 Description of Indigenous Peoples and applicable Legal Framework	17
6.3 Indigenous Knowledge and resource management	21
6.4 Potential Impacts	22
6.5 Procedures for risk screening, assessment and management	24
6.6 Participation, Consultation and the Free Prior Informed Consent Process	25
7. GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM	30
8. MONITORING AND REPORTING	34
8.1 REPORTING FORMAT	34
ANNEX 1: INTRODUCTORY LETTERS TO STAKEHOLDERS (IN ENGLISH AND CI MAORI)	35
ANNEX 2: ATTENDANCE SHEET FOR CONSULTATION MEETINGS	39
ANNEX 3: CIGOV COMMUNICATION POLICY MAY 2018	40
ANNEX 4: COOK ISLANDS NATIONAL POLICY TOOLKIT (PP18-21)	48

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) is designed to ensure effective engagement between various stakeholders throughout the lifecycle of the GEF7 project, and to ensure the incorporation of UNDP social and environmental safeguards and standards. The plan refers to the “people of the Cook Islands” but within this group a special focus is given to those who are acknowledged as the “tangata enua” the indigenous people of the Cook Islands who have their own language, history, and cultural heritage. This SEP also serves to meet UNDP SES 5 requirements, and includes the necessary elements that would constitute a free-standing Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework. The PIMS 6565 project will encourage opportunities for dialogues between government officials and representatives of local NGOs and environmental groups, as well as encourage active participation of our traditional leaders and indigenous communities. .

1. DEFINITIONS

Consultation: Consultation involves information exchanges among the government, the Implementing Agency, the project executing agencies, and other stakeholders. These consultations throughout the project cycle will help managers make informed choices about project activities. More important, it provides opportunities for communities and local groups to contribute to project design, implementation, and evaluation.

Stakeholders: are persons, groups, or institutions with an interest in the project or the ability to influence the project outcomes, either positively or negatively. They may be directly or indirectly affected by the project and may include target beneficiary groups, locally affected communities or individuals, national and local government authorities, civil society actors, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (both domestic and at times international), indigenous peoples, politicians, religious leaders, the academic community, private sector entities, workers organizations, A stakeholder analysis will identify who the key stakeholders are and what their “stake” or interest is in the project and how they may influence the outcomes of the project. They also can identify alliances and conflicts between stakeholders.

Stakeholder engagement: Stakeholder engagement is an overarching term that encompasses a range of activities and interactions with stakeholders throughout the project cycle. The SES defines stakeholder engagement as an ongoing process that may involve, to varying degrees, the following elements: • stakeholder analysis and planning; • disclosure and dissemination of information; • consultation and meaningful participation; • dispute resolution and grievance redress; • stakeholder involvement in monitoring and evaluation; • ongoing reporting to affected communities and other stakeholders. Stakeholder engagement involves more than just occasional consultations; it also seeks to involve beneficiaries and interested parties in decision-making processes.

Stakeholder participation: Where stakeholders collaboratively engage in the identification of project concepts and objectives, selection of sites, design and implementation of activities, and monitoring and evaluation of project outcomes. Developing strategies for incorporating stakeholder participation throughout the project cycle is particularly necessary in projects which have impacts on the incomes and livelihoods of local groups, e.g., women, elderly, youth, disabled.

FPIC: Free, Prior, Informed, Consent Process. Following UNDP SES requirements, no activities that may adversely affect indigenous peoples/communities, their lands, or cultural heritage will be permitted without explicit agreement of the potentially affected communities. The collective right to give or withhold consent applies to all project activities that may directly impact the lands, territories, resources, and livelihoods of indigenous peoples’ communities. Consent must be sought and granted or withheld in accordance with the unique decision-making processes of each community/household. From the preparatory stages of project conceptualization and design, and throughout the implementation and closure processes, mechanisms need to be identified and implemented to guarantee the meaningful, effective and informed participation of indigenous peoples on all matters that may affect them. Culturally appropriate consultation and FPIC will be ensured on any matters that may affect the indigenous peoples’ rights and interests, lands, territories, resources

Information Disclosure: Information disclosure here refers to the provision of timely, accessible information regarding the project and its potential social and environmental impacts to stakeholders in order to facilitate their meaningful, effective and informed participation in project design and implementation. The SES contain requirements for the disclosure of records of consultations, Stakeholder Engagement Plans, screening reports; draft and final social and environmental assessments and management plans; and any required social and environmental monitoring reports

Indigenous People: There is no universally accepted definition of indigenous peoples. Within the Pacific, each island nation consists of its own indigenous people who have their own history, language and cultural heritage and traditions. The Cook Islands MFEM ESS Framework defines the indigenous people and traditional local communities in the Cook Islands context as the ‘Tangata Enea’ or people with blood ties to any of the islands in the Cook Islands. This project will promote the aims of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and affirm the right of indigenous peoples to be consulted and to be part of any decision-making, having given their free, prior and informed consent to any matter that might impact on their rights as the Tangata Enea. Land rights in the Cook Islands is one aspect that is specific only to those who are identified as Tangata Enea and who can prove their genealogical entitlement and right to the ownership of land in the Cook Islands.

2. REGULATIONS & REQUIREMENTS OF THE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

2.1 UNDP COMMITMENT TO STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

UNDP is committed to meaningful, effective and informed stakeholder engagement in the design and implementation of all UNDP projects and ensures the incorporation of social and environmental standards and safeguards. Effective stakeholder engagement is a cornerstone to achieving national sustainable development. Government agencies (national and local), civil society actors and organizations, indigenous peoples (Tangata Eヌua in the Cook Islands), local communities, the private sector and other key stakeholders are crucial partners for advancing human rights-based development.

Effective stakeholder engagement is fundamental to attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and applying the principle of 'leave no one behind' in combatting inequality and ensuring equity and non-discrimination across all programming areas. Stakeholder engagement is critical to securing multi-stakeholder partnerships to advance the SDGs.

UNDP's commitment to stakeholder engagement arises from internal policies, procedures and strategy documents as well as key international human rights instruments, principles and numerous decisions of international bodies, particularly as they relate to the protection of citizens' rights related to freedom of expression and participation. For example:

- Article 19 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (guaranteeing freedom of expression and the right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas);
- Article 25 of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (guaranteeing the right of all citizens to participate in the conduct of public affairs);
- Article 5(c) of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racism (guaranteeing all the right to participate in public life without discrimination);
- Articles 3 and 29 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (affirming rights of persons with disabilities to full and effective participation in the conduct of public affairs);
- The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) further affirms the right of indigenous peoples to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, as well as to be consulted and to give their free, prior and informed consent to a variety of matters;

UNDP also follows the UN Statement of Common Understanding on Human Rights-Based Approaches to Development Cooperation which provides for: *Participation and Inclusion: Every person and all peoples are entitled to active, free and meaningful participation in, contribution to, and enjoyment of civil, economic, social, cultural and political development in which human rights and fundamental freedoms can be realized.*¹

Stakeholder engagement supports the development of strong, constructive, and responsive relationships that are critical for sound project design and implementation. Effective stakeholder engagement enhances project acceptance and ownership and strengthens the social and environmental sustainability and benefits of supported interventions. It is both a goal in itself – upholding the rights of citizens and others to participate in decisions that may affect them – as well as an effective means for achieving project outcomes, including those related to democratic governance, protecting the environment, promoting respect for human rights, and preventing and resolving conflict.

UNDP's **Social and Environmental Standards** (SES) underpin their commitment to mainstream social and environmental sustainability in our Programmes and Projects. The objectives of the standards are to: strengthen the quality of programming by ensuring a principled approach; maximize social and environmental opportunities and benefits; avoid adverse impacts to people and the environment; minimize, mitigate, and manage adverse impacts where avoidance is not possible; strengthen UNDP and partner capacities for managing social and environmental risks; and ensure full and effective stakeholder engagement, including through a mechanism to respond to complaints from project-affected people.

¹ UNDP SES Stakeholder Engagement gN_Final)Dec2020.pdf 2.1 Policy Basis pp2-3

Key UNDP SES stakeholder engagement requirements

- *Ensure meaningful, effective, informed participation of stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of UNDP programmes and projects, providing stakeholders opportunities to express their views at all points in the project decision-making process on matters that affect them (SES, Part C, paras. 18, 20)*
- *Conduct stakeholder analysis and engagement in a gender-responsive, culturally sensitive, non-discriminatory and inclusive manner, identifying potentially affected vulnerable and marginalized groups and providing them opportunities to participate (SES, Part C, para. 18)*
- *Develop appropriately-scaled Stakeholder Engagement Plans, with level and frequency of engagement reflecting the nature of the activity, magnitude of potential risks and adverse impacts, and concerns raised by affected communities (SES, Part C, para. 21).*
- *Meaningful, effective and informed consultation processes need to be free of charge and meet specified criteria, including free of intimidation and external manipulation; initiated early and iterative; inclusive; gender and age responsive; culturally appropriate and tailored to language preferences; and based on timely disclosure of relevant, accessible information regarding the project and its social and environmental risks and impacts (SES, Part C, para. 20)*
- *Include differentiated measures to allow effective participation of disadvantaged or vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities (SES, Part C, para. 20)*
- *Undertake measures to ensure effective stakeholder engagement occurs where conditions for inclusive participation are unfavourable (SES, Part C, para. 18)*
- *Document consultations and report them in accessible form to participants and the public (SES, Part C, paras. 20, 28)*
- *Ensure early and iterative meaningful stakeholder engagement throughout the assessment and management of potential social and environmental risks and impacts (SES, Part C, para. 16)*
- *Ensure that stakeholders who may be adversely affected by the project can communicate concerns and grievances through various entry points, including, when necessary, an effective project-level grievance mechanism, and also UNDP's Stakeholder Response Mechanism and Social and Environmental Compliance Unit (SES, Part C, paras. 23-26, 37)*
- *For projects that affect rights, lands, territories, resources, and traditional livelihoods of indigenous peoples, ensure meaningful consultations and free, prior informed consent (FPIC) (SES, Part C, para. 22; SES, Standard 6, para. 10)*
- *For projects that may involve physical or economic displacement, ensure activities are planned and implemented collaboratively with meaningful and informed participation of those affected (SES, Standard 5)*
- *Provide ongoing reporting to affected communities and individuals for projects with significant adverse social and environmental impacts (SES, Part C, para. 34)*
- *Seek to identify, reduce and address the risk of retaliation and reprisals against people who may seek information on and participation in project activities, express concerns and/or access project-level grievance redress processes/mechanisms or UNDP's Stakeholder Response Mechanism or Social and Environmental Compliance Unit (SES, Part C, para. 27)*

Note: Refer to full notes in SES Part C, UNDP Social and Environmental Standards_2019 UPDATE.pdf²

2.2. GEF GUIDELINES ON STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT:

GEF funded projects are required to meet best international practice and specifically the requirements for stakeholder engagement and public consultations. In the Cook Islands, consultation meetings were undertaken in accordance with the GEF Policy on Public Involvement in GEF Projects and including the **Free Prior Informed Consent** (FPIC) process to ensure agreement between the project team and the communities being consulted about being open and transparent and encouraging free and open expression of community concerns in relation to the project aims. The aim of the FPIC is to create formal agreements between the implementing agencies and the project implementation activity teams.

Information about project stakeholder engagement programme and activities was shared early in the preparation of the PPG visits to promote better awareness and understanding of the project's strategies, policies and operations. The project would therefore be better able to:

- Identify people or communities that are or could be affected by the project as well as other interested parties;
- Ensure that such stakeholders are appropriately engaged on environmental and social issues that could potentially affect them, through a process of information disclosure and meaningful consultation; and

² <https://www.undp.org/publications/undp-social-and-environmental-standards> Section C_pp56-66

- Maintain a constructive relationship with stakeholders on an on-going basis through meaningful engagement during project implementation.

Stakeholder consultations are an on-going process that should take place during the project life necessary to ensure that stakeholders are informed about environmental and social consequences of the project implementation and ensure the opportunity for feedback. A communication plan will ensure that there is frequent communication between the implementing agencies and communities about progress of implementation activities and achieving project goals that have been incorporated in collaboration with community involvement.

2.3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT:

The project stakeholder engagement plan, following UNDP and GEF stakeholder engagement policies and guidelines, encourages adherence to the following guiding principles:

- Promoting an inclusive and diverse stakeholder engagement with a tailored approach for constructive, responsive, accountable, and transparent stakeholder engagement.
- Engaging stakeholders early on (in the designing stage) and throughout project implementation for ensuring fair, balanced, and inclusive participation in project governance and operation
- Ensuring clear and transparent communication with relevant stakeholders.
- Ensuring project's commitment for effective and meaningful stakeholder engagement by allocating sufficient budgetary resources.
- Respect for socio-cultural values and ethics of diverse stakeholder as one of the core principles of the engagement approach for ensuring effective participation and better results.
- Developing skills and capacities of the stakeholders through project activities for sustaining the project initiatives and results.
- Adapting collaborative approaches for safeguarding interests and concerns of all the stakeholders.

2.4. GUIDANCE FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:

The Central Policy and Planning Office at the Office of the Prime Minister, the Office of the Public Service Commission and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development provide government guidance for inter-governmental communication as well as when internal and external personnel are dealing with stakeholders during the development of national policy.

These resources are attached within the set of annexed CIGOV documents at the end of this report.

1. CIGOV Communication Policy May 2018
2. CI National Policy Toolkit April 2017 (with the section on Stakeholder Engagement pp18-21)
3. MFEM Social and Environment Safeguards (SES) Standards Policy 2018
4. MFEM Gender Policy 2018

3. SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT DURING PROJECT PREPARATION

In total, 44 stakeholder meetings were held over the period of 14 January to 01 March 2022. This included two Inception Workshops – one for members of the community and one for the four Government departments involved in this project (NES, Agriculture, Tourism and Infrastructure Cook Islands). An analysis of the participation revealed 43% Female, 69% Indigenous Cook Islanders, 5% Traditional Leaders, 24% Community and 71% Government participants. Stakeholder groups and individuals included:

Government departments

– Te Tatou Vai, National Environment Service (including their Policy and Legal sections, and Aitutaki Office), Pa

Enua Administration, Agriculture, Infrastructure Cook Islands, Tourism, Aitutaki Island Council and MPs, Atiu Island Council, MFEM Development Coordination Division, OPM Climate Change, National Heritage Trust.

Indigenous Groups

- House of Ariki, Koutu Nui, Korero O Te Orau.

Landowner Groups

- Manuae Landowners Committee, Takitumu Conservation Area, Takutea Landowners (who attended the Atiu Island Council Zoom call)

Community Environmental Groups

- (Aitutaki) Vainetini, and Aitutaki Conservation Trust; Avana-Muri Community Group, Te Ipukarea Society, Avatiu Community, Puna RAPPa Fishers and Farmers, Te Vai Ora Maori, Muri Environment Care.

Individual Environmentalists

- xxxxxx

Records of the stakeholder consultations conducted during the project preparation phase are compiled in **Annex 8** to the Project Document.

3.1 STAKEHOLDER CONCERNS ANALYSIS

The project will aim to collect and analyse stakeholder expectations and concerns as well as to taking appropriate responsive measures throughout the life of the project in order to ensure that there is enough support for identified project activities.

Key stakeholders, their roles and potential involvement in the project are described below.

Stakeholders	Expected role in the project
Implementing Partner (Executing Agency)	
National Environment Service (NES)	NES is the central government agency mandated with protecting, managing and conserving the environment of Cook Islands, on behalf of, and for the benefit of, present and future Cook Islanders. One of the core functions of NES under the Environment Act 2003 is to 'protect, conserve, and manage the environment to ensure the sustainable use of natural resources'. NES is responsible for coordination and implementation of GEF projects in the Cook Islands. NES will house the GEF-7 Project Management Unit (PMU), which is responsible for reporting to UNDP and GEF, and takes responsibility for financial management, oversight, and monitoring of the project The NES Director (the GEF Operational Focal Point for the Cook Islands) will be the National Project Director, having overall responsibility of the project, and will serve as the executive function on the Project Board, chairing the Project Board meetings. NES is also one of the project's governmental co-financing partners.
GEF Agency	
UNDP	The UNDP will serve as the GEF Agency for the project, with the Resident Representative of the Samoa Multi-Country Office serving as Development Partner function on the Project Board, ensuring global environmental benefits are generated as planned. The UNDP will also deliver project assurance, overseeing the effective and efficient implementation of the project, and provide limited execution support services, e.g., procure international consultants. UNDP is one of the project's co-financing partners.
Landowners and local communities	
Landowners and local communities	Landowners and local communities in the target sites are among the primary project beneficiaries and stakeholders. Landowners are a vital element of communities targeted by project and require strong engagement, consultation and information sharing. This applies especially for Manuae, Takutea, Takitumu and the proposed community conserved area (Cloud Forest).
Takitumu Conservation Area Coordinating Committee	The TCA Coordinating Committee consists of the heads of the xxxxxxxx families plus xxxx who is their manager and who represents their interests as the landowners of the area of

Stakeholders	Expected role in the project
	land they designated to protect as the Takitumu Conservation Area. xxxxx works as a volunteer and tour guide, carrying out conservation work as required with the help of other volunteers or the occasional overseas conservation worker – maintaining the tracks and buildings, counting birds and rat-baiting. Income to sponsor these activities comes from fundraising, grants and guiding for tourists. While some of the lower hillside is being leased for orange plots the landowners are adamantly opposed to any housing development that might impact negatively on the conservation of the native trees and birds found on the reserve.
Key partner agencies	
Ministry of Agriculture (MOA)	<p>The principal function of MOA is to promote and encourage the development of all phases of agricultural, pastoral, and horticultural industries. MOA has extended its functions to include strengthening household and national food security and nutrition, research and development into crop and tree species, and improved agricultural production methods, including livestock, as well as improving biosecurity to cope with border protection challenges. MOA's mandate for SLM is specific to land areas utilised for agricultural production.</p> <p>MOA will have a critical role in Component 1 to ensure that agri-ecosystems around priority areas such as streams, wetlands and PAs are sustainably managed to minimize source-to-sea/ridge-to-reef impacts.</p> <p>MOA will be a member of the Project Board and is one of the project's co-financing partners.</p>
Cook Islands Tourism (CIT)	<p>CIT promotes tourism in the country and accredits tourism-related businesses (accommodation, restaurants, tour operators, etc.). CIT's primary environmental role is to ensure that tourism activities do not degrade the natural environment. The agency aims to achieve this by marketing the natural environment and PAs, highlighting the importance of biodiversity for tourism; promoting ecotourism experiences; and developing a Tourism Charter to better regulate the industry and apply environmental standards. CIT leads progress towards the national Sustainable Tourism Development Policy Framework.</p> <p>CIT will be closely engaged in Component 1 and 3 activities, including the intersectoral catchment management plans, implementation of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy, facilitating involvement of the private sector, participating in capacity building activities, and involved in project communications and knowledge management.</p> <p>CIT will be a member of the Project Board and is one of the project's co-financing partners.</p>
Infrastructure Cook Islands (ICI)	<p>ICI is responsible for the majority of the Government capital infrastructure projects across the Cook Islands, and also includes some regulatory responsibilities and projects. ICI works with donor partners, Island Governments, other Government departments, the private sector and the community to implement activities and projects and carry out operations and maintenance of public infrastructure assets it is responsible for and infrastructure projects in the Pa Enua. ICI is largely responsible for controlling erosion and sedimentation from source to sea through technical advice and design and is involved in EIA processes regarding environmental standards (cited in the Building Code 2019) to reduce negative impacts of development. ICI supports private sector training to increase understanding and awareness of environmental considerations and best practices.</p> <p>ICI will be closely engaged in Component 1 and 3 activities, including the intersectoral catchment management plans (e.g., promoting green engineering to safeguard riparian zones, lagoons and PAs from erosion and sedimentation impacts), facilitating involvement of the private sector, participating in capacity building activities, and involved in project communications and knowledge management</p> <p>ICI will be a member of the Project Board and is one of the project's co-financing partners.</p>
Other governmental and public entities	
Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) Development Coordination Division (DCD) of the MFEM	<p>MFEM is the central agency in the Cook Islands that is responsible for advising the Government in financial and economic issues. MFEM requires government to produce statements of economic policy; confirmation of adherence to fiscal disciplines prescribed under the MFEM Act; budget policy statements; economic and fiscal forecasts and updates; financial management information and comprehensive annual reports. Within the GEF-7 project, MFEM will be the financial intermediary between UNDP as the GEF Implementing Agency and the NES as the GEF Executing Agency.</p> <p>DCD will provide technical support to the project team, including alignment of multiple project objectives with national priorities. DCD oversees all ODA (official development</p>

Stakeholders	Expected role in the project
	assistance) to ensure coordination of all programmes, projects, activities are aligned to our national sustainable development goals. MFEM-DCD will be a member of the Project Board.
Office of the Prime Minister (OPM)	OPM Central Policy & Planning Division is responsible for development, monitoring and reporting against the National Sustainable Development Plan. OPM is home to the National Research Council, which approves international research permits including those related to biodiversity. OPM also houses the Coordination Office (MMCO) of Marae Moana (Cook Islands Marine Park), and the Climate Change Cook Islands office (CCCI). The OPM will provide oversight, tracking and reporting on project implementation Identifying and facilitating opportunities for co-financing and sharing lessons learned.
Climate Change Cook Islands (CCCI)	CCCI is a division within the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). It has an oversight role of all climate change activities to ensure co-ordination of the multi-sectoral approach to climate change. The co-ordination role ensures alignment of the various activities with the Cook Islands national goals. The CCCI Office also makes sure that there is no duplication and facilitates activities for issues that may not have been addressed.
National Biodiversity Steering Committee (NBSC)	The NBSC was established specifically as the Project Steering Committee for GEF-5 R2R project. It includes heads of ministries, NGOs and traditional leader representatives, meets quarterly and also provides a platform to discuss other national biodiversity matters, some of which directly relate to the project. The NBSC will be available to operate as a technical advisory panel to the GEF-7 project.
Ministry of Marine Resources (MMR)	MMR is the leading agency for marine resource management. MMR's role includes science and research, monitoring, advisory, consultative, and regulatory activities. Significantly for this project, MMR undertakes regular water quality monitoring at the mouths of major waterways on Rarotonga and Aitutaki. MMR will provide <i>ad hoc</i> support, as required, e.g., to monitor changes in water quality at selected sites resulting from project interventions, and to deliver technical advice on marine species and ecosystems.
Natural Heritage Trust (NHT)	NHT is a partner agency to NES and assists the NES and other agencies including, but not limited to MMR, MOA, MM, and TIS, with biodiversity related matters and biodiversity outreach programmes. The NHT collects and integrates scientific and traditional information on Cook Islands flora and fauna and has a database available to the general public. The NHT will provide technical support to the execution of project activities and participate in the development operationalization of the NEIS.
Ministry of Cultural Development (MOCD)	MOCD is responsible for the protection, preservation and perpetuation of all forms of Cook Islands culture, such as language, arts, crafts, historic sites, traditional knowledge. MOCD supports the House of Ariki in project activities, with technical and financial resources, knowledge and liaison with island communities and leaders.
Crown Law Office (CLO)	CLO are responsible for reviewing and providing legal advice on any legislative proposals in the Cook Islands. Any work to strengthen SLM and PA governance systems through regulations and other legislative instruments will involve input and review from CLO.
Tō Tātou Vai (TTV)	TTV is responsible to provide potable drinking water as a public service for the people of Rarotonga and Aitutaki. TTV manages the water catchments in the montane areas of Rarotonga and is establishing catchment committees representing landowners, <i>Aronga Mana</i> (traditional leaders) and community members for input into this management.
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration (MFAI)	MFAI is the GEF Political Focal Point (PFP), responsible for coordination and approval of GEF projects in the Cook Islands, as well as showcasing Cook Islands' project successes and demonstrating its commitments to environmental conservation and safeguards on national, regional and international platforms. MAFI will provide political oversight of this GEF-7 project.
Aronga mana (Traditional leaders)	
House of Ariki (HOA)	HOA is a constitutional and statutory agency of the Cook Islands that comprises all principal Indigenous paramount Ariki (High Chiefs) from the nation's 24 tribes. Given the strong traditional land tenure system, HOA exercises significant influence over land management, including traditional conservation environmental management practices. Given the strong traditional land tenure system, their support for landowner and community conservation areas is critical.

Stakeholders	Expected role in the project
	HOA is highly respected and will be key to awareness raising in their communities and resolving any conflicts. As such, HOA may be represented on the sub-committee of the project level grievance redress mechanism.
Island Governments / Councils	
Island Governments / Councils	Island Governments (or Councils) are responsible for administration on their respective islands as mandated by the Island Government Act 2012-2013. The Island Governments also work in collaboration with each Island Environment Authority (apart from Rarotonga) on environmental management issues. They will be closely engaged in development of Island Environmental Management Plans (IEMPs) under Output 1.3, as well as in project capacity building activities, communications, and knowledge management.
Non-governmental organizations	
Te Ipukarea Society (TIS)	Environmental NGO with a wide remit, primarily as a government watchdog: advocates reduction of chemical pollutants, waste management and recycling, and conservation and restoration of biodiversity. Project implementation includes successful initiatives include eradication of rats on Suvarrow (only 1 islet left to complete in June 2022) in collaboration with BirdLife International; "Save Our Suvarrow" campaign; and key species assessments. Has an anticipated GEF-7 role in local capacity building, public awareness and invasive species eradication.
Kōrero o te 'Ōrau (KOTO)	Environmental and social NGO focused on improving the well-being of indigenous Cook Islanders and their environment, with focal areas on research, youth involvement, traditional knowledge, education and awareness. Has an anticipated GEF-7 role in local capacity building, public awareness and implementation of project activities, in particular in Rarotonga's Takuvaie catchment.
Red Cross	The local Red Cross office coordinates the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) in the Cook Islands.
Takitumu Growers Association (TGA)	TGA promotes organic agriculture among local farmers in Rarotonga. Potential technical agency to support local activities on sustainable agriculture under Outcome 2.
Natura Kuki Airani (NKA)	Natura Kuki Airani (NKA) is the active focal point for organics in the Cook Islands. It is licensed to certify organic crops, livestock, and secondary products (e.g., handicrafts, processed foods), through a Participatory Guarantee System (PGS). Production and processing methods are certified to the (Pacific) regional Pacific Organic Standard, managed by the Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community (PoetCom) under the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). Products certified by NKA can be labelled with the Organic Pasifika mark.
Aitutaki Conservation Trust (ACT)	Environmental NGO based in Aitutaki. Previously involved in project conservation activities and well positioned for further project activities in Aitutaki, including education and awareness.
Au Vaine	Local CSO. Opportunities on the project to introduce best practices to restore riparian zones in <i>Pa Enua</i> (Outer Islands), with inclusion of women (Components 1 and 3).
Academic and International Non-profit Organisations	
University of Newcastle Australia (UON)	UON is a project responsible party, primarily responsible for delivering Output 2.1 on catchment audits of the four priority catchments in Rarotonga. UON will engage with local stakeholders, delivering learning-by-doing capacity building and advising on other project activities, and helping to facilitate women's participation in natural resource management through increased enrolment in science, technology, engineering and mathematics programmes.
University of South Pacific (USP)	The USP Campus in the Cook Islands provides tertiary education, promoting Pacific learning and innovation for sustainable development.
Cook Islands Tertiary Training Institute (CITTI)	CITTI is the vocational training centre of the Cook Islands, delivering courses in business, tourism and hospitality, and other trades.
Seacology	Seacology is a non-profit charitable organisation. Seacology's mission is to protect threatened island ecosystems all over the world, working directly with communities, helping them to preserve their cultures and improve their lives while saving precious island habitats.

During the community consultations, the PPG Team identified the following interests and concerns of the key stakeholder groups as presented in table below.

Key stakeholder expectations and concern analysis

Stakeholder group	Key expectations	Key concerns	Recommendations
National and Islands governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Project activities will increase community awareness and subsequent responsiveness to biodiversity conservation and land management practices *Island governments get an opportunity to convey their concerns and interests *Improved collection of relevant data and quality of reporting. *Improved ability of government agencies to work together for common goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Environmental deterioration *Budgetary constraints *Weather and covid constraints impinged on outer island consultation visits *Actual time spent with Island Councils did not achieve real project inputs *The project not reflecting the priorities of Island Councils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *A second PPG visit to Aitutaki and Atiu Island councils *Establish clear and effective channels of communication with government agencies and Island Councils *Ensure that less-resourced agencies and Island Councils are able to fully participate in project planning and implementation, especially in the Pa Enua.
Vulnerable groups (women, children, elderly, disabled)	To be identified/analysed and given more opportunity to interact with project and to air their concerns	Not being given chance to participate in the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that there is clear communication with these groups and project impacts on marginalised groups if any are identified and addressed Create opportunities for involvement
NGOs and other Community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Improvements in the quality of the environment *Meaningful involvement in the identification, design and implementation of funded initiatives. *To be kept informed about the activities and outcomes of the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Transparency of the decision-making and communication processes. *Resources being spent on initiatives that do not lead to improvements in the environment, or which do not reflect community priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Ensure there is free access for information about the project to various groups whenever they request for it. *Create opportunities for meaningful involvement at all stages of the project cycle. *Ensure that all project activities and outcomes are reported back to communities in an appropriate manner.
PMU and Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project implementation as planned Regular communication and support from MCO 	Project failure / closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue with dialogue and consultations Communicate information and expectations early in the process Establish incentives.

4. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT DURING PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

In order to ensure inclusive participation and consultation, the following stakeholders have been identified for consultation on an on-going basis. The list includes the identified social groups and persons that are associated with the project in different ways at all stages.

Stakeholders have been identified in accordance with the following classifications as shown below.

Stakeholders who will be affected, directly or indirectly, by the outcomes of the project implementation	Stakeholders who will participate in the Project implementation	Stakeholders able to influence and decide on the Project implementation or to use project outcomes for decision making
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The project will involve local indigenous communities on Rarotonga, Aitutaki and Atiu.• Inhabitants associated with or living around protected areas or catchment areas• Vulnerable social groups (the elderly, the disabled, women and children)• NGOS - Non-governmental organisations• Representatives of private sector organisations• Media – Paper, radio and TV Journalists and reporters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GEF Secretariat• UNDP MCO Samoa• UNDP National Support Person• NES PMU• GEF7 Project Steering Group• CI Complaints Unit (GRM)• Island Councils• Project Implementers• Consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministers and senior government officials in line ministries such as<ul style="list-style-type: none">- NES,- Agriculture,- Infrastructure,- MFEM/DCD,- Tourism.- Internal Affairs,- MMR, and other relevant government agencies and institutions• Legal experts and law enforcement agents

4.2 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Purpose and Goals:

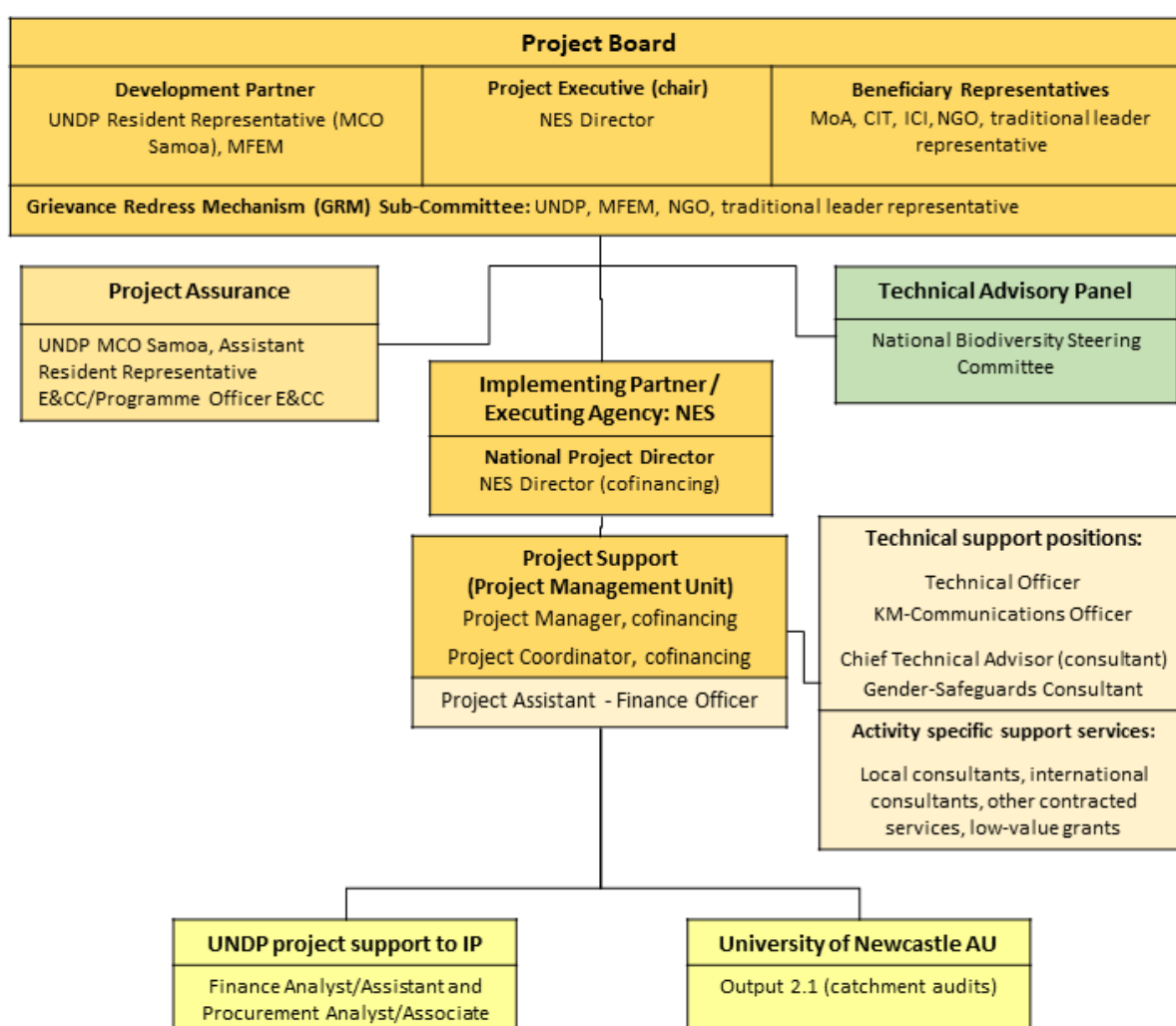
The purpose and goals of the stakeholder engagement plan are summarized below.

- a. Adding value to project activities.
- b. Ensuring accessibility of information, by all stakeholders, including the Ariki and Koutu Nui (traditional leaders) and Tangata Enea (indigenous Cook Island communities), to inform sense-making processes.
- c. Encouraging adherence to values of transparency, trust, equity, and fairness including the introduction of the Free, Prior and Informed Consent when seeking the participation in any decision-making activities by the Ariki, Koutu Nui and Tangata Enea.
- d. Promoting responsiveness to identified needs and the highest ethical standards and respects for differing priorities and values.
- e. Ensuring local ownership, including the involvement of the Ariki, Koutu Nui and Tangata Enea, and the creation of outputs that are relevant and of benefit to local communities and organizations.
- f. Involving different types of stakeholder groups, including the Ariki, Koutu Nui and Tangata Enea in participation processes and benefit distribution, including but not limited to engagement, capacity building, employment, skills transfer, sharing of knowledge and the increase of cultural awareness.
- g. Developing mechanisms to manage conflicts in the public interest.
- h. Being flexible to adapt to changing circumstances.
- i. Fostering well-coordinated and planned implementation.
- j. Generating, and responding to, feedback.

Stakeholder group	Engagement method	Materials to be used	Location	Responsible person/s	Regularity
All external stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Inform on the project implementation status, * collect opinions and concerns during public meetings or other contacts. *Register, analyse and address grievances or comments submitted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website Presentations Progress Reports Brochures Leaflets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NES PMU Office Project sites Village halls for consultation meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PMU Manager UNDP National Support 	Annually
Government ministries and agencies	*Organise training meetings on data collection and sharing	*Data sharing and reporting protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NES PMU Office Government offices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PMU Team NES Communications Team 	Annually during implementation
Island Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Schedule meetings of reporting obligations Free, prior, Informed Consent (FPIC) process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentations Reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NES PMU Office Island Council Offices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PMU Manager Mayor or EO of each Island Council 	Quarterly
Indigenous and local communities, NGOs, and vulnerable groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Consultation meetings *FPIC process *Seminars on biodiversity conservation, ra'ui and land management of protected areas *Grievance redress avenues and feedback *Targeted group meetings, as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveys, questionnaires Public grievance forms 	Village community centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project activity leads Stakeholder liaison officers 	Quarterly
PMU & Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Keep Project Stakeholders informed of project activity plans and progress, as well as actual impacts on local communities *Inform project executing agencies of any development issues, successes, and difficulties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website updates Presentations Regular newsletters to stakeholders and communities Brochures and leaflets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PMU Office Project site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project implementation teams 	Monthly
Project implementers/ consultants	Inform via direct meetings and reporting	Monitoring and evaluation system implemented	PMU Office	PMU Manager	Monthly

5. RESOURCES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 PROJECT ORGANIZATION



The PMU, led by the Project Manager, will be responsible for implementation of the stakeholder engagement plan and for installing adaptive management measures as deemed relevant based on progress made on project activities. The Project Board will be responsible for providing strategic guidance during implementation.

Stakeholder Engagement Roles and Responsibilities

Position / Function	Roles and Responsibilities
National Project Director	The National Project Director (NPD) will have overall responsibility for the implementation of the project, and facilitate engagement with other high-level decision-making stakeholders.
Project Manager	The Project Manager will have responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the project, be tasked with the important role of ensuring that stakeholders are engaged according to plan, oversee the procurement and implementation of project activities and be accountable that stakeholder engagement is inclusive and according to plan.
Project Board	The Project Board will provide strategic oversight to the project, ensuring that the interests of all stakeholders are considered, including stakeholder engagement objectives.
Chief Technical Advisor	The Chief Technical Advisor will support the Project Manager with stakeholder engagement among national and local level governmental entities.
Gender-Safeguards Consultant	The Gender-Safeguards consultant will monitor progress in implementation of the stakeholder engagement plan, gender action plan, and shall ensure compliance with

Position / Function	Roles and Responsibilities
	UNDP social and environmental standards, including regularly reviewing and updating the social and environmental screening procedure (SESP).

Substantial resources have been allocated in the project budget for stakeholder engagement, including USD 156,000 for trainings, workshops, and conferences.

5.2 THE PROJECT COMMUNICATION PLAN

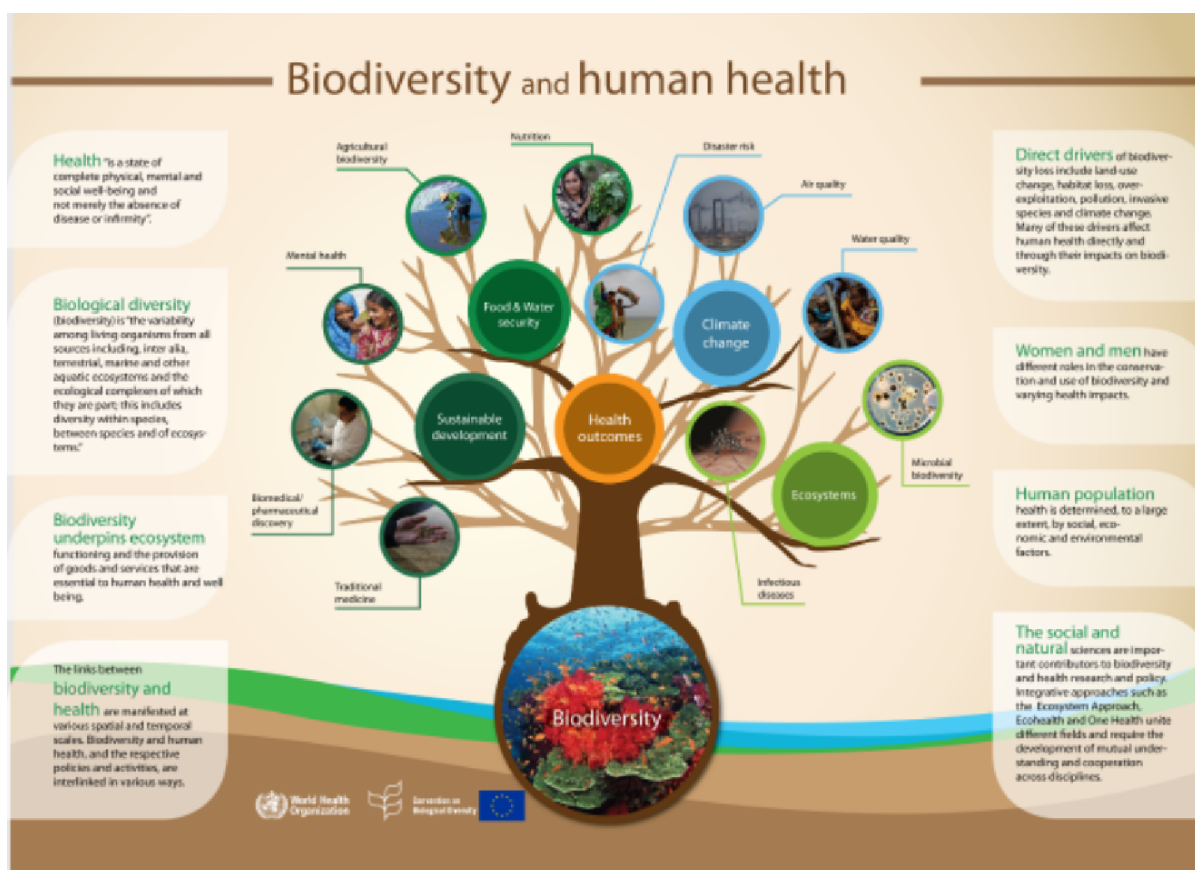
The GEF7 Project Knowledge management and Communications Plan will be finalized at project inception, to increase visibility and understanding of the GEF7 project goal “Enhancing Biodiversity Considerations and Effective Protected Area Management to Safeguard the Cook Islands Integrated Ecosystems and Species”, its objective and key components, as well as to help to mobilize government and community participation and support for its effective implementation. Activities have been developed to support key communication objectives.

1. Increase knowledge and understanding of the Conservation of Biodiversity and Protected areas (“the project”), and their relationships to the Sustainable Development Goals, among stakeholders.
2. Strengthen networking and collaboration between project stakeholders and other relevant groups at the country level
3. Strengthen communications within the Cook Islands about Biodiversity Conservation and Protected Areas

The following are further expectations from investments in communications by the project:

- Communication will provide decision-makers with information about the expected outcomes of national BD conservation projects and their benefits, thereby enabling them to make informed decisions.
- Communication will increase understanding among government authorities involved in dialogue processes relating to BD conservation within catchments and other protected areas.
- Communication will increase awareness and understanding of the rights, roles, responsibilities, and opportunities of stakeholders in relation to land ownership versus land management and to prepare and encourage them to be adequately involved in the design as well as the implementation process.
- Communication can encourage regional and national institutions to fund implementation of certain components of the project
- Communication will facilitate collaborations, dialogues, partnerships and consultations by increasing networking opportunities among government and community stakeholders.

5.3 BIODIVERSITY AND HUMAN HEALTH



5.4 METHODS OF COMMUNICATING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

The project will engage or communicate with various identified stakeholders as outlined below:

Stakeholder groups	Means of engagement	Rules for Communication
Stakeholders to be affected, directly or indirectly, by the outcomes of the Project implementation	Project website (NIES) Brochures and national reports on GEF7 activities on-island	Communication to be done by persons authorised to communicate. Public communication can be done through national reporting protocols (PMU or UNDP National Support) Refer to "Cultural Etiquette in the Pacific – Cook Islands)
Internal stakeholders who are involved in project implementation	Meetings, exchange of minutes, emails and official letters	In accordance with the rules for internal communication, meetings and the grievance mechanism for project participants and communities
Particularly vulnerable social groups (women, children, marginalised groups)	Consultation meetings – providing information, exchange of documentation and correspondence associated with projects	In accordance with the rules for internal communication, and the accepted custom. Direct communication or indirectly through announcements issued to the public
External stakeholders who participate in the Project implementation	Exchange of correspondence, meetings, training courses, project activity design supervision Data collection templates and procedures	In accordance with laid down government procedures for information exchange (Te Tarai Vaka templates)

Island Councils	Progress reporting, project decisions and data usage decisions Official letters	In accordance with administrative procedure requirements
Government Ministries	Official letter	In accordance with administrative procedure requirements
NGOs and interested individuals	Direct meetings Official letters	During public meetings and ad hoc as required

5.5 MAKING INFORMATION AVAILABLE

The project will endeavour to make information available to the public to allow stakeholders to get to know and understand both the environmental and social risks and impacts associated with the project, as well as opportunities provided by the project. This will enable them to utilise the project data to make informed decision in areas associated with biodiversity conservation and land management of protected areas.

On an ongoing basis, the project will have a routine disclosure and consultation on the project's environmental and socio-economic performance including grievances and other new emerging issues on the project. The disclosures will be done to all stakeholders through project briefs or annual reporting through brochures. While providing this disclosure, the project will also provide:

- Regular updates on the Project achievements and how its contributing to enhancing transparency in reporting for GEF7 implementation on Rarotonga, Aitutaki and Atiu.
- An overview of the stakeholder engagement process and how affected parties can participate and provide feedback through meeting or other avenues;
- Project impacts on development and how the government is using the project data to enhance the livelihoods of the people at the same time conserve the biodiversity of our environment as well as enhance land management practices of protected areas including ra'ui.

6. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE COOK ISLANDS AND THE FREE, PRIOR, INFORMED CONSENT PROCESS

The project has been screened during the PPG stage (via the conduct of the SESP), and it has been determined that UNDP Standard 6 will be triggered. Given that the majority of the population in the Cook Islands identifies as Indigenous Maori, a freestanding IPPF has not been developed. Rather the requirements (as stipulated in UNDP SES 6 and its accompanying Guidance Note) are embedded/included in this Stakeholder Engagement plan.

6.1 Introduction

Cook Islanders regard themselves as Maori (not to be confused with the Maori of Aotearoa, New Zealand). Their indigenous culture and language has similarities to other East Polynesian peoples such as the Aotearoa Maori, Tahitian Ma'ohi and Hawai'ian Maoli. The exceptions to this close relationship with East Polynesia are Pukapuka and Nassau islands whose inhabitants have cultural affinities with Samoa and Tokelau (Crocombe & Crocombe 2003: 11). Maori is also the name of the indigenous languages of the Cook Islands.

Although commonly grouped together under the collective term "Cook Islanders", there are actually noticeable cultural and linguistic differences between the native people of the islands in the archipelago. Cook Islanders, like all other Polynesian peoples once lived self-subsistence lifestyles which typically consisted of the growing of root crops such as taro, harvesting of breadfruit and coconuts and fishing in the lagoons or ocean (Crocombe, 1964). The introduction of European foods and non-perishables has led to a decrease in self-subsistence growing amongst Cook Islanders. Cook Islanders place a high importance on extended family relationships.

Traditionally the extended family (kopu tangata) would work together for the benefit of the group through activities such as planting crops. Today the kopu tangata remains the fundamental social unit where individuals may seek support, and family members regularly travel (often overseas) to reunite for ceremonial occasions such as significant birthdays, marriages, deaths and unveilings. Family reunions are a new practice which is now common amongst large families, having emerged as a result of families being split up between various countries as a result of migration (Ama 2003: 125). Cook Islanders often have limited career opportunities to work towards on their home islands, particularly on the outer islands. The attractions of overseas destinations as told in stories from family members are often alluring enough to cause Cook Islanders to emigrate.³

6.2 Description of Indigenous Peoples and applicable Legal Framework

Indigenous Communities within the Project's Scope

Indigenous peoples and traditional local communities in the Cook Islands context refers to the 'tangata enua' or people with blood ties to any of the islands in the Cook Islands. Land rights and land ownership are a key feature of this project with regard to ownership of protected areas. This is a significant issue because land can only be owned by the Tangata Enea and ownership must be proven in a court law showing a person's genealogical connection to any land under discussion. MFEM Environment and Social Safeguards Standard 7 (ESSS7) supports projects that enhance opportunities for the Tangata Enea (indigenous people of the Cook Islands) as well as the Ariki and Koutu Nui (traditional leaders) to participate in, and benefit from, the development process in ways that do not threaten their unique cultural identities and well-being. The standard recognises that all indigenous peoples and traditional local communities have distinct identities and aspirations and that the roles of men and women in these cultures or traditional local communities may often need special consideration. Project activities should create opportunities for the indigenous peoples and traditional local communities of the Cook Islands to participate in, and benefit from being able to play an active and meaningful role as partners in development. This project will aim to recognise, respect and preserve the culture, knowledge and practices of our Tangata Enea and to provide them with the opportunity to adapt to changing conditions in a manner and timeframe that is acceptable to them.

³ Kokaua Liam, 2015. Excerpts from a B.A dissertation "Causes and effects of depopulation in the Cook Islands and possibilities for return migration. Okianga ki te Ipukarea." Auckland University.

The purpose of the involvement of our indigenous communities will be to promote sustainable benefits and opportunities that are accessible, culturally appropriate and inclusive. The UN standard expects that development process factors must fully respect human rights, dignity, aspirations, identity, culture and natural resource-based livelihoods of our indigenous people.⁴

The standard also recognises the importance of the historical background and cultural heritage of indigenous peoples, especially as the people of the Cook Islands identify strongly with their cultural heritage as reflections and expressions of their constantly evolving values beliefs knowledge and traditions. The project will ensure that this standard continues to protect the cultural heritage of the Cook Islands from any adverse impacts of project activities, and to support its preservation. The cultural heritage of the Tangata Enea is regarded as an integral aspect of the sustainable development of the Indigenous people of the Cook Islands.

Leadership Structure:

Crocombe's doctoral thesis (1964) provides much of the following information on hierarchical leadership structure of Māori society. After their arrival, Tangi'ia and Karika were made ariki (paramount chiefs) on Rarotonga, and they joined some of the pre-existing ariki on the island, such as Kainuku Ariki who was already established in the south-east quadrant. Each of the warriors that had travelled on Tangi'ia and Karika's canoes were made a mata'iaipo (sub-chief) and the island was divided into numerous tapere (sub-districts) that were allocated to a governing mata'iaipo and their matakeinanga (a local group based on a lineage). Rangatira (another set of sub-chiefs) were gradually appointed in later history, normally for younger brothers of ariki or for special circumstances such as prominent new arrivals to the island.

Altogether, the holders of these three titles formed a body termed the Aronga Mana (people of authority), and it was the Aronga Mana who were responsible for setting the tapu (that which is sacred, forbidden), noa (free of tapu), and rā'ui (temporal or spatial prohibitions on resource harvesting) for management of natural resources and to protect from spiritual contamination.



Map of Rarotonga displaying official names of Districts and Tapere.⁵

⁴ Ministry of Finance and Economic Management. (MFEM) Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework. ESSS7 (p71-75; ESSS8 (p76-79).

⁵ Compiled by the Survey Department, Ministry of Justice, Rarotonga, Cook Islands (2017)

The tapere mentioned above were mapped out into wedge-shaped areas which run from the mountain peaks to the fringes of the coastal reef. They allowed each lineage access to the trees and other products of the mountain soils, and every segment of the land was identified with a particular lineage. While initially governed by mata'iaipo, this right was later also extended to rangatira, both of whom would answer to the ariki for certain occasions, although it is questioned just how much power ariki had over the more numerous mata'iaipo. Tapere worked harmoniously with watershed boundaries, similar to the ahupua'a ecological management system which has been documented in the Hawai'i island chain (Ayers & Kittinger, 2014).

On Rarotonga, collectives of tapere formed a Vaka (political district). Initially, Vaka Takitumu and Vaka Te Au o Tonga were the only two political districts on Rarotonga, named after Tangi'ia and Karika's respective canoes. Later a breakoff group formed Vaka Puaikura on the sunset side of the island, creating their own ariki, Tinomana, to rule over it. As a result, there were three political districts at the time of European contact, and these three Vaka continue to play an important role in the social organisation of Māori today (Crocombe, 1964). Rarotonga currently has six recognised Ariki titles: Karika, Makea Nui, and Vakatini Ariki in Vaka Te Au o Tonga, Pa and Kainuku in Vaka Takitumu, and Tinomana in Vaka Puaikura.

Today, while the Aronga Mana have some power amongst their matakainanga and their lands, they have been stripped of many of their traditional roles due to rising power of the westminster government system. The ariki are represented in a formal government body known as the House of Ariki, while mata'iaipo and rangatira are represented in their own grouping known as the Koutu Nui. Government consults with these two bodies for important matters.

National Policy/Legal Framework:

There are a number of government agencies who are mandated to work to preserve Kite Māori in the Cook Islands, as well as enforce new legislation such as the Nagoya Protocol, which, amongst other things, seeks to protect Indigenous knowledge from being unfairly appropriated. The agencies which are of relevance in Rarotonga include the National Environment Service (Environment Act 2003), Cook Islands Natural Heritage Trust (Cook Islands Natural Heritage Trust Act 1999), Ministry of Agriculture (Agriculture Act, 1978), Ministry of Marine Resources (Marine Resources Act 2005), Ministry of Cultural Development (Cook Islands Traditional Knowledge Act, 2013), and the traditional leadership bodies of the House of Ariki and the Koutu Nui (House of Ariki Act 1966).

There are three islands in the Cook Islands which operate completely outside of the Environment Act, these are Mangaia, Mitiaro, and Pukapuka. These islands have elected to continue their customary land tenure over their islands, and thus in many ways rely more heavily on Kite Māori for solving land-based management issues than other islands such as Rarotonga. The remainder of the islands use native freehold (in effect private ownership). The Constitution Amendment No. 9 Act 1980-81 prescribes "that land matters in Mangaia, Pukapuka and Mitiaro were to continue to be dealt with by customary procedures unless the customary authorities requested otherwise" (Browne, 1994, p. 207).

The Cook Islands Natural Heritage Trust (CINHT) provides resources and facilitates projects that, research, classify and preserve both scientific knowledge and Kite Māori relating to the flora and fauna of the Cook Islands. The CINHT administers the Cook Islands Biodiversity Database (Cook Islands Natural Heritage Trust, 2007) which is the principal source of information on plants, animals, and organisms of all taxa in the Cook Islands. The Cook Islands is one of the few nations in the world to have a comprehensive database of this type and it is the result of a lifelong labour of love by long-term Rarotonga resident and CINHT Director, Gerald McCormack. The country is very fortunate to have this resource which includes Māori names and the various uses (food, medicinal, craft, ornamental) of all forms of biodiversity whether they are native, Polynesian-introduced, or European-introduced species.

There are currently policies that promote and protect some forms of Kite Māori in the Cook Islands. Some of these policies stem from the Cook Islands' involvement in international bilateral agreements. For example, the National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan (NBSAP) reported every four years by the NES as a requirement of being a signatory to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity which the country ratified in 1992 (Cook Islands National Environment Service, 2015). Some of the specific goals worth mentioning within the 2011 NBSAP include Goal 3: "Promote the conservation of genetic diversity". Actions under this goal have included the

formation of a Rarotonga organization for traditional medical practitioners: Te Vaka Ta'unga – Te Rito o Te Vairākau Māori, that seeks to support suitable legal arrangements to allow Vairākau Māori practitioners legal status as well as recognizing this traditional practice and knowledge. (NBSAP, 2011). Goal 9 of the NBSAP is to “[P]rotect traditional knowledge, innovations, and practices”, one of the goal’s targets being to “protect the rights of Indigenous and local communities over their traditional knowledge, innovations and practices, including their rights to benefit sharing”. The NBSAP document also identified the ongoing loss of Kite Māori of traditional famine crops (crops which were relied upon following cyclone events due to their resilience), traditional food preservation methods, and a general movement away from subsistence based society throughout the country, but most pronounced in Rarotonga.

Management of Indigenous knowledge related to biodiversity was identified as a deficient area within policy, with traditional knowledge and practice being limited to only a few remaining ta'unga. It was identified that while some knowledge has been preserved through oral history and literature, the knowledge needs to be put into practice if it is to be passed on. Programmes to record Indigenous knowledge have been “inconsistent and ad hoc” and few policies are in place to protect practitioners rights and risk of bio-piracy (Cook Islands National Environment Service, 2011, p. 41)⁶

UNDP Standard 6 Requirements

The project has been screened during the PPG stage (via the conduct of the SESP), and it has been determined that UNDP Standard 6 will be triggered.

Box 1: Requirements for Standard 6 – Indigenous Peoples

- **Respect for domestic and international law:** Ensure respect for domestic and international law regarding rights of customary communities.) (Requirement 4)
- **Identification of customary communities:** Identify customary communities who may be affected by Project activities utilizing range of criteria (Req. 5)
- **Land, territory and resources:** Recognize rights of customary communities to lands, territories and resources. Include measures to promote such recognition when necessary for Project activities (Req. 6)
- **Legal personality:** Recognize rights of customary communities to legal personality. Include measures to promote such recognition when necessary for Project activities (Req. 7)
- **Involuntary resettlement:** Prohibit forcible removal of customary communities from lands and territories and ensure no relocation without free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) (Req. 8)
- **Full, effective and meaningful participation:** Ensure full, effective meaningful participation of affected customary communities throughout project cycle and seek FPIC on any matters that may affect rights and interests, lands, territories, resources, and traditional livelihoods (Req. 9) (also relocation and appropriation of cultural heritage)
- **Prior social and environmental assessment:** Ensure prior social and environmental impact review/assessment if Project may affect rights, lands, territories and resources of customary communities (Req. 10)
- **Appropriate benefits:** Ensure equitable sharing of benefits in culturally appropriate manner (Req. 11)
- **Support rights implementation:** Support countries to implement their human rights duties and obligations regarding the rights of customary communities (Req. 12)
- **Special considerations:** Pay particular attention to rights and special needs of women and girls and marginalized customary communities; respect, protect and promote rights of un-contacted or voluntarily isolated peoples; respect, protect, and conserve cultural heritage of customary communities and ensure FPIC before use or appropriation (Req. 13)
- **Customary communities Engagement Plan:** Develop CEPP for Projects that may affect rights, lands, territories and resources of customary communities. CEPP summarizes potential impacts and documents culturally appropriate mitigation measures (Req. 14)
- **Monitoring:** Ensure participatory approach to verifying Project designed in manner consistent with Standard 6 and ensure arrangements for participatory joint monitoring of Project implementation with customary communities (Req. 15)

⁶ Kokaua, Liam. 2019. Sections 3-10 include excerpts from his MA thesis “E Papa, e Atea! E korero ana rai korua kia matou i Tumu-te-varovaro nei? How does Moari Indigenous Knowledge – its generation, practice, and transmission – inform resource management on Rarotonga?” Auckland University.

6.3 Indigenous Knowledge and resource management

Traditional Transmission of Indigenous Knowledge (Kite Māori)

Within The Kōpu Tangata

Kite Māori was traditionally passed down to tamariki (children) and māpū (young adults) from various members of the individual's kōpu tangata (extended family). These included 'ai tupuna (grandparents and their kin of the same generation), 'ai metua (the biological parents and their siblings), and 'ai taeake (kin of the same generation - cousins and siblings). The lack of distinction between grandparents and their siblings, parents, and their siblings, or of biological siblings and cousins of the same generation is an important factor of traditional kinship patterns within Te Ao Māori. In traditional Māori society a child was raised by the entire kōpu tangata and the elevated role of the biological parents (ngā metua) was not of such singular importance as in typical western families.

According to scholars, the nuclear family in the western sense did not exist, and the kōpu tangata was the elementary unit of production and consumption (Crocombe, 1964). For certain types of Kite Māori it was more common to learn from an uncle rather than one's own father, and for other types it was better to come from a grandparent rather than the parents. In fact, grandparent to grandchild knowledge transmission was and remains very prominent, perhaps because grandparents play an important role in the upbringing of tamariki Rarotonga. Sometimes they take this caretaker role a step further by adopting their grandchildren, especially the oldest children. Another important factor in the role of Rarotonga grandparents may be due to having more time to share compared to adults of working age. The relationship between tuakana and teina (respectively, the older and younger siblings or cousins of the same gender), is an important one to note, as there would be a higher degree of knowledge transmission from the older tuakana sibling or cousin to the younger teina. The tuakana would be expected to show their teina ('ai teina if there were more than one) Kite Māori to be applied in numerous contexts, but especially within and around the kainga (home).

The Role of the Ta'unga

The individuals who accumulated the highest level of Kite Māori over the course of their lives were known as ta'unga (expert, skilled craftsman). There could be ta'unga for any type of area of knowledge or art form, such as agriculture, medicine, or as a spiritual priest. Knowledge was communicated and passed down not only orally but also in the various practiced forms of Māori literature which included 'akatikitiki (carving), tātatau (tattooing), rāanga (weaving), tapa (designs on bark-cloth) and other arts and crafts.

Some forms of Kite Māori was passed down within specific family lineages, for example, a ta'unga vairākau (Māori doctor), would pass on his or her medicinal recipes to their direct descendants or a specially chosen heir. Kōrero and 'akapapa'anga would be transmitted to specially chosen tamariki from chiefly lines. This sacred knowledge of genealogies was never meant to be known by all and would be taught by a tumu kōrero in a special learning house called 'are vānanga (house of learning).

The Place of the 'Are Vānanga and 'Are 'Ōrau

'Are vānanga operated in a similar fashion to Aotearoa Māori whare wānanga, which are described in depth in some publications such as The Lore of the Whare Wānanga (Walker, 1990; Whatahoro & Smith, 2011). The 'are vānanga were specialised schools which were bound in strict tradition and custom regarding both learning and teaching within its walls. 'Are kōrero is another name used for this structure (Savage, 1917). Eruera Nia of Ngāti Makea Nui wrote of his desires to revive the 'are kōrero within Vaka Te Au o Tonga in his master's thesis (Nia, 2010). Another type of house specially designed for the transmission of Kite Māori was the 'are 'ōrau (house of manual training). Tangatapoto (1984) described how cultural learning occurred within the 'are 'ōrau, a specially designated house where where Kite Māori of practical skills such woodcraft, weaving, and bark cloth is passed down from ta'unga to tauira (student).

Resource Management:

Some research articles have focussed on the recent revival of rā'ui on Rarotonga (Hoffmann, 2002; Solomona & Vuki, 2012). Rā'ui, or rāhui is a resource management practice in Te Ao Māori. It refers specifically to the prohibition on harvesting resource(s), a practice which ceased to be practiced for a few decades on Rarotonga and other islands. Philosophically rā'ui seek environmental benefits by managing human behaviours; it is not an environmental management tool, but a human behaviour tool with environmental outcomes. Dixon in Bambridge (2016) produced a chapter on rā'ui on the nearby island of Mangaia, and Mokoroa has written an article on traditional fishing practices on Atiu (Mokoroa, 1981). A recent doctoral thesis focussed on rāhui (a local pronunciation of rā'ui) on the northernmost island of Tongareva, and how this traditional practice is influenced by modern day issues such as politics (Chambers, 2008).

Aside from the above works, no studies have focussed specifically on the generation, practice, and transmission of Kite Māori for resource management on Rarotonga. One significant gap in the research of Kite Māori in Rarotonga, which is lacking, is work that defines traditional values and principles. With an adequate understanding of traditional values, both Indigenous and modern knowledge can be applied to resource management in a way that is mutually respectful, culturally appropriate, and most often in-line with aspects of sustainability. What traditional Māori values, principles and practices are and how these are applied to resource management today is an area of research which needs to be developed in order to better understand and develop Māori resource management practices on the island.

6.4 Potential Impacts

The primary objective of this project is to safeguard globally significant biodiversity and core ecosystem services through mainstreaming environmental issues in key development sectors, facilitating more inclusive natural resource governance, and improving the management effectiveness of conservation areas

Component 1 is **Mainstreaming safeguards to conserve biodiversity and maintain ecosystem services across key development sectors**. There are two main outcomes of this component.

The first outcome is to ensure that biodiversity and ecosystem services safeguards are embedded in national and island governance frameworks, and policies, and institutional capacities strengthened across key development sectors (i.e., agriculture, infrastructure, tourism)

- Positive outputs: The development of consistent frameworks, policies and protocols which will not only clearly identify what the rights are of local landowning communities but they also recognise gender issues and safeguard key biodiversity areas and ecosystem services (1.1). There is some clearly developed and institutionalised National Environment Information System (NEIS) that will support intersectoral coordination, monitoring and integration of safeguards in land use and planning and development processes. (1.2) Regulatory and policy frameworks will safeguard key biodiversity areas and incorporate these safeguards into Island Environmental Management Plans and apply them to relevant catchment and protected area management plans.(1.3)
- One of the greatest Negative impacts of this outcome could result from local landowners not being actively involved in the development of necessary frameworks and policies before they are put in place. Having all parties involved at this initial level will resolve any conflicts of interests of different local landowning groups or between landowners and government officials created by different values or visions for the future with regards to land management and the composition of management bodies. This may result in an impasse that may last years and prevent any further development

The second outcome is that ecosystem services are restored, maintained and enhanced, and globally significant biodiversity is safeguarded in priority catchments and managed areas.

- Positive Outputs: Audits will be completed for priority catchments, in order to identify key pollutant sources and responsible parties Interventions will be prescribed to address any negative impacts (2.1) The indigenous community of traditional leaders and landowners of the island of Manuae will be able to develop and implement a gender sensitive natural resource management plan (2.3) that will incorporate innovative practices that will provide for the sustainability of the island's historical features, potential for tourism activities as well as its terrestrial and marine biodiversity (2.2)

- Negative impacts of non-consultation with the indigenous community of land-owners and disallowing their self-determination to make their own decisions about how the land of which they are traditional owners will be managed. Further barriers and delays to enabling them to formulate a management plan collaboratively developed by the elected members of the Manuae Management Committee will only encourage those whose interests may conflict with the majority to create obstacles to the progress that has been under discussion for many years. Non action with regard to rat eradication on some of the motu and protected areas would have a negative impact on the environment as well as on the biodiversity of the area.

Component 2: Improving the management framework to effectively conserve a national protected areas system representative of Cook Islands biodiversity

The key outcome of this component is a globally significant biodiversity protected across the Cook Islands through effective selection, design, management as well as monitoring and enforcement of its protected area system

- Positive impacts will include updated, developed and operations management plans that incorporate governance structures that take cognisance of the inputs of traditional leaders and the tangata enua communities connected to the protected areas. They will also consider gender mainstreaming objectives and any other collaborative arrangements made, including training and systems on biodiversity conservation as well as surveillance and monitoring (3.2), with and for these indigenous communities (3.1) One specific output will include collaborative land management agreements made between the government, traditional leaders and indigenous communities connected to the Rarotonga Cloud Forest PA (3.3) . The FPIC process will encourage institutional strengthening where partners will talk out their issues in a productive and meaningful way taking the human rights approach in order to come to an agreement. Appropriate training will also be important to ensure clear understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities and what they entail, as well as contributing to a strengthened and more meaningful MOU between the lead stakeholder partners .
- Any risks associated with these developments will arise without the FPIC process in place so that there is full and active participation of the affected indigenous communities and that their rights to land and the opportunity to self-determine how their land is governed and managed. Communication with these communities and their active participation in the decision making is critical and must ensure clear understanding of the responsibilities of the different engaged stakeholder parties to any agreements that are made.

Component 3: Raising awareness, managing knowledge, mainstreaming gender and monitoring, evaluating and disseminating project results

The key outcome of this project component is greater understanding of the value and values of conserving Cook Islands Biodiversity and ecosystem services. Adaptive management will be informed by monitoring and evaluation results. Knowledge and information will be regularly disseminated, and lessons learned from other projects and activities will be incorporated into new learning.

- A key output of this project will be the development and implementation of a gender responsive Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy which will include action plans with targeted programmes to promote the values of biodiversity and ecosystem services.(4.1) Information products will not only be gender sensitive but will also take note of the learning and understanding needs of the indigenous stakeholder participants (for example translations of important documents, etc) as well as incorporating best practices, innovations and lessons learned from previous project activities as well as suggestions made during the consultation meeting that were held during the PPG phase.(4.2) and ensuring a human rights participatory approach to all associated project activities and outputs that informs project implementation and decision-making. Project activity leaders will be encouraged to use various forms of disseminating information about progress of their activity regularly to the community to ensure a wider distribution of information about the project and its objectives. (4.3)
- Any risks may result when not enough information is disseminated about the value of new knowledge management systems such as the NES website and the National Environment Information system not which biodiversity resource inventories and data will be compiled, analysed and updated. This

information must be kept up to date and be relevant to the information needs of the wider Cook Islands community who are expected to be the beneficiaries of the project and its biodiversity conservation efforts. It will be important that any new knowledge products generated during the project such as case studies, fact sheets, videos and any guidance documents related to technical matters are articulated in such a way as to be clearly understood by all beneficiaries, and to be translated if considered an essential learning or information issue.

6.5 Procedures for risk screening, assessment and management

Based on the potential adverse impacts, UNDP SES 6 puts emphasis on measures to ensure that the IPs received social and economic benefits that are culturally appropriate, and gender responsive and inclusive. In order to adequately identify, assess and manage potential impacts to indigenous peoples, their lands, resources and/or rights, a suite of procedures has been designed to be undertaken during project implementation. It should be noted that UNDP SES 6 requirements will be considered in all applicable assessments and management plans. FPIC process will be included within the architecture of both upstream (i.e. scoped SESA) and downstream risk assessments.

Screening:

- **Continuous Disaster Risk screening of project interventions:** Climate and disaster risk mitigation will be incorporated in the intersectoral catchment management plans developed under **Output 2.2**, as well as in the updated protected area management plans prepared in **Output 3.1**. The Climate and Disaster Risk Screening (i.e. following UNDP SES 2 requirements) will continue to be monitored and updated (where necessary) as prescribed by Activity 4.3.5 of the project.
- **Screening (i.e. via the application of the SESP) of low-value grant assistance activities:** The Implementing Partner will be obliged to follow the On-Granting Provisions, which are annexed to the Project Document and require adherence to the requirements of UNDP's SES. As part of the grant process under **Activity 2.3.4**, all proposals will be screened using the SESP (see Para 118 for more detail). The project team will monitor and evaluate the activities in the field for compliance with UNDP SES, as well as other specifications described in the grant agreements. Progress and completion reports submitted by the grantees will document compliance.

Assessment and Management:

- **Scoped SESA:** To adequately assess the potential social and environmental impacts associated with upstream activities supported by the project, a scoped SESA will be required to be undertaken. The SESA will follow UNDP SES requirements and shall include within its scope **Activities 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.3.3**. The SESA will be carried out by independent experts in accordance with UNDP's SES policy and the [UNDP SES Guidance Note on Assessment and Management](#) to identify and assess social and environmental impacts associated with the proposed regulations in a participatory manner with stakeholders as follows:
 1. Identify social and environmental priorities to be included in planning and policy processes
 2. Assess gaps in the institutional, policy, and legal frameworks to address these priorities
 3. Identify potential adverse social and environmental impacts associated with policy options
 4. Engage decision makers and stakeholders to ensure a common understanding and broad support for implementation
 5. Formulate policy and institutional measures needed to close policy and legal gaps, address institutional weaknesses, and avoid adverse social and environmental impacts.

The SESA process will ensure that impacts to local communities, their livelihoods, rights, resources and the biophysical receptor environment are taken into consideration in the decision-making process while developing legislative tools and strategies. Any institutional and capacity gaps identified during this process will be addressed through the training that will be conducted for the specified activities.

The SESA will be comprised of a concise report that summarizes the main findings and results of SESA, including (a) SESA stakeholder engagement process; (b) key social and environmental priorities and

issues associated with chosen policy/strategy initiative; (c) institutional arrangements for coordinating integration of social and environmental issues into chosen policy/strategy initiative; (d) legal, regulatory, policy, institutional and capacity recommendations to address any identified gaps for managing the social and environmental priorities and implementing applicable social and environmental policies; (e) results of assessment of social and environmental risks/impacts associated with the implementation of the proposed regulations; (f) identification of measures (e.g. policies, institutional strengthening, governance reform) to address and manage anticipated adverse social and environmental risks and impacts, including a summary Action Matrix

- **Rat eradication risk assessment and management plan:** Before the implementation of **Activities 2.2.6 and 3.1.5** a Rat Eradication risk assessment will be required to be undertaken. This risk assessment shall include an analysis of alternative pest management options, and shall assess (amongst others); the potential impacts on non-target species (examining both primary and secondary poisoning), impacts on human health, and receptor environmental impacts (i.e. on vegetation, soil, water, marine environment etc.). The risk assessment will be undertaken using UNDP SES requirements as the part of the basis of assessment (most notably SES 1, 3, 7 and 8). To manage the identified risks, a Rat Eradication plan will be developed that is based on the findings of the risk assessment. The plan will include baseline monitoring in preparation for the rodent eradication programme, as well as post-release monitoring (both during and after the eradication programme). In adhering to the requirements of UNDP SES 7, the rat eradication management plans will also include applicable elements of labour management procedures in order to ensure that labour and working conditions for project workers are compliant with UNDP SES requirements,
- **Training on EIA best practices and SES requirements (for project proponents)** under **Activity 1.1.1:** . Project proponents will be trained on EIA best practice which will include key material and guidance on identifying impacts (including cumulative) and formulating mitigation measures for wetland, riparian and coastal ecosystems. This training on EIA best practice will be informed by the SES policy of UNDP.
- **Intersectoral Catchment Management Plans:** : Only pesticides, herbicides and insecticides meeting internationally accepted standards will be supported by the project. Their storage and application will be subject to the health and safety guidelines. Management measures will include but are not limited to the following: 1) internationally or nationally banned or restricted agrochemicals will not be used, 2) workers and farmers working with agrochemical will be trained and equipped with appropriate personal protective equipment, and 3) national, provincial, and local guidelines and regulations on use and handling of agrochemicals will be followed.
- **Islands Environmental Management Plans :** The development of these management plans will be based on the requirements of UNDP SES 1 and 6, ensuring compliance with the necessary stipulations and principles of the SES and most notably those relating to Biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of living natural resources, and Indigenous Peoples.
- **Ecosystem Audits:** Ecosystem audits will be undertaken at 4 priority catchments covered by the project. UNDP SES 1 requirements will serve as a basis for the conduct of these audits. The project has also been designed to include collaborative/community driven intersectoral catchment management plans (**Output 2.2**), that will seek to utilize best practice in terms of sustainable land management , the safe use and handling of agrochemicals, erosion prevention etc.

6.6 Participation, Consultation and the Free Prior Informed Consent Process

Summary of appropriate Consultation and meaningful engagement during Project Design Phase

Following UNDP SES requirements (and most specifically those pertaining to UNDP SES6 on Indigenous Peoples), no activities that may adversely affect indigenous peoples/ communities, their lands, resources, or cultural heritage will be permitted without explicit agreement of the potentially affected communities. The collective right to give or withhold consent⁷ applies to all project activities that may directly impact the lands, territories,

⁷ i.e. for project activities to be undertaken

resources, and livelihoods of indigenous peoples' communities. Consent must be sought and granted or withheld in accordance with the unique decision-making processes of each community/household.

FPIC consultations will be comprehensively documented. Ideas, questions, and concerns raised by different stakeholders, including related government institutions, NGOs, CSOs, and women's groups, private institutions, indigenous communities and/or resource-owners, shall be captured, well documented, and made available to relevant stakeholders.

Documentation of consultations should include the following:

- the information provided to local communities during consultations;
- the language and method of information-sharing that was used;
- measures taken to ensure the participation/representation of women and other marginalized sub-groups; and,
- the number of participants present at community consultations (including gender and indigenous peoples disaggregated statistics).

Other information that must be recorded, updated, and made available includes:

- the manner in which consent (or the withholding of consent) is recorded;
- any instances of previously given consent being withdrawn; and
- any other grievances raised and subsequent action taken by project management and other relevant stakeholders.

FPIC consultations should be carried out in a culturally appropriate manner, delivered by appropriate personnel, and in culturally appropriate locations. Consultations shall be delivered with sufficient time to be understood and verified, and measures must be taken to ensure that consultations reach and account for the particular challenges faced by the most marginalized and vulnerable within potentially affected communities. Consultations and associated reporting must be undertaken on an on-going and continuous basis throughout the lifecycle of the project.

The FPIC process will be tailored to specific indigenous communities based on the standards defined by UNDP, the Government of the Cook Islands and as dictated by the communities themselves. The process of meaningful consultation and FPIC must be initiated during project inception, with potentially affected groups of Cook Islanders consulted at each site. The project's objectives, activities, expected outcomes and information dissemination mechanisms will be presented as part of any FPIC process. To achieve this, the following actions will be carried out as and when FPIC is required. The process outlined below may be refined as needed, while at all times remaining compliant with SES Standard 6 requirements.

1. Contact the Island Council or affected landowning families associated with the site where the Project's activities might be carried out. As per the norms and traditions of each of the Pa Enua islands of the Cook Islands, the formality of Prior Notification of the visit and an explanation for its purpose is provided to the Island Council before the visit is endorsed. A presentation to the Council on arrival would also be appropriate. This is particularly important if the visit involves any local or national decision-making that may impact on individuals or communities on the island. Island Councils are a multistakeholder mix of government and locally appointees as well as of traditional leaders and other elected representatives of the community with specific roles on the Council. All Council members on an Island Council in the Pa Enua, would most often also be a landowner. All aspects of island life, including external factors such as government projects, are discussed in Island Council meetings and it is usually through this

channel that the Cook Island government via its departmental leaders, approaches an island to seek their support (and views) for a project, or access to women's groups, youth groups and those with disabilities on the island. On Rarotonga, there is less formality, except that notification of the prospect of a meeting with a particular leadership group or landowning family is usually made via an approach to a representative of the group, for example, the Secretary of a landowning family group or the Secretary of the Koutu Nui.

2. Come to an agreement with the representative of the Landowning Group on a **Project Presentation Workshop**, for the purpose of informing local indigenous peoples of the project's objectives, activities and expected outcomes. The other reason for these workshops would be to get to know the potential participants' visions, suggestions, opinions and proposals, and to validate and strengthen the project so that it can be adjusted to the needs of affected people.
3. This Workshop should be designed with the protocols of each particular institution in mind, and taking account of any requirements relating to language and other communication factors, such as the need for remote participation via zoom, etc. Doubts which might arise can be clarified, and agreements can be reached about the steps to be taken. One of these steps might involve internal deliberations by the respective groups with regards to the contents of the presentation.
4. If during the Presentation Workshop an individual or organization believes they may be adversely affected by the project, they may request a follow-up meeting/consultation. In such instances, the Project team must provide for this request, and to ensure that there is a person nominated to act as the respective counterpart to ensure accurate communications of any potential misunderstandings between the project team and the potentially affected indigenous individual or organisation about the objectives and purposes of the project.
5. If the potentially affected indigenous people/households decide to hold an internal deliberation process following the Presentation Workshop, a second workshop will be held where the village will present the results of their deliberations to the Project. Once this is done, and if the decision is affirmative regarding participation in and consent to the project, an **Affected Peoples Agreement** and/or a **Memorandum of Understanding** will also be drawn up where the parties establish their commitment and consent for engagement/participation in the project.
6. Once the Agreement (i.e. **APA or MoU**) is drawn up and signed-off by both parties, project implementation will begin, and the involvement of the indigenous people in the project will commence.
7. Follow-up and evaluation of compliance with the **APA and/or MoU** will be carried out periodically, and project activities may be adjusted if required.
8. The Project Manager (PM) (or whoever he/she designates for this purpose) will be responsible for contacting the potentially affected indigenous people within the project's area of influence during project implementation to ensure continued consent and compliance with the requirements as established in any APA and/or MoU.
9. All the above processes, as well as actions deriving from them, will be duly recorded and documented, both as a safeguard of due process and as a line of project knowledge management. The above indicative procedure for FPIC is summarized in Figure 1

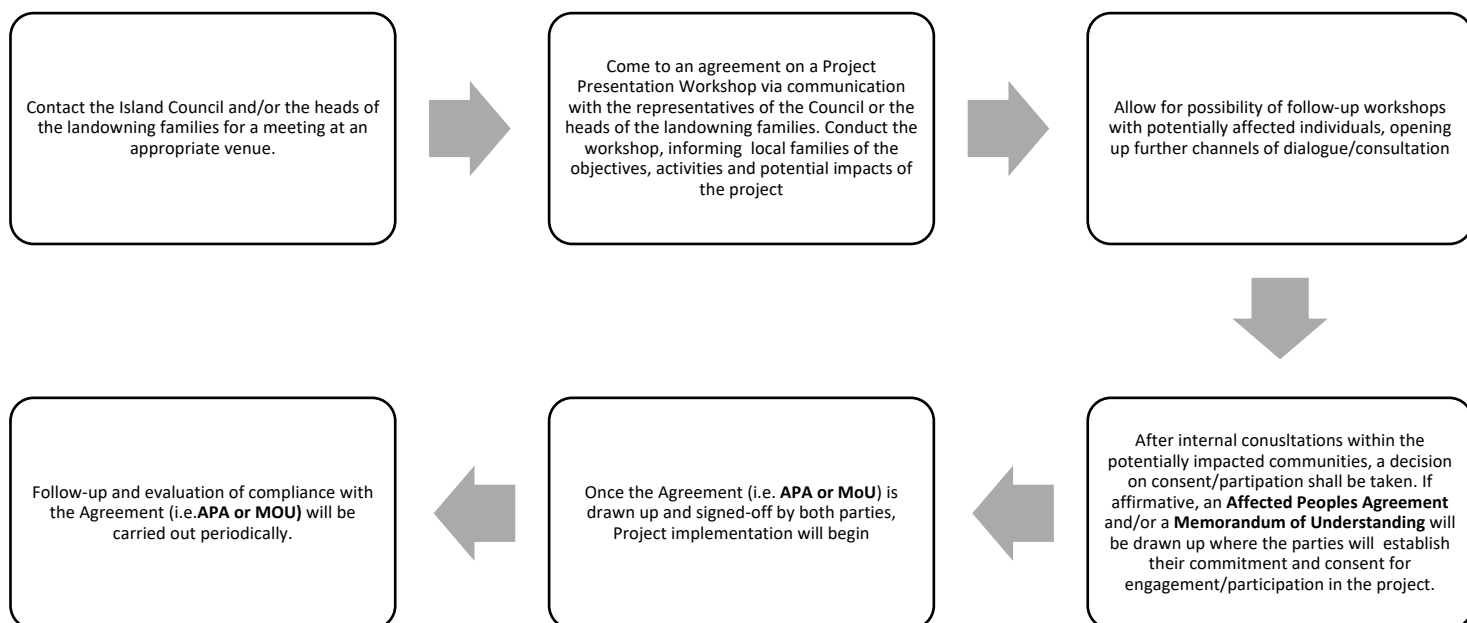


Figure 1. Engagement, Consultation and Participation of Indigenous Communities in the Project

The project has also been designed with FPIC and consultation requirements embedded into relevant activities that may have UNDP SES 6 risks associated with them (i.e. as identified in the project’s SESP, see **Annex 4** to the Project Document). For example, at a policy/upstream level, Activity 1.3.2 will require the project to facilitate Pa Enua consultations in the socialization of the Islands Environmental Management Plans with local stakeholders.

For downstream activities, FPIC requirements have been explicitly embedded into the design of Activities 3.3.5 and 4.2.3. FPIC has also been required and embedded into project activities that will involve the use/or may impact traditional knowledge (i.e., Activities 3.1.3 and 4.2.3) .

Outputs/Activities requiring FPIC

Given the nature of the project, several key project activities will require further/additional risk screening, assessment and management during project inception/implementation (as described above).. In addition, concerning the initial identified risks associated with Indigenous peoples a list of activities for which formal community consent (following the requirements of FPIC as outlined in Standard 6 of the UNDP’s SES) has been identified. No activities which may cause economic displacement, or which may have adverse impacts on Indigenous People, can commence until agreed mitigation or risk management methods are in place. These activities require formal broad community consent, through a process of Free, Prior Informed Consent (FPIC). Provisionally, these activities are preliminarily assessed as follows.

Activity No.	Description
1.1.1	Provide environmental law and policy assistance in updating legislation and preparing draft derivative regulations, expected to include the EIA permitting and consent regulations, agricultural regulations under the Pesticides Act 1987, and the protected area regulations under the new Environmental Act and aligning with the new PAMP.
1.1.2	Develop the Protected Areas Management Policy (PAMP) based on the existing discussion paper.
1.1.3	Facilitate consultations (in line with UNDP SES 6 requirements on FPIC) and finalise the Protected Area Classification System (PACS).
1.3.2	Facilitate <i>Pa Enua</i> consultations (following UNDP SES 6 requirements on FPIC), socializing the IEMPs among local stakeholders.
1,3,3	Support integration of regulatory and policy frameworks to safeguards KBAs and ecosystem services into catchment management plans under Output 2.2 and PA management plans under Output 3.1.
2.2.1	Develop gender responsive intersectoral catchment management plans for the priority catchments in Rarotonga.
2.2.2	Develop a gender responsive management plan for the Manuae Managed Area, through inclusive, participatory processes and based on an updated resource inventory.
2.2.6	Implement specific management measures in the Manuae Managed Area, including eradication of invasive rats to protect locally and globally significant biodiversity using proven, cost-efficient and effective methods (process to include a risk assessment, approval for project from relevant agencies, and before, during, and after eradication monitoring); etc.
3.1.3	Integrate traditional management systems into protected area management through inclusive consultations with landowners and traditional leaders, and through obtaining FPIC.
3.1.5	Implement eradication of rats in target sites to protect globally significant biodiversity using proven, cost-efficient and effective methods; process will include a risk assessment, rat eradication plan, approval of the plan and for agent release, and post-release monitoring.
3.3.5	Facilitate formulation of collaborative agreements involving landowners, government, and traditional leaders – including obtaining FPIC for the establishment of the community conserved area.
4.2.4	In collaboration with landowners, communities, and local peoples, and upon obtaining FPIC, document traditional knowledge in biodiversity conservation using culturally important methods, ensuring voices of both females and males.

7. GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM

A. Mandate of the GRM Sub-Committee:

1. Receive and address any concerns, complaints, notice of emerging conflicts or grievances alleging actual or potential harm to the environment or to affected individuals including human rights and gender equality
2. Assist in resolving grievances between and among project stakeholders
3. Conduct itself at all times in a flexible, collaborative, and transparent manner aimed at problem solving and consensus building.
4. It is the duty of the PMU/GRM Sub-Committee to adequately report in Project presentations regarding the UNDP mechanism for rendering accounts, including the Stakeholder Response Mechanism (SRM) and the Social and Environmental Compliance Unit (SECU), to which they can have recourse in case the parties are not satisfied with the GRM's response.

B. Principles on which the GRM Sub-Committee process has been developed

- . **Legitimacy** – enabling trust from the stakeholder groups and being accountable for the fair conduct of grievance processes
- a. **Accessibility** – being known to all stakeholder groups and providing adequate assistance for those who may face particular barriers to access
- b. **Predictability** – providing a clear and known procedure with an indicative timeframe for each stage and clarity on the types of process and outcomes available as well as means of monitoring implementation
- c. **Equity** – ensuring that aggrieved parties have reasonable access to sources of information, advice, and expertise necessary to engage in a grievance process on fair, informed and respectful terms
- d. **Transparency** – keeping parties to a grievance informed about its progress and providing sufficient information about the mechanism's performance to build confidence in its effectiveness and to meet any public interest at stake.
- e. **Compatibility with rights** – processes are more successful when all parties agree that outcomes are consistent with applicable national and internationally recognised rights.
- f. **Enabling continuous learning** – drawing on relevant measures to identify lessons for improving the mechanism and preventing future grievances and harms.
- g. **Based on engagement and dialogue** – consulting the stakeholder groups on the design and performance of the process and focusing on dialogue as the means to address and resolve grievances.

C. Composition of the GRM Sub-Committee

The GRM Sub-Committee will primarily consist of:

1. The Project Coordinator
2. The Social and Environmental Safeguards Specialist
3. The Gender Specialist (or a member of the Gender Unit of the Ministry of Internal Affairs)
4. A representative of the Implementing Partner (e.g., National Environment Service for Biodiversity Projects) will act as the Secretariat whose role will be to:
 1. Ensure that the project community is aware of the role of the GRM Sub-Committee, and the procedures associated with the complaint process
 2. Receive, log, and acknowledge requests for grievance/dispute resolution
 3. Determine the eligibility of the request (plus explain any ineligibility issues to the requestor)
 4. Forward eligible requests to the GRM Sub-Committee for review and action

5. Track and document efforts at grievance/dispute resolution and their outcomes.
6. Inform the Claimant of the outcomes of the GRM Sub-Committee deliberations and recommendations relating to the dispute grievance issue.

D. Communicating a Grievance

1. Who can submit a Grievance?

- A grievance can be submitted by any individual or group of individuals who believes that he/she/they have been or will be harmed by the project and/or its activities.

2. How is the Grievance communicated?

- A grievance can be transmitted to the GRM Sub-Committee by any means available i.e., by email, letter, phone call, meeting, SMS, etc
- The grievance should be addressed to the **GRM Sub-Committee** at the office of the Implementing Partner (e.g., National Environment Service, resources@cookislands.gov.ck)

3. What information should be included in a Grievance Claim?

- The name of the individual or individuals making the complaint (the “Claimant/s”)
- A means for contacting the Claimant (email, phone, address, other)
- A description of the potential or actual harm, including
 1. The risk or harm and those who are directly or indirectly affected by it
 2. The names of the individuals or institutions responsible for the risk/harm
 3. The location and dates of harmful activity
- What has been done by the Claimant thus far to resolve the matter?
- What specific help is being requested from the GRM Sub-Committee?
- (NOTE: All personal details are confidential to the GRM Sub-Committee)

4. What happens next?

1. Once the GRM Sub-Committee has received the Grievance/Dispute issue, it will acknowledge receipt and outline how the grievance will be processed, assess eligibility, and assign organisational responsibility for proposing a response. This stage will also include a meeting with the Claimant.
2. If the Claimant does not accept the GRM Sub-Committee’s initial solution, the GRM Sub-Committee may then refer the case to another mechanism/agency such as: a qualified mediator, a community organisation e.g., CI National Council of Women, the Ombudsman’s Office, or the Office of the Prime Minister, for resolution at community level.
3. If the matter is still not resolved, an alternative course of action could be for the Claimant to take the matter to court.

5. How long should a Grievance case take?

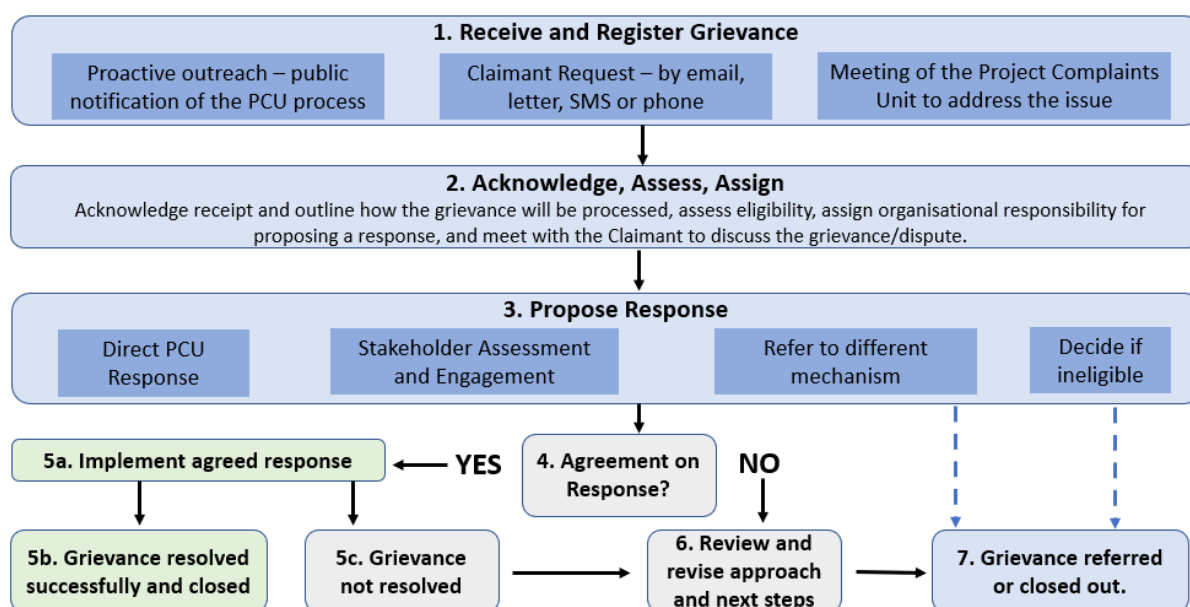
- Within 1 week from the receipt of the Grievance, the GRM Sub-Committee will send a written acknowledgement to the Claimant of the Grievance received, with an assigned tracking number
- Within the next 2 weeks, giving the GRM Sub-Committee time to investigate the Grievance/Dispute, a meeting will be arranged by the GRM Sub-Committee with the Claimant (and a limited number of supporters, if requested)
- Within the next 3 weeks, the GRM Sub-Committee will meet with related stakeholder groups to collaborate on a plan of action to implement the decision which is aimed to resolve the issue for the Claimant.

- If this decision is not accepted by the Claimant, then a referral to an alternative agency will be made. This may require further extension of time, and possible expense at the Claimant's own cost.

6. What records are kept of the Grievance Case?

- All Grievances and reports of conflict will be received, assigned a tracking number, acknowledged to the Claimant, recorded electronically, and are subject to periodic updates to the office file as well as to the Claimant.
- The Claimant will also be notified of the GRM Sub-Committee's privacy policies.
- Each Grievance file will contain, as a minimum:
 - The date of the request as received
 - The date the written acknowledgement was sent (and oral acknowledgement if also made)
 - The dates and nature of all other communications or meetings with the Claimant and other relevant Stakeholders
 - And requests, offers or engagements of a Mediator or Facilitator
 - The date and records related to the proposed solution/way forward.
 - The acceptance or objections of the Claimant (or other Stakeholders)
 - The proposed next steps if objections arose
 - The alternative solution if renewed dialogues were pursued
 - Notes regarding implementation
 - Any conclusions and recommendations arising from monitoring and follow up.

Project level Grievance Redress Mechanism



UNDP Accountability Mechanism

In addition to the above mentioned project-level Complaints mechanism, all stakeholders will have access to UNDP's institutional Accountability mechanism, through which grievances and requests can be lodged.

UNDP's SES recognize that although robust planning and stakeholder engagement can be designed and implemented, unanticipated issues can still arise. Therefore, the SES are underpinned by an Accountability Mechanism with two key components:

1. A Social and Environmental Compliance Review Unit (SECU) to respond to claims that UNDP is not in compliance with applicable environmental and social policies; and
2. A Stakeholder Response Mechanism (SRM) that ensures individuals, peoples, and communities affected by the Project have access to appropriate grievance resolution procedures for hearing and addressing project-related complaints and disputes.

UNDP's Accountability Mechanism is available to all of UNDP's project stakeholders. The Social and Environmental Compliance Unit (SECU) investigates concerns about non-compliance with UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards and Screening Procedure raised by project-affected stakeholders and recommends measures to address findings of non-compliance.

The Stakeholder Response Mechanism helps project-affected stakeholders, UNDP's partners (governments, NGOs, businesses) and others jointly address grievances or disputes related to the social and/or environmental impacts of UNDP-supported projects.

Further information, including how to submit a request to SECU or SRM, is found on the UNDP website at: <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/operations/accountability/secu-srm/>.

8. MONITORING AND REPORTING

Monitoring is an integral component of project management as it tracks and assesses progress towards achieving tangible development results associated with the project being implemented. It is an essential management tool which provides an opportunity to know whether results are being achieved as planned, what corrective action are needed to ensure delivery of the intended results and how they are making positive development contributions. This helps to detect problems earlier and coming up with appropriate measures to address them. Therefore, monitoring usually provides data used for analysis and synthesis prior to reporting for decision making.

8.1 REPORTING FORMAT

	Parameter	Monitoring and reporting responsibility	Reporting period
1	Number of government agencies, civil society organisations, private sector, indigenous groups and other stakeholder groups that have been involve in the project implementation phase	PMU	Annual basis
2	Number of persons (sex disaggregated) that have been involved in the project implementation phase	PMU	Annual basis
3	Number of engagements (e.g. meetings, workshops, consultations) with stakeholders during the project implementation phase	PMU	Annual basis
4	Percentage of stakeholders who rate as satisfactory, the level at which their views and concerns are taken into account by the project.	MCO Samoa/ consultant	Annual basis
5	Grievance handling mechanism – how grievances are received, and results communicated to all stakeholders.	PMU	Annual basis

ANNEX 1: INTRODUCTORY LETTERS TO STAKEHOLDERS (IN ENGLISH AND CI MAORI)



Cook Islands Global Environment Facility (GEF) 7 Project

– Introductory Note –

Background:

This is to inform all interested parties that the Cook Islands National Environment Service (NES), with the support of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and on behalf of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), is commencing the preparation phase of a six-year project of support for sustainable biodiversity and protected areas conservation in the Cook Islands.

The project objective

: “To mainstream biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services safeguards across Cook Islands key sectors, in partnership with traditional leaders and communities, to deliver sustainably managed protected areas and catchments”.

What is biodiversity mainstreaming? - The objective of mainstreaming biodiversity is to reduce the negative impacts that agriculture, infrastructure, tourism and other human activities exert on biodiversity.

This project was approved by the GEF Council in June 2021. A total of approximately NZD \$5,000,000 is available from the GEF to achieve the aims of this project. These funds will be administered by National Environment Service with oversight from the Ministry of Finance & Economic Management’s Development Coordination Division (MFEM-DCD).

Aims:

The aims of this project include biodiversity mainstreaming and the enhancement of protected areas and catchments, including the Government mandated Suvarrow National Park, plus community conservation areas and catchments on Aitutaki, Manuae, Atiu, Takutea and Rarotonga.

Consultations and workshop:

To ensure an inclusive and meaningful development phase for the project, a series of consultations will take place during this preparation phase. This includes a project workshop on Rarotonga in late January.

These ongoing consultations and the workshop will strengthen the foundation of the project, ensuring that priority activities are undertaken in alignment with: national priorities; GEF7 programming directions; and the project concept already approved by the GEF Council.

The workshop will disseminate information on the project, while drawing valuable insights on key areas from relevant stakeholders. Everyone interested or involved in this project is invited to attend.

A design team of independent consultants has been assembled to prepare the project design in collaboration with the NES and the broader community in the Cook Islands. The team will be meeting with the wider community and potential partners as soon as possible, via zoom meetings (where possible) and then by conducting island visits.

The independent consultants will be visiting Aitutaki and Rarotonga in mid-to-late January. These meetings need to be arranged with: the landowners; the traditional leaders; government agencies; scientists; and non-government organisations.

The consultants employed by the UNDP for the development stage of this project are a mix of Cook Islanders and International experts, they are:

- XXX - Sustainable development and GEF project design specialist (team leader)
- XXX - Protected areas, biodiversity and livelihoods specialist (deputy team leader)
- XXXX - Safeguards, gender and community engagement specialist
- XXXXX - Environmental policy and governance specialist
- XXXX - Gender and environmental safeguards specialist

Plus, a Rarotonga-based general support and research analyst working with the NES will be recruited.

Outcome:

From the results of the workshop and stakeholder consultations, the UNDP, NES, and the independent consultants, will develop a comprehensive project design to be presented to both the GEF funders and the Government of the Cook Islands for their endorsement by late April/May 2022.

This project will enhance the long-term sustainable protection of the environment, while at the same time supporting the sustainable economic and social development of the Cook Islands and its people.

TE AU TURANGA TAPOROPORO E TE TAKAIANGA O TE KUKI AIRANI E PINI UAKE[GEF] 7 TAKAIANGA

AKAMARAMAANGA:

Te akakite iatu nei ki te au tuanga pouroa e ko te Opati o te Tuanga Taporoporo o te Kuki Airani nei [NES] e pera katoa te Opati o te tuanga tauturu a te United Nations Development [UNDP] e te Opati tuanga tauturu a te Global Environment Facility [GEF] e, te akamataia nei I te akateateamamao I tetai paranianga 6 mataiti no te turuturuanga I te turanga o te kai Natura e pera katoa te turanga o te au ngai Raui.

Ko te Manako Nui koia oki:

Ko te akarakara matatio anga I tetai au takaianga e ka akapeaa I te parurruanga/Taporoporoanga I te turanga natura o te au kai I roto nei I te Kuki Airani na roto I te angaanga kapipitianga ki te au Arataki o te Enea e te Aronga Mana kia rauka tetai akapapuanga I te paruruanga I te au Ngai Raui e te Kakapunga.

Tetai au Takaianga Paruru o te Ao Rangi.

Ko te akakoroanga maata o teia au takaianga paruru I te Ao Rangi Natura koia oki ko te akaitianga mai I te au kino mei roto mai I te Tuanga Tanutanu, Tuanga akameitaki Oraanga, Tuanga o te Turoto and tetai uatu angaanga ta tatou ta te tangata e rave nei ki runga I te Ao Rangi Natura.

Kua akatikaia teia Angaanga e te GEF Konitara I te marama ia Tiunu 2021. Mei te \$5,00,00.00 ta te GEF i oronga mai kia tauturu I teia akakoroanga kia tupu. Ko teia tuanga ka riro e na te Opati o te Tuanga Taporoporo e pera katoa te Opati o te Moni e akateretere [MFEM – DCD]

Manako Nui.

Ko te manako nui o teia akakoroanga koia oki no te Paruruanga I te Ao Rangi e tetai uatu Ngai Raui e te Kakapuanga e pera katoa te Suwarrow National Park e tetai uatu au ngai Raui e te kakapuanga o Aitutaki, Manuae, Atiu, Takutea e Rarotonga nei.

Ai Takaianga Iriiri Kapua.

Ko te akapapuanga e ko te au takaianga te ka raveia no teia akakoroanga kia akarakara matatio ia te reira I te tuatau o te akateateamamaoanga e te paranianga. Kia akamataia teia I te nga ra openga o Tianuare I teia mataiti I Rarotonga nei.

Kia riro katoa teia iririkapuanga ei akamatutu atu I te tango turanga Matutu o teia akakoroanga, na roto I te akakapapuanga I te au Manako Nui kia tau ki te au manakonakoanga e te irinakianga o te GEF 7 e te au porokaramu tei akonoonoia e tei akatikaia e te GEF Konitara.

Ka riro teia Iriirikapua I te turama mai I tetai au takaianga o teia akakoroanga e te au tauturu mei roto mai I tetai au Tuanga Tauturu. Ka inangaroia te katoatoa I roto I teia au tuanga kia tae mai.

E pupu tangata akateateamamao e te akarakara matatio tetai tei akapapuia no teia akakoroanga e ka angaanga kapipiti atu ratou ki te Opati o te Tuanga Taporoporo e te katoatoa I te Kuki Airani nei. Ka rave viviki katoa ia tetai au iririkapuanga na teia pupu tangata e te katoatoa I tetai taime ua nei, uipaanga Pia Roro Uira e pera katoa te tere atu ki vao I te Pa Enea.

Ko teia pupu tangata ka tere atu ratou ki Aitutaki I te openga o Tianuare nei me oti a Rarotonga nei. Ka Inangaro katoaia te au Mata o te Kavamani, Ui Ariki, Aronga Mana, Te au Atu Enea e tetai uatu putuputuanga kia piri mai ki teia au Iriirikapuanga.

Ko teia au tangata angaanga a te UNDP e au tamariki Kuki Airani e te Papaa no Vao mai. Ko:

- XXX – Turanga Kimi Puapinga e te Akara Matatio GEF [Arataki]
- XXX – Tuanga Raui, Ao Rangi Natura e te Oraanga Meitaki [Tauturu Arataki]
- XXX – Tua Paruru, Turanga Oraanga Vaine/Tane e te katoatoa.
- XXX – Ture Tuanga Taporoporo e te Ture o te Ao Rangi.
- XXX – Turanga Oraanga e te Ao Rangi Natura

Ka akara katoaia mai tetai tangata I Rarotonga nei no te tauturu I te akarakara matatio I te au angaanga e raveia nei e te Tuanga Taporoporo.

Mei roto mai I te au Iriirikapua/uipaanga te ka raveia I rotopu I te UNDP, NES e tetai uatu putuputuanga, ka akapapa ia I reira tetai Parani Tango Matutu te ka oronga iatu ki te GEF e te Kavamani Kuki Airani no ta raua turu pakari I teia tamanakoanga I te opeanga o Aperira me kore Me o teia mataiti 2022.

Ka riro teia akakoroanga I te akameitaki atu I te turangi o te Ao Rangi no tetai tuatau roa e pera katoa I te turuturu pakari I te turanga o te kimikimi puapinga e te oraanga tangata I roto nei I te Kuki Airani.

ANNEX 2: TEMPLATE ATTENDANCE SHEET FOR CONSULTATION MEETINGS

CIPPG CONSULTATION ATTENDANCE LIST

Stakeholder Group Name:.....

Stakeholders present who identify as: (F)..... (M)..... (Other).....

Indigenous Cook Islander (I)	Non-indigenous (manu'iri, papa'a) (N)	Traditional Leader (HoA, TKN) (T)	UNDP, Government (National, Local) (G)	Community or NGO member (C)

Meeting Date:/01/2022..... Meeting Time: Meeting type: Online/In Person

Meeting Venue - if not online: (Village) (Island)

No	Full Name	M/F	Designation	I/N	T/G/C	Signature
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						



Communications Policy **GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS**

Effective: May 2018

Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that communication across the Public Sector is well coordinated, effectively managed and responsive to the diverse information needs of the public service and the public.

Scope

This policy applies to all public sector agencies to support effective communication internally and externally.

Communication under this policy includes:

- Internal and external communications
- Stakeholder engagement or public consultation
- Managing content on websites, social media and intranet
- Speaking to the media and at conferences or events
- Protocols for official functions or events
- Sponsorship

This policy excludes:

- Disaster or emergency communications – refer to National Disaster Risk Management Plan
- Responding to official information requests – refer to Official Information Requests Guide
- Managing official information – refer to Official Information Management Policy

Principles

The Public Service Act 2009 identifies the following values for public servants to adhere to:

Honesty	acting honestly, being truthful, and abiding by the laws of the Cook Islands
Impartiality	providing impartial advice, acting without fear or favour, and making decisions on their merits
Service	serving the people well through faithful service to the Government of the Cook Islands
Transparency	taking actions and making decisions in an open and transparent manner
Accountability	being able to explain the reason for actions taken and taking responsibility for those actions
Respect	treating the people, the Government of the Cook Islands and colleagues with courtesy and respect
Efficiency and Effectiveness	achieving good results for the Cook Islands in an economical way

Delivering information and meeting internal and external communication needs, efficiently and effectively, requires cooperation. Public servants must respect the rights of individuals to be informed and have access to relevant information for decision making in all communication activities.

The Official Information Act provides that all agencies must ensure the public have access to official information relating to public policies, programmes and services.

■

ANNEX 4: COOK ISLANDS NATIONAL POLICY TOOLKIT (PP18-21)



■