

**GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE ALLIANCE:
PACIFIC SMALL ISLAND STATES PROJECT**

CONCEPT NOTE

Building Climate Change Resilience through Direct Access to Climate Change Financing

Short Description of the Project

The Cook Islands Government is seeking National Implementing Entity (NIE) status with the Adaptation Fund. This will allow government the preferred modality of direct access to Climate Change funding allowing in-country management and delivery of CCA related priorities over a longer timeframe than presently exists.

In a broader context the CI Government hopes the efforts to attain accreditation reap benefits beyond the Adaptation Fund to other Climate Change Financing options and supports our Government strengthening activities as we strive for a more transparent and accountable MFEM.

Having completed an initial assessment of readiness for the accreditation with support from the UNDP earlier in 2012, the Cook Islands are now clear on where we have gaps and the direction for the future. Consequently we are now seeking Technical Assistance (TA) to progress us towards a successful application with the Adaptation Fund.

The TA seeks to:

- Verifying the current NIE assessment information through documentation centralisation
- Consultation with ministries to work on the plans that need to be put in place to address the gaps
- Providing (and in some cases brokering) solutions to the gaps
- Development and subsequent preparation of training materials where possible and practical
- Preparation of an overall Implementation plan, in consultation with all ministries, to define clear activities, timeframes and resources
- Documentation of all processes to support the application to the AF.

The European Union-funded Global Climate Change Alliance: Pacific Small Island States (GCCA: PSIS) project has provided funding for technical assistance for the Cook Islands Government to advance the NIE process. This work is being conducted in 2014.

The GCCA: PSIS is implemented by the [Secretariat of the Pacific Community](#).

Background and Justification

The Cook Islands are adversely affected by climate change impacts and on an ongoing basis have to adapt to a rapidly changing environment which can pose significant risk to livelihoods and quality of life, especially in the 11 Pa Enea (sister islands). While CC funding across the globe is significant, the process to access these funds can be time consuming and complex. Additionally, there are often pressures for regional programs which do not always meet the needs of the Cook Islands and its' own priorities.

The Cook Islands is Self Governing and has a National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) which outlines our clear development priorities over the next 5 years. At a budget and sector level we are very clear what issues need to be addressed in the areas of Climate Change Adaptation and want to be

best positioned to direct funds to appropriate activities over the short and longer term. NIE Accreditation enables this process.

The TA will assist with information gathering, process documentation and capacity building to obtain NIE accreditation. The following capacities of the national entity (MFEM) would be progressed:

Financial Integrity and Management:

- (i) Accurately and regularly record transactions and balances in line with good practices, and are audited;
- (ii) Managing and disbursing funds efficiently and with safeguards;
- (iii) Producing financial plans and budgets;
- (iv) Legal status to contract with the Adaptation Fund.

Institutional Capacity:

- (i) Procurement procedures which provide for transparent practices;
- (ii) Capacity to undertake monitoring and evaluation.

Project/ Programme Management Capacity:

- (i) Ability to identify, develop and appraise projects;
- (ii) Competency to manage or oversee the execution of the project/program including ability to manage sub-recipients and to support project /program delivery and implementation.

Transparency and Self-investigative Powers:

- (i) Competency to deal with financial mismanagement and other forms of malpractice.