



## ADAPTATION FUND

AFB/PPRC.36/37  
8-9 October 2025

---

Adaptation Fund Board  
Project and Programme Review Committee  
Thirty-sixth Meeting  
Bonn, Germany 8-9 October 2025

Agenda Item 11)

### **PROPOSAL FOR ADAPTATION FUND CLIMATE INNOVATION ACCELERATOR (AFCIA) PROGRAMME THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY (SPC)**

## Background

1. At its thirtieth meeting, having considered document AFB/B.30/5/Rev.1, the Adaptation Fund Board (the Board) decided:

(a) *To adopt the medium-term strategy as amended by the Board, as contained in the Annex 1 of the document AFB/B.30/5/Rev.1 (the MTS); and*

(b) *To request the secretariat:*

(i) *To broadly disseminate the MTS and work with key stakeholders to build understanding and support;*

(ii) *To prepare, under the supervision of the MTS task force, a draft implementation plan for operationalizing the MTS, containing a draft budget and addressing key assumptions and risks, including but not limited to funding and political risks, for consideration by the Board at its thirty-first meeting; and*

(iii) *To draft, as part of the implementation plan, the updates/modifications to the operational policies and guidelines of the Adaptation Fund needed to facilitate implementation of the MTS, for consideration by the Board at its thirty-first meeting.*

*(Decision B.30/42)*

2. Pursuant to decision B.30/42, subparagraph (b) (ii), the secretariat prepared a draft implementation plan for the MTS, including an assessment of assumptions and risks. The secretariat shared a version of the draft with the MTS task force for comments.

3. At its thirty-first meeting, the Adaptation Fund Board discussed document the draft implementation plan for the MTS, and members of the Board proposed amendments to the document. The secretariat then presented a revised draft, in document AFB/B.31/5/Rev.1. Having considered that document, the Board decided:

(a) *To approve the implementation plan for the medium-term strategy for the Fund for 2018–2022 contained in the Annex I to document AFB/B.31/5/Rev.1 (the plan);*

(b) *To request the secretariat:*

*[...]*

(iii) *To prepare, for each proposed new type of grant and funding window, a specific document containing objectives, review criteria, expected grant sizes, implementation modalities, review process and other relevant features and submit it to the Board for its consideration in accordance with the tentative timeline contained in Annex I to document AFB/B.31/5/Rev.1, with input from the Board's committees;*

- (iv) Following consideration of the new types of support mentioned in subparagraph (b)(iii), to propose, as necessary, amendments to the Fund's operational policies and guidelines Fund to better facilitate the implementation of such new types of support; and*

*[...]*

**(Decision B.31/32)**

4. Accordingly, a Call for Expressions of Interest was issued to MIEs in August 2018 (see Annex 1), requesting such submissions of expressions of interest to be submitted by the Deadline of September 17th, 2018, to the Adaptation Fund Board secretariat. The Call for Expressions of Interest provided a background to the initiative, as well as the objectives, provisional criteria, and guidance on the learning aspect of the initiative.

5. At its thirty-second meeting, having considered the comments and recommendation of the Project and Programme Review Committee, the Adaptation Fund Board (the Board) decided:

- (a) To select and invite both the United Nations Development Programme and United Nations Environment Programme to serve as the multilateral implementing entity (MIE) aggregator(s) for small grants for innovation;*
- (b) To request the secretariat to prepare a joint announcement of the initiative in conjunction with the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;*
- (c) To request the secretariat to develop guidance to the MIE aggregators for preparing proposals for small grant programmes for innovation;*
- (d) To establish a task force that would advise the secretariat on the development of the guidance; and*
- (e) To invite the two MIE aggregators to prepare respective proposals for the consideration of the Board.*

**(Decision B.32/5)**

6. The two programmes were developed in tandem and launched jointly as Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator (AFCIA), the initiative first announced by the Adaptation Fund at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP25) in Madrid in December 2019, and subsequently announced as operational in November 2020 by the Fund together with UNDP and UNEP/Climate and Technology Centre and Network (CTCN). Since then, AFCIA has been topped up by a contribution from the European Commission of EUR 10 million.

7. The Adaptation Fund Board, through Decision B.39/61, approved the Fund's second and current Medium-Term Strategy (MTS II) for the 2023 – 2027 period. In its implementation it will continue to build on the work carried out under the previous MTS (2018-2022), which included the implementation of AFCIA. As part of MTS II, the Fund also seeks to further enhance and expand its support for locally-led adaptation (LLA) by fostering innovation and creating a portfolio of diverse and locally appropriate innovation projects and programmes, and thus contribute to its

mission of accelerating effective adaptation action, innovation and learning in developing countries.

8. The expected results (ERs) for the innovation pillar under MTS II have been defined as follows:

- (i) New innovations and risk-taking encouraged and accelerated – Development of innovative adaptation practices, tools and technologies encouraged and accelerated, including solutions with high impact potential even if it comes with a higher risk of failure.
- (ii) Successful innovations replicated and scaled up – Innovative adaptation practices, tools and technologies that have demonstrated success in one country spread to new countries/regions or are scaled up from smaller to larger scales.
- (iii) Access and capacities enhanced for designing and implementing innovation – Access and capacities enhanced, knowledge generated, and awareness raised, for implementing entities and non-accredited actors to design and implement innovative adaptation solutions.
- (iv) Evidence base generated and shared (linkage with learning and sharing pillar) – Evidence on the conditions that lead to successful innovation generated and shared, and partnerships, iteration, learning, and adaptive management encouraged. Evidence of effective, efficient adaptation practices, products and technologies generated as a basis for implementing entities and other funds to assess scaling up.

9. In line with the MTS II and following consultations with the members of the Innovation Task Force of the Board, the secretariat issued a Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI) with a view of the continuation and expansion of AFCIA to include additional multilateral and regional implementing entities (IEs) with capacity to administer small innovation grants in vulnerable regions and in relevant sectors.

10. Subsequently, the secretariat circulated the Call for Regional and Multilateral Implementing Entities to express their interest in applying for funding to support and expand AFCIA on the 20th of January 2023. IEs were invited to submit expressions of interest to the AFB Secretariat no later than the deadline of February 20, 2023. By the deadline, the secretariat had received five submissions, which were presented in document AFB/PPRC.31/58.

11. The secretariat also presented Document AFB/PPRC.31/59 concerning the 'Operational Policy and Guidance to Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator (AFCIA) Implementing Entities', in line with the Medium-term Strategy (MTS II) 2023-2027.

12. Having considered the recommendations of the Project and Programme Review Committee concerning documents AFB/PPRC.31/58 and AFB/PPRC.31/59, the Adaptation Fund Board (the Board) decided:

- (a) To invite the Pacific Community (SPC) to develop a programme proposal for an amount of up to US\$ 5,000,000;

- (b) To invite the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) to develop a programme proposal for an amount up to US\$ 5,000,000;*
- (c) To invite the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to develop a programme proposal for an amount up to US\$ 10,000,000;*
- (d) To invite the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) to develop a programme proposal for an amount up to US\$ 10,000,000;*
- (e) To invite the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) to develop a programme proposal for an amount up to US\$ 10,000,000;*
- (f) To invite the implementing entities (IEs) to prepare a programme proposal using the process elaborated in document AFB/PPRC.31/59 for the consideration of the Board at its forty-first meeting;*
- (g) To invite UNEP, UNIDO and WFP to submit a proposal on extending coordination services to the Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator (AFCIA) partnership for consideration by the Project and Programme Review Committee at its thirty-second meeting;*
- (h) To request the selected IEs to indicate acceptance by letter to the Chair of the Board by no later than two weeks following the date of the official invitation notification;*
- (i) To request the secretariat to increase the outreach to IEs regarding the AFCIA partnership.*

**(Decision B.40/57)**

13. Pursuant to decision B.40/57 subparagraph (h), all selected IEs indicated acceptance following the official invitation notification.

14. The following fully-developed proposal document titled “SPC’s Climate Innovation Co:Lab” was submitted by Pacific Community (SPC), which is a Regional Implementing Entity of the Adaptation Fund.

15. This is the second submission of the fully developed project proposal, using the one-step submission process.

16. The current submission was received by the secretariat in time to be considered in the forty-fifth Board meeting. The secretariat carried out review of the project proposal, assigned it the Project ID number AF00000449, and completed a review sheet.

17. In accordance with a request to the secretariat made by the Board in its 10th meeting, the secretariat shared this review sheet with SPC and offered it the opportunity of providing responses before the review sheet was sent to the PPRC.

18. The secretariat is submitting to the PPRC the summary and, pursuant to decision B.17/15, the final technical review of the project, both prepared by the secretariat, along with the final submission of the proposal in the following section. In accordance with decision B.25/15, the

proposal is submitted with changes between the initial submission and the revised version highlighted or with track change.



ADAPTATION FUND

# ADAPTATION FUND BOARD SECRETARIAT TECHNICAL REVIEW OF PROJECT/PROGRAMME PROPOSAL

PROJECT/PROGRAMME CATEGORY: Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator

**Country/Region:** Regional (14 Pacific SIDS) - Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

**Project Title:** SPC's Climate Innovation Co:Lab

**Thematic Focal Area:** Innovative Adaptation Financing

**Implementing Entity:** Pacific Community (SPC)

**Executing Entities:** Pacific Community (SPC)

**AF Project ID:** AF00000449

**IE Project ID:** **Requested Financing from Adaptation Fund (US Dollars): 5,000,000**

**Reviewer and contact person:** Marcus Johannesson **Co-reviewer(s):** Andrew Hollander

**IE Contact Person:**

<b>Technical Summary</b>	<p>The project "SPC's Climate Innovation Co:Lab" aims to incubate, catalyse, de-risk, and scale locally led climate adaptation innovations across Pacific SIDS. This will be done through the 3 components below:</p> <p><u>Component 1:</u> Incubation – Identification and development of innovative practices for climate adaptation (USD 1,306,120)</p> <p><u>Component 2:</u> Acceleration – Scale-up funding for promising innovation projects (USD 1,654,120)</p> <p><u>Component 3:</u> Amplification – Knowledge management, learning and replication (1,447,800)</p> <p><u>Requested financing overview:</u></p> <p>Project/Programme Execution Cost: USD 151,960  Total Project/Programme Cost: USD 4,560,000  Implementing Fee: USD 440,000  Financing Requested: USD 5,000,000</p>
--------------------------	---

	<p>The first technical review identified several points requiring clarification or corrective action including issues related to the sourcing and screening process, the mainstreaming of gender considerations, the execution cost, alignment with the AF results framework and a few other issues. These and other issues are addressed in the Clarification Requests (CRs) and Corrective Action Requests (CARs) raised in the review.</p> <p>The second technical review identified that there are a few points requiring clarification or corrective action including issues related to the ESP, the execution cost, SPC acting both as a funder and grantee in some cases, and a few other minor issues as addressed in the Clarification Requests (CRs) and Corrective Action Requests (CARs) raised in the review.</p> <p>The third technical review finds that all CRs and CARs have been sufficiently addressed.</p>
Date:	September 2, 2025

Review Criteria	Questions	1 <sup>st</sup> Review [19 August 2025]	2 <sup>nd</sup> Review [28 August 2025]	3 <sup>rd</sup> Review [2 September 2025]
Country Eligibility	1. Does the proposal include a mechanism that will ensure that the participating countries are party to the Paris Agreement and/or the Kyoto Protocol?	<b>Yes</b>	-	
	2. Does the proposal describe how the IE will involve the participation of developing countries particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of	<p><b>Yes, but corrections needed</b></p> <p>The proposal describes the involvement of developing countries particularly vulnerable to climate change, specifically targeting</p>	<p><b>Cleared.</b></p> <p>The proposal's pages and paragraphs are now numbered.</p>	

	<p>climate change? Does it specify countries, a region, or two or more regions?</p>	<p>Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS), which are known for their high vulnerability due to geographical and socio-economic factors.</p> <p>The following countries are explicitly mentioned in the proposal as participating in the program: Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Tuvalu, Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Tonga. Some pages and paragraphs are not numbered appropriately.</p> <p><b><u>Correction needed</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please appropriately number all pages.</li> <li>• Please appropriately number all paragraphs.</li> </ul>		

--	--	--	--	--

	<p>1. Does the proposal describe how it will source innovation small grant proposals, and screen them <b>for the potential to support concrete adaptation actions</b> to assist the participating countries in addressing the adverse effects of climate change and build in climate resilience?</p>	<p><b>Yes, but with clarifications required</b></p> <p>A process is outlined, starting with a regional call for project pitches from a broad range of actors including from CSOs, SMEs, community groups, and academia. Shortlisted project pitches will lead to full proposals and awards, with specific funding for both incubation (USD 25,000 – 75,000) and accelerator phases (up to USD 250,000).</p> <p><b>CR1:</b> The proposal states that project pitches responding to a country-specific adaptation challenge will first be reviewed by a multi-disciplinary Appraisal Committee, and later by SPC for a final technical appraisal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Please provide clarifications on how and when criteria for these</li> </ul>	<p><b>CR1: Cleared</b> Paragraph 22 The revised proposal clarifies that the appraisal criteria will be developed during the project induction phased involving the multi-disciplinary Appraisal Committee. At least one specific criteria will observe the response of pitch ideas to climate change adaptation and resilience building challenges.</p> <p><b>CR2: Cleared</b> Paragraph 22 The revised proposal clarifies that the Appraisal Committee will be multi-disciplinary, and will involve SPC specialists in areas of climate change adaptation, procurement, finance, resource mobilization, MEL, innovation, and social and environmental responsibility.</p>	
--	--	--	--	--

		<p>processes will be developed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Please also provide details on the extent that climate change adaptation will be integrated into the criteria for reviewing project pitches, and move beyond the criteria that was used for previous Funding with Intent (FiT)-related initiatives. Part II, Section G, provides several example criteria that will be utilized by the multi-disciplinary Appraisal Committee, but none of these explicitly relate to climate change adaptation or building resilience.</li> </ul>	<p><b>CR3: Clarification required</b> Paragraph 22</p> <p>While the State Project Committee (SPC) will distribute funds and also be involved in executing projects, the proposal must clearly state that its appraisal process is independent. Specifically, please clarify measures to ensure the impartiality of the SPC Appraisal Committee from the technical teams that will submit and carry out sub-projects. This separation is crucial for ensuring an impartial review. Furthermore, the proposal needs to use consistent and precise language related to SPC's execution role.</p> <p><b>CR4: Cleared</b> Paragraph 36</p> <p>The proposal clarifies that information on call for pitches will be shared amongst the network of DAs in the</p>	<p><b>CR3: Cleared. (Para 22)</b></p> <p>In para 22, the proposal clarifies that the appraisal process in the project will be independent and transparent. This includes that the selection of appraisal committee members will be made in careful consideration of the independence of the process. Furthermore, the Appraisal committee members will have to sign a 'Conflict of Interest Declaration Form'.</p>

		<p><b>CR2:</b> Please provide further details on the composition of the multi-disciplinary Appraisal Committee.</p> <p><b>CR3:</b> Part II, Section E states under Activity 1.1.1: “Pitch submissions are encouraged by a broad range of actors including from CSOs, small and medium enterprises, community groups, and <u>SPC technical teams</u>.” Please clarify whether the intention is for SPC to serve both as the distributor of funds and grantee in certain cases.</p> <p><b>CR4:</b> In multiple parts of the proposal, it states that regional calls will leverage a range of networks and be disseminated widely. The budget even indicates that there will be funding dedicated to translation and communication services</p>	<p>Pacific, and some calls may be disseminated through regional networks of civil society organizations. It also provides examples: Pacific Resilience Partnership, NDC Focal Points, and SPC’s established relationships through the One CROP mechanism.</p> <p><b>CR5: Cleared</b> Paragraphs 22, 23 The proposal now clarifies that Co:Lab will support 20 incubation projects and approximately 6 acceleration projects.</p>	
--	--	--	--	--

		<p>to ensure wide dissemination. Please provide further details in the main body of the proposal on how in practice outreach efforts will be undertaken to ensure the regional calls will be accessible to a range of vulnerable communities and ensure broad participation of local actors.</p> <p><b>CR5:</b> The proposal states that there will be specific funding for both incubation (USD 25,000 – 75,000) and accelerator phases (up to USD 250,000). Could you please indicate how many grant recipients are anticipated at the incubation phase, and how many grant recipients are anticipated at the accelerator phase.</p>		
--	--	--	--	--

	<p>2. Does the programme contribute meaningfully to the Expected Results under the Innovation Pillar:</p> <p>I. New innovations and risk-taking encouraged and accelerated</p> <p>ii. Successful innovations replicated and scaled up</p> <p>iii. Access and capacities enhanced for designing and implementing innovation.</p> <p>iv. Evidence base generated and shared.</p>	<p><b>Yes (p. 16)</b></p> <p>The proposal depicts how the programme will contribute meaningfully to the Expected Results under the Innovation Pillar:</p> <p><u>New innovations and risk-taking encouraged and accelerated</u></p> <p>The proposal indicates that new innovations and de-risking will be encouraged and accelerated through the programme's Incubation phase by offering catalytic small grants to support local innovators from communities, CSOs, SMEs and academia in testing novel ideas, proof of concept, approaches, and technologies that respond to priority climate adaptation needs.</p> <p><u>Successful innovations replicated and scaled up</u></p>		

		<p>The proposal indicates that successful innovations will be refined and scaled up through the Acceleration phase. Projects that demonstrate strong results during the Incubation stage will receive follow-on funding along with technical assistance from SPC's in-house expertise and partner networks. The Co:Lab programme will also connect scale-ready innovations through Matchmaking Labs to other financial actors.</p> <p><u>Access and capacities enhanced for designing and implementing innovation</u></p> <p>The programme will carry out capacity-building activities such as targeted training, hands-on technical assistance and innovation clinics, and actively prioritise engagement with women, youth, and</p>		
--	--	---	--	--

		<p>persons with disabilities.</p> <p><u>Evidence base generate and shared</u>  The programme will generate and disseminate an evidence base for adaptation innovation through its Amplification stage. Lessons learned from Components 1 and 2 will be systematically documented and disseminated via established platforms such as the Regional NDC Hub and SPC's internal knowledge systems. It will also coordinate learning with other regional RIEs that have submitted AFCIA proposals (SPREP).</p>		
	<p>3. Does the proposal describe how it will screen innovation small grant proposals for their potential to provide economic, social, and environmental benefits, particularly</p>	<p><b>Clarification needed</b></p> <p>The proposal provides a dedicated Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) for screening, assessing, managing, and</p>	<p><b>CAR1: Cleared</b></p> <p>The ESMS has been updated to clarify that all sub-projects regardless of categorization (B or C) will require an ESMP.</p>	

	<p>to vulnerable communities, including gender considerations, while avoiding or mitigating negative impacts, in compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy of the Fund?</p>	<p>monitoring E&amp;S risks across all Unidentified Sub-Projects (USPs) funded through the programme.</p> <p>The ESMS provides a programme level analysis of the 15 AF E&amp;S principles with mitigation measures, as well demonstrating how the SPC SER Screening tool, which will be applied to all USPs, also aligns with the AF 15 E&amp;S principles.</p> <p><b>CAR1:</b> The ESMS states that USPs will be screened and categorized as Category A, B, or C based on their risks. It states that Category B sub-projects require an Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMP), while Category C sub-projects will not.</p> <p>The proposal is sparsely describing which are the</p>	<p><b>CR6: Cleared</b> The revised background now provides a more comprehensive contextual description of climate change challenges and barriers in Pacific SIDS, drawing on NDC priority sectors as well as SPC's programme experience. Building on this, further clarifications on the anticipated benefits have been added in Section H (p. 22), including the screening process.</p>	
--	---	--	--	--

		<p>anticipated benefits for people on the ground based on the planned activities that will lead up to various adaptation solutions.</p> <p><b>CR6:</b> Please elaborate further and more concretely outline the potential economic, social and environmental benefits that the project activities are anticipated to deliver as a response to participating countries' climate change adaptation-related challenges and identified gender issues. A good starting point may be to outline how various sectors/themes can be enhanced for people's lives.</p> <p>Whenever possible, please also quantify the estimated benefits.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> A more comprehensive</p>		

		contextual description of challenges and barriers to climate change adaptation may be needed to facilitate the above discussions and requested input.		
	4. Does the project engage, empower and/or benefit the most vulnerable communities and social groups?	<p><b>Yes</b></p> <p>The “co-design” phase of the programme will “actively involve vulnerable populations and follow a people-centred approach (PCA)” (Part II, Section N).</p> <p>In various stages of its implementation, the project through its proposed Climate Innovation Co: Lab seeks to ensure empowerment and benefit to most vulnerable communities and social groups by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Offering targeted small grants under its Incubation stage to pilot community-led innovations and de-risk proof-of-concept ideas</li> </ul>		

		<p>address the lack and need of access for inclusive early-stage catalytic finance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adopting a broad innovation definition that values social, institutional, and nature-based solutions, including approaches grounded in indigenous knowledge and cultural practices.</li> <li>- Applying assessment criteria explicitly recognizing community-driven innovation and social inclusion. Potential grant applicants must demonstrate inclusive engagement, and include vulnerability-disaggregated indicators.</li> </ul>		
--	--	--	--	--

	<p>5. Does the project advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls?</p>	<p><b>Clarification needed</b></p> <p>The proposal provides a detailed Gender Analysis and Assessment, complemented by a comprehensive Gender Action Plan GAP including implementation measures aligned with AF Gender Principles.</p> <p>However, there is a misalignment in between the level of profoundness that the gender assessment and its recommendations, and the GAP illustrate compared to the results framework which only includes a few high-level gender indicators and targets in the results framework.</p> <p><b>CAR2:</b> Although the Gender Action Plan provides a set of gender-specific indicators and targets, those are not reflected in the project results framework. Please</p>	<p><b>CAR2: Cleared</b></p> <p>The results framework has now been updated to better align with the level of detail that the Gender assessment and analysis including Gender Action Plan provides. (See Section W, p. 40).</p>	

		<p>ensure that the project results framework captures the indicators and associated targets included in the Gender Action Plan.</p>		
	<p>6. Is the project/programme cost-effective?</p> <p>In the case of regional project/programmes, does the regional approach support cost effectiveness? Does the project engage, empower and/or benefit the most vulnerable communities and social groups?</p>	<p><b>Clarification needed</b></p> <p>The proposal highlights that by leveraging SPC's institutional platform for innovation, Funding with Intent (FiT), the programme can utilize existing infrastructure and mechanisms which have been used in the past to support "high-impact initiatives across Pacific SIDS at</p>		

		<p>relatively low costs” (Part I, Section A).</p> <p>The proposal also states that the regional nature of the programme can help achieve economies of scale through regional peer-to-peer learning, matchmaking initiatives, and the transfer of proven innovations from one context to another, reducing time and cost associated with developing entirely new solutions in each country (Part II, Section I).</p> <p>The FiT framework is said to historically have been cost effective with relatively low costs while maximizing resource efficiency, promoting knowledge sharing, and avoiding duplication of efforts (Part II, Section I).</p> <p><b>CR7:</b> To understand how the project will benefit from this model in terms of cost-</p>		

		<p>effectiveness, please elaborate on how the FiT is more cost-effective compared to alternative options. Please, also provide quantitative estimates of this.</p>		
	<p>7. Does the proposal describe how it will screen innovation small grant proposals for consistency with national or sub-national sustainable development strategies, adaptation planning processes, national or sub-national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, national communications and adaptation programs of action, national adaptation plans (NAPs), nationally determined contributions (NDCs), adaptation communications, and other voluntary adaptation reports,</p>	<p><b>Clarification needed.</b></p> <p>Part II, Section J of the proposal is related to alignment to national and sub-national strategies. This section of the proposal focuses on regional priorities, but overlooks national or sub-national (if they exist) strategies.</p> <p><b>CR8:</b> Please clarify how the program will ensure that the proposed small grant projects are aligned with national or sub-national sustainable development strategies, adaptation plans, and other relevant frameworks, including NDCs and NAPs.</p>	<p><b>CR8: Cleared</b></p> <p>The proposal now sufficiently clarifies the project's cost-effectiveness. Quantifications estimates are provided (figures and percentages) while comparing FiT projects' (based on historical records) cost structure with other project approaches. See Section I (p. 23).</p> <p><b>CR9: Cleared</b></p> <p>The proposal has now included a mention of that project applicants</p>	

	<p>where they exist, as well as with the UNFCCC technology framework, and other relevant instruments?</p>	<p>A key element of innovation and adaptation planning are Technology Needs Assessments (TNAs) and Technology Action Plans (TAPs). These are often developed by countries to identify and prioritize technologies for both climate mitigation and adaptation, and they could provide valuable insight for an innovation-focused project.</p> <p><b>CR9:</b> Clarify how alignment with the UNFCCC technology framework (TAPs and TNAs if they exist) and other relevant instruments will be evaluated during the screening process.</p> <p><b>CR10:</b> Please consider exploring the alignment and reference to other national/regional cross-cutting plans and strategies that may be relevant such as strategies for Private</p>	<p>will have to demonstrate the strategic alignment of their project with relevant regional or national frameworks including TNAs and TAPs when available. This will be assessed by the Appraisal Committee in the selection process. See Section 'J' p. 24.</p> <p><b>CR10: Cleared</b></p> <p>Clarifications added regarding the project's alignment with national or regional cross-cutting strategies which will be considered as part of the appraisal process of strategic alignment. See Section 'J' p. 24.</p>	

		Sector and SME development, Inclusive Economic Development, and Research & Academia etc.		
	8. Does the proposal describe how it will screen innovation small grant proposals for meeting the relevant national technical standards, where applicable, in compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy of the Fund?	<p><b>Clarification needed</b></p> <p>The proposal explains that all innovation small grant proposals are screened for compliance with relevant national technical standards, sectoral policies, and regulatory requirements in each participating country, and also outlines the role of SPC in each case.</p> <p>The relevant national technical standards for the project's activities have not been identified. It could for instance include building codes, water quality regulations, land use or any other sector-specific regulation.</p> <p><b>CR11:</b> Please, identify and list relevant</p>	<p><b>CR11: Cleared</b></p> <p>The proposal has now included a list of selected relevant National Technical Standards among the fourteen participating SIDS. In addition, the process to ensure compliance has been outlined in more detail. See Section 'K', p. 25.</p>	

		national technical standards and clarify the process for compliance, the steps to comply with them during implementation.		
	9. Is there duplication of project / programme with other funding sources?	<p><b>Clarification needed</b></p> <p>The proposal highlights how it will use safeguards and coordination mechanisms to avoid duplication. This includes tracking all small grants applications within the FiT platform, to cross-check against past or ongoing initiatives. SPC will also cross-reference all proposals received with the respective NDA of the participating country, as well as ensuring coordination with another Pacific RIE (SPREP) that has submitted their own AFCIA proposal.</p> <p><b>CR12:</b> The proposal mentions a number of regional initiatives/partnerships that will be relevant to</p>	<p><b>CR12: Correction needed.</b></p> <p>The proposal has added more detail on other regional initiatives/partnerships that are relevant to the project including how complementarities will be sought with these. See Section 'Project/Programme Background and Context', p.9.</p> <p>To better fit the template of the proposal, please move the above-mentioned piece to Section 'L' Complementarity with Other Fund Sources.</p>	<p><b>CR12: Cleared.</b></p> <p>The key regional initiatives that SPC will leverage and draw from (best practices) into the project are moved from the background into Section L of the proposal. See p.26.</p>

		<p>this programme including: The Regional Programmatic Approach on Climate Action; Unlocking Blue Pacific Prosperity; SPC's Regional Readiness Programme; Climate Finance Access Network (CFAN); Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH) Programme. Could you please provide a little more information on these initiatives/partnerships and indicate how they will complement and enhance the programme, and ensure there are no duplications.</p>		
	<p>10. Does the programme have a learning and knowledge management system to capture and disseminate evidence, particularly of effective, efficient adaptation</p>	<p><b>Yes, but clarifications needed</b></p> <p>The programme provides a strong learning and knowledge management system, with a dedicated Knowledge Management and MEL Officer in the Project</p>	<p><b>CR13: Cleared</b></p> <p>The proposal has clarified that it will apply adaptive management during implementation and through the capacity strengthening activities based on continuous learning (lessons learned). The</p>	

	<p>practices, products or technologies generated, as a basis for potential scaling up?</p>	<p>Management Unit. Component 3 highlights facilitated structured peer-to-peer learning and regional knowledge exchanges. It also highlights that “lessons from Component 1 and 2 will be captured and translated into factsheets, policy briefs and technical guidance, contributing to the integration of successful innovations into national adaptation planning processes (Part II, Section M).</p> <p><b>CR13:</b> Please elaborate further on in the proposal how the project plans to continuously assess and use evidence and lessons learned (double loop learning) in an iterative learning process so that the project and its activities can adapt and improve its implementation.</p>	<p>project will encourage a continuous review of the theory of change, activities and associated budget to improve their concept based on lessons learned.</p>	
	<p>11. Has the proposal described what consultative process will take place, and</p>	<p><b>Not Cleared</b></p> <p>The proposal states that “the consultative</p>	<p><b>CR14: Cleared</b></p> <p>As part of programme design, SPC drew on their ongoing regional</p>	

	<p>how will it involve all key stakeholders, and vulnerable groups, including gender considerations?</p>	<p>process underpinning the programme is designed to be inclusive, participatory, and responsive to the diverse needs of Pacific countries and communities, with particular emphasis on engaging vulnerable groups and integrating gender consideration” (Part II, Section N). While the approach to the stakeholder consultative process is positive, the proposal lacks sufficient detail on concrete measures that will take place.</p> <p>It is, however, unclear what consultative processes have already taken place and how it has contributed to the design of the project’s proposal.</p> <p><b>CR14:</b> Please, clarify the consultative process already taken place and with whom (stakeholders, vulnerable groups) and</p>	<p>and national engagement processes, including structured consultations and continuous engagement under the NDC Hub, Regional Programmatic Approach on Climate Action (RPACA), SPC’s Regional Readiness support, “Heads of” meeting with directors or permanent secretaries of technical services, ministerial meetings, and multiple country-driven GCF and AF projects. The priorities and gaps consistently raised in these exchanges, such as the need for early-stage catalytic finance, stronger inclusion of women and youth, and clearer pathways for scaling, directly informed the design of the Co:Lab.</p> <p>See section N, p. 27.</p> <p><b>CR15: Cleared</b></p>	

		<p>how this has influenced the project design.</p> <p><b>CR15:</b> Please provide further clarifications on the specific actions which will take place to ensure an inclusive and meaningful consultative process takes place, that involves all key stakeholders, and especially marginalized and vulnerable groups during implementation.</p>	<p>The project will use a co-design approach to develop full project concepts before their implementation including stakeholder consultation and partnership discussion, most often with technical services of national governments (civil servants) or partner organisations such as community-based organisations (youth groups, women's group, local NGOs). Project leads must attend co-design training sessions and are supported by the FiT and SER teams through a coaching approach.</p> <p>See section N, p. 27.</p>	
	<p>12. Is the requested financing justified based on full cost of adaptation reasoning?</p>	<p><b>Yes (p. 21)</b></p> <p>The proposal clarifies that the planned activities and their intended results do not depend on any other sources of funding.</p>		

	13. Is the project / program aligned with AF's results framework?	<p><b>Clarifications needed</b></p> <p>The project aligns with the Adaptation Fund's Strategic Results Framework, particularly Outcome 8, which focuses on innovation in adaptation practices, tools, and technologies.</p> <p><b>CAR3:</b> Please list alignment with all relevant outcomes of the AF strategic results framework that might apply. For example, activities focused on KM and Learning could be aligned with Outcome 3 and activities focused on enhancing institutional capacity may be aligned with outcome 2 and their respective outcome and output indicators (<a href="#">Results Framework Alignment Table (Amended in March 2019)</a>)</p>	<p><b>CAR3: Cleared</b></p> <p>Table 9 - Project alignments with AF Strategic Results Framework has been updated with relevant Fund Outcomes and indicators as suggested. See p. 44.</p> <p><b>CR16: Cleared</b></p> <p>The results framework is updated including clarifications for the planned number of incubated and scaled solutions, as well as added baselines values. The # sign has been replaced with Number for consistency.</p>	

		<p><b>CR16:</b> For the Project Results Framework (table 5):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Please clarify the target number of adaptation solutions that will be incubated and scaled.</li><li>- For incubation, the first row lists 20, while the second row lists 30. It also lists that 10 innovations will be scaled, while 6 incubation grantees will access follow-on funding. Please provide further clarification on what this means as it is not entirely clear from the table alone.</li><li>- Please also ensure a consistent use of "Number" or "#" throughout the proposal.</li><li>- Please provide a baseline value for the indicator "# of local stakeholders with enhanced capacity to</li></ul>		
--	--	---	--	--

		implement climate adaptation innovations."		
	<p>14. Has the sustainability of the programme outcomes been considered when designing the programme, including in the screening of the innovation small grants projects? Does the programme include pathways to scale up successful small grant projects?</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p> <p>Overall, the programme promotes a long-term vision by focusing on a clear innovation pathway of incubation, acceleration, and amplification.</p> <p>Sustainability considerations have been embedded in in the project cycle from initial screening of small grant proposals to structured pathways for scaling and accelerating successful innovations under Component 1 and 2.</p> <p>Component 3 will further catalyse scale-up by enabling innovators to access strategic finance opportunities, enabling replication pathways by embedding learnings into national and regional systems while</p>		

		<p>convening innovation investment matchmaking labs, regional knowledge sharing arrangements, knowledge products and policy uptake.</p> <p>In addition, the FIT framework offers an institutional platform with established systems for managing innovation and with strong links to national institutions and technical divisions. This ensures that adaptation innovations are strategically supported to evolve, scale and influence broader development outcomes across the Pacific.</p>		
	<p>15. Does the project / programme provide an overview of environmental and social impacts / risks identified, in compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy and Gender Policy of the Fund?</p>	<p><b>Not Cleared</b></p> <p>The proposal provides a comprehensive Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS), as well as a process for screening sub-grant projects and categorizing risk, as</p>	<p><b>CAR1: Cleared</b> The ESMS has been updated to clarify that all sub-projects regardless of categorization (B or C) will require a ESMP.</p> <p><b>New CAR10: Not Cleared</b> Table 5, P.29</p>	<p><b>CAR10: Cleared.</b></p> <p>A risk assessment narrative and a risk level have been added for ESP 1 and 4 in table 5 (p. 29), as well as in table 18 in the ESMS.</p>

		<p>well as a clear gender assessment and action plan.</p> <p>As specified in earlier <b>CAR1</b>, please ensure that all sub-projects, regardless of their risk categorization, require the preparation of an ESMP.</p>	<p>In the Table for Environmental and Social Impact and Risks, for ESP 1 “Compliance with the Law” it states there will be “no risk”. For ESP 4 “Human rights” states there be “no risk”. Please note that in projects and programmes, ESP 1, 4 and 6 must always apply and monitoring measures should be in place. This needs to be acknowledged in the proposal.</p>	
Resource Availability	1. Is the requested project funding within the parameters for large grants set by the Board?	<p><b>Yes</b></p> <p>The requested funding of USD 5,000,000 is within the Adaptation Fund Board approved parameters for this proposal.</p>		
	2. Is the Implementing Entity Management Fee at or below 10 per cent of the project/programme for implementing entity (IE) fees and at or below 10 per	<p><b>Yes</b></p> <p>The Implementing Entity Management Fee is USD 440,000 which is less than 10% of the Total Project/Programme Cost of USD USD</p>	<p><b>CAR4: Cleared.</b> Paragraph 104</p> <p>According to Adaptation Fund policy, when the IE and EE are the same, execution costs are capped at 1.5%. To</p>	

	<p>cent of the project/programme cost for the execution costs?</p>	<p>4,560,000. The Project/Programme Execution Cost is USD 151,960. When compared to the Total Project/Programme Cost, this is approximately 3.4%.</p> <p>According to Adaptation Fund policy, when the IE and EE are the same, the execution costs are capped at 1.5% of the total project cost, noting that justifications for increase over the 1.5% can be accepted with a justification on a case-by-case basis. Since SPC is stated to be both IE and EE, this rule will apply.</p> <p><b>CAR4:</b> Please, provide a strong justification for its currently proposed cost level.</p>	<p>exceed this cap, strong justification is required.</p> <p>The proposal now provides a strong justification for having the project's execution cost at 3.4% of the total project cost. The proposal justifies an execution cost of 3.4% exceeding the standard 1.5% cap because the project is unusually complex. It spans 14 different Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS), each with its own unique institutional and regulatory challenges. This requires significant resources for coordinating across multiple countries and providing tailored support.</p> <p>Additionally, the project involves a regional innovation financing window, which demands dedicated oversight for screening proposals, performing fiduciary checks,</p>	
--	--	--	---	--

			<p>ensuring safeguard compliance, and reporting. These specialized tasks cannot be covered by the standard IE management fee. The justification argues that while the percentage is high, the total amount of \$151,960 over five years is modest relative to the scale and complexity of the project. These funds are essential to ensure the project's fiduciary integrity, maintain compliance with various national and fund requirements, and provide high-quality technical support across the region. Without this budget, the small grant mechanism cannot be managed to the required standards.</p>	
Eligibility of IE	<p>1. Is the programme submitted through an eligible Multilateral or Regional Implementing Entity that has been accredited by the</p>	<p><b>Yes</b> SPC is an AF accredited Regional Implementing Entity. SPC's accreditation is valid until 25<sup>th</sup> August 2026.</p>	-	

	Board? Is the programme submitted by an entity that has been invited by the Board to do so?			
Implementation Arrangements	1. Does the proposal include adequate arrangement for programme management at the multi-regional/regional and national level, including coordination arrangements within countries and among them? Has the potential to partner with national institutions, and when possible, national implementing entities (NIEs), been considered, and included in the management arrangements?	<p><b>Yes</b></p> <p>The proposal outlines that overall coordination will be carried out by SPC's Project Management Unit (PMU), in close cooperation with SPC's technical divisions.</p> <p>Activity 2.2.3 provides focused capacity building to NIEs on how to identify innovative local practices, integrate them into national pipelines, and prepare proposals aligned with the objectives of the Adaptation Fund's innovation funding stream and similar opportunities.</p> <p>The proposal also highlights that SPC will coordinate activities</p>	-	

		with NDAs and NIEs in the region.		
	2. Are there measures for financial and project/programme risk management?	<p><b>Yes</b></p> <p>Table 3 provides a Financial and Project Risk Management Framework. This proposal highlights operational, strategic, compliance, and environmental risks, and proposes risk mitigation measures.</p>	-	
	3. Are there measures in place for the management of environmental and social risks, in line with the	<p><b>Clarification needed</b></p> <p>The proposal provides a comprehensive ESMS. This includes allocated roles and</p>	<p><b>CAR1: Cleared</b></p> <p>The ESMS has been updated to clarify that all sub-projects regardless of</p>	

	Environmental and Social Policy of the Fund?	responsibilities for its implementation, a process for screening and risk categorization, capacity strengthening, MEL, and the use of a grievance redress mechanism.  As specified in the earlier <b>CAR1</b> , please ensure that all sub-projects, regardless of their risk categorization, require the preparation of an ESMP.	categorization (B or C) will require an ESMP.	
	4. Are arrangements for monitoring and evaluation clearly defined, including budgeted M&E plans and sex-disaggregated data, targets, and indicators, in compliance with the Gender Policy of the Fund?	<b>Yes</b>  The proposal includes a budgeted M&E plan with a breakdown, provisions for a mid-term and terminal evaluation, as well as the integration of gender and inclusion-sensitive reporting.	-	
	5. Is a budget on the Implementing Entity Management Fee use included?	<b>Yes, but clarification needed</b>  <b>CR17:</b> A breakdown of the Implementing Entity	<b>CR17: Cleared</b> Table 10 Budget notes have now been included for the	

		Management Fee (USD 440,000) is provided. Please also provide budget notes.	Implementing Entity Management Fee.	
	6. Is an explanation and breakdown of the execution cost included?	<p><b>Clarification needed</b></p> <p>The project proposal states that the Implementing Entity (IE) will also act as the Executing Entity (EE) for this regional project. According to Adaptation Fund policy, when the IE and EE are the same, the execution costs are capped at 1.5% of the total project cost. The Execution Cost of the project is around 3.4 %. While the policy allows for exceeding the cap with a strong justification on a case-by-case basis, the current proposal does not provide this.</p> <p><b>Please see CAR4 above.</b></p> <p><b>CR18:</b> A breakdown of the Execution Costs (USD 151,960) is</p>	<p><b>CR18: Cleared</b> Table 10 Budget notes are provided for the Execution Costs.</p> <p><b>CR19: Not Cleared</b> Paragraph 17, 82 The narrative has been updated to reflect clearly that SPC will be the sole EE, and other organizations are referred to as sub-implementing partners. This is reflected in paragraph 82. Please also reflect it in paragraph 17 which still says “execution partnerships”.</p> <p><b>CAR5: Cleared</b> This has been updated to correctly reflect the Total Project/Programme</p>	<p><b>CR19: Cleared.</b></p> <p>Para 17 has now been updated while referring to sub-implementing partners instead just as in para 82.</p>

		<p>provided. Please also provide budget notes.</p> <p><b>CR19:</b> Part 1, Section C states: “From Year 3 onwards, SPC will expand execution partnerships to include community-based organisations and small private sector enterprises”. Please clarify what is meant by this statement and whether SPC is anticipated to be the only Executing Entity (EE) for this programme? The proposal should confirm that SPC is the sole official Executing Entity responsible for all legal and financial obligations. Sub-implementers/Partners: The proposal should refer to the other organizations—such as community-based organizations and private sector enterprises—as sub-implementing partners, sub-grantees, or project beneficiaries. This</p>	<p>Cost throughout the proposal.</p>	

		<p>clarifies that they are not EEs in the formal sense but are entities responsible for carrying out specific project activities under SPC's oversight.</p> <p><b>CAR5:</b> In this proposal the Total Project/Programme Cost listed does not include the Project/Programme Execution Cost. Please note that the Total Project/Programme Cost (USD 4,560,000) = Project/Programme Activities Cost (USD 4,408,040) + Project/Programme Execution Cost (USD 151,960). Please correct this throughout the proposal.</p>		
	<p>7. Does the M&amp;E Framework include a break-down of how implementing entity IE fees will be utilized in the</p>	<p><b>Not cleared.</b> The budget allocates USD 90,000 for mid-term review and terminal evaluation, which is 1.8% of the total programme cost</p>	<p><b>CAR6: Cleared</b> Page 39, Table 9 M&amp;E Section includes reference to a budgeted Project Completion Summary</p>	

	<p>supervision of the M&amp;E function?</p>	<p>(USD 5,000,000). This is within the recommended range of 1-5% for M&amp;E evaluations.</p> <p><b>CAR6:</b> Please kindly include in the M&amp;E section a reference to the mandatory Project Completion Summary (see <a href="https://www.adaptation-fund.org/projects-programmes/project-performance/">https://www.adaptation-fund.org/projects-programmes/project-performance/</a>) as well as to a baseline report (see p.8 of the guidance document on the updated Evaluation Policy at: <a href="https://www.adaptation-fund.org/document/evaluation-policy-of-the-adaptation-fund-graphically-edited">https://www.adaptation-fund.org/document/evaluation-policy-of-the-adaptation-fund-graphically-edited</a>), ensuring that they are adequately budgeted in the proposal.</p> <p><b>CAR7:</b> Please ensure that, in compliance with Decision B.41/20, costs related to the MTR and the Final Evaluation are</p>	<p><b>CAR7: Cleared</b> MTR and Final Evaluation are now budgeted under the IE fee</p>	

		budgeted under the IE fee. The sections on M&E must be revised accordingly, given that these costs are said to be budgeted under the PEC, although the budget indicates that they are (correctly) budgeted under the IE fee.		
	8. Is the timeframe for the proposed activities adequate?	<b>Yes</b> The programme duration of 5 years appears appropriate for the implementation of the listed activities.	-	-
	9. Is a summary breakdown of the budget for the proposed activities included?	<b>Clarification needed</b> <b>CR20:</b> Across the three components, USD 1,007,665 is reserved for "Personnel costs". The budget notes state "see personnel cost table below". However, there is no personnel cost table clearly visible. Please clarify with detailed budget notes how this USD 1,007,665 will be utilized.	<b>CR20: Cleared.</b> Table 10, p.46  The budget notes mention that this related to technical assistance for various activities. As well as technical backstopping by SPC experts.	-

		<p><b>CAR8:</b> Please review and ensure consistency between the budget and the budget notes. There are a number of inconsistencies that lead to confusion e.g. Row 1 budget notes says 150,000 per year but the budget provides per 200,000; Communication budget notes says 5,000 per year but the budget provides 2,000 per year. There are multiple examples beyond just the examples listed above.</p> <p><u>Furthermore,</u> Output 2.2. states sub-grants will be awarded with the lumpsum of 300,000 USD per year. This is not easy to understand so please provide further details in the budget notes.</p>	<p><b>CAR8: Cleared</b> Table 10, p.46 Budget notes have been updated and revised to ensure consistency and alignment.</p>	
	<p>10. Does the project/programme's results framework align with the AF's results framework? Does it include at least one core</p>	<p><b>Clarification needed</b></p> <p>The results framework aligns with the AF framework but lacks details on core impact</p>	<p><b>CAR9: Cleared</b> P.39-44 The project results framework now includes direct and indirect beneficiaries (core</p>	<p>-</p>

	<p>outcome indicator from the Fund's results framework?</p>	<p>indicators and quantifiable targets.</p> <p><u>Missing Elements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core indicator: Number of beneficiaries (direct and indirect).</li> <li>• Second core indicator for relevant areas (e.g., assets produced or natural assets protected).</li> </ul> <p><b>CAR9:</b> For each AF Core Indicators relevant to the project interventions (i.e., "Number of beneficiaries" as well as possibly "Assets Produced, Developed, Improved, or Strengthened" and "Natural Assets Protected or Rehabilitated"), please add in the project results framework section the corresponding Core</p>	<p>indicator), and disaggregates by gender. It also includes the number of assets produced, developed, improved, or strengthened (second core indicator).</p>	

		<p>Indicators table(s) available on pp.10-14 of the document <a href="#">"Methodologies for reporting Adaptation Fund core impact indicators"</a>.</p> <p><a href="#">Methodologies for reporting Adaptation Fund core impact indicators</a> (<b>Template for fully-developed proposals</b>)</p> <p>Kindly ensure that "Baseline" and "Target at project approval" (estimates are fine) columns are duly completed in each table, and ensure that the figures provided in the tables align with those included in the project results framework. While filling out the "Number of beneficiaries" core indicator table, efforts should be made to disaggregate the direct and indirect beneficiaries by youth (age 15-24).</p>		
--	--	---	--	--

		For your reference: <a href="#">Methodologies for reporting Adaptation Fund core impact indicators</a>		
	11. Is a disbursement schedule with time-bound milestones included?	<b>Yes.</b>  <b>Note, the budget tables will be rechecked until final technical clearance.</b>	<b>Cleared</b>	-

**Funding Proposal Template for Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator (AFCIA) fully developed programme proposals**



**ADAPTATION FUND**

**PROGRAMME ON INNOVATION:  
AFCIA PROGRAMMES**

**REQUEST FOR PROJECT FUNDING FROM THE ADAPTATION FUND**

The annexed form should be completed and transmitted to the Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat by email.

Please type in the responses using the template provided. The instructions attached to the form provide guidance to filling out the template.

Please note that a project must be fully prepared when the request is submitted.

Complete documentation should be sent to:

The Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat  
1818 H Street NW  
MSN N7-700  
Washington, D.C., 20433  
U.S.A  
Fax: +1 (202) 522-3240/5  
Email: [afbsec@adaptation-fund.org](mailto:afbsec@adaptation-fund.org)



## ADAPTATION FUND

# MULTI/ REGIONAL INNOVATION PROJECT/PROGRAMME PROPOSAL

### PART I: PROJECT/PROGRAMME INFORMATION

Title of Project/Programme:	SPC's Climate Innovation Co:Lab
Geographic Scope (Multi/Regional):	Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu
Thematic Focal Area:	Innovative adaptation financing
Type of Implementing Entity:	Regional Implementing Entity
Implementing Entity:	Pacific Community (SPC)
Executing Entities:	Pacific Community (SPC)
Amount of Financing Requested:	5,000,000 (in U.S Dollars Equivalent)

## Table of Contents

A. Project / Programme Background and Context:	4
B. Project/Programme Objectives	10
C. Project / Programme Components and Financing:	11
D. Projected Calendar:	13
E. Project Structure	15
F. Contributions to the Innovation Pillar	20
G. Sourcing and Screening of Innovation Small Grant Proposals for Climate Adaptation	21
H. Screening Innovation Proposals for Inclusive and Sustainable Benefits	22
I. Cost Effectiveness	23
J. Alignment to National and Sub-National Strategies	24
K. Alignment with National Technical Standards	<u>2524</u>
L. Complementarity with Other Funding Sources	<u>262625</u>
M. Learning and Knowledge Management	<u>272726</u>
N. Stakeholder consultative process	<u>272726</u>
O. Incorporating Multi-Stakeholder Views on Innovation in Context	<u>282827</u>
P. Justification of Full Cost Adaptation Reasoning	<u>2928</u>
Q. Sustainability	<u>292928</u>
R. Environmental and Social Impact and Risk	<u>302928</u>
S. Arrangements for Project Implementation	<u>353533</u>
T. Project and Financial Risk	<u>373735</u>
U. Environmental and Social Risk Management	<u>383836</u>
V. Monitoring and Evaluation	<u>393937</u>
W. Results Framework	<u>414139</u>
X. Alignment of the project against the AF Results Framework	<u>454543</u>
Y. Budget	<u>474745</u>
Z. Disbursement Schedule	<u>545452</u>
I. Annex – Gender Assessment and Action Plan	<u>575755</u>
II. Annex – Environmental and Social Management System	<u>747472</u>

## A. Project / Programme Background and Context:

### Context

1. Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are among the countries most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, particularly low-lying atoll nations whose with low elevations of only a few metres above sea level.<sup>1</sup> The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) continuously underscores the urgent and unique climate challenges faced by Pacific SIDS, emphasizing that these nations are disproportionately vulnerable to the impending impacts of climate change. With their geographical isolation, limited economic diversification, and dependence on climate-sensitive sectors, PSIDS are facing a multitude of climate hazards that threaten both their ecological integrity and the well-being of their communities (IPCC, 2021). The World Risk Index identifies disaster risk – the likelihood that an extreme natural event will result in a disaster – as the highest in Oceania.<sup>2</sup> This is based on: exposure to natural hazards such as cyclones, flooding, drought and sea-level rise; vulnerability, including infrastructure quality, nutrition and socio-economic conditions; coping capacities such as governance, early warning systems and healthcare access; and adaptive capacities to manage future climate threats.
2. Pacific SIDS face increasingly frequent and severe impacts caused by climate change including rising temperatures, warming and acidifying oceans, degradation of coral reefs, extreme rainfall variability, more intense tropical cyclones and prolonged droughts.<sup>3</sup> Most populations are concentrated along coasts, making them particularly vulnerable to storm surges, saltwater intrusion into freshwater and agricultural systems, and flooding. Remoteness from global markets, small and dispersed populations, and limited natural resource bases constrain economic development and climate resilience. Economies are heavily reliant on climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, and tourism. As land masses comprise only a small fraction of the Pacific region, the health of marine and coastal ecosystems is especially vital for community well-being, food security, and economic resilience. Traditional coping mechanisms are being tested by long-term climatic shifts, while adaptation capacity is limited by structural barriers including constrained public finance, human resource gaps and inadequate infrastructure.
3. The region's climate is shaped by large-scale atmospheric systems, namely the South Pacific Convergence Zone (SPCZ), the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) and the Western Pacific Monsoon. These influence variability of rainfall, winds, tropical cyclone tracks, ocean currents and other environmental conditions. Their interactions are especially evident during El Niño and La Niña events.<sup>4</sup> Rainfall variability across the region is strongly influenced by the El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and the Interdecadal Pacific Oscillation, which cause shifts in the position of the SPCZ and other rainfall bands. ENSO is the dominant driver of interannual climate variability, affecting the occurrence and intensity of droughts, floods, tropical cyclones, coral bleaching and extreme sea-level events. Extreme El Niño events – recorded in 1982/83, 1997/98 and 2015/16 – are characterised by significant changes in sea surface temperatures, movement of key atmospheric convergence zones and intensified climate impacts. These events cause widespread disruption to agriculture, fisheries, ecosystems and weather systems. Under future climate scenarios, the frequency of extreme El Niño events are projected to double, with associated rainfall anomalies becoming more intense in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific. Future events are also expected to be warmer and more severe than in the past.<sup>5</sup>
4. While Pacific SIDS rank among the highest globally in terms of climate exposure and vulnerability, these vulnerabilities are compounded by structural challenges such as small land area, geographic isolation, fragmented private sectors and limited institutional capacity. Many countries have largely subsistence economies and constrained infrastructure systems. This constrains adaptation planning, service delivery and

---

<sup>1</sup> UNEP, 2014. GEO Small Island Developing States Outlook

<sup>2</sup> Hans-Joachim Heintze et al., 2018. WorldRiskReport 2018, Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft

<sup>3</sup> IPCC, 2014 ([https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/wg2/WGIIAR5-Chap29\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/wg2/WGIIAR5-Chap29_FINAL.pdf))

<sup>4</sup> CSIRO, Australian BoM and SPREP, 2015. Climate in the Pacific: A regional summary of new science and management tools.

<sup>5</sup> CSIRO, Australian BoM and SPREP, 2015. Climate in the Pacific: A regional summary of new science and management tools.

resilience building. In addition, limited access to data and evidence hampers climate-informed decision-making in the long term.<sup>6</sup>

5. Adaptation needs across the region are significant. Climate finance requirements are estimated at 6.5% to 9% of regional GDP – equivalent to nearly USD 1 billion annually. An analysis of National Determined Contributions (NDCs) Investment Plans of five Pacific SIDS (Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu) estimates a combined need of USD 2.4 billion of investments to reach NDC targets across priority sectors<sup>7</sup>. However, actual finance flows to the Pacific average just USD 220 million per year for the whole region, leaving a financing gap of over 75%. In the energy sector alone, over 93% of climate finance needs remain conditional on external support. While Pacific SIDS have improved access to vertical climate funds such as the Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Fund and Global Environment Facility, this access remains uneven, slow and largely dependent on international intermediaries. As of 2024, only a handful of countries in the region had received direct funding from the Adaptation Fund, and overall funding volumes remain low relative to adaptation needs. Lessons from the SPC and SPREP Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change and Resilience Building (PACRES) programme highlight that, despite improved readiness support, access modalities remain complex and resource-intensive for SIDS, with accreditation and fiduciary requirements delaying direct access and limiting ownership.
6. The gap between high vulnerability and limited finance access is exacerbated by systemic barriers that constrain the emergence and scale-up of innovative, locally-led adaptation solutions. Community-driven ideas often remain unfunded due to insufficient early-stage catalytic support, limited technical capacity and unclear pathways for integration into national systems. PACRES also evidenced that these challenges are particularly acute for women’s groups, youth, and community innovators, who face difficulties navigating climate finance systems and whose traditional and social innovations are often overlooked in formal programming. Innovation is further hampered by fragmented programming, poor coordination and inadequate incorporation of traditional knowledge, social innovation and local decision-making structures into formal adaptation planning processes. Despite these challenges, a growing number of adaptation innovators are active in the region. Community organisations, women’s groups and local enterprises are already piloting solutions to manage climate risk. However, many of these initiatives stall due to limited technical support, institutional recognition and follow-on finance. Strengthening of regional and local ecosystems for innovation by providing early-stage funding, building enabling systems for scale and bridging between local and national planning and investment pipelines will be critical for unlocking transformative adaptation outcomes across the Pacific.
7. An analysis conducted by SPC’s Regional Pacific NDC Hub demonstrates that the majority of targets found in Pacific SIDS NDCs concentrate on AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use), energy, and oceans and coastal zone, reflecting the central role of agriculture, fisheries, and renewable energy in Pacific livelihoods and resilience. (Figure 1). Targets also highlight waste, health, disaster risk reduction and human rights, signalling a strong focus on community well-being and equity.

---

<sup>6</sup> CSIRO, Australian BoM and SPREP, 2015. Climate in the Pacific: A regional summary of new science and management tools.

<sup>7</sup> Analysis of Pacific SIDS NDCs done by SPC’s Regional Pacific NDC Hub (August 2025)

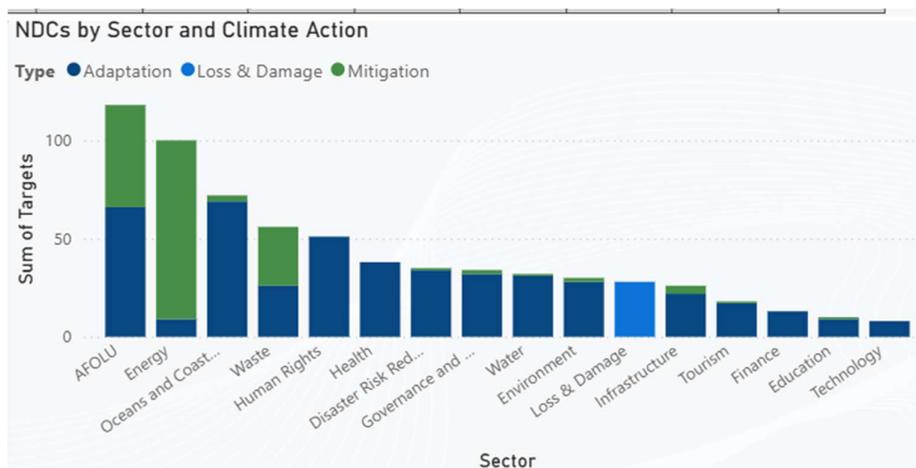


Figure 1: Analysis of NDCs by Sector and Climate Action across 14 Pacific SIDS (Regional Pacific NDC Hub, 2025)

- The Adaptation Fund’s Medium-Term Strategy (MTS II) for 2023–2027 seeks to continue the implementation of the Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator (AFCIA) through multilateral and regional implementing entities as innovation small grant administrators. This presents an opportunity for vulnerable Pacific SIDS to access fit-for-purpose climate finance to demonstrate proof-of-concept for innovative initiatives that struggle to attract the interest of larger multilateral and other sources of funding. In response to this context and the call of the Adaptation Fund, the proposed Climate Innovation Co:Lab will allow the Pacific Community (SPC) to provide a regionally coordinated, inclusive and flexible funding platform that enables Pacific SIDS to test, refine, and scale locally led adaptation solutions. The initiative will be implemented through SPC’s institutional “Funding with Intent” (FIT) programme, which drives innovation across multiple sectors and creates space for experimentation and learning. By targeting both the supply and demand sides of the innovation ecosystem, the SPC Co:Lab will fill a critical gap in the adaptation finance landscape by providing the support needed by Pacific innovators to move from ideas to impact. In this way, the Co:Lab will support locally led adaptation action that can crowd in other sources of funding and create the basis for larger national and regional projects and programmes that could attract climate finance at scale.

## Barriers

- Building on the barriers documented through several of SPC’s past and on-going initiatives including PACRES, Funding with Intent and the NDC Hub and consultations undertaken with Pacific stakeholders as part of these channels, the Co:Lab targets the most persistent systemic challenges that have prevented adaptation innovation from being financed, scaled and embedded into national systems. These barriers and how the Co:Lab responds to these barriers are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Barriers to Innovation Climate Finance in the Pacific

Barrier	Description	Programme response
<b>Limited access to early-stage catalytic finance</b>	Most financing mechanisms are geared toward large-scale or proven interventions, while small, community-led ideas often lack the resources needed to pilot or test innovative concepts. PACRES showed that these early-stage ideas, including those led by women and youth, often stalled due to lack of catalytic support and recognition in formal finance systems. SPC NDC Hub analysis further shows that the Pacific SIDS prioritize sectors such as agriculture, energy, oceans and coastal zones – areas where local innovations will be critical yet often remain beyond the reach of early-stage or de-risking finance.	The Co:Lab offers targeted small grants under its Incubation stage to pilot community-led innovations and de-risk proof-of-concept ideas. These are delivered through a regionally coordinated, inclusive mechanism that lowers entry barriers and supports experiment through innovative mechanisms and approaches.

<b>Weak institutional capacity and coordination</b>	Many Pacific SIDS face challenges in project preparation, technical appraisal, and monitoring, which hampers their ability to manage innovation portfolios or scale up successful interventions. PACRES experience highlighted that institutional fragmentation and limited proposal development capacity significantly delayed access to climate finance.	The programme provides tailored technical assistance, mentoring, and capacity-building delivered by SPC's Climate Finance Unit (CFU), technical divisions, and embedded advisors. This includes support for proposal development and innovation design.
<b>Fragmented and siloed programming</b>	A lack of regional coordination results in duplication, missed opportunities for learning and synergy, and insufficient regional visibility of effective practices. PACRES highlighted duplication across regional and national levels, underscoring the need for structured mechanisms for joint learning and coordination.	The Co:Lab is embedded in SPC's FiT platform and coordinated with designated authorities (DAs) and regional partners. Joint learning events and coordination with national focal points will reduce fragmentation and promote visibility and collaboration.
<b>Inadequate pathways for scaling and replication</b>	Most financing mechanisms are geared toward large-scale or proven interventions, while small, community-led ideas often lack the resources needed to pilot or test innovative concepts. PACRES found that many promising pilots stalled at the end of funding cycles due to missing links to investment matchmaking and national policy frameworks.	The programme's Acceleration and Amplification stages support high-potential innovations through follow-on funding (up to USD 250,000), innovation-to-investment matchmaking and integration into national policy and financing processes via knowledge sharing and outreach activities.
<b>Limited integration of social innovation and traditional knowledge</b>	Many conventional financing mechanisms do not account for community-led processes, non-technological innovation, or approaches grounded in Indigenous knowledge and cultural practices. PACRES experience highlighted that social and cultural dimensions of resilience are critical yet remain weakly integrated into finance systems.	The programme adopts a broad innovation definition that values social, institutional, and nature-based solutions, including traditional knowledge. Assessment criteria explicitly recognise community-driven innovation and social inclusion.
<b>Slow and complex access modalities</b>	Many Pacific SIDS prefer direct access to climate finance, but progress has been slow due to the time and effort required to meet accreditation and fiduciary standards. PACRES experience highlighted that despite readiness support, access to vertical funds remains uneven, slow, and heavily dependent on international intermediaries.	SPC, as a Regional Implementing Entity (RIE) provides an accessible channel for countries without accredited National Implementing Entities (NIEs). The programme works closely with DAs to ensure national ownership.
<b>Limited technical capacity to develop mature project pipelines</b>	Many Pacific SIDS still face limited technical capacity to translate priorities into bankable projects, as small administrations, high staff turnover, and competing demands constrain expertise in project design, financial structuring, and safeguards. As a result, many proposals remain at an early stage and rely heavily on external consultants, which can weaken national ownership and slow the development of mature project pipelines. This capacity gap is a key bottleneck in accessing climate finance at scale.	The <b>Co:Lab</b> provides Pacific Island Countries with a targeted platform to strengthen long-term institutional capacity to access, absorb, and deliver climate finance at scale. Leveraging the expertise of SPC's Climate Finance Unit, Pacific SIDS can receive tailored support during the <b>incubation and acceleration stages</b> , enabling them to nurture early ideas into viable concepts and develop mature project pipelines that respond to national and regional priorities.

## Funding with Intent

10. FiT is SPC's institutional platform for innovation, established in partnership with the New Zealand Government. It serves as an incubator–accelerator system to support the design, testing, refinement and amplification of innovation across SPC's programme areas. Between 2020 and 2024, FiT funded 30 incubation projects and 5 amplification projects with an annual budget of about NZD 800,000 (Figure 2). It operates as part of the broader OneSPC Transformation Programme and draws on the organisation's extensive technical, policy and regional engagement capacities.

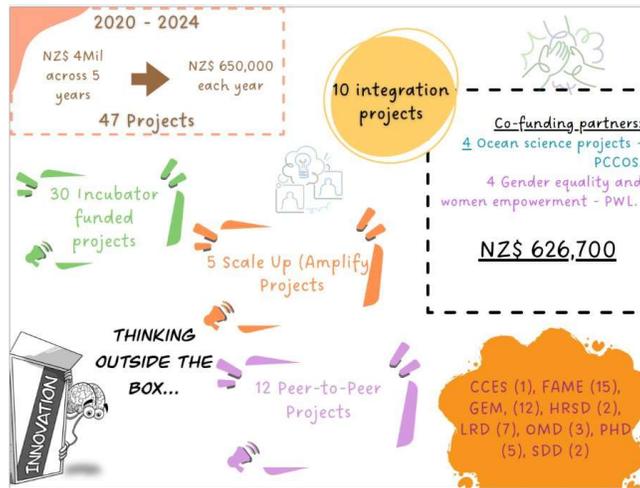


Figure 2. SPC's FiT innovation window.

11. Over the 2020–2024 period, FiT demonstrated its value in uncovering high-impact initiatives across Pacific SIDS at relatively low costs. This exceptional value-for-money has been recognised over time with other SPC programmes increasingly investing in the FiT call for pitches and selection process and contributing to co-funding initiatives. The FiT programme has already created specific funding windows to generate innovative ideas in key thematic areas like gender equality and the empowerment of young Pacific Ocean scientists. These successful adaptations led to the support of projects such as “Gender-responsive Climate Action in the Informal Shipping Sector” where Papuan women were trained as operators for locally equipped solar-powered boats for inter-island transportation and shipping. Another example is the “Swamp Taro Basket Planting” initiative, Palauan communities addressed the challenge of declining taro yields due to soil sodicity and invasive plants by blending traditional practices of basket planting with improving drainage systems and selection of more resilient crop varieties (Figure 3).

- **Challenge:** declining taro yields in atolls due to high sodicity of soils, stagnant waters and invasive plants (Kayangel, Palau)
- **Innovation:** blending traditional practices (raising planting beds, basket planting), socio-cultural survey, soil health monitoring (organic amendments), improving drainage systems, and selecting suitable crop varieties
- **Implementers:** LRD, GEM
- **Type:** Breakthrough Innovation
- **Domain:** Process
- **Incubate:** March 2023 - Dec 2024
- **Amplify:** March 2025 -



Figure 3. Case Study Innovation Incubation Swamp Taro Basket Planting

12. To date, FiT has financed a diverse portfolio of innovation projects spanning multiple sectors across Pacific SIDS. These projects reflect both the region’s cross-cutting adaptation challenges and the breadth of innovative responses trialed. The sectors also strongly align with national climate change priorities presented in Figure 1.

Table 2: FiT portfolio up to date

Clustered Area	Sectors Included	Innovations supported
1. Food Security & Sustainable Livelihoods	Fisheries (5), Aquaculture (4), Agriculture (3), Livestock farming (1), Forestry (1), Tourism (2)	16
2. Marine & Coastal Resources Management	Coastal fisheries (3), Oceanic fisheries (2), Marine resources management (2), Maritime transport (1)	8
3. Health, Biosecurity & Resilience	Health (4), Biosecurity (3), Resilience (1), Water management (1)	9
4. Energy & Climate Finance	Energy (2), Climate Finance (1)	3
5. Knowledge, Culture & Education	Education (2), Arts & Culture (2), Languages (2), Statistics (2), Geospatial (3)	11

13. The Sensemaking Exercise of FiT phase 2020–2024 showed high success rates for supported initiatives at the incubation and proof of concept phase, while the amplification generally confirmed the strong impact potential but lacked resources for proper scale-up. The Co:Lab will build directly on this existing infrastructure by establishing an innovation window for climate change adaptation within FiT, focused on identifying, incubating and scaling transformative, locally owned solutions that build climate resilience in Pacific SIDS. The Co:Lab will provide a clear, structured pipeline for adaptation innovation aligned to the core FiT innovation pathway of Incubation, Acceleration and Amplification:

- Incubation through small grants to local actors to pilot context-relevant adaptation solutions (Component 1);
- Acceleration through technical assistance, mentoring and follow-on grants to refine and scale high-potential innovations (Component 2); and
- Amplification through peer-to-peer exchanges, investment matchmaking, knowledge dissemination, and integration of successful innovations into national policies and planning frameworks (Component 3).

By embedding the Co:Lab into the FiT framework, SPC is able to offer a mature institutional platform with established systems for managing innovation, shorter feedback loops, and strong links to national institutions and technical divisions. This ensures that adaptation innovations are not only funded, but strategically supported to evolve, scale and influence broader development outcomes across the Pacific. Furthermore, the proposal leverages SPC’s relationships with DAs and NIEs to the Adaptation Fund, regional development banks, and initiatives such as the Climate Finance Access Network (CFAN) and the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH) programme. These partnerships position SPC as a regional aggregator and connector, capable of transforming grassroots adaptation ideas into investable, scalable solutions aligned with regional priorities and climate finance strategies.

14. An adaptation innovation window under FiT offers a compelling, high-impact investment for the Adaptation Fund that will advance innovation, inclusivity and country ownership while making full use of SPC’s institutional strengths and strategic innovation systems. The Co:Lab incorporates lessons from previous phases of FiT from the design stage. SPC will also leverage its ongoing involvement and best practices from key regional initiatives, which are outlined in detail in Section L of this proposal, including:

- ~~The Regional Programmatic Approach on Climate Action (RPACA)<sup>8</sup>—RPACA, provides a framework for coordinated, programmatic climate action across Pacific SIDS, focusing on scaling up adaptation and resilience through multi-country approaches. RPACA has prioritised sectors that are critical for building resilience, including water security, resilient agriculture and food systems, coastal resilience, health, and climate information services. The proposed programme complements RPACA by operationalising an~~

<sup>8</sup> RPACA is a coordinated initiative that has identified 6 regional priorities for resource mobilisation with the Green Climate Fund.

innovation small grants window that can channel resources towards locally led solutions in these same priority sectors, aligned with national priorities identified through RPACA.

- ~~Unlocking Blue Pacific Prosperity (UBPP)<sup>9</sup>—UBPP, under the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, seeks to protect 30% of the Pacific Ocean and sustainably manage its resources, with particular emphasis on coastal and marine ecosystems, sustainable fisheries, biodiversity conservation, and nature-based solutions. While UBPP is primarily focused on large-scale marine and ocean governance, the proposed programme contributes complementary action by supporting local innovation in coastal adaptation, fisheries management, and community resilience. Lessons from Co:Lab can inform and feed into UBPP’s broader regional frameworks.~~
- ~~SPC’s Regional Readiness Programme<sup>10</sup>—This programme strengthens institutional capacities of Pacific SIDS to access, manage, and report on climate finance. SPC has already engaged national stakeholders through climate finance writeshops and regional learning exchanges with national development banks, helping countries build pipelines of climate finance-ready projects. The proposed programme will complement this by piloting innovative adaptation solutions, which can then be scaled through readiness pipelines. This collaboration will be further strengthened by sharing evidence and lessons from innovation pilots into the readiness process.~~
- ~~Climate Finance Access Network (CFAN)—This initiative provides in-country advisors to support governments with project development and climate finance access. The proposed programme is complementary, as it will create a pipeline of innovative, country-driven projects that can be further developed and scaled by CFAN advisors. In addition, SPC’s CFAN advisors will directly support innovation projects under this programme by providing technical expertise, and ensuring coherence, and alignment with national financing strategies.~~

## B. Project/Programme Objectives

15. The objective of the SPC Co:Lab programme is to incubate, catalyse, de-risk, and scale locally led climate adaptation innovations across Pacific SIDS. The Co:Lab will be operationalised through a dedicated adaptation innovation window embedded within SPC’s institutional FiT innovation platform. This dedicated window will provide tailored financial and technical support through the structured Incubation–Acceleration–Amplification pathway, allowing local actors and institutions to move ideas from early-stage concepts to scalable, investable solutions.

The programme builds on SPC’s established innovation management systems under FiT, characterised by shorter feedback loops, adaptive learning and regional integration. The programme responds to regional and member country priorities, leverages SPC technical capabilities in innovation and research, and prioritises support for projects that are “shovel ready” with teams prepared to move quickly and deliver impact. It will also actively promote the engagement of young and emerging Pacific professionals and scientists, as well as foster gender equality, women’s leadership and social inclusion. FiT has demonstrated strong potential for social inclusion by involving stakeholders in co-design processes, leading to many women-led initiatives (e.g., in local maritime transport, geospatial, domestic energy consumption, agriculture), strong involvement of young professionals, and integrated responses to issues important to vulnerable communities (e.g., sustainable farming on atolls, context-specific early warning systems, invasive species management).

16. The Co:Lab programme will enhance the adaptive capacity and climate resilience of vulnerable communities by:

- Identifying and nurturing promising locally led adaptation ideas;
- Supporting early-stage innovation, pilots, and proof-of-concept projects;

---

<sup>9</sup> [UBPP comprises philanthropic seed funding to unlock new, catalytic and accessible investments for sustainable management of the Blue Pacific Continent and for robust food systems to ensure the livelihoods and well-being of all Pacific people.](#)

<sup>10</sup> [The Regional Readiness “Building capacity of regional direct access entity and national designated authorities to foster climate action in the Pacific” is building capabilities across the Pacific for the development of high-quality feasibility studies, concept notes and funding proposals for submission to multilateral climate finance mechanisms.](#)

- Accelerating tested ideas through targeted technical assistance and scale-up funding;
- Promoting knowledge sharing, investment matchmaking, and policy uptake for replication.

Through this approach, the Co:Lab will unlock fit-for-purpose, catalytic adaptation finance, address systemic barriers to innovation, and build an enabling environment for transformative, inclusive, and enduring climate resilience in the Pacific. The Theory of Change is presented in [Figure 4](#).

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	To incubate, catalyse, de-risk, and scale locally led climate adaptation innovations across Pacific SIDS					
<b>COMPONENTS</b>	1. Incubation – Identification and development of innovative practices for climate adaptation		2. Acceleration – Scale-up Funding for Promising Innovation Projects		3. Amplification – Knowledge Management, Learning, and Replication	
<b>EXPECTED OUTCOMES</b>	1. Innovative, locally led adaptation solutions are identified, de-risked, and refined through targeted incubation support, strengthening the pipeline of scalable climate adaptation practices across the Pacific.		2. Adaptation innovations are scaled up, resulting in increased climate resilience of communities and systems through expanded implementation		3. Knowledge, evidence, and learning from innovative adaptation practices are systematically captured and disseminated, promoting replication, policy influence, and increased regional capacity for climate resilience	
<b>EXPECTED OUTPUTS</b>	1.1 Incubation of 20 innovative and eligible small grant projects identified, screened and funded across priority adaptation themes.	2.1 Increased capacity of local actors to develop technically sound and innovative adaptation project ideas	2.2 Enhanced pipeline of viable adaptation concepts for SPC CIA and other funding sources	3.1 Investment matchmaking and climate finance readiness for amplification supported	3.2 Regional peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, policy uptake, and replication pathways are strengthened	
<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	1.1.1 – Launch call for project pitches and develop supporting guidance 1.1.2 – Screen pitches using pre-agreed innovation criteria and country-specific priorities 1.1.3 – Facilitate collaborative co-design and proposal development for shortlisted EOIs 1.1.4 – Conduct technical review and final selection of proposals 1.1.5 – Monitor implementation and provide ongoing support	2.1.1 Establish a responsive technical assistance mechanism (Helpdesk) 2.1.2 Deliver targeted technical support for early-stage concept refinement 2.1.3 Deliver clinics and mentoring on adaptation innovation, integrating human-centred design, business modelling, and risk assessment	2.2.1 Prepare successful incubation projects for scale-up under the acceleration phase 2.2.2 Support high-performing Component 1 projects with additional acceleration funding 2.2.3 Support NIEs to strengthen innovation pipelines and develop proposals for the Adaptation Fund innovation window	3.1.1 Convene Climate Innovation Investment Matchmaking Labs	3.2.1 Develop Documentation and Knowledge Exchange of Successful Innovations 3.2.2 Convene joint Peer-to-Peer Learning and Community of Practice Development 3.2.3 Provide support for Policy Uptake and Mainstreaming	
<b>ASSUMPTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation and experimentation are politically and institutionally tolerated, and small-scale failure is understood as part of a learning process.</li> <li>• Local actors are willing and able to engage and are supported to access small grants and capacity development opportunities.</li> <li>• Coordination with existing NIEs and regional partners is effective and leads to meaningful collaboration rather than duplication or competition.</li> <li>• Regional development banks are open to engaging in innovation-to-investment matchmaking, offering scale-up pathways for high-potential grantees</li> </ul>					

Figure 4. Theory of Change

## C. Project / Programme Components and Financing

17. As RIE, SPC will be responsible for overall programme implementation, coordination, fiduciary management, and reporting to the Adaptation Fund. SPC will also serve as Executing Entity (EE) for the programme, particularly in the early phases, drawing on its technical divisions, regional platforms, and established presence across the Pacific. From Year 3 onwards, SPC will expand [execution partnershipssub-implementing partners](#) to include community-based organisations and small private sector enterprises. This phased approach will be guided by the principles of country ownership, subsidiarity, and effectiveness, and will allow for adaptive management as implementation capacity is strengthened across the region. The Co:Lab programme is structured into three interlinked components aligned with the FiT innovation lifecycle to support a coherent pipeline from early-stage ideation to scaled implementation and peer-to-peer knowledge sharing. It also includes dedicated resources for coordination, learning and programme management, supported by SPC as the RIE and EE.
18. **Component 1: Incubation** will provide small grants (USD 25,000–75,000) for locally led initiatives to pilot climate adaptation innovations that are inclusive, context-relevant, and technically sound. This component will establish a robust pipeline of early-stage innovations with high potential for scale. To ensure accessibility and reduce entry barriers, the component will adopt FiT’s proven two-step design process:

- The first step is the **Idea stage**, where a call for pitches invites applicants to submit a short two-page concept note - distinct from most EOI processes. These initial ideas are reviewed by a multi-disciplinary Appraisal Committee.

- Selected concepts then move into the **Co-design stage**, where SPC's FiT team accompanies applicants in developing a full proposal. The process remains intentionally light-touch and iterative. Applicants are supported by SPC colleagues from various divisions, including the CFU and the institutional Social and Environmental Responsibility (SER) team to co-develop technically sound and context-sensitive proposals. This hands-on, collaborative approach ensures quality while building local ownership and capacity.

**Component 2: Acceleration** will offer targeted technical assistance and follow-on grants (up to a maximum of USD 250,000) to potential projects, including those successfully incubated under Component 1. Technical support will be delivered through SPC's internal capacity (e.g. CFU, CFAN and CCFAH Advisors, and technical divisions,) as well as external partners where needed. The focus will be on strengthening the viability, scalability, and investment readiness of innovations, enabling their integration into national pipeline and adaptation strategies.

**Component 3: Amplification** will focus on scaling impact through peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, replication, and investment matchmaking. SPC will organise regional Innovation-to-Investment Matchmaking Labs, connecting innovators with development finance institutions (e.g. national development banks) and private capital. It will also deliver training on blended finance tools and innovative climate finance instruments. Lessons learned and successful models will be documented and disseminated through existing platforms such as the Regional National Determined Contributions (NDC) Hub and integrated into national policies and planning frameworks.

Project/Programme Components	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Countries	Amount (USD)
1. <b>Incubation</b> – Identification and development of innovative practices for climate adaptation	1. Innovative, locally led adaptation solutions are identified, de-risked, and refined through targeted incubation support, strengthening the pipeline of scalable climate adaptation practices across the Pacific.	1.1 Incubation of 20 innovative and eligible small grant projects identified, screened and funded across priority adaptation themes.	Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu	1,306,120
2. <b>Acceleration</b> – Scale-up funding for promising innovation projects	2. Adaptation innovations are scaled up, resulting in increased climate resilience of communities and systems through expanded implementation	2.1 Increased capacity of local actors to develop technically sound and innovative adaptation project ideas. 2.2 Accelerated innovation pipeline and scaled-up readiness innovation of approximately 6 incubated projects.		1,654,120
3. <b>Amplification</b> – Knowledge management, learning and replication	3. Knowledge, evidence, and learning from innovative adaptation practices are systematically captured and disseminated, promoting replication, policy influence, and increased regional capacity for climate resilience	3.1 Investment matchmaking and climate finance readiness for amplification supported 3.2 Regional peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, policy uptake, and replication pathways are strengthened		1,447,800
6. Project/Programme Execution cost				<b>151,960</b>
7. Total Project/Programme Cost				<b>4,560,000</b>
8. Project/Programme Cycle Management Fee charged by the Implementing Entity				<b>440,000</b>
Amount of Financing Requested				<b>5,000,000</b>

## D. Projected Calendar

Milestones	Expected Dates
Start of Project/Programme Implementation	Q1/2026
Mid-term Review (if planned)	Q2/2028

Project/Programme Closing	Q4/2030
Terminal Evaluation	2031

### E. Project Structure

#### ***Component 1: Incubation – Identification and incubation of innovative practices for climate adaptation***

19. Component 1 will provide catalytic financial support to innovative, inclusive, and locally led adaptation solutions in Pacific SIDS through a structured small grants facility hosted by SPC and embedded within its institutional FiT innovation platform. This facility provides a clear entry point for local actors to test and de-risk novel adaptation concepts, while allowing SPC and country stakeholders to identify and nurture ideas with scale-up potential.
20. The facility will be implemented in close coordination with DAs in participating countries to ensure alignment with national adaptation priorities and strategic direction. To further enhance country ownership, existing coordination structures at the national level will be used to support the identification of country priorities, oversee the screening of project pitches, and recommend proposals for funding under all components. Grants ranging from USD 25,000–75,000 will support early-stage, proof-of-concept adaptation projects, recognising the absorptive capacity and needs of local actors. Projects that do not fully meet selection criteria but demonstrate strong potential will be referred to Component 2 for technical assistance and proposal strengthening, in line with the programme’s emphasis on risk-tolerant innovation and inclusive capacity development. The selection procedure under Component 1 will follow the core principles and process used by SPC’s FiT programme (see Figure 5):
- A. Ideas Stage. A regional call for Expressions of Interest (EOIs) will be launched annually and disseminated through SPC’s regional networks, technical divisions, and established platforms such as the NDC Hub, as well as through direct engagement with DAs. The call will invite brief, two-page concepts from civil society organisations (CSOs), small and medium enterprises, community groups and SPC technical teams, responding to country-specific adaptation challenges. Ideas may be submitted individually or in collaboration with SPC technical divisions. EOIs will be reviewed by a multi-disciplinary Appraisal Committee using criteria aligned with the FiT approach, pre-liminary criteria identified include:
- Clear response to a climate change adaptation or resilience building challenge
  - Alignment with regional priorities (including outcomes of regional convenings) or national priorities articulated in NAPs, NDCs, TNAs, sectoral strategies, or similar policy frameworks
  - Local ownership and implementation capacity
  - Utilisation of SPC technical capabilities in innovation and research
  - “Shovel readiness”, demonstrating the ability to begin implementation quickly and effectively
  - Support for young and emerging Pacific professionals, and/or promotion of gender equality, women’s leadership and social inclusion
  - Balanced representation across countries and innovation types, with flexibility to respond to emerging opportunities and country priorities
- B. Co-Design Stage: Shortlisted applicants from the Ideas Stage will be invited into a collaborative co-design phase. SPC teams will accompany applicants in refining their concept into a more detailed proposal, identifying appropriate implementation arrangements, including partnerships with local actors. The process is intentionally light-touch and adaptive, involving relevant SPC divisions (e.g. SER, technical programmes) and country stakeholders.

# FUNDING WITH INTENT

## FIT

### REVIEW PROCESS



Figure 5. Review Process from Project Pitch to Implementation

21. Innovation within the programme will be treated not as a fixed list of eligible technologies, but as a dynamic and context-driven process of creating value through novel and locally appropriate solutions. This will include both high-tech interventions (e.g. artificial intelligence, geographic information system tools) and low-tech or traditional knowledge-based approaches (e.g. nature-based solutions, customary practices). Innovation will be viewed in the context of de-risking proof-of-concept ideas and transforming them to suitable acceleration stages. Innovation can be categorised as presented in [Figure 6](#), namely: (i) Breakthrough, (ii) Sustaining, (iii) Basic Research, and (vi) Disruptive. Central to the Co:Lab approach is empowering local communities, especially those most vulnerable to climate change, to actively co-create innovative adaptation solutions that honour and leverage traditional knowledge, indigenous practices, and locally defined priorities. This process ensures that interventions are culturally appropriate, socially accepted, and grounded in lived experience.

How well is the problem defined?	Well	<p><b>Breakthrough</b></p> <p>Well-defined problem that's just devilishly hard to solve. New product/service for new market. In cases like these, we need to explore unconventional skill domains.</p>	<p><b>Sustaining</b></p> <p>Problem well understood, existing market. Innovation improves performance and efficiency. Incremental change.</p>
	Not well	<p><b>Basic Research</b></p> <p>Scientific research with the aim of improving scientific theories for better understanding and prediction of natural or other phenomena.</p>	<p><b>Disruptive</b></p> <p>Problem not so well understood, new market or disrupting existing markets. Innovation is game changing, could be an innovation in business model. Challenges previous assumptions about how business works.</p>
		Not well	Well
		How well is the domain defined?	

Figure 6. Innovation Framework (G. Satell, Harvard Business Review, 2017)

## 22. Output 1.1: Incubation of 20 innovative and eligible small grant projects identified, screened and funded across priority adaptation themes

### Activity 1.1.1 Launch call for project pitches (EOIs) and provide supporting guidance

SPC will launch an annual, regionally coordinated **call for short two-page project pitches**, in close collaboration with DAs as well as SPC's networks, technical divisions, and established platforms such as the Regional NDC Hub. Pitch submissions are encouraged by a broad range of actors including from CSOs, small and medium enterprises, community groups, and SPC technical teams. Applicants will be encouraged to submit ideas independently or in partnership with SPC technical teams. The pitch appraisal will be conducted by an Appraisal Committee with representatives separated from technical teams submitting a concept or potentially selected to implement a project. To ensure the independence of the appraisal process, appraisal committee representatives will be selected based on their strategic role in the organisation or role in a corporate function separated from day-to-day decisions and operations of technical divisions or implementing teams. They must testify that: 1) they did not participate in the ideation of any pitches submitted; 2) they will not take part in decisions during project implementation; 3) neither they nor anyone with whom they have a relationship or shared interest (such as family, cultural ties, political or commercial interests) will receive personal benefit from the project; and 4) there is no conflict of interest related to the projects being evaluated. Additionally, each appraisal committee member will have to sign a 'Conflict of Interest Declaration Form' testifying that they will declare any potential conflict of interest. If a conflict of interest arise, SPC will take the appropriate measures to mitigate it and prevent associated risks. In this way, SPC will ensure the independence of the appraisal process using the approach successfully trialled through FiT. Clear guidance will be provided on eligibility criteria including Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) and Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) considerations, country-specific priorities and innovation principles aligned with AFCIA and FiT, as well as how SPC facilitates matchmaking between promising ideas and technical divisions where needed. A webinar will be organised with each call for pitches to introduce potential applicants, DAs and other local actors to the Co:Lab and guide on the application process and overall requirements for implementation.

### Activity 1.1.2 Screen EOIs using pre-agreed innovation criteria and country-specific priorities

Submitted EOIs will be reviewed against screening criteria jointly developed under the FiT framework aligned with AFCIA guidance and inclusive of ESS and GESI criteria. A preliminary list of criteria has been identified and will be refined during the inception phase of the project involving a multi-disciplinary Appraisal Committee with SPC specialists in areas of climate change adaptation, procurements, finance, resource mobilisation, MEL, innovation, and social and environmental responsibility. At least one specific criterion will observe the response of pitch ideas to climate change adaptation and resilience building challenges. Screening will be conducted by the multi-disciplinary Appraisal Committee to ensure transparency, national alignment and inclusivity. Pitches will be assessed based on the 2025 Competitive Funds Selection Criteria but with the additional requirement of clearly addressing impacts of climate change. Further, pitches are assessed against an SER Checklist as per SPC's SER Policy. Proposals that are high risk (Category A) will not be eligible for support through the Co:Lab. Projects that are low risk (Category C) will be prioritised. All projects (Category B & C) will be required to develop an appropriate Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) at project level, following the Adaptation Fund's Environmental and Social Policy (ESP), to mitigate and monitor the risks during the project implementation. Promising but underdeveloped ideas may be referred to Component 2 for technical strengthening.

### Activity 1.1.3 Facilitate collaborative co-design and proposal development for shortlisted EOIs

Shortlisted applicants will enter a structured co-design phase, during which SPC will provide light-touch, hands-on technical assistance to co-develop full proposals. This includes the use of simple templates, continued alignment with country and regional priorities, and active engagement of SPC's technical divisions, SER team and CFU, as appropriate execution partners. The co-design will improve project viability, strengthen local ownership, and ensure that proposals are feasible and ready for implementation. During this phase, applicants will be required to demonstrate how their proposed solutions address the impacts of climate change while also considering the specific needs and priorities of marginalised groups, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples and/or remote communities in outer islands. To ensure proposals are socially and environmentally robust, SPC's SER team will actively participate in the co-design process, supporting applicants to strengthen safeguards and inclusion measures during proposal development. Any

recommendations made by the SER team must be incorporated into the project design. This ensures that proposals are socially and environmentally robust and reflect SPC's commitment to inclusive and rights-based development.

**Activity 1.1.4 Conduct technical review and final selection of proposals**

SPC will conduct a final technical appraisal of the full proposals emerging from the co-design process. All proposals submitted will be assessed against a set of technical, social and environmental criteria. These criteria will examine the innovation's potential to strengthen adaptive capacity. In addition, the proposals will be considered on their articulation of how vulnerable groups will be engaged and the extent to which they ensure equitable access, participation, and benefit-sharing. Final selection will reflect a balanced portfolio in terms of climate innovation, social inclusion, gender equality, geographic distribution, and strategic alignment with national or regional priorities.

**Activity 1.1.5 Monitor implementation and provide ongoing support**

SPC will monitor the implementation of sub-projects through regular reporting, periodic virtual and in-person support, and mid-point check-ins in alignment with the Co:Lab Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS), Gender Action Plan, sub-project ESMP (if applicable), and Adaptation Fund reporting requirements. Technical backstopping will be provided by SPC divisions and country support structures to promote adaptive delivery and early-stage learning and ensuring compliance with ESS measures integrated into the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) system. This system will include gender- and vulnerability-disaggregated indicators, enabling real-time learning and the identification of any unintended negative impacts. Through this systematic screening and support process, the project ensures that all innovations not only avoid harm but actively deliver co-benefits that enhance resilience and inclusion.

**Component 2: Acceleration – Scale-up funding for promising innovation projects**

23. Component 2 will build capacities by providing tailored technical assistance for the development, refinement, and acceleration of approximately 6 promising adaptation solutions, enabling their replication and access to climate finance. This component will support both:

- Applicants from Component 1 whose ideas showed strong potential but did not meet selection thresholds during the co-design process and request targeted support for refinement; and
- Successful grantees under Component 1 whose incubated innovations demonstrate impact, relevance, and scalability, and are ready for scale-up or replication.

This component will deliver targeted technical assistance and follow-on grants of up to USD 250,000 to help actors move from proof-of-concept to scale-ready solutions. It will also strengthen the overall pipeline of innovation projects that can be submitted to other climate finance sources such as the Adaptation Fund or Green Climate Fund (GCF). Technical assistance will be provided primarily through SPC's internal capacities, including the CFU, technical divisions, CFAN and CCFAH advisors, and, where needed, complemented by external specialists. The focus will be on enhancing and positioning existing concepts rather than generating new ideas from scratch.

24. **Output 2.1: Increased capacity of local actors to develop technically sound and innovative adaptation project ideas**

**Activity 2.1.1 Establish a responsive technical assistance mechanism (Helpdesk)**

SPC will establish a responsive Helpdesk mechanism to coordinate requests for technical assistance from local stakeholders, NIEs, and other actors across participating countries. The Helpdesk will serve as a central platform for intake, triage and referral of requests to appropriate SPC divisions or external experts. It will provide targeted advisory services, guidance on funding pathways, and pre-submission feedback to strengthen proposals for incubation, scale-up, or other funding windows. The Helpdesk will be accessible year-round and supported by SPC's internal capacities and strategic partnerships. This mechanism ensures that support is accessible outside of formal calls for proposals, and it enables SPC to maintain a proactive, responsive and country-driven pipeline of adaptation innovations, even between funding windows.

**Activity 2.1.2 Deliver targeted technical support for early-stage concept refinement**

Building on Activity 2.1.1, SPC will provide support based on requests from applicants who need additional technical input to develop viable concept notes or proposals. For instance, concepts requiring additional work,

either following rejection from Component 1 or as a result of pre-screening, will receive hands-on support in refining adaptation objectives, clarifying theories of change, integrating innovation dimensions, and strengthening technical soundness. Support will align ideas for submission under future Co:Lab calls or other adaptation innovation financing opportunities. The focus will be on strengthening existing concepts rather than developing new ones.

*Activity 2.1.3 Deliver clinics and mentoring on adaptation innovation, integrating human-centered design, business modelling, and risk assessment*

Complementing Activities 2.1.1 and 2.1.2, SPC will deliver structured clinics and mentorships focused on building practical innovation design capacities. Topics will include people-centred design, business modelling, scaling strategies, adaptive management, and investment structuring. This activity will particularly benefit Component 1 grantees advancing toward acceleration or repositioning their concepts after feedback received in the Helpdesk process. This approach will equip participants to develop solutions that are not only technically sound and financially viable, but also socially inclusive and responsive to real-world adaptation challenges. The activity will target Component 1 grantees and other country stakeholders interested in strengthening innovation readiness.

**25. Output 2.2: Accelerated innovation pipeline and scaled-up readiness innovation**

*Activity 2.2.1 Prepare successful incubation projects for scale-up under the acceleration phase*

This activity will provide targeted support to high-performing grantees from Component 1 being considered for acceleration grants. Building on results and lessons from their incubation phase, SPC and other partners will support these grantees to assess their scaling potential, develop scale-up strategies, and refine their project design, business models, and implementation plans. This includes identifying operational, financial, social, and environmental risks, GESI and opportunities associated with scaling. This activity is closely linked to Activity 2.2.2 (provision of acceleration grants) to ensure that only projects with verified impact, capacity, and readiness move forward into the acceleration track. This activity will also prepare grantees for subsequent engagement with investors and development finance institutions under Component 3 (see Activity 3.1.1) and elsewhere.

*Activity 2.2.2 Support high-performing Component 1 projects with additional acceleration funding*

Leveraging the outcomes of Component 1 and aligned with the support provided under Activities 2.1.3 and 2.2.1, this activity will issue follow-on grants of up to USD 250,000 to scale successful pilots. Grantees will be supported to develop scaling strategies, including delivery models, results frameworks, risk mitigation plans, gender action plans, ESMPs. This will also prepare them for external investor engagement under Activity 3.1.1.

*Activity 2.2.3 Support NIEs to strengthen innovation pipelines and develop proposals for the Adaptation Fund innovation window*

Building on the institutional relationships developed under Component 1 and aligned with mentoring delivered under Activity 2.1.3, this activity will deliver focused capacity-building to NIEs. Training will include how to identify innovative local practices, integrate them into national pipelines, and prepare proposals aligned with the objectives of the Adaptation Fund's innovation funding stream and similar opportunities.

**Component 3: Amplification – Knowledge management, learning and replication**

26. Component 3 focuses on amplifying the impact of innovation grants supported under the Co:Lab programme by facilitating investment matchmaking, regional knowledge sharing, and replication of proven adaptation solutions. This component will catalyse scale-up by enabling innovators to access strategic finance opportunities and embedding learnings into national and regional systems. Central to this is the facilitation of structured matchmaking processes to connect promising innovations with potential funders, including development banks and private sector actors. These efforts will complement targeted capacity-building support on innovative climate finance mechanisms, as well as integration of successful approaches into policy and planning frameworks to foster replication and uptake. This component completes the logical pathway from Incubation through Acceleration to Amplification, creating a dynamic pipeline for nurturing and scaling locally led adaptation innovation in the Pacific.

**27. Output 3.1: Investment matchmaking and climate finance readiness for amplification supported**

*Activity 3.1.1 Convene Climate Innovation Investment Matchmaking Labs*

SPC will organise a series of Climate Innovation Investment Matchmaking Labs that will connect promising grantees from Components 1 and 2, scale-ready projects, and NIEs with development finance actors such as

national and regional development banks. These events will build on SPC's existing collaboration with development banks in the Pacific such as the Development Bank Learning Exchange (DB-LX) and will be delivered in partnership with regional support mechanisms, including the CFAN and CCFAN advisors. The Labs will equip innovators with the tools and insights required to navigate investment partnerships, including gender-responsive blended finance solutions and instruments such as first-loss guarantees, allowing them to better navigate and secure investment partnerships for climate innovation.

**28. Output 3.2: Regional peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, policy uptake, and replication pathways are strengthened**

***Activity 3.2.1 Develop documentation and knowledge exchange of successful innovations***

Drawing from project data, outcomes, and learning captured under Outcomes 1 and 2, knowledge products such as factsheets, policy briefs, technical summaries, and impact stories will be synthesised and disseminated through existing knowledge platforms such as the Regional NDC Hub. These materials will highlight innovation stories centred on rural communities, youth, young women, and other contextually marginalised or vulnerable groups. Lessons learned will also be shared through webinars and peer exchanges, co-organised with other national and regional partners to promote south-south learning and increase visibility of successful, inclusive approaches.

***Activity 3.2.2 Convene joint peer-to-peer Learning and community of practice development (with SPREP AFCIA programme)***

This activity will facilitate joint thematic learning exchanges and regional capacity-building activities in partnership with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). This will include co-organised learning events between beneficiaries of both SPC's and SPREP's AFCIA programmes to foster regional Communities of Practice and support cross-country knowledge sharing. Where appropriate, these exchanges will showcase people-centred innovations and highlight successful approaches through a gender equality lens, in line with the programme outcomes.

***Activity 3.2.3 Provide support for policy uptake and mainstreaming***

Informed by knowledge products developed under Activity 3.2.1 and regional collaboration under Activity 3.2.2, SPC will support engagement with national and regional policy actors to integrate proven innovations into national adaptation planning processes, investment strategies, regulatory frameworks or similar. This will involve disseminating lessons learnt and creating awareness of successful approaches through the organisation of side-events and or panels.

## **F. Contributions to the Innovation Pillar**

29. The proposed regional programme has been strategically designed to contribute meaningfully to all four expected results of the Adaptation Fund's Innovation Pillar:

- New innovations and risk-taking encouraged and accelerated;
- Successful innovations replicated and scaled up;
- Access and capacities enhanced for designing and implementing innovation and;
- Evidence base generated and shared

By embedding the programme within SPC's institutional FiT innovation platform, the Co:Lab programme will foster a structured, inclusive, and risk-tolerant ecosystem to support the emergence, refinement, and scaling of locally led adaptation solutions across Pacific SIDS in alignment with the Innovation Pillar.

30. Firstly, new innovations and de-risking will be encouraged and accelerated through the programme's Incubation phase by offering catalytic small grants to support local innovators from communities, CSOs, SMEs and academia in testing novel ideas, proof of concept, approaches, and technologies that respond to priority climate adaptation needs. By operating within the flexible and iterative framework of FiT, the Co:Lab programme will create a safe space for experimentation and learning. Support services such as mentoring, technical guidance, and feedback loops will enable local actors to pursue context-sensitive and socially inclusive innovations with reduced risk.

31. Secondly, successful innovations will be refined and scaled up through the Acceleration phase. Projects that

demonstrate strong results during the Incubation stage will receive follow-on funding along with technical assistance from SPC's in-house expertise and partner networks. The Co:Lab programme will also connect scale-ready innovations to regional development finance actors and blended finance mechanisms, facilitating access to larger pools of capital. Through this step, the programme will ensure that high-potential innovations are not only proven but translated into viable, long-term solutions with broader reach.

32. Thirdly, the programme is committed to enhancing access and capacities for designing and implementing adaptation innovations, particularly among marginalised and vulnerable groups. Capacity-building activities such as targeted training, hands-on technical assistance and innovation clinics will empower local actors with the skills and tools to lead their own adaptation efforts. The approach actively prioritises engagement with women, youth, and persons with disabilities, contributing to a more inclusive and equitable adaptation ecosystem.
33. Finally, the programme will generate and disseminate a robust evidence base for adaptation innovation through its Amplification phase. Lessons learned from Components 1 and 2 will be systematically documented and disseminated via established platforms such as the Regional NDC Hub and SPC's internal knowledge systems. Rather than creating parallel systems, Co:Lab will generate synergies with SPREP's AFCIA programme through joint learning events and thematic exchanges. These efforts will ensure that innovation insights inform national and regional adaptation planning processes and feed into future investment pipelines.

This phased, adaptive, and regionally embedded approach to innovation will significantly advance the goals of the Adaptation Fund's Innovation Pillar. The Co:Lab will not only support the emergence of new ideas but also ensure that Pacific SIDS have the capacity, partnerships, and evidence to scale for resilient, locally owned adaptation.

## **G. Sourcing and Screening of Innovation Small Grant Proposals for Climate Adaptation**

34. The Co:Lab programme will leverage the institutional processes and experiences of SPC's FiT platform to source, screen, and manage small grant proposals for adaptation innovation. The programme will adopt an inclusive and regionally coordinated approach to ensure that innovation is accessible to a wide range of actors, including those that may not typically engage with climate finance. Small grants of up to USD 75,000 will be awarded under Component 1 to incubate early stage, locally led adaptation innovations. These grants will test and de-risk novel adaptation ideas, while building a pipeline of projects with the potential for acceleration under Component 2.
35. The sourcing process will begin with a regional call for project pitches, issued at programme launch and repeated annually throughout the lifespan of the Co:Lab. This call will be disseminated widely through SPC's regional networks, technical divisions, and established platforms such as the Regional NDC Hub, as well as through direct engagement with Das and other stakeholders. The call will encourage applications of a broad range of actors including from CSOs, small and medium enterprises, community groups, and academia. The programme will seek a broad spectrum of innovation types, including technological, social, institutional, financial, and nature-based solutions. It will encourage both new applications of existing practices and entirely novel approaches in line with the innovation framework presented in [Figure 6](#).
36. The regional call for pitches will invite brief, two-page concepts responding to country-specific adaptation challenges. Ideas may be submitted individually or in collaboration with SPC technical divisions. "Individually" submitted pitches will be matched with SPC technical divisions for execution during Year 1 and Year 2 of the programme. Information on call for pitches will be shared amongst the Designated Authorities in the Pacific, and some call may be disseminated through regional networks of civil society organisations, especially the ones targeting the building of resilience in vulnerable communities and groups, such as the Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP), NDC Focal Points and leveraging the established relationships of the One CROP mechanism (SPC, SPREP and PIFS), tapping on focal points in relevant countries. Pitches will be reviewed by a multi-disciplinary Appraisal Committee using criteria, including:

- Clear response to a climate change adaptation or resilience building challenge
  - Alignment with regional priorities (including outcomes of regional convenings) or national priorities articulated in NAPs, NDCs, TNAs, sectoral strategies, or similar policy frameworks
  - Local ownership and implementation capacity
  - Utilisation of SPC technical capabilities in innovation and research
  - “Shovel readiness”, demonstrating the ability to begin implementation quickly and effectively
  - Support for young and emerging Pacific professionals, and/or promotion of gender equality, women’s leadership and social inclusion
  - Balanced representation across countries and innovation types, with flexibility to respond to emerging opportunities and country priorities
37. The sourcing process will continue with the co-design phase for proposal development: Shortlisted applicants will collaborate with SPC teams to refining concepts into more detailed proposals that elaborate on the specific adaptation innovation as well as identifying appropriate implementation arrangements including partnerships with local actors. The process is intentionally light-touch and adaptive, involving SPC divisions and country stakeholders to ensure that proposals are technically sound, context appropriate and socially inclusive.
38. All grant awards will be managed under SPC’s Grants Policy, which adheres to the principles of open competition, value for money, ethics, transparency, and environmental and social responsibility. Grants will be disbursed under performance-based agreements with clearly defined milestones and reporting requirements. Monitoring and evaluation will follow a streamlined, yet robust framework aligned with the Adaptation Fund’s results architecture and SPC’s MEL requirements. Grantees will report against tailored indicators, including GESI metrics and ESS monitoring. Site visits, and check-ins will form part of the support provided to each grantee.
39. Technical assistance forms a cornerstone of the Co:Lab programme. Under Component 1, applicants will receive light-touch technical support during co-design of their proposals. Projects that show strong potential but are not yet ready for implementation will benefit from targeted assistance under Component 2, providing more in-depth support to strengthen and position ideas for future funding. Similarly, projects funded under Component 1 that require additional technical guidance or mentoring during implementation may also receive support through Component 2. This ensures a supportive environment for refining and improving innovation over time. Finally, learning and knowledge sharing are integral to the programme. Lessons from successful innovations will be synthesised into case studies and knowledge products and shared through existing regional and national platforms. Grantees will participate in regional peer exchanges, joint learning events, and matchmaking workshops with development finance institutions and private sector actors.
40. These pathways allow successful innovations to gain visibility, access scale-up financing, and inform broader policy and investment frameworks. Through this approach, the Co:Lab programme goes beyond merely a funding mechanism, but also serves as a launchpad for innovation, unlocking local solutions to climate change while building long-term community resilience across Pacific SIDS.

## **H. Screening Innovation Proposals for Inclusive and Sustainable Benefits**

41. The project will apply a structured and transparent screening process to ensure that innovation proposals demonstrate strong potential to deliver economic, social, and environmental benefits, particularly to vulnerable communities. This will be undertaken in full compliance with the Adaptation Fund’s ESP and Gender Policy as well as in accordance with SPC’s SER Policy. The selection and design processes that have been successfully demonstrated through the FiT programme will be tailored under the Co:Lab to meet specific climate adaptation needs. At the pitch phase, applicants will submit a high-level concept explaining the challenge they are trying to address, the solution they are putting forward and how their concept addresses adaptation while at the same time contributing to environmental and social benefits.
42. All pitches will be screened and categorized according to their potential environmental and social risks and impacts. Screening will explicitly assess the potential for the proposed innovations to generate tangible

benefits for communities, including improved livelihoods, health, safety, access to resources, and gender equality. This ensures that only proposals with a clear pathway to positive and inclusive outcomes are selected for support.

43. As part of the design process, all proponents will be asked to develop a simple gender and social inclusion plan that outline intended outcomes and practical measures to ensure equitable access, participation, and benefit-sharing. This will be delivered through ESS- and GESI-specific support provided under Outcomes 1 and 2 of the Co:Lab programme. To ensure proposals are socially and environmentally robust, SPC's SER team will actively participate in the co-design process, supporting applicants to strengthen safeguards and inclusion measures during proposal development. Similarly, the Helpdesk and clinics will provide targeted support and capacity building to ensure inclusion and sustainability of adaptation innovations supported by the Co:Lab programme.
44. While specific generated benefits will depend on the type of USPs financed. There are a number of anticipated benefits based on identified prioritised sectors across the Pacific SIDS and lessons from innovation financing through FiT, PACRES, Pacific regional NDC Hub and other SPC initiatives. These anticipated benefits are expected to cluster around the priority sectors identified:
  - Economic: diversification of income sources through climate-resilient agriculture, fisheries and tourism practices; reduced livelihood losses from climate change impacts; and strengthened local enterprises through climate-smart products and services.
  - Social: improved water security and food security; reduced health risks from climate-related hazards; enhanced participation of women, youth and marginalised groups in decision-making and economic opportunities; and stronger community safety nets.
  - Environmental: improved management of coastal ecosystems, forests and agricultural land; reduced ecosystem degradation; and increased use of nature-based solutions that deliver co-benefits for biodiversity and carbon sequestration.

By focusing on these benefit areas, the Co:Lab will ensure that innovations are not only technically sound and environmentally safe, but also directly enhance the well-being of people on the ground in line with participating countries' climate change adaptation priorities and gender commitments.

## I. Cost Effectiveness

45. Co:Lab will be cost-effective through its leveraging of an existing regional delivery model that maximises resource efficiency, promotes knowledge sharing, and avoids duplication of efforts. A key feature of the design is the phased innovation pipeline from Incubation through Amplification to Acceleration, which ensures that resources are strategically allocated to ideas that demonstrate real potential for adaptation impact. In the first stage, relatively small investments are made to support early-stage ideas with technical assistance and capacity support. Those initiatives that show tangible results in improving resilience and benefiting vulnerable communities will be selected for amplification in the second stage. This stepwise approach reduces the risk of inefficient funding by prioritising investment into innovation proposals that have demonstrated potential for delivering benefits.
46. By building on an existing mechanism that demonstrated high efficiency, Co:Lab will have strong cost effectiveness. FiT projects are allocating approximately 25% more money to activity costs in comparison with regular donor-funded projects at SPC (e.g., funded by DFAT, MFAT or US Department of State). Consequently, they are delivering significantly high value for money. Human resources costs represent on average 10% less in FiT projects than in regular projects when implemented internally as SPC teams implementing FiT project activities and are often funded by other sources. In addition, no project management fees (indirect costs) are allowed in individual FiT projects and some of the MEL costs are centralised as part of the project management unit and not charged individually in each project. Here is an estimation of costs for FiT projects and non-FiT projects of the same size.

Table 3: Estimation of costs for FIT projects and non-FIT projects of same size

Budget Item	FIT Project (\$)	FIT Project (%)	Non-FIT Project (\$)	Non-FIT Project (%)
Human Resources	\$19,000	19.0%	\$30,000	30.0%
Activities (sub-grants, workshops, travels, equipment, communications, etc.)	\$75,000	75.0%	\$41,300	41.3%
Cost recovery (ICT, facilities, translation, interpretation)	\$4,000	4.0%	\$9,700	9.7%
MEL	\$2,000	2.0%	\$4,000	4.0%
Project management fees	\$-	0.0%	\$15,000	15.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

47. The regional nature of the programme also allows for shared delivery systems and collective learning across countries facing similar climate challenges. By creating a shared innovation mechanism for Pacific SIDS, the project achieves economies of scale through regional peer-to-peer learning, and matchmaking initiatives. These mechanisms facilitate the transfer of proven innovations from one context to another, reducing the time and cost associated with developing entirely new solutions in each country.
48. The project also creates opportunities to pool technical and financial resources through strategic partnerships. For example, collaboration with SPREP's AFCIA programme through coordinated peer learning will enhance access to knowledge and reduce duplicative efforts. Matchmaking activities with development banks in the region will support the mobilisation of capital to sustain and expand promising innovations. These partnerships are designed to attract additional financing and offer alternative financing options, including concessional loans, for grantees whose innovations are ready for commercial deployment.
49. Overall, the regional and multi-country approach enhances cost-effectiveness by building a shared enabling environment for innovation and scaling, while delivering context-specific support where it is needed most. It allows for smart allocation of resources, promotes the replication of successful models, and supports long-term sustainability of adaptation solutions.

## J. Alignment to National and Sub-National Strategies

49. During the 51st Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in July 2022, Pacific leaders declared that the region "is facing a Climate Emergency that threatens the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of its people and ecosystems." Similarly, during the Forum Economic Ministers' Meeting in August 2022, Pacific Ministers emphasised that "timely access to scaled-up climate finance remains a critical priority," and tasked CROP agencies to "expedite efforts to strengthen national capacities [...] to improve access to, and the effective management of, scaled up finance."
50. This is reinforced by the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP, 2017–2030), which calls for greater innovation and inclusivity under Goal 1: Strengthened Integrated Adaptation and Risk Reduction to Enhance Resilience to Climate Change and Disasters. The 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent also emphasises the need for climate action that is community-centred, innovation-driven, and anchored in Pacific values and leadership.
51. The Co:Lab will directly address priorities through the strict application of a selection criteria focussing on how the project responds to a regional priority (including outcomes from regional convenings or priorities included in a regional framework) or national priority (including direct country requests, NDCs, NAPs, TNAs, and TAPs). The reference to other national or regional cross-cutting strategies (e.g., on research, innovation, economic development) will be considered as part of this appraisal process of strategic alignment.
52. The Co:Lab directly responds to these regional priorities by creating opportunities for vulnerable communities

in Pacific SIDS to access innovative climate finance for locally led action. It aligns with SPC’s Strategic Plan 2022–2031, particularly its goals related to climate resilience, innovation, and inclusive development, and complements ongoing coordination through mechanisms such as the Pacific Resilience Partnership and the Regional NDC Hub.

## K. Alignment with National Technical Standards

52. The project will ensure that all innovation small grant proposals are screened for compliance with relevant national technical standards, sectoral policies, and regulatory requirements in each participating country, in line with the ESP of the Adaptation Fund and SPC’s SER Policy. During the co-design phase of the proposal development process, applicants will work in partnership with SPC technical divisions and national stakeholders to demonstrate how their proposed activities align with applicable sectoral norms, technical guidelines, and legal frameworks in their area of focus (e.g. agriculture, water resources, infrastructure, ecosystem restoration, or public health). Relevant national standards and regulations may include building codes, environmental regulations, permits, or standards for climate-resilient practices and occupational health and safety. A non-exhaustive list of such standards is presented in Table 2, with examples including: (i) national building codes and coastal setback requirements (Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands); (ii) water quality and sanitation regulations, such as the Public Health Acts and associated drinking water standards (Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Niue, Tuvalu); (iii) environmental impact assessment legislation and permitting procedures (Papua New Guinea, Palau, Tonga); (iv) land use and forestry regulations, including sustainable land management guidelines (Cook Islands, Nauru, Niue); and (v) sector-specific technical standards, such as agriculture extension guidelines, waste management standards, and occupational health and safety codes.. Where needed, SPC will consult relevant government ministries or regulatory agencies to verify alignment and flag any compliance requirements.

Table 4: Non-exhaustive list of National Technical Standards across 14 Pacific SIDS

Country	National Technical Standards
Cook Islands	Environment Act (2003) Building Control and Standards Regulations (1991)
Fiji	Environmental Management Act (2005) Integrated Coastal Management Framework (2011) ( <i>not legally binding</i> ) National Building Code of Fiji (1990)
Kiribati	Environment Act (1999/2007) Land Planning Ordinance (1979) Public Health Ordinance (1977)
Marshall Islands	Environmental Protection Act (1984) Water Quality Standard Regulations (2004)
Nauru	Environment Management Act (2015) Planning and Development Control Act (1976)
Niue	Environment Act (2003) Public Health Act (1965)
Palau	Environmental Quality Protection Act (1974) Earthmoving Regulations (2011) Environmental Impact Statement Regulations (1996)
Papua New Guinea	Environment Act (2000) Building Regulations (1994)
Samoa	Planning and Urban Management Act (2004) National Building Code of Samoa (1992) Water Resources Management Act (2008)
Solomon Islands	Environment Act (1998) National Building Code (1990) Water Authority Act (1992)
Tonga	Environment Management Act (2010) Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (2010) Building Control and Standards Act (2002) Water Resources Act (2020)

Tuvalu	Environment Protection Act (2008) Building Act (2022) Water Supply Act (1967 rev. 2008)
Vanuatu	Environmental Protection and Conservation Act (2002) Building Act No 36 & National Building Code (2013) Water Resources Management Act (2002)

53. To ensure compliance, SPC will (i) require applicants to demonstrate how their proposal adheres to applicable national standards; (ii) review proposals against country-specific regulatory frameworks with input from designated authorities (DAs); and (iii) provide targeted technical support to proponents to address identified gaps.
54. If a project is likely to trigger a national environmental impact assessment, permitting process, or licensing requirement, SPC will provide guidance and technical support to proponents to ensure these are identified and addressed prior to implementation. Capacity-building will also be integrated into the programme's early stages to raise awareness among grantees about country-specific technical standards and institutional procedures. This approach ensures that all innovations supported under the programme are not only socially and environmentally sound, but also embedded within the national adaptation, regulatory, and technical landscapes of participating Pacific SIDS, reinforcing country ownership and long-term sustainability.

## L. Complementarity with Other Funding Sources

55. The proposed programme has been carefully designed to complement, rather than duplicate, ongoing and planned adaptation innovation initiatives in the Pacific, including other innovation funding windows such as SPC's FiT initiative and SPREP's AFCIA programme. To this end, several safeguards and coordination mechanisms will be embedded into programme design and operations to systematically avoid duplication with other funding sources while encouraging synergies and co-funding opportunities.
56. By embedding the Co:Lab within the FiT platform, it benefits from the architecture of SPC's internal innovation incubator including an established grant management and tracking system. FiT maintains a central tracker with all relevant information, supported by a dedicated SharePoint group serving as a central document repository for project managers, alongside a separate SharePoint repository for FiT programme management. The FiT team communicates regularly with project managers, providing monthly updates on all projects. FiT projects are managed as cohorts with joint meetings around mid-term (July–August) and end-of-project periods to facilitate coordination and shared learning.
57. All small grant applications submitted under the Co:Lab adaptation window will be logged, tracked, and cross-checked against past and ongoing FiT-supported initiatives and SPC-administered grants. The pitch template requires applicants to identify any co-financing sources for similar or related initiatives. During the screening process, SPC will assess whether such initiatives represent potential duplication or could be complementary, and take appropriate action if duplication is identified. The FiT budget includes co-funding sections to identify other funding sources, thereby positively encouraging collaboration and resource mobilisation.
58. To further mitigate risks of overlap at the national level, all proposals received will be cross-referenced with the DAs of participating countries to avoid duplication of efforts. Regular quarterly coordination calls with SPREP AFCIA project managers will support alignment and information exchange between the two RIEs and both Pacific programmes. If a potentially duplicative proposal is identified, whether in SPC's internal screening, by a DA, or by a partner institution, SPC will initiate a consultation process with the applicant and relevant stakeholders. In cases where a similar proposal has also been submitted to another implementing entity (e.g. SPREP), a joint coordination call will be organised to determine which submission should proceed. Applicants will be asked to submit a formal letter of withdrawal for any duplicate pitch that is not taken forward under this programme.

59. Furthermore, the proposed programme is designed to leverage SPC's ongoing involvement and best practices from key regional initiatives, including:

- The Regional Programmatic Approach on Climate Action (RPACA) – RPACA, provides a framework

for coordinated, programmatic climate action across Pacific SIDS, focusing on scaling up adaptation and resilience through multi-country approaches. RPACA has prioritised sectors that are critical for building resilience, including water security, resilient agriculture and food systems, coastal resilience, health, and climate information services. The proposed programme complements RPACA by operationalising an innovation small grants window that can channel resources towards locally led solutions in these same priority sectors, aligned with national priorities identified through RPACA.

- Unlocking Blue Pacific Prosperity (UBPP) – UBPP, under the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, seeks to protect 30% of the Pacific Ocean and sustainably manage its resources, with particular emphasis on coastal and marine ecosystems, sustainable fisheries, biodiversity conservation, and nature-based solutions. While UBPP is primarily focused on large-scale marine and ocean governance, the proposed programme contributes complementary action by supporting local innovation in coastal adaptation, fisheries management, and community resilience. Lessons from Co:Lab can inform and feed into UBPP’s broader regional frameworks.
- SPC’s Regional Readiness Programme - This programme strengthens institutional capacities of Pacific SIDS to access, manage, and report on climate finance. SPC has already engaged national stakeholders through climate finance writeshops and regional learning exchanges with national development banks, helping countries build pipelines of climate finance-ready projects. The proposed programme will complement this by piloting innovative adaptation solutions, which can then be scaled through readiness pipelines. This collaboration will be further strengthened by sharing evidence and lessons from innovation pilots into the readiness process.
- Climate Finance Access Network (CFAN) - This initiative provides in-country advisors to support governments with project development and climate finance access. The proposed programme is complementary, as it will create a pipeline of innovative, country-driven projects that can be further developed and scaled by CFAN advisors. In addition, SPC’s CFAN advisors will directly support innovation projects under this programme by providing technical expertise, and ensuring coherence, and alignment with national financing strategies.

## **M. Learning and Knowledge Management**

60. Learning will be driven through Outcome 3: Amplification, which serves not only as a support mechanism for scaling high-potential innovations but also as the programme’s core knowledge engine. This includes facilitating structured peer-to-peer learning, regional knowledge exchanges, investment matchmaking, and policy advisory. Selected grantees and technical partners will engage in regional learning activities including thematic workshops, co-learning clinics, and communities of practice to share insights on the design, implementation, and scaling of adaptation innovations.
61. Regional matchmaking will connect promising innovators with development finance institutions, NIEs, and private sector actors, building on SPC’s prior experience and partnerships – such as through the DB-LX – to foster investment partnerships and scale-up pathways. Lessons from Component 1 and 2 will be captured and translated into factsheets, policy briefs and technical guidance, contributing to the integration of successful innovations into national adaptation planning processes.
62. Finally, coordination with AFCIA Implementing Entities and particularly SPREP will be pursued through joint learning sessions to enhance coherence and complementarity across innovation windows. To amplify reach and visibility, the programme will also undertake communications and outreach activities including innovation showcases, success stories, and targeted dissemination through regional forums and existing platforms such as the Regional NDC Hub.

## **N. Stakeholder consultative process**

63. As part of programme design, SPC drew on its ongoing regional and national engagement processes, including structured consultations and continuous engagement under the NDC Hub, Regional Programmatic

Approach on Climate Action (RPACA), SPC's Regional Readiness support, "Heads of" meeting with directors or permanent secretaries of technical services, ministerial meetings, and multiple country-driven GCF and AF projects. Through these initiatives, SPC is in continuous dialogue with national focal points, line ministries, CSOs, and other partners on national climate priorities, barriers, and opportunities. The priorities and gaps consistently raised in these exchanges, such as the need for early-stage catalytic finance, stronger inclusion of women and youth, and clearer pathways for scaling, directly informed the design of the Co:Lab.

64. The consultative process underpinning the implementation of the programme is designed to be inclusive, participatory, and responsive to the diverse needs of Pacific countries and communities, with particular emphasis on engaging vulnerable groups and integrating gender considerations. From Year 3 external calls for pitches will be managed in collaboration with DAs and will encourage pitch submission by a broad range of actors including from CSOs, small and medium enterprises, community groups, and academic institutions. All proposals must clearly respond to adaptation needs identified at the country level or articulated within relevant regional frameworks, ensuring alignment with national and regional priorities.
65. The co-design phase of the programme will actively involve vulnerable populations and follow a people-centred approach (PCA). This iterative process encourages meaningful engagement with participating communities to test and refine proposed solutions, ensuring that interventions are contextually appropriate, equitable, and effective. A dedicated training session on 'Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement' will be an integral part of the co-design training with project managers. With stakeholder engagement embedded directly in the co-design process, shortlisted proponents will be required to undertake consultations with affected communities and relevant local institutions, and to reflect this input in their proposals.
66. To further safeguard social and environmental integrity, all projects will undergo appraisal using SPC's SER screening checklist. The SER team will provide critical feedback to ensure that gender, youth empowerment, human rights, and other social inclusion factors are comprehensively addressed throughout the project lifecycle. Each grantee will also prepare a simple GESI action plan, supported by targeted coaching from SPC's SER and CFU teams. During implementation, the programme will systematically track progress against gender and vulnerability-disaggregated indicators to monitor inclusivity and equitable impact. Building on learnings from FiT, evidence will be collected throughout the project cycle, and flexibility will be provided to project managers to incorporate lessons, including reviewing their theory of change, activities, and budget, particularly during the incubation phase. Project implementers will be encouraged and trained in the use of human-centred design thinking and the double loop approach during the co-design phase, as part of the innovation clinics (activity 2.1.3), and through regular project catch-ups. Structured feedback will be collected [to ensure that lessons on inclusivity and participation inform future incubation rounds as well as the acceleration and amplification of projects].
67. Project managers will also be responsible for reporting on social and environmental risk mitigation measures, with a detailed account presented in end-of-project reports. This consultative process fosters collaboration among stakeholders, supports transparency and accountability, and ensures that the programme contributes to resilient and inclusive climate adaptation outcomes across the Pacific region.

## **O. Incorporating Multi-Stakeholder Views on Innovation in Context**

68. The Co:Lab is intentionally designed to integrate multiple perspectives on innovation, recognising the complex and context-specific nature of climate adaptation challenges across Pacific SIDS. Central to this approach is empowering local communities, especially those most vulnerable to climate change, to actively co-create innovative adaptation solutions that honour and leverage traditional knowledge, indigenous practices, and locally defined priorities. This process ensures that interventions are culturally appropriate, socially accepted, and grounded in lived experience.
69. Complementing this, the programme engages a broad spectrum of partners, including from research, private sector innovators, and civil society, to provide scientific insights, technical expertise, and access to cutting-edge tools and technologies. These collaborations foster interdisciplinary approaches that bridge traditional wisdom and modern innovation. To facilitate meaningful interaction among these diverse actors, the

programme will convene structured platforms such as peer learning sessions and innovation matchmaking workshops. These spaces promote ongoing dialogue, knowledge exchange, and partnership-building, enabling cross-pollination of ideas and co-investment opportunities.

70. Furthermore, the programme places strong emphasis on inclusivity by ensuring that voices of youth, women, and other marginalised groups are deliberately integrated into innovation processes. This pluralistic and participatory model not only enhances the relevance and contextual fit of supported solutions but also improves their scalability, sustainability, and potential to generate systemic change in Pacific adaptation contexts.

## **P. Justification of Full Cost Adaptation Reasoning**

71. The funding requested through the Adaptation Fund will cover the full cost of adaptation in vulnerable Pacific SIDS where communities face disproportionate climate risks and limited access to resources. The small grants to be issued under the Incubation and Acceleration stages are specifically targeted at identifying and developing adaptation innovations that would not otherwise receive support through conventional funding mechanisms.
72. These grants will support adaptation actions that address urgent climate vulnerabilities and generate tangible economic, social, and environmental benefits, with a strong emphasis on inclusion and gender equity. Co:Lab's regional approach further enhances cost-effectiveness by enabling shared learning, resource pooling, and regional collaboration, thereby avoiding duplication and maximising impact of the funded initiatives.
73. While co-financing is not required, the programme's design encourages partnerships and potential top-ups, including from development banks or private sector actors, which could further enhance the financial sustainability and reach of successful initiatives. The pitch template includes a dedicated section for applicants to declare any existing or planned co-financing, which is actively encouraged as a positive addition to the initiative.

## **Q. Sustainability**

74. The programme design explicitly recognises that innovation incubator projects inherently carry a higher risk of failure, given their experimental nature and the complexity of climate adaptation challenges. To address this, sustainability considerations have been embedded throughout the project cycle from initial screening of small grant proposals to structured pathways for scaling successful innovations.
75. All innovation small grant pitches will be rigorously screened not only for their relevance, potential impact, and technical feasibility, but also for their capacity to deliver sustained adaptation benefits beyond the pilot phase, including potential for upscaling and replication. Recognising the experimental risks, Co:Lab adopts a flexible and iterative approach, supporting learning from both successes and failures to refine solutions and avoid premature scaling of unproven interventions.
76. The programme incorporates well-defined pathways to scale promising innovations. Projects that demonstrate successful outcomes in the Incubation phase (Component 1) will be eligible for scaled-up support under the Amplification phase (Component 2), which facilitates expansion and replication. The Acceleration phase (Component 3) will further enable project proponents to access tailored capacity-building and financial advisory services, including connections with other sources of finance. These partnerships will help explore concessional loans, blended finance, or other financing mechanisms to support growth.
77. In addition, the programme will leverage the knowledge, evidence, and lessons generated from small grant projects to inform proposals for scaling through other funding windows and donors, including the Adaptation Fund's Large Innovation Projects window, thereby creating a clear pipeline from pilot initiatives to transformative, large-scale adaptation interventions. Finally, the programme emphasises knowledge sharing, policy engagement, and regional collaboration to foster an enabling environment where successful innovations can be sustained, adapted, and replicated across Pacific contexts facing similar vulnerabilities.

This integrated approach ensures that, despite the inherent risks of early-stage innovation, the programme maximises the likelihood of lasting, systemic impact.

## R. Environmental and Social Impact and Risk

78. The screening process has identified that while the Co:Lab does not pose any significant or large-scale environmental or social risks, several environmental and social principles present low to moderate risks that will require targeted mitigation measures to ensure full compliance with the Adaptation Fund’s ESP. Each of the 15 principles was reviewed against the proposed activities, with appropriate mitigation strategies integrated into the design where potential risks were identified. These measures will ensure that the project remains inclusive, equitable, and environmentally and socially responsible throughout its implementation. [In line with the Adaptation Fund’s ESP, the project acknowledges that Principles 1 \(Compliance with the Law\), 4 \(Human Rights\), and 6 \(Core Labour Rights\) always apply, and monitoring measures have been integrated accordingly.](#) Further analysis is reflected as part of the Environmental and Social Management System in Annex II.

Table 5. Environmental and Social Impact and Risks

Checklist of environmental and social principles	No further assessment required for compliance	Potential impacts and risks – further assessment and management required for compliance
<i>Compliance with the Law</i>	No further actions required beyond on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>No Low risk.</b> <a href="#">While the project will ensure compliance with the relevant national environmental laws and regulations in the 14 participating Pacific SIDS, there is some risk of inconsistency in enforcement and institutional capacity across countries, particularly in relation to environmental protection, land use, and water resources. To address this, the project will ensure compliance with the relevant environmental national laws and regulations in the 14 participating Pacific SIDS related to environmental protection, land use, and water resources.</a> The project will be implemented in close collaboration and regular coordination with relevant government authorities. Development and delivery of targeted capacity-building for project implementers will ensure ESS compliance, and legal compliance checks will be integrated in project MEL systems.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Conduct regular ESS compliance checks through SPC’s ESMS. Applicants must demonstrate alignment with national technical standards and legal frameworks during co-design (Activity 1.1.3).</p>
<i>Access and Equity</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) Action Plan and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the Gender Assessment and Action Plan (GAAP). For further information, please refer to Annex I. Moderate risk.</b> Systemic inequities in the Pacific, including limited access to finance, decision-making, and services for women, youth, persons with disabilities, and those in remote areas, may create barriers to equitable participation in innovation activities. While the Co:Lab incorporates inclusion safeguards and locally led approaches, there remains a moderate risk that structural exclusion or digital divides (e.g., access to internet or climate information) will persist, especially in rural or outer island contexts. The programme mitigates this risk through inclusive stakeholder engagement, accessible application processes, and targeted outreach to women’s groups and CSOs</p> <p><b>Mitigation measures:</b> Apply inclusive screening criteria (Activity 1.1.2), ensure transparent selection, require GESI plan in proposals (Activity 1.1.3), and track beneficiary participation using disaggregated data (Activity 1.1.5).</p>

<i>Marginalised and Vulnerable Groups</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of GESI Action Plan and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b><i>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to Annex I.</i></b></p> <p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Vulnerable groups - including women with disabilities, single mothers, LGBTQ+ individuals, and subsistence-based rural households - face layered disadvantages in resilience and innovation participation. The Gender Annex acknowledges these intersecting vulnerabilities, particularly in relation to informal economies, unpaid care burdens, and gendered impacts of climate disasters. Although the Co:Lab integrates safeguards and intends to include diverse participants in co-design and implementation, the risk of underrepresentation or unintended exclusion remains unless active accompaniment and targeted support are sustained.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Applicants must demonstrate inclusive engagement (Activity 1.1.3), include vulnerability-disaggregated indicators, and submit proposals reviewed by the SER team (Activities 1.1.4, 1.1.5).</p>
<i>Human Rights</i>	No further actions required <u>beyond</u> implementation of the GESI Action Plan and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b><i>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to Annex I.</i></b></p> <p><b>No-Low risk.</b> <u>While the project design follows a rights-based and people-centred approach, that is respecting freedom of association, non-discrimination, and equitable access to resources, there is some risk that uneven application across diverse cultural and institutional contexts in the 14 participating Pacific SIDS could affect the consistent protection of rights. In particular, risks may arise if vulnerable or marginalised groups are not fully engaged or if free, prior, and informed consent processes are not uniformly upheld. To address this, the project design follows a rights-based and people-centred approach, respecting freedom of association, non-discrimination, and access to resources.</u></p> <p>Meaningful community engagement and free, prior, and informed consent are ensured throughout the project life cycle.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Promote rights-based design through co-design support (Activity 1.1.3) and technical clinics (Activity 2.1.3). Ensure screening criteria incorporate human rights considerations.</p>
<i>Gender Equity and Women's Empowerment</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of the GESI Action Plan and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b><i>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to Annex I.</i></b></p> <p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Persistent gender gaps in leadership, land tenure, economic participation, and digital access create a moderate risk that women's voices may be overlooked, or their contributions undervalued in innovation contexts. While the Co:Lab leverages SPC's Gender Flagship and FiT programme to promote gender-responsive innovations, it relies heavily on implementing partners to carry out GESI commitments, which may vary in capacity. The programme addresses this through a structured GESI Action Plan, targeted mentoring, and MEL systems that go beyond participation counts to track influence, benefits, and leadership outcomes.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Evaluate project pitches according to priorities criteria including gender equality and women's leadership (Activity 1.1.2); require gender action plans in all proposals (Activity 1.1.3); prioritise women-led initiatives (Activity 1.1.2), and track gender-specific outcomes (Activity 1.1.5).</p>
<i>Core Labour Rights</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>Low risk.</b> The project will comply with regional and national employment laws and regulations and will respect, promote, and realise in good faith the principles of the ILO Labour Standards also in accordance with SPC Policy and the People-Centred Approach. Employment of local labour</p>

		<p>during construction or maintenance may expose workers to occupational health and safety (OHS) risks and informal labour practices or labour rights violations could occur without contractor oversight. The SER Team will screen proposals against the following: Project activities will ensure that they do not violate labour laws in relation to project management specific to recruitment of human resources to support project delivery and implementation; and any contracts for recruited staff will ensure that they align with national labour standards and ensure competitive salaries and packages are offered. Compliance will be monitored annually in accordance with the project's MEL system.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Require compliance with national labour laws (Activity 1.1.4); and enable grievance redress through SPC systems.</p>
<i>Indigenous Peoples</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of the GESI Action Plan and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Low risk.</b> There is no universally accepted or internationally agreed upon definition of 'indigenous peoples' (UNDP, 2021; GCF, 2018; AF, 2013; IFC, 2012). In the particular context of most Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the majority of the population and the dominant sociocultural or ethnic group is native to the island country or territory. That is: they are indigenous to the land, and they are the 'local communities'. In this context, the terms 'communities' and 'beneficiaries' are synonymous to 'Indigenous Peoples'. The anticipated project benefits, co-benefits, opportunities, and mitigated risks for communities or beneficiaries are de facto anticipated benefits, co-benefits, opportunities, and mitigated risks for indigenous people. The project's existing mechanisms for stakeholder engagement and community consultations fulfil the intended purpose of free and prior informed consent (FPIC). Respect for customary land ownership and cultural practices is critical, hence a culturally-sensitive and people-centred approach will be adopted in the project.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Require FPIC during co-design (Activity 1.1.3); SER team ensures cultural appropriateness; consult Indigenous communities as part of proposal development.</p>
<i>Involuntary Resettlement</i>	No further actions required beyond on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>No risk.</b> The project and sub-projects are not anticipated to cause inadvertent physical or economic displacement of target communities. Involuntary resettlement is under the exclusionary criteria for project selection, hence loss of shelter, assets, or access to assets that lead to loss of income sources or other means of livelihood is not a likely impact.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Prohibit any activity requiring involuntary resettlement (as per exclusionary activities). Require land tenure verification as part of co-design (Activity 1.1.3).</p>
<i>Protection of Natural Habitats</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Moderate risk.</b> There is some risk that project and sub-project activities may unintentionally degrade critical natural habitats. The project will support the protection of natural habitats through promoting nature and community-based solutions, any potential of sub-projects to directly or indirectly impact upon natural or critical habitats will be identified at the ESS risk screening stage as outlined in the ESMS. Implementation of risk mitigation measures and ESS compliance will be monitored and reported on the project and sub-project level, as incorporated in the MEL system.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Exclude high-risk (Cat A) proposals (Activity 1.1.2). Require ESMPs for low-risk (Cat C) and medium-risk (Cat B) proposals (Activity 1.1.4). Use SER checklist to assess ecosystem impacts.</p>
<i>Conservation of Biological Diversity</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Low risk.</b> It is not anticipated that project and sub-project activities will lead to a loss in biological diversity or introduction of known invasive species. The project will comply with any National Biodiversity Strategy and Action</p>

		<p>Plans, ensuring alignment and contribution to the protection of countries' biological and natural resources. The sub-projects' ESIA and ESMP will contextualise the policy and evaluate against biological diversity criterion and mitigate risk as needed for specific sites and sub-projects, e.g. an ecological screening may be necessary before water tank installation near bush or coastal vegetation to avoid disturbing nesting birds and endemic flora; where pit latrine leakage may contaminate soil invertebrates and micro biodiversity, latrine construction will be avoided in coastal wetlands and require consultations with local environmental officers; and/or where clearing of coastal vegetation for drainage or expansion may affect shoreline biodiversity or erosion processes, ESMPs would be required to minimise mangrove disturbance and avoid crossing turtle nesting zones.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Avoid non-native species introduction; promote biodiversity-sensitive practices through proposal screening (Activity 1.1.4) and technical review.</p>
<i>Climate Change</i>	No further actions required beyond on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Low risk.</b> The project is climate adaptation-focused, explicitly designed to enhance resilience to climate hazards such as sea-level rise, cyclones, and flooding. Its activities are not anticipated to result in any significant or unjustified increase in greenhouse gas emissions or other drivers of climate change. Any agro-forestry and agriculture sub-projects will be small-scale as per exclusionary criteria and are not anticipated to result in large-scale negative impacts on carbon capture and sequestration capacity.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Screen proposals for maladaptation risks (Activity 1.1.4); promote resilience-focused innovations in clinics (Activity 2.1.3).</p>
<i>Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Sub-project construction activities may generate waste, noise, dust, or cause minor pollution if not managed properly. Project and sub-project activities will exercise cost-effectiveness and minimise the use of resources used during implementation – applicable to all sources and forms of energy, water, and other resources and materials inputs. There is some risk of waste production and pollution due to the quantity and diversity of sub-projects, though they are required to be in compliance with national waste management laws including monitoring of ESS compliance, inclusive of pollution prevention and resource efficiency.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> If applicable, proposals must include simple waste management plans (Activity 1.1.3)</p>
<i>Public Health</i>	No further actions required beyond on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Low risk.</b> The project avoids potentially significant negative impacts on public health, hence overall risk to public health is low. Sub-project activities are anticipated to generate minimal, site-specific, largely reversible impact to public health and will comply with national public health laws. A WHO-compliant rapid health impact screening checklist will be integrated in the ESIA and ESS compliance monitoring tools, to determine if a further thorough public health impact assessment and development of a management plan is necessary.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Public health implications assessed in screening (Activity 1.1.4); technical backstopping from SPC divisions (Activity 1.1.5)</p>
<i>Physical and Cultural Heritage</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Low risk.</b> Project and sub-project activities will not be implemented around physical heritage sites and will not permanently interfere with communities' existing access and use of such physical and cultural resources. They will be designed and implemented in a way that avoids the alteration, damage, or removal of any physical cultural resources and sites with unique natural values recognised as such at the community, national or international level. The sub-project ESS screenings will identify the presence of</p>

		<p>cultural heritage in or near the project, and if cultural heritage exists, a risk assessment will be conducted to analyse the potential for impacting cultural heritage, and the measures to mitigate the risk. Consultations will be undertaken with village, community leaders and nobles to ensure that project activities will not directly involve any preserved and cultural heritage sites.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Applicants must identify culturally sensitive sites (Activity 1.1.3); project spoiling cultural heritage are excluded</p>
<i>Lands and Soil Conservation</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Moderate risk.</b> The project promotes ecosystem-based approaches and the inclusion of soil conservation practices in design of land-based sub-projects. While the screening criteria exclude activities which explicitly target or require the use of soil, there is small risk of roads renovation and water tank installations having an impact on the soil and land surrounding the sites or facilities. Site-specific assessments and regular ESS compliance monitoring will be conducted particularly for infrastructure and WASH sub-projects, to ensure no negative impacts on land and soil. This will include ecological studies that account for the identification of fragile soils, to inform the final detailed design and to identify any additional site-specific impacts.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Encourage use of nature-based solutions and proper site design during proposal co-development (Activity 1.1.3).</p>

**S. Arrangements for Project Implementation**

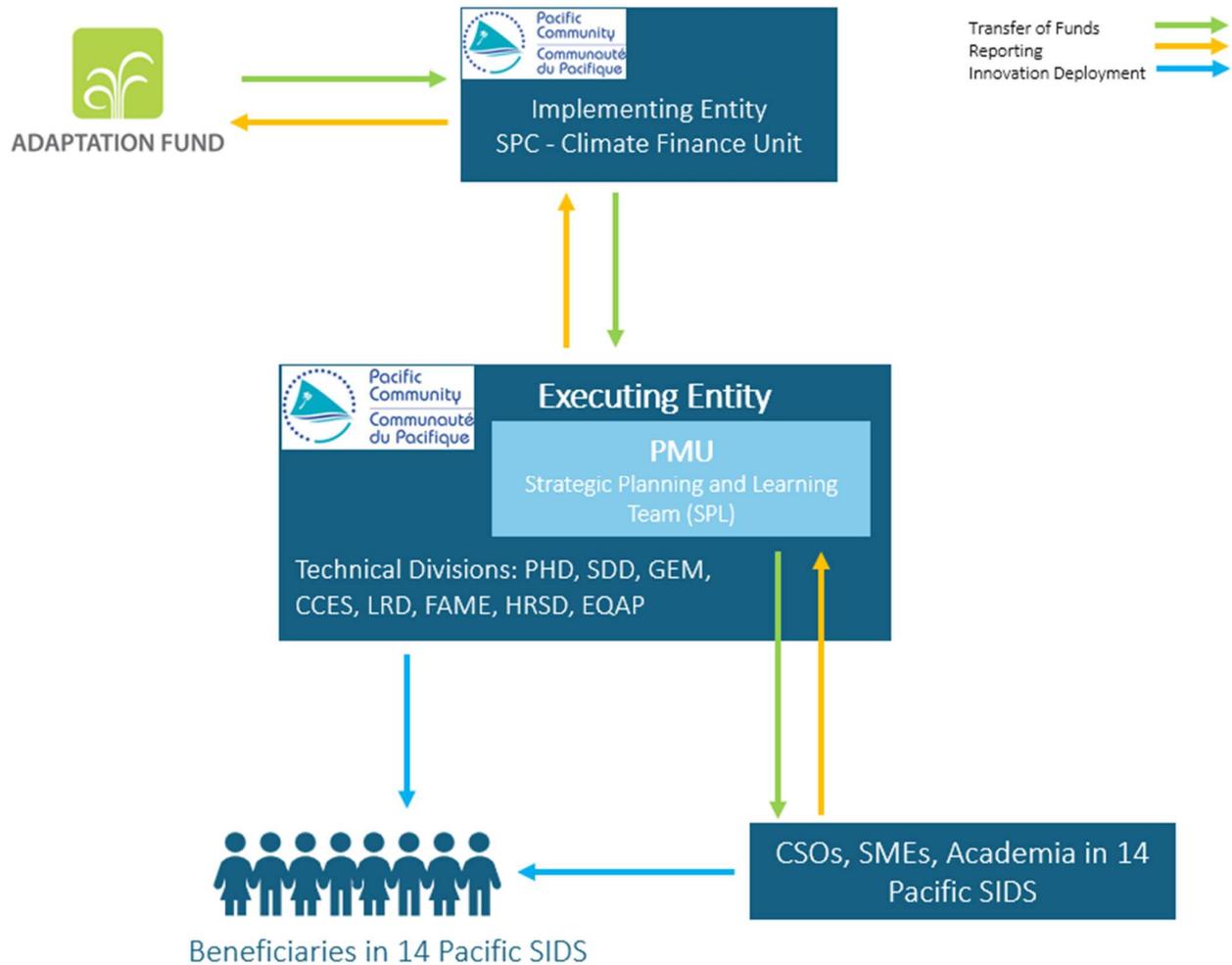


Figure 7. Implementation Arrangements

**Implementing Entity**

79. SPC through its CFU within the Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Division, will be the RIE for the Co:Lab programme. SPC will ensure implementation is in alignment with SPC’s policies, procurement standards in accordance with its accreditation to the Adaptation Fund. SPC will also be responsible for reporting activities in accordance with the funding agreement and reporting schedule. Furthermore, SPC will monitor and supervise the execution of the project and ensure proper management, application and use of the funds.

80. As a Pacific-based RIE to the Adaptation Fund, SPC is well-placed to coordinate and lead on a regional small grants programme for innovative adaptation measures. With existing strong relationships with DAs and line ministries in Pacific SIDS, SPC is well placed to oversee the Co:Lab. The execution of the project will be through SPC’s institutional FiT innovation platform, which serves as the organisation’s incubator–accelerator for testing, refining, and scaling innovative development solutions. By leveraging FiT, the programme benefits from SPC’s established mechanisms for adaptive management, feedback loops, and cross-sectoral coordination across its technical divisions with existing reach into participating countries. Building on learnings from FiT, evidence will be collected throughout project implementation and flexibility will be provided

to project managers to incorporate lessons during implementation, review their theory of change, activities and associated budget to improve their concept, especially during the incubation phase. Project implementers will be encouraged and trained in the use of human-centred design thinking and the double loop approach during the co-design phase, as part of the innovation clinics (activity 2.1.3), and during regular project catchups.

## Executing Entity

81. SPC will also serve as the EE, with the Project Management Unit (PMU) housed within the Strategic Planning and Learning (SPL) Unit. Overall coordination will be carried out through the PMU, in close cooperation with SPC's technical divisions. Strategic collaborations are also being pursued with CSOs, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and academic institutions across the 14 participating Pacific SIDS. Through its climate change advisers and experts across its divisions, SPC will provide a range of technical assistance services. The SER team will also play a key role in supporting the co-design phase of projects to ensure they are inclusive, equitable, and aligned with social development principles.
82. In later stages of implementation starting in Year 3, SPC will expand its network of sub-implementing partners to include national actors, including from CSOs, SMEs and academia. This phased, adaptive approach will be guided by the principles of country ownership, subsidiarity, and effectiveness, and is designed to support gradual strengthening of implementation capacity across the region. Where feasible, SPC will also seek opportunities to collaborate with other RIEs and NIEs. SPC already has formal and informal partnerships with entities such as SPREP, Tuvalu's Ministry of Finance, the Micronesia Conservation Trust, and the Cook Islands Ministry of Finance and Economic Management. These collaborations may involve knowledge sharing and joint identification of project concepts.
83. Execution of project activities will leverage existing arrangements under SPC's established FiT initiative, particularly those under Component 1: Incubation and Component 2: Acceleration. The Co:Lab is structured around three interlinked components aligned with the FiT innovation lifecycle: **Incubation**, **Acceleration**, and **Amplification**. This design supports a coherent pipeline of support, from early-stage ideation to scaled implementation and peer-to-peer knowledge exchange.

### *Project Management Unit*

84. The SPC Climate Innovation Co:Lab will be implemented by SPC as an accredited RIE of the Adaptation Fund, and executed through a dedicated PMU embedded within SPL. This arrangement ensures alignment with the FiT funding window and SPC's broader climate finance support services for Pacific SIDS, leveraging its technical expertise, fiduciary systems, and multi-country experience.

The PMU will consist of two dedicated staff members:

- An Adaptation Innovation Officer, responsible for technical coordination, oversight of the grant cycle, and grantee support; and
  - A Knowledge Management and MEL Officer, responsible for capturing visibility, regional outreach, and cross-country learning as well as the monitoring, evaluation and learning from the programme.
85. Other core programme functions and support services such as ESS, GESI, finance, administration, procurement and grants will be delivered variously through SPC's SPL and CFU teams in collaboration with the Operations and Management Directorate, ensuring cost efficiency and programme coherence.

## Institutional advantage of SPC as Implementing Entity

86. SPC's comparative advantage as RIE lies in its:
  - Extensive ties with governments, administrations, agencies, and partners in all Pacific SIDS;
  - Broad mandate on development and climate change issues in the Pacific, including coastal restoration, ecosystem-based adaptation, flood protection, nature-based solutions and gender and human rights;
  - Large funding base with multi-lateral and bilateral donors, allowing for extensive lessons learned from donor

- funded projects, especially in the target sectors;
- Extensive international, national and local partnerships which range from United Nations agencies to other inter- and non-governmental organisations, academia and civil society groups at grassroots level that facilitates knowledge exchange and cross fertilisation across multiple climate change considerations;
- SPC has 75 years of experience in the region covering 22 Pacific countries and territories (including all 14 Pacific countries eligible for Adaptation Fund support);
- SPC staffing includes a high proportion of native Pacific Islanders from across the region, bringing extensive contextual knowledge and a large amount of regional ownership as well as rich in-country networks; and
- As a member-driven organisation, SPC is country-focused and places the needs of its Members as a paramount priority, ensuring strong country ownership in its designs.

### *Coordination with Designated Authorities*

87. The Co:Lab has been designed to be fully aligned with the Adaptation Fund's principles of country-drivenness and ownership. In accordance with this, SPC will work closely with the DAs of all 14 participating Pacific SIDS throughout the implementation of the programme.
88. To initiate each funding cycle under Component 1: Incubation, SPC will circulate the call for pitches through the respective DAs. This ensures that national stakeholders are aware of the call and that outreach is coordinated with the appropriate government authorities. DAs will be invited to support national-level dissemination through their own platforms and stakeholder networks, helping ensure the call reaches relevant actors including local government, community-based organisations, women's groups, and indigenous knowledge holders.
89. Following the submission of pitches and prior to the final selection of successful grantees, SPC will request endorsement from the DA of the countries from which each selected application originates. These endorsements will confirm alignment with national adaptation priorities and demonstrate government support for the proposed activity. This step is a condition for final grant approval and will be integrated into SPC's grant management system and tracked through regular monitoring and reporting.
90. All letters of endorsement will be submitted to the Adaptation Fund Secretariat as part of the periodic reporting for the programme. This approach ensures that country-drivenness is embedded not only at the design stage but also throughout project implementation, while maintaining the flexibility of a competitive innovation window.

### *Partnerships with national institutions and NIEs*

91. Where feasible, Co:Lab will partner with national institutions for the implementation of small grant projects. These may include government ministries, universities, local enterprises and community-based organisations. The programme also encourages capacity-sharing arrangements between regional actors and national partners to build long-term national ownership of adaptation innovation processes.
92. Moreover, the programme has been designed to complement the work of other regional and national climate adaptation initiatives, including projects implemented by NIEs in the Pacific. Where NIEs are active, SPC will coordinate with them during project screening to identify potential overlaps, co-financing opportunities, or shared learning agendas. Joint technical coordination calls may be held to review proposals of mutual interest or resolve duplication concerns.
93. Through these management arrangements, Co:Lab ensures strong alignment with national adaptation priorities, promotes inclusive participation, and strengthens country ownership while maintaining the operational advantages of regional implementation.

## **T. Project and Financial Risk**

94. A robust risk management framework has been integrated into the project design to proactively identify, assess, and mitigate potential risks that may affect the successful implementation activities. The table below

outlines key financial, operational, strategic, compliance, and environmental risks, along with their initial risk ratings and corresponding mitigation measures. These measures are designed to ensure the project remains on track, and adaptive to changing circumstances.

Table 6. Financial and Project Risk Management Framework

Risk category	Risk description	Initial Risk		Proposed Mitigation measures
		Probability	Impact	
<b>Operational</b>	Limited proposal quality due to lack of capacity among small organisations, especially in SIDS.	Medium	Medium	The programme includes proposal clinics, mentoring, and guidance materials to support applicants. Component 2 will provide targeted capacity-building for grantees and other stakeholders to strengthen innovation readiness and project design capabilities.
<b>Strategic</b>	High failure rate of innovative projects, particularly incubator-stage grants.	Medium	Medium	As an innovation accelerator, the programme anticipates risk. Technical mentoring and iterative design processes will be embedded. Learning from both success and failure will be captured and shared. Acceleration and Amplification will only apply to proven concepts with demonstrated potential.
<b>Strategic</b>	Risk of overlap or duplication with other climate innovation initiatives in the Pacific region.	Medium	Low	Proposals will be cross-checked against SPC's FiT Tracker and other innovation funding sources. Coordination with other regional partners (e.g. SPREP) and periodic joint calls will ensure complementarity. Applicants must declare co-financing or related funding in the pitch template.
<b>Compliance</b>	AF grants are used to support money laundering financing or prohibited practices.	Low	Medium	All project activities will be executed in line with the established policies and procedures of SPC and the government to minimise these risks, including strong oversight, monitoring and reporting practises.
<b>Environmental</b>	Climate and non-climate hazards prevent or delay the execution of activities.	Medium	Medium	Adaptive management approaches will be used, with flexible implementation timelines. Regular communication with grantees and staggered calls will help reduce disruption. SPC's regional presence and local partners will support continuity.

## U. Environmental and Social Risk Management

95. The Co:Lab has been designed in full alignment with the Adaptation Fund's ESP and Gender Policy. Given the programme's nature as an accelerator supporting unidentified sub-projects (USPs) through a competitive grant-making process, environmental and social (E&S) risks cannot be precisely determined at this stage. However, the programme has adopted a precautionary and proactive approach to safeguard management, ensuring that risks will be identified, assessed, avoided, and mitigated through robust mechanisms integrated throughout the programme lifecycle.

96. A dedicated ESMS for the programme has been developed and submitted as Annex II to this proposal. The ESMS provides a comprehensive framework for screening, assessing, managing, and monitoring E&S risks across all USPs funded through Co:Lab. The system is aligned with the 15 ESP principles of the Adaptation Fund and will align with national regulatory frameworks in the countries of implementation. It also integrates

principles of gender equality, inclusion, and meaningful participation, as outlined in the Adaptation Fund's Gender Policy and the programme's Gender Action Plan.

97. While the exact location, scale, and nature of future USPs are currently unknown, the programme anticipates that they are likely to involve low to moderate E&S risks that are site-specific, temporary, and manageable. Based on the typologies of anticipated USPs such as early-stage adaptation pilots, community-based solutions, or nature-based innovations, SPC's Co:Lab is preliminarily classified as Category B under the Adaptation Fund's risk categorisation system. To manage risks effectively, the following measures have been integrated into the programme design:

- **Screening and Risk Categorisation:** All innovation proposals will undergo initial E&S risk screening conducted by the PMU, using SPC's ESMS tools and checklists. Proposals will be categorised as A, B, or C based on their scale, context, and potential E&S risks. Risk categorisation will determine the level of assessment, review, and safeguards required. Category A proposals will be excluded while Category B and Category C proposals will require ESMPs.
- **Proposal Support and Safeguards Integration:** During the co-design phase, the PMU will be supported by SPC's SER team and technical divisions to provide tailored support to applicants to identify risks, apply mitigation measures, and integrate appropriate safeguards into project design. All eligible proposals (Cat B & Cat C) will include ESMPs proportionate to the risks, outlining mitigation actions, institutional responsibilities, monitoring indicators, and grievance redress procedures.
- **Capacity Strengthening:** The programme includes dedicated capacity-building for grantees on ESS, risk mitigation, GESI, and the use of SPC's screening and planning templates. Technical clinics and direct mentoring will help ensure applicants understand and apply the ESMS requirements throughout project development and implementation.
- **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning:** The PMU will lead the monitoring of ESS implementation through the programme's MEL system, with technical backstopping from SPC's technical divisions. E&S indicators will be integrated into the performance monitoring framework, including disaggregated data by gender, age, and disability. Regular site visits, spot checks, and consultations with communities will be conducted to verify implementation and foster adaptive learning. A digital reporting tool will support real-time data capture and reporting.
- **Grievance Redress Mechanism:** A robust grievance redress mechanism (GRM) is in place at SPC, accessible to all stakeholders – including community members, innovation teams, and partners – who wish to raise concerns related to the programme's environmental or social performance. Information on SPC's institutional mechanism is publicly available at [spc.int/accountability](http://spc.int/accountability). The GRM is fully outlined in Annex II as part of the programme's ESMS.

## V. Monitoring and Evaluation

98. As RIE, SPC will provide overall supervision of the programme and ensure implementation is carried out in line with the provisions of the funding agreement with the Adaptation Fund. SPC will lead on programme-wide monitoring and evaluation in compliance with both Adaptation Fund and SPC policies and procedures, ensuring accountability, learning, and adaptive management throughout the programme lifecycle.

99. SPC's CFU will coordinate and oversee monitoring and evaluation (M&E), working in close collaboration with the PMU and SPL. This coordination will facilitate the use of harmonised tools, templates, and methods to enable consistent tracking of programme results, including against the Adaptation Fund's core indicators. The M&E approach will be guided by the following principles:

- Participatory and inclusive monitoring, ensuring engagement of project stakeholders, including grantees and community representatives;
- Evidence-based learning, with regular data collection, field validation, and reflection loops; and
- Gender- and inclusion-sensitive reporting, ensuring that disaggregated data (by sex, age, and disability) is systematically collected and analysed.

100. Monitoring responsibilities will be divided as follows:

- The PMU will lead day-to-day monitoring of grant implementation, using standardised reporting tools aligned with the programme’s ESMS, Gender Action Plan, and knowledge management system;
- The CFU will ensure consistency and quality across countries, provide technical guidance, and maintain oversight of results-based reporting and safeguards compliance; and
- The SPL Team will provide advisory support for evaluation design and quality assurance.

101. In terms of evaluation:

- A mid-term evaluation will be conducted to assess progress, identify operational and strategic challenges, and recommend adjustments to enhance delivery and maximise impact in the second half of the programme. This evaluation will be formative and focused on strengthening implementation.
- A terminal evaluation will assess the programme’s overall performance in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and sustainability. It will also capture outcomes, impacts, and key lessons learned to inform future programming and scale-up opportunities.
- Both evaluations will be coordinated by the CFU, with support from SPL, and guided by terms of reference aligned with Adaptation Fund requirements. Evaluation findings will be made publicly accessible via SPC’s various platforms to support transparency and knowledge sharing.

102. This structure ensures a robust result and learning system, allowing the Co:Lab to track performance, manage risk, demonstrate impact, and continuously improve delivery of climate adaptation innovation across the region.

Table 7. Budgeted M&E plan

M&E Activity	Responsible Party(ies)	Deliverable	Budget		Timeframe
			USD	Source	
Baseline Report  IE to prepare a project baseline report to be used for designing the project, setting targets and monitoring and implementation progress	SPC	Baseline Report	5,000	IE fee	Inception
Quarterly monitoring activities  Gathering of project level results-based information at output and outcome level	KM & MEL Officer	Progress report	6,838	PEC	Quarterly
Environmental, social and gender safeguards monitoring.  Data gathering and tracking against the AF ES Policy and gender policy ensuring compliance against mitigation measures of the ESMP, including corrective actions taken if applicable.	KM & MEL Officer	ESMP and gender report	6,838	PEC	Annually
Supervision missions  IE travel to country to carry out supervision mission, providing assessment of project progress and needs.	SPC	Mission report	10,000	IE fee	Annually
Audit  Annual independent audit to assess project financial statements and ensure compliance with AF and SPC	Independent firm	Audit report	8,000	PEC	Annually

financial policies as well as the grant agreement.					
Project Performance Reports (PPR)  Compilation of all data and information required for the development and submission of PPRs on alignment with AFs Evaluation Framework.	PMU and SPC	Project Progress Report	5,000	IE fee	Annually
Mid-term Evaluation  Independent evaluation conducted to assess project progress and provide recommendations for enhancement	SPC	Mid-term Report	40,000	IE fee	Mid-point
Terminal/final Evaluation  Independent evaluation conducted to assess project effectiveness and evaluate strengths and weaknesses, providing recommendations to SPC for future implementation	SPC	Terminal Evaluation Report	50,000	IE fee	End of project
Project Completion Summary  IE to prepare a summary that covers the entire project life in a reader friendly format by compiling submitted single-year PPRs	SPC	Project Completion Summary	5,000	IE fee	Within six (6) months of project completion
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>136,676</b>		

## W. Results Framework

103. The results framework presents the core structure for tracking the implementation and impact of Co:Lab including milestones, targets and indicators. This also includes core outcome indicators of the Adaptation Fund Results Framework in compliance with the Gender Policy of the Adaptation Fund.

Table 8. Project Results Framework

Result level	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions
<b>Objective: Incubate, catalyse, de-risk, and scale locally led climate adaptation innovations across Pacific SIDS.</b>	Number of innovative, locally led adaptation solutions incubated and/or scaled across Pacific SIDS.	0	20 adaptation innovations supported (20 incubated, 6 scaled)	Grant database;	Local partners and communities are interested and available to co-develop and test innovative solutions.
	Number of local stakeholders with enhanced capacity to implement climate adaptation innovations.	0	At least 100 local stakeholders with enhanced capacities	Capacity development reports	
	Number of beneficiaries with increased adaptive capacity to respond to the impacts of climate change	0	Direct beneficiaries <sup>11</sup> : 900 people (50% women) Indirect	Grant database, capacity development reports	Locally led innovations are successfully implemented and scaled in ways that directly address

<sup>11</sup> The project plans to directly benefit 900 people (20 incubated projects x 30 people + 6 accelerated x 50 people)

			beneficiaries <sup>12</sup> : 2,700 (50% women)		community identified climate risks. The enabling environment support sustain uptake to increase adaptive capacity of vulnerable populations.
<b>Outcome 1: Innovative, locally led adaptation solutions are identified, de-risked, and refined through targeted incubation support, strengthening the pipeline of scalable climate adaptation practices across the Pacific.</b>	Number of eligible innovation concepts incubated with technical support and mentoring	0	20 projects incubated	Grant database, Innovation proposals	Sufficient quality proposals are received; Support services meet innovators' needs
<b>Output 1.1: Incubation of 20 innovative and eligible small grant projects identified, screened and funded across priority adaptation themes.</b>	Percentage of co-designed projects demonstrate how specific needs and priorities of marginalised groups, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, and/or remote communities, are met	0	100% of grantees received support (50% applicants are women)	Grant database and support logs	Technical divisions and experts are available to support applicants.
	Percentage of outreach materials (guidance documents, webinars) developed and disseminated that explicitly include GESI and ESS criteria	0	100%	Outreach materials	Outreach materials developed in alignment with project requirements in relation to GESI and ESS
	Percentage of approved project pitches confirms with SPC SER Policy	0	100%	Approved project proposals	Support during the Co-design phase ensures that all pitches meet relevant safeguards
	Percentage of projects that demonstrate culturally sensitive, context-specific, context-sensitive improvement in gender equality and women's empowerment in design	0	75%	Approved project proposals	Support during project cycle equips project proponents to embed gender-transformative approaches into their innovation projects.
	Percentage of total MEL indicators that are gender-responsive, culturally sensitive, and socially inclusive	0	85%	Projects results framework	Project proponents and implementing partners have the capacity and commitment to design MEL frameworks that integrate

<sup>12</sup> The project plan to indirectly benefit 2,700 people (20 incubated projects x 90 people + 6 accelerated projects x 150 people)

					gender, culture and social inclusion from the outset.
<b>Outcome 2: Adaptation innovations are scaled up, resulting in increased climate resilience of communities and systems through expanded implementation</b>	Number of scaled innovations demonstrating climate resilience benefits	0	6 innovations scaled	Project reports, grant database	Innovations remain viable and funding opportunities are accessible
<b>Output 2.1: Increased capacity of local actors to develop technically sound and innovative adaptation project ideas.</b>	Percentage of total beneficiaries that report an overall improvement in knowledge and capacity on GESI and ESS in the development of concept notes	0	100%	Training/ Capacity Building reports	Stakeholders actively participate
	Percentage of clinics participants that demonstrate understanding and improved capacity of human-centered design and ESS-compliant GESI integration in innovation projects.	0	100%	Clinic session reports	Applicants actively participate in clinic sessions
<b>Output 2.2 Accelerated innovation pipeline and accelerated readiness innovation</b>	Number of proposals receiving additional funding support	0	6 innovations scaled	Submission records to other funding sources	External funders receptive to proposals; Concepts aligned with other funding criteria
	Percentage of accelerated innovations that identify and address gender differentiated risks and opportunities	0	100%	Approved accelerated innovation proposals	Innovation proponents and implementing partners have the technical capacity, resources, and commitment to integrate gender analysis into design and implementation of innovative projects.
	Percentage of accelerated innovations that demonstrate culturally sensitive, context-specific improvement in gender equality in design	0	75% of accelerated innovations demonstrate culturally sensitive, context-specific improvement in gender equality in design	Approved accelerated innovation proposals	Local cultural norms and community priorities are respected and engaged throughout the innovation design process.
	Percentage of NIEs with enhanced capacity in developing national adaptation innovation pipeline.	0	100%	Workshop reports Pre and post workshop surveys	Invited NIEs attended capacity building for developing innovative project proposals

<b>Outcome 3: Knowledge, evidence, and learning from innovative adaptation practices are systematically captured and disseminated, promoting replication, policy influence, and increased regional capacity for climate resilience</b>	Number of knowledge products and knowledge sharing events generated	0	4 knowledge products 3 Investment Labs 2 peer learning events	Knowledge products, Workshop reports	Stakeholders are willing to share learnings; Learning formats are relevant and accessible
	Number of assets produced, developed, improved, or strengthened	0	4 assets	Project progress reports	Innovative adaptation projects are successfully implemented and completed and resulted in development and strengthening of development sector services.
<b>Output 3.1: Investment matchmaking and climate finance readiness for amplification supported</b>	Number of investment labs	0	3 Investment Labs	Workshop reports	Travel/logistics allow for regional convening
	Number of stakeholders benefitted from Innovation Labs	0	90 stakeholders (50% women)		Innovation labs are designed and delivered in a way that is relevant, accessible, and responsive to stakeholder needs.
<b>Output 3.2: Strategic partnerships for replication and scaling facilitated across the Pacific</b>	Number of cross-country or multi-stakeholder knowledge exchange sessions held	0	2 peer learning events	Workshop reports	Travel/logistics allow for regional convening
	Number of innovation stories or case studies highlighting gender-responsive and inclusive approaches	0	5 innovation stories	Web-stories,	Partners and project teams are willing to document and share their experiences. Sufficient capacity and resources exist to capture gender-responsive and inclusive lessons in ways that are credible, contextually appropriate and useful for replication across the Pacific.
	Percentage of learning events that include representation from marginalised communities	0	50% of learning events include women or representation from marginalised communities	Learning event reports	Marginalised groups and women are able and willing to participate in learning events. The organisers

					have the capacity and commitment to ensure inclusive planning, outreach, and logistical support that enable
	Percentage of supported policy engagements that include meaningful representation of women	0	75% of supported policy engagements that include meaningful representation of women	Stakeholder engagement reports.	All invited stakeholders attend supported policy engagements

## X. Alignment of the project against the AF Results Framework

Table 9. Project alignment with the Adaptation Fund Results Framework

Project Objective(s)	Project Objective Indicator(s)	Fund Outcome	Fund Outcome Indicator	Grant Amount (USD)
Incubate, catalyse, de-risk, and scale locally led climate adaptation innovations across Pacific SIDS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of innovative, locally led adaptation solutions incubated and/or scaled across Pacific SIDS.</li> <li>- Number of local stakeholders with enhanced capacity to implement climate adaptation innovations.</li> </ul>	<p>Outcome 2: Strengthened institutional capacity to reduce risks associated with climate-induced socioeconomic and environmental losses</p> <p>Outcome 8: Support the development and diffusion of innovative adaptation practices, tools and technologies</p>	<p>2.1 Capacity of staff to respond to and mitigate impacts of climate-related events from targeted institutions increased.</p> <p>8.1 No. of new, adapted or improved adaptation solutions developed contextually and with the inclusion of the communities most vulnerable to climate change</p>	4,408,040
Project Outcome(s)	Project Outcome Indicator(s)	Fund Outcome	Fund Outcome Indicator	Grant Amount (USD)
Outcome 1: Innovative, locally led adaptation solutions are identified, de-risked, and refined through targeted incubation support, strengthening the pipeline of scalable climate adaptation practices across the Pacific.	- Number of eligible innovation concepts incubated with technical support and mentoring	<p>Outcome 2: Strengthened institutional capacity to reduce risks associated with climate-induced socioeconomic and environmental losses</p> <p>Outcome 8: Support the development and diffusion of innovative adaptation practices, tools and technologies</p>	<p>2.1 Capacity of staff to respond to and mitigate impacts of climate-related events from targeted institutions increased.</p> <p>8. Innovative adaptation practices are rolled out, scaled up, encouraged and or/accelerated at the regional, national and/or subnational level.</p>	1,306,120
Outcome 2: Adaptation innovations are scaled up, resulting in increased climate resilience of communities and systems through expanded implementation	- Number of scaled innovations demonstrating climate resilience benefits	<p>Outcome 2: Strengthened institutional capacity to reduce risks associated with climate-induced socioeconomic and environmental losses</p> <p>Outcome 8: Support the development and</p>	<p>2.1 Capacity of staff to respond to, and mitigate impacts of, climate-related events from targeted institutions increased</p> <p>8. Innovative adaptation practices are rolled out,</p>	1,654,120

		diffusion of innovative adaptation practices, tools and technologies	scaled up, encouraged and or/accelerated at the regional, national and/or subnational level.	
Outcome 3: Knowledge, evidence, and learning from innovative adaptation practices are systematically captured and disseminated, promoting replication, policy influence, and increased regional capacity for climate resilience	- Number of knowledge products and knowledge sharing events generated	Outcome 2: Strengthened institutional capacity to reduce risks associated with climate-induced socioeconomic and environmental losses  Outcome 3: Strengthened awareness and ownership of adaptation and climate risk reduction processes at the local level	2.1 Capacity of staff to respond to, and mitigate impacts of, climate-related events from targeted institutions increased  3.1 Percentage of targeted population aware of predicted adverse impacts of climate change, and of appropriate responses	1,447,800

## Y. Budget

Table 10. Detailed budget

Outcome/Output	Cost Category	Budget Notes and Assumptions	Amount Year 1 (USD)	Amount Year 2 (USD)	Amount Year 3 (USD)	Amount Year 4 (USD)	Amount Year 5 (USD)	Total (USD)
<b>Outcome 1: Innovative, locally led adaptation solutions are identified, de-risked, and refined through targeted incubation support, strengthening the pipeline of scalable climate adaptation practices across the Pacific.</b>								<b>\$1,306,120</b>
Output 1.1. Incubation of 20 innovative and eligible small grant projects identified, screened and funded across priority adaptation themes.	<b>Sub-grants</b>	Annual ceiling of up to USD 200,000 allocated for incubation sub-grants under Activity 1.1.4. This budget will be distributed across multiple grants each year depending on demand, quality, and scope of proposals.	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$1,000,000
	<b>Travel</b>	Project site visits for supervision at 5000USD/trip with 4 visits budgeted per year under Activity 1.1.5	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$100,000
	<b>Communication</b>	Translation and communication services at lumpsum of 2,000 USD /year	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$10,000
	<b>Technical support</b>	Technical assistance, including technical backstopping by SPC experts for project	\$39,224	\$39,224	\$39,224	\$39,224	\$39,224	\$196,120

		pitches and co-design							
<b>Outcome 2: Adaptation innovations are scaled up, resulting in increased climate resilience of communities and systems through expanded implementation</b>									<b>\$1,654,120</b>
Output 2.1 Increased capacity of local actors to develop technically sound and innovative adaptation project ideas.	<b>Workshops</b>	Two innovation clinics per year under Activity 2.1.3 at 1500USD/clinic for venue and logistics	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	\$15,000
	<b>Travel</b>	International travel for helpdesk experts to convene up to 2 clinics per year in-country at 5000 USD/trip (flights, DSA and local transport) under Activity 2.1.3	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	\$50,000
Output 2.2 Accelerated innovation pipeline and scaled-up readiness innovation	<b>Sub-grants</b>	Annual ceiling of up to USD 300,000 allocated for acceleration sub-grants under Activity 2.2.2. This budget will be distributed across multiple grants depending on demand, quality, and scope of proposals		\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$1,200,000

	<b>Workshops</b>	3-day regional training under Activity 2.2.3 at 145,000 USD/workshop including regional travel for participants, venue and other logistics		\$145,000					\$145,000
	<b>Travel</b>	Project site visits for supervision visits at 5000USD/trip with 2 visits budgeted per year under Activity 2.2.2		\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$40,000
	<b>Communication</b>	Translation and communication services at lumpsum 2,000USD /year under Activity 2.2.1, 2.2.2, and 2.2.3		\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$8,000
	<b>Technical support</b>	Technical assistance, including preparation of training materials, review and co-design of acceleration projects	\$39,224	\$39,224	\$39,224	\$39,224	\$39,224	\$39,224	\$196,120
<b>Outcome 3: Knowledge, evidence, and learning from innovative adaptation practices are systematically captured and disseminated, promoting replication, policy influence, and increased regional capacity for climate resilience</b>									<b>\$1,447,800</b>

Output 3.1 Investment matchmaking and climate finance readiness for amplification supported	<b>Workshops</b>	Investment Labs at 146,000 USD/lab per year in Year 3,4,5 organised under Activity 3.1.1 (including venue, logistics and travel of participants)			\$146,000	\$146,000	\$146,000	\$438,000
	<b>Travel</b>	International travel for helpdesk experts to convene investment lab at 5000 USD/trip (flights, DSA and local transport) under Activity 3.1.1			\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$30,000
	<b>Technical support</b>	Technical assistance, including technical inputs to Investment Labs, documentation of lessons and distillation of best practices across innovation projects under Activity 3.1.1	\$61,543	\$61,543	\$61,543	\$61,543	\$61,543	\$307,715
Output 3.2 Regional peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, policy uptake, and replication pathways are strengthened	<b>Consulting services</b>	Communication Expert to develop 2 policy briefs, 1 factsheet and 1 technical report under Activity 3.2.1 at 600USD/day at 80days			\$24,000	\$24,000		\$48,000

	<b>Workshops</b>	2x peer-to-peer learning exchanges at 146,185 USD/workshop organised under Activity 3.2.2 (including venue, logistics and travel of participants)		\$146,185		\$146,185		\$292,370
	<b>Travel</b>	International travel for helpdesk experts to support peer-to-peer learning at 5000 USD/trip (flights, DSA and local transport) under Activity 3.2.2		\$10,000		\$10,000		\$20,000
	<b>Communication</b>	Translation services to translate and disseminate project outputs at lumpsum of 2000 USD /year under Activity 3.2.1, 3.2.2 and 3.2.3			\$2,000	\$2,000		\$4,000
	<b>Technical support</b>	Technical assistance for knowledge management, including technical inputs to peer-to-peer learning, documentation and learning under Activity 3.2.1, 3.2.2 and 3.2.3	\$61,543	\$61,543	\$61,543	\$61,543	\$61,543	\$307,715
<b>Total across Outcomes</b>			\$436,534	\$1,049,719	\$930,534	\$1,086,719	\$904,534	<b>\$4,408,040</b>

<b>Project Execution costs</b>								
Adaptation Innovation Officer		Part-time position over five years to coordinate the adaptation innovation window	\$8,716.00	\$8,716.00	\$8,716.00	\$8,716.00	\$8,716.00	\$43,580
Knowledge Management & MEL Officer		Position over five years dedicated to monitoring, evaluation, learning, and knowledge sharing	\$13,676.00	\$13,676.00	\$13,676.00	\$13,676.00	\$13,676.00	\$68,380
Audit		Annual independent external audits	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$40,000
<b>Project Execution costs (&gt;1.5%)</b>			<b>\$30,392</b>	<b>\$30,392</b>	<b>\$30,392</b>	<b>\$30,392</b>	<b>\$30,392</b>	<b>\$151,960</b>
<b>Total project cost (incl. PEC)</b>			<b>\$466,926</b>	<b>\$1,080,111</b>	<b>\$960,926</b>	<b>\$1,117,111</b>	<b>\$934,926</b>	<b>\$4,560,000</b>
<b>Project Cycle Management fee</b>								
Direct project supervision from IE		Staff time to cover technical oversight and quality assurance by IE, baseline report and project closure summary, etc	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$175,000
Travel		Travel costs for IE staff for site visits, supervision missions or coordination meetings	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$50,000

IE financial and fiduciary compliance		Financial oversight and fiduciary management, including review of sub-grants disbursements and internal compliance checks	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$75,000
Mid-Term and Final Evaluation		Independent evaluations to assess progress, effectiveness and impact			\$40,000		\$50,000	\$90,000
Annual Progress Reports (APRs)		Preparation, compilation and submission of annual report to AF	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$25,000
Administrative costs		Routine administrative support for IE operations related to project implementation	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$25,000
<b>Project Cycle Management fee charged by the Implementing Entity (&gt;10%)</b>			<b>\$70,000</b>	<b>\$70,000</b>	<b>\$110,000</b>	<b>\$70,000</b>	<b>\$120,000</b>	<b>\$440,000</b>
<b><u>Total cost (incl. PEC and IE fee)</u></b>								<b>\$5,000,000</b>

104. The project’s execution costs of USD 151,960 (3.4% of the total project cost) exceed the Adaptation Fund’s 1.5% ceiling for cases where the Implementing Entity also serves as the Executing Entity. As the project spans 14 Pacific SIDS, each with distinct institutional, technical, and regulatory contexts. This requires additional resources for coordination, compliance verification, and tailored technical support compared to a single-country project. Further the project operationalises a regional innovation financing window, which necessitates dedicated oversight of proposal screening, fiduciary checks, safeguard compliance, and reporting. These functions require sustained technical backstopping and cannot be absorbed within the IE management fee. While 3.4% exceeds the policy threshold, the absolute amount of USD 151,960 over five years is modest when compared to the scale of activities and the fiduciary, technical, and compliance responsibilities involved. For these reasons, the proposed execution costs are essential to safeguard fiduciary integrity, ensure compliance national, SPEC and Adaptation Fund requirements and to deliver high-quality technical support and knowledge sharing across multiple countries. Without these resources, the regional innovation small grant mechanism could not be managed to the required standards.

**Z. Disbursement Schedule**

Table 11. Disbursement Schedule

Budget type	Year 1 (USD)	Year 2 (USD)	Year 3 (USD)	Year 4 (USD)	Year 5 (USD)	Total (USD)
Activities cost	436,534 <sup>3</sup>	\$1,049,719	\$930,534	\$1,086,719	\$904,534	4,408,040
Execution cost	30,392	30,392	30,392	30,392	30,392	151,960
Project Cycle Management fee charged by the Implementing Entity	70,000	70,000	110,000	70,000	120,000	440,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	536,926 <sup>5</sup>	1,150,112 <sup>2</sup>	1,070,926 <sup>5</sup>	1,187,113 <sup>3</sup>	1,054,926 <sup>5</sup>	5,000,000

## PART IV: ENDORSEMENT BY GOVERNMENTS AND CERTIFICATION BY THE IMPLEMENTING ENTITY

**Record of endorsement on behalf of the government:** *Letters of endorsement may be provided at a later stage, if not possible to include with the fully-developed programme. In that case, the proposal should describe how the IE plans to secure governments' endorsements of the initiative and when the IEs will provide the letters in the reports to the secretariat.*

<i>(Enter Name, Position, Ministry)</i>	<i>Date: (Month, day, year)</i>
<i>(Enter Name, Position, Ministry)</i>	<i>Date: (Month, day, year)</i>
<i>(Enter Name, Position, Ministry)</i>	<i>Date: (Month, day, year)</i>

Call for pitches will be coordinated through Designated Authorities in 14 eligible Pacific SIDS. Following the submission of pitches and prior to the final selection of successful grantees, SPC will request a letter of endorsement from the DA of the country from which each selected application originates. These letters will confirm alignment with national adaptation priorities and demonstrate government support for the proposed activity.

**B. Implementing Entity certification** *Provide the name and signature of the Implementing Entity Coordinator and the date of signature. Provide also the project/programme contact person's name, telephone number and email address*

<p>I certify that this proposal has been prepared in accordance with guidelines provided by the Adaptation Fund Board, and prevailing National Development and Adaptation Plans and subject to the approval by the Adaptation Fund Board, <u>commit to implementing the project/programme in compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy of the Adaptation Fund</u> and on the understanding that the Implementing Entity will be fully (legally and financially) responsible for the implementation of this project/programme.</p>	
 <p><i>Dirk Snyman</i> Implementing Entity Coordinator</p>	
<p>Date: <i>July 25 2025</i></p>	<p>Tel. and email: +687 26 20 00 <a href="mailto:dirks@spc.int">dirks@spc.int</a></p>
<p>Project Contact Person: Dirk Snyman and Anna Deinhard</p>	
<p>Tel. And Email: +687 26 20 00 <a href="mailto:dirks@spc.int">dirks@spc.int</a> ; <a href="mailto:annad@spc.int">annad@spc.int</a></p>	

---

## I. Annex – Gender Assessment and Action Plan

---

### Introduction

105. The SPC Climate Innovation Co:Lab (Co:Lab) will operate across 14 Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS): Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. These countries are dispersed across a vast ocean area and share common vulnerabilities as low-lying or geographically remote islands exposed to the impacts of climate change. Many face rising sea levels, saltwater intrusion, coastal erosion, and intensifying extreme weather events, compounded by limited infrastructure, geographic isolation, and small economies reliant on climate-sensitive sectors such as fisheries, agriculture, and tourism. Despite their rich cultural diversity and strong traditional governance systems, Pacific SIDS have constrained access to adaptation finance. In response, the Co:Lab aims to support locally led, scalable, and inclusive climate adaptation solutions through targeted grants and technical support.
106. While women and men contribute in distinct and valuable ways to climate resilience, gender and social inequalities persist across the Pacific – shaped by deeply rooted cultural norms, systemic barriers, and uneven institutional capacity. Women often face limited access to economic resources, land, and decision-making spaces, particularly in customary governance systems. In many countries, gender roles are strongly defined, with women predominantly engaged in unpaid care, community service, or informal economies. Despite parity in education in many countries and the emergence of strong women-led civil society organisations, women remain underrepresented in formal leadership, and barriers to participation persist for people with disabilities, youth, and gender-diverse individuals. Structural exclusion, unequal access to climate information and resources, and the gendered impacts of disasters further entrench vulnerability.
107. This annex provides the foundation for integrating gender equality, social inclusion, and locally led adaptation into all stages of the Co:Lab programme. It thereby maximises equitable outcomes, supports the reduction of structural vulnerabilities, and fulfils the Adaptation Fund’s requirements under its Gender Policy. It also aligns with SPC’s institutional commitments, building on the framework of the “Funding with Intent” programme and supports Pacific countries in meeting their own gender equality and climate resilience targets.

### Methodology

108. This Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) Analysis and associated Gender Action Plan was completed through a desk review of the legal and policy framework and publicly available gender data pertinent to this assessment. Overall, there continues to be several significant gaps in gender-disaggregated data and gender-specific metrics for the Pacific. To account for this, the programme will implement strong stakeholder engagement throughout the programme cycle, ensuring that stakeholders across groups are meaningfully consulted and sufficiently informed both prior to and during programme implementation.

### Gender Analysis and Assessment

#### Policy and Legal Framework

109. The following section details an abbreviated list of the legal frameworks and regulations related to gender and social inclusion, at the international and regional levels ([Table 12](#)Table 12).

Table 12. Selected legal and policy frameworks for gender applicable to the region.

Level	Agreement/Convention/Treaty
International/Global	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Acceded, 1972) Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (Acceded, 1995) UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Signed, 2007) Convention on Biological Diversity (1992) Beijing Platform for Action (Signed, 1995) Agenda 2030 for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
Regional	SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway (2014) Pacific Platform for Action on the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality Triennial Conference of Pacific Women and Meeting of Ministers for Women Pacific Leaders' Gender Equality Declaration (2012) Moana Declaration (2013) Pacific Platform for Action on Gender Equality and Women's Rights 2018–2030 Revitalised Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration (2023) Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific Pacific Framework on the Rights for Persons with Disabilities

109. Pacific SIDS align with a range of regional and international frameworks that support gender equality and women's empowerment, recognising the unique social, economic, and environmental contexts of the Pacific. Key among these is the *SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway*, which includes specific priorities for gender equality within the broader sustainable development agenda. Additionally, the *Pacific Platform for Action on the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality* has served as a core framework since 1994, with a revised version guiding policy and programming from 2005 to 2015.

110. Another significant regional commitment is the *Pacific Leaders' Gender Equality Declaration* (PLGED), endorsed in 2012. This declaration represents a unified political commitment by Pacific leaders to enhance the status of women and girls across economic, political, and social domains. Under the PLGED, governments committed to:

- Improve the collection and use of sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis to inform policies and programmes;
- Increase women's representation in leadership and decision-making at all levels, including governance structures such as political institutions, school boards, advocacy groups, and market committees;
- Support economic empowerment through equitable access to employment, reduction of discriminatory pay practices, and support for women entrepreneurs, including better facilities for market-based economic activities;
- Address sexual and gender-based violence through legislation, appropriate penalties, and provision of essential services such as health care, counselling, legal support, and protection for survivors;
- Promote gender parity in education, raise awareness of reproductive health, and strengthen access to education and training across all levels, including informal and tertiary education.

111. Regional mechanisms such as the *Triennial Conference of Pacific Women* and the *Meeting of Ministers for Women* are designed to facilitate accountability and provide important platforms to assess progress, share experiences, and set common priorities for advancing gender equality.

112. On an international level, the majority of Pacific SIDS are signatories to agreements such as the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*. Similarly, most Pacific SIDS have endorsed other key global commitments, including the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, the

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and have made their own national level commitments (Table 13-Table 13).

Table 13. Summary of National Policies and Commitments on Gender

Country	Agreement/Convention/Treaty
<b>Cook Islands</b>	National Policy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 2011 Gender and Development Division under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Crimes Act and the Family Protection and Support Law Bill Employment Relations Act 2012
<b>FSM</b>	FSM Strategic Development Plan 2004–2023 National Gender Policy 2018–2023 The FSM Constitution Article IV, section 4 Kosrae State Family Protection Act 2014. Pohnpei State Domestic Violence Act 2017. FSM Disability Policy 2009–2016 FSM Youth Policy 2017–2023 FSM Government National Ending Violence against Women Policy 2018.
<b>Fiji</b>	Fiji Constitution 2013 National Gender Policy 2014 National Climate Change Policy 2019 Employment Relations Act 2007 Family Law Act 2003 Widows and Orphans Pensions Act 1914 Married Women's Property Act 1891
<b>Kiribati</b>	National Approach to Eliminating Sexual and Gender Based violence in Kiribati Policy and National Action Plan 2011–2021 Te Rae N Te Mwenga (Family Peace) Act 2014 Kiribati 20-Year vision 2016-2036 National Policy on Gender Equality and Women's Development 2019–2022
<b>Republic of Marshall Islands</b>	National Gender Mainstreaming Policy 2015–2019 Domestic Violence Prevention and Protection Act 2011 (amended 2018) Gender Equality Act 2019 Employment Equal Opportunity Act 2017 Marriage Act Amendment 2016 Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons Act 2017 Child Protection Act 2015 Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2015
<b>Nauru</b>	National Action Plan for Women 2005-2015 National Women's Policy 2014–2019 (reviewed in 2021) Domestic Violence and Family Protection Act 2017 Nauru National Women's Summit (2019 and 2022) Draft policies in development: Public Service Sexual Harassment Policy Gender Policy Gender Responsive Pandemic Policy No Drop Policy Zero to Three Development Centre Policy National Action Plan for Gender Based Violence Service Delivery Protocol for Gender Based Violence
<b>Niue</b>	National Gender Policy (draft) Family Law Bull (draft)
<b>Papua New Guinea</b>	National Policy for Women and Gender Equality 2011–2015 National Public Service Gender Equity and Social Inclusion Policy 2011–2015 National Council of Women's Act 2013
<b>Samoa</b>	Family Safety Act 2013 National Policy on Gender Equality and the Rights of Women and Girls 2021–2031

Country	Agreement/Convention/Treaty
	National Policy on Family Safety 2021-2031
<b>Solomon Islands</b>	Family Protection Act 2014 National Development Strategy 2016–2035 National Policy on Eliminating Violence Against Women 2016–2020 Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan 2017–2021 National Gender Equality and Women’s Development Policy 2016–2020 National Strategy for the Economic Empowerment of Women and Girls 2020–2023
<b>Tonga</b>	Family Protection Act 2013 Tonga Strategic Development Framework (II) 2015–2025 National Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality Tonga Policy and Strategic Plan of Action 2019–2025
<b>Tuvalu</b>	Tuvalu National Gender Policy 2014
<b>Vanuatu</b>	Family Protection Act 2008 Child Protection Policy 2016–2026 National Sustainable Development Plan 2016–2030 Review Gender Equity in Education Policy 2018 National Disability Inclusive Development Policy 2018–2025 National Gender Equality Policy 2020–2030 and Implementation Plan and Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy 2020–2025 Vanuatu Reproductive, Maternal, New-boar, Child & Adolescent Health Policy, Strategy & Implementation Plan 2021–2025

113. Despite these international and regional commitments, gender-specific national policies and overall progress towards gender equality in the Pacific has been uneven. While some advances have been made, such as improved access to education for girls and efforts to address gender-based violence, gender inequality continues to have significant social and economic costs and there remains substantial scope to improve outcomes. Continued action to strengthen gender equality through regional initiatives can support more resilient, inclusive, and secure communities across the Pacific.

114. The SPC Climate Innovation Co:Lab will ensure compliance and alignment with the relevant national, regional, and international gender mechanisms in coordination with corresponding women’s and family affairs ministries and/or implementing entities on the community level in areas where sub-projects are conducted.

## Socioeconomic and Gender Baseline

115. The Gender Development Index (GDI)<sup>13</sup>, Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI), and Gender Inequality Index (GII)<sup>14</sup> provide a deeper understanding of development and inequality<sup>15,16</sup>. [Table 14](#) provides a summary of key information on these indices for Pacific SIDS.

Table 14. Overview comparison of gender indices for Pacific Island countries based on the GII and GDI.

Indicator	Cook Islands	FSM	Fiji	Kiribati	RMI	Nauru	Niue	Palau	PNG	Samoa	Solomons	Tonga	Tuvalu	Vanuatu
GII			0.35					0.58		0.42	0.48	0.44		0.56

<sup>13</sup> The GDI measures gender inequalities in achievement in three basic dimensions of human development; health, education, and command over economic resources. <https://hdr.undp.org/gender-development-index#/indicies/GDI>

<sup>14</sup> The GII is a composite metric of gender inequality using three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market. A low GII value indicates low inequality between women and men, and vice-versa. <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

<sup>15</sup> [UNDP. Human Development Report.](#)

<sup>16</sup> [UNDP. Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index.](#)

Value (2023)														
Rank (2023)			85					156		105	118	115		147
HDI Rank (2023)		149	111	140	108	124		84	160	122	156	92	129	146
GDI Group <sup>17</sup> (2023)		2	3	1	2	2		1	3	2	3	1	2	2
Share of seats in parliament (2023) (% held by women)		14.3	10.9	6.7	12.1	10.5		6.9	2.7	13.0	8.0	7.1	6.3	1.9
Population with at least secondary education (2023) (% ages 25 and older)														
Female			87.9		96.3			96.2	27.4	94.4	38.2	94.2	61.1	46.6
Male			86.7		97.1			92.9	41.3	90.0	47.8	94.1	60.6	48.2
Female Labor Participation Rate (2023)		48.6	38.4	43.0	42.7	56.9		60.5	50.7	31.4	87.1	53.3	35.2	43.1
Male Labor Participation Rate (2023)		68.1	75.8	54.8	60.8	72.7		73.7	53.3	56.6	87.7	71.4	52.4	48.8
Female-Male Labor Participation Ratio														
Estimate gross national income per capita (2021 PPP USD)														
Female (2023)		7,531	3,157	3,949	5,186	15,192		12,385	3,436	3,724	2,469	5,957	4,963	2,857
Male (2023)		18,235	5,348	6,009	9,161	23,930		19,156	4,475	8,150	3,072	9,081	8,957	3,940
Maternal mortality ratio (2023) Deaths per 100,000		73	38	76					192	59	122	126		94

## Women's Voice, Decision-Making, and Access to Resources

116. Across Pacific SIDS, women are often underrepresented in political and public life, with systemic barriers limiting their access to leadership, decision-making spaces, and productive resources. Pacific Women Lead notes that “patriarchal, cultural and social norms, lack of knowledge of the law, limited access to justice, and stigma within communities all contribute to social acceptance of men controlling women’s participation in social, political and economic life”<sup>18</sup>.

### 117. *Political Representation and Governance:*

Women’s representation in national parliaments in the Pacific remains the lowest of any global region. In 2022, women held just 9.7% of national legislative seats across the 14 Pacific SIDS reviewed<sup>19</sup>, well below the global average of 26.1%. This disparity is compounded by a lack of Temporary Special Measures (TSMs) in most countries; Samoa is the only country in the region with a parliamentary gender quota, and a small number of others, including Vanuatu and Solomon Islands, have introduced partial measures at the local or political party level. However, it is important to note that there is significant variation across Pacific

<sup>17</sup> Countries are divided into five GDI groups by absolute deviation from gender parity in HDI values. Group 1 comprises countries with high equality in HDI achievements between women and men. Group 2 comprises countries with medium to high equality in HDI achievements between women and men. Group 3 comprises countries with medium equality in HDI achievements between women and men. Group 4 comprises countries with medium to low equality in HDI achievements between women and men. Group 5 comprises countries with low equality in HDI achievements between women and men.

<sup>18</sup> [Pacific Women Lead: Formative Situation Analysis, August 2024](#)

<sup>19</sup> [Regional Gender Equality Brief for 14 Pacific Island Countries and Territories, UN Women, 2022](#)

SIDS. The proportion of women in national legislature is highest in the Cook Islands, where women hold 25% of parliamentary seats.

118. Since the establishment of the PLGED in 2012, Pacific SIDS have made steady progress on the third indicator (women in senior management in the public sector), reporting an increase in the number of women in senior management positions within government ministries and divisions. That being said, and, with the exception of the Cook Islands and Niue, Pacific SIDS have faced challenges in making progress on the first 2 indicators (see page 57). The overarching trend in the Pacific shows a slow upward trajectory in the proportion of parliamentary seats held by women: from 2.7% in 2013 to 8.5% in 2023<sup>20</sup>. Some Pacific countries, such as Fiji, RMI, Tonga and Palau, show a regression from their last general election results, recording a decrease in the number of women elected.
119. Women's political participation can be hindered by limited access to campaign financing, social capital, and entrenched gender stereotypes that reinforce male dominance in leadership roles. Women candidates face both economic and social barriers, as well as online and offline harassment and defamatory attacks<sup>21</sup>.
120. There are regional and national initiatives working toward addressing the status quo, such as the Pacific Girl program in Fiji, PNG, Solomon Islands, FSM, Tonga, and Vanuatu, Balance of Power Phase 1 in Vanuatu and Tonga, and Fi-e-Fi-a'a Fafine Tonga Women's Coalition in Tonga.
121. *Traditional and Local Leadership*  
Customary leadership systems remain influential in many Pacific societies and are instrumental in determining women's involvement in local decision-making. In several countries, traditional titles or clan-based leadership positions are predominantly or exclusively held by men. In Samoa, some villages prevent women from holding *matai* (chief) titles, an exclusion that limits their eligibility to run for national office. In Tuvalu, only 10% of members of the traditional decision-making body *Falekaupule* were women as of 2018, and in Fiji, just 7% of village chief positions were held by women in 2019<sup>22</sup>. Yet sociocultural norms on women's leadership differ across the region, as in the Cook Islands, women can hold *Ariki* (chief) titles and the Are Ariki make recommendations to the Legislative Assembly on matters concerning the welfare of the population. In the Federated States of Micronesia land use rights are inherited through the mother's clan, and in the Marshall Islands female clan-heads participate in community meetings deciding on land matters<sup>23</sup>.
122. Women's control over land and property remains unequal across the Pacific. Legal and customary practices often disadvantage women in inheritance, land ownership, and decision-making regarding communal resources. In countries like Palau, Tonga, and Tuvalu, inheritance laws favour male heirs, and in several others, women are excluded from land-related decisions under customary law. Even where legal provisions exist for gender equality, traditional systems often override statutory protections<sup>24</sup>. However, there are developments, such as Vanuatu's Custom Land Management Act (2013) which mandates women's participation in customary land institutions, representing a step toward more inclusive governance of natural resources.
123. Women's civil society organisations (CSOs) and feminist movements have played a crucial role in advocating for gender equality, promoting women's leadership, and holding governments accountable. These groups often engage at national and regional levels to influence policies related to gender-based violence, education, economic empowerment, and political representation. Ongoing regional engagement through platforms such as the Triennial Conference of Pacific Women and the Meeting of Ministers for Women provide opportunities for CSO voices to shape regional gender equality agendas.

## Gender in Economy and Education

---

<sup>20</sup> Ibid 6. Pacific Women Lead

<sup>21</sup> Ibid 7. UN Women

<sup>22</sup> [Regional Gender Equality Brief for 14 Pacific Island Countries and Territories, UN Women, 2022](#)

<sup>23</sup> Ibid

<sup>24</sup> Ibid

124. Across Pacific SIDS, gender disparities persist in access to and control over economic resources, employment opportunities, and decision-making in the economic sphere. Although efforts to support women's economic empowerment have increased in recent years, structural barriers remain. National labour force participation rates are difficult to compare across the region due to the varying definitions used by governments. Women have lower labour force participation rates than men, and economic opportunities for women remain limited and unequal especially for women living in rural and remote areas, women with disabilities, and young women. Overall, there is significant variation in women's economic representation, with over 60% of managerial positions in the Cook Islands held by women (2019), compared to just 20% in the FSM (2014) and 26% in the Solomon Islands (2013)<sup>25</sup>.
125. While some countries have introduced national strategies to improve women's participation in the economy (e.g. through entrepreneurship support or public sector employment targets), implementation and monitoring remain limited<sup>26</sup>. In addition, in the majority of countries, the prohibition of sexual harassment is not included within formal employment legislation. However, the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, the RMI, and Samoa all have national legislation which prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of sex in both the public and private sectors.
126. In comparison to the formal labour market, a significant proportion of women are engaged in informal and subsistence economies, such as market vendors, informal tourism workers, and unpaid family workers in agriculture and fishing. In 8 out of the 10 countries with available data<sup>27</sup>, more women than men are working in informal employment, which is typically characterised by low earnings, job insecurity, and limited legal protections. These sectors are often overlooked in national labour statistics, leading to a lack of visibility of women's economic contribution<sup>28</sup>. Furthermore, access to financial services, credit, and markets remains limited for many women entrepreneurs particularly those operating outside formal networks and although initiatives to improve financial inclusion (e.g. digital banking and microcredit schemes) exist, scale and sustainability vary widely across countries.
127. Women also carry a disproportionate burden of unpaid care and domestic work. This includes childcare, elder care, meal preparation, and community-based voluntary work. These responsibilities limit the time women can dedicate to income-generating activities or participation in training and leadership programmes. Currently no comprehensive time-use data is available at the regional level to quantify this gendered role.
128. Where data is available, women's unemployment rates are consistently higher than men's, particularly among young women. In countries like Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu, many young women are not in education, employment or training. Labour force surveys are often outdated or unavailable in many Pacific SIDS, limiting the accuracy of estimates<sup>29</sup>.
129. The Cook Islands, FSM, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, RMI, Samoa, Tonga, and Tuvalu all offer free and compulsory education. In many PICs, gender parity has been achieved in primary and secondary education enrolment, and in some cases, girls outperform boys. The Net Enrolment Ratios in early childhood are significantly higher for girls than boys in the Cook Islands, Kiribati, and Palau. For all countries where sex-disaggregated data is available, tertiary education enrolment is higher among women and girls than their male counterparts<sup>30</sup>. However, gender differences in access to quality education remain. As an example, educational achievement for women is particularly poor in Melanesia, where only 45% of women receive secondary education<sup>31</sup>.
130. Girls and women continue to face gender-based barriers to completing education and accessing technical or vocational pathways, including early marriage and pregnancy, household responsibilities,

---

<sup>25</sup> [PWL: Formative Situational Analysis, 2024, pg 88](#)

<sup>26</sup> [UN Women Regional Brief: Pacific](#)

<sup>27</sup> [SPC Pacific Data Hub, Sustainable Development Goal 08 – Decent Work and Economic Growth \(July 2025\)](#)

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>29</sup> [UN Women Regional Brief: Pacific](#)

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>31</sup> [PWL: Formative Situational Analysis, 2024, pg 88](#)

poverty and school-related costs, and safety concerns especially in rural areas. These factors contribute to high dropout rates for girls particularly in secondary school. Educational pathways remain highly gendered as girls are less likely to enter or complete studies in technical fields, and are instead concentrated in teaching, nursing, and caregiving. This pattern reinforces occupational segregation in the labour market and contributes to the regional gender pay gap.

## Women's Health and Violence Against Women and Children

131. While there have been advances in women's health particularly in relation to maternal health, access to culturally sensitive health services remains significantly limited. Many of the leading causes of death among women in the region are non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. In 2021, 37.8% of female mortality in Kiribati (51.1% for men) and 35.1% of female mortality in the FSM (46.2% for men) are attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease<sup>32</sup>. For countries where sex-disaggregated data is available, mortality rates related to NCDs are higher in men than women. Consistently, women take on the gendered role of caring for family members suffering from NCDs<sup>33</sup>.
132. Access to antenatal care and skilled birth attendance varies widely across the region and is particularly constrained in remote areas and outer islands. In Palau, 100% of births in 2018 were attended by skilled health personnel, compared to 56.4% in PNG. Maternal mortality rate also varies greatly, with the lowest in Fiji at 39 deaths per 100,000 births compared to the RMI with 302 deaths per 100,000 births (2020)<sup>34</sup>.
133. In general, sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services are available across the Pacific but they can remain underutilised or stigmatised. The constraints vary across different countries and communities, but common dimensions include taboos and stigma (for example towards premarital intimacy), gender norms and inequality (for example restricting women's autonomy and decision-making powers), limited access to education (for example lack of information on SRH), and religious and moral beliefs (for example influence over the use of family planning)<sup>24</sup>. These issues are compounded for women and adolescent girls with disabilities who often face further reduced accesses to SRH services.
134. Violence against women and children remains a critical and pervasive issue across the Pacific, with some of the highest prevalence rates in the world. However, there is a distinct lack of recent data on Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC). The highest rate of physical violence against women from intimate partners is found in Fiji, where 61% of ever-partnered women reported experience physical intimate-partner violence in their lifetime (2013). This was 59% in Kiribati (2019), 51% in Vanuatu (2009), 48% in RMI (2012), 47% in Nauru (2013), and 46% in Solomon Islands (2008)<sup>35</sup>. The rate of controlling behaviours in intimate partner relationships has also been observed as high across Pacific SIDS, for example 79% in RMI (2012), as well as the rate of non-partnered sexual violence, for example 47% of the 148 women surveyed in 2013 in Nauru reported experiencing sexual violence from someone other than an intimate partner.
135. VAWC is underreported throughout the region, and it is not uncommon for both women and men to hold beliefs that normalise or excuse VAWC. Reluctance to openly discuss VAWC may actively impede efforts to effectively understand and respond to violence within societies. All countries in the Pacific have developed their own gender equality/gender equity policies, with some going further to develop specific VAWG/domestic violence laws; nevertheless, systemic gaps in implementation and sociocultural resistance to change continue to limit the effectiveness of these policies.

## Gender in Climate Change and Innovation

<sup>32</sup> [Pacific Data Hub, SPC, Annual mortality rate attribute to cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory diseases, disaggregated by sex](#)

<sup>33</sup> PIFS and SPC. Addressing inequalities: The case of Small Island Developing States in the Pacific. Issues paper for Small Islands Developing States Conference, August, 2013.

<sup>34</sup> [Regional Gender Equality Brief for 14 Pacific Island Countries and Territories, UN Women, 2022](#)

<sup>35</sup> [ibid.](#)

136. *Gender in climate change*

Climate change is not gender-neutral, and while all people living in affected areas experience the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events, “those who are socially and economically excluded experience the effects of climate change more intensely”<sup>36</sup>. Women in the Pacific have lower socioeconomic resilience – they are less likely to own productive assets or have access to credit, and are more likely to work in informal sectors or subsistence-based livelihoods. Women and their children are 14 times more likely to die in a disaster and four times more likely to be displaced<sup>37</sup>. Risks increase further for people living with disabilities; the elderly, widowed or those with chronic illnesses; young children; pregnant or breastfeeding women; female heads of households; single mothers, particularly those with a large number of dependents; and people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities.

137. In disaster contexts, roles are gendered. Women are more likely to store food, water, medicine, and take children to safety, while men are more engaged in reinforcing shelters, safeguarding livestock, and securing agricultural assets. In Tonga, women experience heightened burdens of unpaid care and domestic work (77%) compared to men (68%). The destruction of basic services and public transport further exacerbate women’s mobility and safety challenges, particularly in rural areas where access to healthcare and evacuation services was more limited and compromised sanitation facilities increased the risk of gender-based violence, with 4% of women forced to share sanitation spaces after disasters, heightening their vulnerability<sup>38</sup>.

138. Climate change and disaster risks are differentiated, but access to risk-mitigating information and early warning systems is not equitable. Across the Pacific, women tend to have limited access to information in part due to gendered social norms<sup>39</sup>. Men as ‘household heads’ are more likely to have better access to information and control who accesses information in their household<sup>40</sup>. This underscores the disadvantage and vulnerability that women-headed households face in access to climate information. Men are more likely to receive warnings via radio, while women tend to rely on internet or social media-platforms that may not be equally available in all regions, particularly in rural areas where digital connectivity is limited<sup>41</sup>.

139. Actions to redress the gendered impact of climate change vary across Pacific SIDS. The Cook Islands’ 2011 National Policy on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment<sup>42</sup> recognises that men and women are impacted differently by climate change due to their different roles in the society. The Policy advocated for gender-responsive climate strategies to build capacity and reduce vulnerability. In Solomon Islands, the 2018 National Disaster Management Plan included provisions to involve women in preparedness and response arrangements at all levels to promote effective disaster management, including involvement in operational processes and decision-making. In Vanuatu, the Department of Climate Change is working closely with the Department of Women’s Affairs to effectively integrate women’s voice in their plans and activities<sup>43</sup>. Evidence shows that when women are involved in designing and driving climate solutions, these solutions are more likely to be comprehensive, contextually relevant, sustainable, and designed specifically to meet the needs of women and other marginalised groups<sup>44</sup>. But despite progress, discrimination and harmful gender norms mean women’s contributions to disaster resilience are often overlooked, and their voices are marginalised in decision-making process and the development of disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies and plans<sup>45</sup>.

140. Women-led organisations and women leaders from the Pacific region are emerging as drivers of

---

<sup>36</sup> [Thematic Brief: Women and Climate Change in the Pacific, 2021.](#)

<sup>37</sup> [ActionAid: Transforming disaster response women led climate solutions in Asia and the Pacific, 2024](#)

<sup>38</sup> [Tonga Statistics Department, UN Women \(2022\). Gender and Environment Survey 2022.](#)

<sup>39</sup> [UN Women \(2022\). Gender Equality Brief for Tonga.](#)

<sup>40</sup> [UNCDF \(2020\). Economic Impacts of Natural Hazards on Vulnerable Populations in Tonga.](#)

<sup>41</sup> [Tonga Statistics Department, UN Women \(2022\). Gender and Environment Survey 2022.](#)

<sup>42</sup> [Cook Islands National Policy on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment and Strategic Plan of Action \(2011 – 2016\)](#)

<sup>43</sup> [Thematic Report on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Disaster Risk Reduction in the Pacific, 2023](#)

<sup>44</sup> Ibid

<sup>45</sup> Ibid

national and regional policy reforms. Pacific women are leading different multi-hazard early warning initiatives, including Women’s Weather Watch in Fiji, Women Wetem Weta in Vanuatu, and Meri Gat Infomesen in PNG under the Shifting the Power Coalition programme. In Vanuatu, the local women’s network Women I Tok Tok Tugeta (Women Talk Together) partnered with an international NGO (ActionAid Australia) to implement a ni-Vanuatu women’s leadership initiative<sup>46</sup>. These initiatives support women in working with national and regional scientific organisations, such as the National Meteorological Services and SPREP, to increase their technical knowledge in DRR and lead risk-informed and pragmatic disaster approaches.

141. *Gender in Innovation*

Gender inequality across the Pacific often limits women’s ability to adapt to climate change and participate in key decision-making processes. It is therefore essential to identify the institutional structures, behaviours, and norms that reinforce exclusion, as well as the resources women lack to support their resilience and innovation. Women’s knowledge and innovations have played a vital role across sectors, enhancing livelihoods, supporting adaptation, and improving community well-being. However, Pacific-specific evidence on the gendered landscape of innovation is sparse. While women’s traditional knowledge and roles in climate resilience are widely acknowledged, systematic research on whether women, people with disabilities, youth, and others gain or lead innovation remains limited. There is a notable gap in the region examining how innovations are accessed or shaped by different groups. The absence of disaggregated data, for example by gender and age, means the full extent of these disparities remains poorly understood. Further structured investments in the intersection of innovations in gender and climate change are necessary in the Pacific.

142. *SPC’s Gender and Climate Innovation Investment*

SPC and its Members are committed to advancing gender equality, to ensure that Pacific women and girls in all their diversity are safe and have an equitable share in resources, opportunities and decision-making. This commitment is articulated in numerous regional frameworks including the *Pacific Platform for Action for Gender Equality and Women’s Human Rights 2018-2030*, and through the implementation of the *Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific 2017–2030*. The *SPC Strategic Plan 2022-2031* recognises the importance of including human rights, gender equality and social inclusion, cultural development and the relationship of people to their environment into all aspects of work.

143. SPC’s Human Rights and Social Development (HRSD) Division and the SER team (within the Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Division) play the critical role of mainstreaming GESI and PCA to programmes and operations across the organisation. Through tailored interventions they support the application of PCA throughout the programme management cycle and the implementation of SPC’s SER Policy. Alongside this, support is provided to the technical and scientific divisions (those to be executing the grants under the Co:Lab programme) to gender equality, social inclusion, traditional knowledge, and positive expression of culture in divisional business plans, programmes, and projects.

144. In 2022 SPC launched its Gender Equality Flagship. This cross-cutting flagship is designed to build on SPC’s existing work and strengths, deepening sectoral impact and ensuring SPC has an integrated approach to gender equality and empowerment. The goal of the flagship is that all people, of all genders, of all diversities are empowered and benefit equally from development outcomes in all areas of their lives. The Flagship is trialling eight dimensions and indicative examples of SPC’s work under these dimensions can be found in [Table 15](#) ~~Table 15~~:

Table 15. Examples of work under SPC’s Gender Equality Flagship Dimensions

Dimension	Examples
-----------	----------

<sup>46</sup> Ibid

 <p>Leadership &amp; decision making</p>	<p><b>Pacific Women Lead Programme</b></p> <p>The PWLP is a AUD57.3 m DFAT funded project. The key outcome areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased leadership and decision-making opportunities</li> <li>• Increased agency of women and girls</li> <li>• Gender and social norms change in Pacific communities (gender mainstreaming)</li> <li>• Policy change and implementation for gender equality and social inclusion</li> <li>• Collaboration and cohesiveness of gender equality efforts.</li> </ul> <p>The work is across safety, SRH, women’s economic empowerment, and climate change and resilience.</p>
 <p>Economic empowerment &amp; livelihoods</p>	<p><b>Oceans and Maritime Programme (OMP) – Gender-responsive climate action in the informal shipping sector: a practical demonstration.</b></p> <p>Support through the 2024 Funding with Intent Programme the project’s gender outcomes are to empower women in the informal shipping sector by obtaining Boat Masters Licences (BML), leading to the certification and recognition of skilled female ‘seafarers’, and increasing women’s participation in the maritime sector.</p>
 <p>Gender research, data &amp; innovation</p>	<p><b>Statistics for Development</b></p> <p>SPC’s Statistics for Development Division has developed the Mapping Gender Statistics Framework in the Pacific Region and a stocktake of available sources of gender-related data for the region. In addition, SDD supported the development of the <a href="#">Gender Statistics Dashboard</a> which pulls together all available gender statistics within SPC and ultimately across national statistics systems.</p>
 <p>Resilience &amp; climate action</p>	<p><b>Disaster Community Resilience Programme (DCRP)/Hydrology Support to Enhance Flood Early Warning Systems.</b></p> <p>This project executed by SPC’s Geoscience Energy and Maritime (GEM) Division includes gender outcome to improve participation of women in hydrological services in Pacific SIDS, in line with the Updated PLGED and to improve resilience of communities to flooding through the incorporation of GEDSI considerations into flood early warning messaging. The project has engaged a GEDSI expert as part of the project team.</p>
 <p>Governance, institutional mechanism &amp; coordination</p>	<p><b>Revised Pacific Platform for Action, Regional Working Group on the Implementation of Domestic Violence/Family Protection Legislation (RWG) and Pacific Gender Equality Programme II (PGEP II).</b></p> <p>Through HRSD, SPC provides on-going support for members to progress their gender equality commitments. This includes the convening of the Triennial Conference of Pacific Women and the Pacific Ministers for Women Meeting for all 22 Pacific Island Country and Territory members of SPC. Since 1994 SPC has been the technical lead in the Pacific on gender and women’s development.</p>

145. The SPC Climate innovation Co:Lab will build directly on the existing infrastructure of the SPC Funding with Intent (FIT) Programme by establishing a climate adaptation window, focused on identifying, incubating, and scaling transformative, locally owned solutions that build climate resilience in Pacific Island countries. The FIT Programme has already created specific funding windows to generate innovative ideas in key thematic areas like gender equality and the empowerment of young Pacific Ocean scientists. These successful adaptations led to the support of projects such as ‘Gender-responsive Climate Action in the Informal Shipping Sector’ where Papuan women were trained as boat operators for locally equipped solar-powered “banana boats” for inter-island transportation and shipping. Further indicative examples can be found below.

Table 16: Indicative List of Gender-Responsive Innovations Supported by FIT.

Cohort	Project Title	Brief Description
2022	Gender-responsive Climate Action in the Informal Shipping Sector (Papua New Guinea)	Papuan women were trained as boat operators for locally equipped solar-powered “banana boats” for inter-island transportation and shipping
2023	Pacific MEL Tok podcast	This project is to create a 10-episode series podcast on Pacific MEL – breathing into life what is discussed in the Rebblib. The podcast will encourage those who are experienced or emerging evaluators to talk about their experiences on what has worked for them, lessons learnt and challenges along the way in conducting MEL in the Pacific in a culturally responsive way. This project aims to address the challenges of limited opportunities for communication and collaboration and honest reflection on the challenges of MEL practices across the Pacific, and to be able to Talanoa on MEL practices to share with a wide audience, actioning areas in the 2024 PacMEL convening calls to action, as well as developing content with the Pacific that is for the Pacific, by the Pacific.
2024	Gender analysis of Tuvalu Bigas project	The project aims to improve evidence on the gendered impact of biogas systems, through conducting a mixed-methods gender analysis of the installation of 20 biogas systems in Tuvalu planned to be installed in Funafuti in November/December 2023 as part of a GEP project and of 40 systems installed in 2019.
2024	Scaling up and establishment of the Pasifika Socio-Economic Community of Practice	Socio-economic studies and monitoring efforts in the Pacific region tend to be scattered and ad-hoc. In August 2023, an inception workshop brought together socio-economic experts and users in the region to draft an Action Plan to bring a Community of Practice to life. The proposed program will provide vital seed funding in establishing the CoP, engagement with key stakeholders and activities for the first 12 months. The objectives of the socio-economic community of practice include developing ethical guidelines for socio-economic research including the “do no harm principle” and FPIC to enhance inclusive, equitable and sustainable practices including gender equality.
2025	Pacific Health Dataveillance	Pacific Island Countries and Territories face mounting challenges in monitoring and controlling infectious diseases. The proposal is a centralised, web-based tool that integrates health related data (surveillance data, laboratory reports, outbreak situational report) and non-health related data (social media post, google trends) into an intuitive dashboard. The project will deliver capacity trainings including specific sessions on GESI and the prevention of sexual harassment and sexual exploitation.
2025	Language and Culture – reaching out to local communities – building a network of Pacific Island language providers for community outreach products (PacLang Project)	The project’s aim is to create a registry of Pacific language service providers in which interested teams and partners can access. This will encourage the development of local language products for regional Pacific communities as well as support the global focus on indigenous

146. Under the existing FiT Programme, all projects are screened against SPC’s SER Policy, and the SER team provides critical feedback to ensure that gender, youth empowerment, human rights, and other social inclusion factors are comprehensively addressed throughout the project lifecycle. The Co:Lab will fund similar gender-responsive, locally led, community-based innovations with the support of initiatives such as the Gender Flagship and the cross-divisional expertise of HRSD and the Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Division. Lessons learned from previous cohorts were documented and will be applied to the Co:Lab, to strengthen PCA and GESI mainstreaming across the design, implementation, and monitoring of innovation sub-projects.

### *Overall assessment*

147. Climate change compounds existing inequalities in the Pacific, where women and other marginalised groups face greater climate change vulnerability and fewer opportunities to shape solutions. Their limited access to assets, credit, decision-making processes, and climate information reduces adaptive capacity. Despite these barriers, Pacific women play critical roles in resilience and recovery, and their knowledge and leadership are key to locally relevant solutions.

148. In Fiji and Vanuatu, women’s groups have led post-cyclone recovery efforts through traditional governance systems; in Kiribati and the Solomon Islands, women are central to water security and food preservation practices in atoll communities; while in Samoa and Tonga, women’s committees are critical actors in coastal protection, early warning systems, and community-based planning. Regional frameworks and national policies increasingly recognise the value of women’s contributions, but harmful gender norms and underrepresentation continue to limit progress. In innovation contexts, these dynamics manifest as unequal access to funding, limited presence in research and development spaces, and the undervaluing of community-rooted, non-technical adaptation practices often led by rural or Indigenous women.

149. The Co:Lab represents a timely and strategic opportunity to address these gaps. By building on SPC’s FiT programme, the programme will support transformative, locally driven projects with strong inclusion safeguards. Its flexible design and mentoring infrastructure are particularly suited to supporting Pacific women innovators, who may face relational, procedural, or institutional barriers to accessing formal climate finance. To achieve equitable, inclusive outcomes, the programme will support continued investment in institutional capacity, accountability mechanisms, and meaningful engagement with women and vulnerable groups throughout the project lifecycle.

150. Building on the existing infrastructure, the programme will need to embed gender equality and social inclusion at each stage of the innovation process, from appraisal and implementation to monitoring and evaluation. This includes ensuring that innovation is not only technically sound but also culturally sensitive and socially embedded – valuing traditional and indigenous knowledge, community roles, and collective leadership models often advanced by Pacific women. Leveraging SPC’s people-centred and technical GESI integration capabilities, the programme is well-positioned to promote gender-responsive innovation.

## Recommendations

### Key Recommendations

151. Based on the analysis above, the following recommendations are provided:

1. **Strengthen gender-responsive monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) systems.** The PMU, in coordination with national partners and grantees, should ensure that MEL systems incorporate gender-, age-, and disability- disaggregated data across all components. The project should support the development of a standard harmonised GESI and ESS monitoring template and orientation sessions on gender-sensitive data collection and analysis for implementing partners. Aligned with the AF Gender Policy principles, MEL tools should go beyond counting participation to analyse: (i) gendered roles in climate

response; (ii) power-holders and access to decision-making; and (iii) social norms that shape exclusion. Each project should systematically track progress against gender and vulnerability-disaggregated indicators, using both quantitative and qualitative methods to understand who benefits and why. These systems should be integrated into sub-project agreements and reviewed at midline and final reporting stages by the SPC MEL team and GESS Officer.

- 2. Build GEDSI capacity and enhance accessibility in the Co:Lab systems.** The PMU should deliver modular training and learning sessions for grantees and technical partners that cover climate adaptation through a gender equality and social inclusion lens, people-centred approach to project design, gender-related risks, SPC's SER Policy, and ESIA/ESMP preparation. Sessions should also raise awareness of gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (SEAH) risks, including how these can be prevented and mitigated in the context of projects, and consider technical capacity, indigenous and traditional knowledge, and gendered expertise in curriculum design. Where possible, curricula should be co-designed with regional, national, or context-specific gender and social inclusion institutions. Project materials and engagement tools should be adapted into disability-accessible formats and disseminated in ways that ensure reach, including digital and non-digital channels for outer island and rural communities.
- 3. Promote locally-led, inclusive approaches that centre women's leadership and feedback.** The programme should proactively engage women's networks, CSOs, and diverse actors, particularly in sectors where women's labour and leadership are often invisible or undervalued. The PMU should ensure that the inputs of women and representatives of marginalised groups are visibly integrated into project design, monitoring, and adaptive management. Grantees should be supported to identify gendered barriers and entry points in their proposals, ensuring that solutions address accessibility issues, such as time burdens and mobility constraints. Evaluations should document how feedback from women and vulnerable groups has shaped outcomes or influenced key changes in project implementation or evaluation – not just attendance rates, but influence, leadership, and sustained access to Co:Lab-supported resources and decision spaces.
- 4. Institutionalise gender integration and accountability mechanisms.** To align with SPC's SER policy and the Gender Equality Flagship the programme should establish clear accountability for gender outcomes across all stages and levels. This includes embedding gender expertise within the Appraisal Committee, SER oversight during co-design, and structured review of inclusion plans prior to grant approval. Knowledge and amplification activities should feature case studies of inclusive innovation, including lessons on overcoming systemic barriers. These should be captured through the Co:Lab learning platform and shared in relevant regional fora. The project should coordinate with regional and local gender ecosystem (e.g. Pacific Women Lead) for technical backstopping and contextualised, gender-responsive support. A GESS focal point should be designated within the Co:Lab PMU to coordinate cross-cutting gender actions and reporting to the Fund.

## Gender Action Plan (GAP)

Table 17. Gender Action Plan (GAP)

Outcome/Output	GAP Integrated Activities	AF Gender Principle	Gender-Responsive Indicators and (targets)
<b>Outcome 1. Incubation – Identification and incubation of innovative practices for climate action.</b>			
<b>Output 1.1. Pipeline of eligible small grant projects identified, screened, and funded across priority adaptation themes.</b>			
Activity 1.1.1 Launch call for project pitches (Expressions of Interest) and provide supporting guidance	Develop guidance materials for applicants that clearly articulates eligibility criteria (including GESI and ESS specific criteria), country-specific priorities, innovation principles aligned with AFCIA and FIT. Deliver an accessible webinar to guide actors on the Co:Lab and the application process, including GESI and ESS criteria.	Access Representation Participation	% of outreach materials (e.g., guidance documents, webinars) developed and disseminated that explicitly include GESI and ESS criteria (Baseline: 0; Target: 100)
Activity 1.1.2. Screen EOIs using pre-agreed innovation criteria and country-specific priorities	Screen applicants against the standardised screening criteria, inclusive of GESI and ESS specific criteria, taking into consideration country-level DAs. Assess pitches against SER checklist to ensure they conform with SPC's SER Policy (inclusive of gender-related criteria)	Equity Access	% of approved project pitches conform with SPC SER Policy (Baseline:0; target: 100)
Activity 1.1.3 Facilitate collaborative co-design and proposal development for shortlisted EOIs	Provide hands-on technical assistance to shortlisted applicants to co-develop full proposals. Ensure project proposals demonstrate how the specific needs and priorities of marginalised groups, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, and/or remote communities are met. Ensure recommendations from the SER team are incorporated into final project designs.	Access Participation	% of co-designed projects demonstrate how specific needs and priorities of marginalised groups, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, and/or remote communities are met (Baseline: 0; Target: 100).
Activity 1.1.4 Conduct technical review and final selection of proposals	Assess full proposal against selection criteria, including technical, environmental and social, and GESI criteria.	Access	% of incubation projects that demonstrate culturally sensitive, context-specific improvement in gender equality and women's empowerment in design (Baseline:0, Target 75%)
Activity 1.1.5 Monitor implementation and provide ongoing support	Monitor the implementation of small grant projects against the M&E plan, including gender- and	Equity Participation	% of total MEL indicators that are gender-responsive,

Outcome/Output	GAP Integrated Activities	AF Gender Principle	Gender-Responsive Indicators and (targets)
	vulnerability- disaggregated indicators.		culturally-sensitive, and socially-inclusive (Baseline:0; Target: 85%)
<b>Outcome 2. Acceleration – Scale-up funding for promising innovation projects</b>			
<b>Output 2.1: Increased capacity of local actors to develop technically sound and innovative adaptation project ideas.</b>			
Activity 2.1.2 Deliver targeted technical support for early-stage concept refinement	Provide technical support, including support on GESI and ESS, to applicants for the development of viable concept notes or proposals.	Access Equity	% of total beneficiaries that report an overall improvement in knowledge and capacity on GESI and ESS in the development of concept notes (Baseline:0; Target:100)
Activity 2.1.3 Deliver clinics and mentoring on adaptation innovation, integrating human-centred design, business modelling, and risk assessment	Deliver structured clinics and mentorship focused on building practical innovation design capacities, including human-centred design, business modelling, scaling strategies, adaptive management, and investment structuring.	Participation Access	% of clinics participants that demonstrate understanding and improved capacity of human-centered design and ESS-compliant GESI integration in innovation projects (Baseline:0; Target: 100%)
<b>Output 2.2: Strengthened innovation pipeline and accelerated readiness innovation</b>			
Activity 2.2.1 Prepare successful incubation projects for scale-up under the acceleration phase	Provide targeted support to high-performing grantees from Component 1 who are being considered for acceleration grants. This includes identifying operational, financial, social and environmental risks, GESI, and opportunities associated with scaling.	Equity Sustainability	% of scale-up concepts that identify and address gender-differentiated risks and opportunities (Baseline: 0; Target: 100%)
Activity 2.2.2 Support high-performing Component 1 projects with additional acceleration funding.	Support grantees to develop scaling strategies, including delivery models, results frameworks, risk mitigation plans, gender action plans, and ESMP.	Equity Access	% of acceleration projects that demonstrate culturally sensitive, context-specific improvement in gender equality and women's empowerment in design (Baseline :0, Target 75%)
Activity 2.2.3 Support NIEs to strengthen innovation pipelines and develop proposal for the Adaptation Fund innovation window	Deliver focused capacity-building to NIEs including aligning proposal with the Adaptation Fund's innovation funding stream, Environmental and Social Safeguards Policy and Gender Policy.	Capacity Building Representation	% of proposals submitted by NIEs that are aligned with AF Gender Policy and contain a gender action plan (Baseline: 0; Target: 100%)

Outcome/Output	GAP Integrated Activities	AF Gender Principle	Gender-Responsive Indicators and (targets)
<b>Outcome 3: Amplification – Knowledge management, learning and replication</b>			
<b>Output 3.1: Investment matchmaking and climate finance readiness for scale-up supported</b>			
Activity 3.1.1 Convene innovation investment matchmaking labs.	Deliver Climate Innovation Investment Labs that equip innovators with the tools required to navigate investment partnerships, including gender-responsive blended finance solutions.	Access Equity	# of stakeholders benefited from Innovation Labs (Baseline: 0, Target: 90 (50% women))
<b>Output 3.2: Regional peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, policy uptake, and replication pathways are strengthened</b>			
Activity 3.2.1: Develop document and knowledge exchange of successful innovations.	Synthesise and disseminate project data outcomes and learnings through existing regional knowledge platforms such as the NDC Hub. This will include innovation stories that center rural communities, youth, young women, and other contextually marginalised or vulnerable groups.	Participation Knowledge Sharing	# of innovation stories or case studies highlighting gender-responsive and inclusive approaches (Baseline: 0; Target: 5)
Activity 3.2.2: Convene joint peer-to-peer learning and community of practice development (with SPREP CIA Programme).	Facilitate inclusive joint thematic learning exchanges and regional capacity-building activities in partnership with SPREP. Showcase people-centered innovations and highlight successful approaches through a gender equality lens.	Representation Access	% of learning events that include participation from women or representation from marginalised communities (Baseline: 0; Target: 50%)
Activity 3.2.3: Provide support for policy uptake and mainstreaming.	Support engagement with national and regional policy actors to integrate proven innovations into national adaptation planning process, investment strategies, regulatory frameworks or similar, with a focus on PCA and gender equality.	Equity Sustainability	% of supported policy engagements that include meaningful representation of women (Baseline: 0; Target 75%)

---

## II. Annex – Environmental and Social Management System for the SPC Climate Innovation Co:Lab

---

152. The SPC Climate Innovation Co:Lab is designed to support locally-led adaptation innovations across 14 Pacific SIDS, many of which are highly vulnerable to climate change impacts. In delivering support through catalytic finance and technical assistance, the Programme recognises that all activities must be implemented in a manner that protects people, ecosystems, and cultural values, while promoting gender equality, inclusion, and environmental sustainability.
153. As an accelerator supporting Unidentified Sub-Projects (USPs) through a competitive grant-making process, the Co:Lab cannot precisely determine environmental and social impacts and risks at this stage. The programme conducted a high-level indicative analysis and adopted a precautionary and proactive approach to safeguards management to ensure that risks will be identified, assessed, avoided, and mitigated through robust mechanisms integrated throughout the programme lifecycle.
154. This Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) provides a comprehensive framework for screening, assessing, managing, and monitoring E&S risks across all sub-projects funded through the programme. The system is aligned with all 15 ESP principles of the Adaptation Fund and national environmental and social regulatory frameworks in the countries of implementation. It also integrates principles of gender equality, inclusion, and meaningful participation, as outlined in the Fund's Gender Policy and the programme's Gender Action Plan.

### Environmental and Social Context and Policy

#### Environmental Policy and Legal Framework in the Pacific SIDS

155. The 14 Pacific SIDS targeted by the programme - Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu - share common environmental and social challenges, but also operate within distinct legal and policy frameworks. In general, these countries maintain strong constitutional protections for the environment, community land rights, and indigenous heritage, often underpinned by traditional governance systems and customary law.
156. At the national level, all the 14 participating Pacific SIDS have laws or policies in place that govern Environmental and Social Impact Assessments. An overview is presented below:

**Cook Islands:** Guided by the *Environment Act 2003*, EIA is mandatory for any activity likely to have significant environmental impacts. Requires submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment, 30-day public consultation, and approval through the National Environment Service.

**Federated States of Micronesia:** EIA is regulated under the *Environmental Protection Act* and enacted by the 1996 EIA Regulations. These mandate EIAs for "major actions" likely to significantly affect the human environment, with procedural steps for early integration, scoping, and public disclosure.

**Fiji:** EIA is governed under the *Environment Management Act 2005* and 2007 EIA Regulations. It features a five-stage process (screening to decision-making), mandatory public hearings, and strong legal enforcement mechanisms.

**Kiribati:** EIA provisions exist within the *Environment Act 1999*, requiring EIAs for designated developments. While details on regulations are limited, public consultations and government review are institutionalised

through established administrative processes.

**Marshall Islands:** Under the *Environmental Protection Act*, EIAs are required for National Environmental Protection Board-designated activities. These must include impact analysis, public consultations, and board approval.

**Nauru:** EIA requirements are embedded in the *Environment Act 1991*, setting standards for significant developments. Projects must undergo environmental screening, data-driven assessments, and government review.

**Niue:** EIA is mandated under the *Environment Act 2004*, requiring developers to conduct EIAs on major projects with environmental impact potential, followed by public consultation and ministerial approval.

**Palau:** Guided by the *Environment Quality Protection Act*, EIAs are compulsory for substantial developments. Provisions include public hearings, transparency mechanisms, and review by environmental boards.

**Papua New Guinea:** Administered under the *Environment Act 2000*, developers must submit EIAs for prescribed activities. Evaluations and public consultations are overseen by the Department of Environment and Conservation.

**Samoa:** The *Planning and Urban Management Act 2004* and subsequent regulations require EIAs for specified developments. The process includes scoping, impact assessment, and ministerial review.

**Solomon Islands:** EIA requirements are specified in the *Environment Act 1998*. Major projects undergo screening, environmental assessments, and principal secretary approval, with community consultation encouraged.

**Tonga:** EIA is governed by the *Environmental Impact Assessment Act 2003* (No. 16 of 2003) and implemented through 2010 Regulations. EIAs are required for all “major projects” listed in the Schedule, with mandatory assessments, public notifications, inter-agency review by the Environmental Assessment Committee, and approval by the Minister.

**Tuvalu:** Under the *Environmental Conservation and Management Act 1996*, EIAs are required for designated activities. The process includes environmental screening, public consultation, and government decision-making.

**Vanuatu:** The *Environmental Management and Conservation Act 2002* requires EIAs for projects that may significantly affect the environment. Provisions include screening, scoping, public participation, and decision-making through the Environmental Protection Agency.

157. SPC, as a regional organisation with long-standing and formalised working relationships with these governments, will ensure that all activities implemented under the Co:Lab comply with relevant national laws and policies. This will be achieved through the following mechanisms:

- **Alignment with country-level legal requirements and approvals**, including EIA regulations, customary land use protocols, and any protected area designations; and
- **Collaboration with Designated Authorities (DAs) and relevant ministries** to validate project compliance with national priorities and safeguards.

## SPC Social and Environmental Responsibility Policy

**158.** SPC’s SER Policy provides the framework, including guiding principles, for SPC to ethically and sustainably manage social and environmental risks and impacts of all its activities. This will be done in an inclusive, PCA manner to maximise whole-of-society benefits (see [This Gender and Social Inclusion \(GESI\) Analysis and associated Gender Action Plan was completed through a desk review of the legal and policy framework and publicly available gender data pertinent to this assessment. Overall, there continues to be several significant gaps in gender-disaggregated data and gender-specific metrics for the Pacific. To account for this, the programme will implement strong stakeholder engagement throughout the programme cycle, ensuring that stakeholders across groups are meaningfully consulted and sufficiently informed both prior to and during programme implementation.](#)

~~158.—Gender Analysis and Assessment This Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) Analysis and associated Gender Action Plan was completed through a desk review of the legal and policy framework and publicly available gender data pertinent to this assessment. Overall, there continues to be several significant gaps in gender disaggregated data and gender-specific metrics for the Pacific. To account for this, the programme will implement strong stakeholder engagement throughout the programme cycle, ensuring that stakeholders across groups are meaningfully consulted and sufficiently informed both prior to and during programme implementation.~~

159. ~~Gender Analysis and Assessment~~). The intent of this policy is to help SPC in:

- identifying, assessing and managing social and environmental risks, impacts or opportunities in all SPC activities and projects;
- improving existing practices in the implementation of other relevant SPC policies;
- strengthening the involvement of staff and all stakeholders' in defining and implementing social and environmental performance standards; and
- meeting the International Finance Corporation (IFC)'s Environmental and Social Performance Standards.
- This policy is implemented through an SER action plan and integrated coherently with all other relevant SPC policies, including its human resources, financial, and monitoring and evaluation policies.
- SPC is committed to improving its social and environmental responsibility along three pillars: people, operations and programmes.

160. **People.** SPC is committed to providing its staff with a workplace that promotes diversity and inclusion, guarantees equal rights, and provides for a safe, healthy and dynamic working environment. SPC is committed to the prevention of abuse and to the well-being of members, children, vulnerable adults and their families.

161. **Operations.** SPC is committed to being a responsible organisation in the fight against climate change and biodiversity loss and in the protection of the environment. SPC will endeavour to reduce its own environmental and carbon footprint with the ultimate goal of achieving carbon neutrality and zero waste. To this end, SPC will implement a robust in-house climate and environmental responsibility framework, and ensure that relevant policies are adapted to reflect this approach, including the greening of its procurement and travel policies.

162. **Programmes.** SPC is committed to supporting programmes and projects to deliver activities that maximise social benefits and minimise environmental degradation. SPC aims to prevent or, where not possible, mitigate any significant or unjustified impacts on the environment, or negative social impacts, such as those that affect gender equality or human rights.

163. To this end, SPC has a robust ESMS to screen and appraise its activities through a dynamic and continuous process supported by management. The ESMS includes tools, methodologies and guidelines that are applied in a consistent and supportive manner with SPC's integrated programmatic approach. Overall, SPC is committed to achieving the following outcomes:

1. All activities, programmes and projects are subject to a risk categorisation exercise through a screening process, which is operationalised through the SER action plan.
2. Where risks are identified in the light of the SER screening process, activities, programmes and projects are assessed for the magnitude of potential social and environmental risks.
3. Against these risks and potential impacts, social and environmental mitigation measures are proposed and included in the formulation of the project and its activities, and monitored throughout the life of the project.

4. Staff are trained in the identification and assessment of social and environmental risks and impacts, as well as in the implementation of mitigation measures.
5. Openness and transparency are maintained with affected communities or stakeholders who are engaged in the identification of risks and impacts and who can express their concerns through a grievance mechanism.

**The SPC Co:Lab follows SPC's ESMS and ensures compliance with the Adaptation Fund ESP.**

## **Adaptation Fund Environmental and Social Policy**

163. This ESMS is designed to be fully compliant with the Adaptation Fund's overall environmental and social framework as outlined in its operational policies and guidance.

This comprises the following elements as they relate to the Adaptation Fund:

- The Adaptation Fund's ESP, including its 15 Environmental and Social Principles;
- The Gender Policy and Action Plan, which ensures that projects are designed and implemented in a gender-responsive manner;
- The Adaptation Fund's guidance on stakeholder engagement, including principles of transparency, participation, and inclusivity, particularly with respect to vulnerable and marginalised populations;
- The commitment to prevent and respond to SEAH in all activities supported by the Adaptation Fund;
- Consideration of the rights and roles of indigenous peoples in line with the Adaptation Fund's guidance on respecting traditional knowledge, participation, and FPIC where applicable;
- Promotion of environmental, social, economic, and development co-benefits through funded interventions;
- A systematic approach to addressing gender equality, promoting equal opportunities, and ensuring that women and men benefit equitably from Adaptation Fund activities; and
- Encouragement of the active involvement of relevant stakeholders, particularly those most vulnerable to climate change, throughout the project cycle.

164. As the RIE, SPC shall undertake all necessary measures to ensure that activities are implemented in such a manner that:

- Ensures that environmental and social management plans, and all measures to mitigate and manage environmental and social risks and impacts and to improve outcomes are implemented, monitored and continuously improved; and
- Ensures that progress and performance are monitored and reported to the Adaptation Fund and its stakeholders throughout the implementation of the Adaptation Fund-financed activities, in accordance with the monitoring and accountability framework and allowing Adaptation Fund or Adaptation Fund-authorized third-party verification of such reports.

165. In addition, SPC will:

- confirm that the measures to manage environmental and social risks and impacts, including, as relevant, information disclosure, stakeholder engagement, and grievance redress, are incorporated in the agreements with executing entities including tendering documents and contracts;

- take all necessary measures to ensure the compliance with all applicable laws, including the laws, regulations, and standards of the country in which the activities are located, and/or obligations of the country or countries directly applicable to the activities under relevant international treaties and agreements (all of these will be reflected in the agreements with the executing entities); and
- undertake all necessary measures to ensure that the communities affected or potentially affected by the activities (including vulnerable populations, local communities, groups and individuals including women, children, people with disabilities, people marginalised by virtue of their sexual orientation and gender identity, indigenous peoples and other marginalised groups of people and individuals) are properly consulted in a manner that facilitates the inclusion of local knowledge in the design of the activities, provides them with opportunities to express their views on risks, impacts and mitigation measures related to the activities, and allows the accredited entities to consider and respond to their concerns.

**The sub-projects under the SPC Co:Lab, as supported by SPC, will similarly comply with the Adaptation Fund’s ESP and SPC’s SER Policy.**

## Environmental and Social Impact and Risk Indicative Analysis

### Programme-Level E&S Impact Analysis

166. This section provides an assessment of the anticipated environmental and social impacts associated with the Co:Lab at the programme level. While individual sub-projects will undergo their own safeguards screening and assessment, this analysis identifies potential risks and opportunities inherent in the facility’s design, operational model, and priority sectors. The purpose is to ensure that upstream risk mitigation measures are embedded across the programme lifecycle, in line with the AF ES Policy. [In line with the Adaptation Fund’s ESP, the project acknowledges that Principles 1 \(Compliance with the Law\), 4 \(Human Rights\), and 6 \(Core Labour Rights\) always apply, and monitoring measures have been integrated accordingly.](#)

Table 18. Environmental and Social Impacts and Risks.

AF E&S Principle	Further assessment required for compliance	Potential impacts and risks – further assessment and management required for compliance
<i>Compliance with the Law</i>	No further actions required beyond on-going risk monitoring	<b>No-Low risk.</b> <a href="#">While the project will ensure compliance with the relevant national environmental laws and regulations in the 14 participating Pacific SIDS, there is some risk of inconsistency in enforcement and institutional capacity across countries, particularly in relation to environmental protection, land use, and water resources. To address this, The project will ensure compliance with the relevant environmental national laws and regulations in the 14 participating Pacific SIDS related to environmental protection, land use, and water resources. The the project will be implemented in close collaboration and regular coordination with relevant government authorities. Development and delivery of targeted capacity-building for project implementers will ensure ESS compliance, and legal compliance checks will be integrated in project MEL systems.</a>

		<p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Conduct regular ESS compliance checks through SPC's ESMS. Applicants must demonstrate alignment with national technical standards and legal frameworks during co-design (Activity 1.1.3).</p>
<i>Access and Equity</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) Action Plan and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to Annex I.</b></p> <p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Systemic inequities in the Pacific, including limited access to finance, decision-making, and services for women, youth, persons with disabilities, and those in remote areas, may create barriers to equitable participation in innovation activities. While the Co:Lab incorporates inclusion safeguards and locally led approaches, there remains a moderate risk that structural exclusion or digital divides (e.g., access to internet or climate information) will persist, especially in rural or outer island contexts. The programme mitigates this risk through inclusive stakeholder engagement, accessible application processes, and targeted outreach to women's groups and CSOs</p> <p><b>Mitigation measures:</b> Apply inclusive screening criteria (Activity 1.1.2), ensure transparent selection, require GESI plan in proposals (Activity 1.1.3), and track beneficiary participation using disaggregated data (Activity 1.1.5).</p>
<i>Marginalised and Vulnerable Groups</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of GESI Action Plan and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to Annex I.</b></p> <p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Vulnerable groups - including women with disabilities, single mothers, LGBTQ+ individuals, and subsistence-based rural households - face layered disadvantages in resilience and innovation participation. The Gender Annex acknowledges these intersecting vulnerabilities, particularly in relation to informal economies, unpaid care burdens, and gendered impacts of climate disasters. Although the Co:Lab integrates safeguards and intends to include diverse participants in co-design and implementation, the risk of underrepresentation or unintended exclusion remains unless active accompaniment and targeted support are sustained.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Applicants must demonstrate inclusive engagement (Activity 1.1.3), include vulnerability-disaggregated indicators, and submit proposals reviewed by the SER team (Activities 1.1.4, 1.1.5).</p>
<i>Human Rights</i>	No further actions required <u>beyond</u> implementation of the GESI Action Plan and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to Annex I.</b></p> <p><b>No-Low risk.</b> <u>While the project design follows a rights-based and people-centred approach, that is respecting freedom of association, non-discrimination, and equitable access to resources, there is some risk that uneven application across diverse cultural and institutional contexts in the 14 participating Pacific SIDS could affect the consistent protection of rights. In particular, risks may arise if vulnerable or marginalised groups are not fully engaged or if free, prior, and informed consent processes are not uniformly upheld.</u></p>

		<p><del>To address this, The project design follows a rights-based and people-centred approach, respecting freedom of association, non-discrimination, and access to resources.</del></p> <p>Meaningful community engagement and free, prior, and informed consent are ensured throughout the project life cycle.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Promote rights-based design through co-design support (Activity 1.1.3) and technical clinics (Activity 2.1.3). Ensure screening criteria incorporate human rights considerations.</p>
<i>Gender Equity and Women's Empowerment</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of the GESI Action Plan and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to Annex I.</b></p> <p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Persistent gender gaps in leadership, land tenure, economic participation, and digital access create a moderate risk that women's voices may be overlooked, or their contributions undervalued in innovation contexts. While the Co:Lab leverages SPC's Gender Flagship and FIT programme to promote gender-responsive innovations, it relies heavily on implementing partners to carry out GESI commitments, which may vary in capacity. The programme addresses this through a structured GESI Action Plan, targeted mentoring, and MEL systems that go beyond participation counts to track influence, benefits, and leadership outcomes.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Evaluate project pitches according to priorities criteria including gender equality and women's leadership (Activity 1.1.2); require gender action plans in all proposals (Activity 1.1.3), prioritise women-led initiatives (Activity 1.1.2), and track gender-specific outcomes (Activity 1.1.5).</p>
<i>Core Labour Rights</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>Low risk.</b> The project will comply with regional and national employment laws and regulations and will respect, promote, and realise in good faith the principles of the ILO Labour Standards also in accordance with SPC Policy and the People-Centred Approach. Employment of local labour during construction or maintenance may expose workers to occupational health and safety (OHS) risks and informal labour practices or labour rights violations could occur without contractor oversight. The SER Team will screen proposals against the following: Project activities will ensure that they do not violate labour laws in relation to project management specific to recruitment of human resources to support project delivery and implementation; and any contracts for recruited staff will ensure that they align with national labour standards and ensure competitive salaries and packages are offered. Compliance will be monitored annually in accordance with the project's MEL system.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Require compliance with national labour laws (Activity 1.1.4); and enable grievance redress through SPC systems.</p>
<i>Indigenous Peoples</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of the GESI Action Plan and	<p><b>Low risk.</b> There is no universally accepted or internationally agreed upon definition of 'indigenous peoples' (UNDP, 2021; GCF, 2018; AF, 2013; IFC, 2012). In the particular context of</p>

	on-going risk monitoring.	<p>most Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the majority of the population and the dominant sociocultural or ethnic group is native to the island country or territory. That is: they are indigenous to the land, and they are the 'local communities'. In this context, the terms 'communities' and 'beneficiaries' are synonymous to 'Indigenous Peoples'. The anticipated project benefits, co-benefits, opportunities, and mitigated risks for communities or beneficiaries are de facto anticipated benefits, co-benefits, opportunities, and mitigated risks for indigenous people. The project's existing mechanisms for stakeholder engagement and community consultations fulfil the intended purpose of the FPIC. Respect for customary land ownership and cultural practices is critical, hence a culturally-sensitive and people-centred approach will be adopted in the project.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Require FPIC during co-design (Activity 1.1.3); SER team ensures cultural appropriateness; consult Indigenous communities as part of proposal development.</p>
<i>Involuntary Resettlement</i>	No further actions required beyond on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>No risk.</b> The project and sub-projects are not anticipated to cause inadvertent physical or economic displacement of target communities. Involuntary resettlement is under the exclusionary criteria for project selection, hence loss of shelter, assets, or access to assets that lead to loss of income sources or other means of livelihood is not a likely impact.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Prohibit any activity requiring involuntary resettlement (as per exclusionary activities). Require land tenure verification as part of co-design (Activity 1.1.3).</p>
<i>Protection of Natural Habitats</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Moderate risk.</b> There is some risk that project and sub-project activities may unintentionally degrade critical natural habitats. The project will support the protection of natural habitats through promoting nature and community-based solutions, any potential of sub-projects to directly or indirectly impact upon natural or critical habitats will be identified at the ESS risk screening stage as outlined in the ESMS. Implementation of risk mitigation measures and ESS compliance will be monitored and reported on the project and sub-project level, as incorporated in the MEL system.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Exclude high-risk (Cat A) proposals (Activity 1.1.2). Require ESMPs for low-risk (Cat C) and medium-risk (Cat B) proposals (Activity 1.1.4). Use SER checklist to assess ecosystem impacts.</p>
<i>Conservation of Biological Diversity</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Low risk.</b> It is not anticipated that project and sub-project activities will lead to a loss in biological diversity or introduction of known invasive species. The project will comply with any National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans, ensuring alignment and contribution to the protection of countries' biological and natural resources. The sub-projects' ESIA and ESMP will contextualise the policy and evaluate against biological diversity criterion and mitigate risk as needed for specific sites and sub-projects, e.g. an ecological screening may be necessary before water tank installation near bush or coastal vegetation to avoid</p>

		<p>disturbing nesting birds and endemic flora; where pit latrine leakage may contaminate soil invertebrates and micro biodiversity, latrine construction will be avoided in coastal wetlands and require consultations with local environmental officers; and/or where clearing of coastal vegetation for drainage or expansion may affect shoreline biodiversity or erosion processes, ESMPs would be required to minimise mangrove disturbance and avoid crossing turtle nesting zones.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Avoid non-native species introduction; promote biodiversity-sensitive practices through proposal screening (Activity 1.1.4) and technical review.</p>
<i>Climate Change</i>	No further actions required beyond on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Low risk.</b> The project is climate adaptation-focused, explicitly designed to enhance resilience to climate hazards such as sea-level rise, cyclones, and flooding. Its activities are not anticipated to result in any significant or unjustified increase in greenhouse gas emissions or other drivers of climate change. Any agro-forestry and agriculture sub-projects will be small-scale as per exclusionary criteria and are not anticipated to result in large-scale negative impacts on carbon capture and sequestration capacity.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Screen proposals for maladaptation risks (Activity 1.1.4); promote resilience-focused innovations in clinics (Activity 2.1.3).</p>
<i>Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Sub-project construction activities may generate waste, noise, dust, or cause minor pollution if not managed properly. Project and sub-project activities will exercise cost-effectiveness and minimise the use of resources used during implementation – applicable to all sources and forms of energy, water, and other resources and materials inputs. There is some risk of waste production and pollution due to the quantity and diversity of sub-projects, though they are required to be in compliance with national waste management laws including monitoring of ESS compliance, inclusive of pollution prevention and resource efficiency.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> If applicable, proposals must include simple waste management plans (Activity 1.1.3)</p>
<i>Public Health</i>	No further actions required beyond on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Low risk.</b> The project avoids potentially significant negative impacts on public health, hence overall risk to public health is low. Sub-project activities are anticipated to generate minimal, site-specific, largely reversible impact to public health and will comply with national public health laws. A WHO-compliant rapid health impact screening checklist will be integrated in the ESIA and ESS compliance monitoring tools, to determine if a further thorough public health impact assessment and development of a management plan is necessary.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Public health implications assessed in screening (Activity 1.1.4); technical backstopping from SPC divisions (Activity 1.1.5)</p>
<i>Physical and Cultural Heritage</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk	<p><b>Low risk.</b> Project and sub-project activities will not be implemented around physical heritage sites, and will not permanently interfere with communities' existing access and</p>

	monitoring.	<p>use of such physical and cultural resources. They will be designed and implemented in a way that avoids the alteration, damage, or removal of any physical cultural resources and sites with unique natural values recognised as such at the community, national or international level. The sub-project ESS screenings will identify the presence of cultural heritage in or near the project, and if cultural heritage exists, a risk assessment will be conducted to analyse the potential for impacting cultural heritage, and the measures to mitigate the risk. Consultations will be undertaken with village, community leaders and nobles to ensure that project activities will not directly involve any preserved and cultural heritage sites.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Applicants must identify culturally sensitive sites (Activity 1.1.3); project spoiling cultural heritage are excluded</p>
<i>Lands and Soil Conservation</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Moderate risk.</b> The project promotes ecosystem-based approaches and the inclusion of soil conservation practices in design of land-based sub-projects. While the screening criteria exclude activities which explicitly target or require the use of soil, there is small risk of roads renovation and water tank installations having an impact on the soil and land surrounding the sites or facilities. Site-specific assessments and regular ESS compliance monitoring will be conducted particularly for infrastructure and WASH sub-projects, to ensure no negative impacts on land and soil. This will include ecological studies that account for the identification of fragile soils, to inform the final detailed design and to identify any additional site-specific impacts.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Encourage use of nature-based solutions and proper site design during proposal co-development (Activity 1.1.3).</p>

## Programme-Level E&S Risk Categorisation

167. This section categorises the anticipated environmental and social risks associated with each outcome of the SPC Co:Lab in line with the Adaptation Fund’s ESP and SPC’s ESMS. Based on the typologies of anticipated sub-projects, such as early-stage adaptation pilots, community-based solutions, or nature-based innovations, the Co:Lab is preliminarily categorised as Category B under the Adaptation Fund’s risk categorisation system.

Table 19. Risk Categorisation by Outcome.

Component/Outcome	Risk Categorisation
<p><b>Outcome 1: Innovative, locally led adaptation solutions are identified, de-risked, and refined through targeted incubation support</b></p>	<p><b>Category B – Moderate Risk</b></p> <p>This outcome includes both upstream activities (e.g., technical support, mentoring, and proposal co-design) and <b>pilot implementation of adaptation innovations</b> via small grants (USD 25,000–75,000). These Unidentified Sub-Projects (USPs) will be selected through a competitive and inclusive process. While most interventions are expected to be small in scale and low in impact, some may involve moderate, site-specific, and reversible environmental and social risks (e.g., minor infrastructure, natural resource use, or social exclusion risks).</p>

Component/Outcome	Risk Categorisation
	<p>All sub-projects will undergo screening and risk categorisation in accordance with the ESMS. High-risk (Category A) activities are explicitly excluded. All other sub-projects classified as either Low (Category C) or Moderate (Category B) will require an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). Category B project will also require an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)</p> <p>Given the inclusion of implementation activities and potential for moderate risks, Outcome 1 is assessed as <b>Category B – Moderate Risk</b>.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 2:</b> Adaptation innovations are scaled up, resulting in increased climate resilience of communities and systems through expanded implementation</p>	<p><b>Category B – Moderate Risk</b></p> <p>This outcome supports the scale-up of high-potential innovations through follow-on funding (up to USD 250,000) and technical assistance. Activities may include nature-based solutions, resilient infrastructure, or technology deployment. While expected risks are still moderate and manageable, they are likely to be more diverse and may involve greater spatial scale than those under Outcome 1.</p> <p>All projects will be screened and categorised under the ESMS. All projects will require ESMPs. Outcome 2 is assessed as <b>Category B – Moderate Risk</b>.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 3:</b> Knowledge, evidence, and learning from innovative adaptation practices are systematically captured and disseminated</p>	<p><b>Category C – Low Risk</b></p> <p>Outcome 3 includes activities such as peer learning, knowledge exchange, communications, and innovation-to-investment matchmaking. These are not expected to have any direct environmental or social impacts. Potential minor risks (e.g., exclusion of vulnerable groups in regional dialogues) will be addressed through inclusive facilitation and targeted outreach. As no physical interventions are foreseen, Outcome 3 is assessed as <b>Category C – Low Risk</b>.</p>

168. While the programme does not present any significant or large-scale risks, screening indicates that several AF ESP principles are triggered at moderate or low levels—particularly those related to access and equity, inclusion of vulnerable groups, labour and working conditions, biodiversity, and pollution prevention. In response, the programme integrates targeted mitigation measures guided by the ESMS and GAAP. These include inclusive project selection criteria, compliance monitoring, transparent beneficiary engagement, and safeguards to protect environmental health and community wellbeing. Risk levels will be regularly reviewed during implementation to ensure continued compliance with the Adaptation Fund’s ESP and Gender Policy.

## Concordance Matrix

169. The matrix below demonstrates the functional equivalence between the **SPC ESMS** specifically the **SER Screening Tool** and the **15 Environmental and Social Principles** of the Adaptation Fund’s ESP. The SER Screening Tool comprises 27 targeted risk screening questions, each systematically mapped to one or more of the AF ESP principles. The tool enables early identification and characterisation of environmental and social risks, using criteria such as likelihood, intensity, duration, reversibility, and geographic scale. This risk analysis informs project categorisation (A, B, or C) and determines the need for development of an ESIA/ ESMP.

170. The matrix confirms that SPC’s system:

- Fully addresses all 15 AF ESP principles, including those related to gender equality, Indigenous Peoples, human rights, and natural habitats;
- Provides for risk-based screening, categorisation, and management of both identified and

unidentified sub-projects;

- Includes safeguards such as stakeholder consultation, public disclosure, and grievance redress mechanisms; and
- Ensures that no activities inconsistent with the ESP are eligible for support.

This concordance supports SPC’s ability to manage environmental and social risks in accordance with Adaptation Fund policy and good international practice.

Table 20. Concordance Matrix: SPC SER Screening Tool against AF ES Principles.

AF E&S Principle	SPC SER Screening Tool
<p><b>Principle 1: Compliance with the Law.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall be in compliance with all applicable domestic and international law. The IE will ensure that the project/programme will comply with applicable domestic and international law.</p>	<p>Applied across the entire tool; risks and impacts are characterised by likelihood, intensity, duration, and reversibility. Risk localisation is indicated on a local, national, and global level, hence remedial actions to mitigate identified risks are designed to comply with applicable environmental law.</p>
<p><b>Principle 2: Access and Equity.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall provide fair and equitable access to benefits in a manner that is inclusive and does not impede access to basic health services, clean water and sanitation, energy, education, housing, safe and decent working conditions, and land rights. Projects/programmes should not exacerbate existing inequities, particularly with respect to marginalised or vulnerable groups.</p>	<p>(5) <i>Impacts on Affected Communities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any risk that populations perceive they did not receive enough opportunities to raise their concerns regarding the project?</li> <li>• Is there a risk that the project would create or exacerbate conflicts with or within affected populations?</li> </ul> <p>(6) <i>Gender</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would the project potentially limit women’s ability to access or use natural resources upon which they depend for a livelihood?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 3: Marginalised and Vulnerable Groups.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall avoid imposing any disproportionate adverse impacts on marginalised and vulnerable groups. In screening any proposed project/programme, the implementing entities shall assess and consider particular impacts on marginalised and vulnerable groups.</p>	<p>(4) <i>Human Rights</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the project likely to create less favourable treatment of, or discrimination against, any person or group?</li> <li>• Is the project likely to increase the risk to people with disability (physical, hearing, visual, intellectual and sensory impairments)?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 4: Human Rights.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall respect and where applicable promote international human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 10 December 1948 provides a common standard of achievements for all peoples and all nations by setting out fundamental human rights to be universally protected.</p>	<p>(4) <i>Human Rights</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the project likely to negatively impact on the human rights of the affected populations? (e.g. their rights to water, work, health, to a healthy environment, etc.)?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 5: Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall be designed and implemented in such a way that both women and men 1) have equal opportunities to participate as per the Fund gender policy; 2)</p>	<p>(4) <i>Human Rights</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the project likely to increase risks to children or vulnerable adults through interaction with SPC staff and non-staff?</li> </ul> <p>(6) <i>Gender</i></p>

AF E&S Principle	SPC SER Screening Tool
<p>receive comparable social and economic benefits; and 3) do not suffer disproportionate adverse effects during the development process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there a likelihood that the project would have adverse impacts on gender equality, and/or the situation of women and girls?</li> <li>• Have community groups/leaders raised gender equality concerns regarding the project during the stakeholder engagement process?</li> <li>• Is the project likely to increase risks of sexual harassment or sexual exploitation?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 6: Core Labour Rights.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall meet the core labour standards as identified by the International Labour Organisation.</p>	<p><i>(1) Labour and Working Conditions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will the project present unsafe, indecent or unhealthy working conditions for stakeholders involved?</li> <li>• Is there potential for the project to apply adverse discriminatory practices based on religious, racial, gender, disability or political considerations?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 7: Indigenous Peoples.</b> The Fund shall not support projects/programmes that are inconsistent with the rights and responsibilities set forth in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other applicable international instruments relating to indigenous peoples.</p>	<p><i>(8) Natural Resources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the project likely to restrict People's access to natural resources and their means of livelihoods?</li> </ul> <p><i>(9) People's Rights and Tenure</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the project likely to negatively affect Peoples or communities rights: rights of affected populations, including procedural rights such as the right to be consulted or to have access to information, or substantive rights (real or personal) such as the right of access to natural resources or benefit-sharing related to these natural resources (carbon rights, benefits from access to genetic resources ...)?</li> <li>• Could the project require the relocation of Peoples from their homes or lands subject to traditional ownership or customary use?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 8: Involuntary Resettlement.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall be designed and implemented in a way that avoids or minimises the need for involuntary resettlement.</p>	<p><i>(7) Resettlement</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could the project involve the physical relocation of people? (encompassing displacement as well as planned relocation)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 9: Protection of Natural Habitats.</b> The Fund shall not support projects/programmes that would involve unjustified conversion or degradation of critical natural habitats, including those that are (a) legally protected; (b) officially proposed for protection; (c) recognised by authoritative sources for their high conservation value, including as critical habitat; or (d) recognised as protected by traditional or indigenous local communities.</p>	<p><i>(8) Use of Natural Resources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could the project lead to adverse impacts on biodiversity or natural habitat?</li> <li>• Is the project likely to negatively impact a protected area?</li> </ul>

AF E&S Principle	SPC SER Screening Tool
<p><b>Principle 10: Conservation of Biological Diversity.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall be designed and implemented in a way that avoids any significant or unjustified reduction or loss of biological diversity or the introduction of known invasive species.</p>	<p>(8) <i>Natural Resources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the project likely to introduce invasive alien species to the project area?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 11: Climate Change.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall not result in any significant or unjustified increase in greenhouse gas emissions or other drivers of climate change.</p>	<p>(2) <i>Climate Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Could the project adversely contribute to climate change by generating greenhouse gas emissions including through deforestation or forest degradation?</li> <li>Could the project negatively affect the resilience to climate change?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 12: Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall be designed and implemented in a way that meets applicable international standards for maximizing energy efficiency and minimizing material resource use, the production of wastes, and the release of pollutants. The project/programme will minimise the production of waste and the release of pollutants.</p>	<p>(3) <i>Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will the project generate hazardous waste? Is the project likely to lead to environmental damages due to an uncontrolled management of waste?</li> <li>Is the project likely to lead to pollutants release? Are chemicals (including pesticides) likely to be used during the project?</li> </ul> <p>(8) <i>Natural Resources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the project likely to favor unsustainable exploitation of a renewable resource?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 13: Public Health.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall be designed and implemented in a way that avoids potentially significant negative impacts on public health.</p>	<p>(5) <i>Impacts on Affected Communities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the project likely to increase community exposure to disease (water borne, water based, water related and vector borne diseases as well as communicable diseases)?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 14: Physical and Cultural Heritage.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall be designed and implemented in a way that avoids the alteration, damage, or removal of any physical cultural resources, cultural sites, and sites with unique natural values recognised as such at the community, national or international level.</p>	<p>(10) <i>Cultural Heritage</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the project likely to negatively affect cultural heritage?</li> <li>Is the project likely to negatively affect a legally protected cultural heritage area?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 15: Lands and Soil Conservation.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall be designed and implemented in a way that promotes soil conservation and avoids degradation or conversion of productive lands or land that provides valuable ecosystem services.</p>	<p>Risks related to soil degradation, unsustainable land use, and loss of productive lands are captured through screening prompts under (8) <i>Natural Resources</i> and (9) <i>People's Rights and Tenure</i>, particularly where livelihoods and customary use rights may be affected.</p>

## Environmental and Social Management Approach

171. The Co:Lab's risk management approach is integrated into SPC's FiT platform and is designed to screen, monitor, and support small-scale adaptation innovations through a tailored, fit-for-purpose system. Due to the open nature of the innovation grants, specific interventions under Outcomes 1 and 2 are USPs at the time of proposal submission. All USPs will undergo full screening and categorisation before implementation. This ensures robust, risk-responsive ESMS that can adapt to the diverse types of innovation the programme is designed to support.
172. Screening and categorisation process will be undertaken using standardised tools and guidance aligned with SPC's SER Policy and the Adaptation Fund's safeguards by using a harmonised tool (see Appendix II-1), that will result in a risk classification (Category B or C) for each investment. No Category A (high-risk) investments will be supported under this programme. While the exact location, scale, and nature of sub-projects are currently unknown, they are likely to involve low to moderate environmental and social risks that are site-specific, temporary, and manageable. To manage risks effectively, the following measures have been integrated into the programme design:
- **Screening and Risk Categorisation:** All innovation proposals will undergo initial E&S risk screening conducted by the PMU, using SPC's ESMS tools and checklists. Proposals will be categorised as A, B, or C based on their scale, context, and potential environmental and social risks. Risk categorisation will determine the level of assessment, review, and safeguards required. Both Category B and Category C proposals will require ESMPs, with the scope proportionate to their risks: Category B sub-projects will require detailed site-based ESMPs (informed by ESIA where necessary), while Category C sub-projects will require simplified ESMPs documenting compliance with national technical standards and any minor mitigation measures.
  - **Proposal Support and Safeguards Integration:** During the co-design phase, the PMU supported by SPC's SER team and relevant technical divisions will provide tailored support to applicants to identify risks, apply mitigation measures, and integrate appropriate safeguards into project design. Proposals must include ESMPs proportionate to the risks, outlining mitigation actions, institutional responsibilities, monitoring indicators, and grievance redress procedures.
  - **Capacity Strengthening:** The programme includes dedicated capacity-building for grantees on environmental and social safeguards, risk mitigation, gender and social inclusion, and the use of SPC's screening and planning templates. Technical clinics and direct mentoring will help ensure applicants understand and apply the ESMS requirements throughout project development and implementation.
  - **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning:** The PMU will lead the monitoring of E&S safeguards implementation through the programme's MEL system, with technical backstopping from SPC's technical divisions. E&S indicators will be integrated into the performance monitoring framework, including disaggregated data by gender, age, and disability. Regular site visits, spot checks, and consultations with communities will be conducted to verify implementation and foster adaptive learning.
  - **Grievance Redress Mechanism:** A robust grievance redress mechanism is in place at SPC, accessible to all stakeholders – including community members, innovation teams, and partners – who wish to raise concerns related to the programme's environmental or social performance. Information on SPC's institutional mechanism is publicly available at [spc.int/accountability](http://spc.int/accountability).

## Risk Categorisation

173. All sub-projects under the Climate Innovation Co:Lab will be subject to environmental and social screening, categorisation, and risk management procedures aligned with the AF ESP and SPC's SER Policy. Categorisation is based on the nature, scale, location, and reversibility of potential environmental and social risks. The Adaptation Fund's classification system is summarised below:

<b>Risk Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Category A</b>	Activities with potentially significant adverse environmental and/or social risks and impacts that are diverse, irreversible, or unprecedented.
<b>Category B</b>	Activities with potential adverse environmental and/or social risks and impacts that are generally limited, site-specific, reversible, and readily mitigated through standard mitigation measures.
<b>Category C</b>	Activities with minimal or no adverse environmental and/or social risks and impacts.

174. All sub-projects will be pre-screened using SPC's SER Screening Tool. Based on the results:

- Category A sub-projects are not eligible for support under the Co:Lab due to the high-risk nature of their impacts.
- Category B sub-projects will require the preparation of a fit-for-purpose ESIA and ESMP. These must:
  - Align with national environmental impact assessment legislation;
  - Demonstrate consistency with applicable IFC Performance Standards;
  - Include meaningful stakeholder consultations, including with women, persons with disabilities, and Indigenous or marginalised groups, in accordance with the principle of FPIC, where relevant.
- Category C sub-projects will also require a simplified ESMP. This will confirm compliance with national technical standards, document the screening outcome, and integrate any necessary minor mitigation measures. Site-specific ESIA will generally not be required upfront, but sub-projects must:
  - Comply with national regulatory requirements;
  - Adhere to AF and SPC safeguards policies; and
  - Conduct site-level reviews if new information, concerns, or unanticipated risks arise during implementation.

175. SPC and the regional PMU will retain decision-making authority over risk classification. All sub-project categorisation decisions, screening forms, and risk management instruments will be retained for audit and reported annually through the PPR.

## Screening Process

176. All sub-projects under the Climate Innovation Co:Lab will undergo a two-phase screening and risk management process.

### Phase 1 – Incubation: Identification and Co-Design

#### Initial Screening and Exclusion Filter

All Project Pitches will be screened by SPC against:

- SER Screening Assessment aligned with SPC's SER Policy and Adaptation Fund's 15 ESP Principles;
- SPC's SER Policy and relevant national regulatory frameworks;

- An Exclusion List to ensure that no ineligible or high-risk (Category A) activities are supported.

Sub-projects will be provisionally categorised as:

- Category C – Low/negligible environmental/social risk (requiring ESMP)
- Category B – Moderate environmental/social risk (requiring ESIA and ESMP)
- Category A – High environmental/social risk (not eligible for funding under this programme)

#### Go/No Go Decision

Screening results will be documented and reviewed by the PMU and Appraisal Committee. Based on risk level, legal considerations, and safeguard triggers, a Go/No Go recommendation will be provided prior to co-design or implementation. For Category B projects, additional due diligence will be triggered.

#### **Phase 2 – Acceleration: Scaling of Incubated Project**

##### Due Diligence Requirements for Category B Sub-Projects

For Category B projects (selected under Components 1 or 2), the following due diligence requirements will apply:

- Detailed site-based ESIA and ESMP, prepared by the proponent with support from SPC's PMU (if required).
- Community consultations, including FPIC processes.
- Review of contractor labour practices, to ensure alignment with IFC PS2 and relevant national legislation.
- Assessment of biodiversity or ecosystem sensitivity, and preparation of a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) where applicable (aligned with IFC PS6).

##### Due Diligence Requirements for Category C Sub-projects

For Category C projects (selected under Components 1 or 2), which are expected to have minimal or no adverse environmental and social risks, the following due diligence requirements will apply:

- Simplified ESMP prepared by the proponent with support from SPC's PMU (if required)
- Basic stakeholder consultations with affected communities, ensuring activities are socially inclusive and consistent with national engagement practices.
- Verification of national regulatory compliance, such as building permits, water quality standards, or other technical approvals relevant to the activity.
- Monitoring and reporting streamlined to focus on confirming continued compliance and capturing any unexpected impacts during implementation.

##### Integration into Project Agreements and Reporting

All funded sub-projects will incorporate relevant E&S provisions into their implementation agreements, including:

- Compliance with approved ESMPs and mitigation plans;
- Grievance redress mechanisms at both local and programme level;
- Roles and timelines for E&S monitoring, reporting, and mid-cycle learning reviews.

Environmental and social performance will be documented annually through the PPR.

## Disclosure Procedure

177. All sub-project safeguard instruments (ESMPs and where applicable ESIA) will be disclosed publicly at least 30 days prior to final approval. Documents will be made available in English and relevant local languages, in accessible formats. Disclosure will take place through multiple channels, including national government websites, SPC and Adaptation Fund portals, and community-level access points such as local offices and/or cultural centres. Proponents must demonstrate that affected communities had a meaningful opportunity to access and respond to the information. This disclosure procedure applies to all sub-projects.

## Grievance Redress Mechanism

178. The objectives of the GRM for the Co:Lab programme are to:

- provide stakeholders with a clear process for providing comment and raising grievances and concerns in an anonymous manner;
- structure and manage the handling of comments, responses, and grievances in a timely manner; and,
- ensure that comments, responses, and grievances are handled in a fair and transparent manner and in line with local and national policies.

179. The GRM serves as an effective tool for early identification, assessment and resolution of grievances and therefore for strengthening accountability to beneficiaries. It is also a feedback mechanism to improve project impact and respond to concerns and grievances of project-affected parties (e.g. related to the environmental and social performance of the project) in a timely manner.

180. All grievances will be closely monitored by SPC to assess the number and type of grievances and evaluate any trends over time. This will be conducted by the relevant responsible parties as highlighted under SPC's policies for accountability<sup>47</sup>. All monitoring and reporting will be carried out conforming to confidentiality and consent from aggrieved parties or survivors.

## SPC Grievance Redress Mechanism

181. SPC has a GRM in place to ensure that complaints are being promptly reviewed and addressed by the responsible units (see <https://www.spc.int/accountability>). This process aims to address complaints from affected stakeholders, including communities, about the social and/or environmental performance of the project, and to take measures to redress the situation, where necessary. Project stakeholders have to be properly informed that SPC has such a mechanism established, and how they can access to it to settle their grievance.

182. The SPC GRM is operated through a web-hosted page on SPC site for the expression of concerns or complaints, which can be posted by email with the information in using the complaints' template ([Grievance Submission Form](#)). Further information and instructions can be found on the [SPC GRM Information Document](#).

It is also possible to submit grievances by post to the headquarters or one of the regional offices:

<b>SPC Headquarters</b> 95 Promenade Roger Laroque BP D5, 98848 Noumea Cedex New Caledonia	<b>SPC Suva Regional Office</b> Private Mail Bag Suva Fiji
---	---

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.spc.int/accountability>

<p><b>SPC Micronesia Regional Office</b>          PO Box Q Suite 301, One World Plaza          Kapwaresou Street          Kolonia, Pohnpei 96941 Federated States of Micronesia</p>	<p><b>SPC Melanesia Regional Office</b>          PO Box 6248, Port Vila, Vanuatu          PO Box 1468, Honiara, Solomon Islands          (Project Support Unit)</p>
<p><b>SPC Polynesia Regional Office</b>          Level 4 – O. G. Sanft Building          P.O Box 3524          Nuku'alofa, Tonga</p>	

183. Concerns expressed shall be treated internally primarily by the division in charge of the project or transferred to the executive level if complaints are related to sensitive issues. Complaints received by the institutional GRM at [complaints@spc.int](mailto:complaints@spc.int) will be acknowledged within 5 business days, and the indicative timeframe for resolution of a complaint is within ninety (90) calendar days.

184. SPC is committed to receiving any concerns or grievances from an affected community, about the environmental and social plans or performance of any SPC project or sub-project.

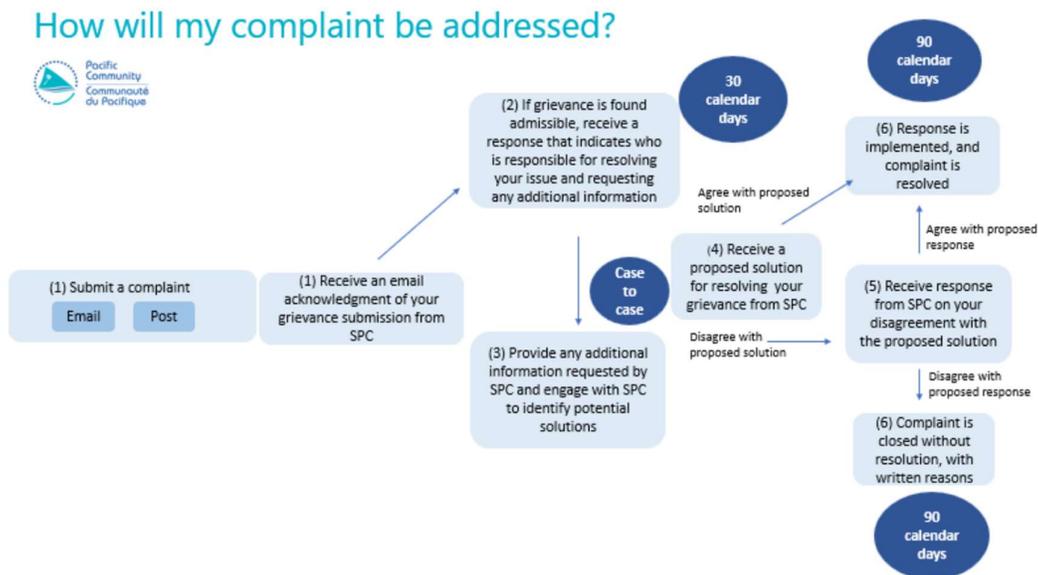


Figure 8. SPC GRM Process.

## Adaptation Fund Ad hoc Complaint Handling Mechanism

185. While the SPC GRM should be the first point of entry for any complaints under the Co:Lab programme, the Ad hoc Complaint Handling Mechanism (ACHM) of the Adaptation Fund can be directly used in cases where the Parties have failed to reach a mutually satisfactory solution through the implementing entities' grievance mechanism within a year.

### 186. How to Submit a Complaint

**Format.** No specific form/format is required, but a complaint must be submitted in writing in any UN language (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian or Spanish) either (1) by email to [afcomplaints@adaptation-fund.org](mailto:afcomplaints@adaptation-fund.org) or (2) by hard copy to the Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat, 1818 H Street NW, N6-600, Washington, DC 20433, USA.

**Standing.** Any individual or group of two or more people who lives in the project area and believe they are adversely affected by the implementation of projects or programmes funded by the Fund, or their duly appointed representative can submit a written complaint to the ACHM.

**Time of submission.** Complaints can be sent up to the date of the submission of the final evaluation report of the project concerned.

**Confidentiality.** If complainants or their representative(s) believe that there may be a present or future risk of retaliation for raising their concerns, they can request confidentiality of their identifying information in a written complaint or in a writing at any time throughout the process.

**Required contents of a written complaint.** Please view a sample form of a complaint [here](#).

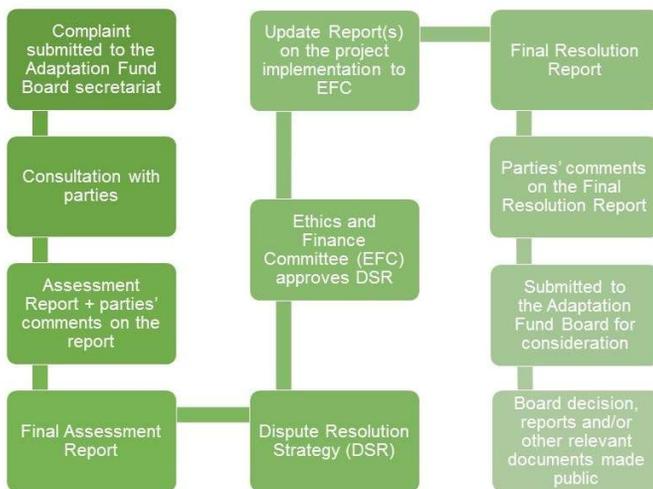


Figure 9. AF ACHM Process.

**ACHM Process.** The ACHM process may start after the complainants and the implementing entity have used the entity's grievance mechanism and failed to reach a solution within a year. The process may be discontinued at any stage should a solution be found or the case be closed for other reasons.

## Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and/or Harassment

187. In all situations involving complaints related to GBV and SEAH, the relevant grievance redress mechanism will take on survivor-centred approach. This will apply to all grievance address mechanisms controlled by SPC or the PMU. The following principles will be systemically applied through all steps and actions:

- The rights, needs, and wishes of the survivor is the foremost priority of everyone involved with the project.
- The survivor has a right to: be treated with dignity and respect instead of being exposed to victim-blaming attitudes; choose the course of action in dealing with the violence instead of feeling powerless; privacy and confidentiality instead of exposure; non-discrimination instead of discrimination based on gender, age, race/ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation or any other characteristic; receive comprehensive information to help her or him make their own decision instead of being told what to do; and a translator, for the language that the survivor feels more comfortable with in the case that further details are required.
- The safety of the survivor shall always be ensured. Potential risks to the survivor will be identified and action take to ensure the survivor's safety and to prevent further harm including ensuring that the alleged perpetrator does not have contact with the survivor. If the survivor is an employee of the Project, reasonable adjustments may be made to the survivor's work schedule and work environment to ensure their safety.
- All actions should reflect the choices of the survivor.

- All information related to the case must be kept confidential and identities protected. Only those who have a role in the response to an allegation should receive case-level information, and then only for a clearly stated purpose and with the survivor’s consent. This applies to any documentation or reports related to the case. Identities will not be revealed unless explicit written consent is provided by the survivor.
  - The survivor must provide informed consent to progress with each stage of the complaints process. Survivors may withdraw their consent at any time during the process.
188. In the case that a case of SEAH or GBV is submitted, SPC as the RIE will carry out duty of care to the survivor in line with its policies. This includes where relevant, support for the provision of medical services (including psychosocial support), legal counsel, community driven protection measures, and reintegration of the survivor. These mechanisms will ensure consistency with the national standard operating procedures for GBV service providers (counselling centres, police, health) as well as service delivery protocols to respond to GBV.

## Environmental and Social Management Plan

189. This table summarises anticipated risks aligned with the AF ESP, indicates their significance, and outlines required mitigation actions at the programme level. Sub-projects assessed as Category B will develop a similar ESMP aligning with the programme-level ESMP and the PPR, using an SPC-provided template.

The ESMP outlines site-specific risks, mitigation measures, implementation arrangements and timeline, ESS monitoring indicators, and budget allocations. All ESMPs will be submitted prior to sub-project implementation and will be reflected in the annual PPR as required by the Fund, ensuring risk mitigation is tracked throughout the project cycle.

Table 21. Programme-Level Environmental and Social Risk Management Plan.

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
ESP1: Compliance with the Law	<del>No-Low risk. While the project will ensure compliance with the relevant national environmental laws and regulations in the 14 participating Pacific SIDS, there is some risk of inconsistency in enforcement and institutional capacity across countries, particularly in relation to environmental protection, land use, and water resources. To address this</del> The project will ensure compliance with the relevant environmental national laws and regulations in the 14 participating Pacific SIDS related to environmental protection, land use, and	No-Low risk	Conduct ESS compliance checks via SPC’s ESMS and confirm alignment with national legal frameworks during the co-design phase (Activity 1.1.3)

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
	<p><u>water resources</u>. The the project will be implemented in close collaboration and regular coordination with relevant government authorities. Development and delivery of targeted capacity-building for project implementers will ensure ESS compliance, and legal compliance checks will be integrated in project MEL systems.</p>		
<p><b>ESP2: Access and Equity</b></p>	<p><i>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to Annex I.</i></p> <p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Systemic inequities in the Pacific, including limited access to finance, decision-making, and services for women, youth, persons with disabilities, and those in remote areas, may create barriers to equitable participation in innovation activities. While the Co:Lab incorporates inclusion safeguards and locally led approaches, there remains a moderate risk that structural exclusion or digital divides (e.g., access to internet or climate information) will persist, especially in rural or outer island contexts. The programme mitigates this risk through inclusive stakeholder engagement, accessible application processes, and targeted outreach to women's groups and CSOs.</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Apply inclusive screening criteria (Activity 1.1.2), ensure transparent selection, require GESI plan in proposals (Activity 1.1.3), and track beneficiary participation using disaggregated data (Activity 1.1.5)</p>

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
<p><b>ESP3: Marginalised and Vulnerable Groups</b></p>	<p><i>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to the Annex I.</i></p> <p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Vulnerable groups — including women with disabilities, single mothers, LGBTQ+ individuals, and subsistence-based rural households — face layered disadvantages in resilience and innovation participation. The Gender Annex acknowledges these intersecting vulnerabilities, particularly in relation to informal economies, unpaid care burdens, and gendered impacts of climate disasters. Although the Co:Lab integrates safeguards and intends to include diverse participants in co-design and implementation, the risk of underrepresentation or unintended exclusion remains unless active accompaniment and targeted support are sustained.</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Applicants must demonstrate inclusive engagement and design (Activity 1.1.3), include vulnerability-disaggregated indicators, and submit proposals reviewed by the SER team (Activities 1.1.4, 1.1.5)</p>
<p><b>ESP4: Human Rights</b></p>	<p><i>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to the Annex I.</i></p> <p><b>No-Low risk.</b> <a href="#">While the project design follows a rights-based and people-centred approach, that is respecting freedom of association, non-discrimination, and equitable access to resources, there is some</a></p>	<p><u>No-Low</u> risk</p>	<p>Promote rights-based design through co-design support (Activity 1.1.3) and technical clinics (Activity 2.1.3). Ensure screening criteria incorporate human rights considerations.</p>

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
	<p><u>risk that uneven application across diverse cultural and institutional contexts in the 14 participating Pacific SIDS could affect the consistent protection of rights. In particular, risks may arise if vulnerable or marginalised groups are not fully engaged or if free, prior, and informed consent processes are not uniformly upheld. To address this, The project design follows a rights-based and people-centred approach, respecting freedom of association, non-discrimination, and access to resources.</u></p> <p>Meaningful community engagement and free, prior, and informed consent are ensured throughout the project life cycle.</p>		
<p><b>ESP5: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment</b></p>	<p><i>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to the Annex I.</i></p> <p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Persistent gender gaps in leadership, land tenure, economic participation, and digital access create a moderate risk that women's voices may be overlooked or their contributions undervalued in innovation contexts. While the leverages SPC's Gender Flagship and FiT programme to promote gender-responsive innovations, it relies heavily on implementing partners to carry out GESI commitments, which may vary in capacity. The</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Evaluate project pitches according to priorities criteria including gender equality and women's leadership (Activity 1.1.2) Require gender action plans in all proposals (Activity 1.1.3), prioritise women-led initiatives (Activity 1.1.2), and track gender-specific outcomes (Activity 1.1.5).</p>

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
	<p>programme addresses this through a structured GESI Action Plan, targeted mentoring, and MEL systems that go beyond participation counts to track influence, benefits, and leadership outcomes.</p>		
<p><b>ESP6: Core Labour Rights</b></p>	<p><b>Low risk.</b> The project will comply with regional and national employment laws and regulations and will respect, promote, and realise in good faith the principles of the ILO Labour Standards also in accordance with SPC Policy and the People-Centred Approach. Employment of local labour during construction or maintenance may expose workers to occupational health and safety (OHS) risks and informal labour practices or labour rights violations could occur without contractor oversight. The SER Team will screen proposals against the following: Project activities will ensure that they do not violate labour laws in relation to project management specific to recruitment of human resources to support project delivery and implementation; and any contracts for recruited staff will ensure that they align with national labour standards and ensure competitive salaries and packages are offered. Compliance will be monitored annually in accordance with the project's MEL system.</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Require compliance with national labour laws (Activity 1.1.4), and enable grievance redress through SPC systems.</p>

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
<p><b>ESP7: Indigenous Peoples</b></p>	<p><b>Low risk.</b> There is no universally accepted or internationally-agreed upon definition of ‘indigenous peoples’ (UNDP, 2021; GCF, 2018; AF, 2013; IFC, 2012). In the particular context of most Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the majority of the population and the dominant sociocultural or ethnic group is native to the island country or territory. That is: they are indigenous to the land and they are the ‘local communities’. In this context, the terms ‘communities’ and ‘beneficiaries’ are synonymous to ‘Indigenous Peoples’. The anticipated project benefits, co-benefits, opportunities, and mitigated risks for communities or beneficiaries are de facto anticipated benefits, co-benefits, opportunities, and mitigated risks for indigenous people. The project’s existing mechanisms for stakeholder engagement and community consultations fulfil the intended purpose of the FPIC. Respect for customary land ownership and cultural practices is critical, hence a culturally-sensitive and people-centred approach will be adopted in the project.</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Require FPIC during co-design (Activity 1.1.3); SER team ensures cultural appropriateness; consult Indigenous communities as part of proposal development.</p>
<p><b>ESP8: Involuntary Resettlement</b></p>	<p><b>No risk.</b> The project and sub-projects are not anticipated to cause inadvertent physical or economic displacement of</p>	<p>No risk</p>	<p>Prohibit any activity requiring involuntary resettlement (as per exclusionary activities). Require land tenure verification as part of co-design (Activity 1.1.3).</p>

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
	<p>target communities. Involuntary resettlement is under the exclusionary criteria for project selection, hence loss of shelter, assets, or access to assets that lead to loss of income sources or other means of livelihood is not a likely impact.</p>		
<p><b>ESP9: Protection of Natural Habitats</b></p>	<p><b>Moderate risk.</b> There is some risk that project and sub-project activities may unintentionally degrade critical natural habitats. The project will support the protection of natural habitats through promoting nature and community-based solutions, any potential of sub-projects to directly or indirectly impact upon natural or critical habitats will be identified at the ESS risk screening stage as outlined in the ESMS. Implementation of risk mitigation measures and ESS compliance will be monitored and reported on the project and sub-project level, as incorporated in the MEL system.</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Exclude high-risk (Cat A) proposals (Activity 1.1.2). Require ESMPs for low-risk (Cat C) and medium-risk (Cat B) proposals (Activity 1.1.4). Use SER checklist to assess ecosystem impacts.</p>
<p><b>ESP10: Conservation of Biological Diversity</b></p>	<p><b>Low risk.</b> It is not anticipated that project and sub-project activities will lead to a loss in biological diversity or introduction of known invasive species. The project will comply with any National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans, ensuring alignment and contribution to the protection of countries' biological and natural resources. The sub-projects' ESIA and ESMP will contextualise the policy</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Avoid non-native species introduction; promote biodiversity-sensitive practices through proposal screening (Activity 1.1.4) and technical review.</p>

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
	<p>and evaluate against biological diversity criterion and mitigate risk as needed for specific sites and sub-projects, e.g. an ecological screening may be necessary before water tank installation near bush or coastal vegetation to avoid disturbing nesting birds and endemic flora; where pit latrine leakage may contaminate soil invertebrates and microbiodiversity, latrine construction will be avoided in coastal wetlands and require consultations with local environmental officers; and/or where clearing of coastal vegetation for drainage or expansion may affect shoreline biodiversity or erosion processes, ESMPs would be required to minimise mangrove disturbance and avoid crossing turtle nesting zones.</p>		
<p><b>ESP11: Climate Change</b></p>	<p><b>Low risk.</b> The project is climate adaptation-focused, explicitly designed to enhance resilience to climate hazards such as sea-level rise, cyclones, and flooding. Its activities are not anticipated to result in any significant or unjustified increase in greenhouse gas emissions or other drivers of climate change. Any agro-forestry and agriculture sub-projects will be small-scale as per exclusionary criteria, and are not anticipated to result in large-scale negative impacts on carbon capture and sequestration capacity.</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Screen proposals for maladaptation risks (Activity 1.1.4); promote resilience-focused innovations in clinics (Activity 2.1.3).</p>

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
<b>ESP12: Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency</b>	<b>Moderate risk.</b> Sub-project construction activities may generate waste, noise, dust, or cause minor pollution if not managed properly. Project and sub-project activities will exercise cost-effectiveness and minimise the use of resources used during implementation – applicable to all sources and forms of energy, water, and other resources and materials inputs. There is some risk of waste production and pollution due to the quantity and diversity of sub-projects, though they are required to be in compliance with national waste management laws including monitoring of ESS compliance, inclusive of pollution prevention and resource efficiency.	Moderate	If applicable, proposals must include simple waste management plans (Activity 1.1.3)
<b>ESP13: Public Health</b>	<b>Low risk.</b> The project avoids potentially significant negative impacts on public health, hence overall risk to public health is low. Sub-project activities are anticipated to generate minimal, site-specific, largely reversible impact to public health and will comply with national public health laws. A WHO-compliant rapid health impact screening checklist will be integrated in the ESIA and ESS compliance monitoring tools, to determine if a further thorough public health impact assessment and development of a management plan is necessary.	Low	Public health implications assessed in screening (Activity 1.1.4); technical backstopping from SPC divisions (Activity 1.1.5)

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
<p><b>ESP14: Physical and Cultural Heritage</b></p>	<p><b>Low risk.</b> Project and sub-project activities will not be implemented around physical heritage sites, and will not permanently interfere with communities' existing access and use of such physical and cultural resources. They will be designed and implemented in a way that avoids the alteration, damage, or removal of any physical cultural resources and sites with unique natural values recognised as such at the community, national or international level. The sub-project ESS screenings will identify the presence of cultural heritage in or near the project, and if cultural heritage exists, a risk assessment will be conducted to analyse the potential for impacting cultural heritage, and the measures to mitigate the risk. Consultations will be undertaken with village, community leaders and nobles to ensure that project activities will not directly involve any preserved and cultural heritage sites.</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Applicants must identify culturally sensitive sites (Activity 1.1.3); project spoiling cultural heritage are excluded</p>
<p><b>ESP15: Lands and Soil Conservation</b></p>	<p><b>Moderate risk.</b> The project promotes ecosystem-based approaches and the inclusion of soil conservation practices in design of land-based sub-projects. While the screening criteria exclude activities which explicitly target or require the use of soil, there is small risk of roads renovation and water tank installations having an</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Encourage use of nature-based solutions and proper site design during proposal co-development (Activity 1.1.3).</p>

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
	impact on the soil and land surrounding the sites or facilities. Site-specific assessments and regular ESS compliance monitoring will be conducted particularly for infrastructure and WASH sub-projects, to ensure no negative impacts on land and soil. This will include ecological studies that account for the identification of fragile soils, to inform the final detailed design and to identify any additional site-specific impacts.		

## Implementation Arrangements

### Roles and Responsibilities

The table below provides an overview of the different actors and their responsibilities related to E&S safeguards.

Table 22. ESMS Implementation Roles and Responsibilities.

Actor	Roles and Responsibilities
<b>Project Management Unit (PMU)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leads overall coordination and implementation of the ESMS.</li> <li>Conducts initial environmental and social screening of proposals based on the SPC ESMS and AF ESP.</li> <li>Presents risk assessments to the Appraisal Committee and makes go/no-go decisions.</li> <li>Ensures mitigation measures and ESMPs are integrated into proposal co-design.</li> <li>Monitors ESMS compliance throughout implementation and ensures issues are addressed.</li> <li>Facilitates grievance redress processes and tracks outcomes.</li> </ul>
<b>SER Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides technical support to the PMU and applicants during the proposal co-design process.</li> <li>Supports applicants in identifying environmental and social risks and integrating mitigation measures.</li> </ul>

Actor	Roles and Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contributes to the development of ESMPs where required.</li> <li>Provides backstopping to the PMU during implementation as needed.</li> </ul>
<b>Appraisal Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviews proposals and associated ESMS documentation (e.g. risk screening, mitigation measures, ESMPs).</li> <li>Provides recommendations to the PMU on technical and safeguards quality.</li> <li>May request revisions or additional information if ESMS compliance is unclear.</li> </ul>
<b>Climate Finance Unit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides technical input on gender equality and social inclusion risks and mitigation.</li> <li>Supports the PMU during proposal screening and co-design to ensure GESI and ESS considerations are mainstreamed.</li> <li>No direct implementation responsibility, but available as support during design and oversight.</li> </ul>
<b>Grantees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comply with ESMS requirements defined in grant agreements.</li> <li>Integrate required mitigation measures and ESMPs into their project design and implementation.</li> <li>Engage stakeholders and affected communities appropriately, including FPIC where required.</li> <li>Report on safeguard actions and submit updates as part of regular reporting.</li> </ul>
<b>Adaptation Fund</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides oversight of project compliance with AF Environmental and Social Policy.</li> <li>May review safeguards implementation through reporting, evaluations, or spot checks.</li> </ul>

## Monitoring and Evaluation

190. Environmental and social performance across all sub-projects will be monitored through a harmonised system that integrates safeguards compliance into the project's overall MEL framework. Each funded innovation will be required to track and report against relevant ESS monitoring indicators, including compliance with the approved ESMP, grievance handling, consultation activities, and mitigation outcomes. These indicators will be integrated into project agreements and monitored by the national PMUs, with technical oversight provided by SPC's GESS Officer and the regional Co:Lab PMU. Spot checks, field missions, and desk-based verification will be used to triangulate reporting and ensure accuracy.

191. All safeguards monitoring data will be consolidated and reflected in the annual PPR submitted to the Adaptation Fund, in line with Section J of the funding proposal. This includes outcome-level analysis of safeguards risks, management responses, and any changes in sub-project risk profiles. Sub-projects with moderate risk (Category B) will be required to provide mid-year

updates on the implementation of their ESMPs, including budget execution, stakeholder engagement, and emerging risks. Lessons from safeguards implementation will also inform adaptive risk management and contribute to regional learning outputs under Outcome 3.

## Appendices

### Appendix II – 1 SER Screening Tool

SER Screening Questionnaire		Risk Description		Risk assessment	Score
		Yes, No, n/a, TBD	If no, please shortly justify  If Yes answer, describe potential issues, specify activities causing the risk identified.  characterise the identified risk or impacts (likelihood, intensity, duration, reversibility)  Indicate the risk localisation (local/national/global)	<i>to be completed only if the answer is "Yes" under the risk description column</i>	Characterise the risk level:  Low (L), Medium (M) High (H)
<b>1. Labour and Working Conditions</b>	Will the project present unsafe, indecent or unhealthy working conditions for stakeholders involved?				
	Is there potential for the project to apply adverse discriminatory practices based on religious, racial, gender, disability or political considerations?				
<b>2. Climate change</b>	Could the project adversely contribute to climate change by generating greenhouse gas emissions including through deforestation or forest degradation?				

	Could the project negatively affect the resilience to climate change?				
<b>3. Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention</b>	Will the project generate hazardous waste? Is the project likely to lead to environmental damages due to an uncontrolled management of waste?				
	Is the project likely to lead to pollutants release? Are chemicals (including pesticides) likely to be used during the project?				
<b>4. Human Rights</b>	Is the project likely to negatively impact on the human rights of the affected populations? (e.g. their rights to water, work, health, to a healthy environment, etc.)?				
	Is the project likely to create less favourable treatment of, or discrimination against, any person or group?				
	Is the project likely to increase the risk to people with disability (physical, hearing, visual, intellectual and sensory impairments)?				
	Is the project likely to increase risks to children or vulnerable adults through interaction with SPC staff and non-staff?				
	Any risk that populations perceive they did not receive enough opportunities to raise their concerns regarding the project?				
	Is there a risk that the project would create or exacerbate conflicts with or within affected populations?				

<b>5. Impacts on Affected communities</b>	Is the project likely to increase community exposure to disease (water borne, water based, water related and vector borne diseases as well as communicable diseases)?				
<b>6. Gender</b>	Is there a likelihood that the project would have adverse impacts on gender equality, and/or the situation of women and girls?				
	Have community groups/leaders raised gender equality concerns regarding the project during the stakeholder engagement process?				
	Would the project potentially limit women's ability to access or use natural resources upon which they depend for a livelihood?				
	Is the project likely to increase risks of sexual harassment or sexual exploitation?				
<b>7. Resettlement</b>	Could the project involve the physical relocation of people? (encompassing displacement as well as planned relocation)				
<b>8. Use of natural resources</b>	Could the project lead to adverse impacts on biodiversity or natural habitat?				
	Is the project likely to negatively impact a protected area?				
	Is the project likely to introduce invasive alien species to the project area?				

	Is the project likely to restrict People's access to natural resources and their means of livelihoods?				
	is the project likely to favor unsustainable exploitation of a renewable resource				
<b>9. Peoples right and tenure</b>	Is the project likely to negatively affect Peoples or communities rights: rights of affected populations, including procedural rights such as the right to be consulted or to have access to information, or substantive rights (real or personal) such as the right of access to natural resources or benefit-sharing related to these natural resources (carbon rights, benefits from access to genetic resources ...).				
	Could the project require the relocation of Peoples from their homes or lands subject to traditional ownership or customary use?				
<b>10. Cultural heritage</b>	Is the project likely to negatively affect cultural heritage?				
	Is the project likely to negatively affect a legally protected cultural heritage area?				
Risk categorisation process			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If only L on the right hand column, then the project is Low risk &gt; no further assessment is required</li> <li>• If one or more M then the project is Medium risk &gt; further assessment is required to formulate alternatives</li> <li>• If one of more H, &gt; topic assessment is compulsory, including for the assessment of credible alternatives (NB: the project may have to be categorised as Medium or High risk depending on the outcome of the ESIA)</li> </ul>		

|

|

## Appendix II – 2 Exclusionary List

192. There are a number of activities that the Co:Lab will not fund. A simple set of exclusion criteria will be implemented to ensure that all programme activities are supporting innovation adaptation sub-grants aligned with SPC SER Policy and Adaptation Fund's ESP. All Category A proposals – defined as those with potentially significant, diverse, irreversible, or unprecedented environmental or social impacts – will be deemed ineligible under the Co:Lab.
193. The SPC Climate Innovation Co:Lab will not be used to directly or indirectly fund activities that<sup>48</sup>:
- Conflict with adopted plans and established uses of the target community
  - Substantially affects a rare or endangered species of animal or plant or the habitat of such species
  - Interfere substantially with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species
  - Substantially diminish habitat for fish, wildlife, or plants
  - Breach standards relating to solid waste or litter control
  - Substantially degrade water quality
  - Contaminate a public water supply
  - Substantially degrade or deplete ground water resources
  - Interfere substantially with ground water recharge
  - Extend a sewer line with capacity to serve new development
  - Encourage activities which result in the use of large amounts of fuel, water, or energy
  - Use fuel, water, or energy in a wasteful manner
  - Disrupt or adversely affect an archaeological site or a property of historic or cultural significance
  - Induce substantial growth or concentration of population
  - Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system
  - Displace a large number of people over the long term
  - Increase substantially the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas over the long term
  - Cause substantial flooding, erosion or siltation
  - Expose people or structures to major geological hazards
  - Create a potential public health hazard or involve the use, production or disposal of materials which pose a hazard to people or animal or plant populations in the areas affected
  - Violate any ambient air quality standard, contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation, or expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations
  - Convert prime agricultural land to non-agricultural use or impair the agricultural productivity of prime agricultural land
  - Interfere with emergency response plans
  - Relate to the extraction or depletion of non-renewable natural resources
  - Cause involuntary resettlement of people or the removal or alteration of any physical cultural assets and property
  - Activities prohibited by host country legislation or international conventions relating to the protection of biodiversity resources or cultural heritage
  - Projects spoiling cultural heritage

---

<sup>48</sup> SPC does not have a specific exclusionary list as part of their SER Policy. Hence this comprehensive indicative list based on FSM Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (one of the participating countries) is proposed; Available at: <http://www.fsmlaw.org/fsm/regulations/envimp.htm>

- Projects negatively affecting indigenous people



ADAPTATION FUND

## ADAPTATION FUND BOARD SECRETARIAT TECHNICAL REVIEW OF PROJECT/PROGRAMME PROPOSAL

PROJECT/PROGRAMME CATEGORY: Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator

**Country/Region:** Regional (14 Pacific SIDS) - Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

**Project Title:** SPC's Climate Innovation Co:Lab

**Thematic Focal Area:** Innovative Adaptation Financing

**Implementing Entity:** Pacific Community (SPC)

**Executing Entities:** Pacific Community (SPC)

**AF Project ID:** AF00000449

**IE Project ID:** **Requested Financing from Adaptation Fund (US Dollars): 5,000,000**

**Reviewer and contact person:** Marcus Johannesson **Co-reviewer(s):** Andrew Hollander

**IE Contact Person:**

<b>Technical Summary</b>	<p>The project "SPC's Climate Innovation Co:Lab" aims to incubate, catalyse, de-risk, and scale locally led climate adaptation innovations across Pacific SIDS. This will be done through the 3 components below:</p> <p><u>Component 1:</u> Incubation – Identification and development of innovative practices for climate adaptation (USD 1,306,120)</p> <p><u>Component 2:</u> Acceleration – Scale-up funding for promising innovation projects (USD 1,654,120)</p> <p><u>Component 3:</u> Amplification – Knowledge management, learning and replication (1,447,800)</p> <p><u>Requested financing overview:</u></p> <p>Project/Programme Execution Cost: USD 151,960  Total Project/Programme Cost: USD 4,560,000  Implementing Fee: USD 440,000  Financing Requested: USD 5,000,000</p>
--------------------------	---

	<p>The first technical review identified several points requiring clarification or corrective action including issues related to the sourcing and screening process, the mainstreaming of gender considerations, the execution cost, alignment with the AF results framework and a few other issues. These and other issues are addressed in the Clarification Requests (CRs) and Corrective Action Requests (CARs) raised in the review.</p> <p>The second technical review identified that there are a few points requiring clarification or corrective action including issues related to the ESP, the execution cost, SPC acting both as a funder and grantee in some cases, and a few other minor issues as addressed in the Clarification Requests (CRs) and Corrective Action Requests (CARs) raised in the review.</p> <p>The third technical review finds that all CRs and CARs have been sufficiently addressed.</p>
Date:	September 2, 2025

Review Criteria	Questions	1 <sup>st</sup> Review [19 August 2025]	2 <sup>nd</sup> Review [28 August 2025]	3 <sup>rd</sup> Review [2 September 2025]
Country Eligibility	1. Does the proposal include a mechanism that will ensure that the participating countries are party to the Paris Agreement and/or the Kyoto Protocol?	<b>Yes</b>	-	
	2. Does the proposal describe how the IE will involve the participation of developing countries particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of	<b>Yes, but corrections needed</b>  The proposal describes the involvement of developing countries particularly vulnerable to climate change, specifically targeting	<b>Cleared.</b>  The proposal's pages and paragraphs are now numbered.	

	<p>climate change? Does it specify countries, a region, or two or more regions?</p>	<p>Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS), which are known for their high vulnerability due to geographical and socio-economic factors.</p> <p>The following countries are explicitly mentioned in the proposal as participating in the program: Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Tuvalu, Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Tonga. Some pages and paragraphs are not numbered appropriately.</p> <p><b><u>Correction needed</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please appropriately number all pages.</li> <li>• Please appropriately number all paragraphs.</li> </ul>		

--	--	--	--	--

	<p>1. Does the proposal describe how it will source innovation small grant proposals, and screen them <b>for the potential to support concrete adaptation actions</b> to assist the participating countries in addressing the adverse effects of climate change and build in climate resilience?</p>	<p><b>Yes, but with clarifications required</b></p> <p>A process is outlined, starting with a regional call for project pitches from a broad range of actors including from CSOs, SMEs, community groups, and academia. Shortlisted project pitches will lead to full proposals and awards, with specific funding for both incubation (USD 25,000 – 75,000) and accelerator phases (up to USD 250,000).</p> <p><b>CR1:</b> The proposal states that project pitches responding to a country-specific adaptation challenge will first be reviewed by a multi-disciplinary Appraisal Committee, and later by SPC for a final technical appraisal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Please provide clarifications on how and when criteria for these</li> </ul>	<p><b>CR1: Cleared</b> Paragraph 22 The revised proposal clarifies that the appraisal criteria will be developed during the project induction phased involving the multi-disciplinary Appraisal Committee. At least one specific criteria will observe the response of pitch ideas to climate change adaptation and resilience building challenges.</p> <p><b>CR2: Cleared</b> Paragraph 22 The revised proposal clarifies that the Appraisal Committee will be multi-disciplinary, and will involve SPC specialists in areas of climate change adaptation, procurement, finance, resource mobilization, MEL, innovation, and social and environmental responsibility.</p>	
--	--	--	--	--

		<p>processes will be developed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Please also provide details on the extent that climate change adaptation will be integrated into the criteria for reviewing project pitches, and move beyond the criteria that was used for previous Funding with Intent (FiT)-related initiatives. Part II, Section G, provides several example criteria that will be utilized by the multi-disciplinary Appraisal Committee, but none of these explicitly relate to climate change adaptation or building resilience.</li> </ul>	<p><b>CR3: Clarification required</b> Paragraph 22</p> <p>While the State Project Committee (SPC) will distribute funds and also be involved in executing projects, the proposal must clearly state that its appraisal process is independent. Specifically, please clarify measures to ensure the impartiality of the SPC Appraisal Committee from the technical teams that will submit and carry out sub-projects. This separation is crucial for ensuring an impartial review. Furthermore, the proposal needs to use consistent and precise language related to SPC's execution role.</p> <p><b>CR4: Cleared</b> Paragraph 36</p> <p>The proposal clarifies that information on call for pitches will be shared amongst the network of DAs in the</p>	<p><b>CR3: Cleared. (Para 22)</b></p> <p>In para 22, the proposal clarifies that the appraisal process in the project will be independent and transparent. This includes that the selection of appraisal committee members will be made in careful consideration of the independence of the process. Furthermore, the Appraisal committee members will have to sign a 'Conflict of Interest Declaration Form'.</p>

		<p><b>CR2:</b> Please provide further details on the composition of the multi-disciplinary Appraisal Committee.</p> <p><b>CR3:</b> Part II, Section E states under Activity 1.1.1: “Pitch submissions are encouraged by a broad range of actors including from CSOs, small and medium enterprises, community groups, and <u>SPC technical teams</u>.” Please clarify whether the intention is for SPC to serve both as the distributor of funds and grantee in certain cases.</p> <p><b>CR4:</b> In multiple parts of the proposal, it states that regional calls will leverage a range of networks and be disseminated widely. The budget even indicates that there will be funding dedicated to translation and communication services</p>	<p>Pacific, and some calls may be disseminated through regional networks of civil society organizations. It also provides examples: Pacific Resilience Partnership, NDC Focal Points, and SPC’s established relationships through the One CROP mechanism.</p> <p><b>CR5: Cleared</b> Paragraphs 22, 23 The proposal now clarifies that Co:Lab will support 20 incubation projects and approximately 6 acceleration projects.</p>	
--	--	--	--	--

		<p>to ensure wide dissemination. Please provide further details in the main body of the proposal on how in practice outreach efforts will be undertaken to ensure the regional calls will be accessible to a range of vulnerable communities and ensure broad participation of local actors.</p> <p><b>CR5:</b> The proposal states that there will be specific funding for both incubation (USD 25,000 – 75,000) and accelerator phases (up to USD 250,000). Could you please indicate how many grant recipients are anticipated at the incubation phase, and how many grant recipients are anticipated at the accelerator phase.</p>		
--	--	--	--	--

	<p>2. Does the programme contribute meaningfully to the Expected Results under the Innovation Pillar:</p> <p>I. New innovations and risk-taking encouraged and accelerated</p> <p>ii. Successful innovations replicated and scaled up</p> <p>iii. Access and capacities enhanced for designing and implementing innovation.</p> <p>iv. Evidence base generated and shared.</p>	<p><b>Yes (p. 16)</b></p> <p>The proposal depicts how the programme will contribute meaningfully to the Expected Results under the Innovation Pillar:</p> <p><u>New innovations and risk-taking encouraged and accelerated</u></p> <p>The proposal indicates that new innovations and de-risking will be encouraged and accelerated through the programme's Incubation phase by offering catalytic small grants to support local innovators from communities, CSOs, SMEs and academia in testing novel ideas, proof of concept, approaches, and technologies that respond to priority climate adaptation needs.</p> <p><u>Successful innovations replicated and scaled up</u></p>		

		<p>The proposal indicates that successful innovations will be refined and scaled up through the Acceleration phase. Projects that demonstrate strong results during the Incubation stage will receive follow-on funding along with technical assistance from SPC's in-house expertise and partner networks. The Co:Lab programme will also connect scale-ready innovations through Matchmaking Labs to other financial actors.</p> <p><u>Access and capacities enhanced for designing and implementing innovation</u></p> <p>The programme will carry out capacity-building activities such as targeted training, hands-on technical assistance and innovation clinics, and actively prioritise engagement with women, youth, and</p>		

		<p>persons with disabilities.</p> <p><u>Evidence base generate and shared</u>  The programme will generate and disseminate an evidence base for adaptation innovation through its Amplification stage. Lessons learned from Components 1 and 2 will be systematically documented and disseminated via established platforms such as the Regional NDC Hub and SPC's internal knowledge systems. It will also coordinate learning with other regional RIEs that have submitted AFCIA proposals (SPREP).</p>		
	<p>3. Does the proposal describe how it will screen innovation small grant proposals for their potential to provide economic, social, and environmental benefits, particularly</p>	<p><b>Clarification needed</b></p> <p>The proposal provides a dedicated Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) for screening, assessing, managing, and</p>	<p><b>CAR1: Cleared</b></p> <p>The ESMS has been updated to clarify that all sub-projects regardless of categorization (B or C) will require an ESMP.</p>	

	<p>to vulnerable communities, including gender considerations, while avoiding or mitigating negative impacts, in compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy of the Fund?</p>	<p>monitoring E&amp;S risks across all Unidentified Sub-Projects (USPs) funded through the programme.</p> <p>The ESMS provides a programme level analysis of the 15 AF E&amp;S principles with mitigation measures, as well demonstrating how the SPC SER Screening tool, which will be applied to all USPs, also aligns with the AF 15 E&amp;S principles.</p> <p><b>CAR1:</b> The ESMS states that USPs will be screened and categorized as Category A, B, or C based on their risks. It states that Category B sub-projects require an Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMP), while Category C sub-projects will not.</p> <p>The proposal is sparsely describing which are the</p>	<p><b>CR6: Cleared</b></p> <p>The revised background now provides a more comprehensive contextual description of climate change challenges and barriers in Pacific SIDS, drawing on NDC priority sectors as well as SPC's programme experience. Building on this, further clarifications on the anticipated benefits have been added in Section H (p. 22), including the screening process.</p>	

		<p>anticipated benefits for people on the ground based on the planned activities that will lead up to various adaptation solutions.</p> <p><b>CR6:</b> Please elaborate further and more concretely outline the potential economic, social and environmental benefits that the project activities are anticipated to deliver as a response to participating countries' climate change adaptation-related challenges and identified gender issues. A good starting point may be to outline how various sectors/themes can be enhanced for people's lives.</p> <p>Whenever possible, please also quantify the estimated benefits.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> A more comprehensive</p>		

		contextual description of challenges and barriers to climate change adaptation may be needed to facilitate the above discussions and requested input.		
	4. Does the project engage, empower and/or benefit the most vulnerable communities and social groups?	<p><b>Yes</b></p> <p>The “co-design” phase of the programme will “actively involve vulnerable populations and follow a people-centred approach (PCA)” (Part II, Section N).</p> <p>In various stages of its implementation, the project through its proposed Climate Innovation Co: Lab seeks to ensure empowerment and benefit to most vulnerable communities and social groups by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Offering targeted small grants under its Incubation stage to pilot community-led innovations and de-risk proof-of-concept ideas</li> </ul>		

		<p>address the lack and need of access for inclusive early-stage catalytic finance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adopting a broad innovation definition that values social, institutional, and nature-based solutions, including approaches grounded in indigenous knowledge and cultural practices.</li> <li>- Applying assessment criteria explicitly recognizing community-driven innovation and social inclusion. Potential grant applicants must demonstrate inclusive engagement, and include vulnerability-disaggregated indicators.</li> </ul>		
--	--	--	--	--

	<p>5. Does the project advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls?</p>	<p><b>Clarification needed</b></p> <p>The proposal provides a detailed Gender Analysis and Assessment, complemented by a comprehensive Gender Action Plan GAP including implementation measures aligned with AF Gender Principles.</p> <p>However, there is a misalignment in between the level of profoundness that the gender assessment and its recommendations, and the GAP illustrate compared to the results framework which only includes a few high-level gender indicators and targets in the results framework.</p> <p><b>CAR2:</b> Although the Gender Action Plan provides a set of gender-specific indicators and targets, those are not reflected in the project results framework. Please</p>	<p><b>CAR2: Cleared</b></p> <p>The results framework has now been updated to better align with the level of detail that the Gender assessment and analysis including Gender Action Plan provides. (See Section W, p. 40).</p>	

		<p>ensure that the project results framework captures the indicators and associated targets included in the Gender Action Plan.</p>		
	<p>6. Is the project/programme cost-effective?</p> <p>In the case of regional project/programmes, does the regional approach support cost effectiveness? Does the project engage, empower and/or benefit the most vulnerable communities and social groups?</p>	<p><b>Clarification needed</b></p> <p>The proposal highlights that by leveraging SPC's institutional platform for innovation, Funding with Intent (FiT), the programme can utilize existing infrastructure and mechanisms which have been used in the past to support "high-impact initiatives across Pacific SIDS at</p>		

		<p>relatively low costs” (Part I, Section A).</p> <p>The proposal also states that the regional nature of the programme can help achieve economies of scale through regional peer-to-peer learning, matchmaking initiatives, and the transfer of proven innovations from one context to another, reducing time and cost associated with developing entirely new solutions in each country (Part II, Section I).</p> <p>The FiT framework is said to historically have been cost effective with relatively low costs while maximizing resource efficiency, promoting knowledge sharing, and avoiding duplication of efforts (Part II, Section I).</p> <p><b>CR7:</b> To understand how the project will benefit from this model in terms of cost-</p>		

		<p>effectiveness, please elaborate on how the FiT is more cost-effective compared to alternative options. Please, also provide quantitative estimates of this.</p>		
	<p>7. Does the proposal describe how it will screen innovation small grant proposals for consistency with national or sub-national sustainable development strategies, adaptation planning processes, national or sub-national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, national communications and adaptation programs of action, national adaptation plans (NAPs), nationally determined contributions (NDCs), adaptation communications, and other voluntary adaptation reports,</p>	<p><b>Clarification needed.</b></p> <p>Part II, Section J of the proposal is related to alignment to national and sub-national strategies. This section of the proposal focuses on regional priorities, but overlooks national or sub-national (if they exist) strategies.</p> <p><b>CR8:</b> Please clarify how the program will ensure that the proposed small grant projects are aligned with national or sub-national sustainable development strategies, adaptation plans, and other relevant frameworks, including NDCs and NAPs.</p>	<p><b>CR8: Cleared</b></p> <p>The proposal now sufficiently clarifies the project's cost-effectiveness. Quantifications estimates are provided (figures and percentages) while comparing FiT projects' (based on historical records) cost structure with other project approaches. See Section I (p. 23).</p> <p><b>CR9: Cleared</b></p> <p>The proposal has now included a mention of that project applicants</p>	

	<p>where they exist, as well as with the UNFCCC technology framework, and other relevant instruments?</p>	<p>A key element of innovation and adaptation planning are Technology Needs Assessments (TNAs) and Technology Action Plans (TAPs). These are often developed by countries to identify and prioritize technologies for both climate mitigation and adaptation, and they could provide valuable insight for an innovation-focused project.</p> <p><b>CR9:</b> Clarify how alignment with the UNFCCC technology framework (TAPs and TNAs if they exist) and other relevant instruments will be evaluated during the screening process.</p> <p><b>CR10:</b> Please consider exploring the alignment and reference to other national/regional cross-cutting plans and strategies that may be relevant such as strategies for Private</p>	<p>will have to demonstrate the strategic alignment of their project with relevant regional or national frameworks including TNAs and TAPs when available. This will be assessed by the Appraisal Committee in the selection process. See Section 'J' p. 24.</p> <p><b>CR10: Cleared</b></p> <p>Clarifications added regarding the project's alignment with national or regional cross-cutting strategies which will be considered as part of the appraisal process of strategic alignment. See Section 'J' p. 24.</p>	
--	---	---	--	--

		Sector and SME development, Inclusive Economic Development, and Research & Academia etc.		
	8. Does the proposal describe how it will screen innovation small grant proposals for meeting the relevant national technical standards, where applicable, in compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy of the Fund?	<p><b>Clarification needed</b></p> <p>The proposal explains that all innovation small grant proposals are screened for compliance with relevant national technical standards, sectoral policies, and regulatory requirements in each participating country, and also outlines the role of SPC in each case.</p> <p>The relevant national technical standards for the project's activities have not been identified. It could for instance include building codes, water quality regulations, land use or any other sector-specific regulation.</p> <p><b>CR11:</b> Please, identify and list relevant</p>	<p><b>CR11: Cleared</b></p> <p>The proposal has now included a list of selected relevant National Technical Standards among the fourteen participating SIDS. In addition, the process to ensure compliance has been outlined in more detail. See Section 'K', p. 25.</p>	

		national technical standards and clarify the process for compliance, the steps to comply with them during implementation.		
	9. Is there duplication of project / programme with other funding sources?	<p><b>Clarification needed</b></p> <p>The proposal highlights how it will use safeguards and coordination mechanisms to avoid duplication. This includes tracking all small grants applications within the FiT platform, to cross-check against past or ongoing initiatives. SPC will also cross-reference all proposals received with the respective NDA of the participating country, as well as ensuring coordination with another Pacific RIE (SPREP) that has submitted their own AFCIA proposal.</p> <p><b>CR12:</b> The proposal mentions a number of regional initiatives/partnerships that will be relevant to</p>	<p><b>CR12: Correction needed.</b></p> <p>The proposal has added more detail on other regional initiatives/partnerships that are relevant to the project including how complementarities will be sought with these. See Section 'Project/Programme Background and Context', p.9.</p> <p>To better fit the template of the proposal, please move the above-mentioned piece to Section 'L' Complementarity with Other Fund Sources.</p>	<p><b>CR12: Cleared.</b></p> <p>The key regional initiatives that SPC will leverage and draw from (best practices) into the project are moved from the background into Section L of the proposal. See p.26.</p>

		<p>this programme including: The Regional Programmatic Approach on Climate Action; Unlocking Blue Pacific Prosperity; SPC's Regional Readiness Programme; Climate Finance Access Network (CFAN); Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH) Programme. Could you please provide a little more information on these initiatives/partnerships and indicate how they will complement and enhance the programme, and ensure there are no duplications.</p>		
	<p>10. Does the programme have a learning and knowledge management system to capture and disseminate evidence, particularly of effective, efficient adaptation</p>	<p><b>Yes, but clarifications needed</b></p> <p>The programme provides a strong learning and knowledge management system, with a dedicated Knowledge Management and MEL Officer in the Project</p>	<p><b>CR13: Cleared</b></p> <p>The proposal has clarified that it will apply adaptive management during implementation and through the capacity strengthening activities based on continuous learning (lessons learned). The</p>	

	<p>practices, products or technologies generated, as a basis for potential scaling up?</p>	<p>Management Unit. Component 3 highlights facilitated structured peer-to-peer learning and regional knowledge exchanges. It also highlights that “lessons from Component 1 and 2 will be captured and translated into factsheets, policy briefs and technical guidance, contributing to the integration of successful innovations into national adaptation planning processes (Part II, Section M).</p> <p><b>CR13:</b> Please elaborate further on in the proposal how the project plans to continuously assess and use evidence and lessons learned (double loop learning) in an iterative learning process so that the project and its activities can adapt and improve its implementation.</p>	<p>project will encourage a continuous review of the theory of change, activities and associated budget to improve their concept based on lessons learned.</p>	
	<p>11. Has the proposal described what consultative process will take place, and</p>	<p><b>Not Cleared</b></p> <p>The proposal states that “the consultative</p>	<p><b>CR14: Cleared</b></p> <p>As part of programme design, SPC drew on their ongoing regional</p>	

	<p>how will it involve all key stakeholders, and vulnerable groups, including gender considerations?</p>	<p>process underpinning the programme is designed to be inclusive, participatory, and responsive to the diverse needs of Pacific countries and communities, with particular emphasis on engaging vulnerable groups and integrating gender consideration” (Part II, Section N). While the approach to the stakeholder consultative process is positive, the proposal lacks sufficient detail on concrete measures that will take place.</p> <p>It is, however, unclear what consultative processes have already taken place and how it has contributed to the design of the project’s proposal.</p> <p><b>CR14:</b> Please, clarify the consultative process already taken place and with whom (stakeholders, vulnerable groups) and</p>	<p>and national engagement processes, including structured consultations and continuous engagement under the NDC Hub, Regional Programmatic Approach on Climate Action (RPACA), SPC’s Regional Readiness support, “Heads of” meeting with directors or permanent secretaries of technical services, ministerial meetings, and multiple country-driven GCF and AF projects. The priorities and gaps consistently raised in these exchanges, such as the need for early-stage catalytic finance, stronger inclusion of women and youth, and clearer pathways for scaling, directly informed the design of the Co:Lab.</p> <p>See section N, p. 27.</p> <p><b>CR15: Cleared</b></p>	

		<p>how this has influenced the project design.</p> <p><b>CR15:</b> Please provide further clarifications on the specific actions which will take place to ensure an inclusive and meaningful consultative process takes place, that involves all key stakeholders, and especially marginalized and vulnerable groups during implementation.</p>	<p>The project will use a co-design approach to develop full project concepts before their implementation including stakeholder consultation and partnership discussion, most often with technical services of national governments (civil servants) or partner organisations such as community-based organisations (youth groups, women's group, local NGOs). Project leads must attend co-design training sessions and are supported by the FiT and SER teams through a coaching approach.</p> <p>See section N, p. 27.</p>	
	<p>12. Is the requested financing justified based on full cost of adaptation reasoning?</p>	<p><b>Yes (p. 21)</b></p> <p>The proposal clarifies that the planned activities and their intended results do not depend on any other sources of funding.</p>		

	13. Is the project / program aligned with AF's results framework?	<p><b>Clarifications needed</b></p> <p>The project aligns with the Adaptation Fund's Strategic Results Framework, particularly Outcome 8, which focuses on innovation in adaptation practices, tools, and technologies.</p> <p><b>CAR3:</b> Please list alignment with all relevant outcomes of the AF strategic results framework that might apply. For example, activities focused on KM and Learning could be aligned with Outcome 3 and activities focused on enhancing institutional capacity may be aligned with outcome 2 and their respective outcome and output indicators (<a href="#">Results Framework Alignment Table (Amended in March 2019)</a>)</p>	<p><b>CAR3: Cleared</b></p> <p>Table 9 - Project alignments with AF Strategic Results Framework has been updated with relevant Fund Outcomes and indicators as suggested. See p. 44.</p> <p><b>CR16: Cleared</b></p> <p>The results framework is updated including clarifications for the planned number of incubated and scaled solutions, as well as added baselines values. The # sign has been replaced with Number for consistency.</p>	

		<p><b>CR16:</b> For the Project Results Framework (table 5):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Please clarify the target number of adaptation solutions that will be incubated and scaled.</li><li>- For incubation, the first row lists 20, while the second row lists 30. It also lists that 10 innovations will be scaled, while 6 incubation grantees will access follow-on funding. Please provide further clarification on what this means as it is not entirely clear from the table alone.</li><li>- Please also ensure a consistent use of "Number" or "#" throughout the proposal.</li><li>- Please provide a baseline value for the indicator "# of local stakeholders with enhanced capacity to</li></ul>		
--	--	---	--	--

		implement climate adaptation innovations."		
	<p>14. Has the sustainability of the programme outcomes been considered when designing the programme, including in the screening of the innovation small grants projects? Does the programme include pathways to scale up successful small grant projects?</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p> <p>Overall, the programme promotes a long-term vision by focusing on a clear innovation pathway of incubation, acceleration, and amplification.</p> <p>Sustainability considerations have been embedded in in the project cycle from initial screening of small grant proposals to structured pathways for scaling and accelerating successful innovations under Component 1 and 2.</p> <p>Component 3 will further catalyse scale-up by enabling innovators to access strategic finance opportunities, enabling replication pathways by embedding learnings into national and regional systems while</p>		

		<p>convening innovation investment matchmaking labs, regional knowledge sharing arrangements, knowledge products and policy uptake.</p> <p>In addition, the FIT framework offers an institutional platform with established systems for managing innovation and with strong links to national institutions and technical divisions. This ensures that adaptation innovations are strategically supported to evolve, scale and influence broader development outcomes across the Pacific.</p>		
	<p>15. Does the project / programme provide an overview of environmental and social impacts / risks identified, in compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy and Gender Policy of the Fund?</p>	<p><b>Not Cleared</b></p> <p>The proposal provides a comprehensive Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS), as well as a process for screening sub-grant projects and categorizing risk, as</p>	<p><b>CAR1: Cleared</b> The ESMS has been updated to clarify that all sub-projects regardless of categorization (B or C) will require a ESMP.</p> <p><b>New CAR10: Not Cleared</b> Table 5, P.29</p>	<p><b>CAR10: Cleared.</b></p> <p>A risk assessment narrative and a risk level have been added for ESP 1 and 4 in table 5 (p. 29), as well as in table 18 in the ESMS.</p>

		<p>well as a clear gender assessment and action plan.</p> <p>As specified in earlier <b>CAR1</b>, please ensure that all sub-projects, regardless of their risk categorization, require the preparation of an ESMP.</p>	<p>In the Table for Environmental and Social Impact and Risks, for ESP 1 “Compliance with the Law” it states there will be “no risk”. For ESP 4 “Human rights” states there be “no risk”. Please note that in projects and programmes, ESP 1, 4 and 6 must always apply and monitoring measures should be in place. This needs to be acknowledged in the proposal.</p>	
Resource Availability	1. Is the requested project funding within the parameters for large grants set by the Board?	<p><b>Yes</b></p> <p>The requested funding of USD 5,000,000 is within the Adaptation Fund Board approved parameters for this proposal.</p>		
	2. Is the Implementing Entity Management Fee at or below 10 per cent of the project/programme for implementing entity (IE) fees and at or below 10 per	<p><b>Yes</b></p> <p>The Implementing Entity Management Fee is USD 440,000 which is less than 10% of the Total Project/Programme Cost of USD USD</p>	<p><b>CAR4: Cleared.</b> Paragraph 104</p> <p>According to Adaptation Fund policy, when the IE and EE are the same, execution costs are capped at 1.5%. To</p>	

	<p>cent of the project/programme cost for the execution costs?</p>	<p>4,560,000. The Project/Programme Execution Cost is USD 151,960. When compared to the Total Project/Programme Cost, this is approximately 3.4%.</p> <p>According to Adaptation Fund policy, when the IE and EE are the same, the execution costs are capped at 1.5% of the total project cost, noting that justifications for increase over the 1.5% can be accepted with a justification on a case-by-case basis. Since SPC is stated to be both IE and EE, this rule will apply.</p> <p><b>CAR4:</b> Please, provide a strong justification for its currently proposed cost level.</p>	<p>exceed this cap, strong justification is required.</p> <p>The proposal now provides a strong justification for having the project's execution cost at 3.4% of the total project cost. The proposal justifies an execution cost of 3.4% exceeding the standard 1.5% cap because the project is unusually complex. It spans 14 different Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS), each with its own unique institutional and regulatory challenges. This requires significant resources for coordinating across multiple countries and providing tailored support.</p> <p>Additionally, the project involves a regional innovation financing window, which demands dedicated oversight for screening proposals, performing fiduciary checks,</p>	
--	--	--	---	--

			<p>ensuring safeguard compliance, and reporting. These specialized tasks cannot be covered by the standard IE management fee. The justification argues that while the percentage is high, the total amount of \$151,960 over five years is modest relative to the scale and complexity of the project. These funds are essential to ensure the project's fiduciary integrity, maintain compliance with various national and fund requirements, and provide high-quality technical support across the region. Without this budget, the small grant mechanism cannot be managed to the required standards.</p>	
Eligibility of IE	<p>1. Is the programme submitted through an eligible Multilateral or Regional Implementing Entity that has been accredited by the</p>	<p><b>Yes</b> SPC is an AF accredited Regional Implementing Entity. SPC's accreditation is valid until 25<sup>th</sup> August 2026.</p>	-	

	Board? Is the programme submitted by an entity that has been invited by the Board to do so?			
Implementation Arrangements	1. Does the proposal include adequate arrangement for programme management at the multi-regional/regional and national level, including coordination arrangements within countries and among them? Has the potential to partner with national institutions, and when possible, national implementing entities (NIEs), been considered, and included in the management arrangements?	<p><b>Yes</b></p> <p>The proposal outlines that overall coordination will be carried out by SPC's Project Management Unit (PMU), in close cooperation with SPC's technical divisions.</p> <p>Activity 2.2.3 provides focused capacity building to NIEs on how to identify innovative local practices, integrate them into national pipelines, and prepare proposals aligned with the objectives of the Adaptation Fund's innovation funding stream and similar opportunities.</p> <p>The proposal also highlights that SPC will coordinate activities</p>	-	

		with NDAs and NIEs in the region.		
	2. Are there measures for financial and project/programme risk management?	<p><b>Yes</b></p> <p>Table 3 provides a Financial and Project Risk Management Framework. This proposal highlights operational, strategic, compliance, and environmental risks, and proposes risk mitigation measures.</p>	-	
	3. Are there measures in place for the management of environmental and social risks, in line with the	<p><b>Clarification needed</b></p> <p>The proposal provides a comprehensive ESMS. This includes allocated roles and</p>	<p><b>CAR1: Cleared</b></p> <p>The ESMS has been updated to clarify that all sub-projects regardless of</p>	

	Environmental and Social Policy of the Fund?	responsibilities for its implementation, a process for screening and risk categorization, capacity strengthening, MEL, and the use of a grievance redress mechanism.  As specified in the earlier <b>CAR1</b> , please ensure that all sub-projects, regardless of their risk categorization, require the preparation of an ESMP.	categorization (B or C) will require an ESMP.	
	4. Are arrangements for monitoring and evaluation clearly defined, including budgeted M&E plans and sex-disaggregated data, targets, and indicators, in compliance with the Gender Policy of the Fund?	<b>Yes</b>  The proposal includes a budgeted M&E plan with a breakdown, provisions for a mid-term and terminal evaluation, as well as the integration of gender and inclusion-sensitive reporting.	-	
	5. Is a budget on the Implementing Entity Management Fee use included?	<b>Yes, but clarification needed</b>  <b>CR17:</b> A breakdown of the Implementing Entity	<b>CR17: Cleared</b> Table 10 Budget notes have now been included for the	

		Management Fee (USD 440,000) is provided. Please also provide budget notes.	Implementing Entity Management Fee.	
	6. Is an explanation and breakdown of the execution cost included?	<p><b>Clarification needed</b></p> <p>The project proposal states that the Implementing Entity (IE) will also act as the Executing Entity (EE) for this regional project. According to Adaptation Fund policy, when the IE and EE are the same, the execution costs are capped at 1.5% of the total project cost. The Execution Cost of the project is around 3.4 %. While the policy allows for exceeding the cap with a strong justification on a case-by-case basis, the current proposal does not provide this.</p> <p><b>Please see CAR4 above.</b></p> <p><b>CR18:</b> A breakdown of the Execution Costs (USD 151,960) is</p>	<p><b>CR18: Cleared</b> Table 10 Budget notes are provided for the Execution Costs.</p> <p><b>CR19: Not Cleared</b> Paragraph 17, 82 The narrative has been updated to reflect clearly that SPC will be the sole EE, and other organizations are referred to as sub-implementing partners. This is reflected in paragraph 82. Please also reflect it in paragraph 17 which still says “execution partnerships”.</p> <p><b>CAR5: Cleared</b> This has been updated to correctly reflect the Total Project/Programme</p>	<p><b>CR19: Cleared.</b></p> <p>Para 17 has now been updated while referring to sub-implementing partners instead just as in para 82.</p>

		<p>provided. Please also provide budget notes.</p> <p><b>CR19:</b> Part 1, Section C states: “From Year 3 onwards, SPC will expand execution partnerships to include community-based organisations and small private sector enterprises”. Please clarify what is meant by this statement and whether SPC is anticipated to be the only Executing Entity (EE) for this programme? The proposal should confirm that SPC is the sole official Executing Entity responsible for all legal and financial obligations. Sub-implementers/Partners: The proposal should refer to the other organizations—such as community-based organizations and private sector enterprises—as sub-implementing partners, sub-grantees, or project beneficiaries. This</p>	<p>Cost throughout the proposal.</p>	

		<p>clarifies that they are not EEs in the formal sense but are entities responsible for carrying out specific project activities under SPC's oversight.</p> <p><b>CAR5:</b> In this proposal the Total Project/Programme Cost listed does not include the Project/Programme Execution Cost. Please note that the Total Project/Programme Cost (USD 4,560,000) = Project/Programme Activities Cost (USD 4,408,040) + Project/Programme Execution Cost (USD 151,960). Please correct this throughout the proposal.</p>		
	<p>7. Does the M&amp;E Framework include a break-down of how implementing entity IE fees will be utilized in the</p>	<p><b>Not cleared.</b> The budget allocates USD 90,000 for mid-term review and terminal evaluation, which is 1.8% of the total programme cost</p>	<p><b>CAR6: Cleared</b> Page 39, Table 9 M&amp;E Section includes reference to a budgeted Project Completion Summary</p>	

	<p>supervision of the M&amp;E function?</p>	<p>(USD 5,000,000). This is within the recommended range of 1-5% for M&amp;E evaluations.</p> <p><b>CAR6:</b> Please kindly include in the M&amp;E section a reference to the mandatory Project Completion Summary (see <a href="https://www.adaptation-fund.org/projects-programmes/project-performance/">https://www.adaptation-fund.org/projects-programmes/project-performance/</a>) as well as to a baseline report (see p.8 of the guidance document on the updated Evaluation Policy at: <a href="https://www.adaptation-fund.org/document/evaluation-policy-of-the-adaptation-fund-graphically-edited">https://www.adaptation-fund.org/document/evaluation-policy-of-the-adaptation-fund-graphically-edited</a>), ensuring that they are adequately budgeted in the proposal.</p> <p><b>CAR7:</b> Please ensure that, in compliance with Decision B.41/20, costs related to the MTR and the Final Evaluation are</p>	<p><b>CAR7: Cleared</b> MTR and Final Evaluation are now budgeted under the IE fee</p>	

		budgeted under the IE fee. The sections on M&E must be revised accordingly, given that these costs are said to be budgeted under the PEC, although the budget indicates that they are (correctly) budgeted under the IE fee.		
	8. Is the timeframe for the proposed activities adequate?	<b>Yes</b> The programme duration of 5 years appears appropriate for the implementation of the listed activities.	-	-
	9. Is a summary breakdown of the budget for the proposed activities included?	<b>Clarification needed</b> <b>CR20:</b> Across the three components, USD 1,007,665 is reserved for "Personnel costs". The budget notes state "see personnel cost table below". However, there is no personnel cost table clearly visible. Please clarify with detailed budget notes how this USD 1,007,665 will be utilized.	<b>CR20: Cleared.</b> Table 10, p.46  The budget notes mention that this related to technical assistance for various activities. As well as technical backstopping by SPC experts.	-

		<p><b>CAR8:</b> Please review and ensure consistency between the budget and the budget notes. There are a number of inconsistencies that lead to confusion e.g. Row 1 budget notes says 150,000 per year but the budget provides per 200,000; Communication budget notes says 5,000 per year but the budget provides 2,000 per year. There are multiple examples beyond just the examples listed above.</p> <p><u>Furthermore,</u> Output 2.2. states sub-grants will be awarded with the lumpsum of 300,000 USD per year. This is not easy to understand so please provide further details in the budget notes.</p>	<p><b>CAR8: Cleared</b> Table 10, p.46 Budget notes have been updated and revised to ensure consistency and alignment.</p>	
	<p>10. Does the project/programme's results framework align with the AF's results framework? Does it include at least one core</p>	<p><b>Clarification needed</b></p> <p>The results framework aligns with the AF framework but lacks details on core impact</p>	<p><b>CAR9: Cleared</b> P.39-44 The project results framework now includes direct and indirect beneficiaries (core</p>	<p>-</p>

	<p>outcome indicator from the Fund's results framework?</p>	<p>indicators and quantifiable targets.</p> <p><u>Missing Elements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core indicator: Number of beneficiaries (direct and indirect).</li> <li>• Second core indicator for relevant areas (e.g., assets produced or natural assets protected).</li> </ul> <p><b>CAR9:</b> For each AF Core Indicators relevant to the project interventions (i.e., "Number of beneficiaries" as well as possibly "Assets Produced, Developed, Improved, or Strengthened" and "Natural Assets Protected or Rehabilitated"), please add in the project results framework section the corresponding Core</p>	<p>indicator), and disaggregates by gender. It also includes the number of assets produced, developed, improved, or strengthened (second core indicator).</p>	

		<p>Indicators table(s) available on pp.10-14 of the document "<a href="#">Methodologies for reporting Adaptation Fund core impact indicators</a>".</p> <p><a href="#">Methodologies for reporting Adaptation Fund core impact indicators</a> (<b>Template for fully-developed proposals</b>)</p> <p>Kindly ensure that "Baseline" and "Target at project approval" (estimates are fine) columns are duly completed in each table, and ensure that the figures provided in the tables align with those included in the project results framework. While filling out the "Number of beneficiaries" core indicator table, efforts should be made to disaggregate the direct and indirect beneficiaries by youth (age 15-24).</p>		
--	--	---	--	--

		For your reference: <a href="#">Methodologies for reporting Adaptation Fund core impact indicators</a>		
	11. Is a disbursement schedule with time-bound milestones included?	<b>Yes.</b>  <b>Note, the budget tables will be rechecked until final technical clearance.</b>	<b>Cleared</b>	-

**Funding Proposal Template for Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator (AFCIA) fully developed programme proposals**



**ADAPTATION FUND**

## **PROGRAMME ON INNOVATION: AFCIA PROGRAMMES**

### **REQUEST FOR PROJECT FUNDING FROM THE ADAPTATION FUND**

The annexed form should be completed and transmitted to the Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat by email.

Please type in the responses using the template provided. The instructions attached to the form provide guidance to filling out the template.

Please note that a project must be fully prepared when the request is submitted.

Complete documentation should be sent to:

The Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat  
1818 H Street NW  
MSN N7-700  
Washington, D.C., 20433  
U.S.A  
Fax: +1 (202) 522-3240/5  
Email: [afbsec@adaptation-fund.org](mailto:afbsec@adaptation-fund.org)



## ADAPTATION FUND

# MULTI/ REGIONAL INNOVATION PROJECT/PROGRAMME PROPOSAL

### PART I: PROJECT/PROGRAMME INFORMATION

Title of Project/Programme:	SPC's Climate Innovation Co:Lab
Geographic Scope (Multi/Regional):	Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu
Thematic Focal Area:	Innovative adaptation financing
Type of Implementing Entity:	Regional Implementing Entity
Implementing Entity:	Pacific Community (SPC)
Executing Entities:	Pacific Community (SPC)
Amount of Financing Requested:	5,000,000 (in U.S Dollars Equivalent)

## Table of Contents

A. Project / Programme Background and Context:	4
B. Project/Programme Objectives	10
C. Project / Programme Components and Financing:	11
D. Projected Calendar:	13
E. Project Structure	15
F. Contributions to the Innovation Pillar	20
G. Sourcing and Screening of Innovation Small Grant Proposals for Climate Adaptation	21
H. Screening Innovation Proposals for Inclusive and Sustainable Benefits	22
I. Cost Effectiveness	23
J. Alignment to National and Sub-National Strategies	24
K. Alignment with National Technical Standards	<u>2524</u>
L. Complementarity with Other Funding Sources	<u>262625</u>
M. Learning and Knowledge Management	<u>272726</u>
N. Stakeholder consultative process	<u>272726</u>
O. Incorporating Multi-Stakeholder Views on Innovation in Context	<u>282827</u>
P. Justification of Full Cost Adaptation Reasoning	<u>2928</u>
Q. Sustainability	<u>292928</u>
R. Environmental and Social Impact and Risk	<u>302928</u>
S. Arrangements for Project Implementation	<u>353533</u>
T. Project and Financial Risk	<u>373735</u>
U. Environmental and Social Risk Management	<u>383836</u>
V. Monitoring and Evaluation	<u>393937</u>
W. Results Framework	<u>414139</u>
X. Alignment of the project against the AF Results Framework	<u>454543</u>
Y. Budget	<u>474745</u>
Z. Disbursement Schedule	<u>545452</u>
I. Annex – Gender Assessment and Action Plan	<u>575755</u>
II. Annex – Environmental and Social Management System	<u>747472</u>

## A. Project / Programme Background and Context:

### Context

1. Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are among the countries most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, particularly low-lying atoll nations whose with low elevations of only a few metres above sea level.<sup>1</sup> The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) continuously underscores the urgent and unique climate challenges faced by Pacific SIDS, emphasizing that these nations are disproportionately vulnerable to the impending impacts of climate change. With their geographical isolation, limited economic diversification, and dependence on climate-sensitive sectors, PSIDS are facing a multitude of climate hazards that threaten both their ecological integrity and the well-being of their communities (IPCC, 2021). The World Risk Index identifies disaster risk – the likelihood that an extreme natural event will result in a disaster – as the highest in Oceania.<sup>2</sup> This is based on: exposure to natural hazards such as cyclones, flooding, drought and sea-level rise; vulnerability, including infrastructure quality, nutrition and socio-economic conditions; coping capacities such as governance, early warning systems and healthcare access; and adaptive capacities to manage future climate threats.
2. Pacific SIDS face increasingly frequent and severe impacts caused by climate change including rising temperatures, warming and acidifying oceans, degradation of coral reefs, extreme rainfall variability, more intense tropical cyclones and prolonged droughts.<sup>3</sup> Most populations are concentrated along coasts, making them particularly vulnerable to storm surges, saltwater intrusion into freshwater and agricultural systems, and flooding. Remoteness from global markets, small and dispersed populations, and limited natural resource bases constrain economic development and climate resilience. Economies are heavily reliant on climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, and tourism. As land masses comprise only a small fraction of the Pacific region, the health of marine and coastal ecosystems is especially vital for community well-being, food security, and economic resilience. Traditional coping mechanisms are being tested by long-term climatic shifts, while adaptation capacity is limited by structural barriers including constrained public finance, human resource gaps and inadequate infrastructure.
3. The region's climate is shaped by large-scale atmospheric systems, namely the South Pacific Convergence Zone (SPCZ), the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) and the Western Pacific Monsoon. These influence variability of rainfall, winds, tropical cyclone tracks, ocean currents and other environmental conditions. Their interactions are especially evident during El Niño and La Niña events.<sup>4</sup> Rainfall variability across the region is strongly influenced by the El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and the Interdecadal Pacific Oscillation, which cause shifts in the position of the SPCZ and other rainfall bands. ENSO is the dominant driver of interannual climate variability, affecting the occurrence and intensity of droughts, floods, tropical cyclones, coral bleaching and extreme sea-level events. Extreme El Niño events – recorded in 1982/83, 1997/98 and 2015/16 – are characterised by significant changes in sea surface temperatures, movement of key atmospheric convergence zones and intensified climate impacts. These events cause widespread disruption to agriculture, fisheries, ecosystems and weather systems. Under future climate scenarios, the frequency of extreme El Niño events are projected to double, with associated rainfall anomalies becoming more intense in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific. Future events are also expected to be warmer and more severe than in the past.<sup>5</sup>
4. While Pacific SIDS rank among the highest globally in terms of climate exposure and vulnerability, these vulnerabilities are compounded by structural challenges such as small land area, geographic isolation, fragmented private sectors and limited institutional capacity. Many countries have largely subsistence economies and constrained infrastructure systems. This constrains adaptation planning, service delivery and

---

<sup>1</sup> UNEP, 2014. GEO Small Island Developing States Outlook

<sup>2</sup> Hans-Joachim Heintze et al., 2018. WorldRiskReport 2018, Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft

<sup>3</sup> IPCC, 2014 ([https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/wg2/WGIIAR5-Chap29\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/wg2/WGIIAR5-Chap29_FINAL.pdf))

<sup>4</sup> CSIRO, Australian BoM and SPREP, 2015. Climate in the Pacific: A regional summary of new science and management tools.

<sup>5</sup> CSIRO, Australian BoM and SPREP, 2015. Climate in the Pacific: A regional summary of new science and management tools.

resilience building. In addition, limited access to data and evidence hampers climate-informed decision-making in the long term.<sup>6</sup>

5. Adaptation needs across the region are significant. Climate finance requirements are estimated at 6.5% to 9% of regional GDP – equivalent to nearly USD 1 billion annually. An analysis of National Determined Contributions (NDCs) Investment Plans of five Pacific SIDS (Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu) estimates a combined need of USD 2.4 billion of investments to reach NDC targets across priority sectors<sup>7</sup>. However, actual finance flows to the Pacific average just USD 220 million per year for the whole region, leaving a financing gap of over 75%. In the energy sector alone, over 93% of climate finance needs remain conditional on external support. While Pacific SIDS have improved access to vertical climate funds such as the Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Fund and Global Environment Facility, this access remains uneven, slow and largely dependent on international intermediaries. As of 2024, only a handful of countries in the region had received direct funding from the Adaptation Fund, and overall funding volumes remain low relative to adaptation needs. Lessons from the SPC and SPREP Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change and Resilience Building (PACRES) programme highlight that, despite improved readiness support, access modalities remain complex and resource-intensive for SIDS, with accreditation and fiduciary requirements delaying direct access and limiting ownership.
6. The gap between high vulnerability and limited finance access is exacerbated by systemic barriers that constrain the emergence and scale-up of innovative, locally-led adaptation solutions. Community-driven ideas often remain unfunded due to insufficient early-stage catalytic support, limited technical capacity and unclear pathways for integration into national systems. PACRES also evidenced that these challenges are particularly acute for women’s groups, youth, and community innovators, who face difficulties navigating climate finance systems and whose traditional and social innovations are often overlooked in formal programming. Innovation is further hampered by fragmented programming, poor coordination and inadequate incorporation of traditional knowledge, social innovation and local decision-making structures into formal adaptation planning processes. Despite these challenges, a growing number of adaptation innovators are active in the region. Community organisations, women’s groups and local enterprises are already piloting solutions to manage climate risk. However, many of these initiatives stall due to limited technical support, institutional recognition and follow-on finance. Strengthening of regional and local ecosystems for innovation by providing early-stage funding, building enabling systems for scale and bridging between local and national planning and investment pipelines will be critical for unlocking transformative adaptation outcomes across the Pacific.
7. An analysis conducted by SPC’s Regional Pacific NDC Hub demonstrates that the majority of targets found in Pacific SIDS NDCs concentrate on AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use), energy, and oceans and coastal zone, reflecting the central role of agriculture, fisheries, and renewable energy in Pacific livelihoods and resilience. (Figure 1). Targets also highlight waste, health, disaster risk reduction and human rights, signalling a strong focus on community well-being and equity.

---

<sup>6</sup> CSIRO, Australian BoM and SPREP, 2015. Climate in the Pacific: A regional summary of new science and management tools.

<sup>7</sup> Analysis of Pacific SIDS NDCs done by SPC’s Regional Pacific NDC Hub (August 2025)

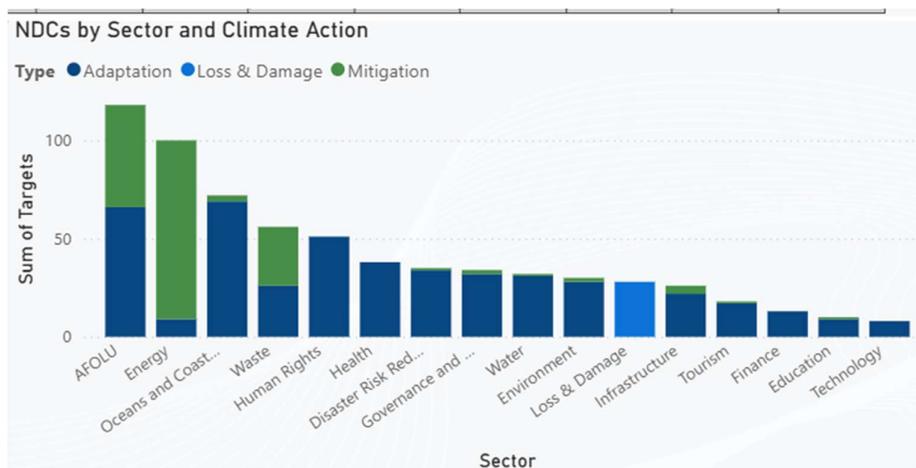


Figure 1: Analysis of NDCs by Sector and Climate Action across 14 Pacific SIDS (Regional Pacific NDC Hub, 2025)

- The Adaptation Fund’s Medium-Term Strategy (MTS II) for 2023–2027 seeks to continue the implementation of the Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator (AFCIA) through multilateral and regional implementing entities as innovation small grant administrators. This presents an opportunity for vulnerable Pacific SIDS to access fit-for-purpose climate finance to demonstrate proof-of-concept for innovative initiatives that struggle to attract the interest of larger multilateral and other sources of funding. In response to this context and the call of the Adaptation Fund, the proposed Climate Innovation Co:Lab will allow the Pacific Community (SPC) to provide a regionally coordinated, inclusive and flexible funding platform that enables Pacific SIDS to test, refine, and scale locally led adaptation solutions. The initiative will be implemented through SPC’s institutional “Funding with Intent” (FIT) programme, which drives innovation across multiple sectors and creates space for experimentation and learning. By targeting both the supply and demand sides of the innovation ecosystem, the SPC Co:Lab will fill a critical gap in the adaptation finance landscape by providing the support needed by Pacific innovators to move from ideas to impact. In this way, the Co:Lab will support locally led adaptation action that can crowd in other sources of funding and create the basis for larger national and regional projects and programmes that could attract climate finance at scale.

## Barriers

- Building on the barriers documented through several of SPC’s past and on-going initiatives including PACRES, Funding with Intent and the NDC Hub and consultations undertaken with Pacific stakeholders as part of these channels, the Co:Lab targets the most persistent systemic challenges that have prevented adaptation innovation from being financed, scaled and embedded into national systems. These barriers and how the Co:Lab responds to these barriers are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Barriers to Innovation Climate Finance in the Pacific

Barrier	Description	Programme response
<b>Limited access to early-stage catalytic finance</b>	Most financing mechanisms are geared toward large-scale or proven interventions, while small, community-led ideas often lack the resources needed to pilot or test innovative concepts. PACRES showed that these early-stage ideas, including those led by women and youth, often stalled due to lack of catalytic support and recognition in formal finance systems. SPC NDC Hub analysis further shows that the Pacific SIDS prioritize sectors such as agriculture, energy, oceans and coastal zones – areas where local innovations will be critical yet often remain beyond the reach of early-stage or de-risking finance.	The Co:Lab offers targeted small grants under its Incubation stage to pilot community-led innovations and de-risk proof-of-concept ideas. These are delivered through a regionally coordinated, inclusive mechanism that lowers entry barriers and supports experiment through innovative mechanisms and approaches.

<b>Weak institutional capacity and coordination</b>	Many Pacific SIDS face challenges in project preparation, technical appraisal, and monitoring, which hampers their ability to manage innovation portfolios or scale up successful interventions. PACRES experience highlighted that institutional fragmentation and limited proposal development capacity significantly delayed access to climate finance.	The programme provides tailored technical assistance, mentoring, and capacity-building delivered by SPC's Climate Finance Unit (CFU), technical divisions, and embedded advisors. This includes support for proposal development and innovation design.
<b>Fragmented and siloed programming</b>	A lack of regional coordination results in duplication, missed opportunities for learning and synergy, and insufficient regional visibility of effective practices. PACRES highlighted duplication across regional and national levels, underscoring the need for structured mechanisms for joint learning and coordination.	The Co:Lab is embedded in SPC's FiT platform and coordinated with designated authorities (DAs) and regional partners. Joint learning events and coordination with national focal points will reduce fragmentation and promote visibility and collaboration.
<b>Inadequate pathways for scaling and replication</b>	Most financing mechanisms are geared toward large-scale or proven interventions, while small, community-led ideas often lack the resources needed to pilot or test innovative concepts. PACRES found that many promising pilots stalled at the end of funding cycles due to missing links to investment matchmaking and national policy frameworks.	The programme's Acceleration and Amplification stages support high-potential innovations through follow-on funding (up to USD 250,000), innovation-to-investment matchmaking and integration into national policy and financing processes via knowledge sharing and outreach activities.
<b>Limited integration of social innovation and traditional knowledge</b>	Many conventional financing mechanisms do not account for community-led processes, non-technological innovation, or approaches grounded in Indigenous knowledge and cultural practices. PACRES experience highlighted that social and cultural dimensions of resilience are critical yet remain weakly integrated into finance systems.	The programme adopts a broad innovation definition that values social, institutional, and nature-based solutions, including traditional knowledge. Assessment criteria explicitly recognise community-driven innovation and social inclusion.
<b>Slow and complex access modalities</b>	Many Pacific SIDS prefer direct access to climate finance, but progress has been slow due to the time and effort required to meet accreditation and fiduciary standards. PACRES experience highlighted that despite readiness support, access to vertical funds remains uneven, slow, and heavily dependent on international intermediaries.	SPC, as a Regional Implementing Entity (RIE) provides an accessible channel for countries without accredited National Implementing Entities (NIEs). The programme works closely with DAs to ensure national ownership.
<b>Limited technical capacity to develop mature project pipelines</b>	Many Pacific SIDS still face limited technical capacity to translate priorities into bankable projects, as small administrations, high staff turnover, and competing demands constrain expertise in project design, financial structuring, and safeguards. As a result, many proposals remain at an early stage and rely heavily on external consultants, which can weaken national ownership and slow the development of mature project pipelines. This capacity gap is a key bottleneck in accessing climate finance at scale.	The <b>Co:Lab</b> provides Pacific Island Countries with a targeted platform to strengthen long-term institutional capacity to access, absorb, and deliver climate finance at scale. Leveraging the expertise of SPC's Climate Finance Unit, Pacific SIDS can receive tailored support during the <b>incubation and acceleration stages</b> , enabling them to nurture early ideas into viable concepts and develop mature project pipelines that respond to national and regional priorities.

## Funding with Intent

10. FiT is SPC's institutional platform for innovation, established in partnership with the New Zealand Government. It serves as an incubator–accelerator system to support the design, testing, refinement and amplification of innovation across SPC's programme areas. Between 2020 and 2024, FiT funded 30 incubation projects and 5 amplification projects with an annual budget of about NZD 800,000 (Figure 2). It operates as part of the broader OneSPC Transformation Programme and draws on the organisation's extensive technical, policy and regional engagement capacities.

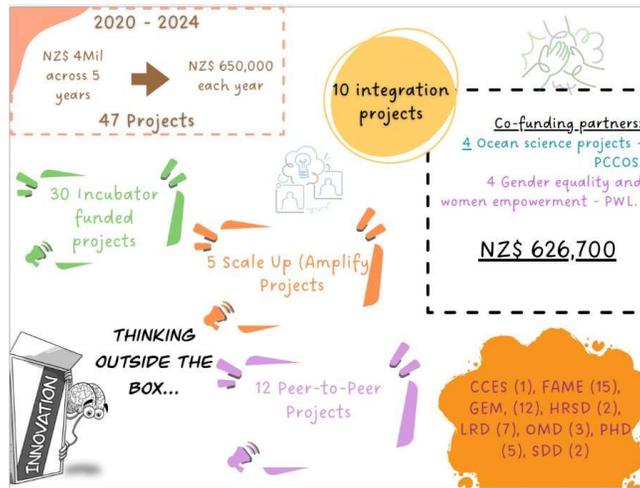


Figure 2. SPC's FiT innovation window.

11. Over the 2020–2024 period, FiT demonstrated its value in uncovering high-impact initiatives across Pacific SIDS at relatively low costs. This exceptional value-for-money has been recognised over time with other SPC programmes increasingly investing in the FiT call for pitches and selection process and contributing to co-funding initiatives. The FiT programme has already created specific funding windows to generate innovative ideas in key thematic areas like gender equality and the empowerment of young Pacific Ocean scientists. These successful adaptations led to the support of projects such as “Gender-responsive Climate Action in the Informal Shipping Sector” where Papuan women were trained as operators for locally equipped solar-powered boats for inter-island transportation and shipping. Another example is the “Swamp Taro Basket Planting” initiative, Palauan communities addressed the challenge of declining taro yields due to soil sodicity and invasive plants by blending traditional practices of basket planting with improving drainage systems and selection of more resilient crop varieties (Figure 3).

- **Challenge:** declining taro yields in atolls due to high sodicity of soils, stagnant waters and invasive plants (Kayangel, Palau)
- **Innovation:** blending traditional practices (raising planting beds, basket planting), socio-cultural survey, soil health monitoring (organic amendments), improving drainage systems, and selecting suitable crop varieties
- **Implementers:** LRD, GEM
- **Type:** Breakthrough Innovation
- **Domain:** Process
- **Incubate:** March 2023 - Dec 2024
- **Amplify:** March 2025 -



Figure 3. Case Study Innovation Incubation Swamp Taro Basket Planting

12. To date, FiT has financed a diverse portfolio of innovation projects spanning multiple sectors across Pacific SIDS. These projects reflect both the region’s cross-cutting adaptation challenges and the breadth of innovative responses trialed. The sectors also strongly align with national climate change priorities presented in Figure 1.

Table 2: FiT portfolio up to date

Clustered Area	Sectors Included	Innovations supported
1. Food Security & Sustainable Livelihoods	Fisheries (5), Aquaculture (4), Agriculture (3), Livestock farming (1), Forestry (1), Tourism (2)	16
2. Marine & Coastal Resources Management	Coastal fisheries (3), Oceanic fisheries (2), Marine resources management (2), Maritime transport (1)	8
3. Health, Biosecurity & Resilience	Health (4), Biosecurity (3), Resilience (1), Water management (1)	9
4. Energy & Climate Finance	Energy (2), Climate Finance (1)	3
5. Knowledge, Culture & Education	Education (2), Arts & Culture (2), Languages (2), Statistics (2), Geospatial (3)	11

13. The Sensemaking Exercise of FiT phase 2020–2024 showed high success rates for supported initiatives at the incubation and proof of concept phase, while the amplification generally confirmed the strong impact potential but lacked resources for proper scale-up. The Co:Lab will build directly on this existing infrastructure by establishing an innovation window for climate change adaptation within FiT, focused on identifying, incubating and scaling transformative, locally owned solutions that build climate resilience in Pacific SIDS. The Co:Lab will provide a clear, structured pipeline for adaptation innovation aligned to the core FiT innovation pathway of Incubation, Acceleration and Amplification:

- Incubation through small grants to local actors to pilot context-relevant adaptation solutions (Component 1);
- Acceleration through technical assistance, mentoring and follow-on grants to refine and scale high-potential innovations (Component 2); and
- Amplification through peer-to-peer exchanges, investment matchmaking, knowledge dissemination, and integration of successful innovations into national policies and planning frameworks (Component 3).

By embedding the Co:Lab into the FiT framework, SPC is able to offer a mature institutional platform with established systems for managing innovation, shorter feedback loops, and strong links to national institutions and technical divisions. This ensures that adaptation innovations are not only funded, but strategically supported to evolve, scale and influence broader development outcomes across the Pacific. Furthermore, the proposal leverages SPC’s relationships with DAs and NIEs to the Adaptation Fund, regional development banks, and initiatives such as the Climate Finance Access Network (CFAN) and the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH) programme. These partnerships position SPC as a regional aggregator and connector, capable of transforming grassroots adaptation ideas into investable, scalable solutions aligned with regional priorities and climate finance strategies.

14. An adaptation innovation window under FiT offers a compelling, high-impact investment for the Adaptation Fund that will advance innovation, inclusivity and country ownership while making full use of SPC’s institutional strengths and strategic innovation systems. The Co:Lab incorporates lessons from previous phases of FiT from the design stage. SPC will also leverage its ongoing involvement and best practices from key regional initiatives, which are outlined in detail in Section L of this proposal, including:

- ~~The Regional Programmatic Approach on Climate Action (RPACA)<sup>8</sup>—RPACA, provides a framework for coordinated, programmatic climate action across Pacific SIDS, focusing on scaling up adaptation and resilience through multi-country approaches. RPACA has prioritised sectors that are critical for building resilience, including water security, resilient agriculture and food systems, coastal resilience, health, and climate information services. The proposed programme complements RPACA by operationalising an~~

<sup>8</sup> RPACA is a coordinated initiative that has identified 6 regional priorities for resource mobilisation with the Green Climate Fund.

innovation small grants window that can channel resources towards locally led solutions in these same priority sectors, aligned with national priorities identified through RPACA.

- ~~Unlocking Blue Pacific Prosperity (UBPP)<sup>9</sup>—UBPP, under the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, seeks to protect 30% of the Pacific Ocean and sustainably manage its resources, with particular emphasis on coastal and marine ecosystems, sustainable fisheries, biodiversity conservation, and nature-based solutions. While UBPP is primarily focused on large-scale marine and ocean governance, the proposed programme contributes complementary action by supporting local innovation in coastal adaptation, fisheries management, and community resilience. Lessons from Co:Lab can inform and feed into UBPP’s broader regional frameworks.~~
- ~~SPC’s Regional Readiness Programme<sup>10</sup>—This programme strengthens institutional capacities of Pacific SIDS to access, manage, and report on climate finance. SPC has already engaged national stakeholders through climate finance writeshops and regional learning exchanges with national development banks, helping countries build pipelines of climate finance-ready projects. The proposed programme will complement this by piloting innovative adaptation solutions, which can then be scaled through readiness pipelines. This collaboration will be further strengthened by sharing evidence and lessons from innovation pilots into the readiness process.~~
- ~~Climate Finance Access Network (CFAN)—This initiative provides in-country advisors to support governments with project development and climate finance access. The proposed programme is complementary, as it will create a pipeline of innovative, country-driven projects that can be further developed and scaled by CFAN advisors. In addition, SPC’s CFAN advisors will directly support innovation projects under this programme by providing technical expertise, and ensuring coherence, and alignment with national financing strategies.~~

## B. Project/Programme Objectives

15. The objective of the SPC Co:Lab programme is to incubate, catalyse, de-risk, and scale locally led climate adaptation innovations across Pacific SIDS. The Co:Lab will be operationalised through a dedicated adaptation innovation window embedded within SPC’s institutional FiT innovation platform. This dedicated window will provide tailored financial and technical support through the structured Incubation–Acceleration–Amplification pathway, allowing local actors and institutions to move ideas from early-stage concepts to scalable, investable solutions.

The programme builds on SPC’s established innovation management systems under FiT, characterised by shorter feedback loops, adaptive learning and regional integration. The programme responds to regional and member country priorities, leverages SPC technical capabilities in innovation and research, and prioritises support for projects that are “shovel ready” with teams prepared to move quickly and deliver impact. It will also actively promote the engagement of young and emerging Pacific professionals and scientists, as well as foster gender equality, women’s leadership and social inclusion. FiT has demonstrated strong potential for social inclusion by involving stakeholders in co-design processes, leading to many women-led initiatives (e.g., in local maritime transport, geospatial, domestic energy consumption, agriculture), strong involvement of young professionals, and integrated responses to issues important to vulnerable communities (e.g., sustainable farming on atolls, context-specific early warning systems, invasive species management).

16. The Co:Lab programme will enhance the adaptive capacity and climate resilience of vulnerable communities by:

- Identifying and nurturing promising locally led adaptation ideas;
- Supporting early-stage innovation, pilots, and proof-of-concept projects;

---

<sup>9</sup> [UBPP comprises philanthropic seed funding to unlock new, catalytic and accessible investments for sustainable management of the Blue Pacific Continent and for robust food systems to ensure the livelihoods and well-being of all Pacific people.](#)

<sup>10</sup> [The Regional Readiness “Building capacity of regional direct access entity and national designated authorities to foster climate action in the Pacific” is building capabilities across the Pacific for the development of high-quality feasibility studies, concept notes and funding proposals for submission to multilateral climate finance mechanisms.](#)

- Accelerating tested ideas through targeted technical assistance and scale-up funding;
- Promoting knowledge sharing, investment matchmaking, and policy uptake for replication.

Through this approach, the Co:Lab will unlock fit-for-purpose, catalytic adaptation finance, address systemic barriers to innovation, and build an enabling environment for transformative, inclusive, and enduring climate resilience in the Pacific. The Theory of Change is presented in [Figure 4](#).

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	To incubate, catalyse, de-risk, and scale locally led climate adaptation innovations across Pacific SIDS					
<b>COMPONENTS</b>	1. Incubation – Identification and development of innovative practices for climate adaptation		2. Acceleration – Scale-up Funding for Promising Innovation Projects		3. Amplification – Knowledge Management, Learning, and Replication	
<b>EXPECTED OUTCOMES</b>	1. Innovative, locally led adaptation solutions are identified, de-risked, and refined through targeted incubation support, strengthening the pipeline of scalable climate adaptation practices across the Pacific.		2. Adaptation innovations are scaled up, resulting in increased climate resilience of communities and systems through expanded implementation		3. Knowledge, evidence, and learning from innovative adaptation practices are systematically captured and disseminated, promoting replication, policy influence, and increased regional capacity for climate resilience	
<b>EXPECTED OUTPUTS</b>	1.1 Incubation of 20 innovative and eligible small grant projects identified, screened and funded across priority adaptation themes.	2.1 Increased capacity of local actors to develop technically sound and innovative adaptation project ideas	2.2 Enhanced pipeline of viable adaptation concepts for SPC CIA and other funding sources	3.1 Investment matchmaking and climate finance readiness for amplification supported	3.2 Regional peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, policy uptake, and replication pathways are strengthened	
<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	1.1.1 – Launch call for project pitches and develop supporting guidance 1.1.2 – Screen pitches using pre-agreed innovation criteria and country-specific priorities 1.1.3 – Facilitate collaborative co-design and proposal development for shortlisted EOIs 1.1.4 – Conduct technical review and final selection of proposals 1.1.5 – Monitor implementation and provide ongoing support	2.1.1 Establish a responsive technical assistance mechanism (Helpdesk) 2.1.2 Deliver targeted technical support for early-stage concept refinement 2.1.3 Deliver clinics and mentoring on adaptation innovation, integrating human-centred design, business modelling, and risk assessment	2.2.1 Prepare successful incubation projects for scale-up under the acceleration phase 2.2.2 Support high-performing Component 1 projects with additional acceleration funding 2.2.3 Support NIEs to strengthen innovation pipelines and develop proposals for the Adaptation Fund innovation window	3.1.1 Convene Climate Innovation Investment Matchmaking Labs	3.2.1 Develop Documentation and Knowledge Exchange of Successful Innovations 3.2.2 Convene joint Peer-to-Peer Learning and Community of Practice Development 3.2.3 Provide support for Policy Uptake and Mainstreaming	
<b>ASSUMPTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation and experimentation are politically and institutionally tolerated, and small-scale failure is understood as part of a learning process.</li> <li>• Local actors are willing and able to engage and are supported to access small grants and capacity development opportunities.</li> <li>• Coordination with existing NIEs and regional partners is effective and leads to meaningful collaboration rather than duplication or competition.</li> <li>• Regional development banks are open to engaging in innovation-to-investment matchmaking, offering scale-up pathways for high-potential grantees</li> </ul>					

Figure 4. Theory of Change

## C. Project / Programme Components and Financing

17. As RIE, SPC will be responsible for overall programme implementation, coordination, fiduciary management, and reporting to the Adaptation Fund. SPC will also serve as Executing Entity (EE) for the programme, particularly in the early phases, drawing on its technical divisions, regional platforms, and established presence across the Pacific. From Year 3 onwards, SPC will expand [execution partnershipssub-implementing partners](#) to include community-based organisations and small private sector enterprises. This phased approach will be guided by the principles of country ownership, subsidiarity, and effectiveness, and will allow for adaptive management as implementation capacity is strengthened across the region. The Co:Lab programme is structured into three interlinked components aligned with the FiT innovation lifecycle to support a coherent pipeline from early-stage ideation to scaled implementation and peer-to-peer knowledge sharing. It also includes dedicated resources for coordination, learning and programme management, supported by SPC as the RIE and EE.
18. **Component 1: Incubation** will provide small grants (USD 25,000–75,000) for locally led initiatives to pilot climate adaptation innovations that are inclusive, context-relevant, and technically sound. This component will establish a robust pipeline of early-stage innovations with high potential for scale. To ensure accessibility and reduce entry barriers, the component will adopt FiT’s proven two-step design process:

- The first step is the **Idea stage**, where a call for pitches invites applicants to submit a short two-page concept note - distinct from most EOI processes. These initial ideas are reviewed by a multi-disciplinary Appraisal Committee.

- Selected concepts then move into the **Co-design stage**, where SPC's FiT team accompanies applicants in developing a full proposal. The process remains intentionally light-touch and iterative. Applicants are supported by SPC colleagues from various divisions, including the CFU and the institutional Social and Environmental Responsibility (SER) team to co-develop technically sound and context-sensitive proposals. This hands-on, collaborative approach ensures quality while building local ownership and capacity.

**Component 2: Acceleration** will offer targeted technical assistance and follow-on grants (up to a maximum of USD 250,000) to potential projects, including those successfully incubated under Component 1. Technical support will be delivered through SPC's internal capacity (e.g. CFU, CFAN and CCFAH Advisors, and technical divisions,) as well as external partners where needed. The focus will be on strengthening the viability, scalability, and investment readiness of innovations, enabling their integration into national pipeline and adaptation strategies.

**Component 3: Amplification** will focus on scaling impact through peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, replication, and investment matchmaking. SPC will organise regional Innovation-to-Investment Matchmaking Labs, connecting innovators with development finance institutions (e.g. national development banks) and private capital. It will also deliver training on blended finance tools and innovative climate finance instruments. Lessons learned and successful models will be documented and disseminated through existing platforms such as the Regional National Determined Contributions (NDC) Hub and integrated into national policies and planning frameworks.

Project/Programme Components	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Countries	Amount (USD)
1. <b>Incubation</b> – Identification and development of innovative practices for climate adaptation	1. Innovative, locally led adaptation solutions are identified, de-risked, and refined through targeted incubation support, strengthening the pipeline of scalable climate adaptation practices across the Pacific.	1.1 Incubation of 20 innovative and eligible small grant projects identified, screened and funded across priority adaptation themes.	Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu	1,306,120
2. <b>Acceleration</b> – Scale-up funding for promising innovation projects	2. Adaptation innovations are scaled up, resulting in increased climate resilience of communities and systems through expanded implementation	2.1 Increased capacity of local actors to develop technically sound and innovative adaptation project ideas. 2.2 Accelerated innovation pipeline and scaled-up readiness innovation of approximately 6 incubated projects.		1,654,120
3. <b>Amplification</b> – Knowledge management, learning and replication	3. Knowledge, evidence, and learning from innovative adaptation practices are systematically captured and disseminated, promoting replication, policy influence, and increased regional capacity for climate resilience	3.1 Investment matchmaking and climate finance readiness for amplification supported 3.2 Regional peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, policy uptake, and replication pathways are strengthened		1,447,800
6. Project/Programme Execution cost				<b>151,960</b>
7. Total Project/Programme Cost				<b>4,560,000</b>
8. Project/Programme Cycle Management Fee charged by the Implementing Entity				<b>440,000</b>
Amount of Financing Requested				<b>5,000,000</b>

## D. Projected Calendar

Milestones	Expected Dates
Start of Project/Programme Implementation	Q1/2026
Mid-term Review (if planned)	Q2/2028

Project/Programme Closing	Q4/2030
Terminal Evaluation	2031

### E. Project Structure

#### ***Component 1: Incubation – Identification and incubation of innovative practices for climate adaptation***

19. Component 1 will provide catalytic financial support to innovative, inclusive, and locally led adaptation solutions in Pacific SIDS through a structured small grants facility hosted by SPC and embedded within its institutional FiT innovation platform. This facility provides a clear entry point for local actors to test and de-risk novel adaptation concepts, while allowing SPC and country stakeholders to identify and nurture ideas with scale-up potential.
20. The facility will be implemented in close coordination with DAs in participating countries to ensure alignment with national adaptation priorities and strategic direction. To further enhance country ownership, existing coordination structures at the national level will be used to support the identification of country priorities, oversee the screening of project pitches, and recommend proposals for funding under all components. Grants ranging from USD 25,000–75,000 will support early-stage, proof-of-concept adaptation projects, recognising the absorptive capacity and needs of local actors. Projects that do not fully meet selection criteria but demonstrate strong potential will be referred to Component 2 for technical assistance and proposal strengthening, in line with the programme’s emphasis on risk-tolerant innovation and inclusive capacity development. The selection procedure under Component 1 will follow the core principles and process used by SPC’s FiT programme (see Figure 5):
- A. Ideas Stage. A regional call for Expressions of Interest (EOIs) will be launched annually and disseminated through SPC’s regional networks, technical divisions, and established platforms such as the NDC Hub, as well as through direct engagement with DAs. The call will invite brief, two-page concepts from civil society organisations (CSOs), small and medium enterprises, community groups and SPC technical teams, responding to country-specific adaptation challenges. Ideas may be submitted individually or in collaboration with SPC technical divisions. EOIs will be reviewed by a multi-disciplinary Appraisal Committee using criteria aligned with the FiT approach, pre-liminary criteria identified include:
- Clear response to a climate change adaptation or resilience building challenge
  - Alignment with regional priorities (including outcomes of regional convenings) or national priorities articulated in NAPs, NDCs, TNAs, sectoral strategies, or similar policy frameworks
  - Local ownership and implementation capacity
  - Utilisation of SPC technical capabilities in innovation and research
  - “Shovel readiness”, demonstrating the ability to begin implementation quickly and effectively
  - Support for young and emerging Pacific professionals, and/or promotion of gender equality, women’s leadership and social inclusion
  - Balanced representation across countries and innovation types, with flexibility to respond to emerging opportunities and country priorities
- B. Co-Design Stage: Shortlisted applicants from the Ideas Stage will be invited into a collaborative co-design phase. SPC teams will accompany applicants in refining their concept into a more detailed proposal, identifying appropriate implementation arrangements, including partnerships with local actors. The process is intentionally light-touch and adaptive, involving relevant SPC divisions (e.g. SER, technical programmes) and country stakeholders.

# FUNDING WITH INTENT

## FIT

### REVIEW PROCESS



Figure 5. Review Process from Project Pitch to Implementation

21. Innovation within the programme will be treated not as a fixed list of eligible technologies, but as a dynamic and context-driven process of creating value through novel and locally appropriate solutions. This will include both high-tech interventions (e.g. artificial intelligence, geographic information system tools) and low-tech or traditional knowledge-based approaches (e.g. nature-based solutions, customary practices). Innovation will be viewed in the context of de-risking proof-of-concept ideas and transforming them to suitable acceleration stages. Innovation can be categorised as presented in [Figure 6](#), namely: (i) Breakthrough, (ii) Sustaining, (iii) Basic Research, and (vi) Disruptive. Central to the Co:Lab approach is empowering local communities, especially those most vulnerable to climate change, to actively co-create innovative adaptation solutions that honour and leverage traditional knowledge, indigenous practices, and locally defined priorities. This process ensures that interventions are culturally appropriate, socially accepted, and grounded in lived experience.

How well is the problem defined?	Well	<p><b>Breakthrough</b></p> <p>Well-defined problem that's just devilishly hard to solve. New product/service for new market. In cases like these, we need to explore unconventional skill domains.</p>	<p><b>Sustaining</b></p> <p>Problem well understood, existing market. Innovation improves performance and efficiency. Incremental change.</p>
	Not well	<p><b>Basic Research</b></p> <p>Scientific research with the aim of improving scientific theories for better understanding and prediction of natural or other phenomena.</p>	<p><b>Disruptive</b></p> <p>Problem not so well understood, new market or disrupting existing markets. Innovation is game changing, could be an innovation in business model. Challenges previous assumptions about how business works.</p>
		Not well	Well
		How well is the domain defined?	

Figure 6. Innovation Framework (G. Satell, Harvard Business Review, 2017)

## 22. Output 1.1: Incubation of 20 innovative and eligible small grant projects identified, screened and funded across priority adaptation themes

### Activity 1.1.1 Launch call for project pitches (EOIs) and provide supporting guidance

SPC will launch an annual, regionally coordinated **call for short two-page project pitches**, in close collaboration with DAs as well as SPC's networks, technical divisions, and established platforms such as the Regional NDC Hub. Pitch submissions are encouraged by a broad range of actors including from CSOs, small and medium enterprises, community groups, and SPC technical teams. Applicants will be encouraged to submit ideas independently or in partnership with SPC technical teams. The pitch appraisal will be conducted by an Appraisal Committee with representatives separated from technical teams submitting a concept or potentially selected to implement a project. To ensure the independence of the appraisal process, appraisal committee representatives will be selected based on their strategic role in the organisation or role in a corporate function separated from day-to-day decisions and operations of technical divisions or implementing teams. They must testify that: 1) they did not participate in the ideation of any pitches submitted; 2) they will not take part in decisions during project implementation; 3) neither they nor anyone with whom they have a relationship or shared interest (such as family, cultural ties, political or commercial interests) will receive personal benefit from the project; and 4) there is no conflict of interest related to the projects being evaluated. Additionally, each appraisal committee member will have to sign a 'Conflict of Interest Declaration Form' testifying that they will declare any potential conflict of interest. If a conflict of interest arise, SPC will take the appropriate measures to mitigate it and prevent associated risks. In this way, SPC will ensure the independence of the appraisal process using the approach successfully trialled through FiT. Clear guidance will be provided on eligibility criteria including Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) and Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) considerations, country-specific priorities and innovation principles aligned with AFCIA and FiT, as well as how SPC facilitates matchmaking between promising ideas and technical divisions where needed. A webinar will be organised with each call for pitches to introduce potential applicants, DAs and other local actors to the Co:Lab and guide on the application process and overall requirements for implementation.

### Activity 1.1.2 Screen EOIs using pre-agreed innovation criteria and country-specific priorities

Submitted EOIs will be reviewed against screening criteria jointly developed under the FiT framework aligned with AFCIA guidance and inclusive of ESS and GESI criteria. A preliminary list of criteria has been identified and will be refined during the inception phase of the project involving a multi-disciplinary Appraisal Committee with SPC specialists in areas of climate change adaptation, procurements, finance, resource mobilisation, MEL, innovation, and social and environmental responsibility. At least one specific criterion will observe the response of pitch ideas to climate change adaptation and resilience building challenges. Screening will be conducted by the multi-disciplinary Appraisal Committee to ensure transparency, national alignment and inclusivity. Pitches will be assessed based on the 2025 Competitive Funds Selection Criteria but with the additional requirement of clearly addressing impacts of climate change. Further, pitches are assessed against an SER Checklist as per SPC's SER Policy. Proposals that are high risk (Category A) will not be eligible for support through the Co:Lab. Projects that are low risk (Category C) will be prioritised. All projects (Category B & C) will be required to develop an appropriate Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) at project level, following the Adaptation Fund's Environmental and Social Policy (ESP), to mitigate and monitor the risks during the project implementation. Promising but underdeveloped ideas may be referred to Component 2 for technical strengthening.

### Activity 1.1.3 Facilitate collaborative co-design and proposal development for shortlisted EOIs

Shortlisted applicants will enter a structured co-design phase, during which SPC will provide light-touch, hands-on technical assistance to co-develop full proposals. This includes the use of simple templates, continued alignment with country and regional priorities, and active engagement of SPC's technical divisions, SER team and CFU, as appropriate execution partners. The co-design will improve project viability, strengthen local ownership, and ensure that proposals are feasible and ready for implementation. During this phase, applicants will be required to demonstrate how their proposed solutions address the impacts of climate change while also considering the specific needs and priorities of marginalised groups, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples and/or remote communities in outer islands. To ensure proposals are socially and environmentally robust, SPC's SER team will actively participate in the co-design process, supporting applicants to strengthen safeguards and inclusion measures during proposal development. Any

recommendations made by the SER team must be incorporated into the project design. This ensures that proposals are socially and environmentally robust and reflect SPC's commitment to inclusive and rights-based development.

**Activity 1.1.4 Conduct technical review and final selection of proposals**

SPC will conduct a final technical appraisal of the full proposals emerging from the co-design process. All proposals submitted will be assessed against a set of technical, social and environmental criteria. These criteria will examine the innovation's potential to strengthen adaptive capacity. In addition, the proposals will be considered on their articulation of how vulnerable groups will be engaged and the extent to which they ensure equitable access, participation, and benefit-sharing. Final selection will reflect a balanced portfolio in terms of climate innovation, social inclusion, gender equality, geographic distribution, and strategic alignment with national or regional priorities.

**Activity 1.1.5 Monitor implementation and provide ongoing support**

SPC will monitor the implementation of sub-projects through regular reporting, periodic virtual and in-person support, and mid-point check-ins in alignment with the Co:Lab Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS), Gender Action Plan, sub-project ESMP (if applicable), and Adaptation Fund reporting requirements. Technical backstopping will be provided by SPC divisions and country support structures to promote adaptive delivery and early-stage learning and ensuring compliance with ESS measures integrated into the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) system. This system will include gender- and vulnerability-disaggregated indicators, enabling real-time learning and the identification of any unintended negative impacts. Through this systematic screening and support process, the project ensures that all innovations not only avoid harm but actively deliver co-benefits that enhance resilience and inclusion.

**Component 2: Acceleration – Scale-up funding for promising innovation projects**

23. Component 2 will build capacities by providing tailored technical assistance for the development, refinement, and acceleration of approximately 6 promising adaptation solutions, enabling their replication and access to climate finance. This component will support both:

- Applicants from Component 1 whose ideas showed strong potential but did not meet selection thresholds during the co-design process and request targeted support for refinement; and
- Successful grantees under Component 1 whose incubated innovations demonstrate impact, relevance, and scalability, and are ready for scale-up or replication.

This component will deliver targeted technical assistance and follow-on grants of up to USD 250,000 to help actors move from proof-of-concept to scale-ready solutions. It will also strengthen the overall pipeline of innovation projects that can be submitted to other climate finance sources such as the Adaptation Fund or Green Climate Fund (GCF). Technical assistance will be provided primarily through SPC's internal capacities, including the CFU, technical divisions, CFAN and CCFAH advisors, and, where needed, complemented by external specialists. The focus will be on enhancing and positioning existing concepts rather than generating new ideas from scratch.

24. **Output 2.1: Increased capacity of local actors to develop technically sound and innovative adaptation project ideas**

**Activity 2.1.1 Establish a responsive technical assistance mechanism (Helpdesk)**

SPC will establish a responsive Helpdesk mechanism to coordinate requests for technical assistance from local stakeholders, NIEs, and other actors across participating countries. The Helpdesk will serve as a central platform for intake, triage and referral of requests to appropriate SPC divisions or external experts. It will provide targeted advisory services, guidance on funding pathways, and pre-submission feedback to strengthen proposals for incubation, scale-up, or other funding windows. The Helpdesk will be accessible year-round and supported by SPC's internal capacities and strategic partnerships. This mechanism ensures that support is accessible outside of formal calls for proposals, and it enables SPC to maintain a proactive, responsive and country-driven pipeline of adaptation innovations, even between funding windows.

**Activity 2.1.2 Deliver targeted technical support for early-stage concept refinement**

Building on Activity 2.1.1, SPC will provide support based on requests from applicants who need additional technical input to develop viable concept notes or proposals. For instance, concepts requiring additional work,

either following rejection from Component 1 or as a result of pre-screening, will receive hands-on support in refining adaptation objectives, clarifying theories of change, integrating innovation dimensions, and strengthening technical soundness. Support will align ideas for submission under future Co:Lab calls or other adaptation innovation financing opportunities. The focus will be on strengthening existing concepts rather than developing new ones.

*Activity 2.1.3 Deliver clinics and mentoring on adaptation innovation, integrating human-centered design, business modelling, and risk assessment*

Complementing Activities 2.1.1 and 2.1.2, SPC will deliver structured clinics and mentorships focused on building practical innovation design capacities. Topics will include people-centred design, business modelling, scaling strategies, adaptive management, and investment structuring. This activity will particularly benefit Component 1 grantees advancing toward acceleration or repositioning their concepts after feedback received in the Helpdesk process. This approach will equip participants to develop solutions that are not only technically sound and financially viable, but also socially inclusive and responsive to real-world adaptation challenges. The activity will target Component 1 grantees and other country stakeholders interested in strengthening innovation readiness.

**25. Output 2.2: Accelerated innovation pipeline and scaled-up readiness innovation**

*Activity 2.2.1 Prepare successful incubation projects for scale-up under the acceleration phase*

This activity will provide targeted support to high-performing grantees from Component 1 being considered for acceleration grants. Building on results and lessons from their incubation phase, SPC and other partners will support these grantees to assess their scaling potential, develop scale-up strategies, and refine their project design, business models, and implementation plans. This includes identifying operational, financial, social, and environmental risks, GESI and opportunities associated with scaling. This activity is closely linked to Activity 2.2.2 (provision of acceleration grants) to ensure that only projects with verified impact, capacity, and readiness move forward into the acceleration track. This activity will also prepare grantees for subsequent engagement with investors and development finance institutions under Component 3 (see Activity 3.1.1) and elsewhere.

*Activity 2.2.2 Support high-performing Component 1 projects with additional acceleration funding*

Leveraging the outcomes of Component 1 and aligned with the support provided under Activities 2.1.3 and 2.2.1, this activity will issue follow-on grants of up to USD 250,000 to scale successful pilots. Grantees will be supported to develop scaling strategies, including delivery models, results frameworks, risk mitigation plans, gender action plans, ESMPs. This will also prepare them for external investor engagement under Activity 3.1.1.

*Activity 2.2.3 Support NIEs to strengthen innovation pipelines and develop proposals for the Adaptation Fund innovation window*

Building on the institutional relationships developed under Component 1 and aligned with mentoring delivered under Activity 2.1.3, this activity will deliver focused capacity-building to NIEs. Training will include how to identify innovative local practices, integrate them into national pipelines, and prepare proposals aligned with the objectives of the Adaptation Fund's innovation funding stream and similar opportunities.

**Component 3: Amplification – Knowledge management, learning and replication**

26. Component 3 focuses on amplifying the impact of innovation grants supported under the Co:Lab programme by facilitating investment matchmaking, regional knowledge sharing, and replication of proven adaptation solutions. This component will catalyse scale-up by enabling innovators to access strategic finance opportunities and embedding learnings into national and regional systems. Central to this is the facilitation of structured matchmaking processes to connect promising innovations with potential funders, including development banks and private sector actors. These efforts will complement targeted capacity-building support on innovative climate finance mechanisms, as well as integration of successful approaches into policy and planning frameworks to foster replication and uptake. This component completes the logical pathway from Incubation through Acceleration to Amplification, creating a dynamic pipeline for nurturing and scaling locally led adaptation innovation in the Pacific.

**27. Output 3.1: Investment matchmaking and climate finance readiness for amplification supported**

*Activity 3.1.1 Convene Climate Innovation Investment Matchmaking Labs*

SPC will organise a series of Climate Innovation Investment Matchmaking Labs that will connect promising grantees from Components 1 and 2, scale-ready projects, and NIEs with development finance actors such as

national and regional development banks. These events will build on SPC's existing collaboration with development banks in the Pacific such as the Development Bank Learning Exchange (DB-LX) and will be delivered in partnership with regional support mechanisms, including the CFAN and CCFAN advisors. The Labs will equip innovators with the tools and insights required to navigate investment partnerships, including gender-responsive blended finance solutions and instruments such as first-loss guarantees, allowing them to better navigate and secure investment partnerships for climate innovation.

**28. Output 3.2: Regional peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, policy uptake, and replication pathways are strengthened**

**Activity 3.2.1 Develop documentation and knowledge exchange of successful innovations**

Drawing from project data, outcomes, and learning captured under Outcomes 1 and 2, knowledge products such as factsheets, policy briefs, technical summaries, and impact stories will be synthesised and disseminated through existing knowledge platforms such as the Regional NDC Hub. These materials will highlight innovation stories centred on rural communities, youth, young women, and other contextually marginalised or vulnerable groups. Lessons learned will also be shared through webinars and peer exchanges, co-organised with other national and regional partners to promote south-south learning and increase visibility of successful, inclusive approaches.

**Activity 3.2.2 Convene joint peer-to-peer Learning and community of practice development (with SPREP AFCIA programme)**

This activity will facilitate joint thematic learning exchanges and regional capacity-building activities in partnership with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). This will include co-organised learning events between beneficiaries of both SPC's and SPREP's AFCIA programmes to foster regional Communities of Practice and support cross-country knowledge sharing. Where appropriate, these exchanges will showcase people-centred innovations and highlight successful approaches through a gender equality lens, in line with the programme outcomes.

**Activity 3.2.3 Provide support for policy uptake and mainstreaming**

Informed by knowledge products developed under Activity 3.2.1 and regional collaboration under Activity 3.2.2, SPC will support engagement with national and regional policy actors to integrate proven innovations into national adaptation planning processes, investment strategies, regulatory frameworks or similar. This will involve disseminating lessons learnt and creating awareness of successful approaches through the organisation of side-events and or panels.

## **F. Contributions to the Innovation Pillar**

29. The proposed regional programme has been strategically designed to contribute meaningfully to all four expected results of the Adaptation Fund's Innovation Pillar:

- New innovations and risk-taking encouraged and accelerated;
- Successful innovations replicated and scaled up;
- Access and capacities enhanced for designing and implementing innovation and;
- Evidence base generated and shared

By embedding the programme within SPC's institutional FiT innovation platform, the Co:Lab programme will foster a structured, inclusive, and risk-tolerant ecosystem to support the emergence, refinement, and scaling of locally led adaptation solutions across Pacific SIDS in alignment with the Innovation Pillar.

30. Firstly, new innovations and de-risking will be encouraged and accelerated through the programme's Incubation phase by offering catalytic small grants to support local innovators from communities, CSOs, SMEs and academia in testing novel ideas, proof of concept, approaches, and technologies that respond to priority climate adaptation needs. By operating within the flexible and iterative framework of FiT, the Co:Lab programme will create a safe space for experimentation and learning. Support services such as mentoring, technical guidance, and feedback loops will enable local actors to pursue context-sensitive and socially inclusive innovations with reduced risk.

31. Secondly, successful innovations will be refined and scaled up through the Acceleration phase. Projects that

demonstrate strong results during the Incubation stage will receive follow-on funding along with technical assistance from SPC's in-house expertise and partner networks. The Co:Lab programme will also connect scale-ready innovations to regional development finance actors and blended finance mechanisms, facilitating access to larger pools of capital. Through this step, the programme will ensure that high-potential innovations are not only proven but translated into viable, long-term solutions with broader reach.

32. Thirdly, the programme is committed to enhancing access and capacities for designing and implementing adaptation innovations, particularly among marginalised and vulnerable groups. Capacity-building activities such as targeted training, hands-on technical assistance and innovation clinics will empower local actors with the skills and tools to lead their own adaptation efforts. The approach actively prioritises engagement with women, youth, and persons with disabilities, contributing to a more inclusive and equitable adaptation ecosystem.
33. Finally, the programme will generate and disseminate a robust evidence base for adaptation innovation through its Amplification phase. Lessons learned from Components 1 and 2 will be systematically documented and disseminated via established platforms such as the Regional NDC Hub and SPC's internal knowledge systems. Rather than creating parallel systems, Co:Lab will generate synergies with SPREP's AFCIA programme through joint learning events and thematic exchanges. These efforts will ensure that innovation insights inform national and regional adaptation planning processes and feed into future investment pipelines.

This phased, adaptive, and regionally embedded approach to innovation will significantly advance the goals of the Adaptation Fund's Innovation Pillar. The Co:Lab will not only support the emergence of new ideas but also ensure that Pacific SIDS have the capacity, partnerships, and evidence to scale for resilient, locally owned adaptation.

## **G. Sourcing and Screening of Innovation Small Grant Proposals for Climate Adaptation**

34. The Co:Lab programme will leverage the institutional processes and experiences of SPC's FiT platform to source, screen, and manage small grant proposals for adaptation innovation. The programme will adopt an inclusive and regionally coordinated approach to ensure that innovation is accessible to a wide range of actors, including those that may not typically engage with climate finance. Small grants of up to USD 75,000 will be awarded under Component 1 to incubate early stage, locally led adaptation innovations. These grants will test and de-risk novel adaptation ideas, while building a pipeline of projects with the potential for acceleration under Component 2.
35. The sourcing process will begin with a regional call for project pitches, issued at programme launch and repeated annually throughout the lifespan of the Co:Lab. This call will be disseminated widely through SPC's regional networks, technical divisions, and established platforms such as the Regional NDC Hub, as well as through direct engagement with Das and other stakeholders. The call will encourage applications of a broad range of actors including from CSOs, small and medium enterprises, community groups, and academia. The programme will seek a broad spectrum of innovation types, including technological, social, institutional, financial, and nature-based solutions. It will encourage both new applications of existing practices and entirely novel approaches in line with the innovation framework presented in [Figure 6](#).
36. The regional call for pitches will invite brief, two-page concepts responding to country-specific adaptation challenges. Ideas may be submitted individually or in collaboration with SPC technical divisions. "Individually" submitted pitches will be matched with SPC technical divisions for execution during Year 1 and Year 2 of the programme. Information on call for pitches will be shared amongst the Designated Authorities in the Pacific, and some call may be disseminated through regional networks of civil society organisations, especially the ones targeting the building of resilience in vulnerable communities and groups, such as the Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP), NDC Focal Points and leveraging the established relationships of the One CROP mechanism (SPC, SPREP and PIFS), tapping on focal points in relevant countries. Pitches will be reviewed by a multi-disciplinary Appraisal Committee using criteria, including:

- Clear response to a climate change adaptation or resilience building challenge
  - Alignment with regional priorities (including outcomes of regional convenings) or national priorities articulated in NAPs, NDCs, TNAs, sectoral strategies, or similar policy frameworks
  - Local ownership and implementation capacity
  - Utilisation of SPC technical capabilities in innovation and research
  - “Shovel readiness”, demonstrating the ability to begin implementation quickly and effectively
  - Support for young and emerging Pacific professionals, and/or promotion of gender equality, women’s leadership and social inclusion
  - Balanced representation across countries and innovation types, with flexibility to respond to emerging opportunities and country priorities
37. The sourcing process will continue with the co-design phase for proposal development: Shortlisted applicants will collaborate with SPC teams to refining concepts into more detailed proposals that elaborate on the specific adaptation innovation as well as identifying appropriate implementation arrangements including partnerships with local actors. The process is intentionally light-touch and adaptive, involving SPC divisions and country stakeholders to ensure that proposals are technically sound, context appropriate and socially inclusive.
38. All grant awards will be managed under SPC’s Grants Policy, which adheres to the principles of open competition, value for money, ethics, transparency, and environmental and social responsibility. Grants will be disbursed under performance-based agreements with clearly defined milestones and reporting requirements. Monitoring and evaluation will follow a streamlined, yet robust framework aligned with the Adaptation Fund’s results architecture and SPC’s MEL requirements. Grantees will report against tailored indicators, including GESI metrics and ESS monitoring. Site visits, and check-ins will form part of the support provided to each grantee.
39. Technical assistance forms a cornerstone of the Co:Lab programme. Under Component 1, applicants will receive light-touch technical support during co-design of their proposals. Projects that show strong potential but are not yet ready for implementation will benefit from targeted assistance under Component 2, providing more in-depth support to strengthen and position ideas for future funding. Similarly, projects funded under Component 1 that require additional technical guidance or mentoring during implementation may also receive support through Component 2. This ensures a supportive environment for refining and improving innovation over time. Finally, learning and knowledge sharing are integral to the programme. Lessons from successful innovations will be synthesised into case studies and knowledge products and shared through existing regional and national platforms. Grantees will participate in regional peer exchanges, joint learning events, and matchmaking workshops with development finance institutions and private sector actors.
40. These pathways allow successful innovations to gain visibility, access scale-up financing, and inform broader policy and investment frameworks. Through this approach, the Co:Lab programme goes beyond merely a funding mechanism, but also serves as a launchpad for innovation, unlocking local solutions to climate change while building long-term community resilience across Pacific SIDS.

## **H. Screening Innovation Proposals for Inclusive and Sustainable Benefits**

41. The project will apply a structured and transparent screening process to ensure that innovation proposals demonstrate strong potential to deliver economic, social, and environmental benefits, particularly to vulnerable communities. This will be undertaken in full compliance with the Adaptation Fund’s ESP and Gender Policy as well as in accordance with SPC’s SER Policy. The selection and design processes that have been successfully demonstrated through the FiT programme will be tailored under the Co:Lab to meet specific climate adaptation needs. At the pitch phase, applicants will submit a high-level concept explaining the challenge they are trying to address, the solution they are putting forward and how their concept addresses adaptation while at the same time contributing to environmental and social benefits.
42. All pitches will be screened and categorized according to their potential environmental and social risks and impacts. Screening will explicitly assess the potential for the proposed innovations to generate tangible

benefits for communities, including improved livelihoods, health, safety, access to resources, and gender equality. This ensures that only proposals with a clear pathway to positive and inclusive outcomes are selected for support.

43. As part of the design process, all proponents will be asked to develop a simple gender and social inclusion plan that outline intended outcomes and practical measures to ensure equitable access, participation, and benefit-sharing. This will be delivered through ESS- and GESI-specific support provided under Outcomes 1 and 2 of the Co:Lab programme. To ensure proposals are socially and environmentally robust, SPC's SER team will actively participate in the co-design process, supporting applicants to strengthen safeguards and inclusion measures during proposal development. Similarly, the Helpdesk and clinics will provide targeted support and capacity building to ensure inclusion and sustainability of adaptation innovations supported by the Co:Lab programme.
44. While specific generated benefits will depend on the type of USPs financed. There are a number of anticipated benefits based on identified prioritised sectors across the Pacific SIDS and lessons from innovation financing through FiT, PACRES, Pacific regional NDC Hub and other SPC initiatives. These anticipated benefits are expected to cluster around the priority sectors identified:
  - Economic: diversification of income sources through climate-resilient agriculture, fisheries and tourism practices; reduced livelihood losses from climate change impacts; and strengthened local enterprises through climate-smart products and services.
  - Social: improved water security and food security; reduced health risks from climate-related hazards; enhanced participation of women, youth and marginalised groups in decision-making and economic opportunities; and stronger community safety nets.
  - Environmental: improved management of coastal ecosystems, forests and agricultural land; reduced ecosystem degradation; and increased use of nature-based solutions that deliver co-benefits for biodiversity and carbon sequestration.

By focusing on these benefit areas, the Co:Lab will ensure that innovations are not only technically sound and environmentally safe, but also directly enhance the well-being of people on the ground in line with participating countries' climate change adaptation priorities and gender commitments.

## I. Cost Effectiveness

45. Co:Lab will be cost-effective through its leveraging of an existing regional delivery model that maximises resource efficiency, promotes knowledge sharing, and avoids duplication of efforts. A key feature of the design is the phased innovation pipeline from Incubation through Amplification to Acceleration, which ensures that resources are strategically allocated to ideas that demonstrate real potential for adaptation impact. In the first stage, relatively small investments are made to support early-stage ideas with technical assistance and capacity support. Those initiatives that show tangible results in improving resilience and benefiting vulnerable communities will be selected for amplification in the second stage. This stepwise approach reduces the risk of inefficient funding by prioritising investment into innovation proposals that have demonstrated potential for delivering benefits.
46. By building on an existing mechanism that demonstrated high efficiency, Co:Lab will have strong cost effectiveness. FiT projects are allocating approximately 25% more money to activity costs in comparison with regular donor-funded projects at SPC (e.g., funded by DFAT, MFAT or US Department of State). Consequently, they are delivering significantly high value for money. Human resources costs represent on average 10% less in FiT projects than in regular projects when implemented internally as SPC teams implementing FiT project activities and are often funded by other sources. In addition, no project management fees (indirect costs) are allowed in individual FiT projects and some of the MEL costs are centralised as part of the project management unit and not charged individually in each project. Here is an estimation of costs for FiT projects and non-FiT projects of the same size.

Table 3: Estimation of costs for FIT projects and non-FIT projects of same size

Budget Item	FIT Project (\$)	FIT Project (%)	Non-FIT Project (\$)	Non-FIT Project (%)
Human Resources	\$19,000	19.0%	\$30,000	30.0%
Activities (sub-grants, workshops, travels, equipment, communications, etc.)	\$75,000	75.0%	\$41,300	41.3%
Cost recovery (ICT, facilities, translation, interpretation)	\$4,000	4.0%	\$9,700	9.7%
MEL	\$2,000	2.0%	\$4,000	4.0%
Project management fees	\$-	0.0%	\$15,000	15.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

47. The regional nature of the programme also allows for shared delivery systems and collective learning across countries facing similar climate challenges. By creating a shared innovation mechanism for Pacific SIDS, the project achieves economies of scale through regional peer-to-peer learning, and matchmaking initiatives. These mechanisms facilitate the transfer of proven innovations from one context to another, reducing the time and cost associated with developing entirely new solutions in each country.
48. The project also creates opportunities to pool technical and financial resources through strategic partnerships. For example, collaboration with SPREP's AFCIA programme through coordinated peer learning will enhance access to knowledge and reduce duplicative efforts. Matchmaking activities with development banks in the region will support the mobilisation of capital to sustain and expand promising innovations. These partnerships are designed to attract additional financing and offer alternative financing options, including concessional loans, for grantees whose innovations are ready for commercial deployment.
49. Overall, the regional and multi-country approach enhances cost-effectiveness by building a shared enabling environment for innovation and scaling, while delivering context-specific support where it is needed most. It allows for smart allocation of resources, promotes the replication of successful models, and supports long-term sustainability of adaptation solutions.

## J. Alignment to National and Sub-National Strategies

49. During the 51st Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in July 2022, Pacific leaders declared that the region "is facing a Climate Emergency that threatens the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of its people and ecosystems." Similarly, during the Forum Economic Ministers' Meeting in August 2022, Pacific Ministers emphasised that "timely access to scaled-up climate finance remains a critical priority," and tasked CROP agencies to "expedite efforts to strengthen national capacities [...] to improve access to, and the effective management of, scaled up finance."
50. This is reinforced by the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP, 2017–2030), which calls for greater innovation and inclusivity under Goal 1: Strengthened Integrated Adaptation and Risk Reduction to Enhance Resilience to Climate Change and Disasters. The 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent also emphasises the need for climate action that is community-centred, innovation-driven, and anchored in Pacific values and leadership.
51. The Co:Lab will directly address priorities through the strict application of a selection criteria focussing on how the project responds to a regional priority (including outcomes from regional convenings or priorities included in a regional framework) or national priority (including direct country requests, NDCs, NAPs, TNAs, and TAPs). The reference to other national or regional cross-cutting strategies (e.g., on research, innovation, economic development) will be considered as part of this appraisal process of strategic alignment.
52. The Co:Lab directly responds to these regional priorities by creating opportunities for vulnerable communities

in Pacific SIDS to access innovative climate finance for locally led action. It aligns with SPC's Strategic Plan 2022–2031, particularly its goals related to climate resilience, innovation, and inclusive development, and complements ongoing coordination through mechanisms such as the Pacific Resilience Partnership and the Regional NDC Hub.

## K. Alignment with National Technical Standards

52. The project will ensure that all innovation small grant proposals are screened for compliance with relevant national technical standards, sectoral policies, and regulatory requirements in each participating country, in line with the ESP of the Adaptation Fund and SPC's SER Policy. During the co-design phase of the proposal development process, applicants will work in partnership with SPC technical divisions and national stakeholders to demonstrate how their proposed activities align with applicable sectoral norms, technical guidelines, and legal frameworks in their area of focus (e.g. agriculture, water resources, infrastructure, ecosystem restoration, or public health). Relevant national standards and regulations may include building codes, environmental regulations, permits, or standards for climate-resilient practices and occupational health and safety. A non-exhaustive list of such standards is presented in Table 2, with examples including: (i) national building codes and coastal setback requirements (Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands); (ii) water quality and sanitation regulations, such as the Public Health Acts and associated drinking water standards (Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Niue, Tuvalu); (iii) environmental impact assessment legislation and permitting procedures (Papua New Guinea, Palau, Tonga); (iv) land use and forestry regulations, including sustainable land management guidelines (Cook Islands, Nauru, Niue); and (v) sector-specific technical standards, such as agriculture extension guidelines, waste management standards, and occupational health and safety codes.. Where needed, SPC will consult relevant government ministries or regulatory agencies to verify alignment and flag any compliance requirements.

Table 4: Non-exhaustive list of National Technical Standards across 14 Pacific SIDS

Country	National Technical Standards
Cook Islands	Environment Act (2003) Building Control and Standards Regulations (1991)
Fiji	Environmental Management Act (2005) Integrated Coastal Management Framework (2011) ( <i>not legally binding</i> ) National Building Code of Fiji (1990)
Kiribati	Environment Act (1999/2007) Land Planning Ordinance (1979) Public Health Ordinance (1977)
Marshall Islands	Environmental Protection Act (1984) Water Quality Standard Regulations (2004)
Nauru	Environment Management Act (2015) Planning and Development Control Act (1976)
Niue	Environment Act (2003) Public Health Act (1965)
Palau	Environmental Quality Protection Act (1974) Earthmoving Regulations (2011) Environmental Impact Statement Regulations (1996)
Papua New Guinea	Environment Act (2000) Building Regulations (1994)
Samoa	Planning and Urban Management Act (2004) National Building Code of Samoa (1992) Water Resources Management Act (2008)
Solomon Islands	Environment Act (1998) National Building Code (1990) Water Authority Act (1992)
Tonga	Environment Management Act (2010) Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (2010) Building Control and Standards Act (2002) Water Resources Act (2020)

Tuvalu	Environment Protection Act (2008) Building Act (2022) Water Supply Act (1967 rev. 2008)
Vanuatu	Environmental Protection and Conservation Act (2002) Building Act No 36 & National Building Code (2013) Water Resources Management Act (2002)

53. To ensure compliance, SPC will (i) require applicants to demonstrate how their proposal adheres to applicable national standards; (ii) review proposals against country-specific regulatory frameworks with input from designated authorities (DAs); and (iii) provide targeted technical support to proponents to address identified gaps.
54. If a project is likely to trigger a national environmental impact assessment, permitting process, or licensing requirement, SPC will provide guidance and technical support to proponents to ensure these are identified and addressed prior to implementation. Capacity-building will also be integrated into the programme's early stages to raise awareness among grantees about country-specific technical standards and institutional procedures. This approach ensures that all innovations supported under the programme are not only socially and environmentally sound, but also embedded within the national adaptation, regulatory, and technical landscapes of participating Pacific SIDS, reinforcing country ownership and long-term sustainability.

## L. Complementarity with Other Funding Sources

55. The proposed programme has been carefully designed to complement, rather than duplicate, ongoing and planned adaptation innovation initiatives in the Pacific, including other innovation funding windows such as SPC's FiT initiative and SPREP's AFCIA programme. To this end, several safeguards and coordination mechanisms will be embedded into programme design and operations to systematically avoid duplication with other funding sources while encouraging synergies and co-funding opportunities.
56. By embedding the Co:Lab within the FiT platform, it benefits from the architecture of SPC's internal innovation incubator including an established grant management and tracking system. FiT maintains a central tracker with all relevant information, supported by a dedicated SharePoint group serving as a central document repository for project managers, alongside a separate SharePoint repository for FiT programme management. The FiT team communicates regularly with project managers, providing monthly updates on all projects. FiT projects are managed as cohorts with joint meetings around mid-term (July–August) and end-of-project periods to facilitate coordination and shared learning.
57. All small grant applications submitted under the Co:Lab adaptation window will be logged, tracked, and cross-checked against past and ongoing FiT-supported initiatives and SPC-administered grants. The pitch template requires applicants to identify any co-financing sources for similar or related initiatives. During the screening process, SPC will assess whether such initiatives represent potential duplication or could be complementary, and take appropriate action if duplication is identified. The FiT budget includes co-funding sections to identify other funding sources, thereby positively encouraging collaboration and resource mobilisation.
58. To further mitigate risks of overlap at the national level, all proposals received will be cross-referenced with the DAs of participating countries to avoid duplication of efforts. Regular quarterly coordination calls with SPREP AFCIA project managers will support alignment and information exchange between the two RIEs and both Pacific programmes. If a potentially duplicative proposal is identified, whether in SPC's internal screening, by a DA, or by a partner institution, SPC will initiate a consultation process with the applicant and relevant stakeholders. In cases where a similar proposal has also been submitted to another implementing entity (e.g. SPREP), a joint coordination call will be organised to determine which submission should proceed. Applicants will be asked to submit a formal letter of withdrawal for any duplicate pitch that is not taken forward under this programme.

59. Furthermore, the proposed programme is designed to leverage SPC's ongoing involvement and best practices from key regional initiatives, including:

- The Regional Programmatic Approach on Climate Action (RPACA) – RPACA, provides a framework

for coordinated, programmatic climate action across Pacific SIDS, focusing on scaling up adaptation and resilience through multi-country approaches. RPACA has prioritised sectors that are critical for building resilience, including water security, resilient agriculture and food systems, coastal resilience, health, and climate information services. The proposed programme complements RPACA by operationalising an innovation small grants window that can channel resources towards locally led solutions in these same priority sectors, aligned with national priorities identified through RPACA.

- Unlocking Blue Pacific Prosperity (UBPP) – UBPP, under the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, seeks to protect 30% of the Pacific Ocean and sustainably manage its resources, with particular emphasis on coastal and marine ecosystems, sustainable fisheries, biodiversity conservation, and nature-based solutions. While UBPP is primarily focused on large-scale marine and ocean governance, the proposed programme contributes complementary action by supporting local innovation in coastal adaptation, fisheries management, and community resilience. Lessons from Co:Lab can inform and feed into UBPP’s broader regional frameworks.
- SPC’s Regional Readiness Programme - This programme strengthens institutional capacities of Pacific SIDS to access, manage, and report on climate finance. SPC has already engaged national stakeholders through climate finance writeshops and regional learning exchanges with national development banks, helping countries build pipelines of climate finance-ready projects. The proposed programme will complement this by piloting innovative adaptation solutions, which can then be scaled through readiness pipelines. This collaboration will be further strengthened by sharing evidence and lessons from innovation pilots into the readiness process.
- Climate Finance Access Network (CFAN) - This initiative provides in-country advisors to support governments with project development and climate finance access. The proposed programme is complementary, as it will create a pipeline of innovative, country-driven projects that can be further developed and scaled by CFAN advisors. In addition, SPC’s CFAN advisors will directly support innovation projects under this programme by providing technical expertise, and ensuring coherence, and alignment with national financing strategies.

## **M. Learning and Knowledge Management**

60. Learning will be driven through Outcome 3: Amplification, which serves not only as a support mechanism for scaling high-potential innovations but also as the programme’s core knowledge engine. This includes facilitating structured peer-to-peer learning, regional knowledge exchanges, investment matchmaking, and policy advisory. Selected grantees and technical partners will engage in regional learning activities including thematic workshops, co-learning clinics, and communities of practice to share insights on the design, implementation, and scaling of adaptation innovations.
61. Regional matchmaking will connect promising innovators with development finance institutions, NIEs, and private sector actors, building on SPC’s prior experience and partnerships – such as through the DB-LX – to foster investment partnerships and scale-up pathways. Lessons from Component 1 and 2 will be captured and translated into factsheets, policy briefs and technical guidance, contributing to the integration of successful innovations into national adaptation planning processes.
62. Finally, coordination with AFCIA Implementing Entities and particularly SPREP will be pursued through joint learning sessions to enhance coherence and complementarity across innovation windows. To amplify reach and visibility, the programme will also undertake communications and outreach activities including innovation showcases, success stories, and targeted dissemination through regional forums and existing platforms such as the Regional NDC Hub.

## **N. Stakeholder consultative process**

63. As part of programme design, SPC drew on its ongoing regional and national engagement processes, including structured consultations and continuous engagement under the NDC Hub, Regional Programmatic

Approach on Climate Action (RPACA), SPC's Regional Readiness support, "Heads of" meeting with directors or permanent secretaries of technical services, ministerial meetings, and multiple country-driven GCF and AF projects. Through these initiatives, SPC is in continuous dialogue with national focal points, line ministries, CSOs, and other partners on national climate priorities, barriers, and opportunities. The priorities and gaps consistently raised in these exchanges, such as the need for early-stage catalytic finance, stronger inclusion of women and youth, and clearer pathways for scaling, directly informed the design of the Co:Lab.

64. The consultative process underpinning the implementation of the programme is designed to be inclusive, participatory, and responsive to the diverse needs of Pacific countries and communities, with particular emphasis on engaging vulnerable groups and integrating gender considerations. From Year 3 external calls for pitches will be managed in collaboration with DAs and will encourage pitch submission by a broad range of actors including from CSOs, small and medium enterprises, community groups, and academic institutions. All proposals must clearly respond to adaptation needs identified at the country level or articulated within relevant regional frameworks, ensuring alignment with national and regional priorities.
65. The co-design phase of the programme will actively involve vulnerable populations and follow a people-centred approach (PCA). This iterative process encourages meaningful engagement with participating communities to test and refine proposed solutions, ensuring that interventions are contextually appropriate, equitable, and effective. A dedicated training session on 'Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement' will be an integral part of the co-design training with project managers. With stakeholder engagement embedded directly in the co-design process, shortlisted proponents will be required to undertake consultations with affected communities and relevant local institutions, and to reflect this input in their proposals.
66. To further safeguard social and environmental integrity, all projects will undergo appraisal using SPC's SER screening checklist. The SER team will provide critical feedback to ensure that gender, youth empowerment, human rights, and other social inclusion factors are comprehensively addressed throughout the project lifecycle. Each grantee will also prepare a simple GESI action plan, supported by targeted coaching from SPC's SER and CFU teams. During implementation, the programme will systematically track progress against gender and vulnerability-disaggregated indicators to monitor inclusivity and equitable impact. Building on learnings from FiT, evidence will be collected throughout the project cycle, and flexibility will be provided to project managers to incorporate lessons, including reviewing their theory of change, activities, and budget, particularly during the incubation phase. Project implementers will be encouraged and trained in the use of human-centred design thinking and the double loop approach during the co-design phase, as part of the innovation clinics (activity 2.1.3), and through regular project catch-ups. Structured feedback will be collected [to ensure that lessons on inclusivity and participation inform future incubation rounds as well as the acceleration and amplification of projects].
67. Project managers will also be responsible for reporting on social and environmental risk mitigation measures, with a detailed account presented in end-of-project reports. This consultative process fosters collaboration among stakeholders, supports transparency and accountability, and ensures that the programme contributes to resilient and inclusive climate adaptation outcomes across the Pacific region.

## **O. Incorporating Multi-Stakeholder Views on Innovation in Context**

68. The Co:Lab is intentionally designed to integrate multiple perspectives on innovation, recognising the complex and context-specific nature of climate adaptation challenges across Pacific SIDS. Central to this approach is empowering local communities, especially those most vulnerable to climate change, to actively co-create innovative adaptation solutions that honour and leverage traditional knowledge, indigenous practices, and locally defined priorities. This process ensures that interventions are culturally appropriate, socially accepted, and grounded in lived experience.
69. Complementing this, the programme engages a broad spectrum of partners, including from research, private sector innovators, and civil society, to provide scientific insights, technical expertise, and access to cutting-edge tools and technologies. These collaborations foster interdisciplinary approaches that bridge traditional wisdom and modern innovation. To facilitate meaningful interaction among these diverse actors, the

programme will convene structured platforms such as peer learning sessions and innovation matchmaking workshops. These spaces promote ongoing dialogue, knowledge exchange, and partnership-building, enabling cross-pollination of ideas and co-investment opportunities.

70. Furthermore, the programme places strong emphasis on inclusivity by ensuring that voices of youth, women, and other marginalised groups are deliberately integrated into innovation processes. This pluralistic and participatory model not only enhances the relevance and contextual fit of supported solutions but also improves their scalability, sustainability, and potential to generate systemic change in Pacific adaptation contexts.

## **P. Justification of Full Cost Adaptation Reasoning**

71. The funding requested through the Adaptation Fund will cover the full cost of adaptation in vulnerable Pacific SIDS where communities face disproportionate climate risks and limited access to resources. The small grants to be issued under the Incubation and Acceleration stages are specifically targeted at identifying and developing adaptation innovations that would not otherwise receive support through conventional funding mechanisms.
72. These grants will support adaptation actions that address urgent climate vulnerabilities and generate tangible economic, social, and environmental benefits, with a strong emphasis on inclusion and gender equity. Co:Lab's regional approach further enhances cost-effectiveness by enabling shared learning, resource pooling, and regional collaboration, thereby avoiding duplication and maximising impact of the funded initiatives.
73. While co-financing is not required, the programme's design encourages partnerships and potential top-ups, including from development banks or private sector actors, which could further enhance the financial sustainability and reach of successful initiatives. The pitch template includes a dedicated section for applicants to declare any existing or planned co-financing, which is actively encouraged as a positive addition to the initiative.

## **Q. Sustainability**

74. The programme design explicitly recognises that innovation incubator projects inherently carry a higher risk of failure, given their experimental nature and the complexity of climate adaptation challenges. To address this, sustainability considerations have been embedded throughout the project cycle from initial screening of small grant proposals to structured pathways for scaling successful innovations.
75. All innovation small grant pitches will be rigorously screened not only for their relevance, potential impact, and technical feasibility, but also for their capacity to deliver sustained adaptation benefits beyond the pilot phase, including potential for upscaling and replication. Recognising the experimental risks, Co:Lab adopts a flexible and iterative approach, supporting learning from both successes and failures to refine solutions and avoid premature scaling of unproven interventions.
76. The programme incorporates well-defined pathways to scale promising innovations. Projects that demonstrate successful outcomes in the Incubation phase (Component 1) will be eligible for scaled-up support under the Amplification phase (Component 2), which facilitates expansion and replication. The Acceleration phase (Component 3) will further enable project proponents to access tailored capacity-building and financial advisory services, including connections with other sources of finance. These partnerships will help explore concessional loans, blended finance, or other financing mechanisms to support growth.
77. In addition, the programme will leverage the knowledge, evidence, and lessons generated from small grant projects to inform proposals for scaling through other funding windows and donors, including the Adaptation Fund's Large Innovation Projects window, thereby creating a clear pipeline from pilot initiatives to transformative, large-scale adaptation interventions. Finally, the programme emphasises knowledge sharing, policy engagement, and regional collaboration to foster an enabling environment where successful innovations can be sustained, adapted, and replicated across Pacific contexts facing similar vulnerabilities.

This integrated approach ensures that, despite the inherent risks of early-stage innovation, the programme maximises the likelihood of lasting, systemic impact.

## R. Environmental and Social Impact and Risk

78. The screening process has identified that while the Co:Lab does not pose any significant or large-scale environmental or social risks, several environmental and social principles present low to moderate risks that will require targeted mitigation measures to ensure full compliance with the Adaptation Fund’s ESP. Each of the 15 principles was reviewed against the proposed activities, with appropriate mitigation strategies integrated into the design where potential risks were identified. These measures will ensure that the project remains inclusive, equitable, and environmentally and socially responsible throughout its implementation. [In line with the Adaptation Fund’s ESP, the project acknowledges that Principles 1 \(Compliance with the Law\), 4 \(Human Rights\), and 6 \(Core Labour Rights\) always apply, and monitoring measures have been integrated accordingly.](#) Further analysis is reflected as part of the Environmental and Social Management System in Annex II.

Table 5. Environmental and Social Impact and Risks

Checklist of environmental and social principles	No further assessment required for compliance	Potential impacts and risks – further assessment and management required for compliance
<i>Compliance with the Law</i>	No further actions required beyond on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>No Low risk.</b> <a href="#">While the project will ensure compliance with the relevant national environmental laws and regulations in the 14 participating Pacific SIDS, there is some risk of inconsistency in enforcement and institutional capacity across countries, particularly in relation to environmental protection, land use, and water resources. To address this, the project will ensure compliance with the relevant environmental national laws and regulations in the 14 participating Pacific SIDS related to environmental protection, land use, and water resources.</a> The project will be implemented in close collaboration and regular coordination with relevant government authorities. Development and delivery of targeted capacity-building for project implementers will ensure ESS compliance, and legal compliance checks will be integrated in project MEL systems.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Conduct regular ESS compliance checks through SPC’s ESMS. Applicants must demonstrate alignment with national technical standards and legal frameworks during co-design (Activity 1.1.3).</p>
<i>Access and Equity</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) Action Plan and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the Gender Assessment and Action Plan (GAAP). For further information, please refer to Annex I. Moderate risk.</b> Systemic inequities in the Pacific, including limited access to finance, decision-making, and services for women, youth, persons with disabilities, and those in remote areas, may create barriers to equitable participation in innovation activities. While the Co:Lab incorporates inclusion safeguards and locally led approaches, there remains a moderate risk that structural exclusion or digital divides (e.g., access to internet or climate information) will persist, especially in rural or outer island contexts. The programme mitigates this risk through inclusive stakeholder engagement, accessible application processes, and targeted outreach to women’s groups and CSOs</p> <p><b>Mitigation measures:</b> Apply inclusive screening criteria (Activity 1.1.2), ensure transparent selection, require GESI plan in proposals (Activity 1.1.3), and track beneficiary participation using disaggregated data (Activity 1.1.5).</p>

<i>Marginalised and Vulnerable Groups</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of GESI Action Plan and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b><i>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to Annex I.</i></b></p> <p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Vulnerable groups - including women with disabilities, single mothers, LGBTQ+ individuals, and subsistence-based rural households - face layered disadvantages in resilience and innovation participation. The Gender Annex acknowledges these intersecting vulnerabilities, particularly in relation to informal economies, unpaid care burdens, and gendered impacts of climate disasters. Although the Co:Lab integrates safeguards and intends to include diverse participants in co-design and implementation, the risk of underrepresentation or unintended exclusion remains unless active accompaniment and targeted support are sustained.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Applicants must demonstrate inclusive engagement (Activity 1.1.3), include vulnerability-disaggregated indicators, and submit proposals reviewed by the SER team (Activities 1.1.4, 1.1.5).</p>
<i>Human Rights</i>	No further actions required <u>beyond</u> implementation of the GESI Action Plan and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b><i>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to Annex I.</i></b></p> <p><b>No-Low risk.</b> <u>While the project design follows a rights-based and people-centred approach, that is respecting freedom of association, non-discrimination, and equitable access to resources, there is some risk that uneven application across diverse cultural and institutional contexts in the 14 participating Pacific SIDS could affect the consistent protection of rights. In particular, risks may arise if vulnerable or marginalised groups are not fully engaged or if free, prior, and informed consent processes are not uniformly upheld. To address this, the project design follows a rights-based and people-centred approach, respecting freedom of association, non-discrimination, and access to resources.</u></p> <p>Meaningful community engagement and free, prior, and informed consent are ensured throughout the project life cycle.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Promote rights-based design through co-design support (Activity 1.1.3) and technical clinics (Activity 2.1.3). Ensure screening criteria incorporate human rights considerations.</p>
<i>Gender Equity and Women's Empowerment</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of the GESI Action Plan and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b><i>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to Annex I.</i></b></p> <p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Persistent gender gaps in leadership, land tenure, economic participation, and digital access create a moderate risk that women's voices may be overlooked, or their contributions undervalued in innovation contexts. While the Co:Lab leverages SPC's Gender Flagship and FiT programme to promote gender-responsive innovations, it relies heavily on implementing partners to carry out GESI commitments, which may vary in capacity. The programme addresses this through a structured GESI Action Plan, targeted mentoring, and MEL systems that go beyond participation counts to track influence, benefits, and leadership outcomes.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Evaluate project pitches according to priorities criteria including gender equality and women's leadership (Activity 1.1.2); require gender action plans in all proposals (Activity 1.1.3); prioritise women-led initiatives (Activity 1.1.2), and track gender-specific outcomes (Activity 1.1.5).</p>
<i>Core Labour Rights</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>Low risk.</b> The project will comply with regional and national employment laws and regulations and will respect, promote, and realise in good faith the principles of the ILO Labour Standards also in accordance with SPC Policy and the People-Centred Approach. Employment of local labour</p>

		<p>during construction or maintenance may expose workers to occupational health and safety (OHS) risks and informal labour practices or labour rights violations could occur without contractor oversight. The SER Team will screen proposals against the following: Project activities will ensure that they do not violate labour laws in relation to project management specific to recruitment of human resources to support project delivery and implementation; and any contracts for recruited staff will ensure that they align with national labour standards and ensure competitive salaries and packages are offered. Compliance will be monitored annually in accordance with the project's MEL system.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Require compliance with national labour laws (Activity 1.1.4); and enable grievance redress through SPC systems.</p>
<i>Indigenous Peoples</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of the GESI Action Plan and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Low risk.</b> There is no universally accepted or internationally agreed upon definition of 'indigenous peoples' (UNDP, 2021; GCF, 2018; AF, 2013; IFC, 2012). In the particular context of most Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the majority of the population and the dominant sociocultural or ethnic group is native to the island country or territory. That is: they are indigenous to the land, and they are the 'local communities'. In this context, the terms 'communities' and 'beneficiaries' are synonymous to 'Indigenous Peoples'. The anticipated project benefits, co-benefits, opportunities, and mitigated risks for communities or beneficiaries are de facto anticipated benefits, co-benefits, opportunities, and mitigated risks for indigenous people. The project's existing mechanisms for stakeholder engagement and community consultations fulfil the intended purpose of free and prior informed consent (FPIC). Respect for customary land ownership and cultural practices is critical, hence a culturally-sensitive and people-centred approach will be adopted in the project.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Require FPIC during co-design (Activity 1.1.3); SER team ensures cultural appropriateness; consult Indigenous communities as part of proposal development.</p>
<i>Involuntary Resettlement</i>	No further actions required beyond on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>No risk.</b> The project and sub-projects are not anticipated to cause inadvertent physical or economic displacement of target communities. Involuntary resettlement is under the exclusionary criteria for project selection, hence loss of shelter, assets, or access to assets that lead to loss of income sources or other means of livelihood is not a likely impact.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Prohibit any activity requiring involuntary resettlement (as per exclusionary activities). Require land tenure verification as part of co-design (Activity 1.1.3).</p>
<i>Protection of Natural Habitats</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Moderate risk.</b> There is some risk that project and sub-project activities may unintentionally degrade critical natural habitats. The project will support the protection of natural habitats through promoting nature and community-based solutions, any potential of sub-projects to directly or indirectly impact upon natural or critical habitats will be identified at the ESS risk screening stage as outlined in the ESMS. Implementation of risk mitigation measures and ESS compliance will be monitored and reported on the project and sub-project level, as incorporated in the MEL system.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Exclude high-risk (Cat A) proposals (Activity 1.1.2). Require ESMPs for low-risk (Cat C) and medium-risk (Cat B) proposals (Activity 1.1.4). Use SER checklist to assess ecosystem impacts.</p>
<i>Conservation of Biological Diversity</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Low risk.</b> It is not anticipated that project and sub-project activities will lead to a loss in biological diversity or introduction of known invasive species. The project will comply with any National Biodiversity Strategy and Action</p>

		<p>Plans, ensuring alignment and contribution to the protection of countries' biological and natural resources. The sub-projects' ESIA and ESMP will contextualise the policy and evaluate against biological diversity criterion and mitigate risk as needed for specific sites and sub-projects, e.g. an ecological screening may be necessary before water tank installation near bush or coastal vegetation to avoid disturbing nesting birds and endemic flora; where pit latrine leakage may contaminate soil invertebrates and micro biodiversity, latrine construction will be avoided in coastal wetlands and require consultations with local environmental officers; and/or where clearing of coastal vegetation for drainage or expansion may affect shoreline biodiversity or erosion processes, ESMPs would be required to minimise mangrove disturbance and avoid crossing turtle nesting zones.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Avoid non-native species introduction; promote biodiversity-sensitive practices through proposal screening (Activity 1.1.4) and technical review.</p>
<i>Climate Change</i>	No further actions required beyond on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Low risk.</b> The project is climate adaptation-focused, explicitly designed to enhance resilience to climate hazards such as sea-level rise, cyclones, and flooding. Its activities are not anticipated to result in any significant or unjustified increase in greenhouse gas emissions or other drivers of climate change. Any agro-forestry and agriculture sub-projects will be small-scale as per exclusionary criteria and are not anticipated to result in large-scale negative impacts on carbon capture and sequestration capacity.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Screen proposals for maladaptation risks (Activity 1.1.4); promote resilience-focused innovations in clinics (Activity 2.1.3).</p>
<i>Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Sub-project construction activities may generate waste, noise, dust, or cause minor pollution if not managed properly. Project and sub-project activities will exercise cost-effectiveness and minimise the use of resources used during implementation – applicable to all sources and forms of energy, water, and other resources and materials inputs. There is some risk of waste production and pollution due to the quantity and diversity of sub-projects, though they are required to be in compliance with national waste management laws including monitoring of ESS compliance, inclusive of pollution prevention and resource efficiency.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> If applicable, proposals must include simple waste management plans (Activity 1.1.3)</p>
<i>Public Health</i>	No further actions required beyond on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Low risk.</b> The project avoids potentially significant negative impacts on public health, hence overall risk to public health is low. Sub-project activities are anticipated to generate minimal, site-specific, largely reversible impact to public health and will comply with national public health laws. A WHO-compliant rapid health impact screening checklist will be integrated in the ESIA and ESS compliance monitoring tools, to determine if a further thorough public health impact assessment and development of a management plan is necessary.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Public health implications assessed in screening (Activity 1.1.4); technical backstopping from SPC divisions (Activity 1.1.5)</p>
<i>Physical and Cultural Heritage</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Low risk.</b> Project and sub-project activities will not be implemented around physical heritage sites and will not permanently interfere with communities' existing access and use of such physical and cultural resources. They will be designed and implemented in a way that avoids the alteration, damage, or removal of any physical cultural resources and sites with unique natural values recognised as such at the community, national or international level. The sub-project ESS screenings will identify the presence of</p>

		<p>cultural heritage in or near the project, and if cultural heritage exists, a risk assessment will be conducted to analyse the potential for impacting cultural heritage, and the measures to mitigate the risk. Consultations will be undertaken with village, community leaders and nobles to ensure that project activities will not directly involve any preserved and cultural heritage sites.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Applicants must identify culturally sensitive sites (Activity 1.1.3); project spoiling cultural heritage are excluded</p>
<i>Lands and Soil Conservation</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Moderate risk.</b> The project promotes ecosystem-based approaches and the inclusion of soil conservation practices in design of land-based sub-projects. While the screening criteria exclude activities which explicitly target or require the use of soil, there is small risk of roads renovation and water tank installations having an impact on the soil and land surrounding the sites or facilities. Site-specific assessments and regular ESS compliance monitoring will be conducted particularly for infrastructure and WASH sub-projects, to ensure no negative impacts on land and soil. This will include ecological studies that account for the identification of fragile soils, to inform the final detailed design and to identify any additional site-specific impacts.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Encourage use of nature-based solutions and proper site design during proposal co-development (Activity 1.1.3).</p>

**S. Arrangements for Project Implementation**

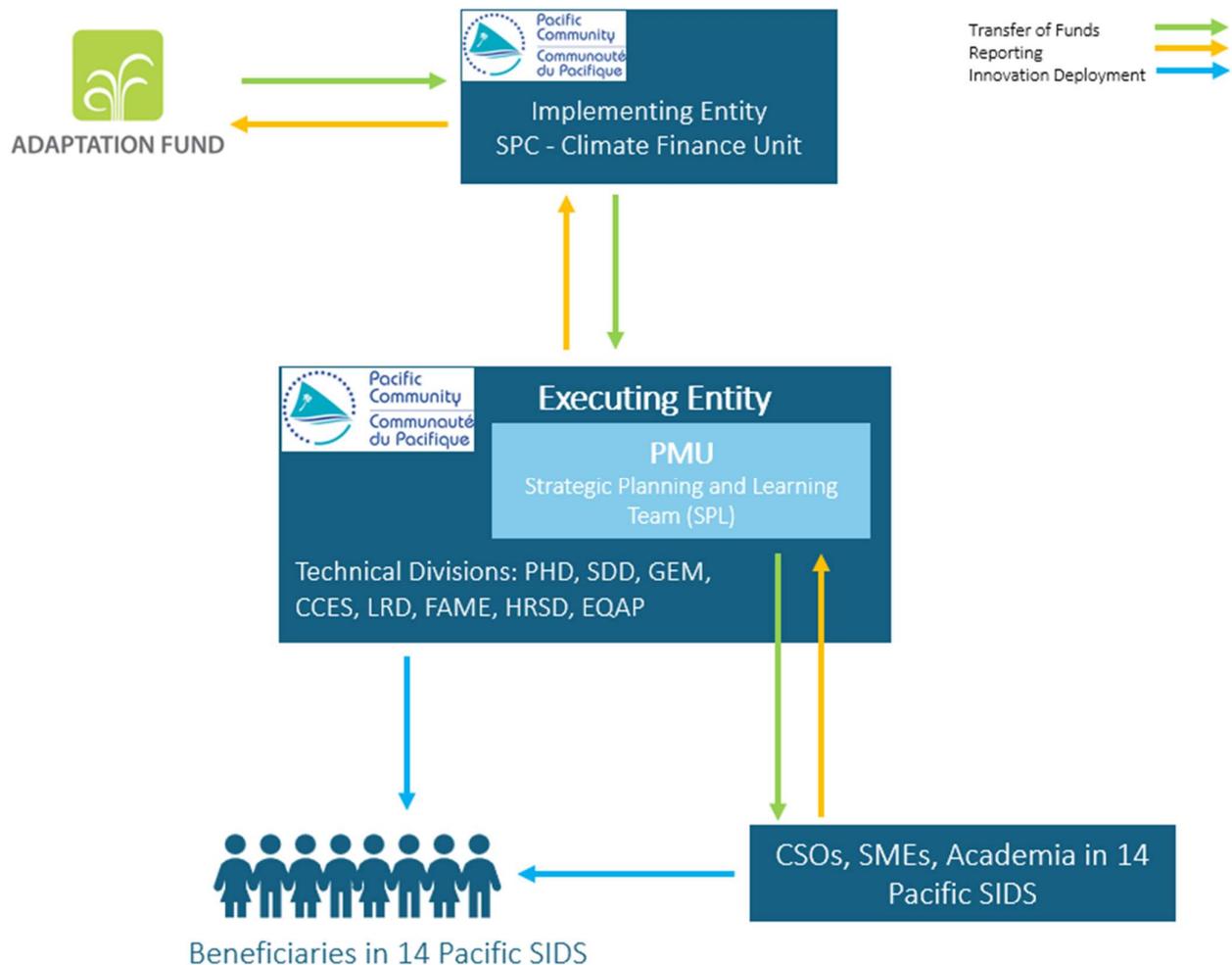


Figure 7. Implementation Arrangements

**Implementing Entity**

79. SPC through its CFU within the Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Division, will be the RIE for the Co:Lab programme. SPC will ensure implementation is in alignment with SPC’s policies, procurement standards in accordance with its accreditation to the Adaptation Fund. SPC will also be responsible for reporting activities in accordance with the funding agreement and reporting schedule. Furthermore, SPC will monitor and supervise the execution of the project and ensure proper management, application and use of the funds.

80. As a Pacific-based RIE to the Adaptation Fund, SPC is well-placed to coordinate and lead on a regional small grants programme for innovative adaptation measures. With existing strong relationships with DAs and line ministries in Pacific SIDS, SPC is well placed to oversee the Co:Lab. The execution of the project will be through SPC’s institutional FiT innovation platform, which serves as the organisation’s incubator–accelerator for testing, refining, and scaling innovative development solutions. By leveraging FiT, the programme benefits from SPC’s established mechanisms for adaptive management, feedback loops, and cross-sectoral coordination across its technical divisions with existing reach into participating countries. Building on learnings from FiT, evidence will be collected throughout project implementation and flexibility will be provided

to project managers to incorporate lessons during implementation, review their theory of change, activities and associated budget to improve their concept, especially during the incubation phase. Project implementers will be encouraged and trained in the use of human-centred design thinking and the double loop approach during the co-design phase, as part of the innovation clinics (activity 2.1.3), and during regular project catchups.

## Executing Entity

81. SPC will also serve as the EE, with the Project Management Unit (PMU) housed within the Strategic Planning and Learning (SPL) Unit. Overall coordination will be carried out through the PMU, in close cooperation with SPC's technical divisions. Strategic collaborations are also being pursued with CSOs, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and academic institutions across the 14 participating Pacific SIDS. Through its climate change advisers and experts across its divisions, SPC will provide a range of technical assistance services. The SER team will also play a key role in supporting the co-design phase of projects to ensure they are inclusive, equitable, and aligned with social development principles.
82. In later stages of implementation starting in Year 3, SPC will expand its network of sub-implementing partners to include national actors, including from CSOs, SMEs and academia. This phased, adaptive approach will be guided by the principles of country ownership, subsidiarity, and effectiveness, and is designed to support gradual strengthening of implementation capacity across the region. Where feasible, SPC will also seek opportunities to collaborate with other RIEs and NIEs. SPC already has formal and informal partnerships with entities such as SPREP, Tuvalu's Ministry of Finance, the Micronesia Conservation Trust, and the Cook Islands Ministry of Finance and Economic Management. These collaborations may involve knowledge sharing and joint identification of project concepts.
83. Execution of project activities will leverage existing arrangements under SPC's established FiT initiative, particularly those under Component 1: Incubation and Component 2: Acceleration. The Co:Lab is structured around three interlinked components aligned with the FiT innovation lifecycle: **Incubation**, **Acceleration**, and **Amplification**. This design supports a coherent pipeline of support, from early-stage ideation to scaled implementation and peer-to-peer knowledge exchange.

### *Project Management Unit*

84. The SPC Climate Innovation Co:Lab will be implemented by SPC as an accredited RIE of the Adaptation Fund, and executed through a dedicated PMU embedded within SPL. This arrangement ensures alignment with the FiT funding window and SPC's broader climate finance support services for Pacific SIDS, leveraging its technical expertise, fiduciary systems, and multi-country experience.

The PMU will consist of two dedicated staff members:

- An Adaptation Innovation Officer, responsible for technical coordination, oversight of the grant cycle, and grantee support; and
  - A Knowledge Management and MEL Officer, responsible for capturing visibility, regional outreach, and cross-country learning as well as the monitoring, evaluation and learning from the programme.
85. Other core programme functions and support services such as ESS, GESI, finance, administration, procurement and grants will be delivered variously through SPC's SPL and CFU teams in collaboration with the Operations and Management Directorate, ensuring cost efficiency and programme coherence.

## Institutional advantage of SPC as Implementing Entity

86. SPC's comparative advantage as RIE lies in its:
  - Extensive ties with governments, administrations, agencies, and partners in all Pacific SIDS;
  - Broad mandate on development and climate change issues in the Pacific, including coastal restoration, ecosystem-based adaptation, flood protection, nature-based solutions and gender and human rights;
  - Large funding base with multi-lateral and bilateral donors, allowing for extensive lessons learned from donor

- funded projects, especially in the target sectors;
- Extensive international, national and local partnerships which range from United Nations agencies to other inter- and non-governmental organisations, academia and civil society groups at grassroots level that facilitates knowledge exchange and cross fertilisation across multiple climate change considerations;
- SPC has 75 years of experience in the region covering 22 Pacific countries and territories (including all 14 Pacific countries eligible for Adaptation Fund support);
- SPC staffing includes a high proportion of native Pacific Islanders from across the region, bringing extensive contextual knowledge and a large amount of regional ownership as well as rich in-country networks; and
- As a member-driven organisation, SPC is country-focused and places the needs of its Members as a paramount priority, ensuring strong country ownership in its designs.

### *Coordination with Designated Authorities*

87. The Co:Lab has been designed to be fully aligned with the Adaptation Fund's principles of country-drivenness and ownership. In accordance with this, SPC will work closely with the DAs of all 14 participating Pacific SIDS throughout the implementation of the programme.
88. To initiate each funding cycle under Component 1: Incubation, SPC will circulate the call for pitches through the respective DAs. This ensures that national stakeholders are aware of the call and that outreach is coordinated with the appropriate government authorities. DAs will be invited to support national-level dissemination through their own platforms and stakeholder networks, helping ensure the call reaches relevant actors including local government, community-based organisations, women's groups, and indigenous knowledge holders.
89. Following the submission of pitches and prior to the final selection of successful grantees, SPC will request endorsement from the DA of the countries from which each selected application originates. These endorsements will confirm alignment with national adaptation priorities and demonstrate government support for the proposed activity. This step is a condition for final grant approval and will be integrated into SPC's grant management system and tracked through regular monitoring and reporting.
90. All letters of endorsement will be submitted to the Adaptation Fund Secretariat as part of the periodic reporting for the programme. This approach ensures that country-drivenness is embedded not only at the design stage but also throughout project implementation, while maintaining the flexibility of a competitive innovation window.

### *Partnerships with national institutions and NIEs*

91. Where feasible, Co:Lab will partner with national institutions for the implementation of small grant projects. These may include government ministries, universities, local enterprises and community-based organisations. The programme also encourages capacity-sharing arrangements between regional actors and national partners to build long-term national ownership of adaptation innovation processes.
92. Moreover, the programme has been designed to complement the work of other regional and national climate adaptation initiatives, including projects implemented by NIEs in the Pacific. Where NIEs are active, SPC will coordinate with them during project screening to identify potential overlaps, co-financing opportunities, or shared learning agendas. Joint technical coordination calls may be held to review proposals of mutual interest or resolve duplication concerns.
93. Through these management arrangements, Co:Lab ensures strong alignment with national adaptation priorities, promotes inclusive participation, and strengthens country ownership while maintaining the operational advantages of regional implementation.

## **T. Project and Financial Risk**

94. A robust risk management framework has been integrated into the project design to proactively identify, assess, and mitigate potential risks that may affect the successful implementation activities. The table below

outlines key financial, operational, strategic, compliance, and environmental risks, along with their initial risk ratings and corresponding mitigation measures. These measures are designed to ensure the project remains on track, and adaptive to changing circumstances.

Table 6. Financial and Project Risk Management Framework

Risk category	Risk description	Initial Risk		Proposed Mitigation measures
		Probability	Impact	
<b>Operational</b>	Limited proposal quality due to lack of capacity among small organisations, especially in SIDS.	Medium	Medium	The programme includes proposal clinics, mentoring, and guidance materials to support applicants. Component 2 will provide targeted capacity-building for grantees and other stakeholders to strengthen innovation readiness and project design capabilities.
<b>Strategic</b>	High failure rate of innovative projects, particularly incubator-stage grants.	Medium	Medium	As an innovation accelerator, the programme anticipates risk. Technical mentoring and iterative design processes will be embedded. Learning from both success and failure will be captured and shared. Acceleration and Amplification will only apply to proven concepts with demonstrated potential.
<b>Strategic</b>	Risk of overlap or duplication with other climate innovation initiatives in the Pacific region.	Medium	Low	Proposals will be cross-checked against SPC's FiT Tracker and other innovation funding sources. Coordination with other regional partners (e.g. SPREP) and periodic joint calls will ensure complementarity. Applicants must declare co-financing or related funding in the pitch template.
<b>Compliance</b>	AF grants are used to support money laundering financing or prohibited practices.	Low	Medium	All project activities will be executed in line with the established policies and procedures of SPC and the government to minimise these risks, including strong oversight, monitoring and reporting practises.
<b>Environmental</b>	Climate and non-climate hazards prevent or delay the execution of activities.	Medium	Medium	Adaptive management approaches will be used, with flexible implementation timelines. Regular communication with grantees and staggered calls will help reduce disruption. SPC's regional presence and local partners will support continuity.

## U. Environmental and Social Risk Management

95. The Co:Lab has been designed in full alignment with the Adaptation Fund's ESP and Gender Policy. Given the programme's nature as an accelerator supporting unidentified sub-projects (USPs) through a competitive grant-making process, environmental and social (E&S) risks cannot be precisely determined at this stage. However, the programme has adopted a precautionary and proactive approach to safeguard management, ensuring that risks will be identified, assessed, avoided, and mitigated through robust mechanisms integrated throughout the programme lifecycle.

96. A dedicated ESMS for the programme has been developed and submitted as Annex II to this proposal. The ESMS provides a comprehensive framework for screening, assessing, managing, and monitoring E&S risks across all USPs funded through Co:Lab. The system is aligned with the 15 ESP principles of the Adaptation Fund and will align with national regulatory frameworks in the countries of implementation. It also integrates

principles of gender equality, inclusion, and meaningful participation, as outlined in the Adaptation Fund's Gender Policy and the programme's Gender Action Plan.

97. While the exact location, scale, and nature of future USPs are currently unknown, the programme anticipates that they are likely to involve low to moderate E&S risks that are site-specific, temporary, and manageable. Based on the typologies of anticipated USPs such as early-stage adaptation pilots, community-based solutions, or nature-based innovations, SPC's Co:Lab is preliminarily classified as Category B under the Adaptation Fund's risk categorisation system. To manage risks effectively, the following measures have been integrated into the programme design:

- **Screening and Risk Categorisation:** All innovation proposals will undergo initial E&S risk screening conducted by the PMU, using SPC's ESMS tools and checklists. Proposals will be categorised as A, B, or C based on their scale, context, and potential E&S risks. Risk categorisation will determine the level of assessment, review, and safeguards required. Category A proposals will be excluded while Category B and Category C proposals will require ESMPs.
- **Proposal Support and Safeguards Integration:** During the co-design phase, the PMU will be supported by SPC's SER team and technical divisions to provide tailored support to applicants to identify risks, apply mitigation measures, and integrate appropriate safeguards into project design. All eligible proposals (Cat B & Cat C) will include ESMPs proportionate to the risks, outlining mitigation actions, institutional responsibilities, monitoring indicators, and grievance redress procedures.
- **Capacity Strengthening:** The programme includes dedicated capacity-building for grantees on ESS, risk mitigation, GESI, and the use of SPC's screening and planning templates. Technical clinics and direct mentoring will help ensure applicants understand and apply the ESMS requirements throughout project development and implementation.
- **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning:** The PMU will lead the monitoring of ESS implementation through the programme's MEL system, with technical backstopping from SPC's technical divisions. E&S indicators will be integrated into the performance monitoring framework, including disaggregated data by gender, age, and disability. Regular site visits, spot checks, and consultations with communities will be conducted to verify implementation and foster adaptive learning. A digital reporting tool will support real-time data capture and reporting.
- **Grievance Redress Mechanism:** A robust grievance redress mechanism (GRM) is in place at SPC, accessible to all stakeholders – including community members, innovation teams, and partners – who wish to raise concerns related to the programme's environmental or social performance. Information on SPC's institutional mechanism is publicly available at [spc.int/accountability](http://spc.int/accountability). The GRM is fully outlined in Annex II as part of the programme's ESMS.

## V. Monitoring and Evaluation

98. As RIE, SPC will provide overall supervision of the programme and ensure implementation is carried out in line with the provisions of the funding agreement with the Adaptation Fund. SPC will lead on programme-wide monitoring and evaluation in compliance with both Adaptation Fund and SPC policies and procedures, ensuring accountability, learning, and adaptive management throughout the programme lifecycle.

99. SPC's CFU will coordinate and oversee monitoring and evaluation (M&E), working in close collaboration with the PMU and SPL. This coordination will facilitate the use of harmonised tools, templates, and methods to enable consistent tracking of programme results, including against the Adaptation Fund's core indicators. The M&E approach will be guided by the following principles:

- Participatory and inclusive monitoring, ensuring engagement of project stakeholders, including grantees and community representatives;
- Evidence-based learning, with regular data collection, field validation, and reflection loops; and
- Gender- and inclusion-sensitive reporting, ensuring that disaggregated data (by sex, age, and disability) is systematically collected and analysed.

100. Monitoring responsibilities will be divided as follows:

- The PMU will lead day-to-day monitoring of grant implementation, using standardised reporting tools aligned with the programme’s ESMS, Gender Action Plan, and knowledge management system;
- The CFU will ensure consistency and quality across countries, provide technical guidance, and maintain oversight of results-based reporting and safeguards compliance; and
- The SPL Team will provide advisory support for evaluation design and quality assurance.

101. In terms of evaluation:

- A mid-term evaluation will be conducted to assess progress, identify operational and strategic challenges, and recommend adjustments to enhance delivery and maximise impact in the second half of the programme. This evaluation will be formative and focused on strengthening implementation.
- A terminal evaluation will assess the programme’s overall performance in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and sustainability. It will also capture outcomes, impacts, and key lessons learned to inform future programming and scale-up opportunities.
- Both evaluations will be coordinated by the CFU, with support from SPL, and guided by terms of reference aligned with Adaptation Fund requirements. Evaluation findings will be made publicly accessible via SPC’s various platforms to support transparency and knowledge sharing.

102. This structure ensures a robust result and learning system, allowing the Co:Lab to track performance, manage risk, demonstrate impact, and continuously improve delivery of climate adaptation innovation across the region.

Table 7. Budgeted M&E plan

M&E Activity	Responsible Party(ies)	Deliverable	Budget		Timeframe
			USD	Source	
Baseline Report  IE to prepare a project baseline report to be used for designing the project, setting targets and monitoring and implementation progress	SPC	Baseline Report	5,000	IE fee	Inception
Quarterly monitoring activities  Gathering of project level results-based information at output and outcome level	KM & MEL Officer	Progress report	6,838	PEC	Quarterly
Environmental, social and gender safeguards monitoring.  Data gathering and tracking against the AF ES Policy and gender policy ensuring compliance against mitigation measures of the ESMP, including corrective actions taken if applicable.	KM & MEL Officer	ESMP and gender report	6,838	PEC	Annually
Supervision missions  IE travel to country to carry out supervision mission, providing assessment of project progress and needs.	SPC	Mission report	10,000	IE fee	Annually
Audit  Annual independent audit to assess project financial statements and ensure compliance with AF and SPC	Independent firm	Audit report	8,000	PEC	Annually

financial policies as well as the grant agreement.					
Project Performance Reports (PPR)  Compilation of all data and information required for the development and submission of PPRs on alignment with AFs Evaluation Framework.	PMU and SPC	Project Progress Report	5,000	IE fee	Annually
Mid-term Evaluation  Independent evaluation conducted to assess project progress and provide recommendations for enhancement	SPC	Mid-term Report	40,000	IE fee	Mid-point
Terminal/final Evaluation  Independent evaluation conducted to assess project effectiveness and evaluate strengths and weaknesses, providing recommendations to SPC for future implementation	SPC	Terminal Evaluation Report	50,000	IE fee	End of project
Project Completion Summary  IE to prepare a summary that covers the entire project life in a reader friendly format by compiling submitted single-year PPRs	SPC	Project Completion Summary	5,000	IE fee	Within six (6) months of project completion
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>136,676</b>		

## W. Results Framework

103. The results framework presents the core structure for tracking the implementation and impact of Co:Lab including milestones, targets and indicators. This also includes core outcome indicators of the Adaptation Fund Results Framework in compliance with the Gender Policy of the Adaptation Fund.

Table 8. Project Results Framework

Result level	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions
<b>Objective: Incubate, catalyse, de-risk, and scale locally led climate adaptation innovations across Pacific SIDS.</b>	Number of innovative, locally led adaptation solutions incubated and/or scaled across Pacific SIDS.	0	20 adaptation innovations supported (20 incubated, 6 scaled)	Grant database;	Local partners and communities are interested and available to co-develop and test innovative solutions.
	Number of local stakeholders with enhanced capacity to implement climate adaptation innovations.	0	At least 100 local stakeholders with enhanced capacities	Capacity development reports	
	Number of beneficiaries with increased adaptive capacity to respond to the impacts of climate change	0	Direct beneficiaries <sup>11</sup> : 900 people (50% women) Indirect	Grant database, capacity development reports	Locally led innovations are successfully implemented and scaled in ways that directly address

<sup>11</sup> The project plans to directly benefit 900 people (20 incubated projects x 30 people + 6 accelerated x 50 people)

			beneficiaries <sup>12</sup> : 2,700 (50% women)		community identified climate risks. The enabling environment support sustain uptake to increase adaptive capacity of vulnerable populations.
<b>Outcome 1: Innovative, locally led adaptation solutions are identified, de-risked, and refined through targeted incubation support, strengthening the pipeline of scalable climate adaptation practices across the Pacific.</b>	Number of eligible innovation concepts incubated with technical support and mentoring	0	20 projects incubated	Grant database, Innovation proposals	Sufficient quality proposals are received; Support services meet innovators' needs
<b>Output 1.1: Incubation of 20 innovative and eligible small grant projects identified, screened and funded across priority adaptation themes.</b>	Percentage of co-designed projects demonstrate how specific needs and priorities of marginalised groups, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, and/or remote communities, are met	0	100% of grantees received support (50% applicants are women)	Grant database and support logs	Technical divisions and experts are available to support applicants.
	Percentage of outreach materials (guidance documents, webinars) developed and disseminated that explicitly include GESI and ESS criteria	0	100%	Outreach materials	Outreach materials developed in alignment with project requirements in relation to GESI and ESS
	Percentage of approved project pitches confirms with SPC SER Policy	0	100%	Approved project proposals	Support during the Co-design phase ensures that all pitches meet relevant safeguards
	Percentage of projects that demonstrate culturally sensitive, context-specific, context-sensitive improvement in gender equality and women's empowerment in design	0	75%	Approved project proposals	Support during project cycle equips project proponents to embed gender-transformative approaches into their innovation projects.
	Percentage of total MEL indicators that are gender-responsive, culturally sensitive, and socially inclusive	0	85%	Projects results framework	Project proponents and implementing partners have the capacity and commitment to design MEL frameworks that integrate

<sup>12</sup> The project plan to indirectly benefit 2,700 people (20 incubated projects x 90 people + 6 accelerated projects x 150 people)

					gender, culture and social inclusion from the outset.
<b>Outcome 2: Adaptation innovations are scaled up, resulting in increased climate resilience of communities and systems through expanded implementation</b>	Number of scaled innovations demonstrating climate resilience benefits	0	6 innovations scaled	Project reports, grant database	Innovations remain viable and funding opportunities are accessible
<b>Output 2.1: Increased capacity of local actors to develop technically sound and innovative adaptation project ideas.</b>	Percentage of total beneficiaries that report an overall improvement in knowledge and capacity on GESI and ESS in the development of concept notes	0	100%	Training/ Capacity Building reports	Stakeholders actively participate
	Percentage of clinics participants that demonstrate understanding and improved capacity of human-centered design and ESS-compliant GESI integration in innovation projects.	0	100%	Clinic session reports	Applicants actively participate in clinic sessions
<b>Output 2.2 Accelerated innovation pipeline and accelerated readiness innovation</b>	Number of proposals receiving additional funding support	0	6 innovations scaled	Submission records to other funding sources	External funders receptive to proposals; Concepts aligned with other funding criteria
	Percentage of accelerated innovations that identify and address gender differentiated risks and opportunities	0	100%	Approved accelerated innovation proposals	Innovation proponents and implementing partners have the technical capacity, resources, and commitment to integrate gender analysis into design and implementation of innovative projects.
	Percentage of accelerated innovations that demonstrate culturally sensitive, context-specific improvement in gender equality in design	0	75% of accelerated innovations demonstrate culturally sensitive, context-specific improvement in gender equality in design	Approved accelerated innovation proposals	Local cultural norms and community priorities are respected and engaged throughout the innovation design process.
	Percentage of NIEs with enhanced capacity in developing national adaptation innovation pipeline.	0	100%	Workshop reports Pre and post workshop surveys	Invited NIEs attended capacity building for developing innovative project proposals

<b>Outcome 3: Knowledge, evidence, and learning from innovative adaptation practices are systematically captured and disseminated, promoting replication, policy influence, and increased regional capacity for climate resilience</b>	Number of knowledge products and knowledge sharing events generated	0	4 knowledge products 3 Investment Labs 2 peer learning events	Knowledge products, Workshop reports	Stakeholders are willing to share learnings; Learning formats are relevant and accessible
	Number of assets produced, developed, improved, or strengthened	0	4 assets	Project progress reports	Innovative adaptation projects are successfully implemented and completed and resulted in development and strengthening of development sector services.
<b>Output 3.1: Investment matchmaking and climate finance readiness for amplification supported</b>	Number of investment labs	0	3 Investment Labs	Workshop reports	Travel/logistics allow for regional convening
	Number of stakeholders benefitted from Innovation Labs	0	90 stakeholders (50% women)		Innovation labs are designed and delivered in a way that is relevant, accessible, and responsive to stakeholder needs.
<b>Output 3.2: Strategic partnerships for replication and scaling facilitated across the Pacific</b>	Number of cross-country or multi-stakeholder knowledge exchange sessions held	0	2 peer learning events	Workshop reports	Travel/logistics allow for regional convening
	Number of innovation stories or case studies highlighting gender-responsive and inclusive approaches	0	5 innovation stories	Web-stories,	Partners and project teams are willing to document and share their experiences. Sufficient capacity and resources exist to capture gender-responsive and inclusive lessons in ways that are credible, contextually appropriate and useful for replication across the Pacific.
	Percentage of learning events that include representation from marginalised communities	0	50% of learning events include women or representation from marginalised communities	Learning event reports	Marginalised groups and women are able and willing to participate in learning events. The organisers

					have the capacity and commitment to ensure inclusive planning, outreach, and logistical support that enable
	Percentage of supported policy engagements that include meaningful representation of women	0	75% of supported policy engagements that include meaningful representation of women	Stakeholder engagement reports.	All invited stakeholders attend supported policy engagements

## X. Alignment of the project against the AF Results Framework

Table 9. Project alignment with the Adaptation Fund Results Framework

Project Objective(s)	Project Objective Indicator(s)	Fund Outcome	Fund Outcome Indicator	Grant Amount (USD)
Incubate, catalyse, de-risk, and scale locally led climate adaptation innovations across Pacific SIDS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of innovative, locally led adaptation solutions incubated and/or scaled across Pacific SIDS.</li> <li>- Number of local stakeholders with enhanced capacity to implement climate adaptation innovations.</li> </ul>	<p>Outcome 2: Strengthened institutional capacity to reduce risks associated with climate-induced socioeconomic and environmental losses</p> <p>Outcome 8: Support the development and diffusion of innovative adaptation practices, tools and technologies</p>	<p>2.1 Capacity of staff to respond to and mitigate impacts of climate-related events from targeted institutions increased.</p> <p>8.1 No. of new, adapted or improved adaptation solutions developed contextually and with the inclusion of the communities most vulnerable to climate change</p>	4,408,040
Project Outcome(s)	Project Outcome Indicator(s)	Fund Outcome	Fund Outcome Indicator	Grant Amount (USD)
Outcome 1: Innovative, locally led adaptation solutions are identified, de-risked, and refined through targeted incubation support, strengthening the pipeline of scalable climate adaptation practices across the Pacific.	- Number of eligible innovation concepts incubated with technical support and mentoring	<p>Outcome 2: Strengthened institutional capacity to reduce risks associated with climate-induced socioeconomic and environmental losses</p> <p>Outcome 8: Support the development and diffusion of innovative adaptation practices, tools and technologies</p>	<p>2.1 Capacity of staff to respond to and mitigate impacts of climate-related events from targeted institutions increased.</p> <p>8. Innovative adaptation practices are rolled out, scaled up, encouraged and or/accelerated at the regional, national and/or subnational level.</p>	1,306,120
Outcome 2: Adaptation innovations are scaled up, resulting in increased climate resilience of communities and systems through expanded implementation	- Number of scaled innovations demonstrating climate resilience benefits	<p>Outcome 2: Strengthened institutional capacity to reduce risks associated with climate-induced socioeconomic and environmental losses</p> <p>Outcome 8: Support the development and</p>	<p>2.1 Capacity of staff to respond to, and mitigate impacts of, climate-related events from targeted institutions increased</p> <p>8. Innovative adaptation practices are rolled out,</p>	1,654,120

		diffusion of innovative adaptation practices, tools and technologies	scaled up, encouraged and or/accelerated at the regional, national and/or subnational level.	
Outcome 3: Knowledge, evidence, and learning from innovative adaptation practices are systematically captured and disseminated, promoting replication, policy influence, and increased regional capacity for climate resilience	- Number of knowledge products and knowledge sharing events generated	Outcome 2: Strengthened institutional capacity to reduce risks associated with climate-induced socioeconomic and environmental losses  Outcome 3: Strengthened awareness and ownership of adaptation and climate risk reduction processes at the local level	2.1 Capacity of staff to respond to, and mitigate impacts of, climate-related events from targeted institutions increased  3.1 Percentage of targeted population aware of predicted adverse impacts of climate change, and of appropriate responses	1,447,800

## Y. Budget

Table 10. Detailed budget

Outcome/Output	Cost Category	Budget Notes and Assumptions	Amount Year 1 (USD)	Amount Year 2 (USD)	Amount Year 3 (USD)	Amount Year 4 (USD)	Amount Year 5 (USD)	Total (USD)
<b>Outcome 1: Innovative, locally led adaptation solutions are identified, de-risked, and refined through targeted incubation support, strengthening the pipeline of scalable climate adaptation practices across the Pacific.</b>								<b>\$1,306,120</b>
Output 1.1. Incubation of 20 innovative and eligible small grant projects identified, screened and funded across priority adaptation themes.	<b>Sub-grants</b>	Annual ceiling of up to USD 200,000 allocated for incubation sub-grants under Activity 1.1.4. This budget will be distributed across multiple grants each year depending on demand, quality, and scope of proposals.	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$1,000,000
	<b>Travel</b>	Project site visits for supervision at 5000USD/trip with 4 visits budgeted per year under Activity 1.1.5	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$100,000
	<b>Communication</b>	Translation and communication services at lumpsum of 2,000 USD /year	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$10,000
	<b>Technical support</b>	Technical assistance, including technical backstopping by SPC experts for project	\$39,224	\$39,224	\$39,224	\$39,224	\$39,224	\$196,120

		pitches and co-design							
<b>Outcome 2: Adaptation innovations are scaled up, resulting in increased climate resilience of communities and systems through expanded implementation</b>									<b>\$1,654,120</b>
Output 2.1 Increased capacity of local actors to develop technically sound and innovative adaptation project ideas.	<b>Workshops</b>	Two innovation clinics per year under Activity 2.1.3 at 1500USD/clinic for venue and logistics	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	\$15,000
	<b>Travel</b>	International travel for helpdesk experts to convene up to 2 clinics per year in-country at 5000 USD/trip (flights, DSA and local transport) under Activity 2.1.3	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	\$50,000
Output 2.2 Accelerated innovation pipeline and scaled-up readiness innovation	<b>Sub-grants</b>	Annual ceiling of up to USD 300,000 allocated for acceleration sub-grants under Activity 2.2.2. This budget will be distributed across multiple grants depending on demand, quality, and scope of proposals		\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$1,200,000

	<b>Workshops</b>	3-day regional training under Activity 2.2.3 at 145,000 USD/workshop including regional travel for participants, venue and other logistics		\$145,000					\$145,000
	<b>Travel</b>	Project site visits for supervision visits at 5000USD/trip with 2 visits budgeted per year under Activity 2.2.2		\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$40,000
	<b>Communication</b>	Translation and communication services at lumpsum 2,000USD /year under Activity 2.2.1, 2.2.2, and 2.2.3		\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$8,000
	<b>Technical support</b>	Technical assistance, including preparation of training materials, review and co-design of acceleration projects	\$39,224	\$39,224	\$39,224	\$39,224	\$39,224	\$39,224	\$196,120
<b>Outcome 3: Knowledge, evidence, and learning from innovative adaptation practices are systematically captured and disseminated, promoting replication, policy influence, and increased regional capacity for climate resilience</b>									<b>\$1,447,800</b>

Output 3.1 Investment matchmaking and climate finance readiness for amplification supported	<b>Workshops</b>	Investment Labs at 146,000 USD/lab per year in Year 3,4,5 organised under Activity 3.1.1 (including venue, logistics and travel of participants)			\$146,000	\$146,000	\$146,000	\$438,000
	<b>Travel</b>	International travel for helpdesk experts to convene investment lab at 5000 USD/trip (flights, DSA and local transport) under Activity 3.1.1			\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$30,000
	<b>Technical support</b>	Technical assistance, including technical inputs to Investment Labs, documentation of lessons and distillation of best practices across innovation projects under Activity 3.1.1	\$61,543	\$61,543	\$61,543	\$61,543	\$61,543	\$307,715
Output 3.2 Regional peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, policy uptake, and replication pathways are strengthened	<b>Consulting services</b>	Communication Expert to develop 2 policy briefs, 1 factsheet and 1 technical report under Activity 3.2.1 at 600USD/day at 80days			\$24,000	\$24,000		\$48,000

	<b>Workshops</b>	2x peer-to-peer learning exchanges at 146,185 USD/workshop organised under Activity 3.2.2 (including venue, logistics and travel of participants)		\$146,185		\$146,185		\$292,370
	<b>Travel</b>	International travel for helpdesk experts to support peer-to-peer learning at 5000 USD/trip (flights, DSA and local transport) under Activity 3.2.2		\$10,000		\$10,000		\$20,000
	<b>Communication</b>	Translation services to translate and disseminate project outputs at lumpsum of 2000 USD /year under Activity 3.2.1, 3.2.2 and 3.2.3			\$2,000	\$2,000		\$4,000
	<b>Technical support</b>	Technical assistance for knowledge management, including technical inputs to peer-to-peer learning, documentation and learning under Activity 3.2.1, 3.2.2 and 3.2.3	\$61,543	\$61,543	\$61,543	\$61,543	\$61,543	\$307,715
<b>Total across Outcomes</b>			\$436,534	\$1,049,719	\$930,534	\$1,086,719	\$904,534	<b>\$4,408,040</b>

<b>Project Execution costs</b>								
Adaptation Innovation Officer		Part-time position over five years to coordinate the adaptation innovation window	\$8,716.00	\$8,716.00	\$8,716.00	\$8,716.00	\$8,716.00	\$43,580
Knowledge Management & MEL Officer		Position over five years dedicated to monitoring, evaluation, learning, and knowledge sharing	\$13,676.00	\$13,676.00	\$13,676.00	\$13,676.00	\$13,676.00	\$68,380
Audit		Annual independent external audits	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$40,000
<b>Project Execution costs (&gt;1.5%)</b>			\$30,392	\$30,392	\$30,392	\$30,392	\$30,392	<b>\$151,960</b>
<b><u>Total project cost (incl. PEC)</u></b>			<b>\$466,926</b>	<b>\$1,080,111</b>	<b>\$960,926</b>	<b>\$1,117,111</b>	<b>\$934,926</b>	<b>\$4,560,000</b>
<b>Project Cycle Management fee</b>								
Direct project supervision from IE		Staff time to cover technical oversight and quality assurance by IE, baseline report and project closure summary, etc	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$175,000
Travel		Travel costs for IE staff for site visits, supervision missions or coordination meetings	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$50,000

IE financial and fiduciary compliance		Financial oversight and fiduciary management, including review of sub-grants disbursements and internal compliance checks	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$75,000
Mid-Term and Final Evaluation		Independent evaluations to assess progress, effectiveness and impact			\$40,000		\$50,000	\$90,000
Annual Progress Reports (APRs)		Preparation, compilation and submission of annual report to AF	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$25,000
Administrative costs		Routine administrative support for IE operations related to project implementation	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$25,000
<b>Project Cycle Management fee charged by the Implementing Entity (&gt;10%)</b>			<b>\$70,000</b>	<b>\$70,000</b>	<b>\$110,000</b>	<b>\$70,000</b>	<b>\$120,000</b>	<b>\$440,000</b>
<b><u>Total cost (incl. PEC and IE fee)</u></b>								<b>\$5,000,000</b>

104. The project’s execution costs of USD 151,960 (3.4% of the total project cost) exceed the Adaptation Fund’s 1.5% ceiling for cases where the Implementing Entity also serves as the Executing Entity. As the project spans 14 Pacific SIDS, each with distinct institutional, technical, and regulatory contexts. This requires additional resources for coordination, compliance verification, and tailored technical support compared to a single-country project. Further the project operationalises a regional innovation financing window, which necessitates dedicated oversight of proposal screening, fiduciary checks, safeguard compliance, and reporting. These functions require sustained technical backstopping and cannot be absorbed within the IE management fee. While 3.4% exceeds the policy threshold, the absolute amount of USD 151,960 over five years is modest when compared to the scale of activities and the fiduciary, technical, and compliance responsibilities involved. For these reasons, the proposed execution costs are essential to safeguard fiduciary integrity, ensure compliance national, SPEC and Adaptation Fund requirements and to deliver high-quality technical support and knowledge sharing across multiple countries. Without these resources, the regional innovation small grant mechanism could not be managed to the required standards.

**Z. Disbursement Schedule**

Table 11. Disbursement Schedule

Budget type	Year 1 (USD)	Year 2 (USD)	Year 3 (USD)	Year 4 (USD)	Year 5 (USD)	Total (USD)
Activities cost	436,534	\$1,049,719	\$930,534	\$1,086,719	\$904,534	4,408,040
Execution cost	30,392	30,392	30,392	30,392	30,392	151,960
Project Cycle Management fee charged by the Implementing Entity	70,000	70,000	110,000	70,000	120,000	440,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	536,926	1,150,112	1,070,926	1,187,113	1,054,926	5,000,000

## PART IV: ENDORSEMENT BY GOVERNMENTS AND CERTIFICATION BY THE IMPLEMENTING ENTITY

**Record of endorsement on behalf of the government:** *Letters of endorsement may be provided at a later stage, if not possible to include with the fully-developed programme. In that case, the proposal should describe how the IE plans to secure governments' endorsements of the initiative and when the IEs will provide the letters in the reports to the secretariat.*

<i>(Enter Name, Position, Ministry)</i>	<i>Date: (Month, day, year)</i>
<i>(Enter Name, Position, Ministry)</i>	<i>Date: (Month, day, year)</i>
<i>(Enter Name, Position, Ministry)</i>	<i>Date: (Month, day, year)</i>

Call for pitches will be coordinated through Designated Authorities in 14 eligible Pacific SIDS. Following the submission of pitches and prior to the final selection of successful grantees, SPC will request a letter of endorsement from the DA of the country from which each selected application originates. These letters will confirm alignment with national adaptation priorities and demonstrate government support for the proposed activity.

**B. Implementing Entity certification** *Provide the name and signature of the Implementing Entity Coordinator and the date of signature. Provide also the project/programme contact person's name, telephone number and email address*

<p>I certify that this proposal has been prepared in accordance with guidelines provided by the Adaptation Fund Board, and prevailing National Development and Adaptation Plans and subject to the approval by the Adaptation Fund Board, <u>commit to implementing the project/programme in compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy of the Adaptation Fund</u> and on the understanding that the Implementing Entity will be fully (legally and financially) responsible for the implementation of this project/programme.</p>	
 <p><i>Dirk Snyman</i> Implementing Entity Coordinator</p>	
<p>Date: <i>July 25 2025</i></p>	<p>Tel. and email: +687 26 20 00 <a href="mailto:dirks@spc.int">dirks@spc.int</a></p>
<p>Project Contact Person: Dirk Snyman and Anna Deinhard</p>	
<p>Tel. And Email: +687 26 20 00 <a href="mailto:dirks@spc.int">dirks@spc.int</a> ; <a href="mailto:annad@spc.int">annad@spc.int</a></p>	

---

## I. Annex – Gender Assessment and Action Plan

---

### Introduction

105. The SPC Climate Innovation Co:Lab (Co:Lab) will operate across 14 Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS): Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. These countries are dispersed across a vast ocean area and share common vulnerabilities as low-lying or geographically remote islands exposed to the impacts of climate change. Many face rising sea levels, saltwater intrusion, coastal erosion, and intensifying extreme weather events, compounded by limited infrastructure, geographic isolation, and small economies reliant on climate-sensitive sectors such as fisheries, agriculture, and tourism. Despite their rich cultural diversity and strong traditional governance systems, Pacific SIDS have constrained access to adaptation finance. In response, the Co:Lab aims to support locally led, scalable, and inclusive climate adaptation solutions through targeted grants and technical support.
106. While women and men contribute in distinct and valuable ways to climate resilience, gender and social inequalities persist across the Pacific – shaped by deeply rooted cultural norms, systemic barriers, and uneven institutional capacity. Women often face limited access to economic resources, land, and decision-making spaces, particularly in customary governance systems. In many countries, gender roles are strongly defined, with women predominantly engaged in unpaid care, community service, or informal economies. Despite parity in education in many countries and the emergence of strong women-led civil society organisations, women remain underrepresented in formal leadership, and barriers to participation persist for people with disabilities, youth, and gender-diverse individuals. Structural exclusion, unequal access to climate information and resources, and the gendered impacts of disasters further entrench vulnerability.
107. This annex provides the foundation for integrating gender equality, social inclusion, and locally led adaptation into all stages of the Co:Lab programme. It thereby maximises equitable outcomes, supports the reduction of structural vulnerabilities, and fulfils the Adaptation Fund’s requirements under its Gender Policy. It also aligns with SPC’s institutional commitments, building on the framework of the “Funding with Intent” programme and supports Pacific countries in meeting their own gender equality and climate resilience targets.

### Methodology

108. This Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) Analysis and associated Gender Action Plan was completed through a desk review of the legal and policy framework and publicly available gender data pertinent to this assessment. Overall, there continues to be several significant gaps in gender-disaggregated data and gender-specific metrics for the Pacific. To account for this, the programme will implement strong stakeholder engagement throughout the programme cycle, ensuring that stakeholders across groups are meaningfully consulted and sufficiently informed both prior to and during programme implementation.

### Gender Analysis and Assessment

#### Policy and Legal Framework

109. The following section details an abbreviated list of the legal frameworks and regulations related to gender and social inclusion, at the international and regional levels ([Table 12](#) ~~Table 12~~).

Table 12. Selected legal and policy frameworks for gender applicable to the region.

Level	Agreement/Convention/Treaty
International/Global	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Acceded, 1972) Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (Acceded, 1995) UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Signed, 2007) Convention on Biological Diversity (1992) Beijing Platform for Action (Signed, 1995) Agenda 2030 for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
Regional	SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway (2014) Pacific Platform for Action on the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality Triennial Conference of Pacific Women and Meeting of Ministers for Women Pacific Leaders' Gender Equality Declaration (2012) Moana Declaration (2013) Pacific Platform for Action on Gender Equality and Women's Rights 2018–2030 Revitalised Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration (2023) Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific Pacific Framework on the Rights for Persons with Disabilities

109. Pacific SIDS align with a range of regional and international frameworks that support gender equality and women's empowerment, recognising the unique social, economic, and environmental contexts of the Pacific. Key among these is the *SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway*, which includes specific priorities for gender equality within the broader sustainable development agenda. Additionally, the *Pacific Platform for Action on the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality* has served as a core framework since 1994, with a revised version guiding policy and programming from 2005 to 2015.

110. Another significant regional commitment is the *Pacific Leaders' Gender Equality Declaration* (PLGED), endorsed in 2012. This declaration represents a unified political commitment by Pacific leaders to enhance the status of women and girls across economic, political, and social domains. Under the PLGED, governments committed to:

- Improve the collection and use of sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis to inform policies and programmes;
- Increase women's representation in leadership and decision-making at all levels, including governance structures such as political institutions, school boards, advocacy groups, and market committees;
- Support economic empowerment through equitable access to employment, reduction of discriminatory pay practices, and support for women entrepreneurs, including better facilities for market-based economic activities;
- Address sexual and gender-based violence through legislation, appropriate penalties, and provision of essential services such as health care, counselling, legal support, and protection for survivors;
- Promote gender parity in education, raise awareness of reproductive health, and strengthen access to education and training across all levels, including informal and tertiary education.

111. Regional mechanisms such as the *Triennial Conference of Pacific Women* and the *Meeting of Ministers for Women* are designed to facilitate accountability and provide important platforms to assess progress, share experiences, and set common priorities for advancing gender equality.

112. On an international level, the majority of Pacific SIDS are signatories to agreements such as the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*. Similarly, most Pacific SIDS have endorsed other key global commitments, including the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, the

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and have made their own national level commitments (Table 13-Table 13).

Table 13. Summary of National Policies and Commitments on Gender

Country	Agreement/Convention/Treaty
<b>Cook Islands</b>	National Policy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 2011 Gender and Development Division under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Crimes Act and the Family Protection and Support Law Bill Employment Relations Act 2012
<b>FSM</b>	FSM Strategic Development Plan 2004–2023 National Gender Policy 2018–2023 The FSM Constitution Article IV, section 4 Kosrae State Family Protection Act 2014. Pohnpei State Domestic Violence Act 2017. FSM Disability Policy 2009–2016 FSM Youth Policy 2017–2023 FSM Government National Ending Violence against Women Policy 2018.
<b>Fiji</b>	Fiji Constitution 2013 National Gender Policy 2014 National Climate Change Policy 2019 Employment Relations Act 2007 Family Law Act 2003 Widows and Orphans Pensions Act 1914 Married Women's Property Act 1891
<b>Kiribati</b>	National Approach to Eliminating Sexual and Gender Based violence in Kiribati Policy and National Action Plan 2011–2021 Te Rae N Te Mwenga (Family Peace) Act 2014 Kiribati 20-Year vision 2016-2036 National Policy on Gender Equality and Women's Development 2019–2022
<b>Republic of Marshall Islands</b>	National Gender Mainstreaming Policy 2015–2019 Domestic Violence Prevention and Protection Act 2011 (amended 2018) Gender Equality Act 2019 Employment Equal Opportunity Act 2017 Marriage Act Amendment 2016 Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons Act 2017 Child Protection Act 2015 Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2015
<b>Nauru</b>	National Action Plan for Women 2005-2015 National Women's Policy 2014–2019 (reviewed in 2021) Domestic Violence and Family Protection Act 2017 Nauru National Women's Summit (2019 and 2022) Draft policies in development: Public Service Sexual Harassment Policy Gender Policy Gender Responsive Pandemic Policy No Drop Policy Zero to Three Development Centre Policy National Action Plan for Gender Based Violence Service Delivery Protocol for Gender Based Violence
<b>Niue</b>	National Gender Policy (draft) Family Law Bull (draft)
<b>Papua New Guinea</b>	National Policy for Women and Gender Equality 2011–2015 National Public Service Gender Equity and Social Inclusion Policy 2011–2015 National Council of Women's Act 2013
<b>Samoa</b>	Family Safety Act 2013 National Policy on Gender Equality and the Rights of Women and Girls 2021–2031

Country	Agreement/Convention/Treaty
	National Policy on Family Safety 2021-2031
<b>Solomon Islands</b>	Family Protection Act 2014 National Development Strategy 2016–2035 National Policy on Eliminating Violence Against Women 2016–2020 Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan 2017–2021 National Gender Equality and Women’s Development Policy 2016–2020 National Strategy for the Economic Empowerment of Women and Girls 2020–2023
<b>Tonga</b>	Family Protection Act 2013 Tonga Strategic Development Framework (II) 2015–2025 National Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality Tonga Policy and Strategic Plan of Action 2019–2025
<b>Tuvalu</b>	Tuvalu National Gender Policy 2014
<b>Vanuatu</b>	Family Protection Act 2008 Child Protection Policy 2016–2026 National Sustainable Development Plan 2016–2030 Review Gender Equity in Education Policy 2018 National Disability Inclusive Development Policy 2018–2025 National Gender Equality Policy 2020–2030 and Implementation Plan and Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy 2020–2025 Vanuatu Reproductive, Maternal, New-boar, Child & Adolescent Health Policy, Strategy & Implementation Plan 2021–2025

113. Despite these international and regional commitments, gender-specific national policies and overall progress towards gender equality in the Pacific has been uneven. While some advances have been made, such as improved access to education for girls and efforts to address gender-based violence, gender inequality continues to have significant social and economic costs and there remains substantial scope to improve outcomes. Continued action to strengthen gender equality through regional initiatives can support more resilient, inclusive, and secure communities across the Pacific.

114. The SPC Climate Innovation Co:Lab will ensure compliance and alignment with the relevant national, regional, and international gender mechanisms in coordination with corresponding women’s and family affairs ministries and/or implementing entities on the community level in areas where sub-projects are conducted.

## Socioeconomic and Gender Baseline

115. The Gender Development Index (GDI)<sup>13</sup>, Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI), and Gender Inequality Index (GII)<sup>14</sup> provide a deeper understanding of development and inequality<sup>15,16</sup>. [Table 14](#) provides a summary of key information on these indices for Pacific SIDS.

Table 14. Overview comparison of gender indices for Pacific Island countries based on the GII and GDI.

Indicator	Cook Islands	FSM	Fiji	Kiribati	RMI	Nauru	Niue	Palau	PNG	Samoa	Solomons	Tonga	Tuvalu	Vanuatu
GII			0.35					0.58		0.42	0.48	0.44		0.56

<sup>13</sup> The GDI measures gender inequalities in achievement in three basic dimensions of human development; health, education, and command over economic resources. <https://hdr.undp.org/gender-development-index#/indicies/GDI>

<sup>14</sup> The GII is a composite metric of gender inequality using three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market. A low GII value indicates low inequality between women and men, and vice-versa. <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

<sup>15</sup> [UNDP. Human Development Report.](#)

<sup>16</sup> [UNDP. Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index.](#)

Value (2023)														
Rank (2023)			85					156		105	118	115		147
HDI Rank (2023)		149	111	140	108	124		84	160	122	156	92	129	146
GDI Group <sup>17</sup> (2023)		2	3	1	2	2		1	3	2	3	1	2	2
Share of seats in parliament (2023) (% held by women)		14.3	10.9	6.7	12.1	10.5		6.9	2.7	13.0	8.0	7.1	6.3	1.9
Population with at least secondary education (2023) (% ages 25 and older)														
Female			87.9		96.3			96.2	27.4	94.4	38.2	94.2	61.1	46.6
Male			86.7		97.1			92.9	41.3	90.0	47.8	94.1	60.6	48.2
Female Labor Participation Rate (2023)		48.6	38.4	43.0	42.7	56.9		60.5	50.7	31.4	87.1	53.3	35.2	43.1
Male Labor Participation Rate (2023)		68.1	75.8	54.8	60.8	72.7		73.7	53.3	56.6	87.7	71.4	52.4	48.8
Female-Male Labor Participation Ratio														
Estimate gross national income per capita (2021 PPP USD)														
Female (2023)		7,531	3,157	3,949	5,186	15,192		12,385	3,436	3,724	2,469	5,957	4,963	2,857
Male (2023)		18,235	5,348	6,009	9,161	23,930		19,156	4,475	8,150	3,072	9,081	8,957	3,940
Maternal mortality ratio (2023) Deaths per 100,000		73	38	76					192	59	122	126		94

## Women’s Voice, Decision-Making, and Access to Resources

116. Across Pacific SIDS, women are often underrepresented in political and public life, with systemic barriers limiting their access to leadership, decision-making spaces, and productive resources. Pacific Women Lead notes that “patriarchal, cultural and social norms, lack of knowledge of the law, limited access to justice, and stigma within communities all contribute to social acceptance of men controlling women’s participation in social, political and economic life”<sup>18</sup>.

### 117. *Political Representation and Governance:*

Women’s representation in national parliaments in the Pacific remains the lowest of any global region. In 2022, women held just 9.7% of national legislative seats across the 14 Pacific SIDS reviewed<sup>19</sup>, well below the global average of 26.1%. This disparity is compounded by a lack of Temporary Special Measures (TSMs) in most countries; Samoa is the only country in the region with a parliamentary gender quota, and a small number of others, including Vanuatu and Solomon Islands, have introduced partial measures at the local or political party level. However, it is important to note that there is significant variation across Pacific

<sup>17</sup> Countries are divided into five GDI groups by absolute deviation from gender parity in HDI values. Group 1 comprises countries with high equality in HDI achievements between women and men. Group 2 comprises countries with medium to high equality in HDI achievements between women and men. Group 3 comprises countries with medium equality in HDI achievements between women and men. Group 4 comprises countries with medium to low equality in HDI achievements between women and men. Group 5 comprises countries with low equality in HDI achievements between women and men.

<sup>18</sup> [Pacific Women Lead: Formative Situation Analysis, August 2024](#)

<sup>19</sup> [Regional Gender Equality Brief for 14 Pacific Island Countries and Territories, UN Women, 2022](#)

SIDS. The proportion of women in national legislature is highest in the Cook Islands, where women hold 25% of parliamentary seats.

118. Since the establishment of the PLGED in 2012, Pacific SIDS have made steady progress on the third indicator (women in senior management in the public sector), reporting an increase in the number of women in senior management positions within government ministries and divisions. That being said, and, with the exception of the Cook Islands and Niue, Pacific SIDS have faced challenges in making progress on the first 2 indicators (see page 57). The overarching trend in the Pacific shows a slow upward trajectory in the proportion of parliamentary seats held by women: from 2.7% in 2013 to 8.5% in 2023<sup>20</sup>. Some Pacific countries, such as Fiji, RMI, Tonga and Palau, show a regression from their last general election results, recording a decrease in the number of women elected.
119. Women's political participation can be hindered by limited access to campaign financing, social capital, and entrenched gender stereotypes that reinforce male dominance in leadership roles. Women candidates face both economic and social barriers, as well as online and offline harassment and defamatory attacks<sup>21</sup>.
120. There are regional and national initiatives working toward addressing the status quo, such as the Pacific Girl program in Fiji, PNG, Solomon Islands, FSM, Tonga, and Vanuatu, Balance of Power Phase 1 in Vanuatu and Tonga, and Fi-e-Fi-a'a Fafine Tonga Women's Coalition in Tonga.
121. *Traditional and Local Leadership*  
Customary leadership systems remain influential in many Pacific societies and are instrumental in determining women's involvement in local decision-making. In several countries, traditional titles or clan-based leadership positions are predominantly or exclusively held by men. In Samoa, some villages prevent women from holding *matai* (chief) titles, an exclusion that limits their eligibility to run for national office. In Tuvalu, only 10% of members of the traditional decision-making body *Falekaupule* were women as of 2018, and in Fiji, just 7% of village chief positions were held by women in 2019<sup>22</sup>. Yet sociocultural norms on women's leadership differ across the region, as in the Cook Islands, women can hold *Ariki* (chief) titles and the Are Ariki make recommendations to the Legislative Assembly on matters concerning the welfare of the population. In the Federated States of Micronesia land use rights are inherited through the mother's clan, and in the Marshall Islands female clan-heads participate in community meetings deciding on land matters<sup>23</sup>.
122. Women's control over land and property remains unequal across the Pacific. Legal and customary practices often disadvantage women in inheritance, land ownership, and decision-making regarding communal resources. In countries like Palau, Tonga, and Tuvalu, inheritance laws favour male heirs, and in several others, women are excluded from land-related decisions under customary law. Even where legal provisions exist for gender equality, traditional systems often override statutory protections<sup>24</sup>. However, there are developments, such as Vanuatu's Custom Land Management Act (2013) which mandates women's participation in customary land institutions, representing a step toward more inclusive governance of natural resources.
123. Women's civil society organisations (CSOs) and feminist movements have played a crucial role in advocating for gender equality, promoting women's leadership, and holding governments accountable. These groups often engage at national and regional levels to influence policies related to gender-based violence, education, economic empowerment, and political representation. Ongoing regional engagement through platforms such as the Triennial Conference of Pacific Women and the Meeting of Ministers for Women provide opportunities for CSO voices to shape regional gender equality agendas.

## Gender in Economy and Education

---

<sup>20</sup> Ibid 6. Pacific Women Lead

<sup>21</sup> Ibid 7. UN Women

<sup>22</sup> [Regional Gender Equality Brief for 14 Pacific Island Countries and Territories, UN Women, 2022](#)

<sup>23</sup> Ibid

<sup>24</sup> Ibid

124. Across Pacific SIDS, gender disparities persist in access to and control over economic resources, employment opportunities, and decision-making in the economic sphere. Although efforts to support women's economic empowerment have increased in recent years, structural barriers remain. National labour force participation rates are difficult to compare across the region due to the varying definitions used by governments. Women have lower labour force participation rates than men, and economic opportunities for women remain limited and unequal especially for women living in rural and remote areas, women with disabilities, and young women. Overall, there is significant variation in women's economic representation, with over 60% of managerial positions in the Cook Islands held by women (2019), compared to just 20% in the FSM (2014) and 26% in the Solomon Islands (2013)<sup>25</sup>.
125. While some countries have introduced national strategies to improve women's participation in the economy (e.g. through entrepreneurship support or public sector employment targets), implementation and monitoring remain limited<sup>26</sup>. In addition, in the majority of countries, the prohibition of sexual harassment is not included within formal employment legislation. However, the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, the RMI, and Samoa all have national legislation which prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of sex in both the public and private sectors.
126. In comparison to the formal labour market, a significant proportion of women are engaged in informal and subsistence economies, such as market vendors, informal tourism workers, and unpaid family workers in agriculture and fishing. In 8 out of the 10 countries with available data<sup>27</sup>, more women than men are working in informal employment, which is typically characterised by low earnings, job insecurity, and limited legal protections. These sectors are often overlooked in national labour statistics, leading to a lack of visibility of women's economic contribution<sup>28</sup>. Furthermore, access to financial services, credit, and markets remains limited for many women entrepreneurs particularly those operating outside formal networks and although initiatives to improve financial inclusion (e.g. digital banking and microcredit schemes) exist, scale and sustainability vary widely across countries.
127. Women also carry a disproportionate burden of unpaid care and domestic work. This includes childcare, elder care, meal preparation, and community-based voluntary work. These responsibilities limit the time women can dedicate to income-generating activities or participation in training and leadership programmes. Currently no comprehensive time-use data is available at the regional level to quantify this gendered role.
128. Where data is available, women's unemployment rates are consistently higher than men's, particularly among young women. In countries like Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu, many young women are not in education, employment or training. Labour force surveys are often outdated or unavailable in many Pacific SIDS, limiting the accuracy of estimates<sup>29</sup>.
129. The Cook Islands, FSM, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, RMI, Samoa, Tonga, and Tuvalu all offer free and compulsory education. In many PICs, gender parity has been achieved in primary and secondary education enrolment, and in some cases, girls outperform boys. The Net Enrolment Ratios in early childhood are significantly higher for girls than boys in the Cook Islands, Kiribati, and Palau. For all countries where sex-disaggregated data is available, tertiary education enrolment is higher among women and girls than their male counterparts<sup>30</sup>. However, gender differences in access to quality education remain. As an example, educational achievement for women is particularly poor in Melanesia, where only 45% of women receive secondary education<sup>31</sup>.
130. Girls and women continue to face gender-based barriers to completing education and accessing technical or vocational pathways, including early marriage and pregnancy, household responsibilities,

---

<sup>25</sup> [PWL: Formative Situational Analysis, 2024, pg 88](#)

<sup>26</sup> [UN Women Regional Brief: Pacific](#)

<sup>27</sup> [SPC Pacific Data Hub, Sustainable Development Goal 08 – Decent Work and Economic Growth \(July 2025\)](#)

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>29</sup> [UN Women Regional Brief: Pacific](#)

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>31</sup> [PWL: Formative Situational Analysis, 2024, pg 88](#)

poverty and school-related costs, and safety concerns especially in rural areas. These factors contribute to high dropout rates for girls particularly in secondary school. Educational pathways remain highly gendered as girls are less likely to enter or complete studies in technical fields, and are instead concentrated in teaching, nursing, and caregiving. This pattern reinforces occupational segregation in the labour market and contributes to the regional gender pay gap.

## Women's Health and Violence Against Women and Children

131. While there have been advances in women's health particularly in relation to maternal health, access to culturally sensitive health services remains significantly limited. Many of the leading causes of death among women in the region are non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. In 2021, 37.8% of female mortality in Kiribati (51.1% for men) and 35.1% of female mortality in the FSM (46.2% for men) are attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease<sup>32</sup>. For countries where sex-disaggregated data is available, mortality rates related to NCDs are higher in men than women. Consistently, women take on the gendered role of caring for family members suffering from NCDs<sup>33</sup>.
132. Access to antenatal care and skilled birth attendance varies widely across the region and is particularly constrained in remote areas and outer islands. In Palau, 100% of births in 2018 were attended by skilled health personnel, compared to 56.4% in PNG. Maternal mortality rate also varies greatly, with the lowest in Fiji at 39 deaths per 100,000 births compared to the RMI with 302 deaths per 100,000 births (2020)<sup>34</sup>.
133. In general, sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services are available across the Pacific but they can remain underutilised or stigmatised. The constraints vary across different countries and communities, but common dimensions include taboos and stigma (for example towards premarital intimacy), gender norms and inequality (for example restricting women's autonomy and decision-making powers), limited access to education (for example lack of information on SRH), and religious and moral beliefs (for example influence over the use of family planning)<sup>24</sup>. These issues are compounded for women and adolescent girls with disabilities who often face further reduced accesses to SRH services.
134. Violence against women and children remains a critical and pervasive issue across the Pacific, with some of the highest prevalence rates in the world. However, there is a distinct lack of recent data on Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC). The highest rate of physical violence against women from intimate partners is found in Fiji, where 61% of ever-partnered women reported experience physical intimate-partner violence in their lifetime (2013). This was 59% in Kiribati (2019), 51% in Vanuatu (2009), 48% in RMI (2012), 47% in Nauru (2013), and 46% in Solomon Islands (2008)<sup>35</sup>. The rate of controlling behaviours in intimate partner relationships has also been observed as high across Pacific SIDS, for example 79% in RMI (2012), as well as the rate of non-partnered sexual violence, for example 47% of the 148 women surveyed in 2013 in Nauru reported experiencing sexual violence from someone other than an intimate partner.
135. VAWC is underreported throughout the region, and it is not uncommon for both women and men to hold beliefs that normalise or excuse VAWC. Reluctance to openly discuss VAWC may actively impede efforts to effectively understand and respond to violence within societies. All countries in the Pacific have developed their own gender equality/gender equity policies, with some going further to develop specific VAWG/domestic violence laws; nevertheless, systemic gaps in implementation and sociocultural resistance to change continue to limit the effectiveness of these policies.

## Gender in Climate Change and Innovation

<sup>32</sup> [Pacific Data Hub, SPC, Annual mortality rate attribute to cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory diseases, disaggregated by sex](#)

<sup>33</sup> PIFS and SPC. Addressing inequalities: The case of Small Island Developing States in the Pacific. Issues paper for Small Islands Developing States Conference, August, 2013.

<sup>34</sup> [Regional Gender Equality Brief for 14 Pacific Island Countries and Territories, UN Women, 2022](#)

<sup>35</sup> [ibid.](#)

136. *Gender in climate change*

Climate change is not gender-neutral, and while all people living in affected areas experience the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events, “those who are socially and economically excluded experience the effects of climate change more intensely”<sup>36</sup>. Women in the Pacific have lower socioeconomic resilience – they are less likely to own productive assets or have access to credit, and are more likely to work in informal sectors or subsistence-based livelihoods. Women and their children are 14 times more likely to die in a disaster and four times more likely to be displaced<sup>37</sup>. Risks increase further for people living with disabilities; the elderly, widowed or those with chronic illnesses; young children; pregnant or breastfeeding women; female heads of households; single mothers, particularly those with a large number of dependents; and people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities.

137. In disaster contexts, roles are gendered. Women are more likely to store food, water, medicine, and take children to safety, while men are more engaged in reinforcing shelters, safeguarding livestock, and securing agricultural assets. In Tonga, women experience heightened burdens of unpaid care and domestic work (77%) compared to men (68%). The destruction of basic services and public transport further exacerbate women’s mobility and safety challenges, particularly in rural areas where access to healthcare and evacuation services was more limited and compromised sanitation facilities increased the risk of gender-based violence, with 4% of women forced to share sanitation spaces after disasters, heightening their vulnerability<sup>38</sup>.

138. Climate change and disaster risks are differentiated, but access to risk-mitigating information and early warning systems is not equitable. Across the Pacific, women tend to have limited access to information in part due to gendered social norms<sup>39</sup>. Men as ‘household heads’ are more likely to have better access to information and control who accesses information in their household<sup>40</sup>. This underscores the disadvantage and vulnerability that women-headed households face in access to climate information. Men are more likely to receive warnings via radio, while women tend to rely on internet or social media-platforms that may not be equally available in all regions, particularly in rural areas where digital connectivity is limited<sup>41</sup>.

139. Actions to redress the gendered impact of climate change vary across Pacific SIDS. The Cook Islands’ 2011 National Policy on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment<sup>42</sup> recognises that men and women are impacted differently by climate change due to their different roles in the society. The Policy advocated for gender-responsive climate strategies to build capacity and reduce vulnerability. In Solomon Islands, the 2018 National Disaster Management Plan included provisions to involve women in preparedness and response arrangements at all levels to promote effective disaster management, including involvement in operational processes and decision-making. In Vanuatu, the Department of Climate Change is working closely with the Department of Women’s Affairs to effectively integrate women’s voice in their plans and activities<sup>43</sup>. Evidence shows that when women are involved in designing and driving climate solutions, these solutions are more likely to be comprehensive, contextually relevant, sustainable, and designed specifically to meet the needs of women and other marginalised groups<sup>44</sup>. But despite progress, discrimination and harmful gender norms mean women’s contributions to disaster resilience are often overlooked, and their voices are marginalised in decision-making process and the development of disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies and plans<sup>45</sup>.

140. Women-led organisations and women leaders from the Pacific region are emerging as drivers of

---

<sup>36</sup> [Thematic Brief: Women and Climate Change in the Pacific, 2021.](#)

<sup>37</sup> [ActionAid: Transforming disaster response women led climate solutions in Asia and the Pacific, 2024](#)

<sup>38</sup> [Tonga Statistics Department, UN Women \(2022\). Gender and Environment Survey 2022.](#)

<sup>39</sup> [UN Women \(2022\). Gender Equality Brief for Tonga.](#)

<sup>40</sup> [UNCDF \(2020\). Economic Impacts of Natural Hazards on Vulnerable Populations in Tonga.](#)

<sup>41</sup> [Tonga Statistics Department, UN Women \(2022\). Gender and Environment Survey 2022.](#)

<sup>42</sup> [Cook Islands National Policy on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment and Strategic Plan of Action \(2011 – 2016\)](#)

<sup>43</sup> [Thematic Report on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Disaster Risk Reduction in the Pacific, 2023](#)

<sup>44</sup> Ibid

<sup>45</sup> Ibid

national and regional policy reforms. Pacific women are leading different multi-hazard early warning initiatives, including Women’s Weather Watch in Fiji, Women Wetem Weta in Vanuatu, and Meri Gat Infomesen in PNG under the Shifting the Power Coalition programme. In Vanuatu, the local women’s network Women I Tok Tok Tugeta (Women Talk Together) partnered with an international NGO (ActionAid Australia) to implement a ni-Vanuatu women’s leadership initiative<sup>46</sup>. These initiatives support women in working with national and regional scientific organisations, such as the National Meteorological Services and SPREP, to increase their technical knowledge in DRR and lead risk-informed and pragmatic disaster approaches.

141. *Gender in Innovation*

Gender inequality across the Pacific often limits women’s ability to adapt to climate change and participate in key decision-making processes. It is therefore essential to identify the institutional structures, behaviours, and norms that reinforce exclusion, as well as the resources women lack to support their resilience and innovation. Women’s knowledge and innovations have played a vital role across sectors, enhancing livelihoods, supporting adaptation, and improving community well-being. However, Pacific-specific evidence on the gendered landscape of innovation is sparse. While women’s traditional knowledge and roles in climate resilience are widely acknowledged, systematic research on whether women, people with disabilities, youth, and others gain or lead innovation remains limited. There is a notable gap in the region examining how innovations are accessed or shaped by different groups. The absence of disaggregated data, for example by gender and age, means the full extent of these disparities remains poorly understood. Further structured investments in the intersection of innovations in gender and climate change are necessary in the Pacific.

142. *SPC’s Gender and Climate Innovation Investment*

SPC and its Members are committed to advancing gender equality, to ensure that Pacific women and girls in all their diversity are safe and have an equitable share in resources, opportunities and decision-making. This commitment is articulated in numerous regional frameworks including the *Pacific Platform for Action for Gender Equality and Women’s Human Rights 2018-2030*, and through the implementation of the *Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific 2017–2030*. The *SPC Strategic Plan 2022-2031* recognises the importance of including human rights, gender equality and social inclusion, cultural development and the relationship of people to their environment into all aspects of work.

143. SPC’s Human Rights and Social Development (HRSD) Division and the SER team (within the Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Division) play the critical role of mainstreaming GESI and PCA to programmes and operations across the organisation. Through tailored interventions they support the application of PCA throughout the programme management cycle and the implementation of SPC’s SER Policy. Alongside this, support is provided to the technical and scientific divisions (those to be executing the grants under the Co:Lab programme) to gender equality, social inclusion, traditional knowledge, and positive expression of culture in divisional business plans, programmes, and projects.

144. In 2022 SPC launched its Gender Equality Flagship. This cross-cutting flagship is designed to build on SPC’s existing work and strengths, deepening sectoral impact and ensuring SPC has an integrated approach to gender equality and empowerment. The goal of the flagship is that all people, of all genders, of all diversities are empowered and benefit equally from development outcomes in all areas of their lives. The Flagship is trialling eight dimensions and indicative examples of SPC’s work under these dimensions can be found in [Table 15](#) ~~Table 15~~:

Table 15. Examples of work under SPC’s Gender Equality Flagship Dimensions

Dimension	Examples
-----------	----------

<sup>46</sup> Ibid

 <p>Leadership &amp; decision making</p>	<p><b>Pacific Women Lead Programme</b></p> <p>The PWLP is a AUD57.3 m DFAT funded project. The key outcome areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased leadership and decision-making opportunities</li> <li>• Increased agency of women and girls</li> <li>• Gender and social norms change in Pacific communities (gender mainstreaming)</li> <li>• Policy change and implementation for gender equality and social inclusion</li> <li>• Collaboration and cohesiveness of gender equality efforts.</li> </ul> <p>The work is across safety, SRH, women’s economic empowerment, and climate change and resilience.</p>
 <p>Economic empowerment &amp; livelihoods</p>	<p><b>Oceans and Maritime Programme (OMP) – Gender-responsive climate action in the informal shipping sector: a practical demonstration.</b></p> <p>Support through the 2024 Funding with Intent Programme the project’s gender outcomes are to empower women in the informal shipping sector by obtaining Boat Masters Licences (BML), leading to the certification and recognition of skilled female ‘seafarers’, and increasing women’s participation in the maritime sector.</p>
 <p>Gender research, data &amp; innovation</p>	<p><b>Statistics for Development</b></p> <p>SPC’s Statistics for Development Division has developed the Mapping Gender Statistics Framework in the Pacific Region and a stocktake of available sources of gender-related data for the region. In addition, SDD supported the development of the <a href="#">Gender Statistics Dashboard</a> which pulls together all available gender statistics within SPC and ultimately across national statistics systems.</p>
 <p>Resilience &amp; climate action</p>	<p><b>Disaster Community Resilience Programme (DCRP)/Hydrology Support to Enhance Flood Early Warning Systems.</b></p> <p>This project executed by SPC’s Geoscience Energy and Maritime (GEM) Division includes gender outcome to improve participation of women in hydrological services in Pacific SIDS, in line with the Updated PLGED and to improve resilience of communities to flooding through the incorporation of GEDSI considerations into flood early warning messaging. The project has engaged a GEDSI expert as part of the project team.</p>
 <p>Governance, institutional mechanism &amp; coordination</p>	<p><b>Revised Pacific Platform for Action, Regional Working Group on the Implementation of Domestic Violence/Family Protection Legislation (RWG) and Pacific Gender Equality Programme II (PGEP II).</b></p> <p>Through HRSD, SPC provides on-going support for members to progress their gender equality commitments. This includes the convening of the Triennial Conference of Pacific Women and the Pacific Ministers for Women Meeting for all 22 Pacific Island Country and Territory members of SPC. Since 1994 SPC has been the technical lead in the Pacific on gender and women’s development.</p>

145. The SPC Climate innovation Co:Lab will build directly on the existing infrastructure of the SPC Funding with Intent (FIT) Programme by establishing a climate adaptation window, focused on identifying, incubating, and scaling transformative, locally owned solutions that build climate resilience in Pacific Island countries. The FIT Programme has already created specific funding windows to generate innovative ideas in key thematic areas like gender equality and the empowerment of young Pacific Ocean scientists. These successful adaptations led to the support of projects such as ‘Gender-responsive Climate Action in the Informal Shipping Sector’ where Papuan women were trained as boat operators for locally equipped solar-powered “banana boats” for inter-island transportation and shipping. Further indicative examples can be found below.

Table 16: Indicative List of Gender-Responsive Innovations Supported by FIT.

Cohort	Project Title	Brief Description
2022	Gender-responsive Climate Action in the Informal Shipping Sector (Papua New Guinea)	Papuan women were trained as boat operators for locally equipped solar-powered “banana boats” for inter-island transportation and shipping
2023	Pacific MEL Tok podcast	This project is to create a 10-episode series podcast on Pacific MEL – breathing into life what is discussed in the Rebblib. The podcast will encourage those who are experienced or emerging evaluators to talk about their experiences on what has worked for them, lessons learnt and challenges along the way in conducting MEL in the Pacific in a culturally responsive way. This project aims to address the challenges of limited opportunities for communication and collaboration and honest reflection on the challenges of MEL practices across the Pacific, and to be able to Talanoa on MEL practices to share with a wide audience, actioning areas in the 2024 PacMEL convening calls to action, as well as developing content with the Pacific that is for the Pacific, by the Pacific.
2024	Gender analysis of Tuvalu Bigas project	The project aims to improve evidence on the gendered impact of biogas systems, through conducting a mixed-methods gender analysis of the installation of 20 biogas systems in Tuvalu planned to be installed in Funafuti in November/December 2023 as part of a GEP project and of 40 systems installed in 2019.
2024	Scaling up and establishment of the Pasifika Socio-Economic Community of Practice	Socio-economic studies and monitoring efforts in the Pacific region tend to be scattered and ad-hoc. In August 2023, an inception workshop brought together socio-economic experts and users in the region to draft an Action Plan to bring a Community of Practice to life. The proposed program will provide vital seed funding in establishing the CoP, engagement with key stakeholders and activities for the first 12 months. The objectives of the socio-economic community of practice include developing ethical guidelines for socio-economic research including the “do no harm principle” and FPIC to enhance inclusive, equitable and sustainable practices including gender equality.
2025	Pacific Health Dataveillance	Pacific Island Countries and Territories face mounting challenges in monitoring and controlling infectious diseases. The proposal is a centralised, web-based tool that integrates health related data (surveillance data, laboratory reports, outbreak situational report) and non-health related data (social media post, google trends) into an intuitive dashboard. The project will deliver capacity trainings including specific sessions on GESI and the prevention of sexual harassment and sexual exploitation.
2025	Language and Culture – reaching out to local communities – building a network of Pacific Island language providers for community outreach products (PacLang Project)	The project’s aim is to create a registry of Pacific language service providers in which interested teams and partners can access. This will encourage the development of local language products for regional Pacific communities as well as support the global focus on indigenous

146. Under the existing FiT Programme, all projects are screened against SPC’s SER Policy, and the SER team provides critical feedback to ensure that gender, youth empowerment, human rights, and other social inclusion factors are comprehensively addressed throughout the project lifecycle. The Co:Lab will fund similar gender-responsive, locally led, community-based innovations with the support of initiatives such as the Gender Flagship and the cross-divisional expertise of HRSD and the Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Division. Lessons learned from previous cohorts were documented and will be applied to the Co:Lab, to strengthen PCA and GESI mainstreaming across the design, implementation, and monitoring of innovation sub-projects.

### *Overall assessment*

147. Climate change compounds existing inequalities in the Pacific, where women and other marginalised groups face greater climate change vulnerability and fewer opportunities to shape solutions. Their limited access to assets, credit, decision-making processes, and climate information reduces adaptive capacity. Despite these barriers, Pacific women play critical roles in resilience and recovery, and their knowledge and leadership are key to locally relevant solutions.

148. In Fiji and Vanuatu, women’s groups have led post-cyclone recovery efforts through traditional governance systems; in Kiribati and the Solomon Islands, women are central to water security and food preservation practices in atoll communities; while in Samoa and Tonga, women’s committees are critical actors in coastal protection, early warning systems, and community-based planning. Regional frameworks and national policies increasingly recognise the value of women’s contributions, but harmful gender norms and underrepresentation continue to limit progress. In innovation contexts, these dynamics manifest as unequal access to funding, limited presence in research and development spaces, and the undervaluing of community-rooted, non-technical adaptation practices often led by rural or Indigenous women.

149. The Co:Lab represents a timely and strategic opportunity to address these gaps. By building on SPC’s FiT programme, the programme will support transformative, locally driven projects with strong inclusion safeguards. Its flexible design and mentoring infrastructure are particularly suited to supporting Pacific women innovators, who may face relational, procedural, or institutional barriers to accessing formal climate finance. To achieve equitable, inclusive outcomes, the programme will support continued investment in institutional capacity, accountability mechanisms, and meaningful engagement with women and vulnerable groups throughout the project lifecycle.

150. Building on the existing infrastructure, the programme will need to embed gender equality and social inclusion at each stage of the innovation process, from appraisal and implementation to monitoring and evaluation. This includes ensuring that innovation is not only technically sound but also culturally sensitive and socially embedded – valuing traditional and indigenous knowledge, community roles, and collective leadership models often advanced by Pacific women. Leveraging SPC’s people-centred and technical GESI integration capabilities, the programme is well-positioned to promote gender-responsive innovation.

## Recommendations

### Key Recommendations

151. Based on the analysis above, the following recommendations are provided:

1. **Strengthen gender-responsive monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) systems.** The PMU, in coordination with national partners and grantees, should ensure that MEL systems incorporate gender-, age-, and disability- disaggregated data across all components. The project should support the development of a standard harmonised GESI and ESS monitoring template and orientation sessions on gender-sensitive data collection and analysis for implementing partners. Aligned with the AF Gender Policy principles, MEL tools should go beyond counting participation to analyse: (i) gendered roles in climate

response; (ii) power-holders and access to decision-making; and (iii) social norms that shape exclusion. Each project should systematically track progress against gender and vulnerability-disaggregated indicators, using both quantitative and qualitative methods to understand who benefits and why. These systems should be integrated into sub-project agreements and reviewed at midline and final reporting stages by the SPC MEL team and GESS Officer.

- 2. Build GEDSI capacity and enhance accessibility in the Co:Lab systems.** The PMU should deliver modular training and learning sessions for grantees and technical partners that cover climate adaptation through a gender equality and social inclusion lens, people-centred approach to project design, gender-related risks, SPC's SER Policy, and ESIA/ESMP preparation. Sessions should also raise awareness of gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (SEAH) risks, including how these can be prevented and mitigated in the context of projects, and consider technical capacity, indigenous and traditional knowledge, and gendered expertise in curriculum design. Where possible, curricula should be co-designed with regional, national, or context-specific gender and social inclusion institutions. Project materials and engagement tools should be adapted into disability-accessible formats and disseminated in ways that ensure reach, including digital and non-digital channels for outer island and rural communities.
- 3. Promote locally-led, inclusive approaches that centre women's leadership and feedback.** The programme should proactively engage women's networks, CSOs, and diverse actors, particularly in sectors where women's labour and leadership are often invisible or undervalued. The PMU should ensure that the inputs of women and representatives of marginalised groups are visibly integrated into project design, monitoring, and adaptive management. Grantees should be supported to identify gendered barriers and entry points in their proposals, ensuring that solutions address accessibility issues, such as time burdens and mobility constraints. Evaluations should document how feedback from women and vulnerable groups has shaped outcomes or influenced key changes in project implementation or evaluation – not just attendance rates, but influence, leadership, and sustained access to Co:Lab-supported resources and decision spaces.
- 4. Institutionalise gender integration and accountability mechanisms.** To align with SPC's SER policy and the Gender Equality Flagship the programme should establish clear accountability for gender outcomes across all stages and levels. This includes embedding gender expertise within the Appraisal Committee, SER oversight during co-design, and structured review of inclusion plans prior to grant approval. Knowledge and amplification activities should feature case studies of inclusive innovation, including lessons on overcoming systemic barriers. These should be captured through the Co:Lab learning platform and shared in relevant regional fora. The project should coordinate with regional and local gender ecosystem (e.g. Pacific Women Lead) for technical backstopping and contextualised, gender-responsive support. A GESS focal point should be designated within the Co:Lab PMU to coordinate cross-cutting gender actions and reporting to the Fund.

## Gender Action Plan (GAP)

Table 17. Gender Action Plan (GAP)

Outcome/Output	GAP Integrated Activities	AF Gender Principle	Gender-Responsive Indicators and (targets)
<b>Outcome 1. Incubation – Identification and incubation of innovative practices for climate action.</b>			
<b>Output 1.1. Pipeline of eligible small grant projects identified, screened, and funded across priority adaptation themes.</b>			
Activity 1.1.1 Launch call for project pitches (Expressions of Interest) and provide supporting guidance	Develop guidance materials for applicants that clearly articulates eligibility criteria (including GESI and ESS specific criteria), country-specific priorities, innovation principles aligned with AFCIA and FIT. Deliver an accessible webinar to guide actors on the Co:Lab and the application process, including GESI and ESS criteria.	Access Representation Participation	% of outreach materials (e.g., guidance documents, webinars) developed and disseminated that explicitly include GESI and ESS criteria (Baseline: 0; Target: 100)
Activity 1.1.2. Screen EOIs using pre-agreed innovation criteria and country-specific priorities	Screen applicants against the standardised screening criteria, inclusive of GESI and ESS specific criteria, taking into consideration country-level DAs. Assess pitches against SER checklist to ensure they conform with SPC's SER Policy (inclusive of gender-related criteria)	Equity Access	% of approved project pitches conform with SPC SER Policy (Baseline:0; target: 100)
Activity 1.1.3 Facilitate collaborative co-design and proposal development for shortlisted EOIs	Provide hands-on technical assistance to shortlisted applicants to co-develop full proposals. Ensure project proposals demonstrate how the specific needs and priorities of marginalised groups, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, and/or remote communities are met. Ensure recommendations from the SER team are incorporated into final project designs.	Access Participation	% of co-designed projects demonstrate how specific needs and priorities of marginalised groups, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, and/or remote communities are met (Baseline: 0; Target: 100).
Activity 1.1.4 Conduct technical review and final selection of proposals	Assess full proposal against selection criteria, including technical, environmental and social, and GESI criteria.	Access	% of incubation projects that demonstrate culturally sensitive, context-specific improvement in gender equality and women's empowerment in design (Baseline:0, Target 75%)
Activity 1.1.5 Monitor implementation and provide ongoing support	Monitor the implementation of small grant projects against the M&E plan, including gender- and	Equity Participation	% of total MEL indicators that are gender-responsive,

Outcome/Output	GAP Integrated Activities	AF Gender Principle	Gender-Responsive Indicators and (targets)
	vulnerability- disaggregated indicators.		culturally-sensitive, and socially-inclusive (Baseline:0; Target: 85%)
<b>Outcome 2. Acceleration – Scale-up funding for promising innovation projects</b>			
<b>Output 2.1: Increased capacity of local actors to develop technically sound and innovative adaptation project ideas.</b>			
Activity 2.1.2 Deliver targeted technical support for early-stage concept refinement	Provide technical support, including support on GESI and ESS, to applicants for the development of viable concept notes or proposals.	Access Equity	% of total beneficiaries that report an overall improvement in knowledge and capacity on GESI and ESS in the development of concept notes (Baseline:0; Target:100)
Activity 2.1.3 Deliver clinics and mentoring on adaptation innovation, integrating human-centred design, business modelling, and risk assessment	Deliver structured clinics and mentorship focused on building practical innovation design capacities, including human-centred design, business modelling, scaling strategies, adaptive management, and investment structuring.	Participation Access	% of clinics participants that demonstrate understanding and improved capacity of human-centered design and ESS-compliant GESI integration in innovation projects (Baseline:0; Target: 100%)
<b>Output 2.2: Strengthened innovation pipeline and accelerated readiness innovation</b>			
Activity 2.2.1 Prepare successful incubation projects for scale-up under the acceleration phase	Provide targeted support to high-performing grantees from Component 1 who are being considered for acceleration grants. This includes identifying operational, financial, social and environmental risks, GESI, and opportunities associated with scaling.	Equity Sustainability	% of scale-up concepts that identify and address gender-differentiated risks and opportunities (Baseline: 0; Target: 100%)
Activity 2.2.2 Support high-performing Component 1 projects with additional acceleration funding.	Support grantees to develop scaling strategies, including delivery models, results frameworks, risk mitigation plans, gender action plans, and ESMP.	Equity Access	% of acceleration projects that demonstrate culturally sensitive, context-specific improvement in gender equality and women's empowerment in design (Baseline :0, Target 75%)
Activity 2.2.3 Support NIEs to strengthen innovation pipelines and develop proposal for the Adaptation Fund innovation window	Deliver focused capacity-building to NIEs including aligning proposal with the Adaptation Fund's innovation funding stream, Environmental and Social Safeguards Policy and Gender Policy.	Capacity Building Representation	% of proposals submitted by NIEs that are aligned with AF Gender Policy and contain a gender action plan (Baseline: 0; Target: 100%)

Outcome/Output	GAP Integrated Activities	AF Gender Principle	Gender-Responsive Indicators and (targets)
<b>Outcome 3: Amplification – Knowledge management, learning and replication</b>			
<b>Output 3.1: Investment matchmaking and climate finance readiness for scale-up supported</b>			
Activity 3.1.1 Convene innovation investment matchmaking labs.	Deliver Climate Innovation Investment Labs that equip innovators with the tools required to navigate investment partnerships, including gender-responsive blended finance solutions.	Access Equity	# of stakeholders benefited from Innovation Labs (Baseline: 0, Target: 90 (50% women))
<b>Output 3.2: Regional peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, policy uptake, and replication pathways are strengthened</b>			
Activity 3.2.1: Develop document and knowledge exchange of successful innovations.	Synthesise and disseminate project data outcomes and learnings through existing regional knowledge platforms such as the NDC Hub. This will include innovation stories that center rural communities, youth, young women, and other contextually marginalised or vulnerable groups.	Participation Knowledge Sharing	# of innovation stories or case studies highlighting gender-responsive and inclusive approaches (Baseline: 0; Target: 5)
Activity 3.2.2: Convene joint peer-to-peer learning and community of practice development (with SPREP CIA Programme).	Facilitate inclusive joint thematic learning exchanges and regional capacity-building activities in partnership with SPREP. Showcase people-centered innovations and highlight successful approaches through a gender equality lens.	Representation Access	% of learning events that include participation from women or representation from marginalised communities (Baseline: 0; Target: 50%)
Activity 3.2.3: Provide support for policy uptake and mainstreaming.	Support engagement with national and regional policy actors to integrate proven innovations into national adaptation planning process, investment strategies, regulatory frameworks or similar, with a focus on PCA and gender equality.	Equity Sustainability	% of supported policy engagements that include meaningful representation of women (Baseline: 0; Target 75%)

---

## II. Annex – Environmental and Social Management System for the SPC Climate Innovation Co:Lab

---

152. The SPC Climate Innovation Co:Lab is designed to support locally-led adaptation innovations across 14 Pacific SIDS, many of which are highly vulnerable to climate change impacts. In delivering support through catalytic finance and technical assistance, the Programme recognises that all activities must be implemented in a manner that protects people, ecosystems, and cultural values, while promoting gender equality, inclusion, and environmental sustainability.
153. As an accelerator supporting Unidentified Sub-Projects (USPs) through a competitive grant-making process, the Co:Lab cannot precisely determine environmental and social impacts and risks at this stage. The programme conducted a high-level indicative analysis and adopted a precautionary and proactive approach to safeguards management to ensure that risks will be identified, assessed, avoided, and mitigated through robust mechanisms integrated throughout the programme lifecycle.
154. This Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) provides a comprehensive framework for screening, assessing, managing, and monitoring E&S risks across all sub-projects funded through the programme. The system is aligned with all 15 ESP principles of the Adaptation Fund and national environmental and social regulatory frameworks in the countries of implementation. It also integrates principles of gender equality, inclusion, and meaningful participation, as outlined in the Fund's Gender Policy and the programme's Gender Action Plan.

### Environmental and Social Context and Policy

#### Environmental Policy and Legal Framework in the Pacific SIDS

155. The 14 Pacific SIDS targeted by the programme - Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu - share common environmental and social challenges, but also operate within distinct legal and policy frameworks. In general, these countries maintain strong constitutional protections for the environment, community land rights, and indigenous heritage, often underpinned by traditional governance systems and customary law.
156. At the national level, all the 14 participating Pacific SIDS have laws or policies in place that govern Environmental and Social Impact Assessments. An overview is presented below:

**Cook Islands:** Guided by the *Environment Act 2003*, EIA is mandatory for any activity likely to have significant environmental impacts. Requires submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment, 30-day public consultation, and approval through the National Environment Service.

**Federated States of Micronesia:** EIA is regulated under the *Environmental Protection Act* and enacted by the 1996 EIA Regulations. These mandate EIAs for "major actions" likely to significantly affect the human environment, with procedural steps for early integration, scoping, and public disclosure.

**Fiji:** EIA is governed under the *Environment Management Act 2005* and 2007 EIA Regulations. It features a five-stage process (screening to decision-making), mandatory public hearings, and strong legal enforcement mechanisms.

**Kiribati:** EIA provisions exist within the *Environment Act 1999*, requiring EIAs for designated developments. While details on regulations are limited, public consultations and government review are institutionalised

through established administrative processes.

**Marshall Islands:** Under the *Environmental Protection Act*, EIAs are required for National Environmental Protection Board-designated activities. These must include impact analysis, public consultations, and board approval.

**Nauru:** EIA requirements are embedded in the *Environment Act 1991*, setting standards for significant developments. Projects must undergo environmental screening, data-driven assessments, and government review.

**Niue:** EIA is mandated under the *Environment Act 2004*, requiring developers to conduct EIAs on major projects with environmental impact potential, followed by public consultation and ministerial approval.

**Palau:** Guided by the *Environment Quality Protection Act*, EIAs are compulsory for substantial developments. Provisions include public hearings, transparency mechanisms, and review by environmental boards.

**Papua New Guinea:** Administered under the *Environment Act 2000*, developers must submit EIAs for prescribed activities. Evaluations and public consultations are overseen by the Department of Environment and Conservation.

**Samoa:** The *Planning and Urban Management Act 2004* and subsequent regulations require EIAs for specified developments. The process includes scoping, impact assessment, and ministerial review.

**Solomon Islands:** EIA requirements are specified in the *Environment Act 1998*. Major projects undergo screening, environmental assessments, and principal secretary approval, with community consultation encouraged.

**Tonga:** EIA is governed by the *Environmental Impact Assessment Act 2003* (No. 16 of 2003) and implemented through 2010 Regulations. EIAs are required for all “major projects” listed in the Schedule, with mandatory assessments, public notifications, inter-agency review by the Environmental Assessment Committee, and approval by the Minister.

**Tuvalu:** Under the *Environmental Conservation and Management Act 1996*, EIAs are required for designated activities. The process includes environmental screening, public consultation, and government decision-making.

**Vanuatu:** The *Environmental Management and Conservation Act 2002* requires EIAs for projects that may significantly affect the environment. Provisions include screening, scoping, public participation, and decision-making through the Environmental Protection Agency.

157. SPC, as a regional organisation with long-standing and formalised working relationships with these governments, will ensure that all activities implemented under the Co:Lab comply with relevant national laws and policies. This will be achieved through the following mechanisms:

- **Alignment with country-level legal requirements and approvals**, including EIA regulations, customary land use protocols, and any protected area designations; and
- **Collaboration with Designated Authorities (DAs) and relevant ministries** to validate project compliance with national priorities and safeguards.

## SPC Social and Environmental Responsibility Policy

**158.** SPC’s SER Policy provides the framework, including guiding principles, for SPC to ethically and sustainably manage social and environmental risks and impacts of all its activities. This will be done in an inclusive, PCA manner to maximise whole-of-society benefits (see [This Gender and Social Inclusion \(GESI\) Analysis and associated Gender Action Plan was completed through a desk review of the legal and policy framework and publicly available gender data pertinent to this assessment. Overall, there continues to be several significant gaps in gender-disaggregated data and gender-specific metrics for the Pacific. To account for this, the programme will implement strong stakeholder engagement throughout the programme cycle, ensuring that stakeholders across groups are meaningfully consulted and sufficiently informed both prior to and during programme implementation.](#)

~~158.—Gender Analysis and Assessment This Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) Analysis and associated Gender Action Plan was completed through a desk review of the legal and policy framework and publicly available gender data pertinent to this assessment. Overall, there continues to be several significant gaps in gender disaggregated data and gender-specific metrics for the Pacific. To account for this, the programme will implement strong stakeholder engagement throughout the programme cycle, ensuring that stakeholders across groups are meaningfully consulted and sufficiently informed both prior to and during programme implementation.~~

159. ~~Gender Analysis and Assessment~~). The intent of this policy is to help SPC in:
- identifying, assessing and managing social and environmental risks, impacts or opportunities in all SPC activities and projects;
  - improving existing practices in the implementation of other relevant SPC policies;
  - strengthening the involvement of staff and all stakeholders' in defining and implementing social and environmental performance standards; and
  - meeting the International Finance Corporation (IFC)'s Environmental and Social Performance Standards.
  - This policy is implemented through an SER action plan and integrated coherently with all other relevant SPC policies, including its human resources, financial, and monitoring and evaluation policies.
  - SPC is committed to improving its social and environmental responsibility along three pillars: people, operations and programmes.
160. **People.** SPC is committed to providing its staff with a workplace that promotes diversity and inclusion, guarantees equal rights, and provides for a safe, healthy and dynamic working environment. SPC is committed to the prevention of abuse and to the well-being of members, children, vulnerable adults and their families.
161. **Operations.** SPC is committed to being a responsible organisation in the fight against climate change and biodiversity loss and in the protection of the environment. SPC will endeavour to reduce its own environmental and carbon footprint with the ultimate goal of achieving carbon neutrality and zero waste. To this end, SPC will implement a robust in-house climate and environmental responsibility framework, and ensure that relevant policies are adapted to reflect this approach, including the greening of its procurement and travel policies.
162. **Programmes.** SPC is committed to supporting programmes and projects to deliver activities that maximise social benefits and minimise environmental degradation. SPC aims to prevent or, where not possible, mitigate any significant or unjustified impacts on the environment, or negative social impacts, such as those that affect gender equality or human rights.
163. To this end, SPC has a robust ESMS to screen and appraise its activities through a dynamic and continuous process supported by management. The ESMS includes tools, methodologies and guidelines that are applied in a consistent and supportive manner with SPC's integrated programmatic approach. Overall, SPC is committed to achieving the following outcomes:
1. All activities, programmes and projects are subject to a risk categorisation exercise through a screening process, which is operationalised through the SER action plan.
  2. Where risks are identified in the light of the SER screening process, activities, programmes and projects are assessed for the magnitude of potential social and environmental risks.
  3. Against these risks and potential impacts, social and environmental mitigation measures are proposed and included in the formulation of the project and its activities, and monitored throughout the life of the project.

4. Staff are trained in the identification and assessment of social and environmental risks and impacts, as well as in the implementation of mitigation measures.
5. Openness and transparency are maintained with affected communities or stakeholders who are engaged in the identification of risks and impacts and who can express their concerns through a grievance mechanism.

**The SPC Co:Lab follows SPC's ESMS and ensures compliance with the Adaptation Fund ESP.**

## **Adaptation Fund Environmental and Social Policy**

163. This ESMS is designed to be fully compliant with the Adaptation Fund's overall environmental and social framework as outlined in its operational policies and guidance.

This comprises the following elements as they relate to the Adaptation Fund:

- The Adaptation Fund's ESP, including its 15 Environmental and Social Principles;
- The Gender Policy and Action Plan, which ensures that projects are designed and implemented in a gender-responsive manner;
- The Adaptation Fund's guidance on stakeholder engagement, including principles of transparency, participation, and inclusivity, particularly with respect to vulnerable and marginalised populations;
- The commitment to prevent and respond to SEAH in all activities supported by the Adaptation Fund;
- Consideration of the rights and roles of indigenous peoples in line with the Adaptation Fund's guidance on respecting traditional knowledge, participation, and FPIC where applicable;
- Promotion of environmental, social, economic, and development co-benefits through funded interventions;
- A systematic approach to addressing gender equality, promoting equal opportunities, and ensuring that women and men benefit equitably from Adaptation Fund activities; and
- Encouragement of the active involvement of relevant stakeholders, particularly those most vulnerable to climate change, throughout the project cycle.

164. As the RIE, SPC shall undertake all necessary measures to ensure that activities are implemented in such a manner that:

- Ensures that environmental and social management plans, and all measures to mitigate and manage environmental and social risks and impacts and to improve outcomes are implemented, monitored and continuously improved; and
- Ensures that progress and performance are monitored and reported to the Adaptation Fund and its stakeholders throughout the implementation of the Adaptation Fund-financed activities, in accordance with the monitoring and accountability framework and allowing Adaptation Fund or Adaptation Fund-authorized third-party verification of such reports.

165. In addition, SPC will:

- confirm that the measures to manage environmental and social risks and impacts, including, as relevant, information disclosure, stakeholder engagement, and grievance redress, are incorporated in the agreements with executing entities including tendering documents and contracts;

- take all necessary measures to ensure the compliance with all applicable laws, including the laws, regulations, and standards of the country in which the activities are located, and/or obligations of the country or countries directly applicable to the activities under relevant international treaties and agreements (all of these will be reflected in the agreements with the executing entities); and
- undertake all necessary measures to ensure that the communities affected or potentially affected by the activities (including vulnerable populations, local communities, groups and individuals including women, children, people with disabilities, people marginalised by virtue of their sexual orientation and gender identity, indigenous peoples and other marginalised groups of people and individuals) are properly consulted in a manner that facilitates the inclusion of local knowledge in the design of the activities, provides them with opportunities to express their views on risks, impacts and mitigation measures related to the activities, and allows the accredited entities to consider and respond to their concerns.

**The sub-projects under the SPC Co:Lab, as supported by SPC, will similarly comply with the Adaptation Fund’s ESP and SPC’s SER Policy.**

## Environmental and Social Impact and Risk Indicative Analysis

### Programme-Level E&S Impact Analysis

166. This section provides an assessment of the anticipated environmental and social impacts associated with the Co:Lab at the programme level. While individual sub-projects will undergo their own safeguards screening and assessment, this analysis identifies potential risks and opportunities inherent in the facility’s design, operational model, and priority sectors. The purpose is to ensure that upstream risk mitigation measures are embedded across the programme lifecycle, in line with the AF ES Policy. In line with the Adaptation Fund’s ESP, the project acknowledges that Principles 1 (Compliance with the Law), 4 (Human Rights), and 6 (Core Labour Rights) always apply, and monitoring measures have been integrated accordingly.

Table 18. Environmental and Social Impacts and Risks.

AF E&S Principle	Further assessment required for compliance	Potential impacts and risks – further assessment and management required for compliance
<i>Compliance with the Law</i>	No further actions required beyond on-going risk monitoring	<b>No-Low risk.</b> <u>While the project will ensure compliance with the relevant national environmental laws and regulations in the 14 participating Pacific SIDS, there is some risk of inconsistency in enforcement and institutional capacity across countries, particularly in relation to environmental protection, land use, and water resources. To address this, The project will ensure compliance with the relevant environmental national laws and regulations in the 14 participating Pacific SIDS related to environmental protection, land use, and water resources. The the project will be implemented in close collaboration and regular coordination with relevant government authorities. Development and delivery of targeted capacity-building for project implementers will ensure ESS compliance, and legal compliance checks will be integrated in project MEL systems.</u>

		<p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Conduct regular ESS compliance checks through SPC's ESMS. Applicants must demonstrate alignment with national technical standards and legal frameworks during co-design (Activity 1.1.3).</p>
<i>Access and Equity</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) Action Plan and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to Annex I.</b></p> <p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Systemic inequities in the Pacific, including limited access to finance, decision-making, and services for women, youth, persons with disabilities, and those in remote areas, may create barriers to equitable participation in innovation activities. While the Co:Lab incorporates inclusion safeguards and locally led approaches, there remains a moderate risk that structural exclusion or digital divides (e.g., access to internet or climate information) will persist, especially in rural or outer island contexts. The programme mitigates this risk through inclusive stakeholder engagement, accessible application processes, and targeted outreach to women's groups and CSOs</p> <p><b>Mitigation measures:</b> Apply inclusive screening criteria (Activity 1.1.2), ensure transparent selection, require GESI plan in proposals (Activity 1.1.3), and track beneficiary participation using disaggregated data (Activity 1.1.5).</p>
<i>Marginalised and Vulnerable Groups</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of GESI Action Plan and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to Annex I.</b></p> <p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Vulnerable groups - including women with disabilities, single mothers, LGBTQ+ individuals, and subsistence-based rural households - face layered disadvantages in resilience and innovation participation. The Gender Annex acknowledges these intersecting vulnerabilities, particularly in relation to informal economies, unpaid care burdens, and gendered impacts of climate disasters. Although the Co:Lab integrates safeguards and intends to include diverse participants in co-design and implementation, the risk of underrepresentation or unintended exclusion remains unless active accompaniment and targeted support are sustained.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Applicants must demonstrate inclusive engagement (Activity 1.1.3), include vulnerability-disaggregated indicators, and submit proposals reviewed by the SER team (Activities 1.1.4, 1.1.5).</p>
<i>Human Rights</i>	No further actions required <u>beyond</u> implementation of the GESI Action Plan and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to Annex I.</b></p> <p><b>No-Low risk.</b> <u>While the project design follows a rights-based and people-centred approach, that is respecting freedom of association, non-discrimination, and equitable access to resources, there is some risk that uneven application across diverse cultural and institutional contexts in the 14 participating Pacific SIDS could affect the consistent protection of rights. In particular, risks may arise if vulnerable or marginalised groups are not fully engaged or if free, prior, and informed consent processes are not uniformly upheld.</u></p>

		<p><del>To address this, The project design follows a rights-based and people-centred approach, respecting freedom of association, non-discrimination, and access to resources.</del></p> <p>Meaningful community engagement and free, prior, and informed consent are ensured throughout the project life cycle.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Promote rights-based design through co-design support (Activity 1.1.3) and technical clinics (Activity 2.1.3). Ensure screening criteria incorporate human rights considerations.</p>
<i>Gender Equity and Women's Empowerment</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of the GESI Action Plan and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to Annex I.</b></p> <p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Persistent gender gaps in leadership, land tenure, economic participation, and digital access create a moderate risk that women's voices may be overlooked, or their contributions undervalued in innovation contexts. While the Co:Lab leverages SPC's Gender Flagship and FIT programme to promote gender-responsive innovations, it relies heavily on implementing partners to carry out GESI commitments, which may vary in capacity. The programme addresses this through a structured GESI Action Plan, targeted mentoring, and MEL systems that go beyond participation counts to track influence, benefits, and leadership outcomes.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Evaluate project pitches according to priorities criteria including gender equality and women's leadership (Activity 1.1.2); require gender action plans in all proposals (Activity 1.1.3), prioritise women-led initiatives (Activity 1.1.2), and track gender-specific outcomes (Activity 1.1.5).</p>
<i>Core Labour Rights</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>Low risk.</b> The project will comply with regional and national employment laws and regulations and will respect, promote, and realise in good faith the principles of the ILO Labour Standards also in accordance with SPC Policy and the People-Centred Approach. Employment of local labour during construction or maintenance may expose workers to occupational health and safety (OHS) risks and informal labour practices or labour rights violations could occur without contractor oversight. The SER Team will screen proposals against the following: Project activities will ensure that they do not violate labour laws in relation to project management specific to recruitment of human resources to support project delivery and implementation; and any contracts for recruited staff will ensure that they align with national labour standards and ensure competitive salaries and packages are offered. Compliance will be monitored annually in accordance with the project's MEL system.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Require compliance with national labour laws (Activity 1.1.4); and enable grievance redress through SPC systems.</p>
<i>Indigenous Peoples</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of the GESI Action Plan and	<p><b>Low risk.</b> There is no universally accepted or internationally agreed upon definition of 'indigenous peoples' (UNDP, 2021; GCF, 2018; AF, 2013; IFC, 2012). In the particular context of</p>

	on-going risk monitoring.	<p>most Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the majority of the population and the dominant sociocultural or ethnic group is native to the island country or territory. That is: they are indigenous to the land, and they are the 'local communities'. In this context, the terms 'communities' and 'beneficiaries' are synonymous to 'Indigenous Peoples'. The anticipated project benefits, co-benefits, opportunities, and mitigated risks for communities or beneficiaries are de facto anticipated benefits, co-benefits, opportunities, and mitigated risks for indigenous people. The project's existing mechanisms for stakeholder engagement and community consultations fulfil the intended purpose of the FPIC. Respect for customary land ownership and cultural practices is critical, hence a culturally-sensitive and people-centred approach will be adopted in the project.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Require FPIC during co-design (Activity 1.1.3); SER team ensures cultural appropriateness; consult Indigenous communities as part of proposal development.</p>
<i>Involuntary Resettlement</i>	No further actions required beyond on-going risk monitoring	<p><b>No risk.</b> The project and sub-projects are not anticipated to cause inadvertent physical or economic displacement of target communities. Involuntary resettlement is under the exclusionary criteria for project selection, hence loss of shelter, assets, or access to assets that lead to loss of income sources or other means of livelihood is not a likely impact.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Prohibit any activity requiring involuntary resettlement (as per exclusionary activities). Require land tenure verification as part of co-design (Activity 1.1.3).</p>
<i>Protection of Natural Habitats</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Moderate risk.</b> There is some risk that project and sub-project activities may unintentionally degrade critical natural habitats. The project will support the protection of natural habitats through promoting nature and community-based solutions, any potential of sub-projects to directly or indirectly impact upon natural or critical habitats will be identified at the ESS risk screening stage as outlined in the ESMS. Implementation of risk mitigation measures and ESS compliance will be monitored and reported on the project and sub-project level, as incorporated in the MEL system.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Exclude high-risk (Cat A) proposals (Activity 1.1.2). Require ESMPs for low-risk (Cat C) and medium-risk (Cat B) proposals (Activity 1.1.4). Use SER checklist to assess ecosystem impacts.</p>
<i>Conservation of Biological Diversity</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Low risk.</b> It is not anticipated that project and sub-project activities will lead to a loss in biological diversity or introduction of known invasive species. The project will comply with any National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans, ensuring alignment and contribution to the protection of countries' biological and natural resources. The sub-projects' ESIA and ESMP will contextualise the policy and evaluate against biological diversity criterion and mitigate risk as needed for specific sites and sub-projects, e.g. an ecological screening may be necessary before water tank installation near bush or coastal vegetation to avoid</p>

		<p>disturbing nesting birds and endemic flora; where pit latrine leakage may contaminate soil invertebrates and micro biodiversity, latrine construction will be avoided in coastal wetlands and require consultations with local environmental officers; and/or where clearing of coastal vegetation for drainage or expansion may affect shoreline biodiversity or erosion processes, ESMPs would be required to minimise mangrove disturbance and avoid crossing turtle nesting zones.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Avoid non-native species introduction; promote biodiversity-sensitive practices through proposal screening (Activity 1.1.4) and technical review.</p>
<i>Climate Change</i>	No further actions required beyond on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Low risk.</b> The project is climate adaptation-focused, explicitly designed to enhance resilience to climate hazards such as sea-level rise, cyclones, and flooding. Its activities are not anticipated to result in any significant or unjustified increase in greenhouse gas emissions or other drivers of climate change. Any agro-forestry and agriculture sub-projects will be small-scale as per exclusionary criteria and are not anticipated to result in large-scale negative impacts on carbon capture and sequestration capacity.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Screen proposals for maladaptation risks (Activity 1.1.4); promote resilience-focused innovations in clinics (Activity 2.1.3).</p>
<i>Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Sub-project construction activities may generate waste, noise, dust, or cause minor pollution if not managed properly. Project and sub-project activities will exercise cost-effectiveness and minimise the use of resources used during implementation – applicable to all sources and forms of energy, water, and other resources and materials inputs. There is some risk of waste production and pollution due to the quantity and diversity of sub-projects, though they are required to be in compliance with national waste management laws including monitoring of ESS compliance, inclusive of pollution prevention and resource efficiency.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> If applicable, proposals must include simple waste management plans (Activity 1.1.3)</p>
<i>Public Health</i>	No further actions required beyond on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Low risk.</b> The project avoids potentially significant negative impacts on public health, hence overall risk to public health is low. Sub-project activities are anticipated to generate minimal, site-specific, largely reversible impact to public health and will comply with national public health laws. A WHO-compliant rapid health impact screening checklist will be integrated in the ESIA and ESS compliance monitoring tools, to determine if a further thorough public health impact assessment and development of a management plan is necessary.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Public health implications assessed in screening (Activity 1.1.4); technical backstopping from SPC divisions (Activity 1.1.5)</p>
<i>Physical and Cultural Heritage</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk	<p><b>Low risk.</b> Project and sub-project activities will not be implemented around physical heritage sites, and will not permanently interfere with communities' existing access and</p>

	monitoring.	<p>use of such physical and cultural resources. They will be designed and implemented in a way that avoids the alteration, damage, or removal of any physical cultural resources and sites with unique natural values recognised as such at the community, national or international level. The sub-project ESS screenings will identify the presence of cultural heritage in or near the project, and if cultural heritage exists, a risk assessment will be conducted to analyse the potential for impacting cultural heritage, and the measures to mitigate the risk. Consultations will be undertaken with village, community leaders and nobles to ensure that project activities will not directly involve any preserved and cultural heritage sites.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Applicants must identify culturally sensitive sites (Activity 1.1.3); project spoiling cultural heritage are excluded</p>
<i>Lands and Soil Conservation</i>	No further actions required beyond implementation of ESMS and on-going risk monitoring.	<p><b>Moderate risk.</b> The project promotes ecosystem-based approaches and the inclusion of soil conservation practices in design of land-based sub-projects. While the screening criteria exclude activities which explicitly target or require the use of soil, there is small risk of roads renovation and water tank installations having an impact on the soil and land surrounding the sites or facilities. Site-specific assessments and regular ESS compliance monitoring will be conducted particularly for infrastructure and WASH sub-projects, to ensure no negative impacts on land and soil. This will include ecological studies that account for the identification of fragile soils, to inform the final detailed design and to identify any additional site-specific impacts.</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Encourage use of nature-based solutions and proper site design during proposal co-development (Activity 1.1.3).</p>

## Programme-Level E&S Risk Categorisation

167. This section categorises the anticipated environmental and social risks associated with each outcome of the SPC Co:Lab in line with the Adaptation Fund’s ESP and SPC’s ESMS. Based on the typologies of anticipated sub-projects, such as early-stage adaptation pilots, community-based solutions, or nature-based innovations, the Co:Lab is preliminarily categorised as Category B under the Adaptation Fund’s risk categorisation system.

Table 19. Risk Categorisation by Outcome.

Component/Outcome	Risk Categorisation
<b>Outcome 1: Innovative, locally led adaptation solutions are identified, de-risked, and refined through targeted incubation support</b>	<p><b>Category B – Moderate Risk</b></p> <p>This outcome includes both upstream activities (e.g., technical support, mentoring, and proposal co-design) and <b>pilot implementation of adaptation innovations</b> via small grants (USD 25,000–75,000). These Unidentified Sub-Projects (USPs) will be selected through a competitive and inclusive process. While most interventions are expected to be small in scale and low in impact, some may involve moderate, site-specific, and reversible environmental and social risks (e.g., minor infrastructure, natural resource use, or social exclusion risks).</p>

Component/Outcome	Risk Categorisation
	<p>All sub-projects will undergo screening and risk categorisation in accordance with the ESMS. High-risk (Category A) activities are explicitly excluded. All other sub-projects classified as either Low (Category C) or Moderate (Category B) will require an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). Category B project will also require an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)</p> <p>Given the inclusion of implementation activities and potential for moderate risks, Outcome 1 is assessed as <b>Category B – Moderate Risk</b>.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 2:</b> Adaptation innovations are scaled up, resulting in increased climate resilience of communities and systems through expanded implementation</p>	<p><b>Category B – Moderate Risk</b></p> <p>This outcome supports the scale-up of high-potential innovations through follow-on funding (up to USD 250,000) and technical assistance. Activities may include nature-based solutions, resilient infrastructure, or technology deployment. While expected risks are still moderate and manageable, they are likely to be more diverse and may involve greater spatial scale than those under Outcome 1.</p> <p>All projects will be screened and categorised under the ESMS. All projects will require ESMPs. Outcome 2 is assessed as <b>Category B – Moderate Risk</b>.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 3:</b> Knowledge, evidence, and learning from innovative adaptation practices are systematically captured and disseminated</p>	<p><b>Category C – Low Risk</b></p> <p>Outcome 3 includes activities such as peer learning, knowledge exchange, communications, and innovation-to-investment matchmaking. These are not expected to have any direct environmental or social impacts. Potential minor risks (e.g., exclusion of vulnerable groups in regional dialogues) will be addressed through inclusive facilitation and targeted outreach. As no physical interventions are foreseen, Outcome 3 is assessed as <b>Category C – Low Risk</b>.</p>

168. While the programme does not present any significant or large-scale risks, screening indicates that several AF ESP principles are triggered at moderate or low levels—particularly those related to access and equity, inclusion of vulnerable groups, labour and working conditions, biodiversity, and pollution prevention. In response, the programme integrates targeted mitigation measures guided by the ESMS and GAAP. These include inclusive project selection criteria, compliance monitoring, transparent beneficiary engagement, and safeguards to protect environmental health and community wellbeing. Risk levels will be regularly reviewed during implementation to ensure continued compliance with the Adaptation Fund’s ESP and Gender Policy.

## Concordance Matrix

169. The matrix below demonstrates the functional equivalence between the **SPC ESMS** specifically the **SER Screening Tool** and the **15 Environmental and Social Principles** of the Adaptation Fund’s ESP. The SER Screening Tool comprises 27 targeted risk screening questions, each systematically mapped to one or more of the AF ESP principles. The tool enables early identification and characterisation of environmental and social risks, using criteria such as likelihood, intensity, duration, reversibility, and geographic scale. This risk analysis informs project categorisation (A, B, or C) and determines the need for development of an ESIA/ ESMP.

170. The matrix confirms that SPC’s system:

- Fully addresses all 15 AF ESP principles, including those related to gender equality, Indigenous Peoples, human rights, and natural habitats;
- Provides for risk-based screening, categorisation, and management of both identified and

unidentified sub-projects;

- Includes safeguards such as stakeholder consultation, public disclosure, and grievance redress mechanisms; and
- Ensures that no activities inconsistent with the ESP are eligible for support.

This concordance supports SPC’s ability to manage environmental and social risks in accordance with Adaptation Fund policy and good international practice.

Table 20. Concordance Matrix: SPC SER Screening Tool against AF ES Principles.

AF E&S Principle	SPC SER Screening Tool
<p><b>Principle 1: Compliance with the Law.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall be in compliance with all applicable domestic and international law. The IE will ensure that the project/programme will comply with applicable domestic and international law.</p>	<p>Applied across the entire tool; risks and impacts are characterised by likelihood, intensity, duration, and reversibility. Risk localisation is indicated on a local, national, and global level, hence remedial actions to mitigate identified risks are designed to comply with applicable environmental law.</p>
<p><b>Principle 2: Access and Equity.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall provide fair and equitable access to benefits in a manner that is inclusive and does not impede access to basic health services, clean water and sanitation, energy, education, housing, safe and decent working conditions, and land rights. Projects/programmes should not exacerbate existing inequities, particularly with respect to marginalised or vulnerable groups.</p>	<p>(5) <i>Impacts on Affected Communities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any risk that populations perceive they did not receive enough opportunities to raise their concerns regarding the project?</li> <li>• Is there a risk that the project would create or exacerbate conflicts with or within affected populations?</li> </ul> <p>(6) <i>Gender</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would the project potentially limit women’s ability to access or use natural resources upon which they depend for a livelihood?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 3: Marginalised and Vulnerable Groups.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall avoid imposing any disproportionate adverse impacts on marginalised and vulnerable groups. In screening any proposed project/programme, the implementing entities shall assess and consider particular impacts on marginalised and vulnerable groups.</p>	<p>(4) <i>Human Rights</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the project likely to create less favourable treatment of, or discrimination against, any person or group?</li> <li>• Is the project likely to increase the risk to people with disability (physical, hearing, visual, intellectual and sensory impairments)?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 4: Human Rights.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall respect and where applicable promote international human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 10 December 1948 provides a common standard of achievements for all peoples and all nations by setting out fundamental human rights to be universally protected.</p>	<p>(4) <i>Human Rights</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the project likely to negatively impact on the human rights of the affected populations? (e.g. their rights to water, work, health, to a healthy environment, etc.)?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 5: Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall be designed and implemented in such a way that both women and men 1) have equal opportunities to participate as per the Fund gender policy; 2)</p>	<p>(4) <i>Human Rights</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the project likely to increase risks to children or vulnerable adults through interaction with SPC staff and non-staff?</li> </ul> <p>(6) <i>Gender</i></p>

AF E&S Principle	SPC SER Screening Tool
<p>receive comparable social and economic benefits; and 3) do not suffer disproportionate adverse effects during the development process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there a likelihood that the project would have adverse impacts on gender equality, and/or the situation of women and girls?</li> <li>• Have community groups/leaders raised gender equality concerns regarding the project during the stakeholder engagement process?</li> <li>• Is the project likely to increase risks of sexual harassment or sexual exploitation?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 6: Core Labour Rights.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall meet the core labour standards as identified by the International Labour Organisation.</p>	<p><i>(1) Labour and Working Conditions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will the project present unsafe, indecent or unhealthy working conditions for stakeholders involved?</li> <li>• Is there potential for the project to apply adverse discriminatory practices based on religious, racial, gender, disability or political considerations?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 7: Indigenous Peoples.</b> The Fund shall not support projects/programmes that are inconsistent with the rights and responsibilities set forth in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other applicable international instruments relating to indigenous peoples.</p>	<p><i>(8) Natural Resources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the project likely to restrict People's access to natural resources and their means of livelihoods?</li> </ul> <p><i>(9) People's Rights and Tenure</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the project likely to negatively affect Peoples or communities rights: rights of affected populations, including procedural rights such as the right to be consulted or to have access to information, or substantive rights (real or personal) such as the right of access to natural resources or benefit-sharing related to these natural resources (carbon rights, benefits from access to genetic resources ...)?</li> <li>• Could the project require the relocation of Peoples from their homes or lands subject to traditional ownership or customary use?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 8: Involuntary Resettlement.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall be designed and implemented in a way that avoids or minimises the need for involuntary resettlement.</p>	<p><i>(7) Resettlement</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could the project involve the physical relocation of people? (encompassing displacement as well as planned relocation)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 9: Protection of Natural Habitats.</b> The Fund shall not support projects/programmes that would involve unjustified conversion or degradation of critical natural habitats, including those that are (a) legally protected; (b) officially proposed for protection; (c) recognised by authoritative sources for their high conservation value, including as critical habitat; or (d) recognised as protected by traditional or indigenous local communities.</p>	<p><i>(8) Use of Natural Resources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could the project lead to adverse impacts on biodiversity or natural habitat?</li> <li>• Is the project likely to negatively impact a protected area?</li> </ul>

AF E&S Principle	SPC SER Screening Tool
<p><b>Principle 10: Conservation of Biological Diversity.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall be designed and implemented in a way that avoids any significant or unjustified reduction or loss of biological diversity or the introduction of known invasive species.</p>	<p>(8) <i>Natural Resources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the project likely to introduce invasive alien species to the project area?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 11: Climate Change.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall not result in any significant or unjustified increase in greenhouse gas emissions or other drivers of climate change.</p>	<p>(2) <i>Climate Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Could the project adversely contribute to climate change by generating greenhouse gas emissions including through deforestation or forest degradation?</li> <li>Could the project negatively affect the resilience to climate change?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 12: Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall be designed and implemented in a way that meets applicable international standards for maximizing energy efficiency and minimizing material resource use, the production of wastes, and the release of pollutants. The project/programme will minimise the production of waste and the release of pollutants.</p>	<p>(3) <i>Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will the project generate hazardous waste? Is the project likely to lead to environmental damages due to an uncontrolled management of waste?</li> <li>Is the project likely to lead to pollutants release? Are chemicals (including pesticides) likely to be used during the project?</li> </ul> <p>(8) <i>Natural Resources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the project likely to favor unsustainable exploitation of a renewable resource?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 13: Public Health.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall be designed and implemented in a way that avoids potentially significant negative impacts on public health.</p>	<p>(5) <i>Impacts on Affected Communities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the project likely to increase community exposure to disease (water borne, water based, water related and vector borne diseases as well as communicable diseases)?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 14: Physical and Cultural Heritage.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall be designed and implemented in a way that avoids the alteration, damage, or removal of any physical cultural resources, cultural sites, and sites with unique natural values recognised as such at the community, national or international level.</p>	<p>(10) <i>Cultural Heritage</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the project likely to negatively affect cultural heritage?</li> <li>Is the project likely to negatively affect a legally protected cultural heritage area?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 15: Lands and Soil Conservation.</b> Projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall be designed and implemented in a way that promotes soil conservation and avoids degradation or conversion of productive lands or land that provides valuable ecosystem services.</p>	<p>Risks related to soil degradation, unsustainable land use, and loss of productive lands are captured through screening prompts under (8) <i>Natural Resources</i> and (9) <i>People's Rights and Tenure</i>, particularly where livelihoods and customary use rights may be affected.</p>

## Environmental and Social Management Approach

171. The Co:Lab's risk management approach is integrated into SPC's FiT platform and is designed to screen, monitor, and support small-scale adaptation innovations through a tailored, fit-for-purpose system. Due to the open nature of the innovation grants, specific interventions under Outcomes 1 and 2 are USPs at the time of proposal submission. All USPs will undergo full screening and categorisation before implementation. This ensures robust, risk-responsive ESMS that can adapt to the diverse types of innovation the programme is designed to support.
172. Screening and categorisation process will be undertaken using standardised tools and guidance aligned with SPC's SER Policy and the Adaptation Fund's safeguards by using a harmonised tool (see Appendix II-1), that will result in a risk classification (Category B or C) for each investment. No Category A (high-risk) investments will be supported under this programme. While the exact location, scale, and nature of sub-projects are currently unknown, they are likely to involve low to moderate environmental and social risks that are site-specific, temporary, and manageable. To manage risks effectively, the following measures have been integrated into the programme design:
- **Screening and Risk Categorisation:** All innovation proposals will undergo initial E&S risk screening conducted by the PMU, using SPC's ESMS tools and checklists. Proposals will be categorised as A, B, or C based on their scale, context, and potential environmental and social risks. Risk categorisation will determine the level of assessment, review, and safeguards required. Both Category B and Category C proposals will require ESMPs, with the scope proportionate to their risks: Category B sub-projects will require detailed site-based ESMPs (informed by ESIA where necessary), while Category C sub-projects will require simplified ESMPs documenting compliance with national technical standards and any minor mitigation measures.
  - **Proposal Support and Safeguards Integration:** During the co-design phase, the PMU supported by SPC's SER team and relevant technical divisions will provide tailored support to applicants to identify risks, apply mitigation measures, and integrate appropriate safeguards into project design. Proposals must include ESMPs proportionate to the risks, outlining mitigation actions, institutional responsibilities, monitoring indicators, and grievance redress procedures.
  - **Capacity Strengthening:** The programme includes dedicated capacity-building for grantees on environmental and social safeguards, risk mitigation, gender and social inclusion, and the use of SPC's screening and planning templates. Technical clinics and direct mentoring will help ensure applicants understand and apply the ESMS requirements throughout project development and implementation.
  - **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning:** The PMU will lead the monitoring of E&S safeguards implementation through the programme's MEL system, with technical backstopping from SPC's technical divisions. E&S indicators will be integrated into the performance monitoring framework, including disaggregated data by gender, age, and disability. Regular site visits, spot checks, and consultations with communities will be conducted to verify implementation and foster adaptive learning.
  - **Grievance Redress Mechanism:** A robust grievance redress mechanism is in place at SPC, accessible to all stakeholders – including community members, innovation teams, and partners – who wish to raise concerns related to the programme's environmental or social performance. Information on SPC's institutional mechanism is publicly available at [spc.int/accountability](http://spc.int/accountability).

## Risk Categorisation

173. All sub-projects under the Climate Innovation Co:Lab will be subject to environmental and social screening, categorisation, and risk management procedures aligned with the AF ESP and SPC's SER Policy. Categorisation is based on the nature, scale, location, and reversibility of potential environmental and social risks. The Adaptation Fund's classification system is summarised below:

<b>Risk Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Category A</b>	Activities with potentially significant adverse environmental and/or social risks and impacts that are diverse, irreversible, or unprecedented.
<b>Category B</b>	Activities with potential adverse environmental and/or social risks and impacts that are generally limited, site-specific, reversible, and readily mitigated through standard mitigation measures.
<b>Category C</b>	Activities with minimal or no adverse environmental and/or social risks and impacts.

174. All sub-projects will be pre-screened using SPC's SER Screening Tool. Based on the results:

- Category A sub-projects are not eligible for support under the Co:Lab due to the high-risk nature of their impacts.
- Category B sub-projects will require the preparation of a fit-for-purpose ESIA and ESMP. These must:
  - Align with national environmental impact assessment legislation;
  - Demonstrate consistency with applicable IFC Performance Standards;
  - Include meaningful stakeholder consultations, including with women, persons with disabilities, and Indigenous or marginalised groups, in accordance with the principle of FPIC, where relevant.
- Category C sub-projects will also require a simplified ESMP. This will confirm compliance with national technical standards, document the screening outcome, and integrate any necessary minor mitigation measures. Site-specific ESIA will generally not be required upfront, but sub-projects must:
  - Comply with national regulatory requirements;
  - Adhere to AF and SPC safeguards policies; and
  - Conduct site-level reviews if new information, concerns, or unanticipated risks arise during implementation.

175. SPC and the regional PMU will retain decision-making authority over risk classification. All sub-project categorisation decisions, screening forms, and risk management instruments will be retained for audit and reported annually through the PPR.

## Screening Process

176. All sub-projects under the Climate Innovation Co:Lab will undergo a two-phase screening and risk management process.

### Phase 1 – Incubation: Identification and Co-Design

#### Initial Screening and Exclusion Filter

All Project Pitches will be screened by SPC against:

- SER Screening Assessment aligned with SPC's SER Policy and Adaptation Fund's 15 ESP Principles;
- SPC's SER Policy and relevant national regulatory frameworks;

- An Exclusion List to ensure that no ineligible or high-risk (Category A) activities are supported.

Sub-projects will be provisionally categorised as:

- Category C – Low/negligible environmental/social risk (requiring ESMP)
- Category B – Moderate environmental/social risk (requiring ESIA and ESMP)
- Category A – High environmental/social risk (not eligible for funding under this programme)

#### Go/No Go Decision

Screening results will be documented and reviewed by the PMU and Appraisal Committee. Based on risk level, legal considerations, and safeguard triggers, a Go/No Go recommendation will be provided prior to co-design or implementation. For Category B projects, additional due diligence will be triggered.

#### **Phase 2 – Acceleration: Scaling of Incubated Project**

##### Due Diligence Requirements for Category B Sub-Projects

For Category B projects (selected under Components 1 or 2), the following due diligence requirements will apply:

- Detailed site-based ESIA and ESMP, prepared by the proponent with support from SPC's PMU (if required).
- Community consultations, including FPIC processes.
- Review of contractor labour practices, to ensure alignment with IFC PS2 and relevant national legislation.
- Assessment of biodiversity or ecosystem sensitivity, and preparation of a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) where applicable (aligned with IFC PS6).

##### Due Diligence Requirements for Category C Sub-projects

For Category C projects (selected under Components 1 or 2), which are expected to have minimal or no adverse environmental and social risks, the following due diligence requirements will apply:

- Simplified ESMP prepared by the proponent with support from SPC's PMU (if required)
- Basic stakeholder consultations with affected communities, ensuring activities are socially inclusive and consistent with national engagement practices.
- Verification of national regulatory compliance, such as building permits, water quality standards, or other technical approvals relevant to the activity.
- Monitoring and reporting streamlined to focus on confirming continued compliance and capturing any unexpected impacts during implementation.

##### Integration into Project Agreements and Reporting

All funded sub-projects will incorporate relevant E&S provisions into their implementation agreements, including:

- Compliance with approved ESMPs and mitigation plans;
- Grievance redress mechanisms at both local and programme level;
- Roles and timelines for E&S monitoring, reporting, and mid-cycle learning reviews.

Environmental and social performance will be documented annually through the PPR.

## Disclosure Procedure

177. All sub-project safeguard instruments (ESMPs and where applicable ESIAAs) will be disclosed publicly at least 30 days prior to final approval. Documents will be made available in English and relevant local languages, in accessible formats. Disclosure will take place through multiple channels, including national government websites, SPC and Adaptation Fund portals, and community-level access points such as local offices and/or cultural centres. Proponents must demonstrate that affected communities had a meaningful opportunity to access and respond to the information. This disclosure procedure applies to all sub-projects.

## Grievance Redress Mechanism

178. The objectives of the GRM for the Co:Lab programme are to:

- provide stakeholders with a clear process for providing comment and raising grievances and concerns in an anonymous manner;
- structure and manage the handling of comments, responses, and grievances in a timely manner; and,
- ensure that comments, responses, and grievances are handled in a fair and transparent manner and in line with local and national policies.

179. The GRM serves as an effective tool for early identification, assessment and resolution of grievances and therefore for strengthening accountability to beneficiaries. It is also a feedback mechanism to improve project impact and respond to concerns and grievances of project-affected parties (e.g. related to the environmental and social performance of the project) in a timely manner.

180. All grievances will be closely monitored by SPC to assess the number and type of grievances and evaluate any trends over time. This will be conducted by the relevant responsible parties as highlighted under SPC's policies for accountability<sup>47</sup>. All monitoring and reporting will be carried out conforming to confidentiality and consent from aggrieved parties or survivors.

## SPC Grievance Redress Mechanism

181. SPC has a GRM in place to ensure that complaints are being promptly reviewed and addressed by the responsible units (see <https://www.spc.int/accountability>). This process aims to address complaints from affected stakeholders, including communities, about the social and/or environmental performance of the project, and to take measures to redress the situation, where necessary. Project stakeholders have to be properly informed that SPC has such a mechanism established, and how they can access to it to settle their grievance.

182. The SPC GRM is operated through a web-hosted page on SPC site for the expression of concerns or complaints, which can be posted by email with the information in using the complaints' template ([Grievance Submission Form](#)). Further information and instructions can be found on the [SPC GRM Information Document](#).

It is also possible to submit grievances by post to the headquarters or one of the regional offices:

<b>SPC Headquarters</b> 95 Promenade Roger Laroque BP D5, 98848 Noumea Cedex New Caledonia	<b>SPC Suva Regional Office</b> Private Mail Bag Suva Fiji
---	---

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.spc.int/accountability>

<p><b>SPC Micronesia Regional Office</b>          PO Box Q Suite 301, One World Plaza          Kapwaresou Street          Kolonia, Pohnpei 96941 Federated States of Micronesia</p>	<p><b>SPC Melanesia Regional Office</b>          PO Box 6248, Port Vila, Vanuatu          PO Box 1468, Honiara, Solomon Islands          (Project Support Unit)</p>
<p><b>SPC Polynesia Regional Office</b>          Level 4 – O. G. Sanft Building          P.O Box 3524          Nuku'alofa, Tonga</p>	

183. Concerns expressed shall be treated internally primarily by the division in charge of the project or transferred to the executive level if complaints are related to sensitive issues. Complaints received by the institutional GRM at [complaints@spc.int](mailto:complaints@spc.int) will be acknowledged within 5 business days, and the indicative timeframe for resolution of a complaint is within ninety (90) calendar days.

184. SPC is committed to receiving any concerns or grievances from an affected community, about the environmental and social plans or performance of any SPC project or sub-project.

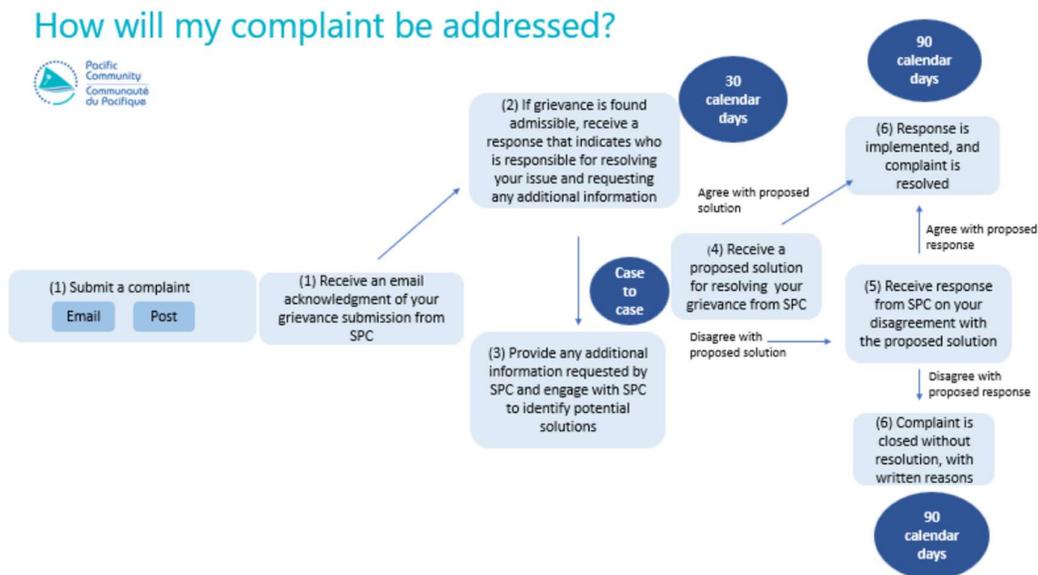


Figure 8. SPC GRM Process.

## Adaptation Fund Ad hoc Complaint Handling Mechanism

185. While the SPC GRM should be the first point of entry for any complaints under the Co:Lab programme, the Ad hoc Complaint Handling Mechanism (ACHM) of the Adaptation Fund can be directly used in cases where the Parties have failed to reach a mutually satisfactory solution through the implementing entities' grievance mechanism within a year.

### 186. How to Submit a Complaint

**Format.** No specific form/format is required, but a complaint must be submitted in writing in any UN language (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian or Spanish) either (1) by email to [afcomplaints@adaptation-fund.org](mailto:afcomplaints@adaptation-fund.org) or (2) by hard copy to the Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat, 1818 H Street NW, N6-600, Washington, DC 20433, USA.

**Standing.** Any individual or group of two or more people who lives in the project area and believe they are adversely affected by the implementation of projects or programmes funded by the Fund, or their duly appointed representative can submit a written complaint to the ACHM.

**Time of submission.** Complaints can be sent up to the date of the submission of the final evaluation report of the project concerned.

**Confidentiality.** If complainants or their representative(s) believe that there may be a present or future risk of retaliation for raising their concerns, they can request confidentiality of their identifying information in a written complaint or in a writing at any time throughout the process.

**Required contents of a written complaint.** Please view a sample form of a complaint [here](#).

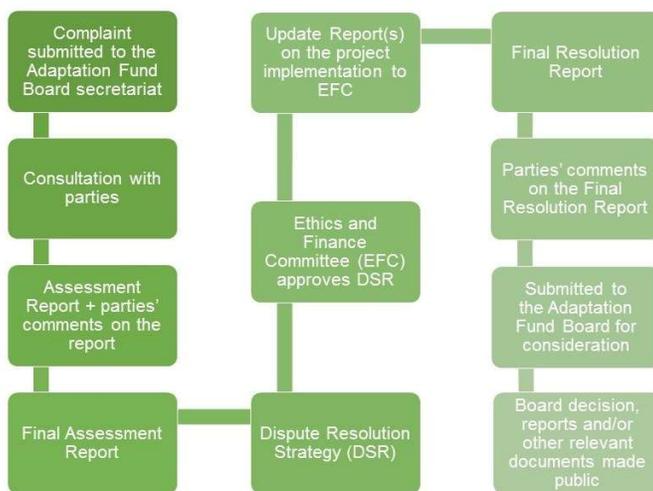


Figure 9. AF ACHM Process.

**ACHM Process.** The ACHM process may start after the complainants and the implementing entity have used the entity's grievance mechanism and failed to reach a solution within a year. The process may be discontinued at any stage should a solution be found or the case be closed for other reasons.

## Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and/or Harassment

187. In all situations involving complaints related to GBV and SEAH, the relevant grievance redress mechanism will take on survivor-centred approach. This will apply to all grievance address mechanisms controlled by SPC or the PMU. The following principles will be systemically applied through all steps and actions:

- The rights, needs, and wishes of the survivor is the foremost priority of everyone involved with the project.
- The survivor has a right to: be treated with dignity and respect instead of being exposed to victim-blaming attitudes; choose the course of action in dealing with the violence instead of feeling powerless; privacy and confidentiality instead of exposure; non-discrimination instead of discrimination based on gender, age, race/ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation or any other characteristic; receive comprehensive information to help her or him make their own decision instead of being told what to do; and a translator, for the language that the survivor feels more comfortable with in the case that further details are required.
- The safety of the survivor shall always be ensured. Potential risks to the survivor will be identified and action take to ensure the survivor's safety and to prevent further harm including ensuring that the alleged perpetrator does not have contact with the survivor. If the survivor is an employee of the Project, reasonable adjustments may be made to the survivor's work schedule and work environment to ensure their safety.
- All actions should reflect the choices of the survivor.

- All information related to the case must be kept confidential and identities protected. Only those who have a role in the response to an allegation should receive case-level information, and then only for a clearly stated purpose and with the survivor’s consent. This applies to any documentation or reports related to the case. Identities will not be revealed unless explicit written consent is provided by the survivor.
  - The survivor must provide informed consent to progress with each stage of the complaints process. Survivors may withdraw their consent at any time during the process.
188. In the case that a case of SEAH or GBV is submitted, SPC as the RIE will carry out duty of care to the survivor in line with its policies. This includes where relevant, support for the provision of medical services (including psychosocial support), legal counsel, community driven protection measures, and reintegration of the survivor. These mechanisms will ensure consistency with the national standard operating procedures for GBV service providers (counselling centres, police, health) as well as service delivery protocols to respond to GBV.

## Environmental and Social Management Plan

189. This table summarises anticipated risks aligned with the AF ESP, indicates their significance, and outlines required mitigation actions at the programme level. Sub-projects assessed as Category B will develop a similar ESMP aligning with the programme-level ESMP and the PPR, using an SPC-provided template.

The ESMP outlines site-specific risks, mitigation measures, implementation arrangements and timeline, ESS monitoring indicators, and budget allocations. All ESMPs will be submitted prior to sub-project implementation and will be reflected in the annual PPR as required by the Fund, ensuring risk mitigation is tracked throughout the project cycle.

Table 21. Programme-Level Environmental and Social Risk Management Plan.

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
ESP1: Compliance with the Law	<del>No-Low risk. While the project will ensure compliance with the relevant national environmental laws and regulations in the 14 participating Pacific SIDS, there is some risk of inconsistency in enforcement and institutional capacity across countries, particularly in relation to environmental protection, land use, and water resources. To address this</del> The project will ensure compliance with the relevant environmental national laws and regulations in the 14 participating Pacific SIDS related to environmental protection, land use, and	No-Low risk	Conduct ESS compliance checks via SPC’s ESMS and confirm alignment with national legal frameworks during the co-design phase (Activity 1.1.3)

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
	<p><u>water resources</u>. The the project will be implemented in close collaboration and regular coordination with relevant government authorities. Development and delivery of targeted capacity-building for project implementers will ensure ESS compliance, and legal compliance checks will be integrated in project MEL systems.</p>		
<p><b>ESP2: Access and Equity</b></p>	<p><i>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to Annex I.</i></p> <p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Systemic inequities in the Pacific, including limited access to finance, decision-making, and services for women, youth, persons with disabilities, and those in remote areas, may create barriers to equitable participation in innovation activities. While the Co:Lab incorporates inclusion safeguards and locally led approaches, there remains a moderate risk that structural exclusion or digital divides (e.g., access to internet or climate information) will persist, especially in rural or outer island contexts. The programme mitigates this risk through inclusive stakeholder engagement, accessible application processes, and targeted outreach to women's groups and CSOs.</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Apply inclusive screening criteria (Activity 1.1.2), ensure transparent selection, require GESI plan in proposals (Activity 1.1.3), and track beneficiary participation using disaggregated data (Activity 1.1.5)</p>

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
<p><b>ESP3: Marginalised and Vulnerable Groups</b></p>	<p><i>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to the Annex I.</i></p> <p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Vulnerable groups — including women with disabilities, single mothers, LGBTQ+ individuals, and subsistence-based rural households — face layered disadvantages in resilience and innovation participation. The Gender Annex acknowledges these intersecting vulnerabilities, particularly in relation to informal economies, unpaid care burdens, and gendered impacts of climate disasters. Although the Co:Lab integrates safeguards and intends to include diverse participants in co-design and implementation, the risk of underrepresentation or unintended exclusion remains unless active accompaniment and targeted support are sustained.</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Applicants must demonstrate inclusive engagement and design (Activity 1.1.3), include vulnerability-disaggregated indicators, and submit proposals reviewed by the SER team (Activities 1.1.4, 1.1.5)</p>
<p><b>ESP4: Human Rights</b></p>	<p><i>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to the Annex I.</i></p> <p><b>No-Low risk.</b> <a href="#">While the project design follows a rights-based and people-centred approach, that is respecting freedom of association, non-discrimination, and equitable access to resources, there is some</a></p>	<p><u>No-Low</u> risk</p>	<p>Promote rights-based design through co-design support (Activity 1.1.3) and technical clinics (Activity 2.1.3). Ensure screening criteria incorporate human rights considerations.</p>

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
	<p><u>risk that uneven application across diverse cultural and institutional contexts in the 14 participating Pacific SIDS could affect the consistent protection of rights. In particular, risks may arise if vulnerable or marginalised groups are not fully engaged or if free, prior, and informed consent processes are not uniformly upheld. To address this, The project design follows a rights-based and people-centred approach, respecting freedom of association, non-discrimination, and access to resources.</u></p> <p>Meaningful community engagement and free, prior, and informed consent are ensured throughout the project life cycle.</p>		
<p><b>ESP5: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment</b></p>	<p><i>This is an abbreviated risk summary of the full analysis found in the GAAP. For further information, please refer to the Annex I.</i></p> <p><b>Moderate risk.</b> Persistent gender gaps in leadership, land tenure, economic participation, and digital access create a moderate risk that women's voices may be overlooked or their contributions undervalued in innovation contexts. While the leverages SPC's Gender Flagship and FiT programme to promote gender-responsive innovations, it relies heavily on implementing partners to carry out GESI commitments, which may vary in capacity. The</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Evaluate project pitches according to priorities criteria including gender equality and women's leadership (Activity 1.1.2) Require gender action plans in all proposals (Activity 1.1.3), prioritise women-led initiatives (Activity 1.1.2), and track gender-specific outcomes (Activity 1.1.5).</p>

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
	<p>programme addresses this through a structured GESI Action Plan, targeted mentoring, and MEL systems that go beyond participation counts to track influence, benefits, and leadership outcomes.</p>		
<p><b>ESP6: Core Labour Rights</b></p>	<p><b>Low risk.</b> The project will comply with regional and national employment laws and regulations and will respect, promote, and realise in good faith the principles of the ILO Labour Standards also in accordance with SPC Policy and the People-Centred Approach. Employment of local labour during construction or maintenance may expose workers to occupational health and safety (OHS) risks and informal labour practices or labour rights violations could occur without contractor oversight. The SER Team will screen proposals against the following: Project activities will ensure that they do not violate labour laws in relation to project management specific to recruitment of human resources to support project delivery and implementation; and any contracts for recruited staff will ensure that they align with national labour standards and ensure competitive salaries and packages are offered. Compliance will be monitored annually in accordance with the project's MEL system.</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Require compliance with national labour laws (Activity 1.1.4), and enable grievance redress through SPC systems.</p>

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
<p><b>ESP7: Indigenous Peoples</b></p>	<p><b>Low risk.</b> There is no universally accepted or internationally-agreed upon definition of ‘indigenous peoples’ (UNDP, 2021; GCF, 2018; AF, 2013; IFC, 2012). In the particular context of most Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the majority of the population and the dominant sociocultural or ethnic group is native to the island country or territory. That is: they are indigenous to the land and they are the ‘local communities’. In this context, the terms ‘communities’ and ‘beneficiaries’ are synonymous to ‘Indigenous Peoples’. The anticipated project benefits, co-benefits, opportunities, and mitigated risks for communities or beneficiaries are de facto anticipated benefits, co-benefits, opportunities, and mitigated risks for indigenous people. The project’s existing mechanisms for stakeholder engagement and community consultations fulfil the intended purpose of the FPIC. Respect for customary land ownership and cultural practices is critical, hence a culturally-sensitive and people-centred approach will be adopted in the project.</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Require FPIC during co-design (Activity 1.1.3); SER team ensures cultural appropriateness; consult Indigenous communities as part of proposal development.</p>
<p><b>ESP8: Involuntary Resettlement</b></p>	<p><b>No risk.</b> The project and sub-projects are not anticipated to cause inadvertent physical or economic displacement of</p>	<p>No risk</p>	<p>Prohibit any activity requiring involuntary resettlement (as per exclusionary activities). Require land tenure verification as part of co-design (Activity 1.1.3).</p>

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
	<p>target communities. Involuntary resettlement is under the exclusionary criteria for project selection, hence loss of shelter, assets, or access to assets that lead to loss of income sources or other means of livelihood is not a likely impact.</p>		
<b>ESP9: Protection of Natural Habitats</b>	<p><b>Moderate risk.</b> There is some risk that project and sub-project activities may unintentionally degrade critical natural habitats. The project will support the protection of natural habitats through promoting nature and community-based solutions, any potential of sub-projects to directly or indirectly impact upon natural or critical habitats will be identified at the ESS risk screening stage as outlined in the ESMS. Implementation of risk mitigation measures and ESS compliance will be monitored and reported on the project and sub-project level, as incorporated in the MEL system.</p>	Moderate	<p>Exclude high-risk (Cat A) proposals (Activity 1.1.2). Require ESMPs for low-risk (Cat C) and medium-risk (Cat B) proposals (Activity 1.1.4). Use SER checklist to assess ecosystem impacts.</p>
<b>ESP10: Conservation of Biological Diversity</b>	<p><b>Low risk.</b> It is not anticipated that project and sub-project activities will lead to a loss in biological diversity or introduction of known invasive species. The project will comply with any National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans, ensuring alignment and contribution to the protection of countries' biological and natural resources. The sub-projects' ESIA and ESMP will contextualise the policy</p>	Low	<p>Avoid non-native species introduction; promote biodiversity-sensitive practices through proposal screening (Activity 1.1.4) and technical review.</p>

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
	<p>and evaluate against biological diversity criterion and mitigate risk as needed for specific sites and sub-projects, e.g. an ecological screening may be necessary before water tank installation near bush or coastal vegetation to avoid disturbing nesting birds and endemic flora; where pit latrine leakage may contaminate soil invertebrates and microbiodiversity, latrine construction will be avoided in coastal wetlands and require consultations with local environmental officers; and/or where clearing of coastal vegetation for drainage or expansion may affect shoreline biodiversity or erosion processes, ESMPs would be required to minimise mangrove disturbance and avoid crossing turtle nesting zones.</p>		
<p><b>ESP11: Climate Change</b></p>	<p><b>Low risk.</b> The project is climate adaptation-focused, explicitly designed to enhance resilience to climate hazards such as sea-level rise, cyclones, and flooding. Its activities are not anticipated to result in any significant or unjustified increase in greenhouse gas emissions or other drivers of climate change. Any agro-forestry and agriculture sub-projects will be small-scale as per exclusionary criteria, and are not anticipated to result in large-scale negative impacts on carbon capture and sequestration capacity.</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Screen proposals for maladaptation risks (Activity 1.1.4); promote resilience-focused innovations in clinics (Activity 2.1.3).</p>

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
<b>ESP12: Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency</b>	<b>Moderate risk.</b> Sub-project construction activities may generate waste, noise, dust, or cause minor pollution if not managed properly. Project and sub-project activities will exercise cost-effectiveness and minimise the use of resources used during implementation – applicable to all sources and forms of energy, water, and other resources and materials inputs. There is some risk of waste production and pollution due to the quantity and diversity of sub-projects, though they are required to be in compliance with national waste management laws including monitoring of ESS compliance, inclusive of pollution prevention and resource efficiency.	Moderate	If applicable, proposals must include simple waste management plans (Activity 1.1.3)
<b>ESP13: Public Health</b>	<b>Low risk.</b> The project avoids potentially significant negative impacts on public health, hence overall risk to public health is low. Sub-project activities are anticipated to generate minimal, site-specific, largely reversible impact to public health and will comply with national public health laws. A WHO-compliant rapid health impact screening checklist will be integrated in the ESIA and ESS compliance monitoring tools, to determine if a further thorough public health impact assessment and development of a management plan is necessary.	Low	Public health implications assessed in screening (Activity 1.1.4); technical backstopping from SPC divisions (Activity 1.1.5)

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
<p><b>ESP14: Physical and Cultural Heritage</b></p>	<p><b>Low risk.</b> Project and sub-project activities will not be implemented around physical heritage sites, and will not permanently interfere with communities' existing access and use of such physical and cultural resources. They will be designed and implemented in a way that avoids the alteration, damage, or removal of any physical cultural resources and sites with unique natural values recognised as such at the community, national or international level. The sub-project ESS screenings will identify the presence of cultural heritage in or near the project, and if cultural heritage exists, a risk assessment will be conducted to analyse the potential for impacting cultural heritage, and the measures to mitigate the risk. Consultations will be undertaken with village, community leaders and nobles to ensure that project activities will not directly involve any preserved and cultural heritage sites.</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Applicants must identify culturally sensitive sites (Activity 1.1.3); project spoiling cultural heritage are excluded</p>
<p><b>ESP15: Lands and Soil Conservation</b></p>	<p><b>Moderate risk.</b> The project promotes ecosystem-based approaches and the inclusion of soil conservation practices in design of land-based sub-projects. While the screening criteria exclude activities which explicitly target or require the use of soil, there is small risk of roads renovation and water tank installations having an</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Encourage use of nature-based solutions and proper site design during proposal co-development (Activity 1.1.3).</p>

AF ES Principles	Identified Risks	Level	Mitigation Measures
	impact on the soil and land surrounding the sites or facilities. Site-specific assessments and regular ESS compliance monitoring will be conducted particularly for infrastructure and WASH sub-projects, to ensure no negative impacts on land and soil. This will include ecological studies that account for the identification of fragile soils, to inform the final detailed design and to identify any additional site-specific impacts.		

## Implementation Arrangements

### Roles and Responsibilities

The table below provides an overview of the different actors and their responsibilities related to E&S safeguards.

Table 22. ESMS Implementation Roles and Responsibilities.

Actor	Roles and Responsibilities
<b>Project Management Unit (PMU)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leads overall coordination and implementation of the ESMS.</li> <li>Conducts initial environmental and social screening of proposals based on the SPC ESMS and AF ESP.</li> <li>Presents risk assessments to the Appraisal Committee and makes go/no-go decisions.</li> <li>Ensures mitigation measures and ESMPs are integrated into proposal co-design.</li> <li>Monitors ESMS compliance throughout implementation and ensures issues are addressed.</li> <li>Facilitates grievance redress processes and tracks outcomes.</li> </ul>
<b>SER Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides technical support to the PMU and applicants during the proposal co-design process.</li> <li>Supports applicants in identifying environmental and social risks and integrating mitigation measures.</li> </ul>

Actor	Roles and Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contributes to the development of ESMPs where required.</li> <li>Provides backstopping to the PMU during implementation as needed.</li> </ul>
<b>Appraisal Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviews proposals and associated ESMS documentation (e.g. risk screening, mitigation measures, ESMPs).</li> <li>Provides recommendations to the PMU on technical and safeguards quality.</li> <li>May request revisions or additional information if ESMS compliance is unclear.</li> </ul>
<b>Climate Finance Unit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides technical input on gender equality and social inclusion risks and mitigation.</li> <li>Supports the PMU during proposal screening and co-design to ensure GESI and ESS considerations are mainstreamed.</li> <li>No direct implementation responsibility, but available as support during design and oversight.</li> </ul>
<b>Grantees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comply with ESMS requirements defined in grant agreements.</li> <li>Integrate required mitigation measures and ESMPs into their project design and implementation.</li> <li>Engage stakeholders and affected communities appropriately, including FPIC where required.</li> <li>Report on safeguard actions and submit updates as part of regular reporting.</li> </ul>
<b>Adaptation Fund</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides oversight of project compliance with AF Environmental and Social Policy.</li> <li>May review safeguards implementation through reporting, evaluations, or spot checks.</li> </ul>

## Monitoring and Evaluation

190. Environmental and social performance across all sub-projects will be monitored through a harmonised system that integrates safeguards compliance into the project's overall MEL framework. Each funded innovation will be required to track and report against relevant ESS monitoring indicators, including compliance with the approved ESMP, grievance handling, consultation activities, and mitigation outcomes. These indicators will be integrated into project agreements and monitored by the national PMUs, with technical oversight provided by SPC's GESS Officer and the regional Co:Lab PMU. Spot checks, field missions, and desk-based verification will be used to triangulate reporting and ensure accuracy.

191. All safeguards monitoring data will be consolidated and reflected in the annual PPR submitted to the Adaptation Fund, in line with Section J of the funding proposal. This includes outcome-level analysis of safeguards risks, management responses, and any changes in sub-project risk profiles. Sub-projects with moderate risk (Category B) will be required to provide mid-year

updates on the implementation of their ESMPs, including budget execution, stakeholder engagement, and emerging risks. Lessons from safeguards implementation will also inform adaptive risk management and contribute to regional learning outputs under Outcome 3.

## Appendices

### Appendix II – 1 SER Screening Tool

SER Screening Questionnaire		Risk Description		Risk assessment	Score
		Yes, No, n/a, TBD	If no, please shortly justify  If Yes answer, describe potential issues, specify activities causing the risk identified.  characterise the identified risk or impacts (likelihood, intensity, duration, reversibility)  Indicate the risk localisation (local/national/global)	<i>to be completed only if the answer is "Yes" under the risk description column</i>	Characterise the risk level:  Low (L), Medium (M) High (H)
<b>1. Labour and Working Conditions</b>	Will the project present unsafe, indecent or unhealthy working conditions for stakeholders involved?				
	Is there potential for the project to apply adverse discriminatory practices based on religious, racial, gender, disability or political considerations?				
<b>2. Climate change</b>	Could the project adversely contribute to climate change by generating greenhouse gas emissions including through deforestation or forest degradation?				

	Could the project negatively affect the resilience to climate change?				
<b>3. Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention</b>	Will the project generate hazardous waste? Is the project likely to lead to environmental damages due to an uncontrolled management of waste?				
	Is the project likely to lead to pollutants release? Are chemicals (including pesticides) likely to be used during the project?				
<b>4. Human Rights</b>	Is the project likely to negatively impact on the human rights of the affected populations? (e.g. their rights to water, work, health, to a healthy environment, etc.)?				
	Is the project likely to create less favourable treatment of, or discrimination against, any person or group?				
	Is the project likely to increase the risk to people with disability (physical, hearing, visual, intellectual and sensory impairments)?				
	Is the project likely to increase risks to children or vulnerable adults through interaction with SPC staff and non-staff?				
	Any risk that populations perceive they did not receive enough opportunities to raise their concerns regarding the project?				
	Is there a risk that the project would create or exacerbate conflicts with or within affected populations?				

<b>5. Impacts on Affected communities</b>	Is the project likely to increase community exposure to disease (water borne, water based, water related and vector borne diseases as well as communicable diseases)?				
<b>6. Gender</b>	Is there a likelihood that the project would have adverse impacts on gender equality, and/or the situation of women and girls?				
	Have community groups/leaders raised gender equality concerns regarding the project during the stakeholder engagement process?				
	Would the project potentially limit women's ability to access or use natural resources upon which they depend for a livelihood?				
	Is the project likely to increase risks of sexual harassment or sexual exploitation?				
<b>7. Resettlement</b>	Could the project involve the physical relocation of people? (encompassing displacement as well as planned relocation)				
<b>8. Use of natural resources</b>	Could the project lead to adverse impacts on biodiversity or natural habitat?				
	Is the project likely to negatively impact a protected area?				
	Is the project likely to introduce invasive alien species to the project area?				

	Is the project likely to restrict People's access to natural resources and their means of livelihoods?				
	is the project likely to favor unsustainable exploitation of a renewable resource				
<b>9. Peoples right and tenure</b>	Is the project likely to negatively affect Peoples or communities rights: rights of affected populations, including procedural rights such as the right to be consulted or to have access to information, or substantive rights (real or personal) such as the right of access to natural resources or benefit-sharing related to these natural resources (carbon rights, benefits from access to genetic resources ...).				
	Could the project require the relocation of Peoples from their homes or lands subject to traditional ownership or customary use?				
<b>10. Cultural heritage</b>	Is the project likely to negatively affect cultural heritage?				
	Is the project likely to negatively affect a legally protected cultural heritage area?				
Risk categorisation process			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If only L on the right hand column, then the project is Low risk &gt; no further assessment is required</li> <li>• If one or more M then the project is Medium risk &gt; further assessment is required to formulate alternatives</li> <li>• If one of more H, &gt; topic assessment is compulsory, including for the assessment of credible alternatives (NB: the project may have to be categorised as Medium or High risk depending on the outcome of the ESIA)</li> </ul>		

|

|

## Appendix II – 2 Exclusionary List

192. There are a number of activities that the Co:Lab will not fund. A simple set of exclusion criteria will be implemented to ensure that all programme activities are supporting innovation adaptation sub-grants aligned with SPC SER Policy and Adaptation Fund's ESP. All Category A proposals – defined as those with potentially significant, diverse, irreversible, or unprecedented environmental or social impacts – will be deemed ineligible under the Co:Lab.
193. The SPC Climate Innovation Co:Lab will not be used to directly or indirectly fund activities that<sup>48</sup>:
- Conflict with adopted plans and established uses of the target community
  - Substantially affects a rare or endangered species of animal or plant or the habitat of such species
  - Interfere substantially with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species
  - Substantially diminish habitat for fish, wildlife, or plants
  - Breach standards relating to solid waste or litter control
  - Substantially degrade water quality
  - Contaminate a public water supply
  - Substantially degrade or deplete ground water resources
  - Interfere substantially with ground water recharge
  - Extend a sewer line with capacity to serve new development
  - Encourage activities which result in the use of large amounts of fuel, water, or energy
  - Use fuel, water, or energy in a wasteful manner
  - Disrupt or adversely affect an archaeological site or a property of historic or cultural significance
  - Induce substantial growth or concentration of population
  - Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system
  - Displace a large number of people over the long term
  - Increase substantially the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas over the long term
  - Cause substantial flooding, erosion or siltation
  - Expose people or structures to major geological hazards
  - Create a potential public health hazard or involve the use, production or disposal of materials which pose a hazard to people or animal or plant populations in the areas affected
  - Violate any ambient air quality standard, contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation, or expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations
  - Convert prime agricultural land to non-agricultural use or impair the agricultural productivity of prime agricultural land
  - Interfere with emergency response plans
  - Relate to the extraction or depletion of non-renewable natural resources
  - Cause involuntary resettlement of people or the removal or alteration of any physical cultural assets and property
  - Activities prohibited by host country legislation or international conventions relating to the protection of biodiversity resources or cultural heritage
  - Projects spoiling cultural heritage

---

<sup>48</sup> SPC does not have a specific exclusionary list as part of their SER Policy. Hence this comprehensive indicative list based on FSM Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (one of the participating countries) is proposed; Available at: <http://www.fsmlaw.org/fsm/regulations/envimp.htm>

- Projects negatively affecting indigenous people