



Conserving biodiversity and enhancing ecosystem functions through a 'Ridge to Reef' approach in Cook Islands (Cook Islands R2R)

REQUEST FOR QUOTES (RFQ): MARAE MOANA OUTLOOK REPORT 2020 – LEAD REVIEWER (position #18)

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1. Introduction

1.1 Project description

The Cook Islands Ridge to Reef (R2R) project is funded by the UNDP Global Environment Facility (GEF) in partnership with the Cook Islands Government. The project aims to enhance the capacity of the Cook Islands to effectively manage its protected areas and sustainably manage its productive landscapes at local scales while considering food security and livelihoods. This includes the operationalisation of the Cook Island Marine Park (CIMP) (covering approximately 1.1 million km² of Cook Islands southern Exclusive Economic Zone - EEZ¹) and the establishment and strengthening of various forms of protected and locally managed areas within the CIMP, including protected natural areas, community conservation areas, and ra'ui sites.

In so doing, the project will support the Cook Islands in maintaining traditional resource management and conservation systems and approaches, including a leading role for traditional and local leaders and the local communities that they represent in the declaration and management of protected areas, while also integrating these traditional systems into a formal legal and institutional system of protected areas.

The project will support the Government in tailoring policy, regulatory and institutional frameworks to suit the specific characteristics of the Cook Islands and of the new CIMP, recognising that protection and sustainable use will need to be zoned and planned carefully, and that tenure over most land areas is vested in local communities through a traditional tenure system.

The project has been designed to engineer a paradigm shift in the management of marine and terrestrial protected areas - from a site centric approach to a holistic 'ridge to reef' management approach, whereby tourism and agriculture activities in production landscapes adjacent to marine and terrestrial protected areas will be managed to reduce threats to biodiversity.

The project started in July 2015 (upon signature of the project document) and was originally intended to be completed and close in July 2019. However approval was provided in early 2019 for a no-cost project extension to 6 January 2021.

The Cook Islands National Environment Service (NES) is the lead executing agency for R2R, responsible for project management, coordination and collaboration with implementation partners.

The project has seven output areas as follows:

- Output 1.1: Strengthened legal / regulatory and policy frameworks for protected areas
- Output 1.2: Expanded and strengthened management systems for protected areas
- Output 1.3: Strengthened institutional coordination and capacities at the national and local levels for the participatory management of protected areas
- Output 1.4: Financial sustainability framework developed for system of protected areas
- Output 2.1: Ridge to Reef approaches integrated into land use and development planning
- Output 2.2: Biodiversity conservation mainstreamed into agriculture sector
- Output 2.3: Biodiversity conservation mainstreamed into tourism sector.

The Government of Cook Islands is recruiting three (3) Marae Moana Outlook Report reviewers under output 1.4 of the Cook Islands Ridge to Reef Project.

1.2 Project design

The R2R project design includes a Strategic Results Framework (SRF) which forms the basis to project planning, and monitoring, evaluation and reporting (MER). The SRF defines the R2R objective as:

To build national and local capacities and actions to ensure effective conservation of biodiversity, food security and livelihoods and the enhancement of ecosystem functions within the Cook Islands Marine Park.

¹ Since the R2R project was initially designed and commenced (in July 2015), the CIMP (renamed as Marae Moana) has been extended to cover the entire EEZ.

There are two project 'components' (outcomes):

- Outcome 1: Strengthening protected areas management
- Outcome 2: Effective mainstreaming of biodiversity in key sectors to mitigate threats within production landscapes.

This consultancy falls within outcome 1.

The SRF has 34 key performance indicators (KPIs) with targets; these targets will be the basis upon which the performance of the project will be assessed during the R2R terminal evaluation (TE) (anticipated to be commissioned by UNDP in October 2020).

SRF indicators and targets directly related to this consultancy are:

SRF #	Description of Indicator	End of project target level
1	Overall framework in place for conservation in the Southern Group of the Cook Islands	1.1 million sq. km. of CIMP legally designated and actively managed, with dedicated staff implementing planning and coordination of the entire CIMP by end of year 2
4	Improved management effectiveness of Cook Islands Marine Park, as measured by GEF BD 1 Tracking Tool (METT)	METT score > 60 by end of project Score 46 at time of Capacity Needs Assessment Report 2019 (CNAR)

The R2R Project, National Environment Service (NES) and Marae Moana Coordination Office (MMCO) within the Cook Islands Government seeks a consultant to undertake an expert review of the draft Marae Moana Outlook Report 2020 in support of the above outputs.

2. Background

Section 34 of the *Marae Moana Act 2017*² provides the legislative basis for outlook reporting in the Marae Moana as follows:

(1) *The Council must prepare and submit to the Prime Minister a report (the marae moana outlook report) about the marae moana every 6 years. The first report must be provided to the Prime Minister by 30 June 2018.*

(2) *The report must describe and assess—*

- (a) the current health of ecosystems within the marae moana and of ecosystems outside the marae moana to the extent that they affect the marae moana; and*
- (b) the status of biodiversity within the marae moana; and*
- (c) commercial and non-commercial use of the marae moana; and*
- (d) risks to the ecosystems within the marae moana; and*
- (e) the resilience of ecosystems within the marae moana; and*
- (f) existing measures in place to protect and manage ecosystems within the marae moana; and*
- (g) factors influencing the current and projected future environmental, economic, and social values of the marae moana; and*
- (h) the long term outlook for ecosystems within the marae moana; and*
- (i) any other matter prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this section.*

(3) *The Prime Minister must arrange for the content of the report to be reviewed by at least 3 persons who, in the Prime Minister's opinion, possess appropriate expertise and qualifications to undertake the review.*

(4) *The Prime Minister may direct the Marae Moana Council to amend the report in response to comments and feedback received from the reviewers.*

(5) *The Prime Minister must cause a copy of the Marae moana annual report and the Marae moana outlook report to be tabled in Parliament within 15 sitting days of the commencement of the next session of Parliament.*

² <https://www.maraemoana.gov.ck/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Marae-Moana-Act-2017.pdf>

3. Key activities

The aim of this consultancy is to ensure that the Cook Islands Government meets its obligations under S34(3) of the Act. The consultant selected and contracted to undertake this project will be one of three engaged for this purpose. One consultant (the subject of this RFQ) will be contracted as the lead reviewer and they will have two broad functions:

- Firstly, to undertake an independent review of the draft Outlook Report, in the same way of the other two reviewers. Review reports from each member will be prepared and submitted separately and independently.
- Secondly, the lead will have responsibility to consider and collate responses from the review team into one consolidated report.

Specific activities are:

1. The Reviewer must provide the R2R Chief Technical Adviser with a written electronic report (the Reviewer's Report) that contains expert review comments on the draft Outlook Report.
2. The Reviewer's Report must include an overall analysis of the draft Outlook Report which is within the Reviewer's expertise.
3. The Reviewer's Report will comprise:
 - a) overall analysis summary and detailed assessments using the Reviewer's Report template (Annex 1).
 - b) additional comments using tracked changes and/or inserted comments on the text of the draft Outlook Report.
4. The Reviewer's Report must:
 - a) Examine the relevance, accuracy and interpretation of factual material contained in the draft Outlook Report; particular attention must be given to whether or not current biodiversity and other values are adequately identified and described.
 - b) Identify any information gaps or important issues that have been overlooked.
 - c) Identify areas where there are conflicting interpretations.
 - d) Provide comments as to whether the Report:
 - i. provides a reliable means of assessing management performance in an accountable and transparent manner
 - ii. could be used as a key input for any future changes to management arrangements and the consideration of broader legislative, policy and operational issues by government.
 - e) Provide any other suggestions for improving the quality, method or interpretation of the draft Outlook Report or subsequent Outlook Reports.
5. The Reviewer's Report should also consider whether the draft Outlook Report adequately includes assessments of the following matters:
 - a) Current health of the ecosystems within the Marae Moana.
 - b) Current health of the ecosystems outside the Marae Moana (ie. islands, marine territories of neighbouring countries, high seas) to the extent that they affect the Marae Moana.
 - c) Commercial and non-commercial use of the Marae Moana.
 - d) Risks to the ecosystems within the Marae Moana.
 - e) Resilience of ecosystems within the Marae Moana.
 - f) Existing measures in place to protect and manage the ecosystems within the Marae Moana.
 - g) Factors influencing the current and projected future environmental, economic, and social values of the Marae Moana.
6. Long-term outlook for the ecosystems within the Marae Moana.
7. **Lead reviewer only:** consider and collate responses from all three reviewers into one consolidated report.

4. Inputs and working arrangements

- This is a short-term assignment of 20 working days over an eight-week duration. Inputs will be conducted from home base as follows:
 - 15 working days: independent review of report
 - 5 working days: prepare consolidated report
- Expected duration: 20 April – 15 June 2020.
- Output: The Reviewer must provide the R2R Chief Technical Adviser with the Reviewer's Report and consolidated report in electronic format.
- Due dates:
 - Independent final report is required by **no later than 31 May 2020**.
 - Consolidated report is required by **no later than 15 June 2020**.
- Reports to:
 - Chief Technical Adviser (CTA) and Director, Marae Moana Coordination Office (MMCO) for all technical aspects.
 - R2R Project Manager for all contractual, logistics and administrative aspects.

5. Key selection criteria

Key selection criteria for this consultancy are listed below. To be considered your proposal MUST include a response against each criteria (maximum two pages please). Relative importance of each criteria is shown by the weighting.

Criteria	Weighting
1. Demonstrated qualifications, expertise, and record of achievement in a relevant scientific or socio-economic field (i.e. current activities, advisory roles and responsibilities, publications, invited presentations).	40
2. Demonstrated experience in informing government policy with respect to a relevant scientific or socio-economic field, including demonstration of high-level analytical skills and judgement.	20
3. Demonstrated knowledge and experience in marine science, conservation, and/or resource economics in the Pacific and ideally Cook Islands.	20
4. Demonstrated experience and record of achievement in conducting high level policy or scientific reviews (for example, reviews of effectiveness of resource management, socio-economic systems or regulatory frameworks).	10
5. International and/or national reputation, as indicated by recognition, including editorial responsibilities, awards, scholarships or prizes received.	10
Total	100
Minimum technical score to proceed to stage 2	70

6. Financial proposals

A financial proposal to carry out the work must be submitted and use the template provided (Annex 2).

All prices in the proposal must be presented in New Zealand Dollars (NZD).

Financial proposals must include professional fees associated with the completion of this work. No other costs are envisaged.

7. Evaluation process

In submitting a proposal, bidders should demonstrate a clear understanding of this RFQ and how your experience, skills and qualifications make you suitable for this consultancy.

Proposals will be assessed and evaluated as follows:

- Technical criteria: 70% weighting
- Financial proposal: 30% weighting

A two-stage procedure will be used in evaluating the proposals:

Stage 1: Technical (70%)

The technical proposal is evaluated on the basis of responsiveness to the competency requirements as weighted in Section 5 and information provided in the applicant's CV. Proposals must receive a minimum technical score of 70 of the total obtainable score (100) to proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Financial (30%)

The financial proposal of those bidders who have attained a minimum score of 70 in the technical evaluation will be assessed and compared.

The contract will be awarded to the bidder offering the best value for money taking into account the summed scores of the technical and financial evaluations.

The successful bidder will be required to sign a standard Cook Islands Government contract for the delivery of services. The standard contract conditions are not negotiable.

8. Schedule of payments

This consultancy will use output-based payments as follows:

#	Outputs	Due date	% of payment total
1	Signing of contract & lodgement of invoice	Target date is 17 April 2020	10
2	Upon submission of Reviewer's Report ³ & lodgement of final invoice	31 May 2020	70
3	Upon submission of consolidated report ⁴ & lodgement of final invoice	15 June 2020	20
	Total		100

Notes: these dates may be adjusted to suit timing of contract signing

9. How to apply

ESSENTIAL: Applications **must** include:

1. Response against each of the key selection criteria (refer Section 5) (maximum two pages)
2. Curriculum vitae/resume including name and contact details (phone and email) of three referees
3. Financial proposal using template provided (Annex 2)
4. Conflict of Interest Declaration using template provided (Annex 3).

Applications that do not address all the requirements stated above will not be considered.

³ to be paid after certification of satisfactory completion of output

⁴ to be paid after certification of satisfactory completion of output

Proposals should be emailed with the subject line heading ‘#19/20: Outlook Review Consultant’ to:
Ms Hayley Weeks, R2R Project Manager Hayley.weeks@cookislands.gov.ck

For further information about this position and a copy of the draft Outlook Report, please contact:

Mr Keith Twyford
R2R Chief Technical Adviser
keith.twyford@gmail.com

Closing date: **4.00pm 10 April 2020** Cook Islands local time (GMT-10 hours)

Late applications will not be considered.

10. Further reading

Govt of Cook Islands (2017) *Marae Moana Act 2017*. <https://www.maraemoana.gov.ck/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Marae-Moana-Act-2017.pdf>

Rongo, T., Rongo, T.T., & Rongo, J. (2020) Cook Islands Maraе Moana: Marine Outlook Report 2020. Government of the Cook Islands. 123 pp. (available upon request)

Annex 1. Reviewer report template

Reviewer report – draft Marae Moana Outlook Report 2020

Reviewer:

Date:

Signature:

General reflections on the Report

Overarching comments (add additional lines as needed)

Specific comments

Chapter and Section number	Page number and/or line numbers	Comment	Suggested references (full citation)
(add additional lines as needed)			

Annex 2. Financial proposal

Cook Islands Ridge to Reef (R2R): #18 Outlook Review – Lead Reviewer - Fee proposal

Item	Cost/unit (NZD)	No. units	Total NZD (exclusive of VAT)
A. Personnel Services			
Daily fee rate		20	
TOTAL			
Bidder notes (if any):			
Name			Date
Signature			

Annex 3. Conflict of Interest Declaration

A conflict of interest arises if you or a close family member has an interest e.g. is a board or committee member or is employed in a senior position in the Government agency that wants to purchase the goods or services relating to this tender process.

In submitting this tender bid I declare:

- I understand that an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest may arise in participating in this tender process and that I am obliged to declare any such conflict of interest.
- I confirm that in submitting this information that I have either declared any potential conflicts of interest or that I am not aware of any situation or issue that would conflict with the interest of the Principal.
- If a conflict of interest arises at any time before the selected supplier has been awarded, I will advise the Contact Officer or the Principal immediately.
- I have personally completed this declaration on behalf of the Supplier(s) and declare that the submitted tender bid provided are true and correct.

I declare that I have a potential conflict of interest as follows:

I will manage this conflict of interest by:

Declared by:

Signature

Date

Full Name

Position (if Company)