

# Terms of reference for the mid-term review of IUCN’s project: Plastic Waste Free Islands

April 2021

## Introduction and Evaluation Background

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), founded in 1948, is the world’s oldest and largest environmental organisation. Conserving biodiversity is central to the mission of IUCN. The goal of the organisation is to demonstrate how biodiversity is fundamental to addressing some of the world’s greatest challenges such as climate change, sustainable development and food security. IUCN works toward its mission by developing hundreds of conservation projects all over the world from the local level to those involving several countries, all aimed at the sustainable management of biodiversity and natural resources.

Among the different threats to biodiversity that IUCN intends to address, there is the 10 million tons of plastic waste that enters the ocean every year<sup>1</sup>. Islands and more specifically Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are particularly concerned by this problem as economic growth, increased population, urbanisation, and a change in production materials and methods have led to a shift of the consumption patterns demanding increased use of resources including plastics, and thus resulting in a boom of marine litter.

In order to address this problem and with the support from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), in 2019 IUCN launched the Plastic Waste Free Islands (PWFI) project, as part of its global *Close the Plastic Tap* Programme. PWFI is a three-year project working in six islands in the Caribbean and Pacific: Fiji, Vanuatu and Samoa in Oceania and Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Lucia and Grenada in the Caribbean. The project seeks to promote island circular economy and to demonstrate effective, quantifiable solutions to addressing plastic leakage from Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

More specifically, the PWFI project is aiming at achieving the following outcomes:

1. Improved knowledge of plastic waste footprints among 6 target islands
2. Increased policy effectiveness in reducing plastic waste generation
3. Enhanced plastic waste reduction measures adopted by tourism, fisheries and waste sectors through alternate value chain development
4. Plastic Waste Free Island blueprint endorsed by regional SIDS bodies

## Rationale for the mid-term review

This mid-term review fulfils the IUCN Monitoring and Evaluation Policy<sup>2</sup> to conduct an independent midterm review (MTR) for the purpose of learning and reflection on project management and early results. It also addresses Norad’s requirement in terms of project evaluation. It is expected that the findings and recommendations of this mid-term review will help to identify any needed course corrections in the project’s approach and activities and bring valuable external reflections to help strengthen the project and complement the MEL system of the project through an adaptive management modality.

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<sup>1</sup> Jambeck, J. R., Geyer, R., Wilcox, C., Siegler, T. R., Perryman, M., Andrady, A., ... & Law, K. L. (2015). Plastic waste inputs from land into the ocean. *Science*, 347(6223), 768-771.

<sup>2</sup>[https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/content/documents/the\\_iucn\\_monitoring\\_and\\_evaluation\\_policy\\_2015.pdf](https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/content/documents/the_iucn_monitoring_and_evaluation_policy_2015.pdf)

## Objectives of the mid-term review

The mid-term review should explore PWFI's work and achievements and IUCN support with the aim of assessing progress so far and providing guidance on how to maximize the potential for achieving the intended results and improve learning in its remaining timeframe (2021-2022). Through the assessment of the performance, achievements and lessons learnt to date, the review will contribute to both learning and accountability.

The specific objectives of the mid-term review are:

- To assess the **relevance** of PWFI project to address the plastic pollution problematic in the 6 targeted islands. It will also assess the relevance of the stakeholders targeted by the intervention and the methodologies and approaches to do so.
- To assess the **effectiveness** of the PWFI project at achieving its objectives and provide clear insights about what has and has not worked so far and why. It should also highlight how the COVID pandemic has affected the project and how it adapted to this situation.
- To assess the **efficiency** in terms of value for money of the delivery of the PWFI outputs.
- To assess the **sustainability** and **potential impacts** of the PWFI project and provide some indication about how the project is progressing towards delivering on its objectives
- To **identify lessons** and provide set of **actionable recommendations** on how the project and the project coordination/management could be adjusted for further improvement and to strengthen delivery of results.

## The key evaluation questions for the mid-term review are:

### Relevance:

1. How appropriate and relevant is PWFI project approach and intervention logic in terms of its objectives and anticipated outcomes, and within each country context?
2. To what extent the project fit-for-purpose to:
  - a. Improved knowledge of plastic waste footprints
  - b. Demonstrate effective, quantifiable solutions to addressing plastic leakage
  - c. Increase policy effectiveness in reducing plastic waste generation
  - d. Disseminate learning and engage broader group of stakeholders (beyond the 6 islands)
3. Has there been any change since the project was formulated that might have affected its relevance? If so, what are these changes and to what extent the project has managed to adapt to ensure it remains relevant?

### Effectiveness:

1. To what extent has PWFI delivered on its outputs and outcomes at regional and global level to date? Were there any unintended consequences? In particular:
  - 1.1. How effective has been PWFI so far in developing methodologies to calculate plastic leakage? How effective has been PWFI in collecting the data that feed into these methodologies?
  - 1.2. How effective has been PWFI in engaging with key decision makers in country to mainstream plastic waste reduction in policy and decision making? What are the early markers of changes among decision/policy makers that demonstrate PWFI is on its way to increase policy effectiveness in reducing plastic waste generation?
  - 1.3. How effective has been PWFI in engaging with public/private investors and other key stakeholders to develop enhanced plastic waste management measures in the targeted sectors? What are the early markers of changes among private sector and other relevant partners that demonstrate PWFI is on its way to trigger changes in terms of how plastic waste is being managed?
  - 1.4. How effective has been PWFI in engaging key national stakeholders in the Plastic Waste Free Island Blueprint network? What are the early markers of changes among key national stakeholders to demonstrate increased level of interest and involvement in developing a Plastic Waste Free Island Blueprint

- 1.5. For all the above questions, what are the factors influencing positively and negatively the effectiveness of the project?
2. To what extent are the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) strategy and tools adequate and effective? In particular:
  - 2.1. To what extent the MEL strategy helps to (a) collect the right kind of data in view of understanding the impact of the project and (b) detect any needed programme implementation adjustments for better progress towards results?
  - 2.2. To what extent the targets need to be readapted in line with the project progress to date?
  - 2.3. What adjustments to the MEL system are recommended to help understand impact of the PWFI?

#### Efficiency

1. To what extent are the PWFI outputs in balance with the level of effort, time and resources spent?
  - 1.1. To what extent spending and project delivery progressed according to the planned schedule?
  - 1.2. To what extent are the current operational modality and governance structure efficient in contributing to the overall achievements of PWFI?
  - 1.3. To what extent has the project management been able to adapt to any changing condition to improve the efficiency of project implementation?
  - 1.4. To what extent has the project built on existing agreements, initiatives, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other projects, partnerships, etc. and avoided duplication of similar activities by other groups and initiatives?
  - 1.5. Are there less costly ways of achieving the same outputs?

#### Sustainability and impact:

1. To what extent is the project set up to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects?
  - 1.1. What are the early markers of PWFI being on track to achieve its long term objectives?
  - 1.2. Are there any barriers or risks that may prevent future progress towards the achievement of the project's longer-term objectives? What can be done to increase the likelihood of positive impacts from the project?
  - 1.3. To what extent have external factors influenced the work of PWFI? Are there any positive or negative unintended results caused by the work of PWFI that can be demonstrated? To what extent may these unintended results affect the future work of PWFI?
2. What efforts are being made to ensure sustainability of PWFI results in the long term?
  - 2.1. What project results, lessons or experiences are likely to be replicated (in different geographic areas) or scaled up (in the same geographic area, but on a much larger scale and funded by other sources) in the near future?

### **Audience for the review**

The primary audiences for the review are the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), IUCN's Global Marine and Polar Programme and the staff from the IUCN regional offices involved in the project. The review will be made available to the public on IUCN's website.

More specifically, the intended users and uses of the review are:

- The PWFI Project Coordinators and Managers in IUCN's global and regional programmes for the purpose of managing the project, and in particular, for making adjustments to improve delivery of outcomes;
- The IUCN Monitoring and Learning team, for the purpose of improving the RDP monitoring and learning approach;
- The Global Directors and Director General at IUCN, for the purpose of gathering lessons to inform future project design and implementation of other projects under the *Close the Plastic Tap* Programme
- Norad and its evaluation department to provide information to the authorities and the general public.

## Methodology

This evaluation will be carried out in conformity with the IUCN Monitoring and Evaluation Policy (2015)<sup>3</sup>, which sets out IUCN's institutional commitment to evaluation, and the criteria and standards for the evaluation and evaluation of its projects, programmes and organizational units. IUCN's evaluation standards and criteria are based on the widely accepted OECD DAC Evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

The evaluator(s) is expected to develop an evaluation framework based on the suggested key evaluation questions above but may suggest additional questions or modifications. The inception report will be prepared as the first deliverable of the evaluation and will include an evaluation matrix<sup>4</sup> presenting how the key issues will be addressed, the data sources and the data collection methods that will be used for the evaluation and a set of criteria to rate the strength of the evidence collected. Adequately addressing the key evaluation questions will be the basis for IUCN to sign off on the completeness of the evaluation report.

All data collection tools are to be included as annexes to the final evaluation report. The link between evaluation questions, data collection, analysis, findings and conclusions must be clearly made and set out in a transparent manner in the presentation of the evaluation findings. Conclusion and recommendations should be underpinned by a strong set of evidences.

The evaluation will seek the views of the range of stakeholders who have been engaged in the process to date<sup>5</sup> to conclude whether the project is on track and expected to realise its set objectives.

The evaluator(s) is expected to use mixed methods, including:

- Review of relevant documentation from the project<sup>6</sup>;
- Interviews of key stakeholders across all 6 countries (list to be provided at inception);
- Other methods may be proposed as needed and as project resources allow, e.g. surveys or focus group.

## Schedule and deliverables

The evaluation will run from beginning of May to end of July 2021. The expected outputs are:

- An inception report including refined key evaluation questions, completed evaluation matrix; approach to sampling stakeholders and field activities, work plan and schedule.
- A draft 20 page evaluation report.
- A final 20 page evaluation report, plus annexes
- A two-page summary of key findings, lessons, recommendations and messages from the MTR report, that can be disseminated to the wider public for general information on the project's results and performance to date.
- A webinar on key findings, including 15 slides summary presentation of key findings

The 20 page evaluation report is expected to follow the format below:

- A. Title page including project identification details
- B. Executive Summary (including at a minimum the methodology, findings and recommendations)
- C. Table of Contents
- D. List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

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<sup>3</sup>[https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/content/documents/the\\_iucn\\_monitoring\\_and\\_evaluation\\_policy\\_2015.pdf](https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/content/documents/the_iucn_monitoring_and_evaluation_policy_2015.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> See annex 1 for draft evaluation matrix

<sup>5</sup> See indicative list in annex 2

<sup>6</sup> See list in annex 3

- E. A short introduction to project/programme – context and description
- F. Purpose of the Evaluation
- G. Evaluation Issues and Questions
- H. Methodology (including approach to data analysis)
- I. Findings - organized according to the key evaluation questions
- J. Conclusions and lessons learned
- K. Recommendations – actionable recommendations clearly linked to findings and lessons
- L. Appendices

Appendices must include: Evaluation terms of reference; Data collection instruments; Evaluation schedule/timetable (including field visits); List of people met/interviewed; Documents consulted.

Milestone / deliverable	Indicative completion date
Recruitment of Evaluation consultant	09 May 2021
Start date and evaluator appointed	14 May 2021
Inception note including final evaluation matrix	30 May 2021
Draft report	30 June 2021
IUCN comments on draft report	09 July 2021
Final Report, two-page summary and webinar	16 July 2021

### Qualifications of the Evaluator(s)

IUCN requires an evaluator or a team of evaluators with experience in assessing change in complex systems and with extensive expertise and knowledge in the field of plastic waste pollution, water and ecosystem management, private sector investment, value chains, or a combination thereof, applied to policy instruments and practice. Expertise or knowledge of SIDs and their contexts is also expected.

In addition, the consultant or lead consultant shall have:

- At least 10 years’ experience as an evaluator with demonstrated quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis skills, with proven record of conducting formative, process and impact evaluations;
- Proven experience in evaluating similar projects; Prior experience in conducting evaluation in Islands where PWFI is implemented would be an asset;
- Complete independence from IUCN;
- English language fluency in both speaking and writing. Spanish would be considered as an additional asset.
- Women are strongly encouraged to apply. The successful candidate will be selected based on merit.

### Budget

The maximum available budget for this review is 210’000 NOK (~25’000 USD)<sup>7</sup>.

The evaluator(s) shall be paid by IUCN upon completion of the following milestones.

- 30% upon signing of the contract
- 30% after presentation of the draft report
- 40% after the approval of the final reports

### Submission

We welcome applications from Organisations and/or individual Consultants.

<sup>7</sup> For contractual reason with Norad, budget and payment for this consultancy have to be made in NOK. On 21.04.2021, 1NOK= 0.12031USD.

- a) Personal CV of the Evaluator that will prepare and lead the activities, indicating all relevant past experiences and main competencies; CVs of any other person to be involved in the evaluation should also be submitted
- b) A brief description (max 2 pages) of why the Evaluator or the Evaluator's team is the most suitable for the assignment, including a short description of the plan and methods envisaged to meet the mid-term review objectives.
- c) A short budget description that demonstrates that the assignment will be done within the budget envelope

### **How to apply?**

The interested candidates, who meet the above mentioned criteria, may send their application to: [florian.reinhard@iucn.org](mailto:florian.reinhard@iucn.org), cc [Janaka.DeSilva@iucn.org](mailto:Janaka.DeSilva@iucn.org)

with the Subject “**PWFI Mid Term Evaluation**” no later than 09th May 2021

**Annex 1: Draft evaluation matrix, to be completed at inception by the evaluator:**

Completing and finalizing the evaluation matrix, particularly the sub-questions, should draw on the learning questions identified in the MEL strategy

Evaluation Criteria	KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS	Subquestions	Data sources/ data collection methods	Results Summary	Rubrik for Evidence rating

**Annex 2: Indicative list and contact of stakeholders who have been engaged in the process to date**

To be shared once the evaluator has been selected



### **Annex 3: Indicative list of key project documents**

To be shared once the evaluator has been selected

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Points available</b>
<b>1. Quality of the Expression of Interest</b>	<b>30</b>
Understanding of the assignment	10
Approach and capacity to deliver on the mid term review objectives	10
Methods proposed	10
<b>2. Qualifications of the evaluator(s)</b>	<b>60</b>
Experience of the evaluator(s)	25
M&E expertise	25
Language skills	10
<b>3. Budget</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 points</b>