



Pacific Regional CSO Meeting GEF ECW Tuesday 04 October 2016
Sheraton Fiji Resort, Denarau Island South, Nadi, Fiji
By Fiu Mata'ese Elisara/RFP/Pacific



Photo of the participants in the Pacific CSO Meetings 04 October 2016, Nadi, Fiji

Background:

The Pacific CSOs Meetings was held at the Sheraton Fiji Resort in Nadi Fiji on Tuesday 04 October 2016. Some seventeen (17) participants from the 17 countries that make up the Pacific Region in the GEF ECW were supported by GEF SEC for these meetings. Only the representative from Timor Leste did not turn up and we have not been informed of the reasons for this. A number of the participants were attending these GEF related meetings for the first time and found the sharing very useful. Despite some late changes, we were able to secure travel arrangement for at least two participants made difficult with the specific problems of small island states when travel offices in their respective countries close during the weekends. In addition to the 17 supported by GEFSEC, our registration showed a total of twenty six (26) participants which included some country officials, the current GEF Council member from the Pacific, Peter Lalas as Adviser to the CEO of GEF, William Ehlers as Secretary to the GEF Council, a number of the GEFSEC staff, and a few local CSOs from Nadi who we gave an opportunity to share their project experiences on GEF-SGP and part of the 'ridge to reef' site visits planned for the ECW participants on Friday 7 October 2016.

Agenda of the CSO Meeting:

Time	Details
8.00 – 8:30	<p>WELCOME REMARKS Fiu Mataese Elisara, <i>RFP Pacific</i> Peter Lalas, Adviser to the GEF/CEO William Ehlers, Secretary to GEF Council</p>
8:30 – 9:30	<p>SESSION 1 : INTRODUCTION Moderated by Fiu Mataese Elisara, <i>RFP Pacific</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-introductions • Objectives and agenda of meeting • An Overview of GEF and the GEF-CSO Network • GEF CSO Network Strategic Plan 2015-2022 • Update on evaluation of GEF CSO Network by IEO • Agenda of ECW meeting and key issues for CSO engagement • Mode of operation
9:30 – 10.00	Group Photo and Coffee break
10.00 – 11.30	<p>SESSION 2 : GEF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT POLICY Moderated by Fiu Mataese Elisara, <i>RFP Pacific</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing on ongoing review of Public Involvement Policy and interim findings • Key areas requiring input from CSOs and ECW participants (based on PIP-WG guidance) • Discussion and inputs from CSOs on level of engagement of CSOs in GEF Programme implementation in respective countries/region
11.30 – 12.00	<p>SESSION 3 : GEF 7 PROCESSES Moderated by Fiu Mataese Elisara, <i>RFP Pacific</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEF7 replenishment • Sharing of GEF/SGP ‘Rise Beyond the Reef’ Project in Nadi Fiji
12.00-13.00	<p>SESSION 4 : THE WAY FORWARD Moderated by Fiu Mataese Elisara, <i>RFP Pacific</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of options to enhance CSO engagement in GEF CSO Network activities in the region • Capacity strengthening needs and opportunities for CSOs • Summary of deliberations and meeting outcome to the ECW • Review and Feedback – Please fill in and hand it over to Fiu Elisara/RFP Pacific <p>Closing</p>
13.00 – 14.30	Lunch

Welcome session:

Fiu Elisara as RFP for the Pacific welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. Ms Veikila Vuki of Fiji started the meeting with a word of prayer. Mr Peter Lalas added his words of welcome from GEF CEO and Secretariat and elaborated on GEF6, preparations for GEF7, the 51st Council Meetings 22-27 October in Washington DC, the GEF 2020 Strategy, and stressed the value of CSO contribution to GEF work. William Ehlers provided additional and detailed explanations on the items on the agenda that complemented the presentations by RFP on GEF CSO Network and its Strategic Plan 2015-2022, Public Involvement Policy, GEF6, Council Meetings, and process on Replenishment for GEF7.

Introductions:

Participants were given the opportunity to introduce themselves and provided some alignment for all participants on their countries and organizations, and what they expect from these meetings.

1. Kelvin Passfield – Te Ipukere Society (TIS), Cook Islands
2. Veikila Vuki – Oceania Environment Consultants, Fiji
3. Adinindyah Arya Wisnutama – LANE Foundation, Indonesia
4. Martin Tofinga – The EcoCare Group, Kiribati
5. Andy George – Kosrae Conservation and Safety organization, Micronesia
6. Haseldon Buraman – ECO Nauru, Nauru
7. Umai Basilius – Palau Conservation Society, Palau
8. Willie Kerenga – United Nauro-Gor, PNG
9. Oliver Agoncillo – Foundation for Philippines Environment, Philippines
10. Fiu Mata'ese Elisara – Ole Siosiomaga Society Incorporated, RFP Pacific Region, Samoa
11. Seumanutafa Dr Malcolm Hazelman – OLSSI, Samoa
12. Michael Ha'apio – USP/ISSI, Solomon Island
13. Emeline Siale Iloahia – Civil Society Forum of Tonga, Tonga
14. Hohn Liu – Vanuatu CSOs, Vanuatu
15. Alana Takuani – NIOFA, Niue
16. John Tannary – Nauru Private Business Sector organization, Nauru
17. Krishne Praser – Ministry of Environment, Fiji
18. Mataio Tekinene – Government of Tuvalu, Tuvalu
19. Tahirih Hokafonua – Government of Tonga Environment Department, Tonga
20. Semi Lotawa – Rise Beyond the Reef, SGP, Nadi, Fiji
21. Augus Rurly – Ministry of Environment and Forestry, GEF Secretariat, Indonesia
22. Bruce Kijjaer – Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Pacific GEF Council Member, Marshall Islands
23. William Ehlers – Secretary to GEF Council, Uruguay
24. Peter L alas – Adviser to GEF-CEO, USA
25. Laura Whitford – GEFSEC, Australia
26. Lisa Pharoah – RARE, USA

Overview of GEF and GEF CSO Network (see Attachment 1)

Fiu Elisara as RFP Pacific walked the meeting through this 19 slides powerpoint presentation as in Attachment 1. This generated a lot of discussion where new participants found the overview useful and for their own better alignment on the work of the CSO Network. Fiu took the opportunity to thank the members of the Pacific CSO Network for the confidence placed on him and his organization, OLSSI, to take on the RFP responsibilities for a second term of 4 years. He also acknowledged the presence of one OLSSI Board member, Seumanutafa Dr Malcolm Hazelman and appreciated the support of OLSSI Board to this work for the first term despite the lack of resources support from GEF to implement an enormous expectation for this work. Fiu encouraged new members to register and welcomed both TIS of the Cook Islands which registered after the ECW last year in 2015, and United Nauro-Gur of PNG as the latest member which brings a total of members of the GEF CSO Network to around ten (10).

GEF CSO Network Strategic Plan 2015-2022 (see Attachment 1)

See Attachment 2 for this 7 slides presentation which is self-explanatory, but Fiu referred to this as an important initiative that tries to address the resources issues needed for the GEF CSO Network and its Coordinating Committee of 16 RFPs and 3 Indigenous Peoples Focal Points to implement the work expected of them.

GEF Public Involvement Policy (see Attachment 2)

Fiu presented on this thirty (30) power point slides on Implementation and Review of this key Public Involvement Policy which is a pivotal requirement that CSOs need to watch out for at the country and project level to ensure that stakeholders are adequately and meaningfully engaged. William Ehlers added

to the importance of this policy and related guidelines that came out of the review process and how GEF expects the eighteen Implementing Agencies to ensure this PIP policy is complied with and aligne their own respective stakeholder engagement policies. Fiu reminded the participants that they need to play the role of monitoring this at the country and program level as there is no attempt by the IAs to check on government reports regarding meaningful consultations as often progress reports are not adequately checked for ground truthing in regards stakeholder consultation and engagement.

Evaluation of GEF5 and GEF6

An opportunity was given to a member of the GEFSEC to speak briefly on the outcome of GEF review and then to what is expected in terms of the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of GEF going into GEF 6. However, he only introduced this as a major part of his presentation in the next two days of ECW meetings and will leave it to that time to share with all the ECW participants.

GEF 7 Processes (see Attachment 3)

Fiu walked the meeting through the 7 slides of powerpoint on GEF7 replenishment which was added to by William Ehlers as to process and timing.

SGP – Rise Beyond the Reefs:

An opportunity was given to the local SGP project “Rise Beyond the Reef” where Semi Lotawa briefed the meeting on a project that engaged a village community that lived far inland in the Sleeping Giants Mountains and how their lives have been transformed by the project led by local advisers and experts to change their mindset from a sugar cane focus to a multi-cropping land utilization engagement which utilized local baseline linked to food security, good village governance, income generating, and land degradation approaches. As well, Semi briefed the participants on what to expect when they go out on the field trip to this area and how this initiative has engaged some more than 240 women and villages in a ‘Shelter from the Storm’ project which has been run very successfully where communities engage in handcrafted cyclone relief products for income to support their own recovery.

The Way Forward

Many of the participants found the sharing interesting, useful, and generated a lot of discussion on all the areas covered in the powerpoint presentations. The complementary explanations from William Ehlers and Peter Lalas provide further clarity on the presentations. Of interest is the participants’ sharing on areas to move the work of CSOs forward that include information sharing, networking, possibility of using social media to exchange information, share experiences and case studies, how to contribute to the work of the GEF CSO Network through the Pacific RFP, etc.

In sum, the participants found the CSO meetings useful and help prepare them for the next two days of ECW discussions when they join the government officials, GEF SEC staff, UN Agencies, IAs representatives, and GEF/SGP. As RFP of the Pacific CSO Network, Fiu encouraged the CSO participants to speak out and not be suppressed by the others when they go into the meetings over the next two days. Participants were also asked to fill in their evaluation forms and hand them over to RFP when completed. Out of the 8 evaluation forms returned, there seems to be general appreciation of the value of the CSO meetings. Some are happy with the half day but some say the one full day was needed as in the past. Many say they met expectations but with some suggestions that prior information sharing on background and contribution to agenda are needed. Some suggest that there is a need for future ECWs to be held in the North Pacific as most have been held in the South Pacific. There is a clear dissatisfaction in relation to prior clear information on logistics, meeting rooms, issuing of per diems where many requests these be given out on arrival to cover needs, lack of background information on agenda items, etc. Participants have been happy about accommodation and local organization. There are suggestions to confirm the need raised in the CSO meetings about social media to enable connectivity with other members around the Pacific.

The meeting closed with a word of prayer by the Fiji CSO representative, Ms Veikila Vuki.

