



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

REQUEST FOR QUOTES (RFQ):

GIS Specialist, Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) (position #21)

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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 sites².

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 a GIS Specialist, Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) under outputs 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 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.

² Rau: traditional form of protected area as used in Cook Islands

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
2b	Area of inhabited Outer Islands in Southern Group managed for biodiversity conservation through traditional systems and island bylaws and supported through capacity development of traditional leaders and communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine 	By end of project: 6 islands totalling 16,174 ha.
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)
9b	% Area of Southern Group islands managed as Protected Areas (protected natural areas, community conservation areas, ra'ui sites): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine (to the outer reef) 	12.3%

The GIS Specialist is expected to provide professional strategic and technical advice in support of the above outputs.

2. Background

The Marae Moana Policy 2016-2020³ and *Marae Moana Act 2017*⁴ provide the policy and legislative basis for Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) in the Marae Moana.

The Marae Moana Policy 2016-2020 includes policy objective #6 'To coordinate use of the Marae Moana through zoning and a management plan' and specifies that:

- A marine zoning and management plan will be developed for the Marae Moana;
- Research and monitoring data should be used in the development, implementation and evaluation of management decisions, resource management plans and a marine zoning and management plan; and
- Consider relevant internationally recognised research and processes including Ecologically and Biologically Significant Areas and Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas.

Part 3 of the *Marae Moana Act 2017* covers Marae Moana Policy and Spatial Planning. Key provisions for preparation of MSPs are Sections 22 (1), 22(5), 26(6), and 35 (c-d).

³ <https://www.maraemoana.gov.ck/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/FINAL-Marae-Moana-Policy-2016-2020.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.maraemoana.gov.ck/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Marae-Moana-Act-2017.pdf>

Regulations must be developed and in place to guide development of a National Marae Moana Spatial Plan (NMMSP) [Section 22 (5)] and Island Marine Spatial Plans (IMSPs) [Section 26(6)]. Policy development work in support of regulations is underway.

Initial priorities are the development of the NMMSP and an IMSP for Suvarrow Island. The GIS Specialist and MSP team will play a key role in the preparation of initial outputs associated with these two MSPs.

3. Key activities

This consultancy will be contracted and implemented in two stages:

- Stage 1 is the subject of this RFQ and procurement process. Activities will be undertaken remotely from the adviser's home base with opportunity taken to use virtual consultation wherever practicable.
- Stage 2 will be the subject of either a contract extension or a separate procurement process. Activities will be a mix of in-country and home based.

The full scope of activities is described below so that consultants are aware of how stage 1 relates to the broader project.

3.1 Stage 1

The aims of this consultancy during Stage 1 are to:

- Support the R2R MSP team to collect, collate and prepare biological, physical and human-use data for use by the Cook Islands Government to inform the development of Marine Spatial Plans.
- Play a key role in the preparatory stages of marine spatial planning with emphasis on sourcing, consolidation and analysis of key thematic data layers into a manageable format for the entire Marae Moana.
- Support the information management process associated with the NMMSP and Suvarrow IMSP so that all information and maps are in place and ready for stakeholder consultation.
- Provide the R2R Project, Marae Moana Coordination Office (MMCO), and government agencies with technical advice on the development of high priority MSPs.

Stage 1 will have the following in scope:

General activities

- Collect, collate and prepare biological, physical geography, economic and human-use spatial data (including all open-source data and other data made available).
- Prepare shape files and interactive and static maps for all special unique marine areas (SUMAs) as identified through MSP R2R team and any previous prioritisation processes.
- Prepare shape files and maps for marine bioregions.
- Develop an analysis-ready data catalogue (including metadata) in accordance with international standards for use by in-country partners.
- Undertake open source spatial visualisation and analysis using typical platforms (QGIS, Marxan, R, Python).
- Prepare maps and provide support to stakeholders for meetings and conferences.
- Conduct complex spatial and numerical data analysis (including results analysis of MPA planning) as required.
- Prepare and/or deliver on-the-job spatial analysis training material for capacity building of in-country GIS officer.
- Engage with GIS users and GIS user groups in Cook Islands.
- Provide support to in-country GIS officers to assist marine spatial planning processes.

Technical advice

This aspect comprises two key parts:

1. Information management for whole of Marae Moana (contractual output)

- Play a key role in the preparatory stages of marine spatial planning with emphasis on sourcing, consolidation and analysis of key thematic data layers into a manageable format for the entire Marae Moana.
- This activity will mean that the preparations are well advanced so that MSPs can be developed for other parts of the Marae Moana as determined by the Cook Islands Government in late 2020.

2. Information management for NMMSP and Suvarrow IMSP (contractual output)

- Support the information management process associated with the NMMSP and Suvarrow IMSP so that all information and maps are in place and ready for stakeholder consultation in Stage 2.
- Assist the review of MACBIO⁵ Marine Bioregions for the Cook Islands (including Reef Associated and Offshore Bioregions).
- Mapping of:
 - Special Unique Marine Areas (SUMAs) (process to include review of existing priority sites, KBAs, EBSAs, etc).
 - Existing marine rahui and reserves (protected areas).
 - Current and forecast key mining areas (separate coverage for each industry type: deep seabed mining/seabed minerals; sand; aggregate).
 - Key commercial fishing areas (separate coverage for each industry type: purse seine; long lining (local and foreign); local inshore fishermen; local charter fishing operators) and aquaculture sites.
 - Key tourism areas (separate coverage for each industry type: charter boats and fishing; diving/snorkelling; whaled watching; etc)
 - Important areas for island communities including livelihoods (fishing, gleaning, etc), recreation, spiritual and cultural values, and so forth.
 - Other key areas (shipping lanes, submarine cables, etc)
 - Intensive preliminary data analysis of above layers for the priority MSPs
- Provide technical advice for the development of these priority MSPs.

3.2 Stage 2

The project may potentially continue into late 2020 and 2021 depending on progress and follow-on funding, and any changes to travel restrictions arising from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Stage 2 of the MSP Project may have the following in scope:

- Refinement of the initial work plan from Stage 1 to encompass (a) completion of the NMMSP and Suvarrow IMSP that were commenced in 2020 and (b) roll-out of additional IMSPs.
- Development of a stakeholder consultation plan and full implementation of that plan as part of development of draft and final MSPs for priority areas (with initial priority to the NMMSP and Suvarrow IMSP).

⁵ <http://macbio-pacific.info/2018/04/marine-bioregions-southwest-pacific-drafted/>

4. Approach

The GIS Specialist is expected to:

- Work closely with the R2R MSP Team Leader and GIS Coordinator based in-country.
- Work closely and in collaboration with government agencies and key stakeholders including National Environment Service (NES), the Marae Moana Coordination Office (MMCO), Marae Moana Technical Advisory Group (TAG), Ministry of Marine Resources (MMR), island governments, the House of Ariki, and other stakeholders to support the development of marine spatial plans for the Marae Moana.
- Ensure good stakeholder relationships with Government agencies and other organisations and stakeholders with interests in marine spatial planning.
- Make effective use of virtual communication tools (email, Skype, Zoom, etc) to optimise stakeholder involvement in the MSP process.
- Undertake opportunistic capacity development activities to support skill development of in-country GIS Officers.
- Present information and status reports to the project steering committee and other governance forums as needed (eg. Marae Moana TAG, National Biodiversity Steering Committee).
- Maintain close and regular contact with the Chief Technical Adviser (CTA), Director MMCO and R2R Project Manager throughout the consultancy.

5. Inputs and working arrangements

This is a short-term assignment with inputs as follows:

- Stage 1: up to 60 working days over a 4-5 month duration. Inputs will be conducted through home base work. Expected duration: 1 June – 30 October 2020.
- Stage 2: Subject to change in border controls and travel restrictions associated with the Covid-19 pandemic, this contract may be extended through negotiation and involve a mix of in-country and desk-based work. Alternatively, NES and R2R reserve the right to retender the project.

Reports to:

- Team Leader MSP for all technical aspects and day-to-day accountability.
- R2R Project Manager for all logistics and administrative aspects.

6. Outputs and schedule of payments

This consultancy will use output-based payments as follows:

#	Outputs	% of payment total
1	Signing of contract and lodgement of invoice	10
2	Work plan	-
3	Bi-monthly report #1	15
4	Bi-monthly report #2	15
5	Information management package for whole of Marae Moana	25
6	Information management package for NMMSP and Suwarrow IMSP	25
7	Final project report	10
	Total	100

Notes:

- Payments subject to certification of satisfactory completion of output.
- Due dates of outputs to be determined to suit timing of contract signing.

7. 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 four pages please). Relative importance of each criteria is shown by the weighting.

Criteria	Weighting
1. At least a Bachelor degree in the field of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) or in natural resources management.	10
2. 7-10 years of experience in the use of geospatial tools and techniques in relation to the design or implementation of protected areas, locally managed marine areas, integrated coastal zone management, terrestrial spatial planning, or marine spatial planning	40
3. A proven record of experience and ability to prepare data, produce maps and conduct spatial data planning and analysis, including experience in open source spatial visualisation and analysis platforms (QGIS, Marxan, R, Python).	40
4. Strong interpersonal skills and excellent verbal and written communication skills in English, including very high calibre abilities and experience in report writing and presentation skills using plain English.	10
Total	100
Minimum technical score to proceed to stage 2	70

8. Evaluation process

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

A three-step procedure will be used in evaluating the proposals:

Step 1: Conformity

Proposals will be assessed and must comply with mandatory conditions of RFQ.

Proposals will then be assessed and evaluated as follows:

Step 2: Technical criteria (70% weighting)

The technical proposal is evaluated on the basis of responsiveness to the key selection criteria as weighted in Section 7, information provided in the tenderers CV, and other information submitted as part of the proposal. Proposals must receive a minimum technical score of 70 of the total obtainable score (100) to proceed to Stage 3.

Step 3: Financial proposal (30% weighting)

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

The contract will be awarded to the applicant offering the best value for money taking into account the qualitative and quantitative evaluation of technical and financial criteria.

The successful applicant will be required to sign a standard Cook Islands Government contract for the delivery of services.

9. How to apply

ESSENTIAL: Applications **must** include:

1. Response against each of the key selection criteria (refer Section 7) (maximum four pages).
2. Curriculum vitae/resume including name and contact details (phone and email) of three referees.
3. Financial proposal using template provided (Annex 1)
 - All prices in the proposal must be presented in New Zealand Dollars (NZD).
 - Financial proposals must include professional fees and any other costs associated with the completion of this work.
 - Travel costs do not need to be included in the financial proposal.
 - Expenses will be reimbursed at actual cost and upon submission of an invoice with valid evidence of expenditure.
4. Conflict of Interest Declaration using template provided (Annex 2).

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

Proposals should be emailed with the subject line heading '#21: GIS Specialist MSP' to:
Ms Hayley Weeks, R2R Project Manager Hayley.weeks@cookislands.gov.ck
with cc to keith.twyford@gmail.com

For further information about this position, please contact:

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

Closing date: **4.00pm 20 May 2020** Cook Islands local time (GMT-10 hours)

Late applications will not be considered.

10. Further reading

Available online and/or upon request:

Ceccarelli D., Davey, K. & Fernandes, L. (2018) Developing a Marine Spatial Plan: a toolkit for the Pacific. MACBIO (SPREP/IUCN/BMU): Suva <http://macbio-pacific.info/Resources/developing-a-marine-spatial-plan-a-toolkit-for-the-pacific/>

Ehler, C. (2014) A Guide to Evaluating Marine Spatial Plans. UNESCO Paris.
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf000027779?posInSet=1&queryId=5eb891ca-167b-4494-9d9d-714e6162bc67>

Ehler, C. & Douvère, F (2009) Marine Spatial Planning: a step-by-step approach toward ecosystem-based management. Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and Man and the Biosphere Programme. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000186559>

Govt of Cook Islands (2016) Marae Moana Policy 2016-2020. <https://www.maraemoana.gov.ck/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/FINAL-Marae-Moana-Policy-2016-2020.pdf>

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

Kashkari, H., Evans, J. 2018. Situation analysis for a Cook Islands spatial data management policy. Marae Moana Coordination Office, Office of the Prime Minister. Rarotonga, Cook Islands

MMCO (2018) Marae Moana action plan 20018-21. Marae Moana Coordination Office, Office of Prime Minister, Cook Islands

Annex 2. 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)