

GEF-8 CHILD PROJECT CONCEPT

GENERAL CHILD PROJECT INFORMATION

Child Project Title:	Reducing Single-use Plastics on Small-island Economies (RESPONSE)		
Country(ies):	Cook Islands	GEF Child Project ID:	
		Type of Child Project	Full-sized Child Project
GEF Agency(ies):	UNEP (select) (select)	GEF Agency Child Project ID:	
Anticipated Executing Entity(s) and Type:	National Environment Service	Government	
	Infrastructure Cook Islands	Government	
GEF Focal Area(s):	Multi Focal Area	Submission Date:	12 April 2023
Type of Trust Fund:	GEF Trust Fund	Child Project Duration (Months)	60 months
GEF Child Project Grant: (a)	US\$ 6,222,018	GEF Child Project Non-Grant (b)	N/A
Agency Fee(s) Grant: (c)	US\$ 559,982	Agency Fee(s) Non-Grant: (d)	N/A
Total GEF Financing: (a+b+c+d)	US\$ 6,782,000	Total Co-financing:	US\$ 35,000,000
PPG Amount (e):	US\$ 200,000	PPG Agency Fee(s) (f):	US\$ 18,000
Total GEF Resources (a+b+c+d+e+f)	US\$ 7,000,000		
Project Sector (CCM only)	Mixed Others		
Program	Circular Solutions to Plastic Pollution Integrated Program		

CHILD PROJECT FINANCING TABLES

GEF Financing Table

Indicative Trust Fund Resources Requested by Agency(ies), Country(ies), Focal Area and the Programming of Funds

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	(in \$)		
					GEF Project Financing	Agency Fee	Total GEF Financing
UNEP	GEF TF	Cook Islands	International Waters	IW IP Contributions (select)	2,685,627	241,706	2,927,333
UNEP	GEF TF	Cook Islands	Biodiversity	BD IP STAR allocation	1,326,147	119,353	1,445,500
UNEP	GEF TF	Cook Islands	Biodiversity	BD IP Matching Incentive	442,049	39,784	481,833
UNEP	GEF TF	Cook Islands	Climate Change	CCM IP STAR allocation	1,326,147	119,353	1,445,500
UNEP	GEF TF	Cook Islands	Climate Change	BD IP Matching Incentive	442,049	39,784	481,833
Total GEF Resources					6,222,018	559,982	6,782,000

Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Is Project Preparation Grant requested? Yes No

If yes: fill in PPG table (incl. PPG fee)

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	(in \$)		
					PPG	Agency Fee	Total PPG Funding
UNEP	GEFTF	Cook Islands	BD	BD STAR Allocation: IPs	50,000	4,500	54,500
UNEP	GEFTF	Cook Islands	CC	CC STAR Allocation: IPs	50,000	4,500	54,500
UNEP	GEFTF	Cook Islands	BD	BD IP Matching Incentives	16,667	1,500	18,167
UNEP	GEFTF	Cook Islands	CC	CC IP Matching Incentives	16,667	1,500	18,167
UNEP	GEFTF	Cook Islands	IW	IW IP Contributions	66,667	6,000	72,667
Total PPG Amount					200,000	18,000	218,000

Sources of Funds for Country STAR Allocation

GFEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Source of Funds	Total
UNEP	GEF TF	Cook Islands	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	1,500,000
UNEP	GEF TF	Cook Islands	Climate Change	CC STAR Allocation	1,500,000

Total GEF Resources	3,000,000
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Indicative Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	(in \$)	
		GEF Project Financing	Co-financing
Plastic IP	GEFTF	6,222,018	35,000,000
Total Project Cost		6,222,018	35,000,000

Indicative Co-financing

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount (\$)
Recipient Country Government	National Environment Service (NES)	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	397,790
Recipient Country Government	National Environment Service (NES)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditure	928,170
Recipient Country Government	Infrastructure Cook Islands (ICI)	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	2,271,315
Recipient Country Government	Infrastructure Cook Islands (ICI)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditure	1,245,500
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM)	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	869,110
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditure	737,240
Recipient Country Government	Climate Change Cook Islands (CCCI)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditure	105,040
Recipient Country Government	Central Policy & Planning Office (CPPO)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditure	81,600
Recipient Country Government	Business Trade Investment Board (BTIB)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditure	140,700
Recipient Country Government	Cook Islands Investment Corporation (CIIC)	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	357,810
Recipient Country Government	Cook Islands Investment Corporation (CIIC)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditure	329,380

Recipient Country Government	Cook Islands Tourism Corporation (CIT)	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	1,400,125
Recipient Country Government	Cook Islands Tourism Corporation (CIT)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditure	850,915
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Marine Resources (MMR)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditure	317,875
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration (MFAI)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditure	251,525
Recipient Country Government	Crown Law Office (CLO)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditure	46,380
Private Sector	Cook Islands Trading Centre	In-kind	Investment mobilized	5,507,150
Private Sector	Cook Islands Government Transport	In-kind	Investment mobilized	622,275
Private Sector	Primefoods Ltd	In-kind	Investment mobilized	3,733,665
Private Sector	Wigmores	In-kind	Investment mobilized	311,140
Private Sector	Upcycle Cook Islands	In-kind	Investment mobilized	31,115
Private Sector	Tourism Sector	In-kind	Investment mobilized	10,060,400
Private Sector	Producers (bakery, hydro, growers, etc.)	In-kind	Investment mobilized	1,555,695
Civil Society Organization	Te Ipukarea Society	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	77,790
Civil Society Organisation	Korero o te Orau	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	77,795
Civil Society Organisation	Muri Environment Programme	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	31,000
Other	University of Newcastle, Australia	Grant	Investment mobilized	250,000
Other	ARDF Trust Fund	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	622,275
Donor	European Union (EU) - Pac Waste Plus programme	Grant	Investment mobilized	186,685
Other	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)	In-kind	Investment mobilized	31,115
GEF Agency	International Union for Conservation of Nature	In-kind	Investment mobilized	6,225
Other	TBC – Possibly UNEP and WWF	In-kind	Investment mobilized	1,562,200
Total Co-financing				\$35,000,000

TABLE ON CORE INDICATORS <still being verified>

Project Core Indicators		Expected at PFD
1	Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management (hectare)	NA
2	Marine protected areas created or under improved management (hectare)	30,913,600 hectares
3	Area of land and ecosystems under restoration (hectare)	NA
4	Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectare)	24,000 hectares
5	Area of marine habitat under improved practices (hectare)	NA
6	Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated (metric ton of CO ₂ e)	726 tCO ₂ e
7	Shared water ecosystems under new or improved cooperative management (count)	7.3 = 1 7.4 = 1
8	Globally over-exploited marine fisheries moved to more sustainable levels (metric ton)	NA
9	Chemicals of global concern and their waste reduced (metric ton of toxic chemicals reduced)	217
10	Persistent organic pollutants to air reduced (gram of toxic equivalent gTEQ)	0
11	People benefiting from GEF-financed investments disaggregated by sex (count)	15040 (7670 female: 7370 male)

Explain the methodological approach and underlying logic to justify target levels for Core and Sub-Indicators (*max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page*)

(2) The Marae Moana Act 2017 designates 50nm around each of the 15 Cook Islands as an MPA. The total area of these MPAs¹ has been included in this figure as plastic reduction activities on land will reduce the amount of marine plastic litter entering the MPAs, hence improving their overall management

(4) Total land area of the Cook Islands is 24,000 Ha. The total land area is expected to benefit from reduced plastic waste due to policies, legislative and national planning interventions.

(6, 9,10) calculated using the calculator prepared by UNEP/WWF

¹ 2021 Protected Areas Classification System (PACS) policy paper (page 9)

(11) Cook Islands census dated 2021 shows the total Cook Islands population = 15,040 with 51% female and 49% male. The total population is expected to benefit from the projects activities due to national planning, policies and legislative interventions.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Country Context (*maximum 500 words*)

Describe the country's relevant environmental challenges and strategic positioning relative to the systems transformation proposed for the program, including relevant existing policies, commitments, and investment frameworks. How are these aligned with the proposed approach to foster impactful outcomes with global environmental benefits?

As a Pacific SIDS, the Cook Islands is an importer and end user of items with single use plastic (SUP) packaging rather than a large-scale producer/exporter. The main form of waste management for non-recyclables in the Cook Islands is a single landfill on the main island of Rarotonga, which is near capacity and with no alternatives available for a secondary site due to limited land available. In the outer islands, waste is often buried or burned. Waste management is a key issue due to the high costs to export waste (incl recyclables) and market challenges. Whilst some shipping agreements have been made under GEF ISLANDS programme with SWIRE, this does not apply to all forms of waste.

The food & beverage sector (F&B) includes both local consumption, as well as supplying the tourism industry, which prior to COVID-19 accounted for 61%² of the Cook Islands GDP and was its largest economic industry. Significant re-growth in the tourism industry is being seen again as part of the post-covid recovery, with trade up by 37.7%, accommodation up by 31.4%, restaurants and bars up by 28.4%, and travel agents/tour operators up by 20.2%³.

A Cook Islands 2020 Waste Audit found the following:

- 1.5 million plastic bottles were imported in the 1-year report period;
- SUPs accounted for 20% of total plastic products imported;
- Plastics made up 94% of the total waste stream in outer island hospitality sector;
- Plastics made up 13% of Rarotonga and 20% of Aitutaki (outer island) households;
- Plastics were a dominant waste category across business types, particularly accommodation and retail;
- Waste composition of businesses was 23.6% plastics (17-42% range) and 5.7% SUPs (4-11% range);
- Sports & leisure businesses had the highest proportion of single use items (20%);
- Of the 2805m³ total volume of waste to landfill, 20% is plastics and 5% is SUPs;
- Import/export data suggests very little material is exported for recycling or recovery.

² <https://www.adb.org/multimedia/partnership-report2021/stories/reviving-cook-islands-tourism-industry/>

³ <https://www.mfem.gov.ck/statistics/134-economic-statistics/national-accounts>

Hence, it is crucial to reduce the amount of plastics being imported for the F&B industry, which includes tourism and retail, particularly as the tourism industry rebounds in the post-covid recovery, and increase circularity and reuse in country to reduce the amount of plastic waste currently entering the environment.

Cook Islands is taking a regional leadership position to tackle plastic pollution and is involved in the following ways:

- National goal of Zero Waste by 2045 (National Sustainable Development Agenda 2020+);
- Pacific marine litter action plan 2018-2025;
- Cleaner Pacific 2025: Pacific Regional Waste & Pollution Management Strategy;
- Actively leading Pacific engagement in the Plastic treaty INC meetings;
- 1st Pacific Island country to join the High Ambition Coalition (HAC) to End Plastic Pollution;
- Actively negotiated for Target 7 of the CBD Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework that focusses on waste;
- Party to Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions on Waste;
- Currently undertaking Minamata Initial Assessment prior to joining Minamata Convention;
- Long history of regional collaboration with SPREP in waste projects, including JICA, 3R, ISLANDS, PacWastePlus and others;
- Hosting the PacWastePlus regional steering committee meeting and the Plastics INC regional pre-meeting in April 2023, where we will be imploring our Pacific partners to also consider joining the HAC and raise Pacific ambition and leadership in global plastic negotiations.

The project outcomes (further described in Section 2d.) will result in reduced plastic waste from the F&B sector, improved landscapes and marine protected areas (MPAs) with improved practices and management, healthier ecosystems, better protected biodiversity and reduced greenhouse gas emissions, linking to the GEF core indicators and global environment benefits.

2. Project Overview and Approach (*maximum 1250 words*)

- a) Provide a brief description of the geographical target(s), including details of systemic challenges, and the specific environmental threats and associated drivers that must be addressed;*

The Cook Islands is a Polynesian South Pacific Island country. It includes 15 islands, 12 of which are inhabited, divided between a Northern Group and a Southern Group. These islands total 240km² of land area, but are spread across 2million km² of ocean space. The total resident population is 15,040, 51% of whom are female and 77% IPLCs (Cook

Islands Maori)⁴.

To address the nation-wide issue of single-use plastic items, it is vital that the project scope includes the main island where products are imported to (Rarotonga), as well as the outer islands that F&B products are sent to from Rarotonga. The outer islands are also more vulnerable to the impacts of plastics to human and environment health.

There is a current lack in viable market alternatives, nor policy/economic enabling environment to encourage them. Local consumer behavior needs to change as plastic reducing measures are not yet the normative or 'easy' or economical choice. Ensuring F&B products remain in good & sanitary condition without typical plastic packaging (e.g. weavels in rice, etc.) remains a challenge.

However, the Cook Islands remote location provides greater control on importation restrictions. The country could be a potential case study as a closed loop circular system approach in SIDS that can be replicated across other SIDS and up-scaled in other countries, providing scalability to success.

As a remote SIDS, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) of Cook Islands are disproportionately vulnerable to negative impacts of plastic pollution due to reliance on limited land and marine environment for food & water security.

With plastic pollution as the 2nd biggest threat to reefs, tackling plastics will contribute to increasing our resilience to climate change impacts with reefs as natural defense systems.

Despite not being a producer of plastics, we still play a key role in reducing plastic pollution through limiting importation and consumption. Given our limited waste management facilities and challenges of our remote location, reducing importation and consumption of plastics will have significant impact on reducing plastic pollution, particularly in the marine sector. Marine pollution will be avoided based on the interconnected nature of SIDS industries and environments. Impacts on significant migratory species in the Pacific (ocean & avian) and their increased vulnerability to plastic pollution will be mitigated. Reducing our contributions to marine litter will have regional impact with our proximity to Pacific gyre.

b) Describe the existing or planned baseline investments, including current institutional framework and processes for stakeholder engagement and gender integration;

The Cook Islands has an ambitious national goal of Zero Waste by 2045. There is already a wealth of policy and legislation in place to support plastic waste management and

⁴ 2021 Cook Islands Census of Population and Dwelling

reduction⁵, which includes regulations to ban the importation of plastic bags. Additionally, a Solid & Hazardous Waste Bill should be passed in 2023, and includes a Schedule with 10 SUP items that will be banned from importation. The Cook Islands also have an Advanced Recovery & Disposal fee (ARDF) policy which should also be passed this year. This will launch the ARDF Fund, which will provide a sustainable financing mechanism for the Cook Islands to manage its waste, as it will add a fee to all imported items to cover their end-of-life disposal, including plastics. The country has several local efforts to target mid and downstream flows, by reducing or reusing plastics in the food and beverage sector and provide viable local market alternatives, which have been boldly led by NGOs and private sector. This includes a plate washing pilot at the local market, a local tour company switching to reusable water bottles for guests, the local beer company providing only refillable options, using traditional skills such as basket weaving, and many more. These demonstrate positive advances in the Cook Islands. However, gaps remain in having a cohesive national strategy and action plan to manage plastics, as well as sufficient support to incentivize and catalyze private sector midstream solutions. Stakeholder engagement plans, communications plans and gender mainstreaming plans will be developed to guide the implementation of these throughout the project.

Meaningful stakeholder engagement will be ensured through inclusive consultation and participation in project planning and activities, including in the more remote and vulnerable outer islands. A strong focus on private sector and NGO engagement will also ensure non-public sector involvement and representation, as well as fostering innovation. There will be robust multi-government agency engagement throughout the project, providing national leadership to the child project and its activities as well as collaborative progress towards our national Zero Waste goal. National Environment Service (NES) and Infrastructure Cook Islands (ICI) hold the mandates for environment protection and waste management, and will therefore co-lead the project. Additionally, existing national platforms and targeted partnerships will be leveraged to ensure maximum engagement and support across the whole of government (refer to co-financing table for list of key supporting government stakeholders).

Gender will be fully included through gender-disaggregated indicators and data collection, as well as specific activities that prioritize women and vulnerable populations. Project governance and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) will include gender mainstreaming to ensure equitable representation and outcomes. Acknowledging women's roles as influencers, determinators of expenditures, SME and entrepreneur developers, links to markets and direct distribution channels, dedicated efforts will be made to ensure they are at the forefront of the project's private sector and community

⁵ *Currently includes Environment Act (2003), Prohibition on Importation of Plastic Shopping Bags regulations (2012), National Solid Waste Management Strategy (2013), Single Use Plastic Ban Policy (2019), Solid Waste Management Policy (2016-2026), Solid & Hazardous Waste Bill (draft), and Advanced Recovery and Disposal Fee (ARDF) policy (draft).*

engagement and implementation activities.

- c) Describe how the integrated approach proposed for the child project responds to and reflects the Program's Theory of Change, and as such is an appropriate and suitable option for tackling the systemic challenges, and to achieve the desired transformation with multiple global environmental benefits;*

Reflecting **component 1** of the PFD, regulatory and policy environment will be enabled by developing a strategy and action plan (SAP) on plastics informed by a legislative gap analysis and developing/strengthening legislation⁵ in response to the SAP (Outcome 1 of child project, see table B). Also aligned with component 1, capacity building initiatives will be addressed by output 4.2 in table B. Technical assistance (TA) may be required for regional/global regulatory best practice and support for customs and tariff alignment.

Mobilization of finance in **component 2** of the PFD is reflected in Outcome 1 in table B, which will include public investment and investments mobilized through co-financing (see co-financing table). We will review our innovative financing mechanism (the ARDF policy and Fund), to address any gaps in our national sustainable financing model to sufficiently include reduce and reuse elements of the waste hierarchy and its application to plastics. Private sector investment will also be mobilized in Output 2.3 and Outcome 3 of table B, whereby private sector pilots and activities in circular solutions will be supported and enabled, with the addition of low value grants to encourage mobilization of resources. We may also explore other innovative financing mechanisms available if there is need and dependent on their applicability to our small island context. We are interested to explore best practice examples of innovative and sustainable financing in a SIDS context and how we can strengthen our own, and may need support either by TA or through the wider global programme in this area..

Outcome 2 in table B is aligned with the programme's **component 3**, to identify plastic producers, develop policies and enabling environments to support alternative options and support roll out of alternatives in the F&B sector. Analysis of current importers and plastic products entering the Cook Islands will inform our national strategies and actions. This outcome will look to engage with big multinational enterprises e.g. Coca Cola, Ceres Organics, Watties, Bestfoods, etc., linking to regional or international private sector engagement, and hopes to contribute to as well as leverage the global programme's support in regional negotiations, agreements, pilots and trials, etc. We will require TA or wider support from the global programme in terms of facilitating such discussions, negotiations, leverage, etc. as this is a novel area for us. Innovative solutions from the private sector will be piloted and up-scaled through the outcome 3 (see table B). In addition to the international private sector efforts, a wide variety of the local private sector will also be engaged, from micro-enterprises/SME to large businesses across the F&B sector to support shifts to circular alternatives from single use plastic packaging (outcome

2 in table B). For example, refill options will be introduced or up-scaled by exploring plastic free bulk food options and refill stations in supermarkets and satellite retail outlets (e.g. oils, vinegars, legumes, etc.). Considering the risk/benefit matrix of transporting and importing goods to the Cook Islands, given our distance from regional producers and tropical climate/temperatures, the project will prioritize non-/less-perishable goods. This is to avoid wasted investment in goods likely to be soiled or contaminated during shipping (e.g. weevils in rice etc.) until strong systems and processes are developed. This outcome will also address water refill stations in key locations (e.g. schools, fishing wharfs, etc.), as well as supporting restaurants, bars and hoteliers transition from selling plastic water bottles to providing refillable glass bottles at tables and to guests. Local private sector bodies (e.g. the Chamber of Commerce, Business Trade Investment Board, Cook Island Tourism Industry Council) will also be engaged to capture the private sector governance and representation arms.

To facilitate behavior and social change as per **component 4**, outcome 3 of table B engages and supports innovative circular solutions driven by the private sector, NGOs and community, who have been leading in this space. Multi-stakeholder platforms to facilitate peer-to-peer business knowledge exchange are also included via output 3.4. Data collection in outcome 4 of table B will also assist in providing information to support the reasoning behind desired behavioral changes and output 5.3 will track its effectiveness through Knowledge, Aptitudes and Practices (KAP) surveys (see table B). Digital and physical factsheets, visual communications (videos) as well as our NES social media tools⁶ can be used for public awareness. We may need TA support to conduct behavioral science analysis through our KAP survey and communication activities. Examples of best practice methods to facilitate behavior and social change from countries in the programme may be beneficial, especially in a SIDS or Pacific context. Gender mainstreaming will be supported in capacity building activities and knowledge exchange, as per outputs 4.2 and 4.3 in table B.

This CP reflects PFD **component 5** with its outcome 5 and subsequent outputs to document and exchange best practices, innovative solutions and lessons learned. The project will consider digitizing processes and/or data collection for easier data sharing, analysis and reporting, and we may require TA to present digital solutions to data collection and knowledge capturing. And as per output 3.4, business knowledge exchange will be facilitated by the project through multi-stakeholder platforms (table B). Key project milestones can be shared publically via our NES electronic direct mail (eDM) and on our NES website. On a regional level, Cook Islands will participate in South-south knowledge exchange platforms as indicated in output 4.3 of table B. We'd be interested to share country experiences within the programme through webinars or annual conferences, with particular interest in other Pacific Island Countries (PICs) and SIDS in the programme (i.e. regional annual conferences). Cook Islands are also interested in acting as a SIDS

⁶ *Environmental Communications Strategy (ECS) 2022-27, National Environment Service, Cook Islands*
<https://environment.gov.ck/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/NES-ECS-2022.27.pdf>

representative on any Advisory committees to the programme to ensure the unique positions of SIDS are fully considered, included and represented in the global programme. This child project can contribute to the programme as a pilot/case study for the activities outlined in table B in small island economies, and share lessons learnt and good practices for the benefit of the wider programme. We may need programme support to share knowledge and country experiences, i.e. provision/coordination of knowledge exchange platform, travel support, etc.

The barriers we face in the Cook Islands are limited waste management facilities for the quantities of waste consumed and high export costs to remove waste. The interventions proposed by the project are to: (1) reduce imports of plastics through upstream policy and planning, (2) create an enabling environment for more reduce and reuse elements of the waste hierarchy (3) stimulating support for private sector innovation for mid and downstream solutions. These are driven by our community who continue to value biodiversity and healthy ecosystems as the foundation of our human health and livelihoods, government commitments to improved waste management and environmental management and equitable distribution of benefits. The outcomes, as described in section 2(d), will result in reduced plastic waste from the F&B sector, improved landscapes and MPAs with improved practices and management, healthier ecosystems, better protected biodiversity and reduced greenhouse gas emissions, linking to the GEF core indicators and global environment benefits. If national policies and legislation are improved, government investments in conserving biodiversity and combatting plastic waste will be more effective.

d) Describe the project's incremental reasoning for GEF financing under the program, including the results framework and components.

The Cook Islands have invested in upstream elements of policy development and setting up a sustainable financing mechanism (ARDF Fund). On Rarotonga, we have the recycling center and waste management facilities. We are currently working on downstream efforts (waste management and exporting waste off island) but need support to improve up- and mid-stream processes, including higher focus on reduce and reuse stages of the waste hierarchy. Cook Islands is strongly involved in plastic treaty negotiations but require support to translate this to action at a country level.

The integrated programme provides the scope for the GEF financing to support improvements in the up- and mid-stream elements of the waste hierarchy as well as some reuse proponents, to move the Cook Islands towards a more circular economy.

Under the programme, this project will address the plastic consumption in the food and beverage sector as a multi-faceted and cohesive solution to our national plastic waste management issues. The aim is to reduce the flow of plastics into the country by targeting a key economic sector (F&B) and to develop and support circular solutions to our existing plastic

issues. Our project components will target upstream policy, strategy and legislative gaps on plastic management and support shifts to alternative products through mid and downstream interventions. All lessons learned, experiences and knowledge will be documented for sharing and transparency, facilitating replication and scalability. Communications tools,⁶ e.g. social media, can be used to promote project activities and objectives to the public/stakeholders/partners.

Table B : Objectives, outcomes and outputs of the child project

Child Project Objective	To reduce the amount of single use and unnecessary plastic products in the food & beverage industry entering the Cook Islands, and support enabling environments for reuse and other alternative solutions, thus reducing the burden of end-of-life waste management, pollution and other harmful plastics impacts.				
Child Project Components	Component Type	Child Project Outcomes	Trust Fund	(in \$)	
				GEF Program Financing	Co - financing
Outcome 1: Upstream policies to limit plastic pollution in the Cook Islands are strengthened	TA	<p>Output 1.1 – Review/Gaps analysis of existing SUP related policies and legislation⁷ to strengthen the reduce and reuse considerations</p> <p>Output 1.2 – Develop a fully inclusive, participatory and gender sensitive national Strategy and Action Plan (SAP) on Plastics</p> <p>Output 1.3 – Develop/update legislation required in response to the Gaps Analysis (1.1) and the SAP (1.2)</p>	GEF-TF	US\$800,000	US\$3,000,000

⁷ Currently includes Solid Waste Management Policy (2016-2026), Single Use Plastic Ban Policy (2019), National Solid Waste Management Strategy (2013), Solid & Hazardous Waste Bill (draft), Advanced Recovery and Disposal Fee (ARDF) policy (draft), Prohibition on Importation of Plastic Shopping Bags regulations (2012), Environment Act (2003)

<p>Outcome 2: Large scale regional producers are identified to replace harmful F&B packaging commonly imported into the Cook Islands</p>		<p>Output 2.1 - Analyze the current import product categories in the F&B sector, and identify key categories of products and sub- sectors for intervention Output 2.2 - Bringing policies to support the alternatives and replacement of problematic plastics product in the FB sector Output 2.3 - Support the pilot and roll-out of alternative products in key businesses and venues (e.g. supermarkets, tourism sites, restaurants, schools, etc.)</p>	GEF-TF	US\$800,000	US\$3,000,000
<p>Outcome 3: Local private sector (incl SMEs), NGOs and communities are engaged and supported to pilot and scale up innovative solutions</p>		<p>Output 3.1 - Provide technical and low-value grant assistance for implementing innovative practices and solutions aligned to the NAP (Output 1.2) Output 3.2 – At least 10 pilot projects with local F&B businesses, retailers and producers are identified and implemented or scaled up Output 3.3 – At least 10 pilot projects within the tourism industry (accommodations, restaurants, operators) are identified and implemented or scaled up Output 3.4 - Multi-</p>	GEF-TF	US\$2,179,444	US\$16,000,000

		stakeholder platforms, dialogues and trade events are facilitated for peer to peer/business to business exchange and support			
Outcome 4: National data on single use plastics is enhanced to inform and improve decision making		Output 4.1 - National inventory on plastics for the F&B industry undertaken Output 4.2 - Capacity building initiatives conducted, including support for tertiary education in plastics science-policy programmes Output 4.3 - Regional & South-South knowledge exchange activities and events with Pacific Island Countries and other SIDS	GEF-TF	US\$1,000,000	US\$5,000,000
Outcome 5: Best practices, innovative solutions and lessons learned are documented and exchanged through knowledge management and knowledge transfer		Output 5.1 - Gender-responsive Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy developed and implemented Output 5.2 - Gender-sensitive knowledge and information products on processes, best practices, innovations, lessons learned, and project findings developed and disseminated to stakeholders Output 5.3 – Gender-	GEF-TF	US\$850,000	US\$5,000,000

		responsive Knowledge, Aptitudes & Practices (KAP) surveys throughout the project demonstrate quantifiable changes in public understanding & consumer behavior Output 5.4 - Participatory monitoring and evaluation, including gender mainstreaming, informs project implementation, decision-making and lessons learned.			
M&E		Effective on-going Monitoring and Evaluation.	GEF-TF	US\$296,287	US\$1,000,000
Subtotal			GEF-TF	US\$5,925,732	US\$33,000,000
Child Project Management Cost (PMC)			GEF-TF	US\$296,287	US\$2,000,000
Total Child Project Cost			GEF-TF	US\$6,222,018	US\$35,000,000

3. Engagement with the Global / Regional Framework (maximum 500 words)

Describe how the project will align with the global / regional framework for the program to foster knowledge sharing, learning, and synthesis of experiences. How will the proposed approach scale-up from the local and national level to maximize engagement by all relevant stakeholders and/or actors?

Section 2c above outlines how the Cook Islands CP will correspond and support the global programme’s PFD components.

Specifically relating to knowledge sharing, the Project will put emphasis on knowledge exchange and documentation as referred to in output 4.3 and outcome 5 in the above section, aligning to PFD component 5 on knowledge exchange. Additionally, as a SIDS, the Cook Islands can provide opportunity to pilot and case study circular economy solutions in

closed loop environments that can be replicated across other SIDS and up-scaled in other countries, providing scalability to success. Cook Islands will participate in regional/global dialogues/events/forums to share project successes and lessons learnt. Depending on other SIDS, the Cook Islands would be interested to join a regional program with the Pacific SIDS as we are all end-users of plastics and share many common challenges. The Cook Islands can also contribute to data on plastics pollution in a generally data deficient region to support national, regional and global assessments, monitoring and reporting. Lastly, the Cook Islands would be proud to represent Pacific Island Countries (PICs) or SIDS on any of the global programme boards/committees, etc. to ensure our unique experiences are reflected in the overall programme planning, processes and collaborative outcomes.