

REGIONAL INITIATIVE TEMPLATE

Please complete each section below.

1. Contact Details

Please provide the following contact details:

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2. Name of Initiative

Empowering Pacific Island Countries and Territories for Sustainable Deep Seabed Minerals Management

3. Background and Rationale

You may consider: What is the issue being addressed by this initiative? What are the causes of this issue? Are there relevant studies that have been carried out to support the issue? Are there links to national, regional or international goals/policies?

Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.

Issue to be addressed

The main issue to be addressed in this regional initiative is sustainable management of deep seabed mineral (DSM) resources that occur within national jurisdictions of Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) and explore ways in which PICTs will continue to embrace the regional cooperative approach. Additionally, PICTs should be encouraged to participate in DSM activities in the International Seabed Area (the Area).

The PICTs have a lot to learn from terrestrial mining and to ensure that the mistakes of the past are not repeated when deep sea mining commences. Mineral development is considered a capital intensive and a high risk venture and PICTs must demonstrate prudence by providing the enabling environment for investment in DSM. Environmental management of deep sea mining will be a challenge and PICTs and developers must ensure that DSM activities are performed in an environmentally friendly manner. Financial management by ways of developing suitable national DSM frameworks for fiscal regime, revenue management, transparency, and saving scheme is needed. Most PICTs are incapable of regulating this new industry as they lack the resources and the know-how to do so hence they continue to rely on external assistance and development partners. Related to that is the capacity of PICTs to implement DSM policy and law, and monitor enforcement.

Some PICTs¹ have requested additional DSM prospecting / exploration to be carried out within their respective Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ). Detailed geological assessment, manipulation of existing and new geological data, identification of potential sites, and the provision of sound geological advice will be required. Data management is another issue the need to be addressed together with assistance rendered to government on contract negotiations. Lastly, ongoing consultations and awareness is crucial to keep stakeholders informed.

Causes of this Issue

The global demand for metals is rising and will continue to grow in the face of increasing economic and social developments. This has exerted enormous pressure on terrestrial mineral resources as high grade deposits are becoming rarer to find, and developers have considered other means including the re-cycling of used metals and the possibility of developing seabed mineral resources. Recent high demand for new and renewable energy technologies has sparked growing interest for non-traditional metals such as Rare Metals, Platinum Group Metals (PGM) and Rare Earth Elements (REE) globally. The grant of commercial exploration rights and the discovery of 'high grade' Seafloor Massive Sulphides (SMS) deposits (enriched in copper-gold-silver-lead-zinc) within the EEZ of Papua New Guinea (PNG), Tonga, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Fiji have triggered renewed interest in DSM throughout the Pacific Islands region. Additionally, Papua New Guinea has granted a mining licence in 2011 to Nautilus Minerals Inc for its Solwara 1 Project in the Bismarck Sea and mining is expected to commence in PNG waters in 2018.

Relevant studies undertaken to support the Issue

Marine mineral studies in the Pacific Islands region commenced in the early 1970s and have been ongoing for the last four decades assessing the occurrence and potential of Manganese Nodules, metalliferous sediments, phosphate, Cobalt-rich Crusts, and Seafloor Massive Sulphides. Under the Japan-SOPAC Cooperative Study on Deep Sea Minerals Resources in the Pacific a significant prospecting program was undertaken from 1985 to 2005 that assessed the deep-seafloor mineral resources potential in selected areas of the EEZ of twelve PICs². The most recent regional intervention is the current SPC-EU Deep Sea Minerals (DSM) Project implemented by the Geoscience Division (GSD) of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) in all fifteen Pacific ACP States.

Links to national, regional or international goals/policies

¹ Niue, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Samoa, Palau, Nauru, French Polynesia, Tokelau

² The 12 PICs are: Cook Islands, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Samoa, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Tonga, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji and Niue.

The 2014 Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) of the SPC-EU DSM Project³ finds that overall the Project is highly relevant to all seven of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), all 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the SAMOA pathway (SIDS Accelerated Modalities for Action), and to the policies and programmes of main development partners. In the 2013 Pacific Plan review report, deep sea mining was highlighted in Recommendation 2 whereby PIFS is encouraged to work with relevant CROP Agencies to assist PICs with the development of deep sea minerals⁴. Cook Islands and Tonga have identified deep sea minerals as one of their national development priorities in the 2014 Palau Declaration. A number of PICTs have either put in place or in the processing of finalising the necessary legal instruments for the management and administration of deep sea mineral resources. The development of these DSM legal instruments is in line with a 2012 Pacific Leaders meeting recommendation⁵.

Regional DSM Agreement

At the request of Pacific ACP States, the SPC has drafted a Regional DSM Agreement⁶ to encourage, facilitate and strengthen (i) regional cooperation, (ii) information sharing, and (iii) PICTs' participation in DSM activities. Such regional intergovernmental agreement is a meaningful and effective way to set and enforce common minimum standards (operational, environmental, and financial) across the region. Sharing the same targets through regional cooperation is likely to lead to more consistent, comprehensive and cost-effective resources management. The Regional Agreement encourages collaboration in order to get optimum benefits and relevant provisions are in place to avoid 'raise to the bottom' whereby countries will be competing against each other. The draft Regional DSM Agreement is expected to be tabled at the 2015 SPC's CRGA meeting as well as at the 2016 Pacific Leaders meeting for consideration.

4. Description

Please provide a brief overview of this initiative. Try to address the following: Does this initiative contribute to a positive change to the region? What makes this initiative of importance to the Pacific region as a whole? Who would implement this initiative? Who are the main beneficiaries? Are regulatory or legislative changes required at the national level to implement this initiative? How would the initiative be funded? Has this initiative been carried out previously? What are the key risks in implementing this initiative? Are there any complementary projects and programmes currently active? What is the proposed timeframe for this initiative? How would the initiative be sustained over the proposed timeframe?

Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.

Contribute to positive change in the region

While PICTs continue to generate revenue through the development of fisheries, forestry, agriculture and minerals (in a few cases only), most of them continue to rely heavily on international aid. Most PICTs have limited access to health, education, and infrastructure, and have sparse employment opportunities. Persistent poverty and low human development index are recognised as major adverse impacts of persistent poor economic performance in the region. PICTs have a large proportion of disparate rural populations highly vulnerable to natural disasters, sea level rise, climate change and economic depressions. Deep sea minerals are accessible to most PICTs in one way or another. Sustainable mineral development offers a potential paradigm shift in economic development (i.e. DSM will be a major development sector for some countries that requires significant changes in planning, development priorities and revenue

³ The EU commissioned Mid-Term Evaluation of the SPC-EU DSM Project was carried out between August and October 2014.

⁴ Pacific Plan 2013 Review – Report to the Pacific Leaders.

⁵ 2012 Forum Leaders Communique

⁶ The Regional Cooperation Agreement for Responsible Deep Seabed Minerals Management in the Pacific Island Countries and Territories

management) that can contribute to poverty alleviation, employment generation, and raising the living standards of the Pacific people.

Importance of this Initiative to the Pacific region

This new frontier of seabed mining can generate enormous economic development opportunities for many PICTs. For smaller Pacific Island Countries such as Cook Islands, Kiribati, and RMI, deep sea mineral may represent a major economic development opportunity apart from fish. A number of countries have already demonstrated their interest by developing enabling mechanisms such as (i) formulation of relevant policies and laws, (ii) establishing/strengthening national agencies responsible for regulating / managing DSM activities, (iii) issuing exploration licences within national jurisdiction, and/or (iv) sponsoring private entities to secure exploration licences in the “the Area”. Through the implementation of sound legal frameworks and scientific studies, this regional initiative will help countries derive maximum benefits with minimal environmental degradation.

Implementing Agencies

The SPC in collaboration with PICTs, relevant CROP Agencies, and other development partners.

Main Beneficiaries

The main beneficiaries are Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTS) and Pacific Communities, and to a lesser extent the private sector, civil society organisations (CSO), research and academic institutions.

National regulatory regime

The following set of principles has been adopted in national regulatory regimes: robust legal standards that conform to international laws, protection of the ocean environment, environmental management that includes the application of the precautionary approach, equitable sharing of mining revenue, and enabling mechanisms for capacity building and regional cooperation. Cook Islands, Tonga, PNG, Fiji, Tuvalu have put in place the necessary policy and legislation for the management of deep seabed mineral activities and resources. Other countries including FSM, RMI Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Niue and Nauru are currently being assisted by the SPC-EU DSM Project in developing their respect DSM Policy and law. While up to 70% of the national DSM policy and law are expected to be developed by 2016, the main challenge for PICTs is the implementation and enforcement of such legal instruments.

How this Initiative will be Funded

SPC is hoping to secure further funding under the EDF11 Pacific Regional Indicative Program (PRIP) to continue the regional intervention on deep sea minerals in collaboration with UNDP Pacific Centre, University of the South Pacific (USP), Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG), and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP). Additionally, under the PACE Net Plus initiative SPC, in collaboration with partners, will develop a joint project proposal for the Horizon 2020 funding⁷. Other funding opportunities will be explored.

Has this initiative been carried out previously?

This initiative is linked to the current SPC-EU DSM Project. To ensure continuity in this regional cooperative approach it is inevitable that some of the activities identified in this initiative will continue from the existing project. New tasks will complement previous regional DSM initiatives.

⁷ Under Horizon 2020, 70 billion Euro is set aside by the EU for research between 2014 - 2020. European research agencies / institutions and other countries including ACP States can access this fund.

Key risks in implementing this initiative

- Whilst a mining licence has been issued in PNG with exploration licences being issued in other countries, deep sea mining has yet to occur within any national jurisdiction in the region. For various reasons, Nautilus Minerals has postponed deep sea mining in PNG at least 3 times and there is no grantee that mining will actually commence in 2018 as indicated.
- The current EU funding for the SPC-EU DSM Project under EDF11 will end in March 2016. There is no grantee that additional funding will be secured under EDF11 and/or Horizon 2020.
- In the 2014 Project MTE, it is recommended that the EU and other donors fund a second phase of the current SPC-EU DSM Project post 2016 to further enhance sustainability. In case funding is not available immediately after March 2016, this initiative is most likely to be postponed or cancelled.
- There is a tendency that PICTs would not be able to monitor DSM activities within their respective jurisdictions enabling DSM developers to operate outside the remit of the law.

Complimentary Projects and Programmes

SPC has over the last 12 years undertaken amongst others a number of large European Union funded projects as well as other projects such as the Australian funded Regional Maritime Boundaries Project. The principal one of these being the current “SPC-EU Deep Sea Minerals Project in the Pacific Islands Region: a Legal and Fiscal Framework for Sustainable Resource Management”, funded under EDF10.

Proposed timeframe for this Initiative

This initiative is expected to take at least 5 years depending on the scope of the project and funding availability.

How this initiative will be sustained over the proposed timeframe?

Through smarter stakeholder participation, guidance and networking individual countries are expected to progressively take ownership of the management of their seabed mineral resources during project implementation and beyond. Part of this project is to ensure appropriate institutional and management structures are strengthened and capacity building initiatives will be made at multiple levels. From a technical viewpoint sustainability would hinge on technical capacity being retained in-country and/or within SPC and other CROP Agencies. This ongoing regional approach is important for the long-term as it provides capacity backstop for PICTs particularly for Smaller Pacific Island Countries.

5. Alignment to Regional Vision, Values and Objectives

Briefly describe how your initiative supports the vision, values and objectives set out in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. These can be found in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism document or in the submissions guideline document.

Please limit your response to no more than 500 words

Initiative supports the FPR Vision

This initiative supports the vision of the FPR particularly for a prosperous Pacific region that enables the Pacific people to live free, healthy and productive lives. The benefits that will be brought about by deep sea minerals development through revenue generation and other direct and indirect benefits will contribute to achieving this vision.

Initiative supports the FPR Values

Through the refining of policies and legislation relating to the governance of DSM resources, environmental management, as well as the management of revenues emanating from DSM development, this initiative is supporting accountability and good governance in the region. Regional DSM frameworks for (i) Fiscal Regime and Revenue Management, and (ii) Environmental Management, will be used to formulate fiscal and environmental safeguards based on international principles to guide national governments with respect to transparency and accountability as well as environmental sustainability. This will ensure that PICTs receive their fair share of the revenue and other benefits relating to deep sea minerals development. Sound environmental management and monitoring will ensure that any deep seabed mining activities will not impact the living resources of the ocean hence contributing to maintaining the integrity of the Pacific ocean. These initiatives will in turn contribute to the full observance of democratic values and the rule of law. The defence and promotion of human rights, gender equality will be embedded in all legal instruments for DSM.

Inclusive and participatory approach will be part of this initiative where all stakeholders (representatives of government, CSO, private sector, international organisations, research institutions, and local communities) will be invited and encouraged to participate in project activities such as consultations, information sharing, policy development, and research. Although specific activities will require the government approval and leadership, most of the tasks will require broader consultation and collaboration. This open and transparent strategy will bring about trusting and enduring relationships among stakeholders and is in line with the core values of the FPR.

Initiative supports the FPR Objectives

This initiative supports all the four principal objectives of the FPR. It aims to empower PICTs to achieve sustainable deep seabed mineral resources management by providing the enabling mechanisms for economic, environmental and social sustainability. Deep sea mining revenue, if used wisely, can significantly contribute to improving the livelihood and well-being of the Pacific people. The Pacific ACP States are encouraged to consider the Norwegian Sovereign Wealth Fund (SWF) model as a way of saving and/or investing a portion of the mining revenue for future generations. Due to ongoing advocacy and training, a number of countries (e.g. PNG and Cook Island) are in the process of establishing a saving scheme.

This initiative will strengthen governance systems by assisting countries (including Pacific OCTs) to put in place/review relevant national frameworks. Included in this initiative is the assistance that will be provided to PICTs to develop appropriate national frameworks pertaining to revenue management, fiscal regime and environmental management. Ensuring environmental sustainability will be a major component of this initiative and relevant regional and international agencies will be consulted and/or involved.

6. Additional Information

Please provide or attach additional information in support of this initiative.

Please limit your response to no more than 5 pages.

Here is a sample deep sea minerals concept note that can be modified and submitted to any donor

DEEP SEA MINERALS – A REGIONAL PRIORITY

Rationale

1.1 SPC-EU Deep Sea Minerals Project

Over the last four years the Project has made significant progress in implementing project activities both at regional and national levels. Major deliverables that have been achieved to date are: publication of the Pacific Regional Framework for DSM Exploration and Exploitation, national stakeholder consultation workshops held in all 15 Pacific ACP States, financial and technical support provided to countries for their respective DSM activities, six regional training workshops on separate DSM themes held, 27 Pacific Island lawyers (representing 13 countries) trained in DSM law via the Project's legal internship programme, publication of a number of technical reports including a global assessment report (in collaboration with UNEP/GRID-Arendal) on relevant DSM aspects, a technical study on DSM environmental management (with the International Seabed Authority), assessment reports on Cook Islands and Kiribati manganese nodules, enactment of DSM laws in Fiji, Tonga, and Tuvalu, preparation of draft DSM laws and policies for eight other countries, and the current cost-benefit analysis of deep sea mining in the Pacific.

These achievements have demonstrated the excellent progress in project implementation over the last three years despite a number of challenges being encountered. This success story is supported by the 2012 and 2013 Result Oriented Monitoring (ROM) reports as well as the 2014 Project Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) report that were independently commissioned by the EU to review the progress of the DSM Project.

1.2 Deep Sea Minerals – a Regional Priority

Deep sea mineral is recognised as a potential for paradigm shift in economic development in the region. This sentiment has been shared by many stakeholders during regional and national consultations for the current Project. Representatives of Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) who attended the DSM Project Steering Committee meetings have expressed their appreciation for the ongoing support provided by SPC through the current Project and are also supportive of the continuation of regional cooperation in this new sector.

The Pacific Forum Leaders have expressed their appreciation and support to SPC and the EU for the assistance provided to Pacific ACP States through the SPC-EU DSM Project in their 2012 meeting in Rarotonga Cook Islands as articulated in the 2012 Forum Communiqué. In addition, DSM has been discussed in many regional meetings including the CRGA Meeting of SPC where DSM has been identified as a regional priority. This has been demonstrated by the fact that DSM is now included as a priority issue in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism.

Relevance of the Project

2.1 Presentation and Analysis of the Problems

While issues relating to: (i) the development and implementation of national policies and legal instruments, (ii) knowledge development and enhancement, (iii) environmental guidelines, and (iv) information sharing, are expected to be addressed during the lifespan of the current project, a significant amount of DSM tasks that are considered a priority to the Pacific Islands region will remain unattended.

Several issues related to DSM management have been raised in many regional and national stakeholder consultation meetings as well as in regional training workshops of the current DSM Project. The major issues that need to be addressed in the next decade or so are: (i) regional cooperation; (ii) capacity building both at regional and national levels; (iii) review and enforcement of national policy and laws; (iv) additional DSM prospecting and exploration within national jurisdictions of PICTs; (v) detailed geological data analysis and interpretation (including sample geochemical analysis, resource estimates, geological modeling, identification of potential sites, etc); (vi) environmental management and

monitoring; (vii) data management; government-company DSM contract negotiations; (viii) financial management aspects such as fiscal regime, revenue management, transparency, and saving scheme; and (ix) ongoing stakeholder consultation and awareness.

The beneficiaries of this regional Project are the 15 Pacific ACP States only and Pacific Territories have expressed a desire to join any future regional intervention relating to deep sea mineral activities. Against a background of limited capacity and resources, PICTs will need to solicit their efforts to address common issues such as detailed exploration, maritime boundary disputes, environmental management and data and information sharing. As proven in the management of fishery resources, regional cooperation is a very effective tool that facilitates dialogue, joint management, dissemination of information, and sharing of proceeds.

Capacity building is one of the priority issues in this new industry and it comes in several dimensions. In addition to the regional training workshops that have been proven successful in the current Project, PICTs nationals need to be exposed to on-the-job training in all facets of DSM activities. Sound environmental monitoring is critical in ensuring potential impacts are avoided and/or minimised. Government officials will not only have to be trained to ensure that they perform their regulatory role well but also to encourage collaboration with relevant partners such as mining companies and marine research institutions. Additionally, a longer term formal training programme in relevant DSM fields such as geology, engineering, deep sea environment, oceanography, and economics needs to be activated enabling PICTs nationals to meaningfully participate in DSM activities. Capable candidates will be identified and supported to undertake graduate and post-graduate studies in their respective field of interest.

Some countries have more seabed minerals surveys that were conducted within their national jurisdiction in the last 40 years compared to others. Additional surveys have been requested by countries such as Kiribati, Samoa, Tuvalu, Niue and Palau to improve knowledge of their respective seabed minerals potential. Similar interests have been communicated to the DSM Project by representatives of French Polynesia and Tokelau. Historically, there has not been any deep sea mineral investigation ever conducted within Nauru's EEZ hence Nauru is very keen to be part of any future regional initiative to investigate deep sea minerals in the region.

Notwithstanding the significant progress that has been made under the DSM Project, Pacific Territories and some Pacific ACP States will require assistance in the development and/or review of national DSM policy and legislation as well as contract negotiations with well-resourced mining companies. Another critical aspect is prudent financial management of proceeds emanating from deep sea mining that will ensure short- to long term benefits are realised. Building on the financial management initiatives of the current Project, more discussions and training on financial modelling, taxation, transparency initiatives, and saving scheme will need to be developed and tested to ensure fair sharing of the proceeds and benefits.

2.2 Target Groups and Final Beneficiaries

The main target groups are: (1) national government (i.e. relevant government agencies) dealing with minerals exploitation; (2) local communities, (3) private sector (i.e. local contractors and sub-contractors) support deep sea minerals exploitation. More specifically: (1) national government agencies will benefit from sound management of mining operations as well as an improved ability to optimize revenues from mining, increase employment, optimize taxes and royalties and improve capacity to manage wealth and minerals resources sustainably; (2) local communities will ultimately benefit from enhanced and more sustainably distributed royalties, improved infrastructure, better managed employment and business opportunities; (3) private sectors will benefit from multi-stakeholder engagement and the generation of mining revenue.

2.3 Relevance of the Project to the needs of Final Beneficiary Groups

Deep seabed mining in the jurisdiction of any country will potentially generate significant wealth and a fair share must be returned to the government and the people in terms of tax revenues, employment and indirect economic activities. Continuing on the successes of the current Project in putting in place enabling mechanisms that safeguard the national interest of the country and people while at the same time encourage investment in seabed minerals exploration and mining in the region, the DSM Project phase 2 will assist countries to better manage DSM activities as well as realise both short and long term benefits of mining. Support will be provided to assist countries in addressing country-specific DSM priority issues.

Project Description

3.1 Description of the overall objective of the Project, Purpose, and expected Key Result Areas

The overall objective of the project is to enhance the knowledge base on seabed minerals in PICTs, ensure environmentally friendly management of seabed mineral resources and proceeds emanating from the development of these resources are utilised in the most appropriate manner. Building on the successes of the current DSM Project, the overarching goal of the DSM Project Phase 2 is to provide an enabling mechanism to strengthen capacities and encourage sustainable development of mineral resources in the Pacific Islands region through scientific investigations, data analysis and management, training, and partnerships.

The Project will have seven Key Result Areas: (1) support and facilitate regional cooperation, data management and information sharing; (2) develop and strengthen capacities in the PICTs through appropriate initiatives such as on-the-job training, fellowship, and workshops; (3) In collaboration with partners, support and coordinate marine scientific research and seabed mineral exploration within national jurisdiction of PICTs; (4) carry out data analysis and modelling (including geological and financial models) based on available data; (5) support environmental management and monitoring initiatives (when opportunities arise); (6) provide legal advice and assistance to PICTs; and (7) assist PICTs to participate in and benefit from DSM activities in 'the Area'.

3.2 Involvement of implementing partners, their role and relationship to the Applicant

Due to the multiple dimensions of DSM issues in the region, SPC will work in partnership with relevant national agencies, regional and international organisations, Non-State Actors (NSAs), and the private sector for effective task delivery. National agencies responsible for minerals/natural resources, environment, law and finance will be key partners.

Under the current Project, SPC has established networks/partnerships with many development and implementing partners that will be crucial to a DSM Project Phase 2. The following organisations are collaborating partners of SPC: the International Seabed Authority, UNEP/GRID-Arendal, New Zealand National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA), US Geological Survey (USGS), Duke University, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA), Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Deep Ocean Stewardship Initiative (DOSI), ANU Deep Sea Minerals Project, International Monetary Fund, Commonwealth Secretariat, UNDP, Pacific Islands Association of NGOs (PIANGO), Mineral Policy Institute (MPI), and a wide range of national non-governmental organisations.

4. Sustainability of the Project

The fundamental premise is that PICTs are interested in a regional cooperative approach to develop and implement strategies to address DSM issues. This is demonstrated by the level of interest in and support for the current Project as reflected in the 2012 Pacific Forum Leaders communique. Stakeholder buy-in is also a concern in implementing a

regional project such as this and slow response from countries can affect implementation timelines. In light of this strong emphasis is placed on a multi-stakeholder approach and the strengthening of the National Offshore Minerals Committee's (NOMC) role to implement in-country Project activities. NOMC has been established in some countries under the current Project.

In relation to capacity building, the loss of expertise exists due to brain drain to the commercial sector and to countries such as Australia and New Zealand. These risks are inherent to all projects in the region and as practiced under the current Project, this will be addressed by the training of multiple candidates through targeted specific training at all levels. Secondly, the strengthening of GSD's capacity in applied geoscience is underway hence SPC will soon have the capacity to respond to many key issues relating to minerals development.

The initial project formulation phase will incorporate wide sectoral participation and strong stakeholder involvement, which will be continued throughout the project, and the partnerships that have been developed during the current Project, will strengthen collaboration between agencies and thus secure ownership beyond the life of the project.

5. Applicant's Capacity and Expertise

SPC through GSD has over the last 13 years undertaken amongst others a number of large European Union funded projects. The principal ones of these being the "Reducing Vulnerability of Pacific ACP States", under the EDF8 and 9, the Pacific Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) funded under EDF9, both of which had a strong component related to natural resources management, resource management policy options as well as the management of information for decision making. The most recent and relevant SPC project is the current DSM Project funded under EDF10.

The GSD of SPC has a regional mandate for the sustainable development of natural, particularly non-living resources and has implemented initiatives related to oceanography, marine science, maritime boundary, ocean policy development, and most recently deep sea minerals. Indeed GSD initial mission under the former SOPAC was to assist PICs in the assessment and management of their deep-sea mineral and hydrocarbon resources. Previously SOPAC has coordinated marine scientific research activities within the region for nearly 40 years including a 21 year Japan deep-sea mineral research programme. Additionally, the establishment of a Regional Marine Minerals Database (RMMD) is underway through the current Project and the DMS Project Phase 2 will continue to assist PICTs in the development national minerals databases as well as to strengthen capacity for data management.

7. Uploading initiatives to the Forum Secretariat website

In line with the process outlined in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, please note that all initiatives will be uploaded to the Forum Secretariat website at the close of the call for initiatives, i.e. 12 June 2015.

8. Contact Details

For further information on completing this template, consult the submissions guideline or contact:

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