

## **Strategic Program for Climate Resilience, Pacific Regional Component**

Independent Reviewer: Catherine Bennett

### **Summation**

It is recognised that the proposal has undergone significant consultation and revision since it was first developed. The CROP agencies are identified as the key implementing partners for the regional track, in recognition of their mandated roles, including in capacity building and coordination. Given the level of funding available for the SPCR program, the approach of building upon the work and priorities identified through the CROP organisations and mechanisms is supported.

The objective of the proposal, with its focus on providing support to the integration of CCA and DRR, is appropriate and also supported.

While the Reviewer suggests some issues may need to be addressed going forward, further consultation or revision of this document is not considered an effective use of resources. The following comments are provided for consideration during the process of detailed project preparation.

### **Management and Co-ordination of the SPCR**

The proposal notes the SPCR is ambitious and has relatively modest funding. The ability of the proposed Coordination Secretariat and Adviser Panel to pull together the 3 components and the individual country tracks as a complementary program will be challenging. How it will actually work in practice is still unclear to the Reviewer, but it seems a somewhat complex system for a financially modest program. Nevertheless, this complexity is understandable given the range of stakeholders involved and the need / desire for all of them to be involved in decision-making.

Implementation of each component will be managed by the relevant MDB. The Adviser Panel (of eleven members) will provide high level advice and work on a consensus basis. The Coordination Secretariat role is to coordinate across the components, but will not be involved in implementation and does not have any management or accountability role.

In detailed project preparation there should be careful consideration of the roles and relationships between the Secretariat, the Advisory Panel, and the PPCR sub-committee, and the reporting requirements of all these entities from the various components and to each other.

The risk is that the 3 components will be developed as 3 'siloes' programs. Management arrangements through the Coordination Secretariat and the Advisory Panel, as well as the CROPs and MDBs, should be further clarified in conjunction with detailed project preparation. This will help to ensure that if any particular component is considered to be moving off course it will be identified, and remedial action taken, in a timely manner. It will also be important to clarify who has responsibility for further developing or reviewing the SPCR program level management structures as the CROPs undertake the detailed proposal development

The proposal that the Advisory Panel meets annually may need to be reviewed, particularly in the start up phase.

### **Consistency and clarity of objectives / roles / how complement across 3 components**

In the process of reviewing the revised documentation, it had been noted that the document is not always consistent between the main body of the document, the 3 components descriptions, and the details provided in the Annexes. A number of these inconsistencies have now been addressed, and they may have been simple editorial issues. However some still remain. The major concern regards Component 1 and the support for practical implementation of mainstreaming. The lesson learnt being that SPREP have been supporting national level policy, but it needs to be operationalised through developing and strengthening practical tools. However under the detailed discussion of Component 2 (SPC) there is reference to Component 2 activities “*underpinning the strategic plans being developed through Component 1*”. The SPREP program component targets PICs that have already developed strategic plans, and now provide support for their implementation.

It will be important when developing the specific detailed proposals to ensure that all of the program stakeholders and implementing partners are quite clear what each of the other components and partners are doing so they can indeed complement each other, and it does work as a program. Coordination during the process of detailed project preparation will therefore be crucial. There is a need to clarify responsibility and mechanisms for this coordination pending establishment of the Coordination Secretariat.

### **Transaction Costs**

The proposal notes the total budget is relatively modest. The Reviewer is concerned at the potentially high costs of developing and then monitoring and coordinating this program as designed.

It is noted the management and admin costs estimated for the 3 components is also high (ranging from 20 – 28 % of total component funding). The Reviewer understands the budget arrangements for the Coordination Secretariat will be developed after a decision is made its placement, and this will be an additional overhead cost. The total cost of administration and coordination should be reviewed when developing the detailed proposals.

### **Developing the detailed Component designs**

Given the program will build upon agreed priorities of the CROP agencies the costs for developing the proposal(s) are considered quite high.

In the case of Components 1 and 2 the proposals will build upon core business. Exiting staff in the relevant CROP agencies (SPREP, SPC and FFA) should be best placed to develop the detailed programs. (The proposal is also looking to maximise the use of expertise available in the CROPs). The merit of consultants undertaking the project preparation work should be reviewed with the CROPs. If it is a matter of the CROPs having limited staff resources or flexibility, ADB / WB should consider providing direct supplementation to the relevant CROPs.

The reviewer recognizes the capacity constraints that CROPs face are significant and, as such, may require some consultancy inputs. However the level of consultant time seems very high. For example under Component 2 the proposal is for 3 person months for the FFA program, and for the SPC program 4 international and 7 national person-months of consulting services including a Knowledge Management Specialist (2 months), Environmental Specialist (2 months), Social Impact Specialist (2months) and a Financial Management Specialist (1 month), to develop an activity proposal that has been under discussion for almost 12 months and is building upon existing core SPC

and FFA activities. During detailed project preparation the overlays and / or complementarities between CROP resources and Component 2 resources should be explored.

Suggest consideration should be given during detailed project preparation to supplementing existing CROP agencies resources rather than using consultants and review the total level of resources required.

### **Component 1**

CCA mainstreaming has been identified as core business for SPREP for several years. The detailed project preparation needs to consider reasons for lack of progress to date and the priority needs that PICs are now articulating. The current document goes some way to address this. As noted in Annex 5: “integrated implementation” has been slow and “a multitude of instruments and institutional arrangements for regional donor and country coordination exist. These have been easy to discuss but difficult to action”

So it needs to be made clear during detailed project preparation how SPREP will address these issues through developing more tools and instruments. The tools identified to be developed under Component 1 are not new. The proposal suggests they in some cases they are to be strengthened or made explicit. i.e.:

- **strengthening** of the traditional EIA, social impact analysis and cost benefit analysis processes;
- **explicit** consideration of the expected and potential impacts of known climatic hazards and projected climate change on a proposed development and its environs;
- the development of checklists or guides for planners (at central agencies) that are screening development projects for government and donor funding as well as for agencies responsible for permits, licensing or lease for land, coastal area or floodplains development; **(do these already exist? Why are they not being used?)** and community planning and implementation to ensure that CCA and DRR are incorporated at all phases of development planning through to implementation and monitoring. **(how is this to be done ? – working with sub national level government is resource intensive)**

The detailed project preparation process will need to consider mechanisms to support practical application. At sub national level the issue is often a problem of gaining consistency in the approach and the tools used, rather than the tools not existing.

Perhaps more fundamentally is the question of DRR and CCA integration in the CROPs themselves, and how this program will support this integration. It is discussed in the early part of the document as an issue. And it is proposed that another regional framework will be developed. SPREP and SPC and SPC / SOPAC (which has the mandate for DRR under CROP) need to be working in collaboration on Component 1, the development of the tools and their implementation and the development of this new framework. This needs to be more clearly articulated in the detailed proposal for Component 1.

A phased approach is proposed, with an initial focus on “*three or four PICs*”. The detailed proposal will need determine which of the potential PICs nominated (*Niue, RMI, Tuvalu, Cook Islands, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands*) are to be targeted. SPC and FFA should be involved in this selection process given this component will aim to use the sector specific knowledge gained under Component 2.

### **Component 2**

The SPC program builds on previous activities and seems relatively self-contained. That is both

strength, and a possible challenge – i.e. the main challenge may be to get SPREP and SPC collaborating and complementing each other's work at practical implementation level across the targeted PICs.

However the FFA sub component appears to be an 'add-on'. The Reviewer is aware of the significance of the tuna fisheries for PIC economies and its potential for food security. But this part of the program seems to sit alongside, or even outside, the arguments and modalities described for food security and developing tools for resilience. Under Component 2 the role of SPC inshore fisheries with respect to food security is also not mentioned.

Has, or could, consideration be given to ADB / WB providing separate core funding for FFA assessment of the impact of CCA on tuna fisheries, and rely on the existing regional coordination mechanisms to provide this information to the relevant PICs. It is recognised the consultations to date have been extensive. But the addition of FFA as an implementing partner further adds to the transaction costs and complexity of an already ambitious program, and it is unclear how it will be integrated.

### **Component 3 – RTSM**

PIFS is the key policy agency under the CROP architecture. However the proposal notes: *"SPREP's expertise and experience in climate change and disaster risk reduction mainstreaming should lead in the regional track mainstreaming and provide TA to the national track mainstreaming in Tonga, Samoa and PNG"*.

As the RTSM aims to provide additional TA and services for mainstreaming, it may be better developed by and located in SPREP, with Component 1, which is attempting to mainstream CCA and DRR. The reviewer recommends that CROP CEOs consider this issue when deciding where the RTSM should be housed.

The need to have an RTSM at all raises an issue that is broader and beyond the scope of SPCR, but needs to be addressed by development partners, including the MDBs.

The body of the document identifies the problem for many of the CROP agencies is the inability of their technical staff to respond because as the proposal rightly identified - (CROP)... *positions do not often come with resources that allow for their deployment on a needs basis, but rather their positions are planned against a specific work program and budget allocated a year in advance by respective governing councils. Alternatively, they are factored into a project that does not always allow for flexible responsiveness to unplanned needs arising from member countries on an ad hoc basis.*

This issue is a result of the way CROPs are being funded – i.e. project, not core or program funding. But the proposed solution is to develop a separate RTSM fund and mechanism. Effectively this proposal responds to the demand for responsive TA by establishing another separate project rather than providing core funds to the give the CROPs capacity to deploy the relevant resources they have on a needs basis.

Given the project funding approach by donors (and the MDBs) the Reviewer recognises this may be a pragmatic option that the region has identified. It does respond to PICs needs and demands for CCA and DRR related technical assistance.

**Other Issues for consideration:**

Confusion between Outputs and Outcomes. Component 1 Outcomes are capacity building programs are 'completed'. Suggest this is an output – not an outcome. It is noted in the new Logic Model Outputs and Outcomes are dealt with as a single section. Suggest indicators of the desired outcomes of the capacity building are articulated.

Gender and youth: in Annex 7 it is stated that SPC's Human Development Programme gender, culture and youth specialists will work across the different components to ensure that these key issues are incorporated into the decision making processes and knowledge products that are developed. This is strongly supported – using the SPC existing resource would be a good mechanism for coordination and sharing of lessons. Resourcing this, with mechanisms clearly articulated in each component, should be addressed in detailed project preparation

**Issues for the MDBs going forward**

The document identifies the development communities working in silos as a barrier. The MDBs are a part of that community. It would be useful to have discussions at senior level as to how this silo mentality can be overcome when it comes to provision of funding. It appears the PICs are often driven by or responding to how donors deliver funding and their reporting requirements.

**The Regional Track Process:**

As an external Reviewer to this process, developing the regional track appears to have been resource intensive for all involved. It is understood that the process is in line with CIF requirements. However designing a program by consensus is difficult given the diversity in the region and the number of stakeholders involved. The reviewer appreciates the Banks may not want to be overly prescriptive, and consultation is critical. But consensus in any group of stakeholders does not always lead to optimal outcomes. Perhaps Bank processes for a regional program need to be streamlined or reviewed. During detailed project preparation it may be necessary to operate not only by consensus in order to ensure effective implementation and achieve outcomes. The MDBs may need to make some hard choices about appropriate implementation entities and related resource allocations.

Despite the time and level of consultations undertaken to date some of the basic issues, such as location of the RTSM and the Coordination Secretariat are still to be agreed. These outstanding issues should be resolved as soon as possible. It is noted that these decisions will be made by the region itself through the CROP executive committee on climate change.