



Terms of Reference: National Climate Expert (NCE)

About this document

This document specifies the terms of reference for the UNEP Climate Services and Knowledge Management programme for the Cook Islands.

Purpose

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) approved Programme “Enhancing Climate Information and Knowledge Services for resilience in 5 island countries¹ of the Pacific Ocean” paves the way for critical climate information and data gathering, and dissemination for the benefit of communities and individuals in remote and isolated islands of the Cook Islands.

Under this approved proposal, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the Accredited Entity (AE) to the Green Climate Fund (GCF), and will be responsible for overseeing the implementation, financial management, evaluation, reporting and closure of activities under the Programme. Each of the five participating Pacific Island countries, including the Cook Islands, has identified and then designated an Executing Entity (EE) for the programme execution. In this context in the Cook Islands has designated and received approval that the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MFEM), which will serve as the EE under the Programme. In addition, UNEP will undertake limited EE functions through its Sub-regional Office for the Pacific, based in Samoa.

The proposal comprises four key components: i) Strengthened delivery model for climate information services and multi-hazard early warning systems (MHEWS) covering oceans and islands; ii) Strengthened observations, monitoring, modelling, and prediction of climate and its impacts on ocean areas and islands; iii) Improved community preparedness, response capabilities, and resilience to climate risks; and iv) Enhanced regional knowledge management and cooperation for climate services and MHEWS.

This TOR is for a consultant National Climate Expert (NCE) who shall undertake activities as they relate to Climate Services and Product Development components across multi-stakeholders, and in close coordination with the Cook Islands Meteorological Services, Cook Islands.

The NCSC will focus on climate science and data analysis for new functions as well as the day-to-day responsibility for sector and inter-ministry coordination. The NCSC will be responsible for enhancing the capacity of Cook Islands Meteorological Services (NMS) for the provision of tailored, location-specific climate services and products relevant to climate-sensitive sectors from government agencies to community level. This will be achieved through the enhancement of in-house forecasting capacity and systems; introduction of impact-based forecasting; establishment of climate science and analysis capacity; facilitating stakeholder uptake of impact-based forecasts and information; and generation of customised climate information and early warnings.

The NCE will work closely with the National Programme Implementation Manager (NPIM), National Climate Data Consultant (NCDC), National Ocean Expert (NOE), National Finance Officer (NFO), and other programme consultants and Technical Partners, under the management of the Director of CIMS.

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¹ Cook Islands, Niue, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Palau, Tuvalu



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Outputs/Activity

The National Climate Expert (NCE) will assist and support Cook Islands Meteorological Service (CIMS) to establish climate information services, including working closely with the NPIM, NCDC, NOE, and other consultants, and will coordinate activities of mutual interest between Climate Change Cook Islands (CCCI), from existing and emerging plans and programs, as they relate to weather and climate monitoring, services and products (under Activity 2.2 – “Strengthen ocean and climate modelling and impact-based forecasting”).

The Programme will enhance NMHS capacity to use the data captured or received to develop tailored, location specific climate services and products relevant to climate-sensitive sectors from government agencies to community level, including through the establishment of in-house impact-based forecasting capacity.



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No.	Activity	Sub Activity	Due date
	<p>Project Coordination Work closely with the NPIM, NCDC, NOE, NFO, and relevant local and international consultants and Technical Partners under the Programme to ensure strong coordination of all activities, particularly under Activity 2.2</p> <p>1.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participate in the development and implementation of the National Framework for Climate Services (NFCS) and Climate Sector Action and Communication Plans for key sectors;• Support the strengthening of climate modelling and impact-based forecasting• Responsible for sector and inter-ministerial coordination to access, use and improve climate information products and services including with Emergency Management Cook Islands, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, and other applicable users from CSO's/NGO community• Work with the Programme-hired National Climate Experts in other Programme countries to ensure coherence and maximise synergies, knowledge sharing and lessons learning• Provide technical and advisory support to the Programme Management Unit (PMU) on climate information services and applications in climate change and disaster risk management, as required	



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	<p>2. Project Implementation Work closely with the NPIM, NCDC, NOE, NFO, and relevant local and international consultants and Technical Partners under the Programme to achieve programme outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Co-facilitate stakeholder engagement workshops and consultations as required to support development of frameworks, policies and planning related to climate services;• Support the Cook Islands Meteorological Service to organise and conduct National Climate Outlook Forums• Enhance understanding amongst national stakeholders on the use of climate data and information to understand weather and climate impacts and to inform effective adaptation planning;• Support with building the scientific understanding to explain the application of climate monitoring and prediction products to all sectors;• Develop new climate products and services in response to user demand, including costs and benefits• For quality control purposes, the NCE will only provide data and information from a climate services product to the INFORM platform (Cook Islands Environment Data Portal) or GIS Hub with the agreement of the Director• Participate in regular training and mentoring related to meteorology and climate services, including attachments, regional meetings and attendance at key conferences	
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3. Reporting requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and submit quarterly progress reports and updates on programme implementation to the EE • Assist the PMU in the preparation of national annual work plans, budgets, procurement plans and related documents/reports, as required 	Quarterly
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Methodology

The Consultant will be required to abide by the Cook Islands Government Public Sector Code of Conduct in particular to carry out their duties in a professional, transparent, participatory and culturally appropriate way. In addition, they must also operate in accordance with all Cook Islands law, regulations and procedures, particularly the:

- Cook Islands Government Financial Policy and Procedures Manual
- Tarai Vaka Process activity management system
- the Cook Island Environment Act 2003 and all subsequent amendments
- The Climate Change Policy and its Country Program
- The emerging Climate Change Response bill development

Expected Competencies

It is expected that the NCE will have the following academic qualifications:

- Graduate degree (Bachelor level, equivalent or higher) in a relevant environmental science.
- A science graduate level with practical working experience will also be considered.

Required Skills and Experience

The successful applicant will have:

- A minimum of 5+ years of proven relevant, practical working experience in similar projects.
- Demonstrated knowledge and skills in environment, climate change and/or meteorology.
- Some knowledge and skills in developing climate information products and services.
- Some knowledge and skills of IT applications for climate services.
- Ability to support climate data analysis and applications in climate change and/or environmental-related reporting and planning.
- Good understanding of climate change risks, hazards, and impacts in the Cook Islands.
- Experience in Pacific Island Countries (PICs) and Cook Islands preferable.
- Strong ability to work as part of a team and actively pursuing networking.



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- Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English and Cook Islands Maori preferred.
- Excellent computer skills (MS Office applications) and ability to use information technologies as a tool and resource.

Performance Standards

All Services must be provided in a professional manner and in accordance with reasonable expectations of the Cook Islands Government. In respect of implementation, the NCSC must meet or exceed the applicable targets as above in the Outputs/Activity table. The services will also be delivered in a manner which provides the best outcomes in terms of the Development Effectiveness criteria specified by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC): relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.

Background

The overall goal of the Programme is to increase the resilience of populations in the Cook Islands, Niue, Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and Tuvalu to climate change and climate-related hazards, through the delivery of timely, accurate and actionable climate and ocean information and early warnings to facilitate climate-resilient policy, planning, preparedness and response actions.

The Programme will establish integrated climate and ocean information services and multi-hazard early warning systems (MHEWS) in five Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS): Cook Islands, Niue, Palau, RMI and Tuvalu. This will be achieved through the following four inter-related Programme Results:

Programme Result 1:

Strengthened delivery model for climate information services and MHEWS covering oceans and islands. This will put in place the institutional frameworks, market analyses, financial policies and mainstreaming of climate risk knowledge to underpin a sustainable business delivery model for climate services.

Programme Result 2:

Strengthened observations, monitoring, modelling and prediction of climate and its impacts on ocean areas and islands. This will transform the five National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) from WMO Basic (Category 1) to Essential (Category 2) level; meet the surface-based standards of the Global Basic Observing Network (GBON); establish end-to-end Ocean Information Services; establish Quality Management Systems (QMSs); and support Impact-based Forecasting – with a focus on building in-country capacity for long-term sustainability.

Programme Result 3:

Improved community preparedness, response capabilities and resilience to climate risks. This will establish last-mile delivery of early warning and early action in island communities through enhanced warning communication, dissemination, and building preparedness and response capacities. It will also introduce Forecast-based Financing to facilitate the shift from traditional reactive responses to pre-event early action.

Programme Result 4:

Enhanced regional knowledge management and cooperation for climate services and MHEWS. This will optimise synergies among the Programme countries; establish an interactive ICT platform and harmonised data management; institute joint learning and training through WMO and other training centres; and foster networking and mentoring in support of Programme implementation.

The Programme will be executed by five national Executing Entities (EE) designated by the Government in each country. The national EE for Cook Islands is Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM). The MFEM



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will be accountable to UN Environment Programme (UNEP) for Programme execution in Cook Islands, and for the effective and efficient use of resources. In addition, UNEP will undertake limited EE functions through its Sub-regional Office for the Pacific, including in the context of Programme Result 4 focusing on regional knowledge management and cooperation. Consultants and Technical Partners will be contracted to undertake relevant activities as appropriate.

Technical Partners will include the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the Pacific Community (SPC), Australian Bureau of Meteorology (BoM), New Zealand National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA), the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), University of Hawai'i (UH), East-West Center (EWC) and APEC Climate Center (APCC), with technical advice from the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

UNEP is the Accredited Entity (AE) to the donor, the Green Climate Fund (GCF), and will be responsible for overseeing the implementation, financial management, evaluation, reporting and closure of activities under the Programme. UNEP will ensure that the Programme is implemented according to the policies and guidelines of UNEP and the GCF.

The Programme will be implemented across 5 years beginning 13 September 2021 or the date of effectiveness of the Funded Activity Agreement between the GCF and UNEP.

Brief history of the programme/activity

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) approved the Enhancing Climate Information Knowledge Services for resilience 5 island countries in 2020. This paves the way for critical climate information and data gathering, and dissemination for the benefit of communities and individuals in remote and isolated islands of the Cook Islands.

The proposal comprises 3 key components; Strengthened delivery model for climate services and MHEWS covering oceans and islands; strengthened observations, monitoring, modelling, and prediction of climate and its impacts on ocean areas and islands; improved community preparedness, response capabilities, and resilience to climate risks.

Under this approved proposal, the UN Environment Program through both its headquarters and regional office in Samoa, is approved as the Accredited Entity (AE) for accessing the funds at the Green Climate Fund. Each of the 5x participating Pacific Island countries, including the Cook Islands has identified and then designated an Executing Entity for the project implementation. In this context in the Cook Islands has designated the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) to serve as the Executing Entity (EE) under the project.

Relevant reports/documentation

- GCF Funding proposal: Enhancing Climate information and Knowledge Services for Resilience in 5 island countries of the Pacific Ocean
- Cook Islands Third National Communication December 2019
- Cook Islands Climate Change Policy 2018-2028 and Country Program
- Ministry of Transport Strategic Plan and emerging policy as it relates to CIMS
- Other relevant regional PMC outputs and strategies



Issues, risks or constraints

Identify the issues, risks and constraints of the project.

The collection of specific information/data is curtailed by a third-party (e.g. gov agency unable to provide documents) – low/medium risk.

Governance and management

The Ministry of Finance and Economic Management is the Executing Entity (EE) and is responsible for programme execution while partnering with the Climate Change Cook Islands, Cook Islands Meteorological Services and other programme stakeholders to achieve the programme outcomes.

The NCE will be based at the Cook Islands Meteorological Service office.

The NCE will report to the Director of the Cook Islands Meteorological Services, Ministry of Finance and Economic Management and will work alongside the programme team to ensure programme is successfully implemented and executed.

Approved by: (signature)	
Title and Ministry/Agency/Dept:	
Date:	