



## Minutes of the Sixth Steering Committee Meeting of the Pacific Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

30th November 2021, Tonga.

### 1. AGENDA ITEM NO.1: Opening and Introduction

The 6th Steering committee meeting (SCM6) convened on the 30th November 2021, and was conducted virtually, using the Zoom online platform. The PCREEE Secretariat hosted the meeting from Nuku'alofa, Tonga, with the PCREEE Manager, Mr. Solomone Fifita joining from Auckland, New Zealand. The meeting was chaired by Mr. 'Ofa Sefana, the Acting Director for the Department of Energy, MEIDECC, Tonga.

The meeting was attended by representatives of the following SPC member countries: Cook Islands, Fiji, Niue, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. PCREEE partners from the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) and University of the South Pacific (USP) were also in attendance. Apologies were acknowledged from the Tuvalu Utility and Vanuatu GGGI office. The participants list is attached as Annex 1.

**Prayer:** A word of prayer was offered by the PCREEE's Programme Delivery Officer (PDO), Mr. Kakau Foliaki.

**Welcome:** The welcoming statement was delivered by the Manager of the PCREEE, who thanked all the participants from the Pacific Region for attending and appreciative remarks were extended to the representative from UNIDO who joined the meeting from Europe, despite the challenge in the time difference.

**Statement by the CEO for MEIDECC, Tonga, Mr. Paula Ma'u:** Mr Ma'u acknowledged the accomplishments of the PCREEE since its establishment in 2017, and their immense contributions to the PICs. He alluded to the challenges of the global pandemic restrictions on the PCREEE's normal operations and the benefits of virtual platforms which has allowed PCREEE to continue providing services to its member countries. Mr Ma'u thanked the PCREEE for their continuous support to the Tonga Department of Energy that achieved many milestones over the years including the newly approved Energy Bill in August 2021. He also extended thanks and gratitude to SPC, UNIDO, Norway, Austria and partner organisations for their continued support and contributions to PCREEE's operations. The CEO's statement is attached as Annex 2.

**Opening remarks by the Deputy Director, Georesources and Energy Programme, SPC, Akuila Tawake:** Mr. Tawake highlighted the challenges of the global pandemic on PICs, energy projects and nations' energy targets. SPC has shifted towards utilising local capacities and experts to coordinate events on the ground. He was optimistic that PCREEE, with the continuous support of donors, will be able to manage major funded projects in 2022. The Deputy Director's statement is attached as Annex 3.

**Statement by the UNIDO Sustainable Energy Expert, Mr Martin Lugmayr:** Mr. Lugmayr delivered his statement on behalf of UNIDO and the Global network of sustainable energy centres. He expressed the continuous support of the UNIDO for the second operational phase of the PCREEE and encouraged PCREEE in securing funding directly to PCREEE. Mr. Lugmayr emphasised their future supports for PCREEE in 2022 through a SIDS-SIDS cooperation with other sustainable energy centres. He congratulated the PCREEE Manager and his team for the 2021 achievements.

Following the opening remarks and statements from partner organisations, the Chairperson welcomed all members to the 6th SCM and highlighted the main discussion points in the agenda of the SCM.

## 2. AGENDA ITEM NO.2: Adoption of the 5<sup>th</sup> PSC meeting Minutes

The 5<sup>th</sup> steering committee meeting (SCM5) in 2020 was held on 18th November virtually, and hosted by the PCREEE in Tongatapu, Kingdom of Tonga.

The PCREEE secretariat presented matters arising from PSC 5 and the Actions taken and Progress to date, as in the Table below:

Agenda Item	Matters Arising	Actions & Progress
1. Opening & Introduction		
2. Adoption of the 4 <sup>th</sup> PSC Minutes		
3. PCREEE Progress Report 2020	Unequal distribution of support among members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tried to promote PCREEE’s support in its 4 programme areas</li> <li>• Some PICs cancelled their agreed events</li> <li>• Recruited in-country SE Coordinators</li> <li>• Made national events available online for others to participate in and view</li> </ul>
	Webinars on accelerating investments and Energy Access & Private Financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeated webinar at Vanuatu</li> <li>• Partners participated in other regional events such as PRIF and FESRIP meetings</li> </ul>
	E-mobility and Business Plan consultations	E-mobility and BP adopted
	Collaboration with ISA on solar mini-grids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drafted roadmap of SPC-ISA collaboration</li> <li>• Workshops on solar mini-grids</li> </ul>

Agenda Item	Matters Arising	Actions & Progress
	Production of regional awareness materials	Completed and used at host country and shared the e-versions with others
	Signed agreement under the PSEEF for support to SuperFly of the SI	Super Fly agreement is dropped. New LoA with the Navara Savings & Credit Cooperative Society Ltd (NSCL) of Vanuatu signed.
4. PCREEE Business Plan / Technical Programme	PCREEE Business Plan: 2021 – 2030 to guide the PCREEE's Second Operational Phase: 2021- 2025	Adopted and is currently being used.
5. Institutional Structure	Change in the National Focal Institutions representatives to the PSC	Fiji, FSM/Kiribati, Tuvalu, French Polynesia & Tonga
	Updated HR Policies by SPC	SPC continued to update its policies to cater for covid and similar events
6. Financial Structure	Centralised SPC Banking System for Tonga	In operation.
	Petty Cash	In operation and working well.
	Asset Register	Regularly updated
	Timely payments of PCREEE vendors	Adopted a payment tracking worksheet
7. 2021 Work Programme & Budget	Approval of a budget of Euro 626,500 for 2021	25% delivery in July and 38% after Sept. Expecting above 80% by end of 2021.
	Increased resource mobilisation & collaborations	Vanuatu GCF SAP for USD 10M submitted with SPC as the AE
8. Update from the Global Network of Sustainable Energy Centres	<p>New development initiatives offered through the GN-SEC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GN-SEC Platform for south-south and triangular cooperation</li> <li>SIDS-SIDS cooperation on EV issues under GN-SEC and SIDS DOCK</li> <li>Online Capacity Building Program on Sustainable Energy Solutions for SIDS in English, Spanish and Portuguese</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Platform is established but very few cooperation</li> <li>Started sharing with the CCREEE on EVs but needs more</li> <li>Available on-line but not fully utilised</li> </ul>

**Recommendations:** The following recommendations were presented to the committee:

- ◆ Note and endorse the SCM5 minutes.
- ◆ Note the progress with the implementation of matters arising from the minutes of SCM5.

**Outcome:** There were no amendments or clarifications raised by the members and the SCM6 endorsed the recommendations as they were presented.

### 3. AGENDA ITEM NO.3. PCREEE Progress Report 2021

The SCM5 meeting endorsed a budget of 626,000 Euro for 2021 and this was revised to 499,100 in July 2021. PCREEE provides bi-annual reports to UNIDO prior to disbursement of funds.

PCREEE is in the early stages of its operational phase for its Business Plan 2020 – 2030. PCREEE has 4 key priority areas (KPA) and programmes and its technical support reflect these KPAs. PICs are encouraged to select the initiatives that best fits their local needs and requirements. The aim is to provide a broad area of support with flexibility to accommodate the specific contextual needs of PICs.

In terms of Human resources, the PDO resigned in 2021 due to personal reasons and the remaining funds for the position was used to recruit a short term PDO consultant and in-country coordinators for Cook Islands and Solomon Islands. The position of Pacific Island Energy Professional was filled after the last holder from PNG to provide support towards the energy programme and activities in the region.

Support Provided to PICs based on Key Priority Areas:

**KPA1 SE Business Start-Up and Entrepreneurships:** A series of SE Business start-up & mentoring programme was conducted throughout the PICs; Joint workshops with BRANTV (Vanuatu), Joint workshop with FREAGER (PNG), Joint workshop with Tonga Electricity Commission (Tonga), Signed LoA with Navara Savings & Credit Cooperative Society Limited (Vanuatu), Energy business start-ups and entrepreneurship (Vanuatu), and Green Climate Fund Simplified Approval Process (Vanuatu)

**KPA2 Sustainable Mobility:** Several activities were conducted under this programme; CTCN proposal (Solomon Is), Exposure visit for the GM Tuvalu Elec Corp (New Zealand), Samoa Awareness (Samoa), Regional webinar of EV guidelines.

**KPA3 Mini-grid:** Two training workshops, the ISA-INES-PCREEE workshop and the Tonga-ISA-INES-PCREEE workshop were conducted with future mini-grid trainings targeted for other PICs in 2022.

**KPA4 EE Investments:** Sustainable energy forum was conducted in Vanuatu in September.

The PCREEE was also involved in consultations and the launch of Tonga's 3rd Electricity Concession Contract, the TERM Plus Framework and the Bp and E-mobility Programme.

Partnership and collaboration for resource mobilisation for the following upcoming projects have also been secured; 1) International Solar Alliance-SPC Roadmap for cooperation; 2) Signed Contract Agreement with the Austrian Development Agency, Recruitment cooperation with Private Finance Advisory Network and GET.Invest; 3) Climate Technology Centre & Network funding proposal with Solomon Islands and; 4) Green Climate Fund Simplified Approval Process with Vanuatu.

**Issues** in coordinating in-country programmes:

- ◆ In-country deliveries depend on local capacity to coordinate
- ◆ Use more in-country coordinators and local consultants
- ◆ Have adopted an accelerated process for accessing support – 2 to 4 weeks from request to implementation
- ◆ Slow delivery of 25% in July and expect to be above 80% by end of 2021

Mr Nakavulevu from IRENA requested clarification on the implications of the recruitment of PCREEE in-country coordinators as opposed to the current assistance from their respective Government Department of Energy. Mr Fifita responded that the delivery and implementation of PCREEE programmes in PICs is slow due to the general lack of human resources i.e lack of local staff, high rate of staff turn-over and high workloads for local focal points as experienced in the Solomon Islands. Usually, regional events and projects do not usually reflect the needs and priorities of all the members, therefore there is a need to focus more on in-country-specific needs and priorities. The recruitment of the three in-country coordinators in Cook Island, Solomon Island and PNG is anticipated to alleviate these issues and allow more focus on the local energy needs of each country and to assist in coordinating and implementing the PCREEE programmes on the ground. The PCREEE will determine the need for further recruitment of other in-country coordinators in other PICs on a needs basis.

**Recommendations:** The following recommendations were presented to the committee for consideration:

- ◆ Note the progress with the implementation of the 2021 work plan and budget.
- ◆ Note the future role of in-country coordinators in the delivery of future work plans in-country.
- ◆ Note the current recruitment of in-country coordinators to assist in the implementation of the 2022 work programme

**Outcome:** The SCM6 endorsed the recommendations as presented.

#### 4. AGENDA ITEM NO.4. Institutional Structure

The PCREEE was established and governed under the FAESP 2010-2020 before the newly established FESRIP 2021-2030. The PCREEE is integrated into the FESRIP and all the four priority areas of PCREEE is reflected in the FESRIP. The SCM6 noted that PEOG and PEAG under the FAESP are now replaced by CROP ETWG and ESWG under the FESRIP and PCREEE reports to the FESRIP 2021 – 2030 & FRDP 2017 – 2030

The PCREEE continues to operate under the governance rules and policies of the SPC, which have included minor changes to accommodate the challenges induced by the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite the pandemic, the PCREEE currently have 4 full time staff and one short term consultant in Tonga, 2 short term consultants in the Cook Islands and Solomon Islands, and one short term consultant for PNG is currently in the process of recruitment.

**Issues:** The following issues were identified;

- ◆ The successful operation of the PCREEE under the SPC governance structure and policy does not require autonomous set up
- ◆ There is a need for clear reporting structure for PCREEE under the FESRIP and FRDP
- ◆ The pandemic will continue to disrupt the operation of the PCREEE and it is important to consider flexible and mixed delivery of the PCREEE workplan for 2022

**Recommendations:** The following recommendations were presented to the committee:

Endorse that the NFIs and THs to the PSC be open-ended.

Acknowledge the effective operation of the PCREEE under SPC's rules and policies.

Endorse that the management / reporting of the PCREEE be aligned with those of the FESRIP and Goal 2 of the FRDP.

Note the key role of SECs in the implementation of the PCREEE work programme.

**Outcome:** The SCM6 endorsed the recommendations as they were presented

## 5. AGENDA ITEM N0.5. Financial Structure

The SCM6 note the operation of the PCREEE under the Financial rules and policies of the SPC. SPC is an accredited entity of the EU and the GCF and this is proof of the compliance of SPC's financial structure with internationally accepted standards and norms.

The SCM6 noted that funds received from PCREEE's donors are deposited to a PCREEE account with SPC. An SPC Project account was opened with ANZ Bank in Tonga but administrated from Suva. All petty cash is being used with regular records of balance, inflow and outflow and 6-monthly financial acquittals as well as updating of the Asset Register

The SCM6 noted that PCREEE outcomes is expected to be 88% achieved by the end of 2021.

**Issues:** The PCREEE has experienced some delays in processing payments, particularly for catering and venue hire costs for national workshops and awareness events. This is an issue that has been flagged and discussed continuously in the meetings of the Georesources and Energy Programme.

The SCM6 noted PCREEE's plan to carry out its 2022 activities virtually and with the involvement of local consultants and in-country coordinators, and the minimisation of delays to payments of local goods and services.

**Recommendations:** The following recommendations were presented to the committee:

- ◆ Note the effort to ensure accountability to PCREEE's resources.
- ◆ Note the on-going challenge of paying island vendors on time.

**Outcome:** The SCM6 endorsed the recommendations as they were presented and requested the Secretariat to take up the lateness of payments as an issue for immediate attention by the SPC management.

## AGENDA ITEM N0.6. 2022 Work Programme & Budget

**Workplan:** The SCM6 noted the 2022 PCREEE workplan which is based on the PCREEE’s Second Operational Phase (SOP) and its Business Plan: 2020 – 2030.

The workplan supported PICs in four key strategic areas:

- ◆ RE&EE Business Start-ups & Entrepreneurship,
- ◆ RE&EE Sustainable Mobility,
- ◆ RE Mini-grids and
- ◆ Energy Efficiency Investment.

The SCM6 noted the need for PCREEE to be flexible within these strategic areas so that PICs are able to tap into these supports.

**Budget:** The SCM6 noted the proposed \$524,746 euro for implementation of the PCREEE 2022 Work Plan and the breakdown as follows:

Item	ADA – Euro	UNIDO - Euro	TOTAL - Euro
Staff / Personnel	128,750	128,750	257,500
Operations & Equipment	60,000	60,000	120,000
Travel	10,000	10,000	20,000
Workshops & conferences	29,400	29,400	58,800
PM Fees	34,223	34,223	68,446
Total	262,373	262,373	524,746

**Earmarked Activities:** The SCM6 note these earmarked activities for 2022:

- ◆ Investment promotion with PFAN, CAMCO, SWIMSOL, etc
- ◆ Support to adopt and conduct national qualifications on sustainable energy
- ◆ EV demo in the CI, Tonga and Vanuatu
- ◆ Energy Awareness in Tonga & Samoa
- ◆ Mini-grids training - CI, Palau and SI
- ◆ Support national effort to operationalize the MEPSL regulation

**Issues:** The SCM6 also noted the following issues:

- ◆ The PCREEE 2022 Work Plan and Budget is skewed towards virtual coordination and implementation in light of the COVID19 pandemic restrictions.
- ◆ PCREEE will heavily depend on the active support of its member countries to deliver on its Work Plan if the travel restrictions persist.

- ◆ The COVID19 pandemic may improve and restrictions may be uplifted in 2022. This would allow for face-to-face meetings and improved coordination and implementation. Consequently, **the budget may change depending on the circumstances at hand.**
- ◆ There is a need for the PCREEE to strengthen its resource mobilization / collaboration effort for the SOP.

The current budget support is planned according to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic and on the understanding that travel restrictions will continue and most meetings and trainings will be conducted virtually. However, there were also considerations to amend the PCREEE budget should the border restrictions ease prior the Pacific Minister Meeting in Vanuatu 2022.

Mr. Temakon from Vanuatu raised the issues regarding the Navara's Savings & Credit Cooperative Society Ltd project which will be completed in December 2021 and requested the assistance of PCREEE to increase its subsidy contributions from 20% to 50%. Mr Fifita explained that this project is one of the first of its kind for PCREEE, therefore, PCREEE is careful with any further investments given that 50,000 euro has been allocated to this project. Mr Fifita suggested to continue with the current arrangements regarding the disbursement of the funds and reporting to PCREEE. Once the first phase of the project is completed, it will be easier for PCREEE to assess the impacts of the funds and the potential for further assistance.

**Recommendations:** The following recommendations were presented to the committee:

- ◆ Note that the PCREEE 2022 Work Plan and Budget is developed in light of the COVID 19 pandemic restrictions;
- ◆ Endorse PCREEE 2022 Work Plan and Budget;
- ◆ Encourage PICTs to jointly carry out and fund PCREEE's 2022 Work Plan

**Outcome:** The SCM6 endorsed the recommendations as they were presented

## 6. AGENDA ITEM NO.7. Update from the Global Network of Sustainable Energy Centres

Mr. Lugmayr presented the update for GN-SEC. He emphasised the support for PCREEE in 2022 through a SIDS-SIDS cooperation with other sustainable energy centres and expressed the continuous support of the UNIDO for the second operational phase of the PCREEE.

He stressed that through these partnerships, there are similar topics across the centres such as the electric mobility programme that PCREEE has started and similar to the Caribbean Centre on electric vehicle, presents an opportunity for joint collaboration with other centres.

The online capacity building programmes on Sustainability energy solutions for smart islands with SIDS-DOCK has been developed by the Spanish Centre for Research in Energy, Environment and Technology (CIEMAT). The online platform has 9 modules for different technologies such as OTEC, PV, etc with the aim for centres to make the most use of this platform. CIEMAT will provide several training workshops in 2022 to train all centres on the use of the platform.

The global ocean energy alliance that was launched with SIDS-DOCK aims to build project pipelines for ocean energy, and connecting with investors, mobilising concession finance for the development and implementation of the project. A pilot project on OTEC is currently under trial in Central Africa with an investor from the UK.



The Centres are required to use the GEF-8 programme through a special programme called the Blue and green islands. The GEF-8 document mentioned a collaboration with regional centres will be one of the priorities.

The Government of France has pledged 1 million to the STAR-C programme main phase. The ISA is willing to collaborate with the PCREEE and Africa regional centres. A meeting is expected in 2022 with ISA management team to discuss the 2022 workplan for the funding.

The Green Tech cluster programme that is currently piloting in Barbados in collaboration with the Government of Barbados. The programme focuses on establishing green cluster for potential local green tech entrepreneurs on new innovative solutions and innovative business models.

## **7. AGENDA ITEM N0.8. Other Business & Date and Venue of the next meeting**

Mr Fifita suggested to schedule the next PCREEEE Steering Committee Meeting at the Pacific Minister Energy and Transport Meeting that will be hosted by Vanuatu in 2022. This will depend on the current pandemic situation amid border restrictions. Should borders remain closed, the meeting will be conducted virtually together with another relevant regional programme. Dates are to be confirmed.

**Conclusion and Closing Remarks.** In delivering his closing remarks, Mr Solomone Fifita, Manager PCREEE thanked the chair on his leadership in successfully steering the meeting and allowing good discussions with all participants. He also acknowledged and thanked the development partners, the SC members, the representatives from the private sector and all participants that joined the meeting.

**Annexes**

Annex 1 : Participants list



Field Code Changed

Annex 2 : CEO for MEIDECC's Statement



Field Code Changed

Annex 3 : DD GEP's Opening Remarks



Field Code Changed