

Mid-Term Review



IMPLEMENTING AN INTEGRATED RIDGE TO REEF APPROACH TO ENHANCE ECOSYSTEM SERVICES, CONSERVE GLOBALLY IMPORTANT BIODIVERSITY AND TO SUSTAIN LOCAL LIVELIHOODS IN THE FSM

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Project Information

Project Title:	IMPLEMENTING AN INTEGRATED RIDGE TO REEF APPROACH TO ENHANCE ECOSYSTEM SERVICES, TO CONSERVE GLOBALLY IMPORTANT BIODIVERSITY AND TO SUSTAIN LOCAL LIVELIHOODS IN THE FSM			
GEF Project ID:	5517		<i>at endorsement (Million US\$)</i> ¹	<i>at Mid Term (Million US\$)</i>
UNDP Project ID:	5179	GEF financing:	\$4,689,815	\$4,689,815
Country:	Federated States of Micronesia	IA/EA own:		N/A
Region:	Pacific	Government:	11,386,398	N/A
Focal Area:	Multi-focal (Biodiversity + Land Degradation + Climate Change Mitigation => SFM + international Waters)	CSO:	\$6,500,000	N/A
FA Objectives, (OP/SP):	BD-1: Improve Sustainability of Protected Area Systems	Total co-financing:	Congressional Budget	\$4,042,558
	LD-3: Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider landscape		Compact Budget	\$5,748,877
	IW-1: Catalyze multi-state cooperation to balance conflicting water uses in transboundary surface and groundwater basins while considering climatic variability and change		Donor Funds	\$2,469,945
Executing Entity:	Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management	Total Project Cost:	\$22,576,213	\$17,373,278²
Other Partners involved:	Department of Resources & Development, Pohnpei State, Kosrae State, Chuuk State, Yap State, Local and International NGOs	ProDoc Signature (date project began):		November 2015
		Duration:		60 months
		Operational Closing Date:		November 2020

¹ From the ProDoc

² The latest financial data (June 2019) show that many of the NGOs have not met their pledges as they stipulated at the start of the project.

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ABS	Area of Biodiversity Significance
AG	Attorney General
BSAP	Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBO	Community-based organization
CCO	Community Conservation Officer
CCS	Chuuk Conservation Society
CEPF	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
CES	Cooperate Extension Service (FSM COM)
CHM	FSM Clearing-House Mechanism (FSM CHM)
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
COM	College of Micronesia
CSP	Conservation Society of Pohnpei
DFMC	Pohnpei State Division of Forestry and Marine Conservation
DFW	Pohnpei State Department of Public Safety's Division of Fish and Wildlife
DLNR	Pohnpei State Department of Land and Natural Resources
DLNR-F	Pohnpei State Department of Land and Natural Resources - Forestry Division
DREA	Department of Resources and Economic Affairs
DSAP	Development Sustainable Agriculture in the Pacific
DSS	Decision Support System
EBM	Ecosystem-Based Management
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FA	Farmer's Association
FIA	Forestry Inventory Assessment
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
FSP	Full Sized Project
FY	Fiscal Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF- UNEP	Global Environmental Facility – United Nations Environmental Programme
GIS	Geographic Information System
GLISPA	Global Island Partnership
IAS	Invasive Alien Species

IEMP	Integrated Environmental Management Plan
ILMP	Integrated Land Management Plan
IMS	Information Management System
INRM	Integrated Natural Resource Management
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IST	Invasive Species Taskforce
iSTOP	Invasive Species Taskforce of Pohnpei
IWRM	Integrated Water Resource Management
KCSO	Kosrae Conservation and Safety Organization
KIRMA	Kosrae Island Resources Management Authority
KLUP	Kosrae Land-use Plan
MC	Micronesia Challenge
MCT	Micronesia Conservation Trust
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Platform
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
MERIP	Marine and Environmental Institute of Pohnpei
MIC	Micronesians in Island Conservation
MINA	Micronesia (previously Mariana) Islands Nature Alliance
MIS	Management Information System
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MPAME	Marine Protected Area Management Effectiveness
MSP	Medium Size Project
NAP	National Action Plan
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCD	Non-Communicable Diseases
NDP	National Development Plan
NEMS	National Environmental Management Strategies
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NORMA	National Oceanic Resource Management Agency
NSWMS	National Solids Waste Management Strategy
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NSDS	National Sustainable Development Strategies
NTMPAs	No-take Marine Protected Areas
OEA	Office of Economic Affairs

OEEM	FSM Office of Environment and Emergency Management
OFA	Pohnpei State Office of Fisheries and Aquaculture
PAs	Protected Areas
PAC	Piggery Advisory Council
PACC	Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change
PAN	Protected Area Network
PB	Project Board
PFA	Pohnpei Farmers Association
PICs	Pacific Island Countries
PIMPAC	Pacific Islands Managed and Protected Areas Community
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
PPS	Plans, Programs & Strategies
PREL	Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
PRMC	Pohnpei Resource Management Committee
R&D	FSM Department of Resources and Development (FSM R&D)
R2R	Ridge-to-Reef
REA	Rapid Ecological Assessment
RMC	Resource Management Committee
RSTC	Regional Scientific and Technical Committee of the Pacific Island Community
SAP	Strategic Action Plan
SD	Sustainable Development
SDP	Sustainable Development Plan
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program
SRPD	UNDP's Sub Regional Programme Document
STAR	GEF System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) projects
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USFS	United States Forestry Service
WFR	Watershed Forest Reserve
Yap-CAP	Yap Conservation Program
YELA	Yela Environmental Landowners Authority

Executive Summary

Project Description & Overview

1. The Ridge to Reef Project (R2R) is a \$4.7 million Global Environment Facility (GEF) supported, Full-sized Project (FSP) whose objective is to *strengthen local, State and National capacities and actions to implement integrated ecosystem-based management through “ridge to reef” approach on the High Islands of the four States of the FSM*. To achieve the objective, the project focused on two main Components, which are essentially R2R’s expected outcomes:
 - ❖ **Outcome 1:** Integrated Ecosystems Management and Rehabilitation on the High Islands of the FSM to enhance Ridge to Reef Connectivity.
 - ❖ **Outcome 2:** Management Effectiveness enhanced within new and existing PAs on the High Islands of FSM as part of the R2R approach (both marine and terrestrial).
2. Together with the agreed co-financing of \$17.9 million United States dollars (USD), the original project budget total was \$22.6 million USD. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the GEF Agency, which executes the R2R project under UNDP’s direct execution (DEX) modality, with the FSM Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management (DECCEM), the key national executing partner. The project started in November 2015 and is scheduled to operate for 60 months, until it ends in November 2020.
3. According to GEF and UNDP evaluation policies, all GEF/funded FSPs must have an independent mid-term review (MTR) to evaluate actual performance and progress toward the expected results against project activities and outputs, based on pertinent evaluation criteria (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, results and sustainability) and the MTR was a planned activity of the monitoring and evaluation plan of the R2R project. Following the Terms of Reference (TORs), this MTR reviews the actual performance and progress toward results of the project against the planned project activities and outputs, based on the standard evaluation criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, results and sustainability.
4. The MTR not only assessed the degree to which the project has advanced toward achieving its expected outcomes and objectives, but it also identified relevant lessons from R2R and other similar projects, as well as whether any unanticipated results arose. The methodology was based on a participatory approach involving three elements: a) a desk review of available documentation; b) interviews with key project participants and beneficiaries; c) field visits to selected R2R project activities, which included several rapid underwater observations to examine the condition of several coastal-marine ecosystems and associated fish populations in Yap and Pohnpei. The MTR examined the available evidence from the start of R2R’s implementation in 2015 through June 2019, as well as pertinent issues that arose prior to R2R approval (project development process, overall design, risk assessment and monitoring and evaluation (M&E)). The desk review started in March 2019 and the review mission was carried out during the first two weeks of April and delays in receiving solicited information from the PIU and UNDP delayed the final report. However, this delay is viewed as being positive, as it allowed time to clarify several key issues and to review the final IEMP Report.
5. The **project relevance is considered highly satisfactory**, because R2R’s outcomes contribute to FSM’s national planning policy related to at least five important government Plans, Policies and Strategies, including the 2004-2023 Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and Protected Area (PA). Outcomes #1 and #2 are fully aligned with FSM’s Strategic Development Plan³ and the outdated National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan⁴ (NBSAP) of 2002, which are being

³ aims to “protect, conserve, and sustainably manage a full and functional representation of marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems”.

⁴ It envisions that *the FSM will have more extensive, diverse, and higher quality of marine, freshwater, and terrestrial ecosystems, which meet human needs and aspirations fairly, preserve and utilize traditional knowledge and practices, and fulfil the ecosystem functions necessary for all life on Earth*”

revised. R2R Outcome 2 specifically focuses on Ecosystem-Based Management (EBM) on the land Sustainable Land Management (SLM), and it also supports the Strategic Agrobiodiversity Theme that focuses on the conservation, sustainable agricultural use and the nation's development and the future food security. Furthermore, Outcome #2 contributes toward Strategic Goal⁵ by helping strengthen individual Protected Areas (PAs) and the Micronesia Challenge's efforts to create a regional Protected Area Network (PAN)⁶. The two outcomes also support NBSAP's aim to ensure that traditional resource owners and communities are fully involved in the protection, conservation, preservation and sustainable use of the nation's biodiversity.

6. R2R also supports NBSAP's Theme 10, which aims to mainstream biodiversity into all economic and social activities of the FSM by taking full account of impacts and their threats to sustainability. The project's conceptual approach to R2R management is innovative and it could offer new knowledge to the UNDP-GEF's R2R activities in the Pacific and other Integrated Land-Sea Island Management (ILSM) in the region, which currently lack critical assessments of ILSM implementation on island systems, despite a wide body of theoretical literature (Jupiter et al. 2018).
7. R2R is a GEF Multi-focal⁷ (Biodiversity + Land Degradation + Climate Change Mitigation => SFM + international Waters) project that addresses the UNDP Strategic Plan's primary outcome⁸: and UNDP's Sub Regional Programme Document (SRPD) aiming to improved resilience of Pacific Islands and Territories, with a particular focus on communities, through the integrated implementation of sustainable environmental management, climate change adaptation and/or mitigation and disaster risk.
8. Based on this updated information, at mid-term, *one-third of the budget has been spent*. If the approved expenditures are executed by December 2019, that amount will reach around 45%, leaving approximately \$2.1 million to spend in the final year. This is highly unlikely, unless the project is extended.
9. Despite its innovative approach, excellent analysis of the situation in FSM, the ProDoc's was overambitious, as confirmed by more than 25 stakeholders who are involved with R2R's implementation. Although the PIU and the State teams are performing well and turning out work of high quality, the evaluative evidence indicates that progress towards *Overall Project Achievement and Results* is **unsatisfactory**, which is largely attributed to an overambitious project, changes in most of the staff who were involved at inception and several challenges related to unacceptably slow disbursement rates, weak communication between the project and the executing agency, and numerous bottlenecks that have slowed the implementation of good technical recommendations on the one hand (e.g., guardhouse construction in Chuuk, capacity development for youth, managers, etc.), and making ad hoc technical decisions on the other. Thus, more weight must be given to recommended technical actions and less second guessing by the PIU and UNDP, unless there are obvious financial or technical reasons to question a proposal from one of the States. Otherwise it leads to frustration and it impedes applying adaptive management approaches to a quasi-experimental endeavor. These frustrations notwithstanding, most stakeholders remain engaged through an inclusive, transparent implementation approach, which bodes well for rallying around the MTR's recommendations for addressing those obstacles.

⁵ a full representation of FSMs marine, freshwater, and terrestrial ecosystems are protected, conserved, and sustainably managed, including selected areas designated for total protection.

⁶ i.e. building a representative PAN that can effectively conserve both biodiversity pattern and the ecological processes responsible for maintaining those patterns.

⁷ Its objectives include: i) Improve Sustainability of Protected Area Systems (BD1); ii) Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider landscape (LD3); and iii) Catalyze multi-state cooperation to balance conflicting water uses in transboundary surface and groundwater basins while considering climatic variability and change (IW1).

⁸ Growth and development are inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded

10. The FSM R2R project's **effectiveness** is also ***unsatisfactory*** at Mid-term, and the project is ***NOT*** on track to operationalize R2R's two component building blocks (the PAN and the IEMP⁹) by the end of the implementation period. Details are given in [Section 4 \(Table 3\)](#) of the main report presented herein.
11. Component 1, the backbone of the R2R process, aims to provide an operational framework for integrated strategic planning, policies and management targets, whose effectiveness will be measured by a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework and a Decision Support System (DSS) by tracking the implementation process and measuring effectiveness of the Integrated Environmental Management Plan (IEMP). A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) lays the foundation of the IEMP and it is the most cost- and time-intensive activity at mid-term.
12. The government and UNDP-Fiji were forced to reduce the scope significantly of the SEA-IEMP consultancy due to cost over-runs related to the high consultancy fees. This resulted in the planned work to be put on hold in three States, and Pohnpei State was selected for developing the model for SEAs, IEMPs and the M&E/DSS platforms to be replicated elsewhere in the future. The government has not been able to find the necessary funding to continue the work in the remaining States, and as a result, R2R will be unable to meet the overall objective, Outcome 1 and Outcome 2.1 without additional funding.
13. While the IEMP's strategy of implement plans at the municipal level is solid, the Final IEMP for Pohnpei is inadequate for several reasons that are grounded to a rapid theory of change the MTR applied to the final report: i) most of the proposed interventions are for achieving the preferred development scenario are 'soft' measures (e.g., emphasis on multiple public awareness campaigns raising, 'introduce' fines, ordinances, monitoring, web sites and newsletter, etc.); ii) mis-placed emphasis on low priority issues (e.g., an entire chapter on guidelines for tourism) at the expense of urgent sectoral threats; iii) an inadequate monitoring framework incapable of measuring intervention effectiveness and their attribution to observed changes; iv) non-SMART outcome indicators. [Annex 4c](#) summarizes many of these issues.
14. Interviews and ongoing discussions with the PIU and SEA Task Force members raise a far more important concern- it is highly unlikely that these important stakeholders the consultant's capacity-building efforts have not prepared them to implement, monitoring and adapt Pohnpei's IEMP as required over time.
15. The METT scores made available to the MTR showed no significant changes between 2015 and 2018, and most of the scores remained below the threshold for satisfactory protected area management. Exceptions were found in customary tenure management arrangements of protected mangrove-to-reef areas in two communities in Yap, and underwater observations by the evaluator confirmed qualitative differences in trophic structure in and outside the MPA boundaries. However, there is evidence that the scores for the several other marine protected areas were based on subjective judgments, because they do not reflect the empirical knowledge of scientists who have worked in those areas. While the METT provides a good measure of performance outputs (e.g., institutional arrangements, regulatory instruments, PA demarcation) and in general it did not reflect the results of *in situ* monitoring fish and ecosystem conditions documented in scientific publications. The MTR finds that the METT is just one link, and an important one, for constructing a causative results chain for measuring the progress R2R's efforts to achieve the desired social, environmental and economic outcomes.
16. Further, several critical risks were neither identified nor mitigated. The biggest environmental and social (food security) risks facing R2R are related to the widespread night spearfishing on the reefs, which has decimated fish populations ([IAS 2018](#)) and resulted in declining marine ecosystem conditions on coral reefs throughout the country ([Houk et al. 2015](#)). Other risks that were not identified in the ProDoc include the rapidly expanding and unsustainable practice of planting

⁹ This was a decision made by the Steering Committee in November 2018.

economically valuable sakau in vulnerable watersheds and the widespread overfishing in coastal lagoons, channels and coral reefs, which are reducing ecosystem conditions and threatening food security for future generations. The significant delays in disbursements tied to FSM's problematic FSM financial disbursement process represent another risk that remains without mitigation.

17. Although the PIU and its partners in the States have been forced into a risky reactive, rather than a proactive approach to adapt to multiple obstacles, the Annual Quarterly Reports do a good job of summarizing the adaptive measures taken to follow up on the annual PIRs and how the project dealt with specific issues raised by the State Coordinators. Thus, the application of AM is considered to be ***moderately unsatisfactory***. Achieving the project's overall stated objective is a long-term goal that will require major adjustments and the continued engagement of the multiple stakeholders who form the foundation of R2R, and conducting a Theory of Change training session focused on the ProDoc's log Frame and incorporating these kinds of examples could help R2R apply a more systematic AM approach for the remaining implementation period.
18. Although R2R project has contributed to build stakeholder capacities on many fronts, there are at least three key issues require attention, including: i) strengthening government capacities institutional capacities to mainstream long-term environmental-economic and climate change considerations and good practices from the project, especially for implementing, monitoring and adapting the Pohnpei IEMP, as needed; ii) improving the capacities of central and state financial management efficiency and catalyzing the disbursement process (FSM and UNDP) so that the project can deliver its final activities in a timely manner; and iii) building capacity to close the scientific research - implementation gap in a way that the data are analyzed and transformed into an easy-to-understand format (e.g., stoplights) that is accessible to policy and decision-makers, as well as resource users through an operational Decision Support Platform. This is essential for closing the wide *knowing-doing* gap that characterizes the project.
19. The PIU has worked diligently to adapt to multiple obstacles and the solutions have been well-documented (primarily in Quarterly Reports) throughout the project. However, adaptive management has been reactive, rather than applied proactively and systematically, and this is attributed to an incomplete list of assumptions about the R2R model and the limited number of risks and mitigation measures presented in the ProDoc.
20. This notwithstanding, there are several highlights of the project that include:
 - ✓ National PAN Law and Policy framework approved (a *deliverable*)¹⁰
 - ✓ Seven PAs (4 marine+2 terrestrial) demarcated in Yap & Chuuk, while one has been gazetted¹¹ (*deliverables*)
 - ✓ Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for Pohnpei State and scoping studies for the other three States;
 - ✓ Yap community based MPAs demarcation (3) from M2R (down to 300 ft. isopleth);
 - ✓ Demarcation of 8 MPAs in Chuuk (*in the process*)
 - ✓ Reef monitoring, fish and inverts ongoing (*Critical for measuring changing baselines*);
 - ✓ Excellent 3-D model in Kitti Municipality;
 - ✓ Pilot dry piggeries on two islands¹² that offer valuable comparisons of the pros and cons of the expensive versus low cost/tech methods.
21. Process-oriented outputs include:

¹⁰ Since the beginning of the project, Kosrae and Pohnpei already had their respective PAN laws in place. In October 2017, through the support of key partners i.e. MCT, TNC and others, Chuuk's PAN was signed into law. Yap has yet to endorse its PAN law due to legal complications.

¹¹ The Malem PA in Kosrae has been gazetted through partnership with KSCO in Kosrae. Yap and Chuuk activities include demarcation through installation of beacon lights. R2R is currently working with the Micronesia Challenge (MC), Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT) and the Nature Conservancy (TNC) to verify legal status of existing PAs in the FSM. Once the list is finalized, the project will be able to provide verification on legal status of the 27 existing PA sites. Verification of the proposed new PA sites is also ongoing, though it is anticipated that additional sites may be selected outside of the identified 40 PAs for support by the project.

¹² are ongoing only in two States (Kosrae and Pohnpei). Chuuk and Yap have yet to begin the necessary construction work.

- New knowledge on the management of coastal marine resources at the different levels of the State, local governments, NGOs, communities;
 - Teams from the FSM States trained in SEA scoping;
 - A team in Pohnpei trained to make 3D land-use and ecosystem threat models in other states for a significantly reduced fee;
 - Equal representation between males and females in decision making bodies.
22. However, at mid-term, the likelihood of ***sustainability is unlikely*** unless the Project logframe and the IEMP are adjusted by applying Theories of Change analyses, mitigating the identified risks (Section 5), operationalizing the proposed Pohnpei IEMP (which is considered to be far from being Final) and introducing more proactive and robust interventions whose effectiveness can be tracked by the M&E platform and inform decision makers about the progress and shortcomings via the DSS.
23. Key recommendations for this MTR report are shown below, and they are followed by the table with the summary of the overall MTR ratings. A more detailed version of the table is presented at the end of this report and in Annex 6.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	WHO
1 Apply Theory of Change (ToC) to adjust the ProDoc Logframe and operationalize the IEMP	
<u>Immediately</u> develop a TOC for the ProDoc logframe & final IEMP submitted by the SEA consultant with a results chain built on SMART outcome indicators, robust assumptions and risk reducing mitigation measures to improve environmental, social & institutional sustainability.	PIU & SC, TACs
2 Reduce activities and prioritize post-MTR Actions based on an Exit Strategy	
<u>Immediately</u> initiate discussions and a plan for action to scale back unachievable targets (e.g. # PAs), replicate good practices (e.g., PA boundaries, DLPs) and focus on activities that will verifiably contribute to action stipulated in the IEMP(s), and harmonize with an Exit Strategy.	PIU, SC & TACs
3 Operationalize IEMP(s) and DSS	
<u>Immediately initiate discussions</u> with UNDP, the State and National Governments, and develop an action plan and adequate budget for State-specific SEAs and the corresponding IEMPs will be completed. Examine the economic costs of the business as usual scenario by hiring an ecological economist to value ecosystem services and lost opportunity costs to FSM. This should only be considered if the project is given the recommended no-cost time extension.	PIU, UNDP, DECEM, Marine Resources
4 Re-assess financial costs and seek sources to fund the remaining SEAs-IEMPS	
<u>By September 2019</u> , report on the economic feasibility and potential funding sources to conduct SEAs and IEMPs, as well as the M&E and DSS platforms in all States.	PIU, SC, DECEM, Marine Resources
5. Narrow the Research-implementation Gap, update outcome indicators & METT	
<u>Prior to any new biological monitoring efforts</u> begin, ensure existing and future scientific data supported by R2R is made accessible to non-scientists (e.g., simple stoplight dashboards) to contribute toward increasing knowledge /learning networks that are available for stakeholders to reduce priority threats, initiate a participatory M&E process involving stakeholders-beneficiaries in R2R target areas; eliminate indicators that are unable to inform decision- & policy-making. METT for 2015 and 2018 should be quality assured, and revised to ensure objectivity, and applied as an output in a causative results chain linked to these outcomes, and link to M&E and CDSS platforms.	PIU, SC & TACs; DECEM, Marine resources; Univ. Guam, all NGOs with monitoring activities funded by R2R
6 Strengthen Collaborative Management & Enforcement using a modular approach	
<u>Immediately</u> strengthen collaborative enforcement capabilities coastal-marine PAs by initiating <i>participatory outcome monitoring</i> and adaptive co-management through applied, <i>in situ</i> training and providing basic equipment to support comanagers, and link to Recommendation #7. Most importantly, strengthen management in areas where leadership or social cohesion are lacking, as this may be a critical step to advance conservation. Support efforts to develop National and State policies to strengthen key	PIU, SC & TACs; Univ. Guam, all NGOs with monitoring activities funded by R2R

social structure features (e.g., social cohesion, leadership) to improve fisheries management and social-ecological resilience.

7 Develop, upscale and replicate quasi-experimental management interventions

Within 3 months, shift capacity development and theoretical discussions to action-oriented efforts promoting well-designed experimental, outcome-oriented management interventions to reduce priority threats to R2R ecosystems (overfishing, deforestation, pollution). Examine good practices developed by NGOs and private sector as alternatives to unsustainable practices and raise awareness about them, and consider building a toolbox of such good practices that could be replicated in other parts of FSM. Build capacities to measure the degree to which outcomes are attributable to interventions and apply to M&E and DSS platforms (Recommendations #3 &4). This could be a catalyzing effect to speed up action oriented to improving performance.

PIU, SC & TACs;
NGOs, private
sector

8 Strengthen R2R Coordination & Communication

Immediately take actions to improve intra- and extra-institutional (UNDP) coordination by holding tri-monthly PIU-TAC meetings to review advances toward revised targets and good practices to be institutionalized, hiring a technical liaison to support PIU in each State and bi-monthly PIU-UNDP Skype to discuss action on bottlenecks for R2R-FSM in meeting targets.

PIU, SC, TACs &
UNDP

9 Consider engaging a Technical Mentor for the remaining R2R implementation period

Immediately discuss the feasibility of hiring a part-time CTA assist the PIU and TACs implement the actions recommended herein, and any new initiatives that are considered to be feasible.

GEF-RTA, PIU,
SC

10 Improve Communication between FSM and UNDP

Take immediate action to improve communication between PIU and UNDP and improve the flow of financial disbursements in a timelier manner to reduce delays in R2R implementation.

PIU, DoF and
UNDP

11 Improve Disbursement efficiency between DoF, SGF and all R2R activities

By September 2019, develop a plan of action with DoF to address the slow disbursement process¹³. This should also apply to improving the efficiency of the GEF Small Grants Fund (SGF) and harmonize them with Recommendation #1 to support experimental management interventions in priority areas to expedite approval and disbursement rates.

PIU, SC, DoF,
SGF

12 Consider a 12-18 month no-cost extension with a clear exit strategy & safeguards assessment

A 12-18 month, no-cost extension should be discussed between DECEM, the PIU and the UNDP, as it will allow stakeholders sufficient time to incorporate the recommendations presented herein and help put R2R on a more direct path toward achieving the overall objective. Developing an exit strategy should be a prerequisite for such an extension (see Recommendation #1).

FSM,
SC, DECEM,
GEF-RTA and
UNDP

13 Consider including a ToC at Inception and environmental-social safeguards monitoring

Future GEF projects should ensure that an experienced Theory of Change/ Results-based facilitator is present during inception workshops to scrutinize and realign ProDoc Logframes, as required. A framework for monitoring GEF's environmental and social safeguards must also be included.

UNDP-GEF, FSM
GEF Focal Points

24. The Table below summarizes the overall ratings for the project at Mid Term. Details are given in [Table 6](#) at the end of the report.

¹³ It is unlikely that a decentralized approach at the State levels is an option, because contracts are another option, and the same arrangement applies there as well – the PIU must still sign the agreement with State government for certain deliverables.

Table 1. Overall ratings¹⁴ for the project at Mid Term

Project Component or Objective	Rating	Achievement Description
Project Strategy		NA
Progress towards results	Objective achievement U	<p>Progress is Moderately unsatisfactory, mainly because at midterm, there are few management interventions that can demonstrate measurable changes in the pressures caused by unsustainable practices. The project is far from meeting its objective for multiple reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The heavy emphasis on capacity building has been decoupled from the important management interventions to address the threats to the R2R pilot sites. The project is far from upscaling and replicating the limited number of interventions and after 3 years, there are few concrete actions after three years of implementation) and what has been accomplished is limited for making the kinds of major changes required to reduce unsustainable practices. While considerable biological monitoring data have been collected, they mainly serve academic research interests, with little attention paid to how the data can be transformed into simple evidence-based decision-making. • Delays and the slow pace of disbursements created by centralized and inconsistent financial administration procedures within DOF has resulted in high levels of unpredictability regarding the procurement of fixed assets and other R2R payments. This has created considerable frustration among all stakeholders and contractors.
	Outcome 1: <i>Integrated Ecosystems Management and Rehabilitation on the High Islands of the FSM to enhance Ridge to Reef Connectivity</i>	<p>While the SEA-IEMP comprise the major activities for Component 1, most work was invested in producing a comprehensive SEA, while a disproportionately small investment was made in developing an operational IEMP. The recommended management and policy actions are weak (it lacks a Theory of change, SMART indicators are lacking, as are assumptions and mitigation measures to reduce the overall risks to different elements of sustainability). A real concern is the weak monitoring approach, which lacks the <i>evaluation</i> and <i>learning</i> dimension that not only drive adaptive management, but which are essential for measuring effectiveness and learning from mistakes, while building on successes. Finally, there is no mention of the DSS, which is considered to be fundamental for providing evidence to decision and policymakers so they can prioritize threats along the R2R continuum, to capture lessons and good practices. As mentioned earlier, the scope of the interventions to address the multiple threats facing the resilience of critical ecosystems along the R2R continuum is very limited and not designed in a way that they can be replicable, nor metrics that for measuring the desired changes,</p>
	Outcome 2: <i>Management Effectiveness enhanced within new and existing PAs on the High Islands of FSM as part of the R2R approach (both marine and terrestrial)</i>	<p>R2R has taken a passive approach to allow PA management to develop by letting stakeholders move at their own contextual pace). However, at midterm, there are still major obstacles to operationalizing the PAN in all states, especially in Chuuk and it is time to drive the process more diligently. However, there have been some excellent community-based enforcement of PA regulations in Yap, but these have been undermined by incongruent national legislation, which must urgently be harmonized. Most of the selected indicators are inadequate for reasons ranging from them not being SMART, are not amenable to operationalizing the DSS. The PA component suffers from many of the same problems listed for the IEMP. There has also been much capacity building with little focus on applications. The interventions are limited in scope and with few exceptions, they are not sufficiently robust to have a major impact. However simple things like marker boundaries and</p>

¹⁴ Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU) The objective/outcome is expected to achieve its end-of-project targets with major shortcomings. Unsatisfactory (U) The objective/outcome is expected not to achieve most of its end-of-project targets. Highly Unsatisfactory (HU) The objective/outcome has failed to achieve its midterm targets, and is not expected to achieve any of its end-of-project targets.

	MU	ights are extremely important as was found on Yap. Beacuse of these accomplishments, the MTR rates Component 2 as Moderately unsatisfactory, beacuse there is hope that these issues can be addressed during teh final implementaton period.
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	MU	<p>Implementation has been slow and R2R is far behind in meeting the logframe indicators at mid-term. .Further, the M&E tracking followed the Logframe, even though the indicators are not SMART, baselines are not updated, many of the METT scores are suspected of being subjective and not a reflection of real conditions according to experts who have worked in those areas. . This is because the PIU has faced multiple obstacles that the project did not foresee during inception and through no fault of their own, the PIU worked hard, but the delays have contributed to repeated delays that have led to multiple setbacks in meeting the implementation schedule, because of it. The aforementioned delays and the slow pace of disbursements created by centralized and inconsistent financial administration procedures within DOF, resulting in high levels of unpredictability regarding the timing of the procurement of fixed assets and other R2R payments. This has resulted in considerable frustration among all stakeholders and contractors. The slow pace of developing management interventions (there are few concrete actions after three years of implementation), the collection of considerable biological monitoring data that mainly serves research interests, with little attention paid to how the data can be used for evidence-based decision-making. Root causes include the continued gap in FSM’s operational and overarching framework for promoting sustainable development on the High Islands, and the slow pace of change and the adaptive management tools that could help create a more dynamic approach is one reason for this low rating.</p> <p>Although the Quarterly reports have carefully described adaptive management measures, the project has repeatedly been forced to deal with unforeseen problems and surprises in a reactive, rather than proactive manner that comes from applying adaptive management and systematically capturing lessons and good practices. One of the reasons for this weakness is that the original assumptions are superficial, and this limits the ability to test the validity of robust assumptions regarding about the innovative R2R development model in a culturally and institutionally complex, 4-State setting. Further, the risks and their corresponding mitigation measures presented in the ProDoc are weak and rather than testing the effectiveness of robust risk-reducing measures, the project has been in a continuous reactive mode that has created inefficiency and frustration. The MTR raises concerns about the degree to which the IEMP is operational and with which the Task force and pertinent stakeholders are able to move the process forward using a systematic approach to adaptive management. Evidence indicates that this capacity is weak at present.</p>
Sustainability SCORE =1	Financial sustainability HU	While the short-term outlook is favorable, it is unclear how the government will support the project after the Compact ends in 2023. This is especially a concern given the significant budget cutbacks the government has made for the environment sector and the failure of the government to meet the annual contributions stipulated for supporting SM and PA management could be interpreted as a lack of political will, especially since large financial support was redirected to developing new infrastructure projects when the national EIA process is weak.
	Socio-political sustainability MU	Despite the stated goal of improving the lives of R2R communities, the project has only left a small social footprint in the communities with some intermittent and small-scale interventions (e.g., SLPs) and interviews suggested that many beneficiaries do not see more than just capacity building coming from the project, but no tangible social or economic benefits for them. The political gap between the support for the project as a source of funds and actions for sustaining it is wide, largely due to a lack of a good communication strategy that targets politicians, resource users and school children. Gender issues are well represented, and women are especially placed in leadership roles within the project organization. To ensure equal representation between males and females, R2R has included women in the SC and State TACs (Chuuk,

		Kosrae and Yap). But there really hasn't been any monitoring done to see any changes in female and male beneficiaries.
	Institutional and governance sustainability HU	The top-down and centralized governability approach that is presently employed by the National government represents a barrier to developing interactive governance processes at the state and community levels. Policies, legislation and the predominantly western judicial system that has been increasingly adopted by the National government tends to undermine customary tenure and effective management in Yap, and in some cases in Chuuk, which have much to offer in terms of good practices that could be replicated in the rest of FSM.
	HU	Until management interventions targeting unsustainable practices are scaled up (e.g., DLP, sustainable forest management, reducing illegal and juvenile overfishing on the reefs), the project is unlikely to sustain the good initiatives laid out in the ProDoc and by stakeholders. AS fishing pressure continues, marine ecosystem conditions deteriorate, while clearing for sakau and other cash crops is resulting in heavy losses of topsoil via landslide and erosion which is blanketing aquatic and marine habitats downstream. Pollution remains a serious threat to lagoons and channels in Yap and Pohnpei.,
Overall Project Achievement and Incipient impacts	U	

1. Introduction – Evaluation Scope & Methodology

25. In compliance with UNDP and GEF policies, this report summarizes the results of the mid-term review (MTR) carried out three-year into the 60-month implementation of the Full-sized GEF project entitled Implementing an Integrated Ridge to Reef Approach (R2R) to Enhance Ecosystem Services, to Conserve Globally Important Biodiversity and to Sustain Local Livelihoods in the FSM. Based on standard evaluation criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, results and sustainability, the report presented herein reviews the actual performance and progress toward results, against the planned activities and results. It follows the ToR given to the consultant as part of his contract ([Annex 8](#)).
26. In October 2012, UNDP adopted and launched its new Biodiversity Strategy, “The Future We Want: Biodiversity and Ecosystems – Driving Sustainable Development” at the 11th Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Under this new strategy, UNDP will work with governments to find new ways to finance biodiversity management through domestic revenue, innovative financial mechanisms, and donor funding from a range of sources. The Ridge to Reef Project is closely aligned with and supports implementation of the UNDP Biodiversity strategy through the strategy’s three focus areas or signature programs: 1) Integrating biodiversity and ecosystem management into development planning and production sector activities; 2) Unlocking the potential of protected areas so that they are better managed and financed, and can contribute to sustainable development; and 3) Managing and rehabilitating ecosystems for adaptation to and mitigation of climate change. UNDP has been supporting numerous protected areas strengthening projects in Asia and the Pacific on PA estate expansion and management, in partnership with the GEF.
27. UNDP’s work on improving governance of international waters incorporates both freshwater and marine water bodies and has for some time applied a R2R approach recognizing the freshwater-marine continuum and important linkages between upstream water and land management and the health and integrity of downstream coastal and marine ecosystems. Underscoring this approach is UNDP’s poverty reduction mandate and commitment to preserving and enhancing food security and livelihoods of the nearly 2 billion people who depend on healthy, functioning marine and freshwater ecosystems. In terms of implementing GEF IW projects, UNDP has consistently delivered results through a broad range of GEF International Waters projects with two highly satisfactory interventions in the Pacific for IWRM as well as collective management of the Southern Pacific Warm Water Pool and its valuable tuna resources with UNDP providing vital technical, financial and capacity building support for the establishment of the world’s first post UN Fish Stocks conservation and management organization for highly migratory fish stocks, the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.

The review assesses the degree to which the project has achieved the anticipated results, based on expected outputs and outcomes and objectives, unanticipated results, provide feedback and relevant lessons, and it provides a basis for decision-making on necessary adjustments and improvements that must be taken to bring the project on the most efficient and effective path to meeting the overall objective during the remaining time for R2R implementation and early signs of potential impacts and sustainability of results, including the contribution to capacity development and the achievement of global environmental goals. The review also examined the degree to which R2R integrated gender considerations based, as set for the by the GEF’s *Guidance*

to Advance Gender Equality in GEF Projects and Programs (GEF 2018)¹⁵, as well as assessing the role that women play in the overall facilitation of the implementation process. Given the short time for conducting interviews across four culturally distinct and geographically dispersed High Islands, the consultant was only able to employ an aggregated approach to the data analysis.

28. The intended users of this MTE are the PIU, the Steering Committee, State and National Actors and beneficiary communities on each island. Finally, it examines the degree to which the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) operationalizes the results of the analysis of the prioritized scoping components in the Integrated Land Management Plans (subsequently re-named to Integrated Environmental Management Plans) and the Decision-Support System (DSS) deliverable, which is stipulated in the ProDoc.
29. Besides assessing the principle GEF evaluation criteria, the MTE provides the required ratings for project design and implementation, and where pertinent, it assesses the project within the context of key GEF operational principles, including country engagement and stakeholder ownership, as summarized in [Annex 1](#). The review at mid-term also provides the project with an opportunity for the project to retroactively review the indicators and assess the relevance of R2R's targets, and the likelihood that they can be achieved within the remaining time for implementation.
30. The evaluation methodology was based on evaluative evidence gathered from a participatory approach employing mixed methods: i) a desk review of relevant documentation (including available SEA reports, meeting minutes, etc.) and relevant published scientific articles; ii) interviews with key project participants and stakeholders; and iii) field visits to each of the four States and different sites within and outside the R2R continuum¹⁶. The desk review commenced in late March, while the field visits took place during the first two weeks of April 2019. [Annex 2](#) provides a list of the key stakeholders and beneficiaries with whom the evaluator met during the field mission¹⁷. The answers to five Key Evaluation Questions (EQs), their corresponding Judgment Criteria (JC), Indicators (I) and supporting evidence are summarized in [Annex 7](#).
31. All evaluations face time- and resources-related challenges for adequately collecting and documenting evaluative evidence and this was especially the case with covering 4 states by limited air traffic between High Islands that are more than 3000 km apart in the Pacific Ocean in two weeks before Easter vacation, but the tremendous organization by the PIU and the State Coordinators were key factors in making it possible.

2. Project Overview and Development Context

A. Development Context

32. The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) comprise an independent and sovereign island-nation consisting of four States spread across the Western Pacific Ocean (from west to east): Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae (Figure 1). Together, the States comprise 607 islands that stretch longitudinally over 1 million mi² of the western Pacific Ocean and 1,200 miles wide, located

¹⁵ Specific questions included: How R2R's products, services, policy measures respond to women's and men's different concerns and needs; The degree to which it is necessary to specify outputs separately for men and women; the degree to which outcomes address the different gender needs; The degree to which outcomes have a specific gender dimension; the degree to which R2R contributes to the overall goal of gender equality and women's empowerment; and the degree to which outcomes foster improvements for both women and men?

¹⁶ This included visits to several mangrove sites, snorkeling in backreef lagoons and SCUBA exploration of several fore-reefs, all of which provided an *in situ* understanding of the degree to which trophic structure is sufficiently resilient to continue providing ecosystem services

¹⁷ NOTE: The list will be updated in the Final Report.

between 6 and 10 degrees north of the equator. The combined land area the FSM [High Islands and Atolls] is approximately 728 km² with 2,700,000 km² of EEZ in the Pacific Ocean. The total area of High Island is approximately 658 km² (Yap 97 km², Chuuk 95 km², Pohnpei 358 km² and Kosrae 110 km²).

33. Of the total population of 103,000, 50% live on Chuuk, 33% on Pohnpei, 10% in Yap and the rest in Kosrae. The Human Development Index (HDI) value for 2012 was 0.645 – placing it in the medium human development category – 117 out of 187 countries and territories. Micronesia receives guaranteed funds (approximately \$130 million annually until 2023) under a compact with the USA, which are invested in education, health, infrastructure, public sector capacity building, private sector development, and environmental management.
34. FSM's agriculture sector comprised a major part of the economy, most of which is subsistence agriculture that is not recorded in the GDP (60% of FSM's population is dependent on subsistence farming and fishing), but swine production constitutes the primary livestock industry - pigs playing an important part in local culture. It also receives income from the sale of fishing licenses to foreign fleets operating in its EEZ and there is an emerging tourism industry in some States, and the US has created a Trust Fund providing long-term financial sustainability of the country after 2023
35. The oceanic islands of the FSM are critical storehouses of biodiversity and endemism, which are of special importance considering their relatively small size. It forms part of two Global-200 WWF ecoregions, namely the Yap Tropical Dry Forest¹⁸ and the Caroline Tropical Moist Forest Ecoregion in Kosrae¹⁹, Pohnpei²⁰, Chuuk and the easternmost islets of Yap State. These islands contain some of the lowest elevation cloud forests in the world, as they thrive on the unique combination of relatively high rainfall and volcanic soils 450 meters above mean sea level. Along the ocean, the country's coastline covers some 6,100 km of the territory, with an estimated 14,517 km² fringing and/or barrier coral reefs are home to nearly 1000 species of fish and over 350 hard coral species.
36. Island and marine ecosystems provide coastal protection, food security and livelihoods for most citizens. The resilience of these important livelihoods, food security and climate adaptation benefits are further reinforced by the mangrove forests and backreef lagoons that serve as nursery areas for many marine species and they are protecting the high volcanic islands against flooding and erosion. Most of the inhabitants of these small islands depend on natural resources for their food, livelihoods, and traditions. However, these resources are threatened by pressure from rapid



Figure 1. Map showing the location of the 4 States of the Federated States of Micronesia.

¹⁸ Yap's Forests and savannas support a number of endemic plant species, including *Drypetes yapensis*, *Drypetes carolenensis*, *Trichospermum kutai*, *Hedyotis yapensis*, *Timonius albus*, *Myrtella bennigseniana*, *Casearia cauliflora*, and *Dentaphalangium volkensii*. The large tree *Serianthes kanehirae* and the distinctive tree *Garcinia rumiyo* are endemic to Yap and Palau.

¹⁹ Kosrae's Yela valley contains the largest remaining ka (*Terminalia carolinensis*) forest in the Pacific. Loss and degradation of these forest ecosystems continues due to development and other factors. For example, illegal cultivation of sakau (kava) in Pohnpei's watershed forest because of the rich soil and unique climate results in forest loss and loosening of the soil, which also leads to landslides during heavy rainfalls.

²⁰ Pohnpei's Nanmeir en Salapwuk Valley holds what is considered to be the largest intact lowland tropical forest in the Pacific outside of Hawaii.

population growth, overharvest, habitat destruction, changing cultural practices, invasive species and climate change.

37. The governability structures are such that each State has a high level of autonomy, while the legislative and institutional framework is underscribed by National and individual State constitutions. This structure makes it a prerogative of each State to enact its own legislation in line with their powers as mentioned in the FSM constitution in terms of sustainable development, land management and conservation. The overarching constitution clarifies the National and State Government's roles in implementing the FSM's obligations under the CBD and UNCCD. However, the primary responsibility for land management, natural resource management, and development planning rests with the four individual States of the FSM. Each State takes the lead role to ensure that development is avoided in vulnerable areas and ensuring critical natural systems are protected. Although there is still much to be done, most of the States have made initial efforts to guide sustainable development through the creation of Land Use Plans, Coastal Zone Plans; National Forest Management and Agriculture Strategic Action Plans.
38. The above notwithstanding, national environmental policies and the pertinent legal framework are incongruent with customary tenure rules that govern community allocation, use, access, and transfer of land and other natural resources, all of which have been identified as key attributes of effective management effectiveness attributes ([Aswani et al. 2007](#)). Experience has shown that when customary resource management systems are undermined and weakened, the authority is engulfed by statutory systems that are either ill-suited to manage the complex issues in local communities, or lack the capacity to deal effectively with communities that are far from the central government. Customary marine tenure helps explain why Yap MPAs are among the best in Micronesia ([Houk et al. 2015](#)) even though fish assemblage condition differed substantially across the island ([Johnson 2017](#)).
39. The FSM Environmental Management and Sustainable Development Council (SDC) was established in 1992 as an interdepartmental and cross-sectoral advisory board established by the President and chaired by the Vice President of the nation. The National Environmental Management Strategies (NEMS) – the nation's first documented environmental strategy were formulated and launched in 1993 providing a national framework for the FSM to adopt sustainable approaches in addressing several key environmental issues which pose pressing threats to sustainable land management. It adopted a holistic approach in creating cooperation between government agencies to work together towards managing the priority SLM issues. Political commitment was necessary through the development of these policies.
40. In 2003, the FSM completed a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), whose goal is to protect and sustainably manage a full representation of the country's marine, freshwater, and terrestrial ecosystems. The FSM government, university scientists, the U.S. Forest Service, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and local experts drafted "A blueprint for conserving the biodiversity of the Federated States of Micronesia" (the FSM blueprint) that aimed to address NBSAP's goal, and they identified 130 areas of biodiversity significance (ABS), including 86 coastal and marine sites comprising 260,948 ha (over 1,007 mi²).
41. In 2003, the FSM also completed a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), with the goal of protecting and sustainably managing a full representation of the country's marine, freshwater, and terrestrial ecosystems. The FSM government, the U.S. Forest Service, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), university scientists and local experts also drafted "A blueprint for conserving the biodiversity of the Federated States of Micronesia" (the FSM blueprint) in order to begin to address this goal. They identified 130 areas of biodiversity significance (ABS) - 86 coastal and marine sites comprising 260,948 ha (over 1,007 mi²) were identified nationwide.
42. In 2005, the Conservation Society of Pohnpei (CSP) led a Rapid Ecological Assessment to assess the existing MPAs and identified new sites based on habitat types and threat status, and two important conservation bills that added four new PAs (including over 1500 ha of reefs and

mangroves) for Pohnpei were signed into law in 2011. Although the law significantly increased the biodiversity (BD) conservation coverage in Pohnpei and Kosrae approved its Protected Area System (PAS), most MPAs that have been designated by island communities are still not recognized under the PAS due to complications with land tenure and boundary issues. All MPAs in Chuuk and Yap MPAs are community-based.

43. One of the most significant threats to marine biodiversity, food security and efforts to adapt to climate change impacts relates to widespread overfishing, especially nighttime spearfishing²¹. Marine areas at the outer limits of the R2R project are seriously overfished (Rhodes et al. 2018) and their historical trophic structures have been altered (Rhodes et al. 2015, 2017; Houk et al. 2015). These are main cause of coral reef degradation throughout the country, and their resilience is uncoupled by land-based sedimentation and pollution (Houk et al. 2015) stressors that weaken the corals' fitness, while permits are issued to dredge critical mangrove nursery and reproduction habitats. Stringent permit requirements and effective enforcement are virtually nonexistent, and there has been little action by the government to turn this situation around.
44. Chronic stressors such as overfishing, pollution and unsustainable coastal development can prolong downstream mangrove, coral reef and fishery recovery rates, while continuously driving reduced ecosystem resilience, are must be primary targets of project like R2R. However, management interventions are complicated because the contributions from individual stressors are difficult to distinguish (Houk et al. 2015), and until their root causes are addressed, they will continue to reduce the fitness of many FSM mangrove-reef ecosystems at a time when the government has cut back on funding to confront the intensification of these stressors. This situation is further exacerbated by climate-related impacts that are increasingly warming and acidifying marine waters that are at the heart of Micronesian societies.
45. Despite good scientific data on variable coral reef condition, fish abundance and diversity, there remains a wide gap between abundant and high-quality scientific monitoring data and their accessibility to managers, decision-makers and policymakers to implement the changes to turn around multiple threats to R2R ecosystems. For example, there are no policies to halt overfishing.
46. These institutional weaknesses and the apparent lack of political interest are also resulting in widespread deforestation (especially on Pohnpei, due *sakau* cultivation) is resulting in serious erosion that has caused landslides during heavy rainfalls and the resulting runoff delivers heavy loads of suspended sediments that are fill in the lagoons and channels in Pohnpei and Yap, while reducing fitness in reef-building corals (MTR, personal observations)²². Figure 2 shows the extent of the areas where erosion rates are most critical (red and orange) on Pohnpei, and this presents a serious risk to mangrove forests, coastal lagoons and coral reefs that are experiencing increasing suspended sediment levels that are altering the resilience of these critical ecosystems (Figure 3).
47. Despite the multiple threats to FSM, neither the current protected area network (PAN), nor the approach to SLM are effectively conserving biodiversity patterns and ecological processes in the FSM. While the number of protected areas has grown over the past decade, the government has shown little support in providing the necessary resources for sustaining donor supported actions like those of the GEF, the Packard Foundation and the Micronesia Challenge (MC) project supporting a regional PAN. However, the government has been ineffective in protecting BD

²¹ To illustrate this point, one fishery scientist with more than 20 years' experience in FSM stated that the because the high demand for domestically consumed fish in FSM, fishers prefer to hunt sleeping fish at night with a flashlight and spear gun, wiping out future generations. The result is that from 1970, fishers have reduced bumphead parrotfish populations by over 70%, and while Pohnpei has a "thriving coral reef fishery that is poorly documented, infrequently monitored, marginally managed, it is experiencing unsustainable levels of fishing".

²² Pathogens and nutrients transported in these waters also create conditions that make coral more vulnerable to lethal diseases and boring sponges that reduce resilience to natural and human-induced changes. Diseased corals were observed on several reefs in Pohnpei (Manta Reef) and Yap. However, it has been difficult to locate maps that delimit the boundaries of the High Island catchments, nor baselines for seasonal river flow and sediment loads.

throughout the country and *most protected areas are only protected on paper* (interviews, [Annex 7](#)).

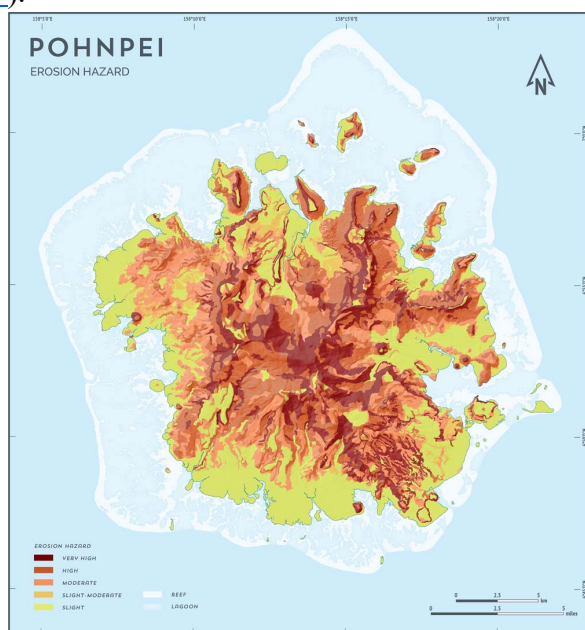


Figure 2. Erosion hazards in Pohnpei (Source: islandatlas.org)

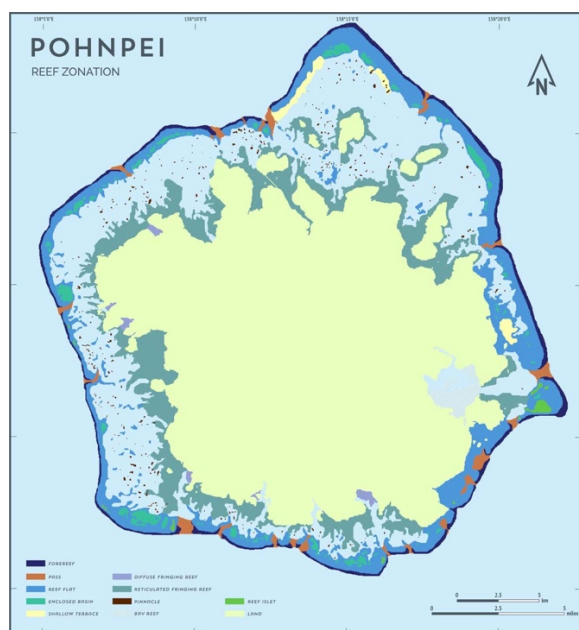


Figure 3. Coral reefs, backreef lagoons and mangroves along the coast. (Source: islandatlas.org)

48. As one interviewee stated, *we need to double, triple and quadruple our efforts to confront this decline, but now the government has cut back on the very kinds of funding that could help the country, while donor funds are running out, while others have left after frustration with the government's apparent lack of concern for this dire situation that affects our families today, and future generations are not yet born into the world.*

B. Concept Development and Project Description

i. Concept Background, Goal and Strategy

49. The Ridge to Reef Project (R2R) was developed to apply an innovative approach designed to engineer a paradigm shift in the management of natural resources from an ad hoc site/problem centric approach to a holistic ridge to reef management approach, where whole island systems are managed to enhance ecosystem services, to conserve globally important biodiversity and to sustain local livelihoods. R2R's goal is to implement an integrated "Ridge to Reef" approach to enhance ecosystem services, to conserve globally important biodiversity and to sustain local livelihoods in the FSM.
50. The project objective is to *strengthen local, State and National capacities and actions to implement an integrated ecosystems management through "ridge to reef" approach on the High Islands of the four States of the FSM.* This will require overcoming formidable barriers to address the problem and its root causes, and demonstrably show that this capacity is adequate for guiding the desired changes and reducing stressors.
51. The project's intervention has formulated two components (in line with the concept presented at PIF stage) to implement in the four high islands of each State, at multiple spatial scales ranging from the selected intervention sites, to the municipal or landscape levels:
- ❖ **Component 1:** Integrated Ecosystems Management and Rehabilitation on the High Islands of the FSM to enhance Ridge to Reef Connectivity, or Sustainable Land-use Management

(Outcome 1), which is aligned with GEF’s Objective 3 (“Reduce Pressures on Natural Resources from Competing Land Uses in the wider Landscape”) under its Land Degradation (Desertification and Deforestation) Strategy, by focusing on capacity development to improve decision-making in management of production landscapes to ensure maintenance of ecosystem services important for the global environment and for people’s livelihoods, and avoiding deforestation and forest degradation.

❖ **Component 2:** Management Effectiveness enhanced within new and existing PAs on the High Islands of FSM as part of R2R approach, or Protected Area Management (Outcome 2), which addresses the GEF’s Biodiversity Focal Area Objective 1 (“Improve sustainability of PA Systems”) and Outcome 1.1 (“Improved management effectiveness of (existing and) new protected areas”).

52. Additionally, R2R aims to contribute directly to IW Focal Area’s Objective 1 (“Catalyze multi-state cooperation to balance conflicting water users in trans-boundary surface and groundwater basins while considering climate variability and change”) under Output 1.3 (“Innovative solutions implemented for reduced pollution, improved water use efficiency, sustainable fisheries with right-based management, IWRM, water supply protection in SIDS, and aquifer and catchment protection” through the project’s activities under Component 2 on pollution reduction in the streams of selected sites.

ii. Project Description

53. The Ridge to Reef Project (R2R) is classified as a Global Environment Facility (GEF) Full-sized Project (FSP), with total GEF support of \$4.7 million, and originally proposed co-financing is \$17.9 million United States dollars (USD), for a total original project budget of \$22.6 million USD. Actual co-financing at project completion is less than planned. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the GEF Agency, as well as the project executing agency under UNDP’s direct execution (DEX) modality, with the FSM Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management (DECCEM) designated as the key national executing partner.

54. Project Preparation Grant (PPG) approvals were received on 23 August, and final GEF approval of the full FSP was received in June 2015 with EO approval in November 2015, marking the project starting date. An Inception Workshop and pre-inception consultations were held from October 17-21, 2016 with key government and NGOs stakeholders, and project implementation began in with the inception workshop held December 2016. Thus, the total project approval period was approximately 60 months, with the closing date scheduled for 17 November 2020. Figure 4 summarizes R2R’s key milestone dates.

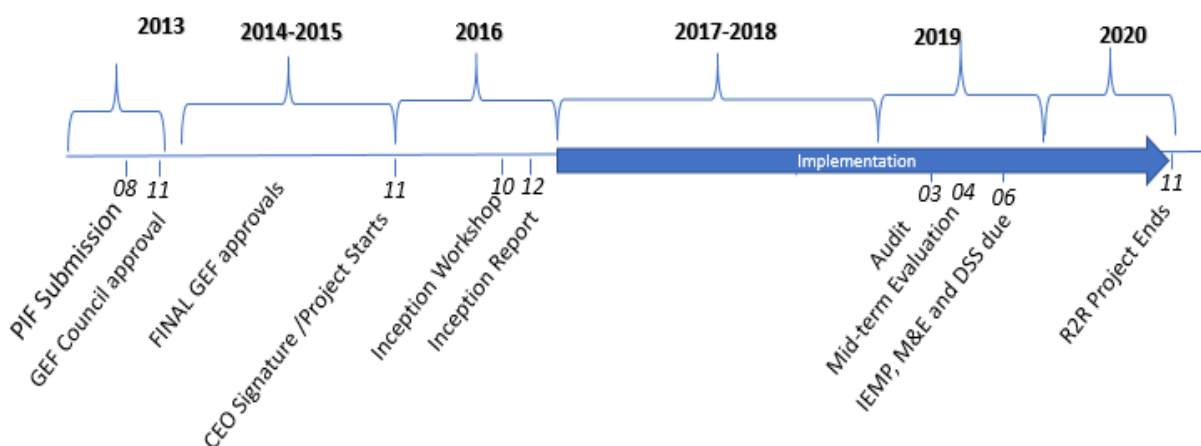


Figure 4: R2R's key milestone dates

55. The project aims to promote an integrated approach towards fostering sustainable land management (SLM) and biodiversity (BD) conservation, seeking to balance environmental management with development needs. Amongst other things, it aims to create an operational, multi-sector planning platform to balance competing environmental, social and economic objectives among different sectors of the economy. In doing so, aims to reduce conflicting land-uses and improve the upland and mangrove forest, and wetlands management to maintain the flow of vital ecosystem services and sustain the livelihoods of local communities. Further, the project should demonstrate SLM practices and testing new management measures to reduce existing environmental stressors. However, there is no mention of the importance of applying adaptive management principles, as recommended by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and other peer reviewed publications on the topic ([Armitage et al. 2009](#); [CBD 2004](#); [Gunderson and Holling 2002](#)).
56. As stated in the ProDoc, R2R should to strengthen local, State and National capacities and actions to implement integrated ecosystem-based management through “ridge to reef” approach on the High Islands of the four States of the FSM. Especially crucial is ensuring that pertinent National and State-level stakeholders have adequate capacity to plan, implement, monitor the effectiveness of the IEMP and PA management interventions, and adapt them as required according to lessons learned from the implementation processes.
57. While *management effectiveness* can be defined in many ways and the answers to the question on whether we are protecting what we need to for ensuring resilience are ambiguous, at best. While efforts aimed at measuring the degree of conservation activity is easily calculated, the ability to measure the conservation impact of these investments and the metrics for measuring the effectiveness of conservation actions remain elusive, and without objective measurements, it is 80 achieve conservation goals ([Parrish et al. 2003](#)). GEF's Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) is the mandatory metric for measuring PA management effectiveness.
58. The ProDoc identified two barriers for achieving effective integrated land-sea and protected area management:
- ❖ *Barrier 1: Lack of an overarching framework for promoting sustainable development in the FSM's High Islands, including systemic capacities and availability of critical information / knowledge and funding*²³.
 - ❖ *Barrier 2: Inadequate PA representation and capacities to effectively conserve biodiversity of the High Islands of the FSM*²⁴.

²³ Includes: diverse and complex institutional arrangements for environmental management (e.g., SLM and PA) caused by parallel National/State political structures, NGOs and traditional leadership frameworks, especially in Yap and Chuuk where land ownership is communal; Unclear and unaligned National policies/State legislation for SLM and PA management; Major gap in comprehensive and coordinated biodiversity monitoring that is of little value to decision- and policy-makers through a user-friendly, evidence-based decision-support platform for measuring management/policy effectiveness; Weak capacity for State governments to produce, implement and enforce integrated land and water management plans; widespread (political figures, communities, youth) lack of awareness of the importance and value of the goods and services provided by functioning ecosystems; a general lack of political will to invest in environmental management, resulting in a disconnect between public expenditure and environmental priorities, with a narrowly focused development agenda that is overwhelmingly driven by economic gains, without due consideration for social or environmental impacts.

²⁴ Includes: Complex governance issues caused by State-specific ownership of lands and waters throughout FSM, which lacks broad public participation to build public understanding of the importance of R2R, biodiversity conservation and the economic value of ecosystem services; Unequal stakeholder commitment to PA objectives, weak collaboration and coordination of initiatives like R2R; State-specific land ownership nuances further complicate efforts to gain support for protecting biodiversity hotspots and managing an uninterrupted land-sea continuum in an integrated manner; inconsistent western-style legal frames are inconsistent with traditional approaches that have historically managed biodiversity areas between the land and ocean at the community-level, as well as eroding cultural norms (Yap is the exception); widespread lack of awareness about the importance of R2R, and especially protecting the heavily overfished forereefs and herbivores throughout FSM ([IAS 2018](#); [Cuetos and Houk 2017](#); [Houk et al. 2015](#); [Rhodes et al. 2015](#)); PA regulations imposed by community-based management are un-aligned with, or not recognized by State legislation²⁴, making it difficult to enforce customary law against violations of rules; Insufficient financial resources are allocated

iii. Pilot sites

59. With the exception of relatively small investments in physical management measures (e.g., Dry litter piggeries, a chipper, FADs²⁵, PA boundary markers and solar lights), FSM's R2R has focused on capacity building (CB), analysis of pertinent PAN and SLM legislation and awareness-raising in R2R pilot sites. Although Baseline data have been collected for 2 PAs, there have been numerous delays in many of the planned activities, and some were only beginning at the time of the mission visit.
60. As a result, the PIU and State-TACs have taken a passive role in supporting management activities in the PAs to allow the managers to develop their own approach, and this seems to have worked well for two PAs under a customary tenure regime. For example, interviews during site visits, terrestrial and underwater reconnaissance to two MPAs on Yap support previous findings ([Johnson 2017](#)) showing that villages with greater social cohesion show greater positive ecological outcomes in MPAs than do villages that were structured solely around strong leadership and enforcement. The two sites with high levels of social cohesion and R2R funded boundary markers and solar-powered lights and FADs had greater total carnivore and herbivore biomass. The Tamil municipality on Yap has made some steady advances in restoring watersheds, construction of a water tank under the Tamil Water Campaign Strategy and their efforts to protect their mangrove-to-reef from illegal fishing by outsiders is promising.
61. Despite these good outcomes, the PIU faces challenges for continuing its support for other activities in Yap, given the weak ownership from lead implementing agencies. Out of the 6 incomplete activities, only three were shifted to Year 2 (FY18). With all resources exhausted and no corresponding adjustments in Tap, R2R concluded that the incomplete activities are no longer priorities for YapCAP, and that support was temporarily terminated. The lack of human resources biggest limitation within implementing agencies and time constraints make it almost impossible to complete project activities with few staff, and it is expected that temporary contractors will be hired to help restore some of Yap's stream banks.
62. SLM training of resource managers in Chuuk has been completed through the assistance of the College of Micronesia Land Grand Program and complimented with an Enforcement, Compliance and Monitoring training program for 40+ participants attending to improve their PA management capacity and promote effective site and cross-site level PA management practices in new and existing PAs. An independent service contract was signed between R2R and the Chuuk Women's Council (CWC), the lead implementing entity for all the rehabilitation-related activities for the Nefo forest, and they will now coordinate several important activities²⁶. While there are some good initiatives for restoring microwatersheds and remove solid waste tittering the streams, few concrete actions have been taken to dae.
63. Pohnpei has also focused on building capacity needs assessments for SLM and IWRM outreach was conducted with 12 communities, while water quality sampling was completed on schedule a Coastal Fisheries Symposium and Summit that took place in late October of 2017, and it led to a call to action declared by the Governor and the Speaker of the Pohnpei State Legislature, prioritizing management of natural resources and associated Protected Areas designated by law. The watershed boundary delimitation and monitoring activities for Kitti Municipality have been

to traditional management areas, even government recognition that hefty fines levied under traditional laws could far exceed anything the National Government could provide from national funds; unclear roles and responsibilities and capacities among the National, State and local-level agencies (NGOs) and local communities resulting from unclear national policy and guidelines represent a serious roadblock to effective PA, unless common functions (e.g. spatial planning, management planning, finance and legal issues) are standardized and centralized nationally.

²⁵ FADs are Fish Attraction Devices.

²⁶ These include; i) the Nefo Forest Project launch, coordination facilitation, mentoring and close out; ii) Rehabilitation of the Nefo Forest area to enhance R2R connectivity; iii) Facilitate a baseline forest survey and inventory for the Nefo Forest; iv) Facilitate a monitoring and evaluating training for the Nefo Forest Area; and v) Development of the Nefo tree planting campaign

put on hold and while the 3D model was completed (and an excellent product), it is not sufficiently visible in the municipal office and putting it in a highly visible public place or in schools would help raise awareness for many more people than it reaches now. Meanwhile deforestation of upland forests in the surrounding watersheds are widespread and increasing, largely for planting sakau and other cash crops. Site visits did not convince that the owners were fully embraced the DLPs. In that sense, the expensive model is little more than an expensive ‘white’ elephant that simply sits in an office. Several private investors have successfully established mariculture operations for sea cucumber and Rabbitfish. However, there remains considerable work to do for disseminating these good practices and examining the feasibility of scaling them up. R2R could play an important role in this respect.

64. Advances have been especially slow in Kosrae, with activities having focused primarily on training related to the dry litter piggery technique and training for the Kosrae Conservation and Safety Organization (KCSO) to assess the Walung MPA and the re-evaluated the Tafunsak MPA. However, the number of DLPs is minuscule compared with the widespread practice of pig farming. Minimal progress is being made to finalize the Walung MPA through PA legislation., advances in operationalizing the site have been slowed by the tedious State-level review process. The After receiving training on the use of the MPAME tool. The most impressive progress has been the work of private actors who have successfully developed techniques to eliminate crown of thorns starfish (*Acanthaster*)²⁷, cultivating corals and giant clams (*Tridacna*)²⁸. Approximately 100,000 clams will be placed on different reefs, and it is essential that R2R raises awareness about these important alternatives, and incorporates them as tools that could be replicated in other States. like who has

3. Assessment of the R2R Design and Implementation

A. Assessment of the Project Design

65. The evidence for **EQ1**, ([Annex 7](#)) indicates that the project ***was inadequately designed*** to meet R2R’s overall objective in the most efficient and effective manner. Causal inference is a crucial part of linking inputs to outcomes. The MTR examined the project’s logical framework using a theory of change (see [Annex 4](#)) for understanding the degree to which there exists a causal chain of actions leading to the expected outcomes, it is becomes clear that there are many gaps in the results chain that should lead the R2R project to its outcomes, as well as the overall objective. As a result, the design cannot clearly demonstrate that the expected outcomes listed in the ProDoc are caused by the interventions listed

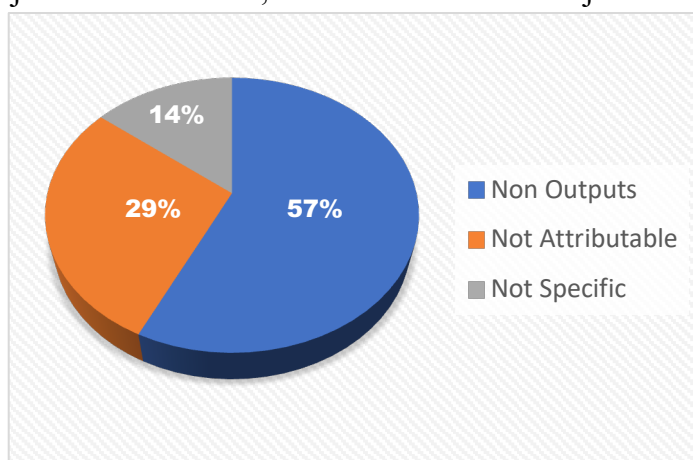


Figure 5: Relative composition of 14 non-SMART Indicators.

²⁷ the Treehouse Lodge

²⁸ This is a private initiative with support by NOAA

therein²⁹. Of the 14 indicators presented in the ProDoc, none are SMART. Eight are actually Output and *not outcome indicators*. None of the remaining indicators are indicators while the remaining indicators cannot measure how the changes in the targeted R2R issue are linked to the intervention and they are not sufficiently specific (see [Annex 4a](#)).

Further, the timeframe for achieving the indicator is not explicitly stated (i.e., are they annual or bi-annual changes, or are they end of the project targets?). now are explicitly time bound so-called outcome indicators in the ProDoc are not SMART.

66. Although the ProDoc's assumptions should be sufficiently robust to provide the 'best guess' about how effective the R2R model on the ProDoc's 'drawing board' should be when it is implemented in real time, the ProDoc's assumptions are so superficial that they offer little value for testing them throughout implementation. This limitation not only clouds our understanding of the causative chain of results leading to the objective, but it also precludes the learning feedback loops that are the basis for systematically applying adaptive management. Finally, the ProDoc failed to identify some risks and the corresponding mitigation measures that could have helped address some of the barriers (see paragraphs #129 and 130) and sustain R2R's advances to date.
67. Additionally, the ProDoc failed to establish *counterfactuals*³⁰, or controls, that could be used to test whether the outcomes of R2R's management interventions were significantly different from the business as usual approach in other areas that did not benefit from the project. [Ahmadia et al. \(2015\)](#) provide an excellent example of how impact evaluation can be used to apply evaluation theory to apply a quasi-experimental approach to address questions about MPA effectiveness and creating counterfactuals, which is something that R2R might consider. It is impossible to measure changes in baselines attributable to management interventions, and without taking these kinds of quasi-experimental approaches, the chances are high that assessments will not be able to attribute interventions to management effectiveness.
68. The ProDoc mentioned FSM's efforts to meet Millennium Development Goals #3 (*Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women*) by aiming for women to play a greater politics and for a more equal rate of pay in the workplace. It has also included Gender as a cross-cutting issue for development and sustainable livelihoods, and several SLM projects focus on gender issues. However, the male-dominated Micronesian culture make it extremely difficult for women to overcome discrimination based on gender. Unfortunately, the ProDoc fails to provide any concrete strategies, policy measures our outcomes that promote improvements for women. The project currently *does not have a gender framework* like those for other R2R projects, and tracking is limited to the degree of gender differentiated participation in R2R's activities. Nonetheless, the project has ensured equal representation to offset the heavily male-dominated agencies by having good representation of women in the Kosrae, Yap and Chuuk TACs. No monitoring has been done to measure gender specific changes to R2R's beneficiaries.

²⁹ If an "outcome" is not caused by the intervention, it is NOT an outcome, but simply a coincidence - and coincidences cannot be documented as intervention outcomes.

³⁰ A counterfactual compares the observed results to those you would expect if the intervention had not been implemented. This can be done in three ways: i) control group created through random assignment who do not receive R2R benefits; ii) a comparison group which has not been created by randomization; iii) developing a hypothetical prediction of what would have happened in the absence of the intervention thru a key informant (asking experts or in the community to predict what would have happened in the absence of the intervention) or a logically constructed counter-factualizing the baseline as an estimate of the counterfactual.

69. Based on these weaknesses, it is not surprising that the interviewed TAC, SC and national NGOs are frustrated with the advances in implementing project activities and most felt that in many ways, they are simply ‘spinning their wheels’ and not making the kind of progress they should be. Many complained that the project design was overly ambitious, and why they feel consumed by having to take on more work than they imagined, and why they feel like they are spinning their wheels. The project lacks a focus on the most important activities, the pathway toward development impacts is not presented coherently and pertinent SMART indicators are lacking, as is a systematic approach to adaptive management to learn from testing interventions.

B. Project Relevance

70. **EQ 2** not only examined the extent to which the project strategy relevant to country priorities, country ownership, but the degree to which it is harmonized with priorities of the GEF (Biodiversity conservation, reduced Land degradation and watershed-groundwater protection) and UNDP (UNDP Strategic Plan Outcome 1: Growth and development are inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded).
71. The evidence indicates that the project is not only **highly relevant to national priorities and policies, priorities** related to pertinent international agreements and to the GEF’s strategic priorities and objectives, but also the degree to which it **contributes to new knowledge on the pioneering R2R approach** in the Pacific. For example, despite a growing body of literature on integrated land–sea management (ILSM), very little critical assessment has been conducted in order to evaluate ILSM in practice on island systems ([Jupiter et. al. 2018](#)). As a consequence, the FSM-R2R project is a pioneering effort that has the potential to fill some ILSM knowledge gaps and learn from the process³¹.
72. From a National perspective, R2R is **highly relevant** to numerous national plans and policies. For example, it is fully aligned with FSM’s Strategic Development Plan, specifically to “protect, conserve, and sustainably manage a full and functional representation of marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems”. Other strategies that could benefit from R2R: (1) A Blueprint for Conserving the Biodiversity of the FSM, specifically the identification of areas of biological significance; (2) The NBSAP, specifically the following Strategic Themes: i) Ecosystem Management³²; ii) Species Management³³; iii) Agrobiodiversity³⁴; iv) Human Resources and Institutional Development Strategy Goal³⁵; v) Resource Owners³⁶; v) Mainstreaming Biodiversity³⁷. R2R also supports the Micronesia Challenge project efforts to create a regional Protected Area Network (PAN), and this support is especially pertinent because the existing PAN

³¹ as with testing any innovative tool, mistakes are inevitable and the systematic application of adaptive management (AM) is crucial for systematically capturing lessons, capturing good practices and discarding less than successful management tools, as well as formal and informal institutional arrangements.

³² Strategic Goal: a full representation of FSM’s marine, freshwater, and terrestrial ecosystems are protected, conserved, and sustainably managed, including selected areas designated for total protection

³³ Strategy Goal: FSM’s native, endemic, threatened, and traditionally important species are protected and used sustainably for the benefit of future generations of the people of the FSM and the global community.

³⁴ Strategic Goal: The conservation and sustainable use of Agrobiodiversity contributes to the nation’s development and the future food security of the FSM

³⁵ All citizens, residents, and institutions of the nation are aware of the importance of biodiversity and have the technical knowledge, skills, and capability to conserve. all biodiversity within the nation

³⁶ Strategy Goal: traditional resource owners and communities are fully involved in the protection, conservation, preservation, and sustainable use of the nation’s biodiversity.

³⁷ Strategy Goal: All economic and social activities of the FSM take full account of impacts on and fully consider sustainability of biodiversity

is not effectively conserving biodiversity patterns and ecological processes, nor are States doing enough to ensure their ecological sustainability, while at the State level, R2R supports the strengthening of existing PAs and the creation of new ones. It also supports PA management and planning, awareness raising about the PAs and legislation, translating management plans into the local Onei language, community governance, and demarcation of PA and watershed boundaries.

73. The project directly supports FSM to achieve several of the CBD's Aichi 2020 Targets³⁸, namely to: i) halve the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced; ii) manage and harvest all fish and invertebrate stocks, sustainably, legally and applying the ecosystem based approaches, so that overfishing is avoided, recovery plans and measures are in place for all depleted species, fisheries have no significant adverse impacts on threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems and the impacts of fisheries on stocks, species and ecosystems are within safe ecological limits; iii) protect at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes; iv) prevent the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly those in decline, has been improved and sustained.
74. The project also aims to advance the goals of the UNCCD 10-year strategic plan namely: 1) To improve the living conditions of affected populations; 2) To improve the condition of affected ecosystems; 3) To generate global benefits through effective implementation of the UNCCD. It addresses the following operational objectives of the UNCCD Strategic Plan: 1) Advocacy; 2) Science, technology and knowledge; 3) Capacity-building; and 4) Financing and technology transfer.
75. The project addresses three GEF Strategies (BD-1: Improve Sustainability of Protected Area Systems; LD-3: Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider landscape IW-1: Catalyze multi-state cooperation to balance conflicting water uses in transboundary surface and groundwater basins while considering climatic variability and change), UNDP's programming for achieving the primary outcome of the UNDP Strategic Plan (Growth and development are inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded), as well as the expected UNDP Sub Regional Programme Document (SRPD) outcome for improved resilience of PICTs, with a particular focus on communities, through the integrated implementation of sustainable environmental management, climate change.
76. The UNDP Sub Regional Programme Document (SRPD) stresses that UNDP will bring to bear its mandates, global technical expertise, knowledge of innovative approaches and global standards, policy support and capacity supplementation abilities to address the environmental, disaster risk and climate change challenges.

C. Project Implementation Approach

i. Management Arrangements

77. The project is executed through UNDP-Fiji, and two key national institutions. DECEM is the lead governmental agency with overall responsibility for project implementation, and is

³⁸ The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity includes 20 time-bound, measurable targets to be met by the year 2020 (Aichi Biodiversity Targets). ...Target 11 (Protected Areas and identification of Key Biodiversity Areas)

accountable for both project and financial management, including being accountable to UNDP for funding disbursements and for achieving R2R’s objectives and outcomes according to the approved work plan. R&D, who is responsible for *the PA components of the R2R project*, plays a supporting role. DECEM is also responsible for: (i) coordinating activities to ensure the delivery of agreed outcomes; (ii) certifying expenditures in line with approved budgets and work-plans; (iii) facilitating, monitoring and reporting on the procurement of inputs and delivery of outputs; (iv) coordinating interventions financed by GEF/UNDP with other parallel interventions; (v) approval of Terms of Reference for consultants and tender documents for sub-contracted inputs; and (vi) reporting to UNDP on project delivery and impact.

- 78. These functions are carried out by the DECEM’s **Project Implementation Unit (PIU)**, comprised of a project coordinator (R2R Project Manager), who will lead the PIU, a Technical Coordinator and a Financial Administrator (Figure 5). The PIU team is responsible for implementing the various components of the project, including technical leadership to the project, managing and coordinating project activities, contracting service providers, providing oversight on the day to day operations of the project, communications, monitoring and evaluation of project performance, reporting and serve as secretariat for the Project Steering Committee and State Technical Advisory Committees (TAC).
- 79. The **PIU** is represented by a SLM and a PA Coordinator, both of whom are funded by the project.

While the original State level coordinating arrangements called for two State Coordinators, the government adjusted the recommendation in the ProDoc and agreed to only one State Coordinator, and the evidence indicates that this has placed a heavy burden on the responsible State coordinator. However, UNDP and the Government recently agreed to fund four additional technical positions to expedite implementation of State level projects. Each component

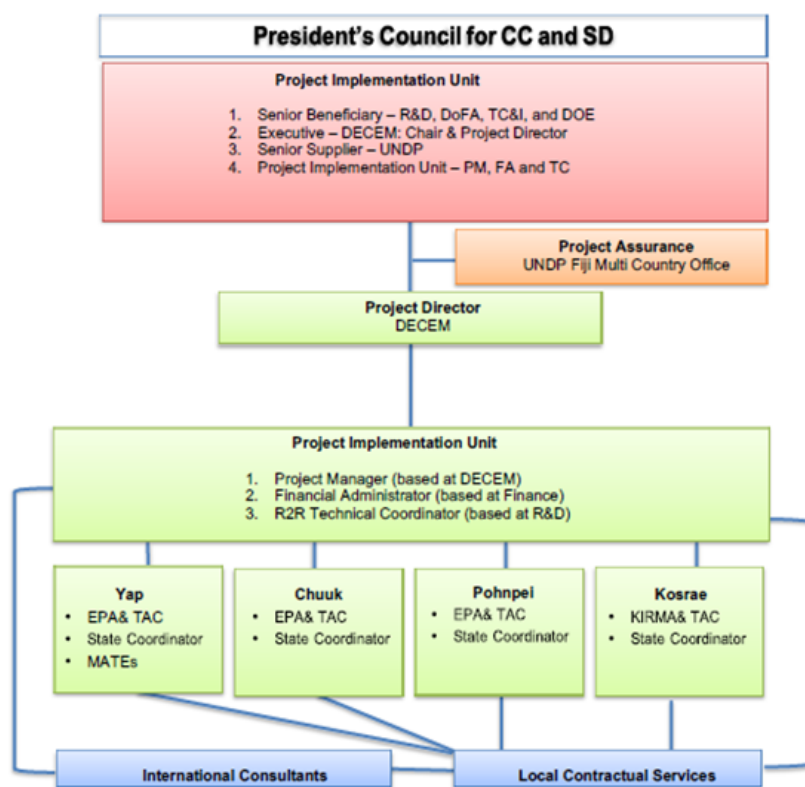


Figure 5. Organizational chart for the project at mid-term.

coordinator is based in the most relevant State agency responsible for implementing SLM or PA activities implementation, as well as coordinating and developing work programs to ensure that R2R is aligned with that of the State Agency. The PIU is responsible for elaborating the project outcomes and developing the Terms of Reference for local and international service providers to undertake specific project components, with inputs and guidance from the national and state TACs.

- 80. The Project Board (PB) , now called the R2R **Steering Committee (SC)**, is comprised of project partner representatives, as well as UNDP. The SC provides overall guidance and policy direction to the implementation of the project, and provides advice on appropriate strategies for project

sustainability. The SC directs and steers the project at both the national and regional levels, although they can call in technical experts to provide them with technical guidance about biodiversity knowledge, information management, finance, SLM, PA management, and these technical experts are occasionally asked to participate in the SC to provide their technical inputs. The SC plays a critical role in project monitoring and evaluation through quality assuring the project processes and products, and it arbitrates project-related conflicts, as well as negotiates solutions to any problems with external bodies. The SC also approves the appointment and responsibilities of the Project Manager and any delegation of its Project Assurance responsibilities. The DECEM Director is the SC Chair, and responsible for convening bi-annual meetings.

81. The PIU has produced the required Annual Work Plans (AWP), which have been approved by the SC at the beginning of each year. These plans are the basis for allocating resources to planned project activities. Once the SC approves the AWP, it is cleared by UNDP-GEF regional coordinating unit (RCU) in Bangkok. Once the AWP is cleared by the RCU, it goes to the UNDP/GEF Unit in New York for final approval and release of the funding. The PM has regularly produced quarterly operational reports and Annual Progress Reports (APR) for review by the SC. The reports, which are the main reporting mechanism for monitoring project activities have adequately summarized R2R's progress versus the expected results, while explaining significant variances, detailing the necessary adjustments.
82. The SC has done an excellent job of making management decisions at the behest of the Project Manager, and it plays a critical role in project monitoring and evaluations by quality assuring processes and products by using evaluations for improving performance, accountability and learning. Based on the approved AWP, the Project Board can also consider and approve the quarterly plans (where applicable). Any deviations from the original plans require approval from Regional Technical Advisor, UNDP-GEF. SC decisions will be made in accordance to standards that shall ensure management for development results, best value money, fairness, integrity, transparency and effective international competition, thereby ensuring UNDP's ultimate accountability for the project results. In case consensus cannot be reached within the Board, the final decision shall rest with the UNDP Project Manager (i.e. UNDP Fiji MCO). The SC has been meeting bi-annually, with the last meeting being in April 2019 as part of the Consultant's presentation of the preliminary MTR debriefing findings.
83. Project implementation has been managed in close collaboration with the pertinent State bodies and their corresponding implementation partners. The project's technical development, cooperation and communication between project partners and service providers is facilitated by the R2R Project Manager, who is responsible for establishing and maintaining a National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) to a **State-level Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)** who is responsible for facilitating R2R implementation in each State, as well as provide a local communication and platform for discussions. The TAC has provided adequate oversight of State-level activities, as well as providing technical advice to support informed decision-making and developing project activities. State-level implementation through their corresponding R2R Coordinators has been satisfactory, but there have been numerous delays, many of which are due to lack of staffing shortages or disbursement delays.
84. Although the Department of Environment and Emergency Management (DECEM) and the Department of Resources and Development's (R&D) have taken ownership of the project, their capacity is limited for taking on even the most basic actions are limited by their relatively small budgets and thinly spread staff that makes it difficult to engage with State agencies, and the absence of a centralized Decision Support System (DSS to inform these main institutional actors severely restricts their ability to take action the country's response to environmental degradation, provide adequate protection and rehabilitation of natural habitats at the National, State and local levels. The challenge is further complicated by recent government funding cutbacks to the

environment sector, unimpeded environmental degradation (e.g., dredging in bays and mangroves, erosion from land clearing for agriculture and the failure of the government to meet the annual financing target indicator (Outcome 1, indicator #3) raises questions about how much power is has to provide the level of support that will be required to out the project back on a more direct path toward meeting the objective.

D. Project Management and Cost Effectiveness

85. The main finding of a recent (March 2019) mandatory audit³⁹ was that there was a slight discrepancy that resulted from the project reporting both actual and expected expenditures for Quarter 4, 2018, which resulted from discrepancies in R2R's expenses identified by UNDP, and those produced by the FSM financial management system. The audit also concluded that the project's balance of funds has been fairly stated and reconciled to the UNDP Outstanding NEX Advance, although the audit identified several financial risks⁴⁰. It did not audit the accompanying Statement of Cash Position ("the statement") because the Project did not have a separate bank account.
86. Overall cost effectiveness is rated as *unsatisfactory* for several reasons. As of December 2018, R2R had spent only 27% (\$1,266,672) of the total budget. The latest estimate⁴¹ for 2019 expenditures could reach \$900,880 will have been made by the end of for 2019, if 100% of the activities are funded. Therefore, the project will still have 46% (c.\$ 2,138,696) of the total budget available for project activities during the final year. However, this is considered to be highly unlikely to be spent, based on the project's historical expenditure rate (Figure 6).

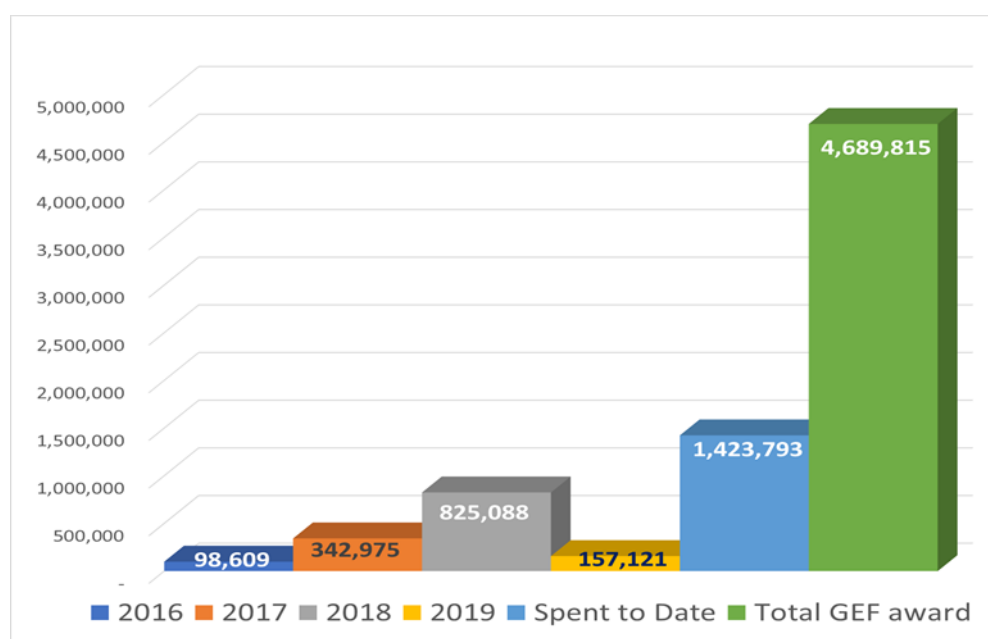


Figure 6: Graph showing annual disbursement rates, total expenditures through mid-2019 and projected expenditures through December 2019, compared with the total GEF award (approximately \$4.7 million).

³⁹ required for all UNDP-GEF projects is shared with not just for the Fiji office, but audit irregularities are raised with UNDP-GEF regional and HQ if required.

⁴⁰ The project recorded certain expenses that did not have sufficient payment supporting evidence.

⁴¹ UNDP-Fiji Data 25 June 2019

87. The project gave approximately \$1.28 million to the GEF Small Grants Programme. However, interviews have indicated that disbursements for R2R-related activities have been extremely slow, and the process has been inefficient. Request for interviewing the SG coordinator were unsuccessful up until the time of publication of this report.
88. Although the project is managed according to UNDP standards, using the ATLAS system, the budget is monitored regularly by project staff and the statement of expenditures is reported comprehensively, the rate of disbursements is painfully slow and according to all interviewees, this demotivates them, while contractors are refusing to work with the project due to the slow cancellation of Purchase Orders (POs). Delays in disbursements are largely related to inconsistent financial procedures within the Department of Finance (DOFA) and these issues have been one of the root causes of procurement delays because the procurement of fixed assets and other R2R payments⁴² is unpredictable. PIU adopted several mitigation measures that include disregarding poorly justified advice from Finance staff (which appears to raise another risk to the financial sustainability of the project), while strictly following FSM's Financial Management Requirements (FMR) to avoid future delays. However, the PIU's own FMR doesn't allow any advance payments to be made to local vendors until the service(s) has been provided. The PIU commits the vendor funds until the invoice has been presented for processing, and the same holds for advance payments. However, the system does not reflect advance payments until delivery of the items/products. The PIU reports its actual expenditures, but it *does not report commitments to pay the vendors*, even though the money is no longer with the PIU.
89. Another problem is DOFA's weak technical capacity to maintain its financial management information system (FMIS), and is another root cause of the inefficiency producing procurement delays and the submission of financial reports to UNDP. For example, the FMIS⁴³ had to shut down because of technical issues, which forced DOFA to bring in an outside expert to solve the problems, which in turn led to unexpected delays in paying vendors and submitting the project's Faceform to UNDP. The PIU mitigated this problem (that was totally out of their control) by providing vendors with constant updates to maintain trust from vendors, as well as informing UNDP to expect delays in submission of financial reports. Project implementation and efficiency has also been affected by the FMIS inadequacy several times when it was unable to request drawdowns due to the system showing that there was still funding available, therefore, the implementation of all activities were halted until new funding was available. Mitigation measures have included ensuring that all reports are expedited so funds can be cleared within the system. However, receiving reports on a timely manner depends on how quickly it takes for fixed assets to arrive, which frequently takes several months ([PIR 2018](#)).
90. Another issue that slowed implementation relates to airfare increases caused by limited flights into and out of FSM, and this has raised R2R's travel costs. While other forms of communication (e.g., teleconferences) are now used to reduce costs, site visits for state and national consultations, training and workshops cannot be avoided⁴⁴.

⁴² Procurement delays often occur from inconsistencies in the way that different staff handle payment requests. Examples are provided in the 2018 PIR.

⁴³ the FMIS system setup allows procurement of fixed assets to remain encumbered (although the payment has been made to the vendor) until the fixed assets are received, is an ongoing issue that also contributes to slow delivery of project activities. Even though the payment has been made to the vendor, the FMIS reflects it as encumbered until the asset is received. Often, the project runs out of funds due to procurement of large fixed assets from overseas, but has to wait until assets are received before a drawdown can be requested (PIR 2018).

⁴⁴ In addition, the project requires funding of 3 individuals (annually) to participate in the R2R Steering Committee meeting and post graduate course training week. This also contributes to the increase in travel costs for the project and is likely to affect cost of future project activities.

E. Financial Planning, Co-financing and Synergies

91. For reasons mentioned earlier, the PIU has labored to deal with continuous procedural and disbursement challenges associated with its financial planning, and after three years of implementation, the project has spent less than one-third of the total budget. The FSM government budget for 2019 (Figure 7), is only half the annual financial pledge defined by Outcome 1’s Indicator #3 and this is largely related to the expiration of the Compact budget, which was included in the baseline figure⁴⁵ shown in Table 4 and the latest PIR ([PIR 2018](#)). This raised concerns about

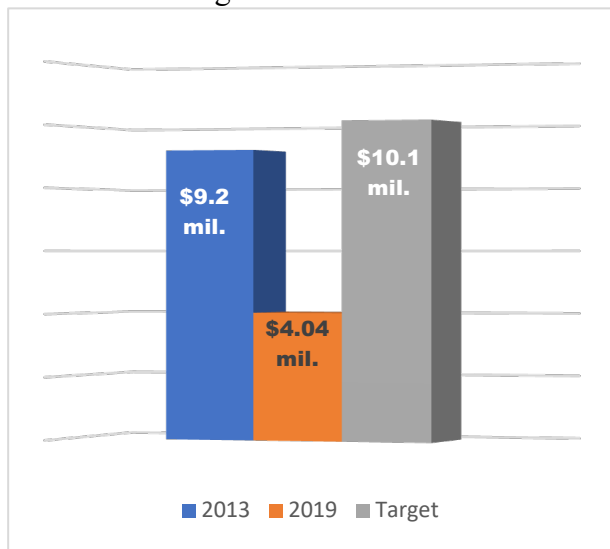


Figure 7. Secured FSM budget vs. annual target

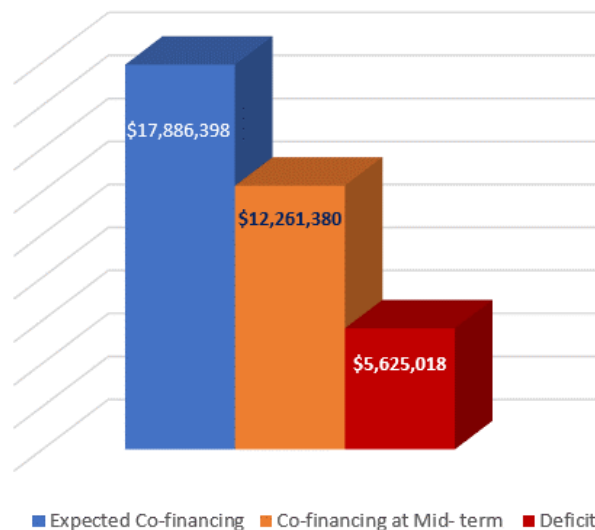


Figure 8. Approved ProDoc co-financing vs 2019 values.

how the government plans to meet its obligation to support the GEF and partner organization investments in the project.

92. There is also a gap in co-financing funds that were pledged in the ProDoc versus the actual amounts allocated for 2019 (Figure 8). It is unclear whether it will be possible to close this deficit of **\$5,625,018** by the end of the fiscal year with the government’s reduced environmental sector budget and shortfalls in the original NGO commitments.

93. The project has built good working relations with many key actors, and this has help build synergies that are critical for the success of a complex project like R2R, especially in helping support the geographically distant project interventions actors in the four States. The table below lists R2R’s partners:

- Pohnpei Environmental Protection Agency
- Pohnpei Department of Resources and Development
- Kosrae Island Resource Management Authority
- Kosrae Department of Resources and Economic Affairs
- Kosrae Department of Health and Social Affairs
- Kosrae Women's Association
- Chuuk Environmental Protection Agency
- Chuuk Department of Marine Resources
- Chuuk Governor’s Office
- Yap Environmental Protection Agency
- Yap Department of Marine Resources
- Yap Women's Association
- USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service
- College of Micronesia – Land Grant Program
- The Nature Conservancy
- YAP CAP
- Chuuk Women's Council
- Chuuk Conservation Society

Table 2. Principal R2R partners.

⁴⁵ The three main funding sources of financing of environmental programs in the FSM in 2019 are Congress, Local Revenues (not Compact) and other Donors. The baseline data captured in the ProDoc for financing of environmental programs included Compact. However, Compact recently ceased funding of recurring costs which have now been supplemented by local revenues.

Each partner has provided financial or in-kind support to the project, while the University of Guam has played a vital role in providing scientific guidance and logistical support that is essential for producing reliable biological monitoring for coral reefs, other invertebrate and fishes.

F. Flexibility and Adaptive Management

94. Although the PIU and its partners in the States have been forced into a reactive, rather than a proactive approach that allows them to adapt more efficiently to multiple obstacles, and this is considered [a risk for sustaining the project](#) after funding ends. However, the Annual Quarterly Reports do a good job of summarizing the adaptive measures taken to follow up on the annual PIRs and how the project dealt with specific issues raised by the State Coordinators. However, evidence shows that many Coordinators do not read the Quarterly Reports, they do follow through with taking adaptive measures. In those cases where there is no response, the issues are taken up in the next Quarterly Reports. In these cases, the project is forced into a reactive mode. and that the project took to address specific issues that affected the project's performance. The evidence indicates that although some issues have been difficult to foresee, others were well-known and could have been mitigated early-on had they been raised during Inception or at the end of each Quarter. Thus, the systematic application of AM is considered to be ***moderately unsatisfactory***.
95. The project has developed its own mitigation measures in response to unforeseen obstacles like the previously mentioned DOFA barriers related to inefficient disbursement rates, it has faced a steep learning curve, which can be partly attributed to weak assumptions listed in the ProDoc. This has been further agitated by the ProDoc overlooking some fundamental risks, which had they been identified early on, they might have been mitigated. Many of the issues related to the weak assumptions and risks could have been addressed if the original project design had been exposed to a Theory of Change (ToC) exercise, which could have helped guide an AM process capable of *systematically* capturing capture lessons and identifying good practices, rather than in the continuously reactive responses that have proven to be not only inefficient and time-consuming, but frustrating to the implementing partners. [Annex 4b](#) shows a simple, reconstructed ToC pathway toward outcomes, and it shows a few of the assumptions and unmitigated risks that the PProDoc missed.
96. At mid-term, stakeholders were unanimous in expressing their frustration with the project, partly because the implementing institutions (both formal and informal) feel that they are paying the price for a weak project that was designed by others who failed to grasp the complexity of implementing R2R. For example, most of the State TAC representatives, the SC and the PIU members who attended the Inception Workshop were new to the process, and they only entered after the Project design was led by an international consultant with support from a broad range of stakeholders, few of whom are involved with R2R today. Interviews with some of Workshop attendees indicated that the ProDoc was taken at face value simply because they were new to the project and they lacked the necessary background to analyze it critically, and scale back the ambitious targets where required. As one interviewee stated that at the *time, many things seemed logical and it was only later into the implementation phase that they began to question the ProDoc's proposed sites to work with, bird and fish indicators, total area of upland forests and mangroves to restore, and how difficult it was to meet many of the targets*. In retrospect, the PIU Coordinator stated that holding a two-day National workshop was a mistake, because they did not have sufficient time, there was not enough critical questioning, nor sufficient knowledge for the participant to go through the details in the level of depth that could have made critical adjustments at the time. As one interviewee mentioned, *we just generally covered everything quickly, so everyone agreed. we were new to the project and there was not much questioning*. The interviews and meetings with stakeholders left no doubt that they lacked a clear understanding of SMART indicators and only

one understood what a Theory of Change involves. Thus, the Inception Workshop missed the opportunity to adjust the project prior to implementation.

97. The biggest question surrounding the issue of the poor design is whether UNDP/GEF took decided to keep the project design a ‘certain way’, without fully understanding that there was too little capacity to raise questions during the inception phase, and that stakeholders would eventually realize that the project was overambitious and poorly designed project. The evaluator is not pointing fingers, but the important point is to learn from this mistake that the evaluator has seen repeatedly in other GEF projects because the Inception Workshops frequently lead enthusiastic and well-meaning stakeholder to ‘rubberstamp’ an approach without having a solid understanding theory of change, the importance of assumptions, counterfactuals and SMART indicators, to name a few ingredients. Even one interviewee with knowledge about ToC stated that in the few cases the approach was questioned, the attention was shifted away from what may have been a critical point for adjusting the approach during inception.
98. A similar problem is associated with the lack of a good understanding of these concepts and there are concerns that the stakeholders responsible for facilitating the implementation of the Final IEMP document ([EDSI 2019](#)) lack the capacity to do, much less to monitor, capture lessons systematically and adapt the approach as required based on those lessons.
99. This situation could be exacerbated because the MTR finds that the Final IEMP is far from being operational. The assumptions are weak, risks for sustaining the IEMP’s implementation at the municipal levels and tracking advances at the national level were not identified, while most indicators are outputs, and the few outcome indicators listed in Chapter 3 are not SMART ([Annex 4d](#)). Although the MTR evaluator raised these issues to the PIU and the SC in April and requested that the PIU develop an action plan to address these issues, there has been no follow-up to date. Based on the available evidence, there are no mitigation measures in place to avoid repeating the aforementioned mistakes (e.g., insufficient knowledge and capacity to raise critical questions⁴⁶, absence of a Theory of Change and results-based framework that can drive adaptive management processes) during the Inception Phase. Therefore, the chances of repeating those mistakes made during inception are a concern by the MTR, unless the necessary actions are taken to correct them. If the MTR is correct, stakeholders are will once again likely to become frustrated, and unless they have guidance to improve the document and its operativity, and there is a risk that Outcome 1 and Output 1.1 will not be achieved.

G. UNDP and Implementing Partner Project Oversight

100. As the responsible GEF Agency, UNDP oversees overall project implementation and carries out general oversight and the executing UNDP Office in Fiji has made numerous visits to FSM to assist the PIU with continuous guidance on procedures, although some issues remain to be clarified (see #92). The Regional GEF office has provided invaluable guidance to the PIU according to interviews.
101. R2R execution follows UNDP’s financial management system and procedures, while most stakeholders appreciate the role that UNDP has played, there have been significant disbursement delays by UNDP were basically due to IPs not meeting NEX liquidation criteria. A request was made to GSSC and exception was made for a request for a payment advance. However, the main reason was related to IP’s National system, whereby expenses were not recognised until goods

⁴⁶ There is no evidence that the Task Force has taken the necessary actions to correct the issues that are responsible for the inoperational IEMP, nor applying a Theory of Change and SMART outcome indicators, and the bottleneck that the existing IEMP creates for developing a robust M&E and DSS platforms.

were received and services rendered, even though check payments were made yet their records still indicate commitments to pay.

102. Interviews underscored that communication between the PIU, and UNDP has considerable room for improvement, and the tardiness of response to specific FSM requests from Fiji is a source of frustration for all stakeholders.
103. The implementing partner, DECEM, has focused well on tracking R2R's achievements through the Logframe indicators (mainly Outputs). Despite the PIU's persistence in tracking advances through the original logframe, it is clear that there DECEM and the PIU are unaware that those indicators are focused on measuring the project's efficacy. However, this is just one link in the results chain leading to changes that can be linked to the project's interventions.
104. The implementing agency has not raised the issue that the government has not met its annual funding target stipulated in the ProDoc, and it now finds itself with a national budget that has significantly reduced the overall support to environmental issues. In terms of candor in its annual reporting, the 2018 PIR, approved by DECEM, paints a much more positive picture of progress than what the MTR has found, and had many of the real obstacles been confronted in the PIR, corrective action might have been taken early this may have given a false sense of security. Additionally, the lack of scrutiny of the risks identified in the ProDoc during the Inception Phase has resulted in many unpleasant surprises. While many of the institutional risks (e.g. addressing financial bottlenecks) were mitigated, serious social and environmental risks to the project's sustainability still remain, and many of these must be addressed by the Ministry of Marine Resources.
105. The PIU and SC are satisfied with the support given by the UNDP-GEF RTA, regional office and HQ. Especially noted was the backup provided by the RTA and the UNDP technical expert who clarified many of the issues that the R2R team did not understand. However, despite feedback from the RTA to clarify how to measure the % of the FSM population benefitting in the long-term from the sustainable management of the fisheries resource which includes providing adequate refugia for sustaining the resource, the PIU is still not clear on this (the MTR offers some suggestions are given in [Annex 4a](#)).

4. Project Performance and Results (Effectiveness)

Despite all good intentions of the project, FSM will not meet some of its internationally agreed upon targets, like Aichi for reasons that are beyond the R2R project's control. For example, there are no recovery plans and measures in place for recovering, fisheries continue, unchecked, to have significant adverse impacts on threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems, while fisheries stocks, species and ecosystems are edging toward unsafe ecological limits. With that backdrop, the MTR examines progress toward the stipulated ProDoc's Outcomes.

A. Progress toward Anticipated Outcomes

106. The project's backbone is built around diverse activities designed to achieve the two anticipated outcomes – *Integrated Ecosystem Management (IEM)* along an R2R continuum and creating a *viable Protected Area Network (PAN)*. Although the project still has 1 ½ years remaining, achieving the overall objective and expected outcomes will be difficult without some significant adjustments, given that effectiveness is rated **unsatisfactory** at mid-term, as shown in Table 2, which summarizes R2R's progress according to the degree to which the ProDoc's logframe indicators have been achieved. The evaluator developed a preliminary Theory of Change ([Vogel 2012](#)) for each R2R component to help disaggregate the Log frame into a more operational framework that follows a pathway toward development impacts ([Annex 4b](#)).

107. Four indicators presented in the ProDoc aim to measure the degree to which the overall objective (see Table 2) was achieved, while five, and four indicators, respectively, were developed to measure Outcomes 1 and 2. In general, the *selected indicators for measuring the overall objective and anticipated outcomes are weak, or not SMART⁴⁷, while baselines are rarely available⁴⁸.*
108. For example, Indicator 1⁴⁹ is not explicitly time-bound⁵⁰, and there is presently no baseline for which to compare changes over time and especially it lacks a catchment focus that provides baseline data for meaningful parameters, like erosion rates water quality, sedimentation rates, etc.) for the R2R-targeted catchments.
109. The PIU and MTR carried out a rapid analysis of the available METT scores⁵¹ that form the basis for measuring Indicator 2. Although the analysis found an *insignificant* increase in average METT scores between 2015 and 2018 METT scores (Table 3 and [Annex 4b](#)), the individual State-PAs were variable and the changes between the two scoring periods are insignificant. Overall, only 38% of all PAs exceeded the METT's effective management threshold (65%). Half of the PA scores *decreased* in Pohnpei and Kosrae, remained the same in Yap and *slightly increased* in Chuuk, either dropped or remained the same and if this trend continues, the final target will not be achieved.

State	Sample Size (N)	Avg. 2015	Avg. 2018	No change	Increased METT	Decreased METT	% PAs > 65% score
Pohnpei	16	59.8	59.3	3	4	9 (50%)	44%
Kosrae ⁵²	10	66.1	66.1	10	0	2 (2%)	50%
Chuuk	8	39.5	30.5	2	4	2 (2.5%)	0%
Yap	6	48.7	51.2	3	3	2 (2.5%)	33%
ALL	40	55.6	56.0	18	11	15	38%

Table 3: Comparison of METT Scores from 2015 and 2018.

One of the most interesting findings from the analysis is that the best managed PA in Yap (Tamil) showed an increase in the 2015 to 2018, and the latter value was above the METT threshold. The other well-managed PA (Nimpal) increased in 2018, but the score was still below the threshold. Visual observations by the evaluator both under- and above-water indicated that qualitatively, the fish trophic group integrity inside the MPAs was in better condition outside at both sites.

⁴⁷ Specific, Measurable, Accepted, Relevant or Time-bound). The 'S' (Specific) indicator clearly and directly relates a desired outcome, it must be described without ambiguities and stakeholders must have a common understanding of the indicator. Measurable means that the indicator can be counted, observed, analyzed, tested, or challenged. If one cannot measure an indicator, then progress cannot be determined. Realistic is used when achievable/attainable is not used. An achievable indicator measures that the performance target accurately specifies the amount or level of what is to be measured in order to meet the result/outcome. The indicator should be achievable both as a result of the program and as a measure of realism. Relevant: An indicator should be a valid measure of the result/outcome and be linked through research and professional expertise. The best way to think about relevance is to ensure that there is a relationship between what the indicator measures and the theories that help create the outcomes for the client, program, or system. The best method to find relevant indicators is to consult expert input and proper research. Time-Bound, Timely, Trackable, and Targeted: The system [monitoring and evaluation system and related indicators] allows progress to be tracked in a cost-effective manner at the desired frequency for a set period, with clear identification of the particular stakeholder group(s) to be affected by the project or program.

⁴⁸ Note that many of the comments to the indicators are summarized in [Table 4](#) and in [Annex 4a](#).

⁴⁹ *area of High Islands where pressures from competing land uses measured by no net loss of intact forests through the implementation of ILMPs*

⁵⁰ Although the UNDP-GEF RTA has argued that all indicators are bound by a GEF-project's termination date, the MTR finds several situations in which annual changes must be addressed, and indeed, once such indicator refers to annual financial contribution by the FSM government and donors to SLM and PA support. However, as mentioned in this report, there remain serious questions about the stipulated time-frame.

⁵¹ The available METT sheets were incomplete, and they had not been subjected to QA by the PIU at the time of analysis, nor at the date (2 months later) on which the final MTR report was submitted.

⁵² The Pikensukar MPA was an outlier, with METT scores < 35, which brought down the average score for both comparison years.

change in the ten scores registered for Kosrae between 2015 and 2018, something that would appear to have a low probability of happening. In other cases, METT scores are incongruent with expert knowledge in some of the PAs, and they don't fit the *in situ* monitoring data (Figure 9; Annex 5b) carried out by scientists throughout Micronesia. Finally, interviews indicate that many of the scores were subjective (Annex 7). In retrospect, the R2R Technical Coordinator concluded that the PIU should have provided more guidance given to the State coordinators who are responsible for overseeing the METT scoring process.

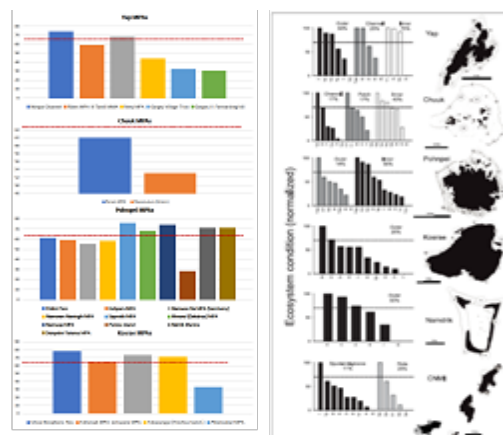


Figure 9: Comparison of 2018 METT Scores for MPAs and the 4 States (KR, TR, MO, UM). Most dashed lines represent the 75% score threshold. Values below the dashed line are below the threshold for consistent MPA ratings above the line.

Figure 10: Comparison of Hawk et al.'s (2015) Marine Ecosystem Condition Indicators for the 4 States. The dashed line represents the 75% score threshold. Values below the dashed line are below the threshold for consistent MPA ratings above the line.

Figure 9: see [Annex 5b](#) for better resolution

110. The proposed metric for the area of ecosystems rehabilitated that result in increased delivery of ecosystem and development benefits is complimentary to [Indicator #2](#). While other sites identified by the project for rehabilitation, they were suspended (in the case of Kosrae, the site was overrun by invasive species) and there are no changes in the baseline since the project started.
111. Of the 25 SLM Capacity Development judgment scores ([Indicator #3](#)), one has increased, one has decreased and there has been no change for 22 of judgments. However, many of the rating are subjective and appear to present a more positive assessment than what was observed by the MTE. Note that the GEF will no longer use the SLM Capacity development tool, and the MTE concurs, as the tool is also an output and leaves considerable room for subjective judgments.
112. The PIU has asked the UNDP and the UNDP-GEF RTA to clarify [Indicator #4](#) (*% of FSM's population that benefit from sustainable management of fishery resources*), given that the metric 'is confusing and we've had challenges identifying the appropriate activities to help us establish our baseline data as well as build on to it'. However, as late as July 2019, the PIU stated that it remains unclear about how to measure the indicator and what it means. Unsurprisingly, no baseline data have been collected to measure the metric at the time the MTE site visit was conducted.
113. While the LD tracking tool has been discontinued by the GEF, the comparison between the 2018⁵³ and 2015 scores remain unchanged. Similarly, there are no significant changes in the IW tracking tool for 2018 when compared with the previous results.

i. Outcome 1

115. Overall Project Achievement and preliminary signs of progress toward Impact are rated ***unsatisfactory*** at Mid Term, despite strong engagement and responsible actions taken by the PIU and the State teams. The evidence indicates that the delays are largely attributable to R2R's overambitious project design, changes in most of the staff who were involved at inception, as well as unacceptably slow disbursement rates, weak communication between the project and the executing agency, and numerous bottlenecks from second guessing what appear to have been good technical recommendations (e.g., guardhouse construction and maintenance in Chuuk and

⁵³ The LD tracking tool is no longer used by GEF Secretariat, and while it still must be completed and submitted at mid-term and end-of-project, the UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor (RTA) recommended minimizing the amount of time invested in filling it out. Therefore, GEF suggests having a quick look over the other section to see if any obvious changes, update the contact/date details and send it through. On project impacts the UNDP-GEF RTA suggested that the tool only be updated if there are significant changes, e.g. in questions 4 and 5 on proposed project impacts.

Yap). These frustrations notwithstanding, most stakeholders remain engaged through the inclusive, transparent implementation approach, which bodes well for rallying around the MTR's recommendations for addressing those obstacles.

116. Achieving effective IEMP is a challenge that can easily derail when one of more of the outputs in the results chain are not achieved, and this is the case for Outcome 1. Although the FSM Strategic Development Plan 2004-2023, FSM 2023 Action Plan, Statewide Assessment Resource Strategy (SWARS) 2010 - 2015+ and the National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan provide a framework to build IEMPs, the SEA is a cornerstone for setting the IEMP process in motion, and Pohnpei's IEMP is expected to be completed in June. Also, Kosrae is the only State having a Land Use Plan, while R2R supported the latest draft version of Pohnpei State's IEMP.
117. Although targets were set and confirmed in the most recent LD Tool (May2019), achieving these targets will require a major effort, something that is considered to be highly unlikely given the

Table 4: Matrix showing the R2R’s advances since Inception

Project Strategy	Indicator ⁵⁴	Baseline ⁵⁵	Level at 1st PIR	MT Goal	Final Goal	Actual progress at MT ⁵⁶	Status
<p>Objective: To strengthen local, State and National capacities and actions to implement integrated ecosystem-based management through “ridge to reef” approach on the High Islands.</p>	<p><u>Indicator 1:</u> Area of High Islands of the FSM where pressures from competing land uses are reduced (measured by no net loss of intact forests) through the implementation of Integrated Landscape Management Plans.</p>	<p>Area of intact forest within the High Islands to be established in Year 1</p> <p><i>Baseline is 0 ha.</i></p>	<p>Implementation of project is halfway through Year 1, with activities currently ongoing. Outcome of Year 1 activities will be reported in the next PIR⁵⁷.</p>	<p><i>Not established</i></p>	<p>62,133 ha</p> <p>No net loss of intact forest against the baseline</p>	<p>No baseline data on intact forest collected/verified for Yr. 1; ongoing collaborative efforts between R2R & MC terrestrial group to verify baseline w. available data; MC initiated terrestrial data collection >1 yr. ago, & analyzing survey data to be included in next PIR, while PIU work w. implementing partners & tech. experts to update/verify baselines & adjust targets (as needed) in the project’s SRF. Work is well underway, beginning 2nd quarter of FY18.</p>	<p>MU</p>

⁵⁴ Data from the logical framework matrix

⁵⁵ Project Document

⁵⁶ From PIR 2018

⁵⁷ **Note:** Gathering of baseline data (area of intact forest within High Islands) was not identified as part of Year 1 Activities; likely to affect implementation.,

Indicator 2: Average increase of METT Scores for 40 target PAs covering 24,986 ha

Baseline = 55%

Scoring wasn't done, as first year activities focused on securing groundwork for 40 PA sites via participatory awareness activities.

65% with no scoring drop in any of the individual PAs

While scores 2015-2018 either increased or remained the same, average METT scores for all the PAs where Scores were calculated were just below the threshold value threshold and there were several PAs whose METT scores dropped between the two scoring periods⁵⁸. However, there is evidence that many of the scores do not coincide with expert knowledge of scientists and NGOs who have worked in those areas for several years. Unless this is remedied, the final scores should be examined critically.

MU

⁵⁸ Effort has focused on 1) consultations with communities for identification of new PA sites; 2) development of management plans for new PA sites and revision of existing plans; and 3) demarcation of existing PAs Chuuk, and on raising awareness around its newly endorsed PAN Law; translating an existing management plan (for Onei community) into the local language; and a mangrove forest assessment which will help inform its efforts to put into place, a moratorium to seize the commercial sale of mangroves. Kosrae is still working towards finalizing and enacting the Walung MPA through PA legislation. Malem was officially endorsed as an MPA in February 2018. Pohnpei State is focusing efforts on participatory awareness for the Nett Watershed Forest Reserve. The Kitti Watershed Forest Reserve completed its awareness activities in Year 1, resulting in a signed MOU between the Pohnpei State Government, Kitti Municipality and traditional leaders for the demarcation of the watershed boundaries. Management planning with the Sokeh's community on Palikir Pass MPA is ongoing – objectives and activities have been identified by the community. The plan will be drafted in the coming weeks based on these community consultation outputs. Yap is working towards developing a new management plan for Gachpar community, and securing additional new sites through outreach on PAs with communities.

Indicator 4: % of the FSM population benefitting in the long-term from the sustainable management of the fisheries resource which includes providing adequate refugia for sustaining the resource

Baseline = 0%

Information to be provided in next PIR once outcome of first year activities is available

20%

The baseline was missing from the 2018 PIR. It will be added for 2019 PIR. Difficult to determine, but given the well-document overfishing of herbivores and juvenile reef fish, it there is presently no sustainable management taking place. However, multiple community-based activities in each State (PA, w. fisheries management plans (Kosrae State), Fish Aggregation Devices (Yap), although these have been destroyed by storms and currently being repaired. Besides establishing/managing MPAs, is difficult to assess how the project's target (20% of the FSM population benefitting from the long-term sustainability of fisheries management) will be determined.

Outcome 1: Integrated Ecosystem. Management and Rehabilitation on the High Islands of the FSM to enhance Ridge to Reef Connectivity

Number of Integrated Landscape Management Plans being implemented

Baseline= 0 ILMPs being implemented

Development of the 4 ILMPs is. First year includes conducting SEA to provide the primary informants to the development of the ILMPs. SEA still in the planning stage, with assistance requested from UNDP.

4 ILMPs (one per State)

SEA completed only for Pohnpei and decision made to halt work in other states. ILMP being developed for Pohnpei, but indicators are weak, not conducive to mainstreaming into a DS tool. Unless action is taken to deal with this, the project will only complete 25% of its targets and ILMP-DSS for Pohnpei is not sufficiently robust to enhance connectivity.

Highly Unsatisfactory

	<p>Enhanced cross-sector enabling environment for integrated LM score: (i) Framework, strengthening INRM; (ii) Capacity strengthening</p>	<p>(i) Score 2 – INRM framework has been discussed and formally proposed (ii) Score 2 – Initial awareness raised (e.g. workshops, seminars)</p>	<p>INRM has yet to be reviewed for discussion with key stakeholders</p>	<p>Annual National, State and NGO budget allocations</p>	<p>(i) Score 4 – INRM frame formally adopted by stakeholders but weak: (ii) Score 4 – Knowledge effectively transferred⁵⁹</p> <p>At least US\$ 10.1 million</p>	<p>INRM was discussed during the project’s recent Project Management Training on 14-18 May 2018. Based on discussions, there is no INRM framework in place. Therefore, there is a need to validate information from the project document, specifically, that referring to a formal endorsement of an INRM framework that has been formally adopted by stakeholders. INRM was discussed during the project’s recent Project Management Training on 14-18 May 2018. Based on discussions, there is no INRM framework in place. Therefore, there is a need to validate information from the project document, specifically, that referring to a formal endorsement of an INRM framework that has been formally adopted by stakeholders.⁶⁰</p> <p>the indicator is not clear at all about whether the target is an annual one, or for the end of the project. The start with a \$9.2 million layout established as a baseline suggests that it is an annual target. However, the PIU was unable to clarify. NGOs have only reached half of the target in 2018 and has yet to meet the target. Recently approved Adaptation Fund project of \$1M that focuses on improving implementation of protected areas; strengthening enforcement of MPAs and near-shore fisheries regulations;</p>	<p>Unsatisfactory</p> <p>Unsatisfactory</p>
	<p>Annual Government and Donor funding allocated to SLM (including PA management costs)</p>	<p>US\$ 9.2 million</p>	<p>An amount of US \$120,000 was allocated by Pohnpei State through its unallocated Compact funds to support R2R’s ongoing dry-litter piggery activities.</p>				

⁵⁹ e.g. working groups tackle cross-sectoral issues

⁶⁰ Mid-Term Review finds that the combines annual government and donor funding allocated for SLM and PAs falls short of the US \$10.1 million target.

	<p>Extent (ha) of ecosystems rehabilitated resulting in increased delivery of ecosystem and development benefits:</p>	<p>Baselines: (i) 0 hectares (ii) 0 hectares</p>	<p>Rehabilitation sites will be identified as part of the SEA/ILMP process. Hence, information will be available once this is complete</p>	<p>(i) 350 ha: (ii) 50 hectares</p>	<p>building community level adaptive capacity to climate change; and improving knowledge management of PAs for livelihoods and conservation. This project has been supported by the R2R project from its project proposal phase until its endorsement to ensure there is no duplication of activities and that resources are shared to maximize benefits.</p> <p>One site (Nero Forest) for rehabilitation has been identified in Chuuk. This activity also includes a baseline forest survey. Although the activity has yet to be implemented due to unforeseen complications with the implementing entity, it is anticipated to commence beginning third quarter of FY18. Other related activities include promotion of sustainable solid waste management practices (in Chuuk) and clean waste and pollution sources impacting critical ecosystems (in Yap). However, the overall impact is minimal (<1 ha total).</p>	<p>Unsatisfactory</p>
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<p>% of piggeries using the dry litter piggery system within the Ipwek, Dachangar, Finkol, and Nefounimas catchments resulting in increased water quality</p>	<p><i>Baseline = 0%</i></p>	<p>Information will be provided in next PIR once first year activities are complete. Only Pohnpei State has finalized its selection criteria for the dry litter piggery conversion, and contracts signed with 15 farmers. Percentage of piggeries using dry litter system will be available in the next PIR.</p>	<p>4 per High Island</p>	<p>The baseline was missing from the 2018 PIR. It will be added for 2019 PIR. Advances and impacts are minimal (<1ha total in all States combines)⁶¹. The baseline data for the project sites also needs to be revisited to determine whether or not the baseline data (number of piggeries using the DLP system) still remains at 0%.</p>
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Unsatisfactory

⁶¹ Four farmers identified in Kosrae to pilot the dry litter piggeries, one in each of the State's four municipalities: Tafunsak, Malem, Walung and Utwe., There was a unanimous decision among key stakeholders to divide the dry litter piggeries among the four municipalities. This decision was based on a recent water quality testing, which indicated that all rivers within the four municipalities are highly contaminated. As such, the project is currently undergoing procurement of materials for construction of piggeries. Pohnpei State has re-affirmed its decision to utilize Ipwek as the project site for its dry litter piggeries. Although the selection of farmers has yet to be confirmed, consultations with the community is expected to commence shortly for identification of four farmers for conversion of their regular piggeries into the DLP system.

Annual Government and Donor funding allocated to SLM (including PA management costs)

US\$ 9.2 million

An amount of US \$120,000 was allocated by Pohnpei State through its unallocated Compact funds to support R2R's ongoing dry-litter piggery activities.

At least US\$ 10.1 million

The government and NGOs have only reached half of the target in 2018 and has yet to meet the target. INRM was discussed during the project's recent Project Management Training on 14-18 May 2018. Based on discussions, there is no INRM framework in place. Therefore, there is a need to validate information from the project document, specifically, that referring to a formal endorsement of an INRM framework that has been formally adopted by stakeholders.⁶²

Unsatisfactory

⁶² Mid-Term Review finds that the combines annual government and donor funding allocated for SLM and PAs falls short of the US \$10.1 million target.

<p>Outcome 2: Mgmt. Effectiveness enhanced within new and existing PAs on the High Islands of FSM as part of the R2R approach (both marine and terrestrial)</p>	<p>(i) Legal status of 0 (0 ha) PAs verified</p>	<p><i>Baseline = 0</i></p>	<p>Development of management plans and demarcation of PA sites are ongoing. Outcome of Year 1 PA activities to be reported in the next PIR.</p>	<p>(i) Legal status of 40 PAs verified - 27 existing and 13 new gazetted; (ii) 14,953 ha; (iii) 10,033 ha; (iv) 24,986</p>	<p>Good progress on the FSM PAN framework - a bill was drafted and introduced to the FSM Congress. It is waiting further action from the FSM Congress. Project is currently working with the Micronesia Challenge (MC), Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT) and the Nature Conservancy (TNC) to verify legal status of existing PAs in the FSM. Once the list is finalized, the project will be able to provide verification on legal status of the 27 existing PA sites. Verification of the proposed new PA sites is also ongoing, though it is anticipated that additional sites may be selected outside of the identified 40 PAs for support by the project⁶³.</p>	<p>Satisfactory</p>
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⁶³ In addition, the Malem MPA (Kosrae State) recently endorsed its management plan with a signing ceremony held on February 9, 2018 to commemorate this important achievement. This achievement was made possible by efforts from the Kosrae Conservation and Safety Organization (a key implementing partner of the R2R project) with support from the R2R project.

	<p>Number of States having a fully operational PA management Decision-support system (DSS) in place on which management decisions are based.</p>	<p><i>Baseline =0</i></p>	<p>FSM PAN Framework pending endorsement by FSM leadership. The frame provides clear guidance on how assistance will be provided from the National Government to the States. PIU currently working with partners (MCT, TNC) to have the PAN Framework endorsed. States encouraged to establish individual PAN laws. Pohnpei+Kosrae w. existing laws, Chuuk and Yap awaiting legislative action.</p>	<p>4 DSS</p>	<p>The baseline was missing from the 2018 PIR. It will be added for 2019 PIR. Given the cutback on the # of SEAs and IEMPBs, there will only be one DSS for Pohnpei unless funds are located to carry on in the remaining States. However, there is presently no DSS blueprint available from the IEMP consultant's final IEMP report and somehow his updated ToR have not included this responsibility, even though it was listed as a deliverable in the original ToR. Through the MC, the FSM is working towards a standardized monitoring and reporting system for PAs⁶⁴, including a consistent set of indicators for biological/socioeconomic/performance monitoring. State agencies collaborate with local NGOs/communities to conduct monitoring. However, there is not an FSM-specific MIS to house/provide access to PA data across all sites (currently housed at the regional MC database) according to the I2/2018quarterly report...he SEA indicators are not considered to be sufficiently robust i.e., (lacking SMART outcomes for proposed measures to achieve the moderate development scenario) to feed into a DSS, Descriptions of the monitoring system presented in the most recent SEA recommendation is not operational and there is no linkage to the ongoing outcome monitoring efforts throughout the R2R continuum.</p>	<p>Highly Unsatisfactory</p>
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⁶⁴ The FSM PAN Framework was endorsed in 2018. Other challenges remain i.e. revisiting existing PAN laws for the States to ensure they align with the FSM PAN Framework and approving Yap's PAN regulation.

	Mean % of total fish biomass of (i) <i>Cheilinus undulates</i> (EN); and (ii) <i>Bolbometopon muricatum</i> (VU) across the States	Chuuk:(i) 1.14% (ii) 0.22% Kosrae: (i) 1.52%(ii) 0.00% Pohnpei: (i) 5.2% (ii) 0.48% Yap: (i) 2.47% (ii) 4.70%	To be determined post completion of Year 1 activities.	Stable or increasing against baseline	Mean % of total fish biomass for <i>Cheilinus undulates</i> (EN); and (ii) <i>Bolbometopon muricatum</i> (VU) across the States has yet to be determined ⁶⁵ . While the R2R project will aim to collect all available data pertaining to recent fish studies, surveys and assessments for review, these were not available to the MTE. This is not a major problem because the MTE considers that all of the proposed indicators are inadequate and they are not sufficiently robust to provide meaningful information about the effectiveness of fishery management, especially given the widespread and illegal nighttime spearfishing and the resulting impacts that have been well-documented by Rhodes and colleagues. Relying on fish biomass of emblematic species has been heavily criticized in peer review articles and if it is going to continue to be used, it MUST include the biomass of these species in their preferred habitats. Houk <i>et al.</i> 2015 have some good recommendations and these have been incorporated into Annex 6a . However simple things like marker boundaries and rights are extremely important interventions that can be linked to increased overall fish biomass (as was found on Yap).	Highly Unsatisfactory
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⁶⁵ R2R is exploring several options to obtain such information i.e. seeking assistance from regional technical experts (for fisheries and coral reef monitoring) to verify baseline information and update the project's data based on recently conducted studies. For example, per the project document, 0.00% of *Bolbometopon muricatum* (VU) exist in Kosrae. The timing of when such assessment was conducted may have affected the results of the study, since reports indicate that such

<p>Mean Detection Rate of the following birds: (i) Kosrae: <i>Zosterops cinereus</i> (Endemic); (ii) Pohnpei: <i>Myiagra pluta</i> (Endemic); (iii) Chuuk: <i>Metabulus rugensis</i> (Endangered); (iv) Yap: <i>Monarcha gadeffroyi</i> (Endemic); (v) All States: <i>Ducula oceanica</i> (Micronesian Pigeon) Regionally endemic</p>	<p>(i) 1.846 (Baseline to be verified in year 1 of project)</p> <p>(ii) 0.7936</p> <p>(iii) – (v) Baseline TBD in year 1 of project</p>	<p>To be determined post completion of Year 1 activities.</p>	<p>Stable or increasing against baseline</p>	<p>Verification of baseline data has yet to happen⁶⁶, including other baseline information that has yet to be determined i.e. Chuuk Monarch; Project will seek assistance from technical experts in forestry/agriculture to verify and determine baseline data, before a survey is conducted to monitor mean detection rates. The R2R project will also aim to obtain existing data for recent bird studies, surveys and assessments to be made available during the project’s upcoming MTR These species must be measured according to specific habitat preferences during specific parts of their life cycles. Measuring absolute abundances and ignoring comparisons with counterfactuals results in potentially dangerous logic and conclusions.</p>	<p>Unsatisfactory</p>
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Table 3. Matrix showing the R2R’s advances since Inception

Key:

- Satisfactory
- Moderately Unsatisfactory
- Unsatisfactory
- Highly Unsatisfactory

type of fish species exist in Kosrae. Baselines for these species need to be adjusted based on existing data – further and/or specific studies/surveys/assessments may need to be undertaken to verify some of this information.

⁶⁶ Although baseline data for the endemic birds have yet to be established, there is a planned bird survey for the project. A TOR are now available, although some adjustments to the budget are lacking to ensure it fits within budgetary limitations.

short time remaining for implementation and the slow rate of developing replicates of key activities (e.g., dry piggeries). For example, with the elimination of the IEMPs for the other States, the target of area of 62,133 ha for integrated landscape management will only reflect the land area of Pohnpei State.

118. While the project helped Pohnpei develop its IEMP as a framework for (a) management of direct, indirect and cumulative environmental and socio-economic impacts or consequences of developments arising under ongoing economic development; (b) achieving environmental and socio-economic objectives; and (c) monitoring and reporting, no one has been trained in integrated landscape management. However, there are several knowledgeable GIS operators on each island who have practical experience with using the tool. At the local level, the IEMP recommended that the project prepare Integrated Ecosystem Management Frameworks at the Municipal level to achieve integrated ecosystem management, particularly the PAN.
119. It is unclear to the MTR and to the PIU, whether Indicator #3 (the financial target for government and donor budget allocations to the SLM and PA components) is an annual target, or the total investment at the end of the project. Given that the baseline year was just under the target, it is assumed that the target is an annual one. If this is correct, the combined funding for SLM and PA are far from the agreed annual investments (the targeted \$10.1 million per annum, which seems high). If this is incorrect, then the combined funding sources would only need to put in c. 250,000 per year., which seems low.
120. Regarding Indicator #4 (percentage of piggeries using the dry litter piggery system within catchments⁶⁷ resulting in increased water quality), the indicator is not SMART, as it explicitly it is impossible to assess whether changes in water quality are attributable to the DLPs, due to the absence of counterfactuals (controls) and more importantly, the probability that 4 DLPs per State will significantly improve water quality (WQ) enormous watersheds delivering large volumes of water to downstream areas is close to zero. Further, the indicator is not specific, as it does not mention which parameters are going to change, nor from where in the water column⁶⁸ the samples will be collected and analyzed. The PIU also indicated that the ProDoc-listed DLP sites no longer align with State priorities.
121. There was confusion at the PIU about the role of the role of the Communication Strategy expert to be hired to influence decision makers to invest more into SLM and PA activities. This person is viewed as being one of the top priorities, as there is a low level of awareness about just what R2R entails and its benefits that is lacking not just for political level actors, but for resource users, government employees, communities, school children and decision makers in different sectors of the government.
122. There are two models with significant cost differences (Figures 9 and 10) being tested. Based on a rapid assessment, the weakness that both models lack is that they fail to lead to sufficient biochemical degradation of the pig fecal wastes and the chips so that the micronutrients become available to soil organisms and plants for uptake. This could be easily remedied by adding earthworms (<https://extension.psu.edu/earthworm-production>) to supercharge the mixture. The liquids the worms produce can use as foliates to stimulate leaf grow and control pests (in some cases white flies can be eliminated) and add considerable value to the resulting product, which can

⁶⁷ Original targets were for Ipwek, Dachnga, Finkol and Nefounimas

⁶⁸ Rivers delivering freshwater and suspended sediments encounter a natural and intense flocculation process whereby many pollutants traveling on particulates are released when chemical bonds change with increasing salinity....Therefore, in some cases sampling in the water column may be less meaningful than looking in sediments, which are the reservoirs that provide the most important information on the pollution 'climate' of an estuarine and marine water body ([Ryan and Windom 1988; Schropp et al. 1991](#))



Figure 9. Low-tech and inexpensive (\$300) DLP model.



Figure 10. High tech DLP model (\$3000) DLP.

even be sold as organic fertilizer. However, the high cost of the second model renders it infeasible. Similarly, the motorized chipper that was purchased in the USA (c. US\$30k) is not sustainable due to the high demand for its use on the island of Pohnpei and the need for continuous with maintenance and upkeep. A local solution is far more feasible for sustaining the approach.

123. Another issue is the absence of data on forest pressure (e.g., % annual change in forest cover within the project sites). Although satellite images are available for purchase, none have been bought for these fundamental analyses and it is a major gap for Component 1 because it also prevents making correlations between the bird surveys with the historical changes in forest cover that are significant in some areas (e.g., the high erosion rates for Pohnpei shown in Figure 2 set off alarm bells).
124. Further, there are several critical risks that were never mitigated, while several others were not even identified. Several of the ProDoc's assumptions related to the R2R development model are not valid in real-time settings, while the design document overlooked other risks that the MTE considers to be important (see the Section discussing Risks and Assumptions).
125. Advances toward achieving Outcome 1 were significantly hindered by lengthy delays in preparing the ToR⁶⁹ for the *Strategic Environmental Assessment*⁷⁰ and recruiting the international expert to execute the SEA process. As correctly envisioned by the ProDoc, four State-specific SEAs as well

⁶⁹ Although there are no standard international guidelines for conducting SEAs, the Terms of Reference for the SEA Specialist were poorly written, they raised questions about how the SEA should be conducted. After a considerable delay in recruiting, the selected international SEA expert found little information available and embarked on an effort to collect information for improving on existing environmental sensitivity maps and biodiversity profiles and carry out scoping exercises in Workshops in each State between October to November 2018, focusing on awareness around SEAs, buy-in from stakeholders, among other issues.

⁷⁰ Few SEAs have been conducted in the Pacific Region, and these are relatively new to GEF projects.

as the following deliverables: i) State-specific Integrated Environmental Management Plan (referred to in the ProDoc as an ILMP⁷¹); ii) guidelines for a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) platform (while not specified, they should be State-specific); and iii) a Decision Support System (DSS)⁷².

126. To date, activities surrounding the SEA are the most resource-intensive and the bulk of the budget focused on the IE's-related work activities. The consultant recommended that the planned consultancy be extended from 130 days to 244 days (full time) and concurred with the ProDoc's recommendation to develop four separate SEAs (each State has different issues/customary traditions). The IE further wisely recommended hiring a local consultant and forming a State Expert Team (10 or more people), developing environment and socio-economic baseline profiles and a model National profile⁷³. The MTE has reviewed the available SEA reports (P) through May 2019, and finds them comprehensive and well-founded, and the SEA has identified many of the pressure points making Pohnpei's Sustainable Development Plan incongruent with environmental and social resilience-building. It also finds that the consultant's recommended Moderate Development Scenario is well-supported.
127. However, at the risk of being repetitive, it is pertinent to highlight that *the SEA is only one input* for developing the IEMPs that aim to provide a framework for (i) the management of direct, indirect and cumulative environmental and socio-economic impacts or consequences of developments arising under on-going economic development (hopefully under a moderate economic growth scenario); (ii) achieving the stated environmental and socio-economic objectives; and (iii) carry out continuous monitoring (note that *the term evaluation is absent* from the IEMP's reporting). Essentially, it should outline metrics that measure positive development and environmental changes, while preventing, minimizing or mitigating negative ones likely to arise under the preferred/recommended development scenarios.
128. While the IEMP's strategy of implement plans at the municipal level is solid, the Final IEMP for Pohnpei is inadequate for several reasons that are linked to a rapid theory of change the MTR applied to the final report: i) most of the proposed interventions are for achieving the preferred development scenario are 'soft' measures (e.g., emphasis on multiple public awareness campaigns raising, 'introduce' fines, ordinances, monitoring, web sites and newsletter, etc.); ii) mis-placed emphasis on low priority issues (e.g., an entire chapter on guidelines for tourism) at the expense of urgent sectoral threats; iii) an inadequate monitoring framework incapable of measuring intervention effectiveness and their attribution to observed changes; iv) non-SMART outcome indicators (Table 3.2, Chapter 3, [ESAI 2019](#)). [Annex 4d](#)); summarizes many of these issues. It is curious that the IEMP dedicates a single chapter to sustainable tourism, even though tourism is not a major threat to ecosystem resilience. Other issues are far more urgent (overfishing, unsustainable agriculture and infrastructure projects, destruction of mangroves, etc.), and it is unclear why guidelines are not provided for those pressure points.
129. Interviews and ongoing discussions with the PIU and SEA Task Force members raise a far more important concern- it is highly unlikely that these important stakeholders the consultant's capacity-building efforts have not prepared them to implement, monitoring and adapt Pohnpei's IEMP as

⁷¹ The SEA expert further recommended changing the name of the ILMPs, and in November 2018, the Steering Committee renamed ILMP and it is now formally called the *Integrated Environmental Management Plan* (IEMP).

⁷² Output 1.1.2: Spatially based decision support systems for INRM are developed and made available for use in EIA, policy development, multi-sector ecosystem-based planning & management to assist users to implement the ILMP in land-use decision and policy making processes.

⁷³ Another good recommendation was for the SEA to assess State-specific SDP's. .

required over time. Reasons for this finding are that: i) the recommended management interventions are not sufficiently robust to bring about the drastic changes in the prevailing business-as-usual model; ii) few of the indicators presented in the monitoring matrix (Table 3.2, Chapter 3, [ESAI 2019](#)) are SMART outcomes (see [Annex 4d](#)); iii) the monitoring approach does not mention the word *evaluation*, and this might explain why it the approach is only measures *State* of the selected thematic areas (e.g., environment, agriculture, etc.), and it is difficult for the PIU to envision how the monitoring matrix will be used to drive a systematic approach to apply an adaptive management process⁷⁴. while ignoring measures of intervention effectiveness (e.g., changes in parameter x linked to intervention y). The MTE considers these gaps to be a high risk for sustaining the IEMPs through a systematic AM approach.

130. There is no evidence that the consultant used a Theory of Change approach to develop risks, assumptions and SMART outcome indicators to develop Pohnpei's Draft IEMP, which is paramount for establish a framework for applying adaptive management⁷⁵). Therefore, the risk is high for the teams could find themselves in the same frustrating situation that resulted after the Inception Workshop. Therefore, the MTE does not concur with the IEMP consultant's suggestion to view the monitoring approach as provisional, 'rolling tool' left for the teams 'under continuous review' *is unacceptable and represents a high risk to the IEMP's sustainability*.
131. The absence of a robust M&E platform raises even bigger questions about why there is no geospatial platform for the DSS platform. Based on the available evidence, the metrics presented in the IEMP table (Chapter 3) will not inform policy and decision-making as they are currently formulated, and this is a major shortcoming of the SEA consultancy. Any new amendments to the IE's recommended approach will require careful scrutiny. Based on the above, the IEMP's recommendation to contract an economist to forecast the value of tourism under economic growth scenarios, valuation of ecosystem services of reef, mangrove, forests, catchments, costs of services due to invasive species has little meaning unless the IEMP can provide a robust and operational M&E/DSS that can use the data. However, with only one year remaining, any consideration given to hiring a resource economist must be contingent on the project being given a no-cost extension of at least one year.
132. Another risk (albeit smaller magnitude) is related to the agreement between UNDP and the government to cut the four originally planned four SEAs and their associated IEMPs to on State due to cost over runs, and for that reason, Pohnpei was selected to be the pilot for developing and implementing both tools. Consequently, the decision affects entire project and will require a major revision of the Log Frame, assumptions, risks and Component 1's (and Outcome 1) outcome indicators. Dropping the other three SEA-IEMPs also risks alienating many stakeholders who spent considerable time developing their State-specific scoping exercises. Finally, economic cost savings from eliminating the SEA-IEMPs in the remaining States are likely to incur social and environment and economic costs that must be considered before a final decision is made. Recommended actions for addressing this issue are presented in [Annex 6](#) .

⁷⁴ [PSEPA-DECEM 2019](#), Chapter 3

⁷⁵ According to CBD (2004), adaptive management is a strategy that allows stakeholders to operate in the face of uncertainty, learning from the effects of their resource management practices on resource quality and quantity (sustainability), including biodiversity, at certain scales, and its links with ecosystem functioning at the same or larger scales. Only through expanding the knowledge base on the relationships between human activities and natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystem functioning, and through continuous experimentation and adaptation to cope with change, will a more sustainable use of natural resources come within reach. AM is a fundamental tool for dealing with situations characterized by complexity, uncertainty and unpredictability (CBD 2004; [Gunderson and Holling 2002](#); CBD 2001).

ii. Outcome 2

133. Component 2 aims to operationalize a highly fragmented and incongruent institutional arrangements for operationalize the National PAN⁷⁶. Prior to launching the R2R project, Kosrae and Pohnpei State already had their respective PAN laws in place. While Chuuk's PAN was approved in 2018, the management plan is not aligned with the PAN framework and it lacks clear guidance on how communities can become PAN members, something that is viewed as a major weakness and there is also a gap with its alignment to the PAN Framework. Yap's PAN has yet to be formulated/approved. It is no coincidence that the two States that are lagging are also those with customary land and marine tenure that is not congruent with western judicial systems and the over/riding National institutional framework. PAs lacks clear standards for community management. Each village owns and manages its resources, have their own customary regulations and judicial systems, and they solely grant access to members of those communities. These locally controlled management and governance processes promote tight feedback loops between environmental and social factors, which in turn, inform management actions (Johnson 2017). Integrating these traditional social-ecological management structures within the Western judicial systems that are the framework of FSM's National PAN legislation, and taking actions that strengthen social cohesion are two of the biggest challenges for the R2R project.
134. Despite the findings by [Houk et al. \(2015\)](#) that fishing pressure is the primary driver of ecosystem condition throughout Micronesia's islands and reefs, and the extensive studies by Rhodes (Rhodes et al. 2018, 2017, 2011) showing that the composition of these catches are juvenile herbivorous fish and carnivores that have an important role in the trophic structure that is also responsible for marine ecosystem condition, the government and the pertinent institutions have not taken action on their important recommendations. Unless action is taken to develop new policies for these reef fisheries and the communities that depend on them, the country will continue heading along a path leading toward poverty traps (Cinner 2012) that is driven by overfishing and the use of destructive fishing practices that will ultimately push Micronesia's social-ecological systems (SES) beyond their critical thresholds, toward less desirable SES conditions.
135. While R2R has improved inter-institutional and NGO coordination, during its final year it still must address multiple bottlenecks that improving the weak to non-existent enforcement of legislation, clarifying ambiguous institutional responsibilities for enforcement, poor cooperation between law enforcement officers and Attorneys General Office, and poor public awareness on resource management and the penalties misuse of resources. These are some of the root causes of widespread overfishing, mainly uncontrolled nighttime spearfishing on the reefs and in the channels, which the government has chosen to ignore. These problems are further by pollution that is pumped into coastal and backreef lagoons that are taking their toll in Yap and Pohnpei's lagoons.
136. The PIU has taken a passive role that aimed to allow the States to drive their own process, but the available evidence indicates that this has not been successful, and it is clear that the PIU will have to take on a more proactive role. The recently approved project funds for hiring a legal expert to assist the States in developing these laws is a good start because it allows the States an option to the degree to which they require legal assistance for drafting of their PAN Law regulations⁷⁷. But strengthening enforcement of these regulations is a major challenge R2R faces for the remaining implementation period.

⁷⁶ PA management in the FSM is highly complex and involves multiple National, State, and Municipal levels actors, together with community managers and local NGOs. However, it lacks a comprehensive institutional framework for PA management.

⁷⁷ Nov. 2018 SC minutes

137. For Indicator 2.1, *Progress in meeting three of the four indicators of the PAN component has been satisfactory* and the project has advanced with legalizing the PAs through its ongoing work with the Micronesia Challenge (MC), Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT) and the Nature Conservancy (TNC) to verify the legal status of existing PAs in the FSM. Further, the project will be able to provide verification on legal status of the 27 existing PA sites once the list is complete. Although proposals for new PA sites are currently being verified according to the selection criteria, it is possible that some new sites could be selected outside of the identified 40 PAs for support by the project⁷⁸. However, given the limited time left to conclude R2R, it will be crucial to reconsider just how much effort should be invested in creating an exhaustive list of PAs by considering cutting down the number of PA sites from 40 to 20. It is better to have operational PAs that are managed effectively, than just to check off boxes on a checklist ([Visconti et al. 2019](#); [Butchart et al. 2015](#); [Venter et al. 2014](#) and of course, [Agardy et al. 2011](#)).
138. Indicator 2.2 (*Number of States having a fully operational PA management decision-support system in place which management decisions are based*) is an output – what remains to be measured the effectiveness of the DSS in making IEM decisions to assess the degree to which development, environment and social concerns are addressed effectively. However, as mentioned previously, the DSS is far from operational at mid-term, and the underlying framework established by the SEA is weak, as is the proposed monitoring system, given the paucity of SMART outcome indicators.
139. Indicator 2.3 measures the abundance of several fish and bird species that require protection. Although the ProDoc chose the mean % of total fish biomass of the endangered humphead wrasse (*Cheilinus undulates*) and the vulnerable green humphead parrotfish (*Bolbometopon muricatum*) across the States⁷⁹, the indicator is not sufficiently robust for measuring of marine ecosystem condition because these species are tied to specific habitats and they do not cover all coastal-marine ecosystems. According to scientific experts with extensive regional experience in the region, other indicators are needed, and these should be tied to fishing pressure⁸⁰ (the primary determinant of ecosystem condition across 72% of all Micronesian islands and reefs), while pollution and fishing pressure predicted a declining ecosystem condition in Yap's and Pohnpei's lagoons because of poor land-use. For example, when comparing them with real-time monitoring data for : i) the Coral Reef Condition ([Houk et al. 2015](#)); ii) the size and trophic group composition of fish captures ([Rhodes et al. 2018, 2017, 2015, 2014, 2011](#); [Cuetos-Bueno and Houk 2017](#)); iii) the effectiveness of protecting important spawning aggregation areas (Rhodes, personal communication); and iv) the calcifying substrate ratio (Houk, personal communication), % algal cover vs live coral cover and *Tridacna* abundance inside and outside of MPAs could add considerable value to the ProDoc's unidimensional fish indicators. Indeed, there are much also better indicators of fish resilience.
140. The indicator also includes the *mean detection rate of several birds* (Kosrae White Eye; Pohnpei Fly Catcher; Chuuk Monarch; Yap Monarch; and the Micronesian Pigeon). However, these are

⁷⁸ In addition, the Malem MPA (Kosrae State) recently endorsed its management plan with a signing ceremony held on February 9, 2018 to commemorate this important achievement. This achievement was made possible by efforts from the Kosrae Conservation and Safety Organization (a key implementing partner of the R2R project) with support from the R2R project.

⁷⁹ Baseline data for the targeted fish need to be verified before the MTR. PIU is already seeking assistance from Peter Houk to update the fish data. Baseline data for birds have yet to be verified and established for some States. The last bird survey was in the 90s. With no specific funding identified within the ProDoc for establishment of the baseline data for birds other than the funding allocated for biodiversity monitoring, the project will require tapping into the monitoring funds to establish the baseline.

⁸⁰ [Houk et al. \(2015\)](#) found that high-wave exposure and far distances from major access ports were both beneficial to reef-fish populations and to overall ecosystem condition.

not stand-alone indicators, because they must not only be linked with species—specific habitat requirements during different stages of their life cycles, but also species-specific habitat condition and changes in total area.

141. However, the biological monitoring only provides *unidimensional metrics* that ignore the social and economic dimensions, which are fundamental for focusing on long term development impacts (see [Ahmadi et al. 2015](#)). [Johnson \(2017\)](#) found that the key to understanding social-ecological systems on Yap requires identifying parameters associated with social structure, which can support desirable feedback loops and are most responsible for conservation success. Villages with indicators for social cohesion were linked to MPAs with greater positive ecological outcomes compared to villages that were structured solely around strong leadership and enforcement, whereas sites with the poorest performing MPAs lacked strong leadership and physical MPA features (e.g., boundary markers and signboards). He found that social cohesion could play an equal or even greater role than governance on Yap, and addressing management in areas where leadership or social cohesion was lacking may be an important next step in advancing conservation. Therefore, it is not surprising that State and National policies could contribute to more effective management and greater social-ecological resilience by taking key social structure features into account.
142. Protected areas are under the mandate of the R&D Department, the country's focal point for CBD and the decision to assign the project to DECEM is perplexing. The PIU helped address this gap by dismantling two project coordinator positions that were initially proposed to be based at R&D to create the new position within R&D, which the Technical Coordinator is now filling. This allows the project to have a R&D technical person who can help drive forward those activities related to CBD agreements, while working with partners on the ground.
143. On a positive note, site visits to several MPAs on islands with traditional property rights found that communities were enthusiastically defending the resources and other ecosystem services within clearly delimited boundaries⁸¹. Violators who conduct illegal activities in these areas are met with unbending community enforcement and traditional judicial instruments that will always result in stiff fines, as well as confiscating the violator's boat after repeated offenses. Boundaries and lights (supported by R2R) may seem like a small intervention, but the MTR evaluator saw qualitative signs of increased submarine resource biomass within unmistakable boundaries and social cohesion in the Tamil and Riken community MPAs⁸².
144. Although R2R has invested in capacity development for better management, stronger PAN legislation, following tracking tools like the METT, activities in the classroom and office do not always predict what is going on below it. For example, capacity building has not gone far enough in some cases, as was observed in an underwater visit to one MPA where a community member accompanied the consultant to show different features of the magnificent reefs (Figure 11). Mangrove destruction and night spearfishing are marine ecosystems and devastating fisheries throughout Micronesia. The lack of decisive action by the National and State governments to



⁸¹ R2R provided funding for boundary markers and solar lights running from mangrove forests out to the deep reefs. The boundaries could only be placed near the reef crest in the backreef lagoon, as the R2R continuum extends seaward out to the 300 foot isopleth, or the upper mesophotic zone.

⁸² The observations found abundant numbers and biomass of different trophic groups (carnivore biomass, herbivores) throughout the area.

enforce regulations and develop alternative income-generating activities (mariculture, adjusting fish market prices).

145. While R2R has focused on developing alternative demonstration interventions in the upper watersheds (DLPs), there is considerable room for improving communication and coordination



Tridacna Farm in Kosrae

Sustainable Fish Market Pohnpei

Sea Cucumber farm in Yap

with NGOs and private entities who are experimenting with alternatives like *Tridacna* (left photo) cultivation sustainable fish markets⁸³ (center photo), Rabbitfish (Pohnpei) and sea cucumbers (right photo in Yap) mariculture. R2R could replicate in other areas and/or incorporate outcome monitoring to measure their effectiveness in reducing fishing pressure in pilot sites.

146. Mariculture alone is not a panacea for stopping overfishing. Policies are needed to strengthen customary tenure regimes that strengthen resource ownership and reduce the “race to fish”⁸⁴ practices, reducing the disparity between wholesale fish prices and external commodity prices, particularly fuel and strengthening fishers’ ability to cooperate to effectively leverage prices, which otherwise, will continue to drive overharvesting. Many of these good recommendations by Rhodes and colleagues are *fundamental for understanding the root causes of the risks that the ProDoc overlooked*.

iii. Remaining Capacity needs for IEMP

147. Although R2R project has contributed to build stakeholder capacities on many fronts, there are three key issues require attention. The first is related to strengthening the capacities of government institutions to mainstream long-term environmental-economic and climate change considerations and good practices that can help shift policies promoting unsustainable infrastructure projects that reduce ecosystem resilience in coastal lagoons and mangrove forests. For example, one interviewee mentioned the lack of capacity to understand the log frame and how it relates to a results-based and adaptive management approach: *we just generally covered everything quickly, so everyone agreed - we were new to the project and there was not much questioning*. The interviews and meetings with stakeholders left no doubt that they lacked a clear understanding of SMART indicators and only one understood what a Theory of Change involves and had they understood better the Inception Workshop could have helped build a more robust logframe.
148. The SEA and IEMP are more than just outputs – they require National and State-level teams with the capacity to operationalize IEMP, and develop a sufficiently robust M&E and DSS platform to monitor and measure the effectiveness of the proposed management interventions and policies,

⁸³ Rhodes has established a model fish market in Pohnpei that could be replicated elsewhere, but it requires government policies to make it attractive to fisherfolk.

⁸⁴ Resource declines were typically most severe in open access jurisdictions, while those with low population density and those operating under stronger and more intact customary marine tenure systems tended to be less overfished.

and adapt them as required (see [Annex 4c](#)) presents a rapid assessment of the IEMP's indicators. However, based on interviews and extensive discussions with the PIU, it is clear that the capacity to do so. The IEMP (EDSI 2019) is not operational, the assumptions are weak and not all risks and their corresponding mitigation measures have been identified, while few indicators are SMART outcomes. The team responsible for implementation does not have a good understanding of these issues and although the MTR evaluator requested that the PIU develop an action plan to address them, there has been no response. Therefore, with the lack of other evidence to the contrary, there is a risk that the mistakes made in the Inception workshop will be repeated when the IEMP is implemented, unless the responsible teams have sufficient knowledge and capacity to raise critical questions based on an understanding of the Theory of Change and results-based framework applied to the Pohnpei IEMP. The other risk is that without such capacity, the SEA-IEMP-DSS is unlikely to be sustained once the project ends.

149. The second issue is improving the capacities of central and state financial management efficiency, and catalyzing disbursements so that the project can deliver its final activities in a timely manner.
150. The third issue related to the scientific research data/implementation gap⁸⁵ mentioned earlier. Although it has been the intention of several FSM scientists (including R2R's Technical Coordinator) since the biological monitoring teams were trained in 2006, it has always been a challenge to build local capacity to collect and analyze the data because turnover and different levels of capacity has always impeded this effort. Further, assistance is required for more complex calculations/ analysis, so the University of Guam and other experts in the region have provided tremendous assistance to keep producing data, storing and analyzing it to ensure continuity. While the monitoring teams have come a long way since they started several years ago and R2R is just trying to build and continue strengthening what has been worked on over the years and build platforms to fill in gaps, etc. Scientists from the University of Guam and BINGOs trained local NGOs to monitor corals and fish biomass continuously. These data are actually owned by the States, but the data are stored and must be analyzed in Guam. The fact that the NGOs lack the capacity to calculate/analyze the raw data leaving this huge data/implementation gap that prevents it being made accessible to any DSS, and of course, without data, evidence-based decision-making is paralyzed. Therefore, it is surprising that the ProDoc did not identify this critical *knowing-doing* gap and the PIU could benefit from work done by [Halpern et al.](#) (2012) to communicate results to decision and policymakers⁸⁶ of a simple scorecard for integrated ecosystem health ([Healthy Reefs 2018](#)) developed for several countries where the GEF supports similar ILMP projects.

iv. Communication and Knowledge Management

151. Interviews with a broad range of beneficiaries and site visits revealed a surprising lack of understanding about the linkages between the discrete terrestrial and coastal-marine systems along the R2R continuum, and obviously, there is considerable work to be done to raise awareness – not only about the penalties for violating laws and social norms, but also about alternatives (e.g., Paragraph #119) that can be used to reduce unsustainable practices and especially for informing about the relationship between coral health and fishing pressure and the sensitivity of corals to

⁸⁵ The 'research-implementation gap' between science (i.e. research on spatial prioritization techniques) and the implementation of conservation action is not solely confined to conservation planning ([Parrish et al 2003](#)), and is almost certainly the norm in FSM and most other countries around the world. Therefore, identifying this 'knowing-doing gap' is an important lesson, and a process for sharing knowledge and focusing on action-oriented applications of the relevant knowledge on the target islands critical.

⁸⁶ Their index allows clear and rapid communication of vast quantities of and it can be used to simulate the consequences of a range of potential actions, providing a powerful tool to inform decisions about how to use or protect ocean ecosystems. The index

human impacts (Figures 11 & 12), and the need for having a more integrated Communication Strategy about how these ecosystems function along the R2R.

152. Substantial volumes of data are of little value unless they are available in popular formats that allow non-scientists to take decisions and actions that contribute toward effective management models. Experience around the globe indicates that what scientist's offer is almost always light years away from what policy and decision-makers need to shift course from policies that undermine, rather than polices aimed at building social and ecological resilience ([Holling 1978](#)⁸⁷). Although continuous monitoring and scientific research have built a reliable data base for the state and pressures characterizing many of FSM's coral reefs and fisheries, there is a formidable '*knowing-doing gap*' between research and monitoring data on the one-hand, and converting those data into decision-support information and knowledge that can be used to develop adaptive management actions to help restore much of the eroded social and ecological resilience attributed to unsustainable policies, plans and projects over the past five decades



Figure 11. Well-respected, model fisherman lacking coral sensitivity knowledge.



Figure 12. Widespread over-fishing of Red-listed species, reef herbivores and immature juveniles.

153. The 'research-implementation gap' between science (i.e. research on spatial prioritization techniques) and the implementation of conservation action has also escaped many beneficiaries who are unable to use the scientific data. Further, there is a limited understanding about the functioning of marine and coastal ecosystems and the processes that ensure the persistence of the flora and fauna on the insular shelves, and especially lacking is knowledge about the ecological linkages with deeper waters (exceptions can be found in the work of Rhodes). Thus, the act of simply *declaring* a MPA does not in itself ensure effective MBD conservation and resilience-building or replenished overfished stocks– systematic spatial planning for MBD conservation is a process that must be driven by the knowledge and inputs from, and by stakeholders, because they will be affected by the final decisions⁸⁸, and they must have access to all existing information and they will ultimately play a key role in planning and implementing different parts of MBD conservation plans.
154. The concept of Management effectiveness is confusing as it is currently applied in the FSM, and it is only being measured with the METT, which is simply a tool for measuring outputs (*which are not unimportant links in a causative results chain leading toward development impacts*) like institutional

⁸⁷ While this book is dated, it is a classic introduction to modern adaptive management and social-ecological resilience-building.

⁸⁸ SDSS tools like MARXAN, MARXAN Zones and CREDOS are used throughout the world, but they are only as good as the information fed into them.

performance, or the degree to which regulatory actions are in place. However, it skirts important indicators like SMART outcomes, which are increasingly recognized as key indicators of effectiveness, despite heavy opposition in a scientific community that frequently looks for simple measurement tools ([Visconti et al. 2019](#); [Ahmadia et al. 2015](#)), without understanding theories of change and how they can drive adaptive management.

155. The project is expected to hire an additional Communications and Knowledge Management Officer and it is noteworthy R2R lacks knowledge management component. Thus, to further raise the visibility of the project and to ensure that the project communicates information effectively, it is very critical to hire a communications person to ensure the project's communication successfully reaches all audiences, through as many ways as possible.
156. Education and awareness raising is a pre-requisite for more significant participation in MPA decision-making processes – it is not a substitute. Primary reliance on interpretive enforcement, at the cost of neglecting the other issues discussed may actually provoke resentment amongst fishers on the grounds that they feel patronized. The use of education and awareness-raising to compliment other initiatives to address such issues and the related CAPs is an important means of supporting enforcement (Rhodes 2016).

B. Priorities and Risks for the Remaining Implementation Period

157. The ProDoc identified several risks related to related to operational and organizational weaknesses⁸⁹ (High), enforcement of fisheries regulations and upland clearing (Medium)⁹⁰, weak adoption of DLPs and SLM practices (Medium) and other environmental issues (Medium)⁹¹. However, site visits, interviews and written documentation indicate that those mitigation measures have been largely ineffective and each of these issues are considered to be high risks at mid-term. This underscores the importance of an operational M&E or DSS capable of informing stakeholders about what works, what does not, and why, so that they can act to correct failures, strengthen good practices and replicate them where feasible.
158. However, the MTR finds that the ProDoc did not go far enough, and identified several additional risks that were overlooked (or they were not considered relevant by the ProDoc). Table 5 summarizes the important priorities and risk factors for the remaining implementation period. [Annex 6b](#) provides more details for the risks and some possible mitigation measures.

ISSUE	RISK
Operational: Unless IEMPs are developed ⁹² for each State, the project will not meet the Outcome 1 nor Output 1.1, and R2R will fall short of its objective, which clearly stipulates	High

⁸⁹ Limited capacity within project partner institutions will affect partners' ability to carry out project activities within the project timeline

⁹⁰ Lack of effective enforcement of SLM and PA legislation:

⁹¹ Land/Reef owners/users flout planning regulations and new protected area designations leading to extension of agricultural areas, including increase in roads leading to farms, and intensification of fishing (and bad fishing practices)

⁹² The project aims to develop an IEMP developed for each high island *and is expected to contribute toward a framework and tools for linking the measurement of GEBs at project level to impacts across multiple scales*. The plan will bring together all available environmental and social spatial information into a single database, and use this information to develop a spatial framework or template for development in the high islands that gives effect to the R2R concept. The methodology for translating the development vision for the FSM into a spatial plan will follow a spatial biodiversity planning (or systematic biodiversity planning) approach that is data and target driven, is analytically explicit and involves all stakeholders. The spatial planning process will deliver a land-use zonation map for the landscape, together with a set of best-practices guidelines for various land-use activities, that explicitly targets the retention of biodiversity pattern and processes in the wider landscape. Specific tools will include (1) the ILMP document, associated map and land-use guidelines, and (2) a GIS database of all environmental data collated through this project. [B] At the

4 High Islands. IEMPs are the foundation of the ecosystem-based framework and R2R into a set of tangible tools recommendations and guidelines that can be used to inform land-use planning and decision making in a way that promotes environmental sustainability.	
<u>Operational</u> : Without a DSS to measure effectiveness of IEMPs and drive a systematic adaptive management approach for the moderate development scenario, the project will not achieve Outcome 1, and Indicator 2.2. DSS is the key to operationalizing the ecosystem-based and adaptive management framework into a set of tangible tools recommendations and guidelines that can be used to inform land-use planning and decision making in a way that promotes environmental sustainability.	High
<u>Operational</u> : Without a coherent logframe, robust assumptions and SMART outcome indicators, there is a risk that the project will not meet its objective. The situation at midterm is that it is difficult for the PIU and stakeholders to focus their work on priorities and this not only affects R2R's efficiency, but is a risk to the overall sustainability.	High
<u>Operational</u> : Communication mechanisms are weak and painfully slow disbursement rates are acting as disincentives to many stakeholders and reducing their interest in participating in the project. Unless addressed immediately, weak coordination between PIU and SC, and the States will continue to reduce efficiency and effectiveness of activities in the High Islands	Medium
<u>Environmental</u> : The strong focus on capacity building and policy-legal framework development without applying them to support and disseminate good practices from ongoing experimental management interventions (mariculture, sustainable fish market) raises a risk that the former actions will not be sustained, and environmental degradation and biodiversity loss are likely to continue.	High
<u>Operational</u> : Lack of national and State-level capacities to implement, monitor and apply adaptive management systematically to the IEMPs is likely to lead to the IEMP being little more than a document on a shelf.	High
<u>Socio-political</u> : Failure to support customary tenure management initiatives runs the risk of losing good practices that could be scaled up and replicated in other areas.	Medium

Table 4. Priorities and risk factors for the remaining implementation period.

5. Key GEF Performance Indicators

A. Sustainability

159. Although the MTE presents a rating for the sustainability criterion, sustainability is a moving target that is influenced by multiple variables and the important aspect of this criterion for GEF projects is sustaining project outcomes, and not the sustainability of activities and outputs that produced those outcomes. There are no clearly defined timeframes for which outcomes should be sustained, although implicitly, they should be reproduced continuously. The greater the time horizon, the lower the degree of certainty.
160. By definition, MTEs are poorly positioned to contribute toward sustainability, given the new activities carried out during the final implementation period can affect the sustainability of project outcomes. This notwithstanding, the MTE rates the likelihood of *sustainability is unlikely* at the mid/term. The Government's inability to meet the annual co-financing targets stipulated in the ProDoc and the recent cuts in government funding for addressing environmental and the lack of enforcement of unsustainable fishing and market practices make it likely that R2R's good initiative

local level the further development (e.g. piggery revolving fund, lessons learned) and adaptation of the dry litter piggery technology to local cultural conditions will provide an understanding and basis for rolling out this technology.

will not be sustained, unless some major changes in the political ecology emerge. Several donors have also experienced this warning sign, and have decided to end their funding support to FSM.

i. Financial Risks to Sustainability

161. Planning for long/term financial sustainability is fundamental for ensuring the R2R outcomes are sustained over time after external funding ends. This will require continuous support for providing socially and economically attractive incentives that foster sustainable use of ecosystem services along the R2R continuum, and this should commence at mid/term, given the widespread deforestation, erosion and effluents from wastes released into catchments that currently threaten ecosystems in the lower watersheds and the outer reefs. Therefore, mid/term is an ideal time for the government to commence financial planning to sustain good practices and to support new ones using adaptive management processes linked to a DSS that is capable of measuring outcomes throughout the R2R continuum.
162. Unless funds are secured for conducting the remaining SEA analyses (GEF only funds consulting fees), there is a likelihood that the IEMPs and DSS in the other states will be shelved and the investments will have a less than optimal impact.
163. The IEMPs cannot be institutionalized in less than 6 months. Given that the 2020 State and National government budgets have already been submitted, funding requests cannot be submitted until 2020 and there will be little time to evaluate the degree of progress via the Terminal Evaluation.

ii. Socio-political Risks to Sustainability

164. While there are many Micronesians in leadership positions in NGOs, as well as traditional community leaders who recognize the importance of conservation and that fishermen are jeopardizing eating their future by indiscriminately taking juvenile fish, not enough of that conservation ethic, customary tenure management and scientific expertise has filtered into government decision and policymaking, and the serious cutback of national budgets for environmental protection compared with increases in the infrastructure budget raises concerns that some of the urgently needed actions will not be forthcoming in the next year. Unless the government invests seriously in strengthening its policies and support for Customary Tenure Resource Management approaches to sustainable management actions and good practices that clearly show improved fish biomass and biodiversity in Yap and in Chuuk, there is a high risk that the good practices under customary tenure and recommendations by the scientific community will not be implemented and sustained.
165. The lack of awareness raising, particularly at the grade school level, about R2R's potential community well-being benefits is likely to slow effective implementation. For that reason, the Communication Strategy offers an opportunity to target awareness-raising for politicians, resource users and school children.
166. The project currently does not have a gender framework like other R2R projects, and there is surprisingly little emphasis on targeting women or girls as direct beneficiaries of the project (PIR 2018). However, participation of men and women is tracked in R2R's ongoing activities and the project has worked to ensure equal representation between males and females in decision-making

bodies, by including women groups represented in State TACs (e.g., Kosrae and Yap). Yet there is no monitoring to measure changes that could be attributed to, or contributed by the project for women. Achieving gender equality in patriarchal FSM society is difficult to overcome (although women in Micronesia have come a long way from always being silent to decision makers), the project focused on involving women groups, youth groups and senior citizens in decision-making bodies of the project - all of these groups are represented in its TAC, while the women's council is a TAC-member, as well as a R2R implementing partner. In Chuuk, majority of the women's council members are stay at home mothers. Through the council's activities, women are able to learn new knowledge and put them into practice. As implementers of the R2R project, key women's organization now have an opportunity to utilize their existing skills, increase their awareness and apply this new knowledge to strengthen local biodiversity conservation efforts.

iii. Institutional and Governance Risks to Sustainability

167. As correctly stated in the ProDoc, securing long-term financial and policy commitments for environmental resilience-building requires a better understanding the linkages between ecosystem health, social well-being and economic development that considers future generations. However, the recent decision by the government to cut environmental management budgets significantly and expand infrastructure projects provides solid evidence that the government has not made the connection between a healthy environment and investing in management. valuation study amongst government and the broader FSM and regional communities. The lack of sectoral harmonization and sectoral interests (infrastructure, tourism) that are incongruent with the R2R objectives is another serious risk to the overall sustainability of the project after funding ends.
168. The absence of an integrated, real-time DSS for promoting evidence-based decisions and policies that promote wise use of resources and other ecosystem services and social resilience is a major risk to sustaining the project, and allowing the government to focus their intervention to address some of the root causes of widespread unsustainable development practices throughout Micronesia ([Annex 7](#)).
169. The top-down governability model centered at the National level has not mainstreamed into the is traditional customary governance practices into the national environmental and fisheries legal-policy framework. Interviewees in Yap and Chuuk where traditional governance is strong, but at a crossroad, are frustrated that their customary management practices are not supported and being undermined in several enforcement cases that had been resolved by the traditional justice systems.

iv. Environmental Risks to Sustainability

170. The R2R project has supported some effective management interventions (boundary markers, FADs, floating guardhouses on Yap) to address widespread overfishing of immature juveniles, megaspawners and spawning aggregation areas (grouper, Napoleon wrasse, bumpheads, etc.) , which threaten the condition of coral reef, seagrass and backreef lagoon ecosystems, they will have only a limited impact on this enormous problem for ecosystem health, but for the food security of future generations.
171. Similarly, unless the DPL pilots are scaled up and embraced by more farmers, the fitness of ecosystems in the backreef lagoons, channels and aquifers will decline and further exacerbate the

aforementioned problems caused by overfishing. The evaluator saw badly stressed diseased and dying corals at Manta Pass in Pohnpei, which is a major recipient of the surrounding watersheds.

172. The inability to use valuable scientific data for taking evidence-based policies and decisions underscores the risk of R2R's continued support for biological monitoring that further widens the research-implementation gap and only reinforces the lack of decisive management actions.

B. Catalytic role: Replication and scaling-up

173. The operational and environmental risks in the previous section outline some of the primary reasons that management interventions have not been replicated and/or scaled-up, and this is a serious concern with only one year left to end the project, and R2R is stuck with a small number of interventions that lag in being scaled up. Private sector and NGO-supported good practices (e.g., mariculture, *Acanthaster* control, etc.) are known to the project but they are not promoted or disseminated, something that is viewed as a lost opportunity. If these and other tools could be incorporated into an R2R toolbox, it could be possible to catalyze the provision of alternative incentives to unsustainable activities.
174. The absence of quasi-experimental and adaptive management approaches to testing the effectiveness of the outcomes and adapting R2R-supported management interventions, an operational DSS, a weak communication strategy to raise awareness about their benefits and the apparent disconnect between the project and ongoing alternative incentives to reduce unsustainable practices (all of which have been described earlier) are considered to be additional limitations to replicating interventions.

C. Monitoring and Evaluation

i. Project Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

175. The PIU uses the original Logframe, existing information on Annual Work Plans and feedback from annual meetings with the SC and TACs for tracking progress of implementation, and to update to update the Strategic Results framework and PIRs⁹³. However, the PIU and SC are not completely convinced that the tracking indicators are adequate and expressed to the MTR that they may spending time tracking the wrong metrics, a concern with which the MTR concurs, based evidence presented herein. These concerns once again raise questions about the rigor of the Inception Workshop where some of these concerns could have been raised, had the stakeholders had sufficient knowledge about ToC and a causative, results-based framework. This suggests that the efficiency of the approach could be improved by re-visiting the logframe indicators and adjusting them as required, and by linking them to the M&E and DSS deliverables that have yet to be constructed.

⁹³ The most recent PIR was completed in July 2018 and the next one is due in July 2019. While some actions have been taken to address the 2018 PIR, they have been limited in their effectiveness and this has set the project further behind in meeting its targets. No monitoring is taking place to measure changes in the perspectives of female and male beneficiaries.

176. In general, the PIU, SC and TACs have followed-up on PIRs and adjustment were made to reflect the results. However, when circumstances change, they have done something other than what was indicated. Other than the PIU and a few members of the different committees actually read the quarterly progress reports after they are finalized to ensure they follow through with what's in the report. Usually, when the Coordinators submit their reports to the PIU coordinator and they discuss ways to address any challenges that are impeding implementation, and they agree on a way forward. Adaptation taken by the PIU are listed in each AQR, and in some cases the problems and recommended actions are not addressed until the next quarterly report, which may lead to critical issues not being addressed in a timely manner.
177. The project-related M&E is adequate. Based on the original budget, the PIU has spent roughly \$64,130 on monitoring and evaluation since inception. This includes two annual State visits, a minimum of one Steering Committee meeting, and quarterly TAC meetings. To date, the project has spent approximately \$78,803 on M&E activities. For 2019 alone, the PIU has approved budget of 61,830 which has only been partially tapped into⁹⁴.
178. While some of the parameters tracked by the GEF-UNDP M&E instrument are adapted by the government for including in its National Reporting system, including the financial reporting system, the absence of a National M&E and DSS platform is a major weakness that the R2R project should be able to address through work with developing the IEMPs. However, for reasons explained previously, the M&E and DSS platforms are still not on track. Having such a platform could serve the government as a real-time system to flag priority issues and track changes based on their interventions, something that could be developed by the Pohnpei IEMP mentioned previously.

ii. Monitoring Environmental and Social Change

177. Environmental and social monitoring efforts are inadequate because they are not designed in a way to inform decision and policymaking. They are also inefficient because the raw data require considerable time to process and the capacity is limited to do so by the NGOs.
178. One of the most important requisites for measuring changes due to management interventions is having *reliable baselines*. This is also important for allowing the MTE to review the robustness of the ProDoc indicators and the relevance of project targets and the most reliable data to date come from studies carried out by the University of Guam ([Cuetos-Bueno and Houk 2017](#); [Houk et al. 2015](#), [Johnson 2017](#)), and Rhodes and his colleagues ([Rhodes et al. 2018, 2017, 2015, 2014, 2011](#); [SAR 2018](#)). However, with the exception of a small study for establishing a nursery for reforestation of mangroves by PCS, no baselines data are available for mangrove forests, nor for data on intact upland forests⁹⁵ coverage has still not been collected. In the case R2R's support to

⁹⁴ The reason that the 2019 allocation is much larger than the two previous years combines is because the SC meeting was supposed to take place in Yap but the venue changed at the last minute to Pohnpei, and the costs were significantly reduced, since only the Coordinators attended. For 2018, money was spent to transport R2R partners to catch up on progress of activities in the States and this did not cost the project anything. which is/is not appropriate for a GEF FSP.

⁹⁵ E.g., missing is the total area of intact forest in the FSM and mean detection rate for Truk Monarch, Yap Monarch and the Micronesian Pigeon. It is understood that the PIU has sought assistance from overseas technical experts, such as the Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA), conducted by the US Forestry Service.

NGOs conducting biological monitoring of corals, fishes and invertebrates, only raw data are available, and they lack a rigorous analysis and transformation of the results into simple indicators that can be fed into the Decision-support system (DSS). The most recent fishery data collected by NGOs require updating.

179. The METT is a mandatory Biodiversity tracking tool for all GEF projects. While monitoring changes in METT scores ([Indicator 2](#)) can potentially provide important links in a results chain leading to *in situ* outcomes on the land and in the sea, they are nothing more than measures of specific outputs that characterize stakeholder performance, presence/absence of infrastructure and regulatory instruments, ancillary information and several other parameters describing a PA. However, because there is no demonstrated causal link between the METT and biological and social indicators, they do not measure outcomes⁹⁶. Instead, METT focuses on institutional performance and regulatory parameters, which are outputs, rather than measuring [outcomes](#)⁹⁷. Therefore, the METT used for the FSM-R2R project measures management efficacy, rather than effectiveness, which is the aim of IUCN-WCPA's objective.
180. As mentioned earlier, the METT scores have not changed significantly between 2015 and 2018. However, there is good evidence that many of the scores are subjective, as they do not coincide with expert knowledge in the PAs. Further, no QA was done by the PIU. However, given their importance as links in a causative results chain, these issues could be addressed by ensuring greater oversight and guidance from the PIU on how to fill in the sheets objectively and with the highest quality.
181. Despite the excellent monitoring carried out by the University of Guam and FSM NGOs ([Houk et al.'s \(2015\)](#)), none of these data have integrated into the overall M&E framework. The results are valuable for future tracking of coral reef and fishing pressures, as the data and metrics they used to measure normalized ecosystem condition⁹⁸, fishing pressure⁹⁹ (which had the greatest effect on ecosystem condition across the outer reefs of Micronesia) and social conditions (see [Johnson 2017](#); [Cuetos-Bueno and Houk 2017](#)) are considered to be sufficiently robust for inclusion as outcome indicators.
181. The most recent fishery data funded by R2R require updating. Researchers at the University of Guam have carried out studies on marine ecosystems ([Cuetos-Bueno and Houk 2017](#); [Houk et al. 2015](#)) and social-ecological systems ([Johnson 2017](#)), while Rhodes and his colleagues have an impressive data base on unsustainable fishing ([Rhodes et al. 2018, 2017, 2015, 2014, 2011](#); [SAR 2018](#)). Although the researchers' data raise serious concerns about ecosystem degradation and over exploited fisheries that are the main cause of changing marine ecosystems, the government has ignored recommendations for confronting root cause of the cumulative impacts of these unsustainable practices.
182. R2R has an approved 200K to be contracted out to NGOs to conduct biological monitoring (coral reef, invertebrate and fish health and abundance, respectively), with a primary focus on the corals.

⁹⁶ For this report, Outcomes are one consequence along a causative results chain leading toward development impacts, where the links in the results chain consist of inputs, activities, outputs leading to those outcomes. Unlike outputs - which can be controlled by the project - outcomes are framed by assumptions that the hypothetical development model will have a desirable effect in the real world.

⁹⁷ For this report, Outcomes are one consequence along a causative results chain leading toward development impacts, where the links in the results chain consist of inputs, activities, outputs leading to those outcomes. Unlike outputs - which can be controlled by the project - outcomes are framed by assumptions that the hypothetical development model will have a desirable effect in the real world.

⁹⁸ predator biomass and fish-assemblage heterogeneity, benthic evenness, and the skewness and richness of coral assemblages provided the strongest independent contribution to the respective latent variables.

⁹⁹ Fishing pressure was evaluated by the interaction between wave energy and distance from the main fishing ports.

Biochemical parameters (e.g., fecal coliforms) are only being measured in Pohnpei by the EPA. There was no participatory monitoring underway at the time of the MTR. However, the data focused on providing information more for scientists than for evidence that can be used for decision-making.

183. There is no ongoing, participatory monitoring funded by the project and the upcoming biological monitoring activities for fish and birds will be conducted only by the Government and NGO partner. It is unclear why the PIU has not established a framework for involving local communities participating in R2R. Thus, an important opportunity for engaging those communities and tying the participatory monitoring to awareness-raising and building knowledge/learning networks will be lost unless the project carefully examines the cost and benefits of adding participatory monitoring to its M&E profile.
184. Although gender-disaggregated data are registered in R2R's activities, there is no ongoing monitoring that measures gender-related issues. There is no indigenous group-specific monitoring

D. Stakeholder Engagement

i. Communication with Stakeholders

185. Awareness and communication with stakeholder has been carried out at different levels. TAC, SC communication is done through meetings, reporting and most recently Skype conference calls. The communication is considered by the TACs and even the PIKU Technical Coordinator to be inadequate and this process could be improved by having a technical coordinator in each State who could liaise with the PIU.
186. Beneficiaries receive information about the project via Facebook and the web portal, as well as through a Quarterly newsletter. A Real-time M&E platform, fed by participatory monitoring results could serve as an important communication and awareness raising tool.
187. Communication with Decision-makers and policymakers is not continuous and inadequate. Developing the DSS is viewed as paramount for adequately informing these high-level actors.
188. TE project is missing a good opportunity to communicate results with school children and engaging them in continuous, R2R-related activities. Coloring the boots (e.g., color the R2R ecosystems, videos, etc.) could be very useful.
189. Communication with non-TAC NGOs, researchers and private sector investors in alternative incentives for replacing unsustainable practices is informal and formalizing these links, and disseminating their good practices is viewed as something that could help R2R build a bod of management tools that could be applied in different contexts.
190. The IEMP recommended public awareness campaigns. However, interviews with expats working for over 2 decades in FSM, interview with community leaders and other stakeholders that these are usually spots that are just a flash event at a particular point in time and they are soon forgotten. The evaluator could not agree more and applied awareness campaigns (innovative and circular solutions to problems like plastic, and other threats to the islands) seem to work far better and they are long lasting.

191. The recent hiring of the new National Communication Strategy expert is viewed as an extremely important step forward to help improve weak communication, and feedback, which is virtually absent within R2R.

6. Main Lessons Learned and Recommendations

A. Lessons Learned from the R2R Project

Although Mid-term reviews are not usually well-positioned to identify lessons in a comprehensive way, because the project continues and evolves, the following lessons appear to be noteworthy.

192. **Lesson:** The importance of including a broad, representative group of stakeholders during the Inception Phase (particularly the Inception Workshop) cannot be overstated, as it must serve as a reference point to check that the project has sufficient flexibility to ensure that completely new stakeholders understand the entire process and are able to judge and inform about their capacities to implement their responsibilities. Otherwise, this will result in inefficient implementation and especially make it difficult to embrace a continuous adaptive management process for capturing lessons from the necessary course-corrections to the interventions, as they are needed.
193. **Lesson:** Without applying theories of change to operational strategies (e.g. ProDocs, SEA, ILMPs, IEMPs), the likelihood of producing a static approach is high, and it will be challenging to systematically apply an adaptive, learning approach to implementation, the best-intentioned efforts are likely to be sidetracked by inefficient and reactive management actions. The systematic capture of lessons from successes and failures, are likely to be lost and this is likely to impede replication and upscaling of good practices, while running the risk that bad practices could be promoted (Kusek and Rist 2004)¹⁰⁰.
194. **Lesson:** SEAs are the foundation of building Decision-support systems (DSS) that measure the degree to which selected development scenarios are achieved through implementing and continually monitoring the effectiveness of ILMPs/IEMPs. As such, they must be framed by a Theory of Change and they require SMART outcome indicators capable of measuring the effectiveness of policies, plans and mitigation measures.
195. **Lesson:** Measure only parameters that can contribute to better decision- and policy-making - *“not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted”*¹⁰¹. Therefore, the surrogate indicator species (e.g., emblematic species like Napoleon wrasse, Bumphead Parrotfish, bird species) concept is problematic because there is no consensus on just what the indicator is supposed to indicate (Simberloff 1998). While these indicator species may appease conservationists, they obscure an understanding of deeper trophic-dynamic relationships¹⁰² that structure ecosystems along the R2R continuum, and they are likely to give an

¹⁰⁰ *If you don't measure results, you cannot tell success from failure. If you can't see success, you cannot reward it. If you cannot reward success, you are probably rewarding failure. If you do not see success, you cannot learn from it. If you cannot recognize failure, you cannot correct it. But if you can demonstrate results, you can win public – and maybe even political – support.*

¹⁰¹ Albert Einstein, physicist from a few years ago.

¹⁰² linked with healthy herbivores, carbonate grazers, percent composition of different stages of sexual maturity (eg., immature juveniles, megaspawners, etc.) in fish catches (e.g., Froese 2004).

inaccurate snapshot of the health of these ecosystems unless they are linked to more important ancillary parameters like changes in habitat cover and easy to measure physical (e.g., temperature, water transparency and light transmissivity) and chemical parameters (e.g., salinity, nutrients).

196. **Lesson:** Unless a conceptually and operationally challenging approach to ecosystem-based management like R2R is accompanied by a solid communication strategy promoting strong awareness-raising and education platform actions that not only target scientists, but most importantly, policy-makers, resource users, local communities and the young, these innovative approaches are likely to fall short of their objectives and lag in gaining support from the most important actors who may not fully understand the concept and how they can support it. The present vision held by most stakeholders is that the highest importance is managing their niche along the R2R, without having an integrated vision of how that niche contributes to overall R2R resilience.
197. **Lesson:** Poor communication from the UNDP and centralized FSM financial management that delays reimbursement to stakeholders' out of pocket expenses, and fails to fulfill promises made to pay vendors in a timely manner are a recipe for frustration and loss of enthusiasm due to inordinate time spent on dealing with issues that are best managed at the source.
198. **Lesson:** In a similar vein, building a project on expensive equipment (like the motorized chipper) that must be imported and requires international experts to maintain and repair that equipment is not only inefficient and unsustainable, but it also creates frustrations and dis-incentives stakeholders from carrying out their activities as planned (KISS – *Keep it Simple, but Sustainable*).

B. Recommendations for the Remaining Implementation Period

Key recommendations for this MTE report are shown below, and they are followed by the table with the summary of the overall MTE ratings.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	START	WHO
1. Apply Theory of Change (ToC) to adjust the ProDoc Logframe and operationalize the IEMP		
<u>Immediately</u> develop a TOC for the ProDoc logframe & final IEMP submitted by the SEA consultant with a results chain built on SMART outcome indicators, robust assumptions and risk reducing mitigation measures to improve environmental, social & institutional sustainability.	August 2019	PIU, SC & TACs
2. Reduce activities and prioritize post-MTR Actions based on an Exit Strategy		
<u>Immediately</u> initiate discussions and a plan for action to scale back unachievable targets (e.g. # PAs), replicate good practices (e.g., PA boundaries, DLPs) and focus on activities that will verifiably contribute to action stipulated in the IEMP(s), and harmonize with an Exit Strategy.	August 2019	PIU, SC & TACs
3. Operationalize IEMP(s) and DSS, and build capacity to sustain their application		
<u>Immediately</u> initiate discussions with UNDP, the State and National Governments to conduct a rigorous Theory of change on the Final IEMP, adjust the indicators, formulate nonexistent assumptions and risks, as well as SMART outcome indicators that can help measure effectiveness. IF funds are located to continue working in the remaining states, the same process should be applied and capacity must be developed to do follow up M&E and adaptive management s required to adjust targets and ineffective	Sept. 2019- Mar. 2020	PIU, UNDP, DECEN, Marine Resources

interventions, and develop an action plan and adequate budget for State-specific SEAs and the corresponding IEMPs will be completed. Examine the economic costs of the business as usual scenario by hiring an ecological economist to value ecosystem services and lost opportunity costs to FSM. This person should only be considered if the project is given at least a one year no-cost time extension.

4. Re-assess financial costs and seek sources to fund the remaining SEAs-IEMPS

<u>By September 2019</u> , report on the economic feasibility and potential funding sources to conduct SEAs and IEMPs, as well as the M&E and DSS platforms in all States.	October 2019	PIU, SC, DECEM, Marine Resources
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5. Narrow the Research-implementation Gap, update outcome indicators & METT

<u>Prior to any new biological monitoring efforts</u> begin, ensure existing and future scientific data supported by R2R is made accessible to non-scientists (e.g., simple spotlight dashboards) to contribute toward increasing knowledge /learning networks that are available for stakeholders to reduce priority threats, initiate a participatory M&E process involving stakeholders-beneficiaries in R2R target areas; eliminate indicators that are unable to inform decision- & policy-making. METT for 2015 and 2018 should be quality assured, and revised to ensure objectivity, and applied as an output in a causative results chain linked to these outcomes, and link to M&E and CDSS platforms. Data, maps etc. should be integrated into the IEMPs... Currently the maps used in the IEMP are not operational and not conducive as geo-referenced maps, especially in the marine environment.	TBD	PIU, SC & TACs; DECEM, Marine resources; Univ. Guam, all NGOs with monitoring activities funded by R2R
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6. Strengthen Collaborative Management & Enforcement using a modular approach

<u>Immediately</u> strengthen collaborative enforcement capabilities coastal-marine PAs by initiating <i>participatory outcome monitoring</i> and adaptive co-management through applied, <i>in situ</i> training and providing basic equipment to support comanagers, and link to Recommendation #7. Most importantly, strengthen management in areas where leadership or social cohesion are lacking, as this may be a critical step to advance conservation. Support efforts to develop National and State policies to strengthen key social structure features (e.g., social cohesion, leadership) to improve fisheries management and social-ecological resilience. The so-called stick of enforcement has been largely unsuccessful, and it may be time to focus on social and financial incentives that provide alternatives to unsustainable practices.	TBD	PIU, SC & TACs; DECEM, Marine resources; Univ. Guam, all NGOs with monitoring activities funded by R2R
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7. Develop, upscale and replicate quasi-experimental management interventions

<u>Within 3 months</u> , shift capacity development and theoretical discussions to action-oriented efforts promoting well-designed experimental, outcome-oriented management interventions to reduce priority threats to R2R ecosystems (overfishing, deforestation, pollution). difficult decision taken Build capacities to measure the degree to which outcomes are attributable to interventions and apply to M&E and DSS platforms (Recommendations #3 &4). While the MTR does not envision that R2R must duplicate private, or donor-funded investments, the project should consolidate and scale up/replicate what it has accomplished, as well as what NGOs and private investors have achieved in terms of good practices (e.g., mariculture	October 2019	PIU, SC & TACs; DECEM, Marine resources; Univ. Guam, all NGOs with monitoring activities funded by R2R, private sector
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activities in Kosrae, Pohnpei and Yap) and the excellent work that Rhodes has produced and examples for promoting sustainably caught fish markets. All of these management tools should become part of a R2R toolbox that can be tested in other areas of FSM and in other Pacific island nations. A focus should be on raising awareness about demonstrated good practice alternatives, exploring their feasibility as management interventions in the Municipal IEMPs and monitoring outcomes that can be attributed to the interventions are considered to be a wise investment with relatively low costs and high returns on building social capital. *This could have a catalyzing effect to speed up action oriented to improving performance.*

8. Strengthen R2R Coordination & Communication

Immediately take actions to improve intra- and extra-institutional (UNDP) coordination by holding tri-monthly PIU-TAC meetings to review advances toward revised targets and good practices to be institutionalized, hiring a *technical liaison* to support PIU in each State and bi-monthly PIU-UNDP Skype to discuss action on bottlenecks for R2R-FSM in meeting targets.

August 2019 PIU, SC, TACs, DECEM, R&D

9. Consider engaging a Technical Mentor for the remaining R2R implementation period

Immediately discuss the feasibility of hiring a part-time CTA assist the PIU and TACs implement the actions recommended herein, and any new initiatives that are considered to be feasible.

August 2019 PIU, SC, TACs & UNDP-Fiji; GEF-UNDP RTA

10. Improve Communication between FSM R2R and UNDP

Take immediate action to improve communication between PIU and UNDP and improve the flow of financial disbursements in a timelier manner to reduce delays in R2R implementation.

11. Improve Disbursement efficiency between DoF, SGF and all R2R activities

By September 2019, develop a plan of action with DoF to address the slow disbursement process¹⁰³. This should also apply to improving the efficiency of the GEF Small Grants Fund (SGF) and harmonize them with Recommendation #1 to support experimental management interventions in priority areas to expedite approval and disbursement rates.

July 2019 PIU, SC, TACs & UNDP

12. Consider a 12-18 month no-cost extension with a clear exit strategy & safeguards assessment

A 12-18 month, no-cost extension should be discussed between DECEM, the PIU and the UNDP, as it will allow stakeholders sufficient time to incorporate the recommendations presented herein and help put R2R on a more direct path toward achieving the overall objective. Developing an exit strategy should be a prerequisite for such an extension (see Recommendation #1).

August 2019 FSM, SC, DECEM, GEF-RTA and UNDP, R&D

13. Consider including a ToC at Inception and environmental-social safeguards monitoring

Future GEF projects should ensure that an experienced Theory of Change/ Results-based facilitator is present during inception workshops to scrutinize and realign ProDoc Logframes, as required. A framework for monitoring GEF's environmental and social safeguards must also be included.

July 2019 UNDP-GEF, FSM GEF Focal Points

¹⁰³ It is unlikely that a decentralized approach at the State levels is an option, because contracts are another option, and the same arrangement applies there as well – the PIU must still sign the agreement with State government for certain deliverables.

C. Project Mid-Term Ratings

199. The table below summarizes the overall finds of the MTR.

Table 6: Summary of the overall findings for the multiple evaluation criteria at mid-term.

Project Component or Objective	Rating	Achievement Description
Project Strategy		NA
Progress towards results	Objective achievement U	<p>Progress is Moderately unsatisfactory, mainly because at midterm, there are few management interventions that can demonstrate measurable changes in the pressures caused by unsustainable practices. The project is far from meeting its objective for multiple reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The heavy emphasis on capacity building has been decoupled from the important management interventions to address the threats to the R2R pilot sites. The project is far from upscaling and replicating the limited number of interventions and after 3 years, there are few concrete actions after three years of implementation) and what has been accomplished is limited for making the kinds of major changes required to reduce unsustainable practices. While considerable biological monitoring data have been collected, they mainly serve academic research interests, with little attention paid to how the data can be transformed into simple evidence-based decision-making. • Delays and the slow pace of disbursements created by centralized and inconsistent financial administration procedures within DOF has resulted in high levels of unpredictability regarding the procurement of fixed assets and other R2R payments. This has created considerable frustration among all stakeholders and contractors.
	<u>Outcome 1:</u> <i>Integrated Ecosystems Management and Rehabilitation on the High Islands of the FSM to enhance Ridge to Reef Connectivity</i> U	<p>While the SEA-IEMP comprise the major activities for Component 1, most work was invested in producing a comprehensive SEA, while a disproportionately small investment was made in developing an operational IEMP. The recommended management and policy actions are weak (it lacks a Theory of change, SMART indicators are lacking, as are assumptions and mitigation measures to reduce the overall risks to different elements of sustainability). A real concern is the weak monitoring approach, which lacks the <i>evaluation</i> and <i>learning</i> dimension that not only drive adaptive management, but which are essential for measuring effectiveness and learning from mistakes, while building on successes. Finally, there is no mention of the DSS, which is considered to be fundamental for providing evidence to decision and policymakers so they can prioritize threats along the R2R continuum, to capture lessons and good practices. As mentioned earlier, the scope of the interventions to address the multiple threats facing the resilience of critical ecosystems along the R2R continuum is very limited and not designed in a way that they can be replicable, nor metrics that for measuring the desired changes,</p>
	<u>Outcome 2:</u> <i>Management Effectiveness enhanced within new and existing PAs on the High Islands of FSM as part of the R2R approach (both marine and terrestrial)</i>	<p>R2R has taken a passive approach to allow PA management to develop by letting stakeholders move at their own contextual pace). However, at midterm, there are still major obstacles to operationalizing the PAN in all states, especially in Chuuk and it is time to drive the process more diligently. However, there have been some excellent community-based enforcement of PA regulations in Yap, but these have been undermined by incongruent national legislation, which must urgently be harmonized. Most of the selected indicators are inadequate for reasons ranging from them not being SMART, are not amenable to operationalizing the DSS. The PA component suffers from many of the same problems listed for the IEMP. There has also been much capacity building with little focus on applications. The interventions are limited in scope and with few exceptions, they are not sufficiently robust to have a major impact. However simple things like marker boundaries and</p>

	MU	ights are extremely important as was found on Yap. Beacuse of these accomplishments, the MTR rates Component 2 as Moderately unsatisfactory, beacuse there is hope that these issues can be addressed during teh final implementaton period.
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	MU	<p>Implementation has been slow and R2R is far behind in meeting the logframe indicators at mid-term. Further, the M&E tracking followed the Logfame, even though the indicators are not SMART, baselines are not updated, many of the METT scores are suspected of being subjective and not a reflection of real conditions according to experts who have worked in those areas. This is because the PIU has faced multiple obstacles that the project did not foresee during inception and through no fault of their own, the PIU worked hard, but the delays have contributed to repeated delays that have led to multiple setbacks in meeting the implementation schedule, because of it. The aforementioned delays and the slow pace of disbursements created by centralized and inconsistent financial administration procedures within DOF, resulting in high levels of unpredictability regarding the timing of the procurement of fixed assets and other R2R payments. This has resulted in considerable frustration among all stakeholders and contractors. The slow pace of developing management interventions (there are few concrete actions after three years of implementation), the collection of considerable biological monitoring data that mainly serves research interests, with little attention paid to how the data can be used for evidence-based decision-making. Root causes include the continued gap in FSM’s operational and overarching framework for promoting sustainable development on the High Islands, and the slow pace of change and the adaptive management tools that could help create a more dynamic approach is one reason for this low rating.</p> <p>Although the Quarterly reports have carefully described adaptive management measures, the project has repeatedly been forced to deal with unforeseen problems and surprises in a reactive, rather than proactive manner that comes from applying adaptive management and systematically capturing lessons and good practices. One of the reasons for this weakness is that the original assumptions are superficial, and this limits the ability to test the validity of robust assumptions regarding about the innovative R2R development model in a culturally and institutionally complex, 4-State setting. Further, the risks and their corresponding mitigation measures presented in the ProDoc are weak and rather than testing the effectiveness of robust risk-reducing measures, the project has been in a continuous reactive mode that has created inefficiency and frustration. The MTR raises concerns about the degree to which the IEMP is operational and with which the Task force and pertinent stakeholders are able to move the process forward using a systematic approach to adaptive management. Evidence indicates that this capacity is weak at present.</p>
Sustainability SCORE =1	Financial sustainability HU	
	Financial sustainability 1	While the short-term outlook is favorable, it is unclear how the government will support the project after the Compact ends in 2023. This is especially a concern given the significant budget cutbacks the government has made for the environment sector and the failure of the government to meet the annual contributions stipulated for supporting SM and PA management could be interpreted as a lack of political will, especially since large financial support was redirected to developing new infrastructure projects when the national EIA process is weak.
	Socio-political sustainability	Despite the stated goal of improving the lives of R2R communities, the project has only left a small social footprint in the communities with some intermittent

	MU	and small-scale interventions (e.g., SLPs) and interviews suggested that many beneficiaries do not see more than just capacity building coming from the project, but no tangible social or economic benefits for them. The political gap between the support for the project as a source of funds and actions for sustaining it is wide, largely due to a lack of a good communication strategy that targets politicians, resource users and school children. Gender issues are well represented, and women are especially placed in leadership roles within the project organization. To ensure equal representation between males and females, R2R has included women in the SC and State TACs (Chuuk, Kosrae and Yap). But there really hasn't been any monitoring done to see any changes in female and male beneficiaries.
	Institutional and governance sustainability HU	The top-down and centralized governability approach that is presently employed by the National government represents a barrier to developing interactive governance processes at the state and community levels. Policies, legislation and the predominantly western judicial system that has been increasingly adopted by the National government tends to undermine customary tenure and effective management in Yap, and in some cases in Chuuk, which have much to offer in terms of good practices that could be replicated in the rest of FSM.
	HU	Until management interventions targeting unsustainable practices are scaled up (e.g., DLP, sustainable forest management, reducing illegal and juvenile overfishing on the reefs), the project is unlikely to sustain the good initiatives laid out in the ProDoc and by stakeholders. AS fishing pressure continues, marine ecosystem conditions deteriorate, while clearing for sakau and other cash crops is resulting in heavy losses of topsoil via landslide and erosion which is blanketing aquatic and marine habitats downstream. Pollution remains a serious threat to lagoons and channels in Yap and Pohnpei.,
Overall Project Achievement and Incipient impacts	U	

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¹⁰⁴ Report is mis-spelled on the Title Page.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1: R2R Performance Summary

The Table below summarizes the scoring of difference performance indicators according to the GEF requirements.

Project Component or Objective	Rating	Qualitative Summary
Project Formulation		Project formulation is considered Moderately Satisfactory.
Relevance	HS	The project is not only highly relevant to national priorities and policies (FSM's national planning policy for SLM and PAs, the NBSAP and fully aligned with FSM's Strategic Development Plan), as well as the GEF's strategic priorities and objectives. R2R also supports the Micronesia Challenge project efforts to create a regional Protected Area Network (PAN).
Conceptualization/ design	MU	While the conceptual approach is innovative (particularly the iterative approach for operationalizing R2R with the SEA-ILMP-DSS process), the logframe is the weakest link in the project's design due gaps (weak assumptions, risks and risk mitigating measures, limited SMART outcome indicators) that could have been filled by applying a theory of change in the final preparation phase, or during the inception phase. The focus on small actions (e.g. 4 DLPs per State), placing the METT as a primary measure of protected area success (while important, it is only an output in a causative results chain are weak links in the project) without linking it to outcomes and a systematic approach to adaptive management are some of the key design issues that have limit R2R's effectiveness.
Stakeholder participation	HS	Although there has been a change in the original core group of stakeholders from the time of inception, there is ample evidence that shows that stakeholders today are fully engaged in carrying out most project activities. However, lengthy delays in approval of activities, financial disbursements, etc. are a demotivating force for many actors, especially contractors, who feel they are wasting their time with the bureaucratic bottlenecks they have faced through mid-term.
Project Implementation		Implementation is considered Moderately Unsatisfactory
Implementation approach (efficiency)	MU	The aforementioned delays and the slow pace of disbursements created by centralized and inconsistent financial administration procedures within DOF, resulting in high levels of unpredictability regarding the procurement of fixed assets and other R2R payments. This has created considerable frustration among all stakeholders and contractors. The slow pace of developing management interventions (there are few concrete actions after three years of implementation), the collection of considerable biological monitoring data that mainly serves research interests, with little attention paid to how the data can be used for evidence-based decision-making and the continued gap where FSM lacks an operational and overarching framework for promoting sustainable development in the FSM's High Islands, including systemic capacities and availability of critical information are some of the root causes of this rating.
Relevance and Use of the Logframe	MS	While the PIU and the SC have followed the weak Logframe faithfully, they cannot be blamed for its inadequacies and there is no doubt that an improved logframe will be followed even more tenuously.
Adaptive management	MS	To date, the project has been forced to deal with unforeseen problems and surprises in a reactive, rather than proactive manner that comes from applying adaptive management and systematically capturing lessons and good practices. One of the reasons for this weakness is

		that the original assumptions are superficial, and this limits the ability to test the validity of robust assumptions regarding about the innovative R2R development model in a culturally and institutionally complex, 4-State setting. Further, the risks and their corresponding mitigation measures presented in the ProDoc are weak and rather than testing the effectiveness of robust risk-reducing measures, the project has been in a continuous reactive mode that has created inefficiency and frustration
Use/establishment of information technologies for DSS & M&E	U	The PIR monitoring report for 2018 is inadequate, as it paints an incorrectly optimistic analysis of the project progress through July of that year. At mid-term, the DSS is not ready and based on the available information on the foundation that was constructed according to the SEA reports, the approach to DSS will require some major adjustments, some of which will require improved SMART outcome indicators and adjusting the approach to a theory of change analysis. The M&E approach proposed by the SEA reports is also weak and the use of information technologies is not evident from the available evidence at midterm. While R2R has supported biological monitoring of fish, coral reefs and other invertebrate with reliable data that is carefully checked by TNC and University of Guam scientists, the results are designed for an academic research audience. They focus mainly on measuring the State of these conservation targets and to some extent the pressures that they are facing. However, they are of little value for taking evidence-based decisions or for formulating policies that target a triple bottom line in FSM's Strategic Development planning nor for feeding the data into the DSS.
Operational relationship between institutions involved	S	The PIU, SC and State TACs have an excellent operational relationship. However, the the National government's approach can be characterized as being a top-down approach to management, giving little power and responsibility to institutions who could be implementing the project at the lowest practical levels. Examples of community level management and enforcement have been undermined in several instances by the National government intervening in traditional laws in Yap and in Chuuk, and this is considered a threat to effort by R2R to develop interactive governance processes at the community and municipal levels.
Financial management	S	Financial management by the PIU has been well executed and this was confirmed by the recent audit (March 2019). However, the project had spent only 27% (\$1,266,672) of the total budget as of December 2018. The latest estimate ¹⁰⁵ for 2019 expenditures could reach \$900,880 will have been made by the end of for 2019, if 100% of the activities are funded. Therefore, the project will still have 46% (c.\$ 2,138,696) of the total budget available for project activities during the final year. However, this is considered to be highly unlikely to be spent, based on the project's historical expenditure rate (Figure 6). There is also a gap in co-financing funds that were pledged in the ProDoc versus the actual amounts allocated for 2019 (Figure 8). It is unclear whether it will be possible to close this deficit of \$5,625,018 by the end of the fiscal year with the government's reduced environmental sector budget and shortfalls in the original NGO commitments

¹⁰⁵ UNDP-Fiji Data 25 June 2019

Financial disbursement timeliness	U	The centralized approach to financial management using an inadequate financial management tool, inconsistent procurement and disbursement guidelines at DOF has not only resulted in high levels of financial inefficiency, but it has also demoralized many stakeholders, and especially contractors, many of whom no longer have interest in working with R2R for that reason.
Monitoring and Evaluation		Overall M&E is considered satisfactory
M&E design	MU	The project M&E plan represents a standard UNDP approach for GEF-funded projects and meets the GEF-UNDP standards and requirements. The exception is the inconsistency with the Logframe indicators and multiple targets that lack SMART indicators, specificity in roles and responsibilities.
M&E budgeting	S	An adequate budget (c. \$65,000) was set aside for M&E activities, and the project has set aside c. \$200,000 for biological monitoring for 2019.
M&E implementation	MU	Until 2018, reporting was consistent. However, the last PIR is nearly one year old. While it provided useful information, its self-rating was overly optimistic and was a stretch from the situation the project is in today.
Stakeholder participation		Stakeholder participation is one of R2R's strengths and is Highly Satisfactory, and expect to continue as long as financial management issues are resolved
Production & dissemination of information	MU	The communication strategy is weak and based on multiple interviews, there remains a general lack of understanding about the potential development impacts of the innovative approach.
Local resource users & civil society participation	HS	Civil society is especially engaged in Yap and Kosrae, whereas CSOs and NGOs are key drivers of R2R in all States. THE project has helped catalyze management and enforcement of communities in Yap.
Establishment of partnerships	HS	There is a high level of synergies that R2R has established with NGOs, CSOs, universities and other actors, and with out this support, the project would be facing much more serious obstacles for achieving its outcomes and overall objective.
Involvement & support of government institutions	S	Government institutions have been primarily represented in the SC and the State TACs. However, there remains serious obstacles presented by government's decision to cut back on investing in environmental protection strategies and supporting development that is incongruent with the project.
Project Results		The overall rating is Moderately unsatisfactory.
Overall Progress Toward Achieving Objective and Outcomes (Effectiveness)	MU	Progress is Moderately unsatisfactory, mainly because at midterm, there are few management interventions that can demonstrate measurable changes in the pressures caused by unsustainable practices.
Outcome 1: Integrated Ecosystems Management and Rehabilitation on the High Islands of the FSM to enhance Ridge to Reef Connectivity	U	The lack of significant progress in addressing the primary threats to health ecosystems along the R2R continuum through rapidly replicable management interventions is surprising after three years of project implementation. While the focus on capacity development is adequate, there is not enough applied learning and testing using an adaptive management approach. The SEA results are good, but drastic cutbacks from four to one SEA/IEMP and DSS is a serious threat to the project's effectiveness. The available evidence for the M&E and DSS approach provided by the SEA report are inadequate at this time.
Outcome 2: Management Effectiveness enhanced within new and existing PAs on the High	U	R2R has for good reasons taken a passive approach to allow R2R management evolve along the PA axis. At midterm, there are still major obstacles to operationalizing the PAN in all states, especially

Islands of FSM as part of the R2R approach (both marine and terrestrial)		in Chuuk. However, there have been some excellent community-based enforcement of PA regulations in Yap, but these have been undermined by incongruent national legislation, which must urgently be harmonized. Most of the selected indicators are inadequate for reasons ranging from them not being SMART, to being built to satisfy academic research interests, rather than to provide evidence that can drive the DSS.
Sustainability		
Financial sustainability	MU	While the short-term outlook is favorable, it is unclear how the government will support the project after the Compact ends in 2023. This is especially a concern given the significant budget cutbacks the government has made for the environment sector.
Socio-political sustainability	ML	The project has to date only left a small social footprint in the communities with some intermittent and small-scale interventions (e.g., SLPs) and interviews suggested that many beneficiaries do not see more than just capacity building coming from the project, but no tangible social or economic benefits for them. The political gap between the support for the project as a source of funds and actions for sustaining it is wide, largely due to a lack of a good communication strategy that targets politicians, resource users and school children. Gender issues are well represented, and women are especially placed in leadership roles within the project organization.
Institutional and governance sustainability	ML	The top-down and centralized governability approach that is presently employed by the National government represents a barrier to developing interactive governance processes at the state and community levels.
Ecological sustainability	U	Until management interventions targeting unsustainable practices are scaled up (e.g., DLP, sustainable forest management, reducing illegal and juvenile overfishing on the reefs), the project is unlikely to sustain the good initiatives laid out in the ProDoc and by stakeholders. ,
Overall Project Achievement and Incipient impacts	MU	

Annex 2: MTR Mission Schedule

<i>ISLAND</i>	<i>DAY</i>	<i>TIME</i>	<i>ACTIVITY</i>	<i>VENUE</i>	<i>PREPARATORY NOTES</i>	<i>RESPONSIBLE</i>
Pohnpei	Tues - April 02		Planning Meetings and Prep	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparatory Work: Inception Report & Work Plan • Complete Checklist of key documents to be provided to Consultant 	• PIU
	Wed – April 03	PM	MTR Consultant (Joseph Ryan) arrives	• Ocean View	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary Meeting with Project Team & Consultant (Afternoon) to finalize schedule for: Pohnpei/Kosrae/Yap /Chuuk 	• PIU
		PM	Team Meeting	• Ocean View Plaza Hotel	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R2R Team • MTR Consultant
	Thurs – April 04	10:00AM – 2:00PM	Field Trip - Diving	• Palikir Pass	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSP • State Coordinator
		6:30PM – 8:00PM	Tech Meeting	• Ocean View Plaza Hotel	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R2R Tech • MTR Consultant • Dr. Kevin Rhodes
	Fri – April 05	8:30AM	Team Meetings / work time	• Ocean View Plaza Hotel	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R2R Team • MTR Consultant
		11:30AM – 1:00PM	Lunch meeting with Pohnpei TAC	• AOne Restaurant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize venue and time with TAC members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R2R Team • MTR Consultant

		2:00PM – 5:00PM	Field Trip – Pehleng Piggery and Kitti 3-D Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kitti Municipality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize preparations with community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAC members • R2R Team • MTR Consultant • Community • R2R State Coordinator
Travel	Sat – April 06	<i>Pohnpei to Yap</i>				
Yap	Sun – April 07	AM	Diving ?? Or Island Tour ??	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize arrangements with hotel upon arrival in Yap 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manta Ray Bay Hotel • MTR Consultant
			Prep and other tech meetings (bird survey, Balabat METT, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize times to meet with individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R2R Tech • R2R State Coordinator
	Mon – April 08	9:00AM	Team Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTR Consultant • R2R Tech • R2R State Coordinator
		10:00AM – 12:00NOON	Meeting with TAC and partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRMD Office? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize time with group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R2R Tech • R2R State Coordinator • MTR Consultant • TAC members
		PM	Site visit to Weloy watershed and Nimpal Channel Marine Conservation Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize time with group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTR Consultant • Community • R2R State Coordinator • R2R Tech
PM	Prep and other tech meetings (bird	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize time with groups / individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R2R Tech 		



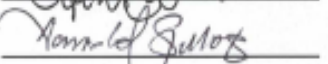






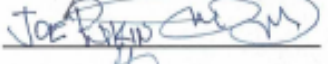



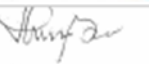

			survey, Balabat METT, etc.)			
	Tues – April 09	AM	Tamil Resource Conservation Trust (TRCT) meeting and site visit watershed reserve and marine managed area	•	• Finalize time with group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTR Consultant • Community • R2R State Coordinator • R2R Tech
		PM	Other meetings as needed	•	• Finalize time with groups / individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTR Consultant • Community • R2R State Coordinator • R2R Tech
TRAVEL	Wed – April 10	<i>AM – Yap to Chuuk</i>				
Chuuk	Wed – April 10	PM	Team Meeting	•	• Finalize time and place for meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R2R State Coordinator • MTR Consultant • R2R Tech
		PM	Drive around Weno? Visit Nefo restoration site?	•	• Finalize time and possibility of visit with CWC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R2R State Coordinator • MTR Consultant • R2R Tech
		PM	Other meetings as needed	•	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTR Consultant • Community • R2R State Coordinator • R2R Tech
	Thurs – April 11	AM	Meeting with TAC and partners	•	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R2R Team

						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTR Consultant • TAC members
		PM	Site visit / dive / snorkelling ?? Fefen or Onei ? Other PA to snorkel?	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize time and possibility of visit with DMR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DMR • R2R State Coordinator • MTR Consultant • R2R Tech • Community
TRAVE	Fri – April 12	<i>AM Chuuk to Kosrae</i>				
Kosrae	Fri – April 12	4:00PM	Team Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree Lodge Hotel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize time and place for meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R2R State Coordinator • MTR Consultant • R2R Tech
	Sat – April 13		Diving	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check hotel for site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree Lodge Hotel • MTR Consultant
	Sun – April 14		Nature hike ?? Drive around island ??	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check hotel if tour available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree Lodge Hotel • MTR Consultant
	Mon – April 15	AM	Meeting with TAC and partners	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize time and place for meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R2R Team • MTR Consultant • TAC members
		PM	Trip to piggery ?? Snorkelling at MPA??	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize time and place for meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIRMA • DREA - Fisheries • R2R State Coordinator • MTR Consultant

						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R2R Tech • Community
	Tues – April 16	AM	Any remaining meetings	•	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTR Consultant • R2R Tech •
TRAVEL	Tues – Apr. 16	PM Travel – Kosrae to Pohnpei				
Pohnpei	Wed – April 17	AM	Team debriefing	• DECEM	• Finalize time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R2R Team • MTR Consultant •
	Wed – April 17	PM	PIU and SC debriefing	• DECEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize time and agenda • Finalize presentation for SC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R2R Team • MTR Consultant • SC members • Department Secretaries • Others
	Thurs – April 18	AM	Any remaining meetings	•	• Finalize time and place for meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCT • TNC • Others?
TRAVEL	Thurs – April 18	PM– Pohnpei to Denmark				





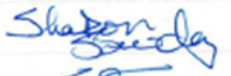






TAC/Stakeholders Workshop
Attendance Sheet

Date: April 8, 2019

Name	Agency	Signature
Victor Bamog	DCO	
Christina Fillred	EPA/Vice Chair	
James Y. Pong	MRMD	
Xavier Jibema	MRMD	
Tamdad Sulog	DAF	
Ryan Talken	DAF	
Rachael Nash	MC seth /map	
Francis Ruegorong	DAF	
Sabino Sauchomal	YapCAP	
Andy Talleichig	YapCAP	
Anthony Yaloo	YapCAP	
Sean Gaarad	TRCT	
Ezekiel Ken	TRCT	
Janice Rutnan	TRCT	
Vitt Foneg	TRCT	
Vanessa Fread	DECEM - R2R	
Margie Falanaw Margie Falanaw	USFS / IPIF USFS / IPIF	
Debra Laan	DECEM - R2R	
Joe Rikin	R2R	
Michael Gaag	R2R	
Magmay Magmay Welay	Welay	
JOE RYAN	GEF-MTR	
Thomas Gorong	Nelay Comm	
Ezekiel Konfiteles	Tamil Comm (TRCT)	

Apr. 5, 2019

MTR Meeting (Johnpei State)

Name	Agency	Signature
1) Rosalinda Yablman	DECEN	
2) Keper Joel	DFW	
3) Vanessa Freed	R2R/ R2R	
4) Liz Turk	TNC	
5) Sharon Sawday	USDA - NRCS	
6) Eugene Joseph	CSP	
7) HENRY SUSANA	EPA	
8) Jerry Anson	"	
9) Dohry Orden	DFW	
10) Rodasio Samuel	NRCS	
11) Joe Ryan	MTR	



Ridge-to-Reef Steering Committee

Sign-In Sheet

April 17, 2019

Name	Department	Contact
1 ✓ Patricia Pedrus (Chairwoman)	Sustainable Development Planner, Department of Environment, Climate Change & Emergency Management	pattiwarm@gmail.com <i>[Signature]</i>
2 ✓ Cindy H. Ehmes (Member)	Assistant Secretary, Division of Environment, Department of Environment, Climate Change & Emergency Management	climate@mail.fm <i>[Signature]</i>
3 Dickson Wichep (Vice Chairman)	Assistant Secretary, Division of Infrastructure, Department of Transportation, Communication & Infrastructure	wichep66@gmail.com
4 Erick Paul (Member)	Assistant Secretary, Division of Treasury, Department of Finance & Administration	erickpaul691@gmail.com
5 ✓ Valentin Martin (Member)	Marine Resources Program Manager	fsmrd@mail.fm <i>[Signature]</i>
6 ✓ Cliff James (Member)	Science Specialist, Department of Education	Cliff.James@national.doe.fm <i>[Signature]</i>
7 ✓ Suzanne Gallen	UNDP	suzanne.gallen@undp.org <i>[Signature]</i>
8 ✓ Rosalinda Yatilman	Project Manager, R2R	ryatilman@gmail.com <i>[Signature]</i>
9 ✓ Vanessa Fread	Technical Coordinator, R2R	r2rtech@gmail.com <i>[Signature]</i>
10 ✓ Joe Ryan	MTR Consultant	Nicavet200@yahoo.com <i>[Signature]</i>
11 ✓ Eugene Joseph	Director, CSP	eujoseph925@gmail.com <i>[Signature]</i>
11 ✓ Jorg Anson	Pohnpei State Coordinator	Jorgyanson@gmail.com
12 ✓ Kepet Joel	Chief, Division of Fish & Wildlife	Kepet.Joel.Kepetjoel4@gmail.com

Name	Organization	Contact
Kriskitina Kanemoto	Dept. of Marine Resources/R2R	Krizk66@gmail.com
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Beverlyn D. Fred	Micronesia Red Cross Society	Fanesu03@gmail.com
Clarice Etop-Graham	Chuuk Conservation Society	clarice.etop@gmail.com
Curtis Graham	Dept. of Marine Resources	abcpenia@gmail.com
Lolita N. Ragus	Cooperative Research Extension	lolitwasnr@gmail.com
Wisney Nakayama	Chuuk State Legislature	wisneynakayama@gmail.com
Kalvin Assito	Cooperative Research Extension	Kassito97@gmail.com
Christine Grace Robert	Chuuk Women's Council	Teentrebor26@gmail.com
Joakim Wasan	Dept. of Agriculture	Jwasan2018@gmail.com



Kosrae Ridge to Reef Project

MTR-Participants List

	Name	Department/Org.	Contact
1	Marston Luckymis	KIRMA-Ridge to Reef	mluckymis@gmail.com
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	Blair Charley	KIRMA	charleyblair@gmail.com
	Hamilson Phillip	Olum Family Organization	
	Steven Palik	KIRMA	s.asupalik@gmail.com
	Andy George	KCSO	kcsodirector@mail.fm
	Canston Segal	Utwe Municipal Government	(691) 370-3207
	Mary Livaie	Kosrae Women Association	mlivaie@yahoo.com
	Hans Skilling	Kosrae Youth Development	hans.skilling@gmail.com
	Ruben Charley	Malem Municipal Government	rubencharley@yahoo.com
	Presley Abraham	Lelu Town Government	kjjpal@gmail.com
	Bond Segal	KCSO	kcseducation@mail.fm
	Joseph Ryan	UNDP - External MTR Consultant	jryan@ensomeinfo.com
	Vanessa Fread	R2R Project	fsmr2rtech@gmail.com

Additional people with whom the consultant met on Yap include;

	Names	Role
1	Debbie Laan, Magmay Magmay, Thomas Gorong	Nimpal and Weloy watershed in
2	Ken, Joe Rikin, Mike Gaag,	Tamil R2R pilot
3	Vitt Foneg	Ex-TRCT Coordinator
4	And Rutnan	TRCT Coordinator
5	Gilippin is the other lady who maintains, manages the plant nursery	Responsible for plant nursery at

Annex 3: UNEG Code of Conduct for MTR Consultants

ToR ANNEX D: UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators/Midterm Review Consultants

Evaluators/Consultants:

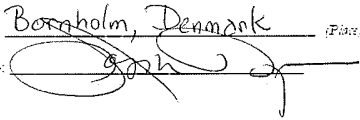
1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their products. They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study limitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

MTR Consultant Agreement Form

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System:

Name of Consultant: JOSEPH RYAN
 Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): Individual Consultant

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed at Borgholm, Denmark (Place) on 13 July 2019 (Date)
 Signature: 

Annex 4a: Degree to which Indicators meet SMART criteria and remedial actions to consider

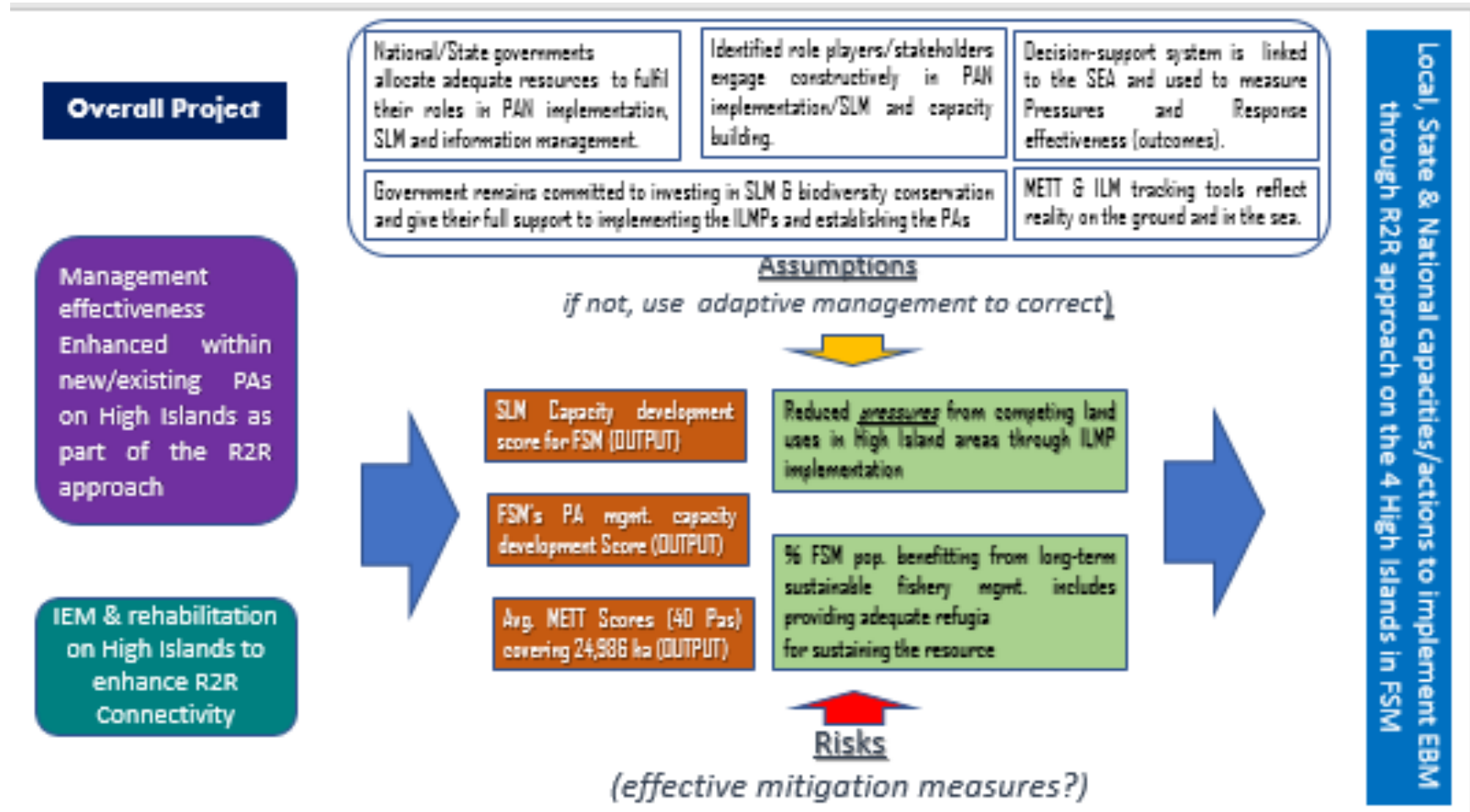
OVERALL OBJECTIVE INDICATOR	ISSUE	REMEDIAL ACTION
Indicator 1: Area of High Islands of the FSM where pressures from competing land uses are reduced (measured by no net loss of intact forests) through the implementation of Integrated Landscape Management Plans.	<p><u>Non-specific</u>: Unclear if this is total area, area per State, upland, lowland or mangrove forests?</p> <p><u>Not time-bound</u>: is it per annum, until the end of the project?</p> <p><u>Not attributable</u>: changes cannot be linked any of the interventions; <i>there are no counterfactuals</i></p>	<i>Annual changes in: a) upland X (type?) forests; b) riparian forests; and c) mangrove forests attributable to specific interventions and policies implemented in IEMPs.</i>
Indicator 2: Average of METT Scores for 40 target PAs covering 24,986 ha	<p><u>Not an outcome</u>: indicator of performance/efficacy; evidence suggests it has been applied subjectively; does not link with in situ outcomes from biodiversity M&E.</p> <p><u>Not attributable</u>: changes cannot be linked any of the interventions</p>	<i>Insert scores within the context of a causative results-chain (activities-outputs-outcomes) and link to site-specific outcomes measured by in situ M&E</i>
Indicator 3a: Sustainable Land Management Capacity Development Score for FSM	<p><u>Not an outcome</u>: this is an output; does not measure how that capacity is out to use.</p>	<p><i>Insert scores within the context of a causative results-chain (activities-outputs-outcomes) and link to site-specific outcomes measured by in situ M&E</i></p> <p><i>NOTE</i>: GEF is no longer using TTs (outside of METT) for GEF-6 and beyond projects. Capacity development scorecards are not GEF TTs and there is no difference to the CD scorecards or the TTs for this project</p>
Indicator 3b: PA Management Capacity Development Score for FSM	<p><u>Not an outcome</u>: this is an output; does not measure how that capacity is out to use.</p>	<p><i>Insert scores within the context of a causative results-chain (activities-outputs-outcomes) and link to site-specific outcomes measured by in situ M&E</i></p> <p><i>NOTE</i>: GEF is no longer using TTs (outside of METT) for GEF-6 and beyond projects. Capacity development scorecards are not GEF TTs and there is no difference to the CD scorecards or the TTs for this project</p>
Indicator 4: % of the FSM population benefitting in the long-term from the sustainable management of the fisheries resource which includes providing adequate refugia for sustaining the resource	<p><u>Lacks specificity</u>: Which fishery resources? There is no specific intervention targeting the fundamental cause of overfishing (night time spearfishing).</p> <p><u>Not simple</u>: This is an extremely complex issue and there are no policies for sustainable fishing</p> <p><u>Not attributable</u>: changes cannot be linked any of the interventions; <i>there are no counterfactuals (outer islands could serve as controls)</i></p>	<i>The indicator should be established for specific (i.e., local) areas (i.e., communities, watersheds) where management interventions and enforcement are viable; apply an adaptive, learning approach to M&E the outcomes; it should measure annual or biannual changes</i>
Comp. #1 Indicators		

Number of Integrated Landscape Management Plans being implemented	<u>Not an outcome</u> : this is an output; does not measure desired changes linked to the plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual changes in: a) upland X (type?) forests; b) riparian forests; and c) mangrove forests attributable to specific interventions and policies implemented in IEMPs - Annual changes in: the condition of: a) backreef lagoons; b) inner reefs; and c) outer reefs attributable to specific interventions and policies implemented in IEMPs
Enhanced cross-sector enabling environment for integrated LM score: (i) Framework, strengthening INRM; (ii) Capacity strengthening	<u>Not outcomes</u> : both are outputs; i) cannot measure the expected changes from the framework and ii) does not measure how that capacity is applied to bring about the desired changes	<p><i>Insert the score within the context of a causative results-chain (activities-outputs-outcomes) and link to site-specific outcomes measured by in situ MGE</i></p> <p><i>NOTE: GEF is no longer using TTs (outside of METT) for GEF-6 and beyond projects. Capacity development scorecards are not GEF TTs and there is no difference to the CD scorecards or the TTs for this project</i></p>
Annual Government and Donor funding allocated to SLM (including PA management costs)	<u>Not an outcome</u> : it is an output; we have no idea whether the money is being used to bring about measurable change, or simply being spent on repeating management interventions that have not been tested for their effectiveness.	Link funding as an output in a causative e results-chains that leads to a measurable outcome
Extent (ha) of ecosystems rehabilitated resulting in increased delivery of ecosystem and development benefits:	<p><u>Non-specific</u>: Unclear if this is total area, area per State, upland, lowland or mangrove forests?</p> <p><u>Not time-bound</u>: is it per annum, until the end of the project?</p> <p><u>Not attributable</u>: changes cannot be linked any of the interventions; <i>there are no counterfactuals</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual changes in: a) upland X (type?) forests; b) riparian forests; and c) mangrove forests attributable to specific interventions and policies implemented in IEMPs - Annual changes in the condition of: a) backreef lagoons; b) inner reefs; and c) outer reefs attributable to specific interventions and policies implemented in IEMPs - You must find controls where no ecosystems are rehabilitated and pair the comparisons between the control and experimental targets. This is always a good education tool to show farmers that they can improve soil retention, forest cover, etc.
% of piggeries using the dry litter piggery system within the Ipwek, Dachangar, Finkol, and Nefounimas catchments resulting in increased water quality	<p><u>Non-specific</u>: Unclear if this is total area, area per State, upland, lowland or mangrove forests?</p> <p><u>Not time-bound</u>: is it per annum, until the end of the project?</p> <p><u>Not attributable</u>: changes cannot be linked any of the interventions; <i>there are no counterfactuals</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The catchments are enormous and best to focus on streams next to the piggeries (upstream impacts) and compare with changes downstream. But with only 4 DLPs per State, the impact will be minimal. - Suggest considering Annual changes of nutrients, fecals in streams immediately adjacent to pilot piggeries.

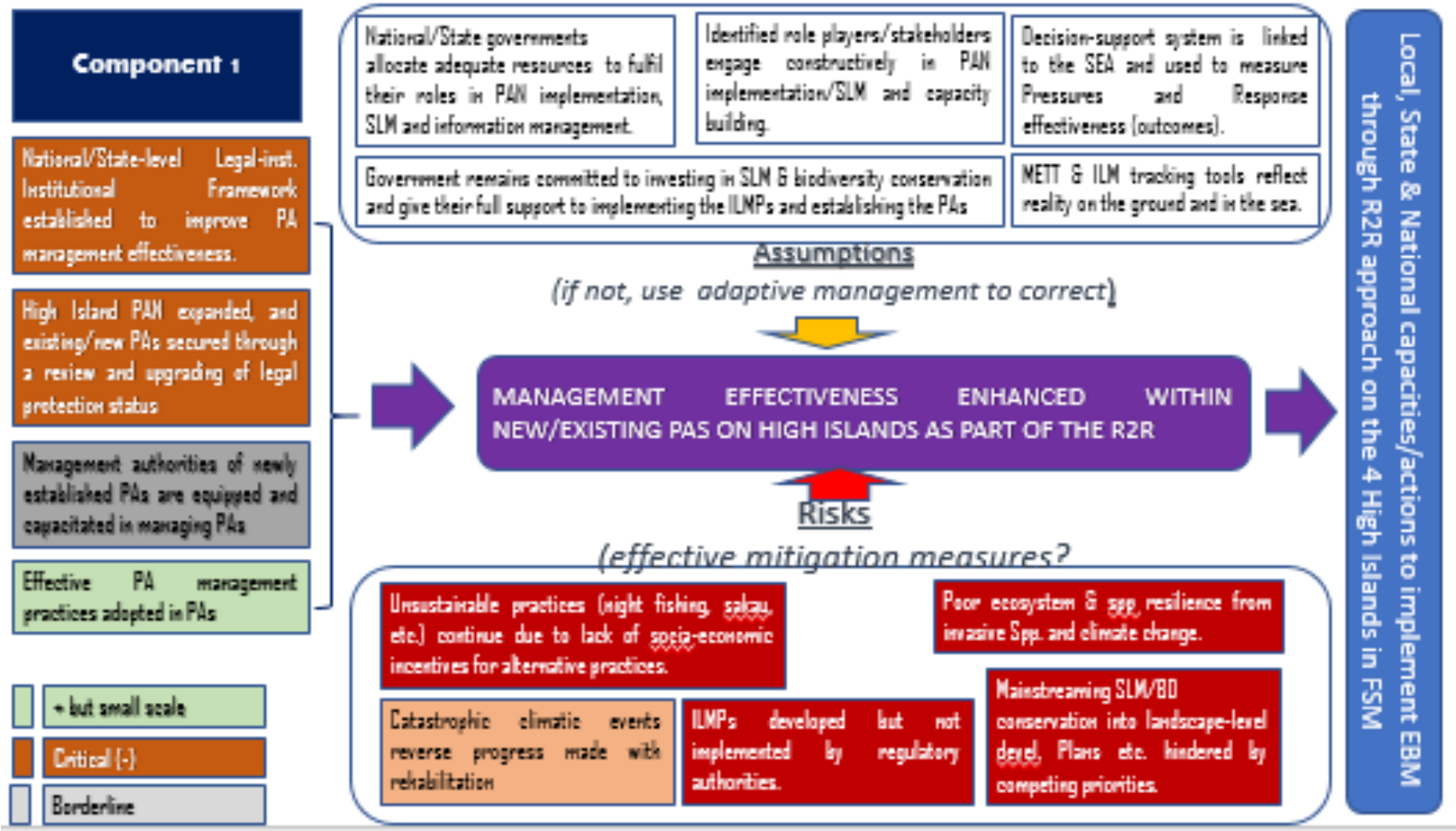
		- You must find controls where no DLPs are in use and pair the comparisons between the control and experimental targets
Comp. #2 Indicators		
(i) Legal status of 0 (0 ha) PAs verified	<p><u>Not an outcome</u>: it is an output; while legal status is important, the bottleneck is with enforcement, which is virtually nonexistent in FSM</p> <p><u>Not attributable</u>:: changes cannot be linked any of the interventions</p>	<p>Link this output in a results chain that is attributable to outcomes from improved policies, management tools and enforcement capacities</p>
Number of States having a fully operational PA management Decision-support system (DSS) in place on which management decisions are based.	<p><u>Not an outcome</u>: it is an output; We want to know whether the DSS is providing the right kind of evidence for taking management decisions; but the assumptions are that the different sectors will fall in to embrace it, that there are robust policies and money to fund alternative, incentives to reduce unsustainable practices</p> <p><u>Not attributable</u>:: changes cannot be linked any of the interventions</p>	<p>Turn it around to say: Number of site-specific changes attributed to more informed decision making through the DSS</p>
Mean % of total fish biomass of (i) <i>Cheilinus undulates</i> (EN); and (ii) <i>Balbometapon muricatum</i> (VU) across the States	<p><u>Lacks specificity</u>: Which fishery resources? There is no specific intervention targeting the fundamental cause of overfishing (night time spearfishing).</p> <p><u>Not simple</u>: This is an extremely complex issue and there are no policies for sustainable fishing</p> <p><u>Not attributable</u>:: changes cannot be linked any of the interventions; <i>there are no counterfactuals</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify habitats specific requirements of the 2 species and link the indicator to those habitats - Measure predator biomass and fish- assemblage/trophic structure heterogeneity, benthic evenness, and the skewness and richness of coral assemblages - Measure social indicators (e.g., social cohesion, etc – See Johnson 2017.) and assess PA management effectiveness based on key indicators - Also measure herbivore size and diversity, coral condition, water quality and land-watershed degradation parameters) baselines; monitoring & evaluate changes. see Houk et al. 2015. - Consider using simple fishery indicators on stages of maturity in the catches/markets (e.g., Froese 2004), and ensure that avian indicators are tied to terrestrial habitat change
Mean Detection Rate of the following birds: (i) Kosrae: <i>Zosterops cinereus</i> (Endemic); (ii) Pohnpei: <i>Myiagra pluto</i> (Endemic); (iii) Chuuk: <i>Metabolus rugensis</i> (Endangered); iv) Yap: <i>Monarcha godeffroyi</i> (Endemic); (v) All States: <i>Ducula oceanica</i> (Micronesian Pigeon) Regionally endemic	<p><u>Lacks specificity</u>: Which habitats are associated with the birds' life cycles?</p> <p><u>Not attributable</u>:: changes cannot be linked any of the interventions; <i>there are no counterfactuals</i></p>	<p>Tie bird indicators to the <u>condition</u> of specific habitats they require to compete their life cycles and link with R2R management interventions</p>

Annex 4b: Preliminary Theory of Change for R2R’s Components

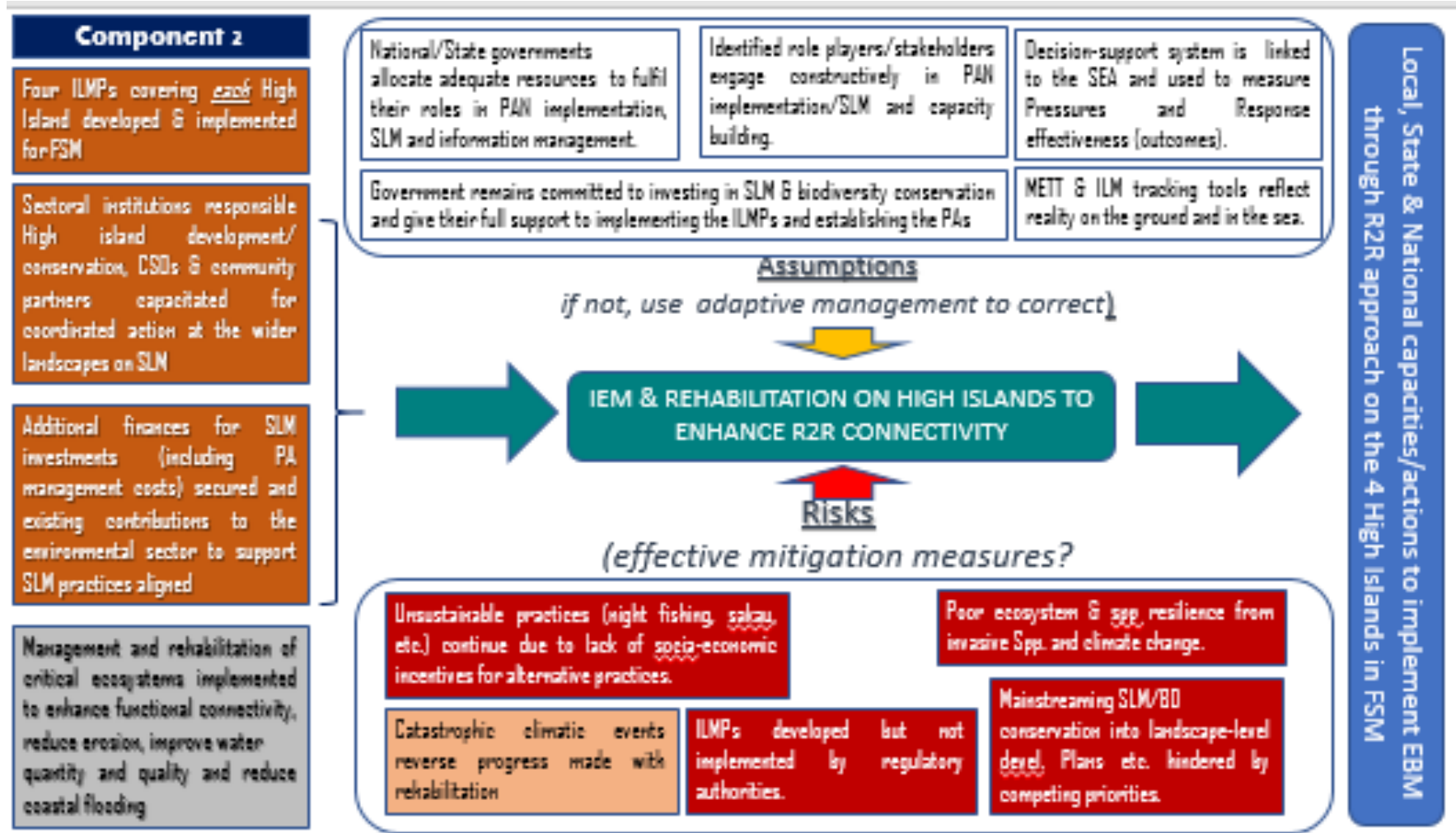
The overall R2R Project and its two expected outcomes can be summarized as follows:



Component 1 can be summarized as follows in this rapid Theory of Change: The overall R2R Project and its two expected outcomes can be summarized as follows:



Component 2 can be summarized as follows in this rapid Theory of Change: The overall R2R Project and its two expected outcomes can be summarized as follows:



Annex 4c: Rapid Assessment and recommended actions to assist the IEMP Consultant to operationalize the DSS and M&E platform

The table below aims to clarify some of the basic tasks the IEMP consultant should deliver to the PIU and the Task Force for them to be able to implement, monitor and continually measure its effectiveness by applying an adaptive, learning approach to build context specific tools and policies for sustaining the approach. The table is presented because the MTR does not consider the Final IEMP ([EDSI 2019](#)) be operational.

TOR-STIPULATED RESPONSIBILITIES	SPECIFIC ACTIONS FOR MAKING THE OUTPUTS OPERATIONAL
<p>Recommend monitoring and environmental management requirements, including identifying where communities can engage in such monitoring and management</p> <p>Set out recommended roles and responsibilities for specific government departments, agencies and NGOs to implement the IEMP, particularly to undertake environmental management and monitoring;</p> <p>Incorporate the review of the capacity of those government departments, agencies and NGOs with a role to play in implementing the IEMP; and recommend requirements to enhance their ability to fulfil their</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The recommended monitoring approach is inadequate, as an incomplete matrix with non-SMART indicators (few of which are outcomes) and responsibilities is of little value for an R2R team whose capacity remains limited for understanding how to operationalize the IEMP. -The approach is not easily adaptable for allowing communities to engage in participatory monitoring, and considerable work remains before this is possible. Once the approach is ready, it should be tested in pilot communities (e.g., Tamil, Rup on Yap) -Include counterfactuals (i.e., <i>controls</i>) in the M&E process -Although the responsibilities for state actors and some NGOs are defined, as must clarify who is responsible for managing the data base, the M&E and DSS platforms stipulated in the ProDoc, as well as QA of the data, and maintaining the platforms. - The first step would be to assess the capacity of the teams to conduct a ToC on the IEMP, implement, monitoring and evaluate effectiveness of interventions and new policies and inform decision- and policy-makers via the DSS

<p>designated roles and responsibilities (including awareness-raising, training, institutional strengthening, equipment, etc.);</p> <p>Recommend measures for compliance with State or National environment safeguards, and where these do not exist, recommend appropriate international safeguards that should be applied;</p> <p>Recommend, as required, a schedule and reporting procedures for mitigation of negative environmental impacts;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Without a robust M&E platform, nor the DSS, it is UNLIKELY that the effectiveness of these safeguard measures can be measured once they are applied -This is another reason that the M&E and DSS platform must be presented by the consultant -The consultant has not given the PIU nor the Task Force the tools to assess negative environmental impacts. While the IEMP makes a vague reference to using EIAs and SEAs, this requires EXPLICIT guidelines. -The EIA and SEA methods should be similar, and they should feed the results (effectiveness of mitigation measures, etc.) into a common data base that can be used for the DSS.
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Annex 4d: Rapid Assessment of the proposed monitoring indicators proposed by the IEMP

Rapid Assessment of Indicators proposed for the IEMPs (from Table 3.2, Draft IEMP, May 2019)

Note: The differences between the matrix presented in the Draft IEMP and the Final (28 June 2019) are negligible.

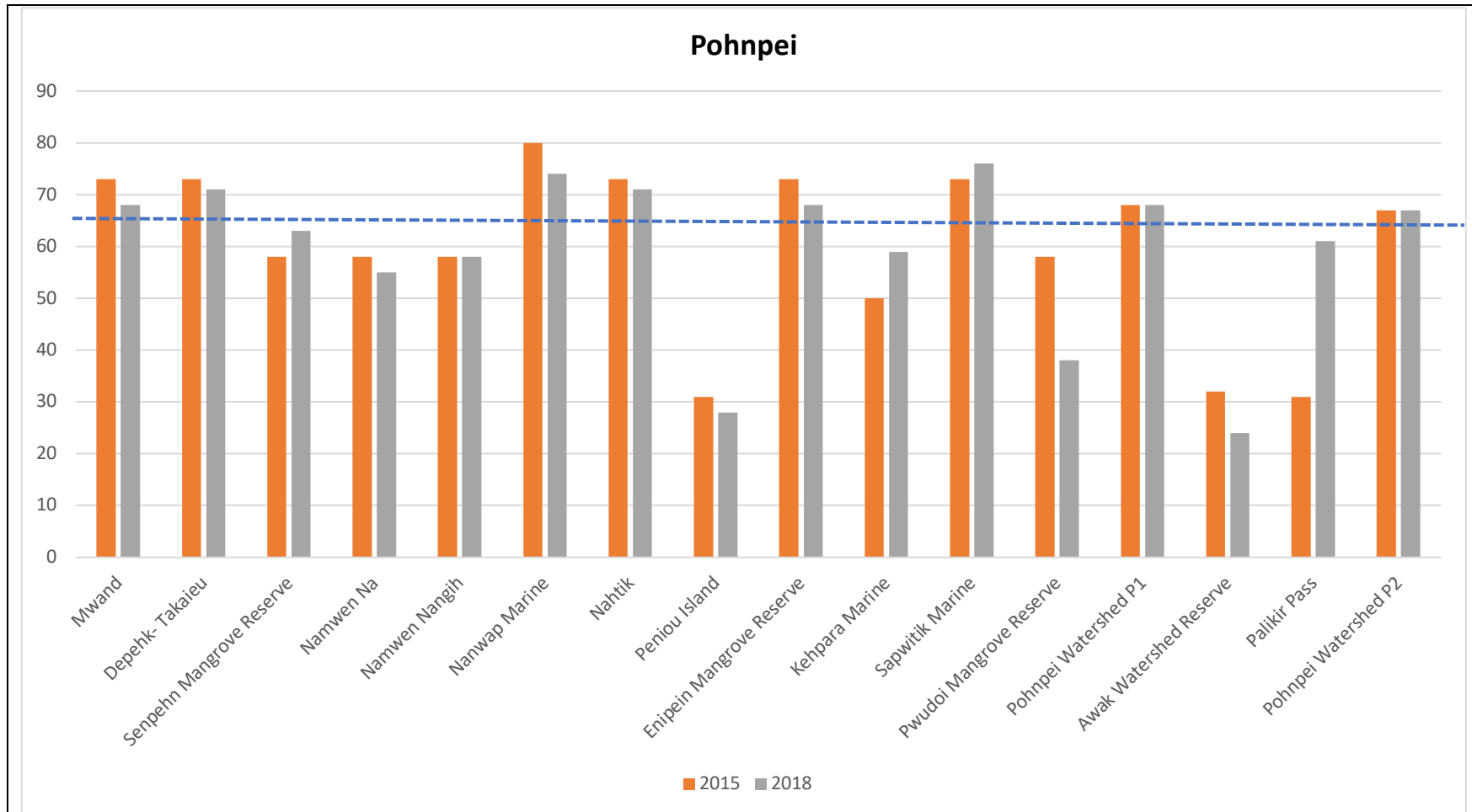
THEME	OBJECTIVES	Indicators	SMART-ness
Protected areas and biodiversity	<i>Improve the status and health of habitats & biodiversity (land and marine)</i>	Achievement of Biodiversity Action Plan targets	<u>Not attributable</u> : How are measured changes linked specific interventions?
		Abundance of endangered species (birds)	<u>Lacks specificity</u> : Which habitats are these birds tied to? during which part of their life cycles) fishery resources? There is no specific intervention targeting the fundamental cause of diminishing birds (is it hunting, monitor-predators on nests?) <u>Not attributable</u> : How are measured changes linked specific interventions?
		Fish biomass	<u>Lacks specificity</u> : Biomass of which fishery resources (Carnivores, herbivores, megaspawners, pre-reproductively active juveniles)? How does it target the fundamental cause of overfishing (night time spearfishing) if there are no policies and enforcement is not working after several decades?. Is it in the markets, is it from night time fishing where most of the fishing mortality comes from? <u>Not simple</u> : This is an extremely complex issue and there are no policies for sustainable fishing <u>Not attributable</u> : How are measured changes linked specific interventions? <i>there are no counterfactuals (controls)</i> <u>Comments to proposed Methods</u> : How many? What about herbivores? Juveniles?
		Live coral cover	<u>Lacks specificity</u> : Which reefs (forereefs, outer reefs, backreef lagoons)? There is no specific intervention targeting the fundamental cause of overfishing (night time spearfishing). <u>Not simple</u> : This is an extremely complex issue and surprising that reference is not made to the work of Houk and colleagues; See Annex 4a of the MTR for other parameters. <u>Comments to proposed Methods</u> : How many transects? Replicates? How long are they? Are they photo/video transects? Sounds like a shotgun approach that is poorly thought out. What about other parameters like % algal and calcifying substrate cover?
		Abundance of invertebrates (various species)	<u>Lacks specificity</u> : Which invertebrates? Aren't corals invertebrates? Are Invasives (e.g., Acanthaster included?)? fishery resources? There is no specific intervention targeting the fundamental cause of overfishing (night time spearfishing). <u>Not simple</u> : This is an extremely complex issue and there are no policies for sustainable fishing

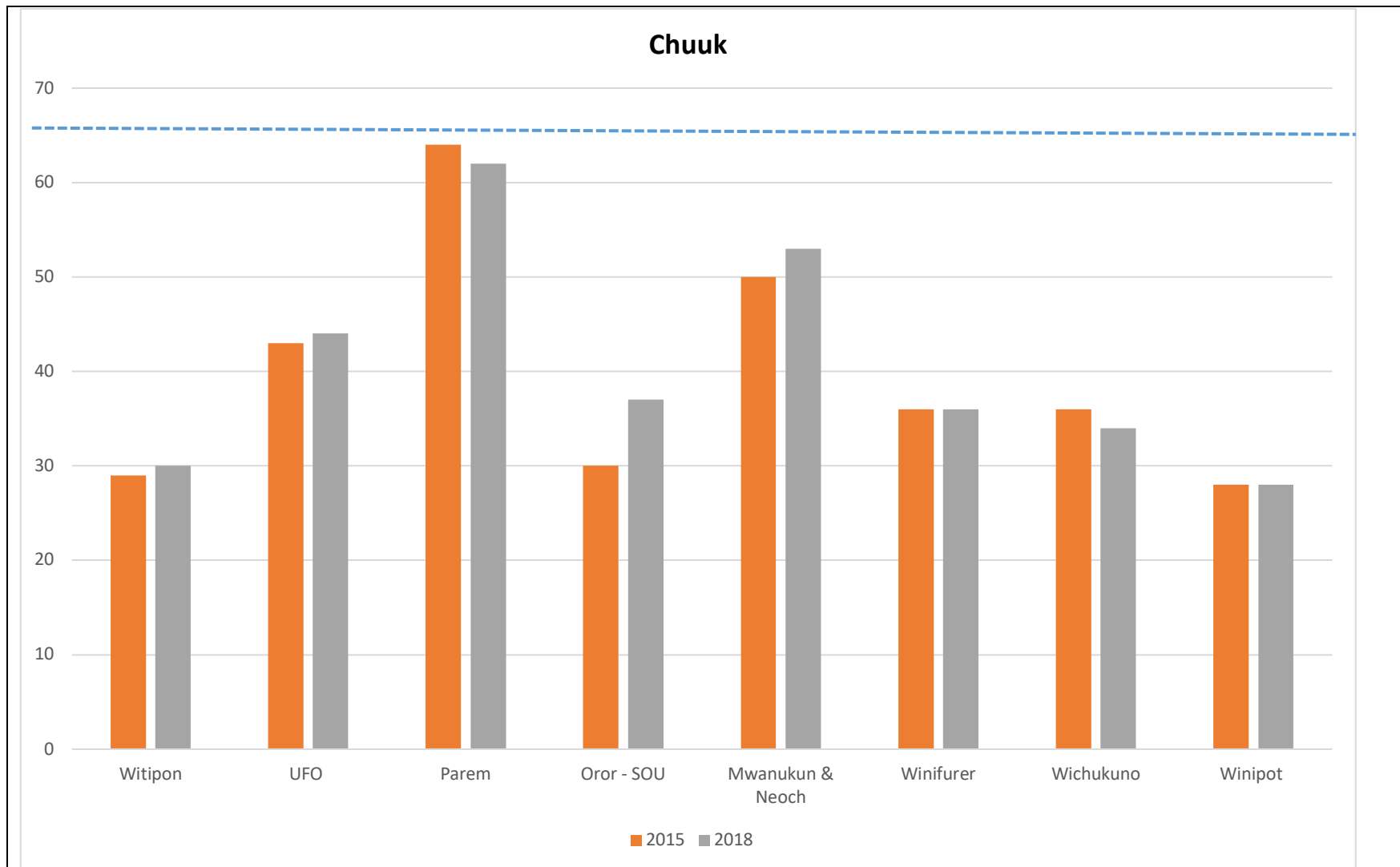
THEME	OBJECTIVES	Indicators	SMART-ness
			Comments to proposed Methods: How many transects? Replicates? How long are they? Sounds like a shotgun approach that is poorly thought out.
		Weight of pelagic fish – landed catch	Lacks specificity: Which pelagics? Why focus on these when the main cause of coral reef condition and threats to food security are due to nearshore fishing (Houk et al. 2015) ? Not attributable: How are measured changes linked specific interventions? <i>there are no counterfactuals</i> Comments to proposed Methods: Sounds like a shotgun approach that is poorly thought out. What does this have to do with the most pressing resource issue in Micronesia – overfishing in the lagoons, channels and reefs?
		Extent of upland forest clearance by humans	Lacks specificity: Which forests (primary vs secondary growth? Riverine forests along rivers ? Can the causes be differentiated (e.g., Sakau plantations vs other crops?) Comments to proposed Methods: Why are satellite images not included? Sounds very unsystematic?
		Number of mangrove crabs exported	Lacks specificity: Where are they coming from? What is the critical threshold for mangrove crab exploitation to affect mangrove condition?
		Mangrove crab size and maturity	Not an outcome: this is an output; should read changes in mangrove crab x,y,z due to interventions
		Mangrove crab weight	
		Number of landslide incidents	Lacks specificity: Where in the watershed? What is sediment load and resulting erosion into rivers included?
	Over-exploitation, encroachment and destruction of mangroves is reduced	Extent (ha) of mangrove clearance by humans	Lacks specificity: Where in the watershed? What is sediment load and resulting erosion into rivers included?
		Volume of carvings made from mangrove	Not attributable: changes cannot be linked any of the interventions; how does one know where they came from? Were the mangroves already down? <i>there are no counterfactuals (controls)</i>
		Construction of housing in mangroves – areas filled in for building	Lacks specificity: Should it not be changes in total area of housing constructed in mangroves?
	Ecosystem services are maintained	Value of ecosystem goods and services benefiting people	Not an outcome: this is an output; Lacks specificity: All ES benefit people by definition? Which ones? How is it measured?
		Rates of streamflow	Lacks specificity: Which streams? Is it total river flow? Total stream flow? Can you measure the contribution of total stream flow to river flow and how changes in freshwater volumes affect coastal lagoon salinities?

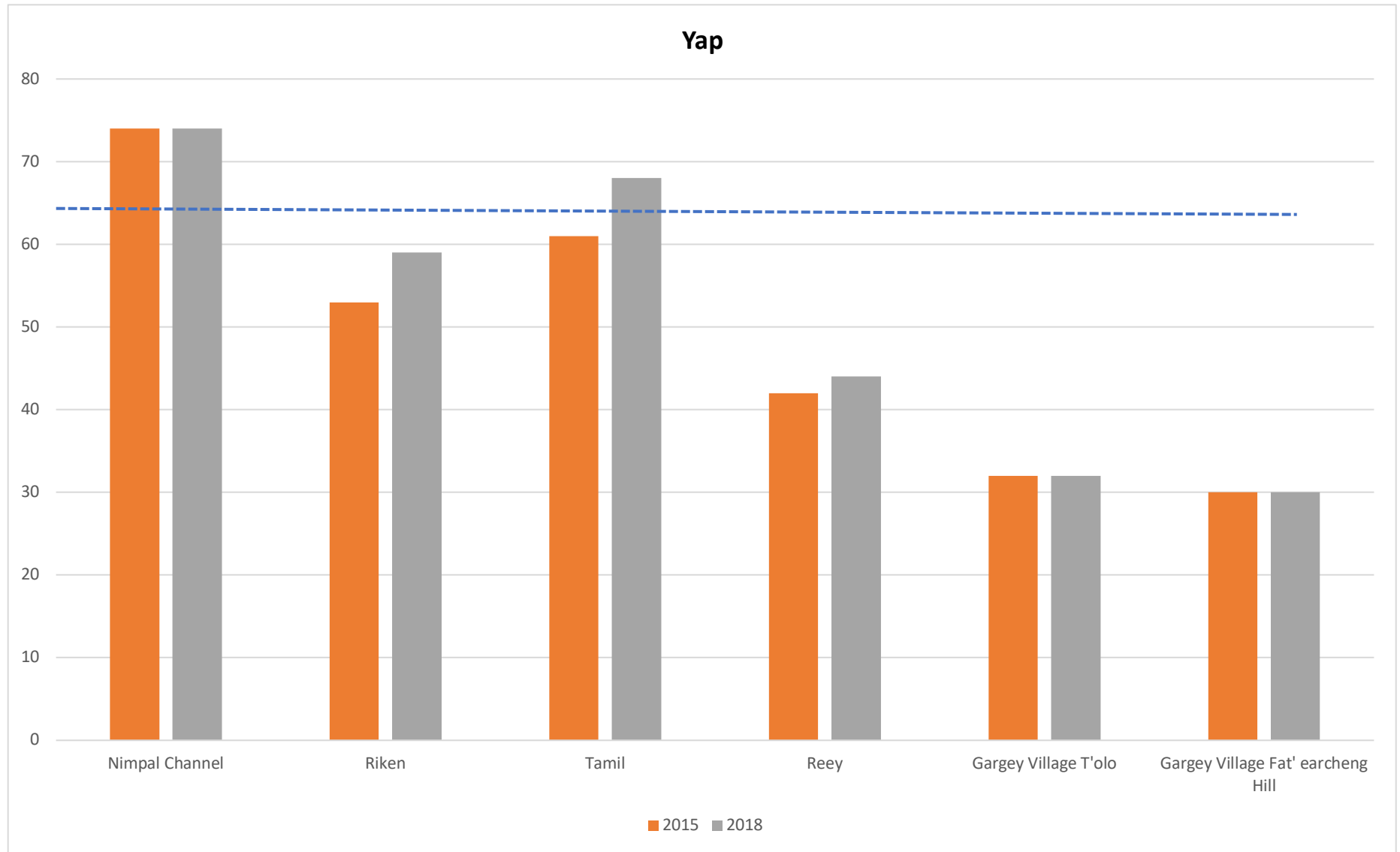
THEME	OBJECTIVES	Indicators	SMART-ness
		Availability medicinal plants	<u>Lacks specificity:</u> Which plants and where?
	Improve management effectiveness & enforcement of protected areas	Number of people cited	<u>Not an outcome:</u> this is an output;
		Number of trained enforcement officers	<u>Not an outcome:</u> this is an output; does not measure how that capacity is applied
		Number of management plans	<u>Not an outcome:</u> this is an output; does not measure effectiveness
		Number of new PAs	<u>Not an outcome:</u> this is an output; does not measure effectiveness
		Number of PA demarcation markers installed	<u>Not an outcome:</u> this is an output; does not measure effectiveness
		Number of signs installed	<u>Not an outcome:</u> this is an output; does not measure effectiveness
	Prevent introduction and improve management/control spread of invasive alien species (IAS)	Numbers of different invasive species in particular areas	<u>Not an outcome:</u> this is an output; does not measure effectiveness
		Number of confiscations and destructions at ports (air and sea) entry	<u>Lacks specificity:</u>
		Extent (ha) of areas where IAS eradicated	<u>Lacks specificity:</u> which areas?
	Minimise waste from piggeries entering water courses	Water Quality (focus on E-Coli)	<u>Lacks specificity:</u> which areas? Which part of the water column? River, brackish lagoons, backreef lagoons? Marine? <u>Not attributable:</u> How are measured changes linked specific interventions? There is so much fecal material going in the water.. <u>Not attributable::</u> changes cannot be linked any of the interventions
		Number of awareness activities (e.g. community meetings, radio announcements, press releases, etc.)	<u>Not an outcome:</u> this is an output; <u>Not attributable::</u> changes cannot be linked any of the interventions

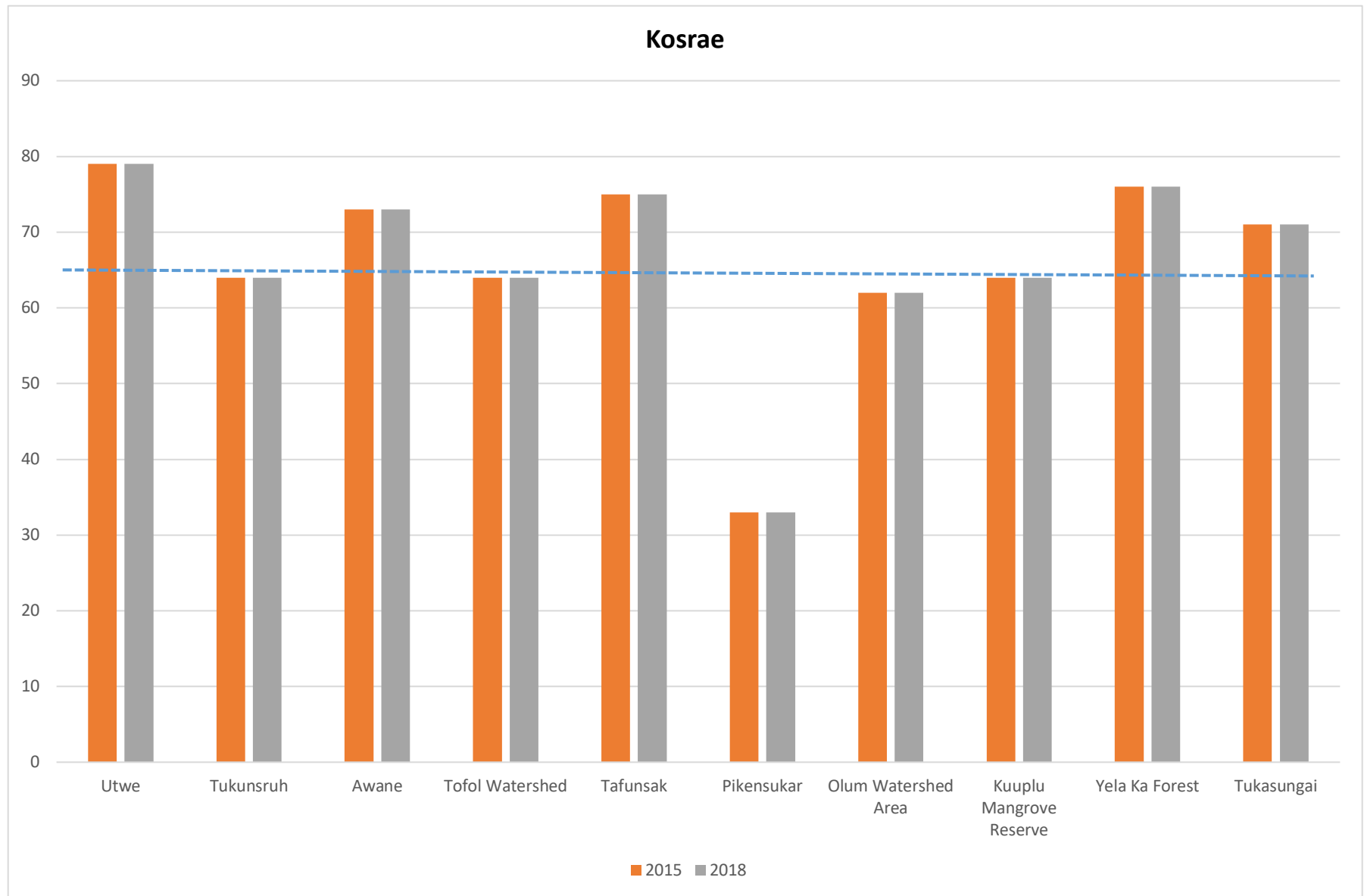
THEME	OBJECTIVES	Indicators	SMART-ness
Agriculture	<i>Forest clearance for farming is reduced</i>	Area of intact forest	<p><u>Not attributable</u>:: changes cannot be linked any of the interventions</p> <p><u>Lacks specificity</u>: which areas (near rivers)? Should it not read changes in area of intact forest in erosion-vulnerable areas?</p>
	<i>Inappropriate use of fertilisers and pesticides is reduced</i>	Level of residues in stream water	<p><u>Lacks specificity</u>: which areas? Which part of the water column? River, brackish lagoons, backreef lagoons? Marine?</p> <p><u>Not attributable</u>:: changes cannot be linked any of the interventions</p>
		Level of residues in stream water	<p><u>Lacks specificity</u>: which areas? Wouldn't sediments be a better place to look since they are the reservoirs of an area's pollution climate?</p>
		Number of trainings on appropriate use of chemicals	<p><u>Not an outcome</u>: this is an output; does not measure effectiveness</p>
		Number of banned chemicals in use	<p><u>Lacks specificity</u>: how do they affect downstream biota ?</p> <p><u>Not attributable</u>:: changes cannot be linked any of the interventions</p>

Annex 5a: Comparison of METT Scores 2015 vs. 2018









Annex 5b: Comparison of METT 2018 Scores, with *in situ* data for the 4 States

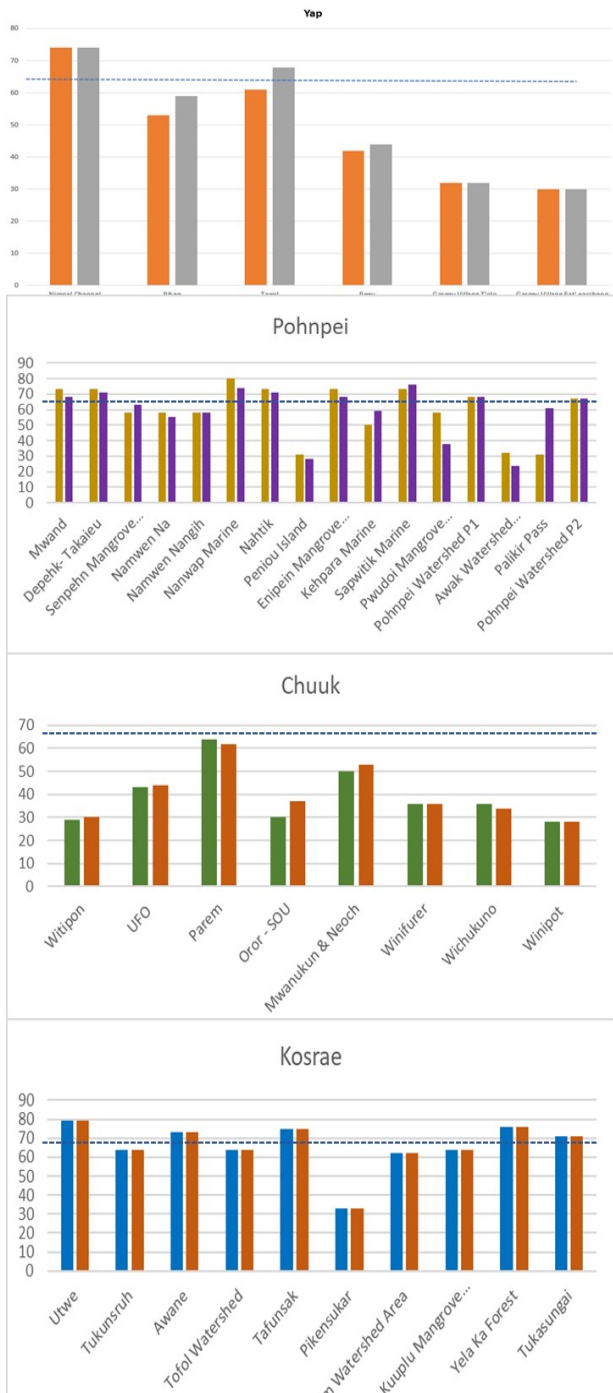


Figure 9: Comparison of 2018 METT Scores for MPAs in the 4 States (R2R 2019). Red dashed line represents the threshold cutoff, with effectively managed MPAs falling above the line.

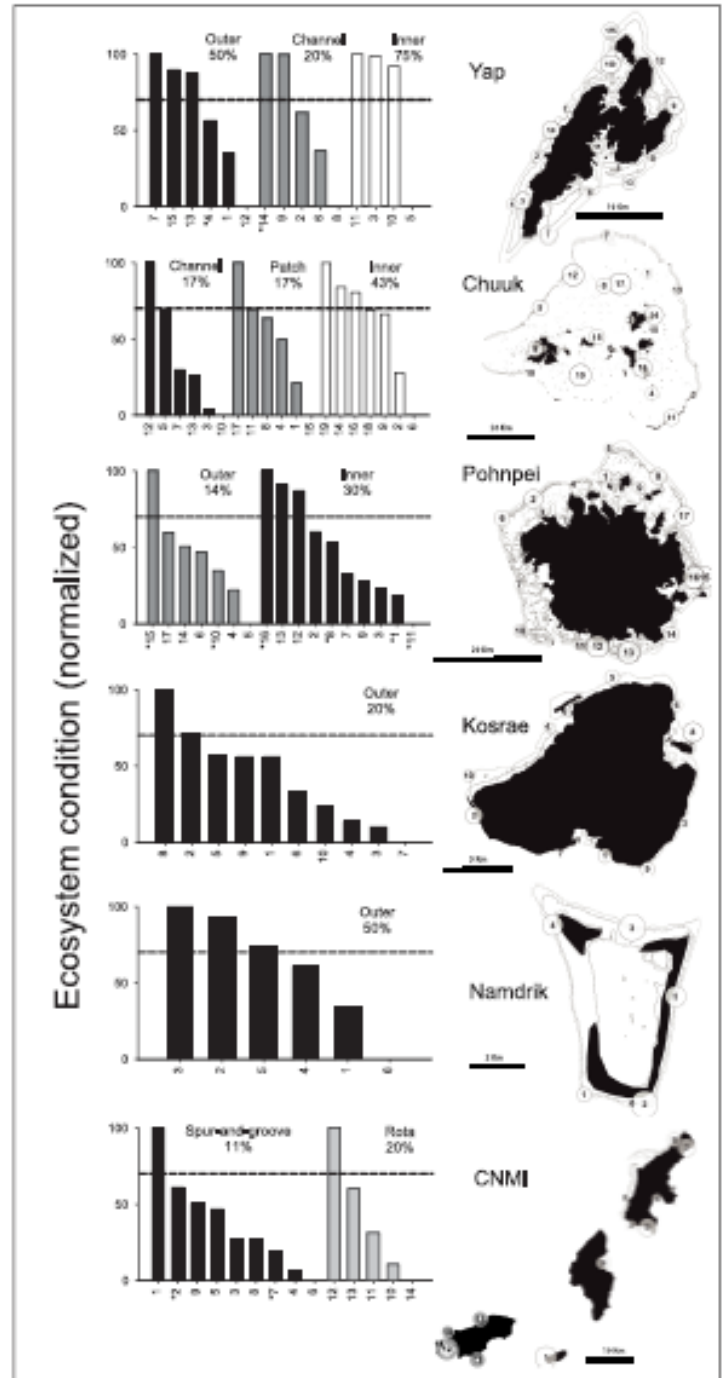


Figure 10: Comparison of Houk et al.'s (2015) Marine Ecosystem Condition Index for the 4 States. The dashed line represents the 75% cutoff value (healthy marine ecosystems indicated by histograms above the dashed line).

The figure on the left represent Houk *et al.*'s normalized ecosystem-condition scores across Micronesia where their monitoring sites were stratified by reef habitat, management, geography, and/or wave exposure, as appropriate (S1 Fig). The dashed lines depict the 'effective-conservation' threshold used to assess progress towards the Micronesia-Challenge conservation goals. Percentages indicate the proportion of sites currently above the threshold. Site-circle sizes on the maps adjacent to the bar graphs were scaled by their normalized ecosystem-condition scores. Marine protected areas are designated on the bar graphs with an asterisk (*).

Annex 6a: Recommended actions for the remaining R2R implementation period

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	WHEN TO START	WHO
Reduce activities and prioritize post-MTR Actions based on an Exit Strategy			
<u>Immediately</u> initiate discussions and a plan for action to scale back unachievable targets (e.g. # PAs), replicate good practices (e.g., PA boundaries, DLPs) and focus on activities that will verifiably contribute to action stipulated in the IEMP(s).	Action Plan for final and R2R Exit Strategy	August 2019	PIU, SC & TACs
<i>1.1 Focus only on funding applied and outcome-oriented quasi-experimental management interventions (e.g., MPAs, Catchments)</i>	<i># viable alternatives with baselines and R2R financial support</i>	TBD	
<i>1.2 Support to the upscaling of pilot projects to reduce pollution (e.g., pig wastes, erosion); this could include joining efforts with the Japanese (?) pig biogas project</i>	<i>% annual change in effluents (e.g., SMART indicators) entering rivers and streams</i>	September 2019	PIU, TACs, GEF-SGF
<i>1.3 Develop selection criteria (e.g., METT scores, do they have baselines, are they on track to be gazetted, ecological importance, etc.) to prioritize PAs to be supported and eliminate those of questionable effectiveness</i>	<i># PAs gazetted, with baselines and participatory M&E plans and local stakeholder support</i>	August 2019	PIU, TACs
<i>1.4 R2R must immediately begin to drive the PAN process rather than sitting back and waiting for things to happen. In addition to the METT scores, introduce SMART outcomes and establish baselines. The METTS were run by the coordinators... I feel I should of done a visit around and facilitated the process... That way it is as uniform as possible I guess... Good recommendation for me... but before the reef and fish monitoring starts, they need to have a long and hard look at Houk's work . I know he is mentoring them, but I think he should give a course for all of you about what his 2015 article is saying...its brilliant work.</i>	TBD	August 2019	PIU, TACs
<i>1.5 Scale back on activities that cannot produce measurable outcomes (e.g., Kudzu control that could be done in GEF 6) and reduce the number of Protected areas targeted in the ProDoc by following the analysis of the METT scores as a preliminary screening tool (Annex 4).</i>	TBD	TBD	PIU, TACs
<i>1.6 Develop an Exit Strategy, and revisit the targets and work plan in light recommendations arising from the MTR; reframing the project goals to that of sustainable development may be necessary</i>	TBD	TBD	PIU, TACs, SC, DECEM, Marine Resources
Narrow the Research-implementation Gap, update outcome indicators & METT			
<u>Prior to any new biological monitoring efforts</u> begin, ensure existing and future scientific data supported by R2R is made accessible to non-scientists (e.g., simple spotlight dashboards) to contribute toward increasing knowledge /learning networks that are available for stakeholders to reduce priority threats,	% of available data converted to user-friendly DSS indicators	TBD	PIU, SC & TACs

initiate a participatory M&E process involving stakeholders-beneficiaries in R2R target areas; eliminate indicators unable to inform decision- & policy making.

2.1 Further refine R2R to disaggregate environmental gradients (e.g., channels, land-watershed, areas of intense wave action, proximity to population centers) as non-biological measures of fishing pressure to help predict reduced fish sizes (see Houk et al. 2015)...Best correlations are predator biomass and fish-assemblage heterogeneity, benthic evenness, and the skewness and richness of coral assemblages provided the strongest independent contribution to the respective latent variables

2.2 Establish participatory processes to create social (governance, social cohesion, etc.) and environmental (herbivore size and diversity, coral condition, water quality and land-watershed degradation parameters) baselines; monitoring & evaluate changes. Also see [Houk et al. 2015](#).

2.3 Ensure that scientific and participatory-collected data and their corresponding indicators can be integrated into the State and National DSS platforms.

participatory monitoring activities with State-level beneficiaries

TBD

PIU, beneficiaries TACs,

new indicators for informing management and policy decisions in the DSS

TBD

PIU, beneficiaries, DECEN, Marine resources TACs,

Other issues:

TBD

PIU, beneficiaries, NGOs/Universities Marine resources TACs,

- Hire consultant to immediately analyze existing biological and social monitoring data and develop simple indicators (e.g. stop-light management) that resource users, decision- and policymakers can use to act on to reduce R2R threats
- Ground/ocean-truth METT scores with results from the real-time field monitoring carried out by the different NGOs...
- Digitize the information and prepare to integrate into the soon to be developed DSS;
- Diligently screen the biological indicators comprising emblematic species and ensure that they can be linked to ecosystem health in the specific area of the R2R continuum. Consider using simple fishery indicators on stages of maturity in the catches/markets (e.g., [Froese 2004](#)), and ensure that avian indicators are tied to terrestrial habitat change.
- eliminate indicators that cannot inform decision- and policy making
- use AM to capture lessons and good practices, linking results to the M&E/DSS platform.
- While the term Ecosystem Services is used in many R2R reports (e.g, SEA, IEMP), the triage assessment to improve the relevance of marine ecosystem services assessments [Pendleton et al. 2015](#)) could be valuable, should the remaining SEAS be re-consider (if UNDP and DEECEM agree to fund them ([Annex 6b](#))).
- Link lessons to a solid communication strategy and target school age children

Apply Theory of Change (ToC) to the ProDoc Logframe and the IEMP

Immediately develop a TOC for the ProDoc logframe & final IEMP submitted by the SEA consultant with a results chain built on SMART outcome indicators, robust assumptions and risk reducing mitigation measures to improve environmental, social & institutional sustainability.

Revised ProDoc Log Frame and IEMP action plan(s)

August 2019

PIU & SC, TACs

3.1 Hire an expert ToC facilitator to impart a 2-3-day training workshop focusing on the ProDoc+IEMP Log frames and adapt as required to need concerns in the MTE Report.

July 2019

PIU, SC and TACs

3.2 Develop an operational results chain with SMART outcome indicators, robust assumptions and measures for mitigation new risks to sustainability.

3.3 Revise Log Frame indicators, fine-tune the evaluators rapid ToC and adjust accordingly to streamline implementation during the remaining period and formulate relevant outcome indicators as required

3.4 Apply AM - It is not a crime to be wrong – we are all wrong one time or another. The important thing is to learn from the mistakes, not to reward failure and to cherish and build on success.

Revised Log Frames with ToC for the ProDoc and IEMP(s)

Operationalize IEMP(s) and DSS and build the capacity to sustain the an adaptive, learning approach

Immediately initiate discussions with UNDP, the State and National Governments, and develop an action plan and adequate budget for State-specific SEAs and the corresponding IEMPs will be completed. Examine the economic feasibility of hiring an ecological economist to value ecosystem services and economic cost to FSM losses comparing the moderate development vs. business as usual scenarios.

4.1 This would include:

- Subjecting the Final Pohnpei IEMP to a rigorous Theory of Change, which could be done in conjunction with the exercise for which the PIU has begun to prepare with an expert facilitator;
- This must link the IEMP to the M&E and DSS platform than operationalize them by creating an easy to use dashboard, for example, that can inform not only decision makers, but resources users, as well as inform the Communication strategy to raise awareness of what works and what does not;

Once this capacity is developed, the same process should be repeated for the remaining states, provided that the necessary funding is located.

4.2 Develop triple-bottom line (social, environmental and economic) baselines and legal status, using AM to capture lessons and good practices, linking results to the M&E/DSS platform.

4.3 Capture and integrate all ongoing State-level management intervention data into the DSS. Examples include activities supported by donors and NGOs in Kosrae (*Acanthaster* elimination, *Tridacna* mariculture and seeding on reefs), Pohnpei (piggery biogas project eliminating effluents, sea cucumber, etc.)

4.4 Acquire watershed maps, Satellite images for marine areas and solicit the side scan sonar mpas avaiabe form Manta Divers, who have agreed to provide them to the rproject: apply and georeferenced the maps in the IEMP

Other possible actions to consider:

- Build on scoping exercises for the remaining States and integrate SEA results into IEMPs for all States, develop more robust assumptions and SMART outcome indicators.

IEMPs linked to M&E and DSS platforms to measure their effectiveness

Start September 2019
End March 2020

PIU, UNDP, DECEM, Marine Resources

December 2019

of new parameters integrated into the DSS

February 2019

PIU, TACs and NGOs

High Island watershed maps

Dec. 2019

PIU, TACs, NGOs

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •It is possible that these gaps could be significantly narrowed by working out the theory of change (ToC) for Pohnpei's IEMP (and subsequent IEMPs), as this could lay the foundation for a Results-based approach. •Run a theory of change on the SEA recommendations and use it as a basis to guide the IEMPs, develop robust assumptions and risks to sustainability, with corresponding mitigation measures and apply an adaptive approach that promotes learning and adjustments throughout the implementation process, The M&E platform is an ideal tool that can contribute to measuring outcomes and capturing lessons and good practices systematically. •Foundation of the Decision-support system must be built by the SEA and used to measure Pressures and Response Effectiveness (immediate, intermediate and long-term outcomes). •Develop SMART outcome indicators along a causative results chain toward impacts for all IEMPs •Integrate SLM and BD into the State IEMPS •Develop more robust targets and indicators for achieving and measuring the moderate development scenario, and mainstream into the DSS •Link good practices and lessons to the Communication Strategy •Examine budget and assess need to hire ecological economist to value ecosystem services and calculate economic losses from not following the IEMP. 	TBD		
Re-assess financial costs and seek sources to fund the remaining SEAs-IEMPS			
By September 2019, report on the economic feasibility and potential funding sources to conduct SEAs and IEMPs, as well as the M&E and DSS platforms in all States.	# SEAs-IEMPs with DSS and M&E platforms	October 2019	PIU, SC, DECEM, Marine Resources
Strengthen Collaborative Management & Enforcement using a modular approach			
<u>Immediately</u> strengthen collaborative enforcement capabilities coastal-marine PAs by initiating <i>participatory outcome monitoring</i> and adaptive co-management through applied, in situ training and providing basic equipment to support comanagers.	# PAs fully equipped with capacity to do in situ enforcement	February 2020	PIU, SC & TACs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist beneficiary communities to develop strategic enforcement plans; • Translate existing management plans into local languages 	# PAs with enforcement plans in local language	February 2020	PIU, TACs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve enforcement through the regular provision of fuel to CCOs and develop plan for communities to take over costs • NEEDS INCLUDE: Infrared binoculars, cameras to document violators; Diver Alert Safety kits and DAN insurance, Oxygen kits, fins for strong currents – these are jsutn the absics 	# PAs supported with fuel subsidies and action plan to recover costs in the near future	February 2020	PIU, TACs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support to pertinent management/enforcement equipment (demarcation with physical boundaries, guard houses, cameras, etc.); 	# PAs equipped with equipment	October 2019	PIU, TACs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund at least one, low-cost radar system (e.g. https://protectedseas.net/marine-monitor-m2/ to detect poachers (Cost is c. \$12k) and conduct training 	# PAs equipped with equipment	February 2020	PIU, TACs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct courses led by environmental and prosecution lawyers to train local comanagers/enforcers on the legal requirements for formally presenting evidence of legal violations to court cases 	# PA comanager trained and operational	TBD	

Strengthen R2R Coordination & Communication

Immediately take actions to improve intra- and extra-institutional (UNDP) coordination by holding trimonthly PIU-TAC meetings to review advances toward revised targets and good practices to be institutionalized, hiring a technical liaison to support PIU in each State and bi-monthly PIU-UNDP Skype to discuss action on bottlenecks for R2R-FSM in meeting targets.

- *Project coordinator must conduct regular (every 3 months) briefings and engage in persuasive activities, such as finalizing important activities mentioned above, including the economic and social valuation in and around the pilot demonstration projects .*
- *Hire a technical liaison in each State, meeting on a trimonthly basis to review advances, lessons and specific actions to adapt to those lessons, as well as coordinate the development of the M&E platform and the DSS tool.*

Reporting in AQRs

July 2019

PIU, SC, TACs & UNDP

TBD

PIU, TACs

Support, replicate/upscale quasi-experimental Management interventions

Within 3 months, shift capacity development and theoretical discussions to action-oriented efforts promoting well-designed experimental, outcome-oriented management interventions to reduce priority threats to R2R ecosystems (overfishing, deforestation, pollution). difficult decision taken Build capacities to measure the degree to which outcomes are attributable to interventions and apply to M&E and DSS platforms (Recommendations #3 &4). While the MTR does not envision that R2R must duplicate private, or donor-funded investments, the project should consolidate and scale up/replicate what it has accomplished, as well as what NGOs and private investors have achieved in terms of good practices (e.g., mariculture activities in Kosrae, Pohnpei and Yap) and the excellent work that Rhodes has produced and examples for promoting sustainably caught fish markets. All of these management tools should become part of a R2R toolbox that can be tested in other areas of FSM and in other Pacific island nations. A focus should be on raising awareness about demonstrated good practice alternatives, exploring their feasibility as management interventions in the Municipal IEMPs and monitoring outcomes that can be attributed to the interventions are considered to be a wise investment with relatively low costs and high returns on building social capital

- *Create incentives or restrictions to eliminate or reduce the use of nighttime spearfishing by supporting the upscaling of ongoing social and economic and pilot incentives (Tridacna, rabbitfish, sea cucumber aquaculture), and promote sustainable resource harvests (sustainable fish markets)*
- *the composting process can be greatly improved by introducing earthworm culture for more complete breakdown and a wide range of other benefits. Should explore*

Alternative income generating activities supported by R2R October 2019

PIU, SC & TACs

TBD

TBD

PIU, TACs, GEF-SGF

integrating the biogas model developed by the Japanese to drive even more acceptance of circular pig economy.

- *8.3 Promote cash crops and link to value-added markets that are equal in value to Sakau, which are less environmentally destructive (e.g. pepper) and promote a tax and heavy fines on unsustainable Sakau production*

8.4 Support market-oriented solutions to overfishing, as recommended in the work of Rhodes et al. that can bridge into GEF 7.

Consider engaging a Technical Mentor for the remaining R2R implementation period

Immediately discuss the feasibility of hiring a part-time CTA assist the PIU and TACs implement the actions recommended herein, and any new initiatives that are considered to be feasible.

Conference calls with RTA and UNDP; AQRs

July 2019

GEF-RTA, PIU, SC

Improve Communication between FSM and UNDP

Take immediate action to improve communication between PIU and UNDP and improve the flow of financial disbursements in a timelier manner to reduce delays in R2R implementation.

AQR

July 2019

PIU, DoF and UNDP

10.1 Hold at least one monthly teleconference with PIU

AQRs

TBD

10.2 Act to address the cause of slow disbursement rates

10.3 Rely on technical experts and do not be afraid of making mistakes as long as they are learned from and corrected using AM.

10.4 Ensure that all future GEF project Inception Phases are accompanied by a ToC facilitator to review the ProDoc's Logframe rigorously with stakeholders and orient it to meet the needs of an operational DSS

Improve Disbursement efficiency between DoF, SGF and all R2R activities

By September 2019, develop a plan of action with DoF to address the slow disbursement process. This should also apply to improving the efficiency of the GEF Small Grants Fund (SGF) and harmonize them with Recommendation #1 to support experimental management interventions in priority areas to expedite approval and disbursement rates.

Action Plan for addressing the bottlenecks and Changes in disbursement rates

TBD

PIU, SC, DoF, SGF

11.1 Examine the feasibility of decentralized financial management to catalyze more timely disbursements and more efficient financial management

11.2 Examine root causes of the delays and address them with measurable actions

11.3 Small Grants Fund projects must be harmonized with recommendation #1 to support experimental management intervention in priority areas and disbursements should be much timelier

Consider a 12-18 month no-cost extension with a clear exit strategy & safeguards assessment

The MTE recommends a 12-18 month, no-cost extension to help the stakeholders incorporate the recommendations presented herein. There is

NA

TBD

FSM, SC, GEF-RTA and UNDP

no way the project can meet its objective and outcomes for reasons explained herein, without and extension

Consider including a ToC at Inception and environmental-social safeguards monitoring

<p>Future GEF projects should ensure that an experienced Theory of Change/ Results-based facilitator is present during inception workshops to scrutinize and realign ProDoc Logframes, as required. A framework for monitoring GEF’s environmental and social safeguards must also be included.</p>	<p>SC meetings and Inception Outcomes</p>	<p>TBD</p>	<p>UNDP-GEF, FSM GEF Focal Points</p>
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Annex 6b: Principal risks and possible mitigation measures

ISSUE	RISK	COMMENT	MEASURE
<p>Operational: Unless IEMPs are developed¹ for each State, the project will not meet the Outcome 1 nor Output 1.1, and R2R will fall short of its objective, which clearly stipulates 4 High Islands.</p>	High	<p>R2R completed the scoping exercises for each State, and this is an important step, albeit a very preliminary one, in the lengthy process of developing the backbone of Outcome 1. However, cost over-runs on the SEA consultancy led UNDP and the FSM government (in November 2018) to reduce the scope of the SEA and IEMP outputs stipulated in Output 1.1, and focus on creating a model for Pohnpei State that could possibly be replicated¹⁰⁶. However, the risk that the Pohnpei IEMP is not sufficiently adaptable to the social-political context of the other states is Medium. Without the 4 State-focused IEMPs, the project will not meet the ProDoc's targets, what has been agreed to by the signatories. However, of equal, if not greater importance is that the States have invested time and great effort in following the SEA process and frustration with the decision of not including their states was unanimous in all interview with State representatives to the Project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Option A: Reallocate funds from other non-essential activities; the IEMP should not be cost-intensive because the SEAs can be streamlined and a consultant can develop IEMPs with the Task Force, as long as an applied approach to capacity building for ToC, SMART indicators, RBM and is taken. - Option B: DECEM should work to secure non-essential State and National funds to follow the steps in Option A. - Option C: Add an addendum to the contract saying the work cannot be completed for the specified reasons - The Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM) framework MUST be approved and implemented¹⁰⁷.
<p>Operational: The Final IEMP Pohnpei State is less than operational and the evidence indicates that the capacity of the Task Force and the stakeholders responsible for implementing the effectiveness of the IEMP for the moderate development scenario is such that they are</p>		<p>IEMPs are the foundation of the ecosystem-based framework and R2R into a set of tangible tools recommendations and guidelines that can be used to inform land-use planning and decision making in a way that promotes environmental sustainability. R2R completed the scoping exercises for each State, and this is an important step, albeit a very preliminary one, in the lengthy process of developing the backbone of Outcome 1 – the Integrated Land Management Plan (ILMP). The Final IEMP for Pohnpei State (Final Report 2019) requires 1 requires more</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apply a Theories of Change analysis to the entire approach, develop robust and testable assumptions and risks, SMART outcome indicators. - Revisit and strengthen the proposed interventions presented in the SEA, and ensuring that they are inked /attributed to management /policy interventions

¹⁰⁶ Aims to apply a systematic spatial biodiversity planning approach to conducting SEAs for all the High Islands with the purpose to integrate all spatial environmental, biodiversity, climate change and social-economic information in an explicit and transparent manner with the purpose of developing land-use planning maps and guidelines that balance biodiversity conservation, natural resource management and social development goals.

¹⁰⁷ there is a need to validate information from the project document, specifically, that referring to a formal endorsement of an INRM framework that has been formally adopted by stakeholders.

highly unlikely to apply a results-based and adaptive management approach to implement, monitor intervention effectiveness and take the necessary adaptive measures.		work that includes. The proposed interventions presented in the SEA to are ‘soft’ measures and do not convince that they will drive the necessary responses to confront the pressures that currently threaten the Moderate Further, this weakness impedes mainstreaming SLM/BD conservation into landscape-level development and mitigate additional threats from competing sectoral priorities.	- This requires an experienced consultant who has experience with the above tools and with developing IEMPs.
<u>Operational:</u> The monitoring approach in the IEMP is not operational	High	The SEA did not take an iterative, results-chain approach that culminates with a DSS that is capable of measuring the effectiveness – the entire process lacks a monitoring and evaluation platform capable of measuring the effectiveness of the SEA’s recommended policy and mitigation measures, as well as integrating other pertinent data from real-time monitoring of outcomes in the field (to compliment the METT). The data are in hard copy format and cannot contribute to decision or policymaking. The foundation of an integrated and outcome-oriented (focusing on triple bottom-line development impacts) is a Theory of Change, which is not included in the SEA approach feeding into the IEMP for Pohnpei. Without a DSS to measure effectiveness of IEMPs and drive a systematic adaptive management approach for the moderate development scenario, the project will not achieve Outcome 1, and Indicator 2.2. DSS is the key to operationalizing the ecosystem-based and adaptive management framework into a set of tangible tools recommendations and guidelines that can be used to inform land-use planning and decision making in a way that promotes environmental sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Previous mitigation measure (above is the foundation) - Develop a geospatial, but user-friendly DSS linked to a GIS platform (e.g., ArcGIS Web, ESRI, etc.) not only capable of storing and showing valuable information/data on maps, but also to show hotspots requiring intervention and with the capability to measure management effectiveness. A good example to consult is from another GEF project using a Ridge2Shelf Edge approach in Cabo Verde.
<u>Operational:</u> Without a coherent logframe, robust assumptions and SMART outcome indicators, there is a risk that the project will not meet its objective. The situation at midterm is that it	High	Log Frame indicators are not SMART, most are outputs, while the relevance of the scarce outcome indicators are inadequate for measuring management and policy outcomes and a less-than coherent Log Frame is certainly not the most direct route for achieving the overall objective; There are disproportionately few SMART outcome indicators (most are output indicators), which are of	- Adjust the original logframe after applying a ToC analysis (see Recommendation in the full MTR report)

<p>is difficult for the PIU and stakeholders to focus their work on priorities and this not only affects R2R’s efficiency, but is a risk to the overall sustainability.</p>		<p>limited value for decision- and policy-making and incongruencies exist among the different SEA indicators, which are not SMART. Further, the absence of a theory of change (ToC) and causative chain of results leading to the desired development impacts presents formidable changes for promoting an adaptive approach for implementing the recommended mitigation measures and evaluating their effectiveness for the recommended ‘<i>moderate development scenario</i>’ recommended by the SEA.</p>	
<p><u>Operational</u>: Communication mechanisms are weak and painfully slow disbursement rates are acting as disincentives to many stakeholders and reducing their interest in participating in the project. Unless addressed immediately, weak coordination between PIU and SC, and the States will continue to reduce efficiency and effectiveness of activities in the High Islands</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Although the level energy invested in the work at hand and the commitment by the R2R coordinator and the technical advisor are impressive, they face many challenges. Communication is weak at all levels, as is disbursement of funds that are needed for ensuring timely delivery of outputs. This is at all levels – UNDP, National Government, State level). This is viewed by many as a disincentive that diminishes their interest in continuing work with R2R¹⁰⁸.</p>	<p>see Recommendation in the full MTR report</p>
<p><u>Environmental</u>: The strong focus on capacity building and policy-legal framework development without applying them to support and disseminate good practices from ongoing experimental</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>At mid-term, the project has produced few management interventions for address the issues identified in the ProDoc and by the SEA, instead of has primarily focused on capacity development and theoretical discussions The pilot demonstrations, lessons arising from the projects must be viewed as important inputs to national land use planning, and lessons arising from these demonstrations can provide</p>	<p>see Recommendation in the full MTR report</p>

¹⁰⁸ Many contractors are now refusing to work with the R2R project due to l

engthy delays in paying purchase orders.

<p>management interventions (mariculture, sustainable fish market) raises a risk that the former actions will not be sustained, and environmental degradation and biodiversity loss are likely to continue.</p>		<p>inputs into this process. The present DLP approach will have a minimal impact on reducing nutrients and fecal coliforms that are a serious problem in every State's watersheds. Further, they are not being snapped up by interested parties, likely because they are expensive, and they do not add the kind of value that beneficiaries are looking for. Similarly, the measures to reduce deforestation from agricultural and Sakau plantations are minimal compared to the problem facing the States, particularly Pohnpei. As such, these interventions are considered to be small bandages on a deep and massive problem that requires triage</p>	
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Annex 7: Evaluation Questions, Judgements and their sources.

The following matrix summarizes much of the triangulated evidence. However, there is considerable information from taped interviews (all interviews and meetings were recorded with permission of the participants/interviewees). Although the information was partially transcribed, it is still considered in raw format. However, if requested, these data can be made available should further support be required. Note that unless otherwise indicated, the names of the interviewees are confidential, something that was explained prior to each interview.

1. Project Relevance and Design

EQ 1A: To what extent has R2R's design responded to national and global strategies for protecting biodiversity, reducing land degradation and balancing conflicting water usage, while fostering country ownership? (RELEVANCE)	
JC-1.1	The Project meets the objectives the GEF strategies to two or more GEF Strategies and pertinent outputs
I-1.1	Actions stipulated in the Prodoc/Inception Phase are oriented toward meeting GEF two or more GEF Strategies and their anticipated outputs
Judgment Ia.1	The project provides an important contribution to Land-Sea Biodiversity management for ongoing and new projects in SIDS and coastal nations, as well as for GEF's R2R initiatives in the Pacific.
<i>Comments</i>	<p>Component 1 is aligned to the Land Degradation (Desertification and Deforestation) Strategy – LD Objective 3: <i>“Reduce Pressures on Natural Resources from Competing Land Uses in the wider Landscape”</i> – through capacity development to improve decision-making in management of production landscapes to ensure maintenance of ecosystem services important for the global environment and for people’s livelihoods, and avoiding deforestation and forest degradation. Component 2 addresses the GEF’s Biodiversity Focal Area Objective 1 <i>“Improve sustainability of PA Systems”</i> and Outcome 1.1: <i>“Improved management effectiveness of (existing and) new protected areas”</i>. The project will also directly contribute to IW Focal Area’s Objective 1: <i>“Catalyze multi-state cooperation to balance conflicting water users in trans-boundary surface and groundwater basins while considering climate variability and change”</i> under Output 1.3 <i>“Innovative solutions implemented for reduced pollution, improved water use efficiency, sustainable fisheries with right-based management, IWRM, water supply protection in SIDS, and aquifer and catchment protection”</i> through the project’s activities under Component 2 on pollution reduction in the streams of selected sites.</p> <p>The Government of the Federated States of Micronesia has requested UNDP assistance in designing and implementing this project, due to UNDP’s track record in Asia and the Pacific. UNDP has an established national representation in the FSM UN Joint Presence Office, Kolonia, Pohnpei with well-developed working relationships with the key stakeholders. It counts on a country development manager exclusively dedicated to FSM’s affairs. This officer is supported by other program, operations and Senior Management staff at UNDP Fiji Multi-country Coordinating Office’s. Moreover, the project will benefit from the presence of a UNDP/GEF Regional Technical Advisor dedicated to Biodiversity in the Regional Service Centre. UNDP also has extensive experience in integrated policy development, human resources development, institutional strengthening, and non-governmental and community participation. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the Pacific Region for the period 2013 – 2017 has identified, under Focus Area 1: <i>“Environmental Management, Climate Change and Disaster Risk management”</i> as a priority. Under Outcome 1.1, the Framework identifies <i>“By 2017, the most vulnerable communities across are more resilient with focus on communities, through integrated implementation of sustainable environmental management, climate change adaptation/mitigation, and disaster risk management. Improved resilience of PICTs, with particular focus on communities, through integrated implementation of sustainable environmental management, climate change adaptation/mitigation, and disaster risk management”</i>. This project is aligned with this priority of the Framework, which is also applicable to the FSM.</p> <p>Despite a growing body of literature on integrated land–sea management (ILSM), very little critical assessment has been conducted in order to evaluate ILSM in practice on island systems (). As a consequence, the GEF-funded R2R</p>

	project is a pioneering effort that has the potential to fill some ILSM knowledge gaps and learn from the process. However, as with testing any innovative tool, mistakes are inevitable and the systematic application of adaptive management (AM) is crucial for systematically capturing lessons, capturing good practices and discarding less than successful management tools, as well as formal and informal institutional arrangements.
Sources	ProDoc; Interviews; GEF 6 documentation; Jupiter et. al. 2018
JC-1a.2	The Project supports FSM Policies, Plans and Strategies
I-1.2	The project directly supports FSM's PPS related to biodiversity protection, integrated land management and protecting watersheds and groundwater
Judgment 1.a2	R2R is in line with and supports 5 of FSM's PPS
Comments	<p>R2R is <i>highly relevant</i> to numerous national plans and policies. For example, it is fully aligned with FSM's Strategic Development Plan, specifically to "protect, conserve, and sustainably manage a full and functional representation of marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems". Other strategies that could benefit from R2R: (1) A Blueprint for Conserving the Biodiversity of the FSM, specifically the identification of areas of biological significance; (2) The NBSAP, specifically the following Strategic Themes: i) Ecosystem Management¹⁰⁹; ii) Species Management¹¹⁰; iii) Agrobiodiversity¹¹¹; iv) Human Resources and Institutional Development Strategy Goal¹¹²; v) Resource Owners¹¹³; v) Mainstreaming Biodiversity¹¹⁴. R2R also supports the Micronesia Challenge project efforts to create a regional Protected Area Network (PAN), and this support is especially pertinent because the existing PAN is not effectively conserving biodiversity patterns and ecological processes, nor are States doing enough to ensure their ecological sustainability, while at the State level, R2R supports the strengthening of existing PAs and the creation of new ones. It also supports PA management and planning, awareness raising about the PAs and legislation, translating management plans into the local language (e.g., Dnei), community governance and demarcation of boundaries for PAs and watersheds.</p> <p>The project aims to support FSM to achieve the following Aichi Targets: i) By 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced; ii) By 2020 all fish and invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants are managed and harvested sustainably, legally and applying the ecosystem based approaches, so that overfishing is avoided, recovery plans and measures are in place for all depleted species, fisheries have no significant adverse impacts on threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems and the impacts of fisheries on stocks, species and ecosystems are within safe ecological limits; iii) By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes; iv) By 2020 the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly those in decline, has been improved and sustained. The project also advances the strategic goals of the UNCCD 10-year strategic plan namely: 1) To improve the living conditions of affected populations; 2) To improve the condition of affected ecosystems; 3) To generate global benefits through effective implementation of the UNCCD. It</p>

¹⁰⁹ Strategic Goal: a full representation of FSM's marine, freshwater, and terrestrial ecosystems are protected, conserved, and sustainably managed, including selected areas designated for total protection

¹¹⁰ Strategy Goal: FSM's native, endemic, threatened, and traditionally important species are protected and used sustainably for the benefit of future generations of the people of the FSM and the global community.

¹¹¹ Strategic Goal: The conservation and sustainable use of Agrobiodiversity contributes to the nation's development and the future food security of the FSM

¹¹² All citizens, residents, and institutions of the nation are aware of the importance of biodiversity and have the technical knowledge, skills, and capability to conserve. all biodiversity within the nation

¹¹³ Strategy Goal: traditional resource owners and communities are fully involved in the protection, conservation, preservation, and sustainable use of the nation's biodiversity.

¹¹⁴ Strategy Goal: All economic and social activities of the FSM take full account of impacts on and fully consider sustainability of biodiversity

	addresses the following operational objectives of the UNGCD Strategic Plan: 1) Advocacy; 2) Science, technology and knowledge; 3) Capacity-building; and 4) Financing and technology transfer.
Sources	ProDoc; Interviews; FSM Policies, Strategies & Plans, GEF documentation, CBD; Aichi Strategy
JC-1a.3	The project took into consideration the political, institutional and capacity realities of FSM in the Project design, as well as its implementation.
Judgment 1a.3	The project formulation was overambitious and while some good capacities for EM were developed, the broader results-based and adaptive approach is lacking at mid term
Comments	<p>Although R2R project has contributed to build stakeholder capacities on many fronts, there are at least three key issues require attention, including: i) strengthening government capacities institutional capacities to mainstream long-term environmental-economic and climate change considerations and good practices from the project; ii) improving the capacities of central and state financial management efficiency, and catalyzing disbursements so that the project can deliver its final activities in a timely manner; and iii) building capacity to close the scientific research data/implementation gap for analyzing data and transforming them into policy and management decision-friendly evidence that is accessible on the Decision Support Platform and closing the existing <i>knowing-doing</i> gap.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See Comments in JC 1.6 - Monitoring is mainly biological baselines are weak or not accessible and there is no adaptation of the scientific data to something a decision maker can understand or a stakeholder can used to track implementation effectiveness
Sources	ProDoc, SEA-IEMP Draft Report (July 2019); Interviews; Vogel 2012; Davies 2018PIR 2017, 2018, SC minutes
JC-1a.4	There are logical linkages between the expected results and the project design in terms of the selection of beneficiaries and partners, implementation mechanisms, budgets, use of resources and scope.
I-1.5	The linkages between 4 or more levels of results are closely linked with the Project design
Judgment 1a.5	The logframe in the prodoc does not follow a logical path and part of this is due to the absence of SMART outcomes
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - THE Rapid TOC done by the MTR helps better understand this; has been discussed with team (SC and PIU) and they say it makes complete sense and they see where many of their implementation problems come from - ITs like we are spinning our wheels and not getting anywhere with these PRODoc outcomes...and then we can't tell they're going to measure changes in the environment because we don't have baselines - The absence of counterfactuals is another problem for measuring attribution
Judgment 1a.6	Only two of the 18 Indicators in the PRODoc are SMART outcomes
Comments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Few indicators measure SMART outcomes 2. What I'm getting from your recommendation for the indicator that measures abundance of our targeted fish species is that we should be focusing more on alternatives to reduce fishing pressures? For example like our FAD deployment activities in Yap to help reduce fishing pressures on the reef? <p>This is very interesting. I have no comment. This is very clear and I think it's great that you have expanded on your points by supporting it with studies from scientists such as Kevin and Pete. I think it's particularly interesting on the point that you raised with effective MPAs being tied to communities that are united. I truly believe this is true and good examples are the communities of Tamil and Nimpal in Yap. And you see from the graphs that they are the only community MPAs in Yap that are above the threshold for effective management.</p>
Sources	ProDoc, IEMP Final Report (July 2019); Interviews; 2018PIR 2017, 2018, SC minutes
JC-1a.7	Key stakeholders were taken into consideration for the design of the project and implementation approach in a way that was in-line with national realities and capacities.
Judgment 1a.8	Although the Inception Phase offered the opportunity to adjust the design and apply a ToC to the original ProDoc design, no significant changes were adopted and the ProDoc was likely taken at its face value, because few of the participants understood ToC or the use of SMART indicators.
Comments	-the Fiji MGD and RTA attended the inception workshop, along with an inception phase consultant recruited to guide the PIU through inception. The inception report shows that the results framework and indicators were reviewed as

<p><i>part of the inception workshop (and prior discussions). Please revise to be more objective and based on evidence. (COMMENT made to the DRAFT MTR).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One of the Audit Tracking (July) questions was: <i>How was MTR able to conclude this based on evidence? The design could have also been related to UNDP and/or GEF clearances or decisions to keep the design a certain way that were not related to 'lack of understanding' on RBM. The MTR can assume this is what it was but cannot conclude that there was weak understanding. Were there challenges with the PPG phase? Was there a complete team in place including required specialists? Were required stakeholders consulted?</i> <p>1) Eight participants (PIU, 3 Stat TAGs, and SC) answered a question about their understanding of the content of the workshop. All reflected their frustration in different ways about the Inception Workshop (IW) coincided that they did not have enough knowledge to critically comment on the approach or the log frame</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>when we did the inception workshop, we really did not understand what a results-based approach or SMART indicators were, much less a theory of change... So we were not prepared to do much more than just accept that what was being told to us was the only way forward. We did not dwell on this until later on into implementation when we realized how hard it was to achieve them. that's when we started to question the direction we were headed and the confusing indicators.</i> - <i>When the concept paper was presented it became more and more clear that the basic assumptions did not hold and that the ProDoc's log frame simply did not take the social and political differences of the different states. Then there was no way for us to adjust because it simply takes too long. I have used adaptive management before and cannot understand why it is so difficult for the Project to try using an experimental approach. I am a scientist and I understand it, but maybe it wasn't clear to others. But the PIU technical coordinator understands it, but she seems to have faced resistance. The IW should not have been at the national level.</i> - <i>Now we have realised that we allowed a project that was overambitious and which we don't feel we have control of now... we are doing things that we don't have time to, always playing catch-up to dang things that were developed and laid out by people before us who are no longer around. There's a lot of frustration and that is why we look for guidance from the MTR.</i> - <i>More than 25 people were asked if they knew about ToC and results-based management and only one did; fewer than 5 people of those understood a SMART outcome</i> - <i>We want, as much as possible, to make this right to avoid having repeating the same mistake. We are very keen on following through with the recommendations of the MTR which includes running a theory of change on the logframe. <u>Such expertise does not exist within the team</u>, but we really need someone who specializes in this area to facilitate the process with us so that we are able to revise the logframe to better achieve the project</i> - <i>Yes... everything is scary about this project</i> - <i>There was no understanding about how the different activities led to outputs that were in the project's control, and those outputs led to outcomes that were not in the project's control... The ProDoc's weak assumptions and risks were not addressed and it seems like the ProDoc was swallowed as it was formulated, with little questioning by participants – But how can you all question it if you dont have the knowledge to do so?..</i> <p>2)Some indicators are still not clear and despite request for clarification, one still remains unclear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The PIU has asked the UNDP and the UNDP-GEF RTA to clarify <u>Indicator #4</u> (% of FSM's population that benefit from sustainable management of fishery resources), given that the metric is confusing and we we've had challenges identifying the appropriate activities to help us establish our baseline data as well as build on to it.</i> - <i>In our discussion with Lisa, i raised that we have not done anything on this particular indicator because it's confusing and we we've had challenges identifying the appropriate activities to help us establish our baseline data as well as build on to it. Vanessa can correct me on this, because i know i did say we are confused with this indicator (July 2019).</i> - <i>Once you have a good TOC, you can have SMART objectives and indicators to go along with it. Maybe I am the only one in the entire project right now that is familiar with it and who has used it and have used it in project adaptation and management? I am not saying I am an expert but when I say YES, I know what you are talking about it...</i> <p>3) The consensus from interviews with the PIU, SC and TACS is that there remains considerable room for UNDP to improve its support to the project</p>
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	<p>- <i>The IW was blasted through in 2 days and the stuff was so new that we didn't have much time to think. we were all excited but, in the end, we really did not fully understand where the project was going nor how we would get there.</i></p> <p>- <i>We're very disappointed with UNDP's support. .we know they're overworked and now they want to take on new countries? SAMOA has 4 and they're constituents are very happy</i></p> <p>- <i>UNDP comes, stays in Pohnpei and doesn't get out to the other states...its like they are just checking off a box that they visited us... and then come the long delays between our questions and their answers</i></p> <p>- <i>we agreed to do this project but felt hat when we come up with solid proposals to deal with ways to move forward in our State, we get rejected by people how have no real technical knowledge that they can use to back up their decisions</i></p> <p>3) Based on interviews and the less than operational IEMP, stakeholders do not have the capacity to take the SEA and IEMP forward at midterm (and this is further confirmed in interviews in early July 2019):</p> <p>- <i>I think your question relating to the SEA is best to be answered by X since X's the one working closely with our stakeholders as well as Barry. Understanding how the process has been going for the last year with the SEA team leading the work, i doubt the taskforce is in the position to address the issue raised. Again, X can correct me on this. At least if this isn't going to be address through Barry's contract, at least it has to be raised through the MTE so we can start thinking about how we can address the issue.</i></p> <p>- <i>yes, and that's probably where I failed, cause I should have that basic knowledge on the IEMP and to learn and adapt from</i></p> <p>4) Were stakeholders provided with appropriate induction?</p> <p>- <i>Knowing what i know now, i think we would have approached it differently by doing separate inceptions for each of the States. That way, we don't only get contributions from 5 members of the three States and majority from Pohnpei, but feedback from stakeholders of the entire State including the community members. It would also have allowed us to focus on the State only instead of having to rush through 2 days because we have the entire FSM to cover.</i></p> <p>5) Were new State representatives and stakeholders given an overview of the project by the PM? Has coordination between States been effective?</p> <p>- <i>I gave a presentation of the project when i did my first visit to the States. This was mainly for the members of the TAC. In 2017 and 2018, i had the opportunity to present on the project to a much larger group although most participants were from government and NGOs. Each of the Coordinators have also facilitated multiple presentations on behalf of the project at different events. In terms of coordination, there is certainly a lot of room for improvement.</i></p> <p>- <i>It varies depending on which State we work with. Some States are more proactive compared to others. Those that are not as proactive are the States that with less effective coordination.</i></p> <p>6) Were new actors (e.g. Van and others in the TACs) unclear about the project? It wasn't the participants of the inception workshop that bailed out and were replaced.</p> <p>- <i>We all participated in the inception workshop including Van, the TACs, some of the SC members, etc. It was the project development stage that had different stakeholders. Some of them have either passed or left the positions they were in. Majority of those who participated in the inception, however, were new to the project so that is why there wasn't much questioning. In my experience facilitating the inception workshop, people didn't really question the project as it was/still is.</i></p> <p>- <i>It was a two days' workshop -- something i learned afterwards to be a mistake. We did not go through as much details as possible. We just generally covered everything so everyone agreed. During implementation when became more detailed by discussing specific sites to work with, bird and fish species to target, total area of mangroves and upland forests to restore, that's when people started question.</i></p>
Sources	FINAL IEMP Report (July 2019); Interview (TAC, SC, PIU, CSOs); PIR 2017, 2018, SC minutes

EQ 1b: To what extent are TOCs grounded on a strong evidence base? (DESIGN)	
JC-1b.1	The Project and the IEMP theories of change (TOC) remain valid at mid-term.
I-1b.1	R2R and the IEMP are built on solid ToCs. SMART outcomes and robust assumptions that drive an adaptive management process.
Judgment 1b.1	ToCs were never developed, much less applied, to the ProDoc logframe, nor the EMP, while assumptions and risks are weak/lacking, and most indicators in the LogFrame and the IEMP are not SMART.
Comments	<p>1. The ProDoc's logframe does not follow a logical chain of causative actions that follow a results chain leading toward the overall objective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>IT is impossible to measure change when indicators focus on outputs, rather than measure desired changes by metrics that measure and attribute them to a management or policy intervention, or changes / institutional arrangements (e.g., governability/governance)</i> - <i>There is no causative results chain as shown in the rapid ToC constructed in Annex 4b</i> - <i>Only one indicator is actually SMART; most of the others are outputs or they are not attributable to R2R intervention –</i> - <i>causative results chain toward the desired objective, with verifiable SMART indicators, robust assumptions and risks</i> <p>2. the ProDoc's assumptions are so superficial that they offer little value for testing them throughout implementation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The lack of political will is a superficial assumption, as are other assumptions that are beyond the project's control (climate change is not going to have a major impact in a 4 year project), More robust assumptions could include the DoF will get their act together, UNDP communication will be fluid and timely with the PIU, the government will tighten enforcement of illegal activities, etc.)</i> - <i>From what I can see from the TOC you constructed, those assumptions were very superficial in the ProDoc... then it, makes sense how that can apply to us using Adaptive management (SC meeting comments)</i> <p>3. Neither the Draft nor Final IEMP reports make any mention of ToC, there are no assumptions and not risk analysis; Few of the indicators are SMART (see Annex 4c in main report); SEA is developed in a way that sets up the IEMP for being less than operational, for e.g., the framework could have been more operational if it developed indicators that measured changes in unsustainable practices; as it is set up, it simply continues to measure the STATE of the environment, but no way to measure changes in the pressures in a way that they are attributable to project interventions</p> <p>4. <i>There are not counterfactuals in either the ProDoc nor the IEMP to measure control effects – namely, how can we be sure that the same changes are happening in other areas that are not supported by the project?</i></p> <p>5. <i>The ProDoc consultant gave tight deadlines, had all the information needed and he didn't need to return, but he did anyway to collect MDRE data, but never met with State govt. because they didn't want him; The GEF coordinator in FSM was very upset that the work was so poor; the guy missed all the deadlines and it turned out to be a copy-paste, he never completed his contract and UNDP patched it up... SO there was no real continuity of ILM</i></p>
Sources	ProDoc., Final SEA Report; FINAL IEMP Report (July 2019); Interviews: PIR 2017, 2018, SC minutes ; Vogel 2012; Davies 2018;
JC-1b.2	There are logical linkages between the expected results and the project design in terms of the selection of beneficiaries and partners, implementation mechanisms, budgets, use of resources and scope.
Judgment 1b.2	There are multiple gaps in linkages between the expected results and the logframes
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The ToC applied to the ProDoc clearly demonstrates the gaps in the logic... Interviews indicate that there is consensus that the indicators are not good and need repair... but they did not realize what a SMART indicator is used for; now it seems to be better appreciated.</i> - <i>Dtehr evidence is given in Different comemtns related to issue-specific JCs</i>

Judgment 1b.3	Only two of the Prodoc's 18 indicators meet SMART outcome criteria
	<p>1. Few indicators measure SMART outcomes?</p> <p>2. One of the biggest threats to the marine ecosystem condition and food security for Micronesians – nighttime spearfishing – is not mentioned at all in the SEA and the IEMP, and just some superficial target indicators are presented, while an entire chapter is dedicated to sustainable tourism – surprising, because tourism is relatively small in FSM.</p> <p><i>What i'm getting from your recommendation for the indicator that measures abundance of our targeted fish species is that we should be focusing more on alternatives to reduce fishing pressures? For example like our FAD deployment activities in Yap to help reduce fishing pressures on the reef?</i></p>
Sources	ProDoc, IEMP Final Report (July 2019); Interviews; 2018PIR 2017, 2018, SC minutes

Progress toward results.

EQ 2: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives been achieved to date? (EFFICACY)	
JC-2.1	At mid-term, R2R has completed more than half its activities that contribute to the expected Component-specific outcome indicators, and it is on track for meeting
I-2.1	
Judgment 2.1	Less than half of the actions contributing toward achieving Component specific outcome indicators have been achieved successfully.
Comments	See Table 4 in Main Report
Sources	ProDoc; Interviews; ProDoc; site visits (terrestrial and underwater observations)
JC-2.2	The project is on track to meet all deliverables by the scheduled termination date
Judgment 2.2	The project is lagging with completing the stipulated outcomes and deliverables
Comments	<p><u>Interviewed stakeholders expressed that they do not feel there is a workable Game Plan that they can follow – it's a free for all:</u></p> <p><i>The agency is implementing this without a real plan that is workable, there is not enough staff (boots on the ground) to work with partners.</i></p> <p><u>DELAYS:</u> <i>If X Vanessa had been onboard from the start , we might have run better, but it took forever to get her on. The technical people need to be able to ask questions and come up with a game plan. But they seem to get blocked either by someone in the PIU or DECEM, and UNDP Fiji... Ideas get shot down a lot. In some cases, proposals we submitted were changed without consulting us... I know this has happened to people in the TACs in the other states. Example is a mangrove project we submitted to stop mangrove cutting---... the ToR were submitted to the PIU to review, we asked for protocols, but the thing is still in a holding pattern and haven't gotten the forms back... there is a law going around to protect mangroves but it's still not approved and only now being amended... it seems like our leaders thing more about money than the environment. frustrating as hell. We had a reforestation project ready to go, seedlings ready to be planted (R2R purchased them from the communities)...But we've waited 7 months to get approval from the national government...</i></p> <p><i>There were two 5 Star mangrove sites in FSM, but they all got dropped for some reason.</i></p> <p>Continued insistence on re-working the Logframe vs doing a ToC on the entire thing</p> <p><i>Didn't someone famous say that if you keep doing the same thing over and over and get the same results youre a bit nutso? For the team to come up with proposed changes to the logframe by Friday -- in our opinion -- is not the best way moving forward. We will only repeat the same mistake and we feel this is something that has to be done through some form of participatory exercise.</i></p> <p>Overambitious:</p> <p><i>- If i remember correctly, when we did the inception workshop, there was no question from participants on the basis of the 65% for the METT scores. I guess at that time, it seems achievable. We did not dwell on this until</i></p>

	<i>later on into implementation when we realized how hard it was to achieve them. That's when we started to question the targets..</i>
Sources	ProDoc, IEMP Final Report (July 2019); Interviews, AQRs, PIR 2017, 2018, SC minutes
JC-2.3	Substantial progress has been made in meeting deliverables
Judgment 2.3	The project is lagging in meeting its deliverables
Comments	. (See Table 4 in main report)
Sources	ProDoc; Interviews; DIRs, Strategic results frame, SC meeting ProDoc; site visits (terrestrial and underwater observations)
JC-2.4	Substantial progress has been made in achieving SMART outcome indicators for Component 1
Judgment 2.4	The outcome is lagging in meeting most of its deliverables, or some (e.g., IEMP) are not fully functional
Comments	. See Table 4 in main report; main problem is with the IEMP there's no DSS or M&E platform to measure effectiveness and inform decision and policy makers, and beneficiaries While the project may get the 4 SLPs by the end of the project, with increasing pig farming, 4 per State will have little effect on reducing the fecals going into the stream
Sources	ProDoc; Interviews; ProDoc; site visits (terrestrial and land-based observations)
JC-2.5	Substantial progress has been made in achieving SMART outcome indicators for Component 2
Judgment 2.4	The outcome is lagging with producing many its deliverables
Comments	See Table 4 in main report; Co-management support: <i>Boundaries and lights: thing is the Yap work was ongoing before project joined... but at least we have structured project to support community-based management in Yap; we learned from others and took it to Yap; Nimpal was the first site where we applied it and its been working well</i>
Sources	ProDoc; Interviews; ProDoc; site visits (terrestrial and underwater observations)
JC-2.6	Substantial progress has been made in achieving SMART outcome indicators for SEA-IEMP-DSS
Judgment 2.6	Most of the indicators are outputs; there is no TOC for the IEMP and it is not set up in a way that is conducive to systematic AM
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Well, we are very limited with data and work can only be based on the time during the consultations... the IEMP table/workplan that you provided with comments, is really helpful when we move forward with implementation with Pohnpei... the first step is to make that workplan SMART and feasible with what Pohnpei has and can reasonably implement with the timeframe given and beyond</i> - <i>I feel like all this work we did was a lot, but for nothing? Maybe it could have been better? A lot of good work has been done... we just need to take it to the next step.</i> - <i>THE problem is that SEA is so new to us that I don't know of any of us who understood it, and that may even include UNDP</i> - <i>Yes, and we were all learning on the go with guidance from consultant</i> - <i>Yes, we have room to improve the IEMP... it is the first step for implementation of the plan reviewing and making it stronger for effective and adaptive management</i> - <i>...and a DSS can be in different forms... it is the mechanism for influence and change that needs to be operationalized and made sure it happens</i> - <i>We are getting worried that the SEA and the IEMP will just sit on a shelf if we can't monitor if they are really contributing to a change we are looking for..</i>
Sources	- ProDoc, IEMP Final Report (July 2019); Interviews, AQRs, PIR 2017, 2018, SC minutes


Project Implementation & Adaptive Management

EQ 3: To what extent has the project been implemented efficiently, cost effective and able to adapt to any changing conditions thus far?? (EFFICIENCY)

JC-3.1	.Substantial progress in achieving the expect outcomes that conduct the project toward the overall objective
Judgment 3.1	There have been many delays that have continued since formulation and much inefficiency is related to a lack of well formulated assumptions and risks before embarking on final design
<i>Comments</i>	<p>Rather than embracing a systematic approach to adaptive management, adjustments have been reactive, rather than proactive and achieving the project objective is a long-term goal that will require major adjustments and the continued engagement of the multiple stakeholders who form the foundation of R2R.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The PIU uses AQRs to present their adaptive measures to deal with problems; sometimes these are dealt with during the following quarter of implementing period, but often, the SC and TACs do not read the AQRs and it has to go another round, which results in delays and inefficient response times... - <i>IT would help a lot of the TACs would read the AQRs and the recommended adaptive measures we recommend. When they don't it slows us down and by the time we get around to the next AQR, there are more things to deal with and these often the older problems get swept under the rug and forgotten about</i>
Sources	ProDoc; AQRs, SC meetings, Interviews; site visits (terrestrial and underwater observations)
JC-3.2	Cost per unit effect is acceptable
Judgment 3.2	THE relative benefits of the investments is low
<i>Comments</i>	<p>- 4 piggeries in each state is not going to have much of an impact on WQ downstream...too little, too late. And the high cost of the High-end model makes it prohibitive and time to move on a build the low cost models and tie them to earthworm culture to break down the wastes better and get other products, link to a biogas generator, like the Japanese (?) project has done</p> <p>The chipper is a totally inefficient approach Bought in the US for \$30k + , it is in high demand and thus, breaks down a lot... Need to have a local solution and create a small project that could be operated by local mechanics who could rebuild the many car engines in the vehicles laying on the roadsides throughout FSM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good example of a lack of robust assumptions related to both of there.. Had it been thought about earlier, it is possible that much less time and money would have been wasted. - While 10 streams are monitored (marine has 9 sites for salinity and temperature) There are no WQ baselines before and after the DLPs and it makes it impossible to attribute changes to the intervention, although its not likely to be much downstream, but possibly at a very localized level.. ...otherwise you will get changes that are in no way attributable to the interventions. But must standardize sampling protocols and analytical methods: - rapid rise in the # piggeries so they are far behind in keeping up... a bandage on a deep wound
Sources	ProDoc; Interviews; ProDoc; site visits (terrestrial and underwater observations)
JC-3.3	The project has used a systematic approach to adaptive management throughout implementation
Judgment 3.3	The project has followed a reactive, rather than a systematic and proactive approach to adaptive management, which has led to inefficient and ineffective implementation, and frustration among stakeholders
	<p>1. R2R's AM framework has centered around recommending actions in the AQRs. Stakeholder and TAC responses to the adaptive measures depend on: a) that TACs read the AQRs, (many do not); and 2) taking action on the recommended AM measure prior to the next AQR report (which does not always occur).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AQRs have been the primary vehicle for guiding adaptive measures, measures are almost always a reaction to issues arising during implementation. While this is not a bad thing, it could be reduced by having a series of robust assumptions along a ToC and causitive results-chain - time lags in the response to adaptive measures is a problem and in many cases these may go well beyond the 3 month period before the next AQR - PIU complains that AQRs are not always read by TAC members and this means there is no reaction to the recommended measures until the next AQR, meaning delays can be up to 6 months or more. <p>2. Stakeholders have limited capacity to understand and apply AM systematically, only one person interviewed had any understanding about ToC and neither concept was presented at the Inception Workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interviews with stakeholders revealed high levels of frustration that the indicators are confusing and they feel like they take one step forward and two back...most interviewed could not understand how the Project could ever become sustainable.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - According to one TAC member, the timeframe for developing R2R's conceptual framework took too long to develop, there were always gaps in how to get to the next step and how to be prepared for surprises, especially since what happens in Pohnpei is very different from Yap; it is still unclear to most of the interviewees how everything is meant to fit together to reach the outcomes and objective..' - <i>we didn't understand the entire process and it was like that from inception. We just get more work piled on us and we make little progress, just sit in capacity-building workshops and unclear how we apply our learning</i> - <i>The timeframe to learn during inception was too short and we hit the ground with our feet running. It was too rushed and it was like a one size had to fit all the states, which is ridiculous....it just doesn't work like that and the UNPD was naive in thinking so..</i> - <i>It's like they just wanted to get their project started and really didn't care whether we understood or not.</i> - <i>It wasn't the participants of the inception workshop that bailed out and were replaced. We all participated in the inception workshop including X, the TACs, some of the SC members, etc. It was the project development stage that had different stakeholders. Some of them have either passed or left the positions they were in. Majority of those who participated in the inception, however, were new to the project so that is why there wasn't much questioning. In my experience facilitating the inception workshop, people didn't really question the project as it was/still is. It was a two days workshop -- something I learned afterwards to be a mistake. We did not go through as much detail as possible. We just generally covered everything quickly, so everyone agreed. During implementation when it became more detailed by discussing specific sites to work with, bird and fish species to target, total area of mangroves and upland forests to restore, that's when people started questioning what was going on ---there was just no time for us to learn and question during inception and now we realize that was the time we should have critically questioned the approach-- but we just didn't have the tools to do it then.</i> <p>2. Were they provided with appropriate induction?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Knowing what I know now, I think we would have approached it differently by doing separate inceptions for each of the States. That way, we don't only get contributions from 5 members of the three States and majority from Pohnpei, but feedback from stakeholders of the entire State including the community members. It would also have allowed us to focus on the State only instead of having to rush through 2 days because we have the entire FSM to cover.</i>
JC-3.4	Actions are carried out in a coordinated manner and Cost per unit effect is acceptable
Judgment 3.4	Activities are not coordinated well, there is a huge work overload and insufficient human resources
COMMENTS	<p><i>1. Were new State representatives and stakeholders given an overview of the project by the PM? Has coordination between States been effective? I gave a presentation of the project when I did my first visit to the States. This was mainly for the members of the TAC. In 2017 and 2018, I had the opportunity to present on the project to a much larger group although most participants were from government and NGOs. Each of the Coordinators have also facilitated multiple presentations on behalf of the project at different events. In terms of coordination, there is certainly a lot of room for improvement. It varies depending on which State we work with. Some States are more proactive compared to others. Those that are not as proactive are the States that with less effective coordination.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>ideally... there will be a national/project TOC and then one for each state and then one for each site... then it should all connect well with the logframe and can be measured / evaluated / adapted and learned from in a streamlined and easier manner</i> <p><i>2. Serious problems with institutional arrangements- the States complain that the National Govt. makes all the decisions on their behalf - this comes back to the weak design of the PRODOC; Institutional arrangements have failed!</i></p> <p><i>Accountability and ownership are badly lacking, and we are trying to address this serious shortcoming in GEF 7</i></p>
Sources	ProDoc, IEMP Final Report (July 2019); Interviews, AQRs, PIR 2017, 2018, SC minutes
JC-3.5	Financial management and government contributions have been adequate
Judgment 3.5	Financial management and government contributions have been INADEQUATE

<p>Comments</p>	<p>1. Is there any hope that the Dept. of Finance will ever get in harmony with the project and vice versa? This relates to whether there are any hopes that you can get clear procedures on the financial stuff so you don't have to deal with 101 ways to hold up disbursements? Is a decentralized approach really an option ?</p> <p><i>The only way to clear procedures is to ensure that we don't follow any verbal instructions from Finance and just follow the Financial Management Regulations. However, it's not just the procedure that delays our disbursement of funds. There are various factors contributing to this including our own FMR which does not allow any advance payments to local vendors until the service(s) has been provided. What happens is we commit the funds until the invoice has been provided to us for payment processing. This goes with advance payments as well. Our system does not reflect advance payments until we receive the items/products. All of these combined go into our commitments which UNDP does not accept. So when we report our actual expenditures, we dont report of our commitments even though sometimes the money is no longer with us. I'm not sure if a decentralized approach is an option given we have contracts as another option -- which is pretty much the same arrangement. We still have to sign the agreement with State government for certain deliverables to be carried out. In this case, we're signing agreements with each IP.</i></p> <p>2. The evidence indicates (Figure 7) that <u>the annual government and donor funding for SLM and PA costs</u> is half the targeted \$10.1 million annual budgetary allocation (per the log frame), although if the Compact funding is included, the target is met easily. Annual government funding – unclear why this is given U rating if 'half of the target' has been reached by mid-term. Please justify why this rating in the incomplete part of Table I. ----- But if you look at reality, the government has only forked out \$120k to date.... The donors have fallen short of what they promised and what I can see is that the government and the donors are a long way away from meeting this target... Am I seeing a mirage, or does Lisa see something that I don't?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>I think the statement is misleading because it seems like (but am not 100% sure) that when i read this the first time around that was my first impression - "The FSM government budget for 2019 is close to matching overall GEF funding (Figure 7), and when adding funds from other sources, the counterpart budget more than doubles the GEF allocation. However, there is still a gap in co-financing funds that were pledged in the ProDoc versus the actual amounts allocated for 2019 (Figure 8). It is unclear whether it will be possible to close this deficit (\$5,625,018), which appears to be from shortfalls from NGOs, by the end of the fiscal year."</i> - <i>I think it is the annual target we are aiming for and it was probably overambitious, just like a lot of things in the ProDoc</i>
	<p>In terms of implementation, the project has faced a key financial issues which has affected acquittals and ability to access further advances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - With new procurement policies to be finalized, the project has faced laborious task of having to obtain at least three quotes for small procurement including stationery. This was also raised at a Project Board Meeting. To this effect, UNDP has enabled provisional measures allowing flexibility of obtaining a minimum of one quote for procurement below USD1, 000. - <i>whilst payments are facilitated to procurements from vendors based from abroad, this is noted as encumbrance until goods are received by the project. The waiting period between payment and receipt of goods has at times crossed over due dates for quarterly reports. Thereby this has created situations whereby project acquittals submitted to UNDP have given a lower delivery rates. At times this has meant the project not being able to meet requirement of 80% acquittal rule before next advance is released. Unfortunately, in some cases this has caused slippages at the state level. UNDP has discussed the issues recently with senior management and identified ways to address such situations. This will be discussed with Government. By the next reporting PIR period, it is anticipated that the issues will have been managed</i> <p>The MTR has tried to contact the SGF coordinator several times, but he has not been available, or outside of Pohnpei. The final attempt in July was not successful.</p> <p><i>_ Simpson in PNI is the SGF coordinator; full grants are to \$50k and \$5k to develop the plan; 25% of the grant can go for salaries</i></p>

	<p><i>Turnover speed and his reaction to requests and other information is the problem; Could have planned his priorities much better, it is not directly linked to R2R and there is no ToC linked to the project design, no SMART indicators:</i></p> <p><i>There is no clearcut workplan, what is to be achieved and how it is to be, All coordinators have voiced this so I am not speaking alone</i></p> <p><i>+/- ID projects and Yap and Chuuk are still waiting after a year (Yap since 2016); need to revisit and screen what's being done and what has gone wrong; there is a lot of smooth talk from the coordinator, but nothing seems to happen and we are frustrated..</i></p> <p>Re: MTR update</p> <p> Rosalinda Yatilman <ryatilman@gmail.com> To: Joseph Ryan</p> <p>Perfect! I have contacted the SGP person and will get back to you as soon as i hear back!</p> <p>Rose</p>
Sources	ProDoc, IEMP Final Report (July 2019); Interviews, AQRs, PIR 2017, 2018, SC minutes

Co financing :

SECTION IV: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

PART I: LETTERS OF CO-FINANCING COMMITMENT

[Refer to separate file for letters of co-financing commitment]

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Date	Amounts mentioned in letters (USD)	Amounts considered as project co-financing (in USD)
National Government	Office of Environment and Emergency	26 January 2015	\$1 000 000	\$1 000 000
National Government	Department of Resources and Development	26 January 2015	\$1 000 000	\$1 000 000
Local Government	Kosrae Island Management Authority	29 May 2014	\$550 000	\$550 000
Local Government	Kosrae Department of Resources and Economic Affairs	29 May 2014	\$550 000	\$550 000
CSO	Kosrae Conservation and Safety Organisation	29 May 2014	\$500 000	\$500 000
CSO	Yela Land Owners Authority	29 May 2014	\$500 000	\$500 000
Local Government	Pohnpei Environmental Protection Agency	09 May 2014	\$2 000 000	\$2 000 000
CSO	Conservation Society of Pohnpei	09 May 2014	\$900 000	\$900 000
Local Government	Chuuk Environmental Protection Agency	15 January 2015	\$2 602 000	\$2 602 000
CSO	Chuuk Conservation Society	15 January 2015	\$98 000	\$98 000
Local Government	Yap Environmental Agency Protection	09 May 2014	\$387 220	\$387 220
Local Government	Yap Marine Resources Management Division	09 May 2014	\$225 986	\$225 986
Local Government	Yap Division of Agriculture and Forestry	09 May 2014	\$536 063	\$536 063
Local Government	Yap Department of Public Works and Transportation-SWM	09 May 2014	\$320 136	\$320 136
CSO	Yap Cap	09 May 2014	\$216 993	\$216 993
CSO	Micronesia Conservation Trust	15 January 2015	\$5 000 000	\$5 000 000
CSO	The Nature Conservancy	14 January 2015	\$1 500 000	\$1 500 000
	TOTAL		\$17 886 398	\$17 886 398

EQ 4: To what extent have the TOCs adapted based on learning? (ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT)

JC-4.1	The TOCs applied to the ProDoc and IEMPs have contributed to adaptive learning and adjustment of the approach and interventions
Judgment 4.1	TOCs were not used to formulated ProDoc or IEMP, and in many cases, the absence of assumptions has resulted inefficiency and lost time

<i>Comments</i>	<p><i>However, there are times when circumstances change so we end up doing something else than what was indicated. as stated, I have to admit that for the quarterly progress reports, it would help if everyone reads the quarterly reports after they are finalized to ensure they follow through with what's in the report. Usually, when the Coordinators submit their reports to me, we discuss ways to address any challenges impeding implementation -- particularly for those that they don't address in their reports because they don't know how to go about addressing them. After our discussions, we agree on a way forward and that's what i put in our report. Most often, they do follow through with them. Other times, no so much and this is only picked up after the next quarterly progress is drafted. There are many quotes presented elsewhere that were used to make the judgment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>TNC conducted Capacity building for PA management in Chuuk, management plan was approved and translated along with fish management plan into Chuukese to be endorsed but there was a long delay because no one thought about translating it beforehand and so it was rejected...so a reactive crisis that delayed the approval</i> <i>There is only one chipper in Pohnpei and it is always broken, need to bring experts from the US to fix it; farmer are getting fed up and starting to go back to water... SO a total waste of the investment unless things are turned around and an AM approach could possibly have helped if this had been foreseen</i> <p>Other examples are given elsewhere in this annex</p>
Sources	ProDoc, IEMP Final Report (July 2019); Interviews, AQRs, PIR 2017, 2018, SC minutes
JC-4.2	Lessons from mistakes in GEF 5 have benefitted other projects
Judgment 4.2	Evidence suggests that there has been learning from GEF 5 and some of the lessons have been used to formulate GEF 6 & 7
<i>Comments</i>	<p><i>I am reviewing GEF6 project activities now and they seem sound and well thought out... they definitely learned a lot of "what not to do" from GEF5; They have a ToC and Output 4.2: Project implementation and decision-making informed by having a monitoring and evaluation system in place. redoing the Logframe and developing a TOC, cannot be or should be done by X and Y... it is a larger team / stakeholder effort</i></p>
Sources	ProDoc; Interviews; ProDoc;

EQ 5: To what extent are project-level M&E systems, reporting and project communications supporting the project's implementation? (M&E APPLICATION)

JC-5.1	The METTs are good indicators of effective biodiversity management and scores have improved between 2015-2018
Judgment 5.1	METT scores are potentially important outputs, not outcomes, but they have not been quality assured, and they appear to be subjective, which means there is no confidence in the trends, if any.
<i>Comments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>the METTs still need to be worked on right? I know we need to verify a few things, which coordinators will have to do... so what does that mean for the MTR?</i> - <i>The METTS were run by the coordinators... I feel I should of done a visit around and facilitated the process... That way it is as uniform as possible I guess..</i> - <i>This is very interesting what you have done to link METT scores with Peters in situ monitoring. . I have no comment. This is very clear and i think it's great that you have expanded on your points by supporting it with studies from scientists such as Kevin and Pete. I think its particularly interesting on the point that you raised with effective MPAs being tied to communities that are united. I truly believe this is true and good examples are the communities of Tamil and Nimpal in Yap. What i'm getting from your recommendation for the indicator that measures abundance of our targeted fish species is that we should be focusing more on alternatives to reduce fishing pressures? For example like our FAD deployment activities in Yap to help reduce fishing pressures on the reef?</i> <p><i>. Houk et al with Vanessa 2012;</i></p>

	<p><i>Building longer-term and larger-scaled datasets across gradients of water quality and fish assemblages that track the ecological responses of reef assemblages through time represents a useful means towards predicting the likely outcomes of management scenarios, and incorporating gradient analyses into long-term monitoring frameworks is one ideal approach (Houk et al. 2010; Wilson et al. 2010; McGlannah et al. 2011). While distilling complex ecological knowledge into a single, condition metric might be regarded as overly simplistic, more complex approaches towards evaluating reef status should substantially improve our prediction of patterns to be preferentially considered (Balasubramanian 1997). Here, the negative influences from predator starfish activity along Yap’s southwestern coastline appeared diminished within the MCA, corroborating similar reports from closures elsewhere along the Great Barrier Reef (McCook et al. 2010). Finally, identifying where and why resiliency exists is a central focus for resource management (Wooldridge et al. 2005; Hughes et al. 2010). We ironically purport that high recovery and predator starfish abundance at the southern tip of Yap (site 16) may be a consequence of the same local hydrodynamic process. Circulation eddies are known to form in the lee of exposed islands and have been documented to benefit recruitment and settlement (Black et al. 1995; Mace and Morgan 2006; Burgess et al. 2007). Thus, the high recovery noted here may be aided by the favorable oceanographic and physical setting that exists. We conclude that a simple, thoughtful approach, combining several robust measures coral and fish populations provided a useful snapshot of Yap’s coral reefs. Through time, quantitative trends can improve the basis for balancing resource integrity and sustainability with socioeconomic needs.</i></p> <p><i>SMART Workplan</i></p> <p><i>Well, we are very limited with data and work can only be based on the time during the consultations... the IEMP table/workplan that you provided with comments, is really helpful when we move forward with implementation with Pohnpei... the first step is to make that workplan SMART and feasible with what Pohnpei has and can reasonably implement with the timeframe given and beyond</i></p> <p><i>This is very interesting. I have no comment. This is very clear and i think it's great that you have expanded on your points by supporting it with studies from scientists such as Kevin and Pete. I think it's particularly interesting on the point that you raised with effective MPAs being tied to communities that are united. I truly believe this is true and good examples are the communities of Tamil and Nimpal in Yap. And you see from the graphs that they are the only community MPAs in Yap that are above the threshold for effective management.</i></p> <p>Answers are also given in other parts of this Annex</p>
Sources	ProDoc; Interviews; ProDoc; site visits (terrestrial and underwater observations) PIRs, AQRs, SC minutes
JC-5.2	Substantial progress has been made in achieving Effective M&E Feeding into the ProDoc and IEMP’s adaptive management and learning, using participatory and gender disaggregated processes
Judgment 5.2	Project Monitoring is through the PIRs, Effectiveness with the METT, but nothing is linked to in situ monitoring, and that is not available for DSS (which is nonexistent)
<i>Comments</i>	<p>1) While the SEA is given tremendous weight (and funding) in the R2R project, it is important to highlight that it is just ONE INPUT (albeit an important one) to the M&E platform, which in turn, should feed into the Decision Support System (DSS) /platform</p> <p>- <i>I can see now that we went overboard on the SEA and now there is little time to do the other things that are deliverables and one (DSS) is an indicator.. I can't see how it will get done since the consultant is almost finished ...and there is no DSS...In fact, it was taken out of his latest ToR..</i></p> <p>2) The only thing I am lacking is Barry's way forward for overcoming the inoperational Draft IEMP that I received some time ago, how the Monitoring approach he proposes is going to be transformed into a monitoring and evaluation platform, and most importantly, how the DSS platform is going to be structured and operationalized – I consider this one to be especially critical for meeting, since it is not only one of your deliverables, but it is one of the indicators for component #2 (<i>Number of States having a fully operational PA management Decision-support system (DSS) in place on which management decisions are based</i>) . Given that Barry's contract is ending, the important thing for me</p>

	<p>to know is whether the Task Force is sufficiently prepared with the capacity to make the adjustments to address these issues I raised in the SC meeting and have been mentioning for over a month.</p> <p><i>This is not good for us.. We just don't have the knowledge to do something like that alone</i></p> <p>3) While I could have asked him how he was going to deal with those issues he could promise anything... I think it is more important to get it from the Task Force, since they are the ones who must understand how to move it forward...</p> <p><i>While it would be good to talk with him, it just seems like the timing was always off to get you 2 together to talk.. but I see the point...because we do not have the capacity to take over</i></p> <p>4) There are no interactive maps of watersheds, coastal marine areas, etc. and this limits the DSS and M&E platforms; instead the existing erosion maps are just copy and pasted into the report without any analysis of hotspots, etc.</p> <p><i>Yeah, kind of get the feeling that he (the consultant) is washing his hands of it and letting us do the work, but we don't really know how to go about it.</i></p> <p><i>images are available out there... but we need to be able to buy it or support LIDAR mapping; we would have a kick ass dataset for all the high islands!! fundamental that we have those information to support effective/informed decision making. I hadn't thought about it and now wonder why he didn't get those things and use them in our training ?</i></p> <p><i>had a chat with him about it this evening on DSS and all that... he said he is pretty much done and can't move it further for now... anyway, you and I should have a call soon</i></p> <p><i>The way forward to operationalize the IEMP is drafted in a chapter</i></p> <p>5) EPA collects and analyzes WQ data but results go into a report that is not readily accessible to decision makers and to others doing monitoring who need ancillary data on the quality declines in the R2R ecosystems; Fecals are 50,000 times the US WQ standard they use (5400 coli/ml)</p> <p>As mentioned in the MTR Report, there is currently a huge Scientific research-implementation gap that is only growing – data do not provide evidence for taking proactive management actions and policy decisions, and if it continues, I predict FSM will suffer the same fate as the Caribbean, which has lost up to half of its critical marine ecosystems during the three decades that the CARICOMP program was running.</p> <p>I was the CARICOMP Site Director for the first and at the time one of the most important biol. Monitoring programs in the world.. N. While the importance of the work cannot be overemphasized for raising awareness, building a regional approach to understanding these ecosystems and providing invaluable data on coral, seagrasses and mangroves, I began to realize is that at least on my site, I was setting up a brilliant monitoring system that would measure the collapse of the coral reefs, because the government had little interest in taking action to mitigate the increasing development pressures. And it turned out that I was not alone – <i>for the past 3 decades since CARICOMP monitoring started the Caribbean has lost 30-50% of its corals, seagrasses and mangroves. SO we essentially set up a beautiful scientific monitoring system that was totally disengaged from decision making</i></p> <p>The second issue related to the scientific research data/implementation gap mentioned earlier. While the data collected by State NGDS were collected under the supervision of scientists from the University of Guam (who also trained these NGOs to monitor corals and fish biomass continuously) are owned by the States, the data are stored and must be analyzed in Guam. The fact that the NGOs lack the capacity to calculate/analyze the raw data leaving this huge data/implementation gap that prevents it being made accessible to any DSS, and of course, without data, evidence-based decision-making becomes paralyzed.</p> <p>The fact that the data are still not accessible from Peter and that the people he has trained are not able to do the calculations/analyses just strengthens my arguments related to M&E data being academic and thus, leaving a huge data-implementation gap, and of course, leaving nothing for a decision or policy-maker to sink their teeth into and digest.. The capacity should be built for people to do it in the places where the data were collected, rather than having to wait for someone to hold the data hostage... This is a real shame and a loss for FSM, no matter how admirable Peter's intentions were to help..</p> <p><i>Lastly, as I mentioned back in April the coral reef monitoring data, including the fish, is owned by the states and stored/analysed with the assistance of Dr. Peter Houk from the University of Guam. I had reached out to him to calculate and provide the percentages for projects target species. We don't have the raw datasets if that is what</i></p>
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<p><i>you are looking for. However, I can connect you with Peter if you need/want. Let me know. Peter has been instrumental in building capacity in coral reef monitoring in the region for many years now. He still assists with data collection, training, and data analysis through his capacity with the university.</i></p> <p><u>PARTICIPATORY MONITORING:</u> <i>Is there is any participatory monitoring going on with R2R? I know the work is mainly done by the State NGDS and the universities, but I did not run across any local communities that are doing participatory monitoring funded by R2R (I know CSP is doing something with mangroves but under a different donor). If I am wrong, could you let me know who you are funding? What I see is purely scientific stuff and nothing using popular approaches.</i></p> <p><i>There is no ongoing participatory monitoring funded by the project except the upcoming biological monitoring activities to be conducted by our Government and NGO partners for fish and birds.</i></p> <p><u>GENDER DISAGGREGATED MONITORING:</u> <i>Is this statement safe to put in the report - No monitoring is taking place to measure changes in the perspectives of female and male beneficiaries.'</i></p> <p><i>- None. The project currently does not have a gender framework like I have seen for other R2R projects. We mostly just track participation of both males and females in our activities. To ensure equal representation between males and females in our decision making bodies, we have the head of agencies which are mostly men and some women groups represented in our TACs in States such as Kosrae and Yap. But there really hasn't been any monitoring done to see any changes in female and male beneficiaries.</i></p> <p><u>ARE YOU ALWAYS RESPONDING TO FINDINGS IN THE PIRs:</u> <i>How much have you all followed up on the 2018 PIR? Is it your bible??? I can see that an effort has been made to address some things, especially in the Annual Quarterly Reports, but it seems that you have had too many bottlenecks stopping you from going the Full Monty to follow up on all of them. Am I off base?</i></p> <p><i>6) For the PIR, we do follow up on it for the most part. However, there are times when circumstances change so we end up doing something else than what was indicated. When we do the following PIR, that's when we make the adjustment to reflect what actually happened. I have to admit that for the quarterly progress reports, it would help if everyone reads the quarterly reports after they are finalized to ensure they follow through with what's in the report. Usually, when the Coordinators submit their reports to me, we discuss ways to address any challenges impeding implementation -- particularly for those that they don't address in their reports because they don't know how to go about addressing them. After our discussions, we agree on a way forward and that's what i put in our report. Most often, they do follow through with them. Other times, no so much and this is only picked up after the next quarterly progress is drafted.</i></p> <p><u>METT AND THE 65% THRESHOLD:</u> <i>Do you have any idea why the 65% Score was designated as being satisfactory for the METT Scores? It's what the GEF uses, but were any of you consulted about it? It is not mentioned in the Inception Report.</i></p> <p><i>I'm not quite sure as to what the basis of the 65% score is. Maybe this is something you have to talk to Lisa about.</i></p> <p><u>COMPARING BIOLOGICAL MONITORING AND METT:</u> <i>You mentioned that you could send me the available biological monitoring data and I would like to ask for it now, because I want to look at whether the METT really reflects what is going on in the PAs in terms of reef and fish health, etc.</i></p> <p><i>7) What i was referring to with this was the exact figures we set aside for the biological monitoring activities we have coming up. The coral reef monitoring is just about to start this month so we don't have any data yet. X has some, but those are from prior years and not funded by the project. Unless you were referring to the new fish data that we also talked about?</i></p> <p><i>8) Please refer to the revised Strategic Results Framework (SRF) which i provided to you earlier for the fish data you're looking for. I believe the data is from Kevin as well, obtained by X to revise our SRF. I'm not sure if the data will serve your purpose given they are from the same source. X can correct me on this. They must have been on XXXX when they wrote this. I don't know of any research other than what X and Y did, but there are no published reports to support management actions.</i></p> <p><i>9) At any rate, there's a lot of wishful thinking in here and I think this is in part due to the MC being over MPA establishment (and fund procurement). Some of the realities from my perspective are surely being misrepresented</i></p>
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	<p><i>here. This is between us, however. I will look at Kehpara shortly and tell you what I think from that site which is where I have the most knowledge/experience</i></p> <p><i>Conservation Trust does the NOAA monitoring thru the Conservation Society of Pohnpei; MGC puts the money in for Peter and TNC has Javie</i></p>
Sources	ProDoc; Interviews; ProDoc; site visits (terrestrial and underwater observations) PIRs, AQRs, SC minutes

Sustainability

<p>EQ 6: To what extent are the financial, institutional, socio-economic and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results? (SUSTAINABILITY)</p>	
JC-3.1	Substantial progress in reducing risks to sustain R2R's tangible outcomes
Judgment 3.3	The project has not addressed the highest-level risks that prevent it from sustaining good practices to increase social cohesion and resilience;
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • but while you're talking locally managed marine protected areas might be of superficial interest. What needs to be flagged is a good assessment of Ant. The aggregations were hammered there for years and they now have private enforcement of the inner lagoon and channel. A baseline is sorely needed to assess its overall importance as a spawning site (also Bumphead parrots, not just groupers), which I call reproductive biodiversity. A baseline and subsequent follow-up would actually show that enforcement works in the FSM. Nothing I love more than metrics and performance indicators. It's why every NGO/aid project has a huge lesson learned section. • The Nimpal MCA is one form of management that benefitted from the spatial interpretation of condition. High conservation value noted in 2007 was mainly due to strong community-based support for management, as ecologically, insight based mainly upon species richness data showed that non-unique assemblages existed (Allen 2007; Houk and Starmer 2007). However, 4 years later, after formalizing their notake MCA, condition is now second highest among channel reefs despite having the smallest habitat size. Thus, due to a strong social acceptance, this reef has exceeded its natural ecological expectations, relative to human influences that currently exist, and confirms the importance of including social factors into conservation planning (Walmsley and White 2003). Beyond increasing fish populations, growing evidence supports that conservation of numerous key ecological functions inside fisheries closures.
Sources	PIRs, AQRs, SC minutes; Interviews 1,2 5, 7, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18; METT; Houk et al 2015, Rhodes et al 2012, 2015, 2017, 2018
Judgment 3.3	The project is neither confronting root causes nor reducing the major threats to food security and BD in FSM...
Comments	<p>What has been done in each strategy to promote durability of outcomes? What seems promising/likely to work (scale, replication, capacity building, leaders, institutions, networks etc.)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of FSM's PAs are little more than paper parks, enforcement is nonexistent and the fisheries are collapsing due to uncontrolled nighttime fishing which is severely uncoupling important ecosystem functions on the reefs, lagoons and spawning aggregation areas: ; successful management examples are found in some of the communities on Yap. • there's been no really good data collected on MPAs within the FSM outside of maybe Houk's work. Basically Joe., 95% of them are paper parks of insufficient size to mean much. The Micronesia Challenge was poorly done without much a priori work to identify which were biologically meaningful. All (but maybe a couple) were established without a management or enforcement plan. Few to my knowledge were implemented with ontogenetic or genetic connectivity or critical habitat protection in mind, i.e. Ant, Palikir, Kehpara. Enforcement is the main issue. <i>Basically, it looks good on paper but otherwise, generally a sore spot in the</i>

	<p><i>communities for no good reason. If it were me, I'd blow them all up and start over. Nothing to lose because they're ineffective now anyway.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Interested in where the sucked-out environment money went. They've waited until the last moment to deal with the Compact loss because they thought we were bluffing. All the govt agencies and even some of the NGOs like Packard have figured out what a bunch of turds the government guys are, and yet, they just re-elected Peter Christian to the PNI Congress.</i> • <i>if that gets out on the web, Manta Ray would be in a deep pile of shit. Of course, Manta Road is trashed anyway from all his divers. It used to be a beautiful spot.</i> • <i>It seems apparent that the southernmost reefs around Kitti Municipality could benefit from area protection both to protect Siganus spp. during critical life-history events, but also to help restore degraded coral and seagrass beds.</i> • <i>Based on information of movement of other siganids, Weeks et al. (2016) suggest that protected areas for S. punctatus should be c. 3-2 kmin linear distance, which roughly accords with that of the NanWap LMMA. This and other Siganus spp. would benefit further by identifying other critical habitats, such as spawning sites and migratory pathways and including them in future sites identified as important to Siganus spp. persistence utilizing a similar area and design to the Nan Wap LMMA.</i>
Sources	Interviews 5, 7, 12, 16, 18; METT; Houk et al 2015, Rhodes et al 2012, 2015, 2017, 2018

Annex 8: Terms of Reference for the MTR

1

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Ref: PN/FJI-001-19 Consultancy Title: Mid Term Evaluation Consultancy

Project Name: National Ridge to Reef Project in the FSM

Duty Station: Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)

Duration of Assignment: 34 days, commencing no later than 24 January, 2019, and completion by 8 April, 2019. The Consultant will be expected to travel to all four states of FSM but partake in briefing and debriefings with National Government in the State of Pohnpei.

Deadline for submission of applications: 17 January 2019

Consultancy Proposal should be sent via email to etenderbox.pacific@undp.org no later than **17th January, 2019 (Fiji Time)** clearly stating the title of consultancy applied for. Any proposals received after this date/time will not be accepted. Any request for clarification must be sent in writing, or by standard electronic communication to procurement.fj@undp.org. UNDP will respond in writing or by standard electronic mail and will send written copies of the response, including an explanation of the query without identifying the source of inquiry, to all consultants. Incomplete, late and joint proposals will not be considered and only offers for which there is further interest will be contacted. **Failure to submit your application as stated as per the application submission guide (Procurement Notice) on the above link will be considered incomplete and therefore application will not be considered.**

Objectives

The MTR will assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document and assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTR will also review the project's strategy, its risks to sustainability. It is also essential that findings of the Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) are considered in the findings/recommendation of this review.

This is the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the UNDP-GEF Midterm Review (MTR) of the *full or medium*-sized project titled **Implementing an integrated "Ridge to Reef" approach to enhance ecosystem services, to conserve globally important biodiversity and to sustain local livelihoods in the FSM** (PIMS:5179) implemented through the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management (DECCEM), which is to be undertaken in 2018. The project started on the *19 November 2015* and is in its *third* year of implementation. In line with the UNDP-GEF Guidance on MTRs, this MTR process was initiated before the submission of the second Project Implementation Report (PIR). This ToR sets out the expectations for this MTR. The MTR process must follow the guidance outlined in the document *Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*

(http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/GEF/mid-term/Guidance_Midterm%20Review%20_EN_2014.pdf)

Background Information

The Implementing an integrated “Ridge to Reef” approach to enhance ecosystem services, to conserve globally important biodiversity and to sustain local livelihoods in the FSM is a five-year (2015-2020) Project, funded by Global Environment Facility (GEF), implemented by UNDP and executed nationally by the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management (DECCEM), in the Federated States of Micronesia. The GEF grant is of USD 4,689,815. The Project’s objective is: *to strengthen local, State and National capacities and actions to implement integrated ecosystem-based management through “ridge to reef” approach on the High Islands of the four States of the FSM.* This will be achieved through two components that are designed to address the barriers of (i) not having an overarching framework for promoting sustainable development in FSM’s High Islands and (ii) inadequate representation and ineffective management of biodiversity in protected areas:

- **Component 1: Integrated Ecosystems Management and Rehabilitation on the High Islands of the FSM to enhance Ridge to Reef Connectivity, (Outcome 1)**, which is essentially about sustainable land management; and

Component 2: Management Effectiveness enhanced within new and existing PAs on the High Islands of FSM as part of R2R approach, both marine and terrestrial (Outcome 2), which is essentially about protected areas

Marine and terrestrial biodiversity and ecosystem services underpin social well-being and the economy of the Federated States of Micronesia and are vital to food security. These resources and services, however, are currently being undermined by unsustainable natural resource use and practices; spread of invasive alien species; the impacts of climate change; and, the limitations of government to effectively implement its programs and policies.

The development of a Strategy Environment Assessment (SEA) is a key activity currently being implemented. This is potentially the largest component of the R2R as it will inform decision making concerning land management and biodiversity conservation in the four states of FSM.

This project is designed to engineer a paradigm shift in the approach to and management of natural resources from an ad-hoc species/site/problem centric approach to a holistic ecosystem-based management “ridge to reef” approach guided by planning and management process that are informed by actual data. The shift to an ecosystem-based approach within National and State governments will ensure that whole island systems are managed to enhance ecosystem goods and services, to conserve globally important biodiversity and to sustain local livelihoods.

The project will promote an integrated approach towards fostering sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation by seeking greater awareness, knowledge and participation of all stakeholders in achieving a greater balance between environmental management and development needs. In doing so it will reduce conflicting land-uses and land-use practices and improve the sustainability of terrestrial and marine management so as to maintain the flow of vital ecosystem services and sustain the livelihoods of local communities. Further, the project will demonstrate sustainable land management practices testing new management measures, as needed, to reduce existing environmental stressors and institutional limitations.

The project will also enhance the FSMs capacities to effectively manage its protected area estate as well as increase the coverage of the terrestrial and marine protected area network on the High Islands.

Under the DECCEM, a **Project Implementation Unit (PIU)** comprising of a Project Manager, a Financial Administrator, four state-based Coordinators and a National Technical Coordinator is responsible for implementing the various components of the project. This includes providing technical leadership to the project, managing and coordinating project activities, contracting service providers, providing oversight on the day to day operations of the project, communications, monitoring and evaluation of project performance, reporting and serve as secretariat for the **Project Steering Committee** and **State Technical Advisory Committees (TAC)**. The Financial Administrator’s primary functions will be to ensure that projects funds are disbursed timeously according to an agreed work plan/payment schedule, and that the project’s financial management meets UNDP management/reporting requirements. UNDP’s role is specifically to provide monitoring and oversight of the Project.

Approach and Methodology

The MTR must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The MTR consultant will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Environmental & Social Safeguard Policy, the Project Document, project reports including Annual Project Review/PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based review). The MTR consultant will review the baseline GEF focal area Tracking Tool submitted to the GEF at CEO endorsement, and the midterm GEF focal area Tracking Tool that must be completed before the MTR field mission begins.

The MTR consultant is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach¹ ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point), the UNDP Country Office(s), UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisers, and other key stakeholders.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR.² Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to national government departments, state governments, state-based NGO's/ Civil Society Organizations, resource owning communities, component leaders, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Steering Committee, other project stakeholders, academia, etc. Additionally, the MTR team is expected to conduct field missions to all four states including Kosrae, Pohnpei, Chuuk and Yap.

The final MTR report should describe the full MTR approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the review.

The MTR consultant will assess the following four categories of project progress. See the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for extended descriptions.

i. Project Strategy

Project design:

- Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document.
- Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?
- Review how the project addresses country priorities. Review country ownership. Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country (or of participating countries in the case of multi-country projects)?
- Review decision-making processes: were perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process, taken into account during project design processes?
- Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design. See Annex 9 of *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for further guidelines.
- If there are major areas of concern, recommend areas for improvement.

Results Framework/Logframe:

- Undertake a critical analysis of the project's logframe indicators and targets, assess how "SMART" the midterm and end-of-project targets are (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound), and suggest specific amendments/revisions to the targets and indicators as necessary.
- Are the project's objectives and outcomes or components clear, practical, and feasible within its time frame?
- Examine if progress so far has led to or could in the future catalyse beneficial development effects (i.e. income generation, gender equality and women's empowerment, improved governance etc...) that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis.
- Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored effectively. Develop and recommend SMART 'development' indicators, including sex-disaggregated indicators and indicators that capture development benefits.

ii. Progress Towards Results

Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis:

- Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets using the Progress Towards Results Matrix and following the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*; colour code progress in a “traffic light system” based on the level of progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as “Not on target to be achieved” (red).

Table. Progress Towards Results Matrix (Achievement of outcomes against End-of-project Targets)

Table. Progress Towards Results Matrix (Achievement of outcomes against End-of-project Targets)

Project Strategy	Indicator ³	Baseline Level ⁴	Level in 1 st PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target ⁵	End-of-project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment ⁶	Achievement Rating ⁷	Justification for Rating
Objective:	Indicator (if applicable):							
Outcome 1:	Indicator 1:							
	Indicator 2:							
Outcome 2:	Indicator 3:							
	Indicator 4:							
	Etc.							
Etc.								

Indicator Assessment Key

Green= Achieved	Yellow= On target to be achieved	Red= Not on target to be achieved
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In addition to the progress towards outcomes analysis:

- Compare and analyse the GEF Tracking Tool at the Baseline with the one completed right before the Midterm Review.
- Identify remaining barriers to achieving the project objective in the remainder of the project.
- By reviewing the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identify ways in which the project can further expand these benefits.

iii. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

Management Arrangements:

- Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of support provided by the GEF Partner Agency (UNDP) and recommend areas for improvement.

Work Planning:

- Review any delays in project start-up and implementation, identify the causes and examine if they have been resolved.
- Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results?
- Examine the use of the project’s results framework/ logframe as a management tool and review any changes made to it since project start.
- Examine the relevance of indicators and targets as per the results framework/ log frame and wherever necessary recommend appropriate changes

Finance and co-finance:

- Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions.
- Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions.
- Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds?
- Informed by the co-financing monitoring table to be filled out, provide commentary on co-financing: is co-financing being used strategically to help the objectives of the project? Is the Project Team meeting with all co-financing partners regularly in order to align financing priorities and annual work plans?

Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:

- Review the monitoring tools currently being used: Do they provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could they be made more participatory and inclusive?
- Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources being allocated effectively?

Stakeholder Engagement:

- Project management: Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders?
- Participation and country-driven processes: Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation?
- Participation and public awareness: To what extent has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives?

Reporting:

- Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management and shared with the Project Board.
- Assess how well the Project Team and partners undertake and fulfil GEF reporting requirements (i.e. how have they addressed poorly-rated PIRs, if applicable?)
- Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.

Communications:

- Review internal project communication with stakeholders: Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are there feedback mechanisms when communication is received? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results?
- Review external project communication: Are proper means of communication established or being established to express the project progress and intended impact to the public (is there a web presence, for example? Or did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?)
- For reporting purposes, write one half-page paragraph that summarizes the project's progress towards results in terms

- of contribution to sustainable development benefits, as well as global environmental benefits.

iv. Sustainability

- Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document, Annual Project Review/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Management Module are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date. If not, explain why.

- In addition, assess the following risks to sustainability:

Financial risks to sustainability:

- What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project's outcomes)?

Socio-economic risks to sustainability:

- Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project? Are lessons learned to be documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?

Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability:

- Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also consider if the required systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place.

Environmental risks to sustainability:

- Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes?

Conclusions & Recommendations

The MTR consultant will include a section of the report setting out the MTR's evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings.⁸

Recommendations should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. A recommendation table should be put in the report's executive summary. See the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for guidance on a recommendation table.

The MTR team should make no more than 15 recommendations total.

Ratings

The MTR consultant will include its ratings of the project's results and brief descriptions of the associated achievements in a *MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table* in the Executive Summary of the MTR report. See Annex E for ratings scales. No rating on Project Strategy and no overall project rating is required.

Table. MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table for (FSM Ridge to Reef Project)

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
Project Strategy	N/A	
Progress Towards Results	Objective Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 1 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 2 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 3 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Etc.	
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	(rate 6 pt. scale)	
Sustainability	(rate 4 pt. scale)	

TIMEFRAME**TIMEFRAME**

The total duration of the MTR will 34 days or approximately *4 months* starting 22 January 2018 *and* shall not exceed five months from when the consultant(s) are hired. The tentative MTR timeframe is as follows:

TIMEFRAME	ACTIVITY
17 January	Application closes
17 – 24 January	Select MTR consultant
25 January – 28 January	Prep the MTR Team (handover of Project Documents) and submission of work plan
29 January – 5 February	Document review and preparing MTR Inception Report
6 February – 13 February	Finalization and Validation of MTR Inception Report- latest start of MTR mission
31 January – 15 February	MTR mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits (approximately 3 – 4 days per state)
19 February -5 March	Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings- earliest end of MTR mission
6 March – 24 March	Preparing and submission of draft report
25 March – 1 April	Incorporating audit trail from feedback on draft report/Finalization of MTR report
1 April - 2 April	Preparation & Issue of Management Response
April 8	Expected date of full MTR completion and audit trail

MID-TERM REVIEW DELIVERABLES

#	Deliverable	Description	Timing	Responsibilities
1	MTR Inception Report	MTR team clarifies objectives and methods of Midterm Review	No later than 2 weeks before the MTR mission – by 13 February	MTR consultant submits to the Commissioning Unit and project management

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2	Presentation	Initial Findings	End of MTR mission – by 5 March	MTR consultant presents to project management and the Commissioning Unit
3	Draft Final Report	Full report (using guidelines on content outlined in Annex B) with annexes	Within 3 weeks of the MTR mission –by 24 March	Sent to the Commissioning Unit, reviewed by RTA, Project Coordinating Unit, GEF OFP
4	Final Report*	Revised report with audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTR report	Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft - by 8 April	Sent to the Commissioning Unit

*The final MTR report must be in English. If applicable, the Commissioning Unit may choose to arrange for a translation of the report into a language more widely shared by national stakeholders. Options for site visits should be provided in the Inception Report

MTR ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's MTR is the UNDP Pacific Office.

The commissioning unit will contract the consultant and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within FSM for the MTR consultant. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the MTR team to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits as well as focal points in each state.

CONSULTANCY CRITERIA

A independent consultant will conduct the MTR - one team leader (with experience and exposure to projects and evaluations in other regions globally). The consultant cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document) and should not have a conflict of interest with project's related activities.

The selection of consultant will be aimed at maximizing the overall qualities in the following areas

- Recent experience with result-based management evaluation methodologies;
- Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;
- Competence in adaptive management, as applied to GEF *Focal Areas* of land degradation, international waters and biodiversity);
- Previous experience facilitating evaluations of GEF/UNDP and other development agency supported projects/initiatives;
- Experience working in the Pacific region and/or small island state is advantageous;
- Work experience in relevant technical areas for at least 10 years;

- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and biodiversity, land degradation and international waters; experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis.
- Excellent communication skills;
- Demonstrable analytical skills;
- A Master's degree in Environmental Conservation, Sustainable Development, Development studies and
- Familiarity and experience with Strategic Environmental Assessment approaches is preferred

The Ful ToR are attached in a separate file submitted to UNDP and the PIU.... The above simply copied the most salient points from the ToR, which re 16 pages.